

# **Forest Ridge Baptist Church Constitution**

**Forest Ridge Baptist Church  
6890 Union Schoolhouse Road  
Dayton, Oh 4542**

**Proposed Constitution presented for revision by the Elders Study Committee June 2011.  
Committee Members: Russel Gross, Pat Harsch, Luke McKeeth, Dean Scott, Jerry Shiver, Fred  
Wilson.**

**Approved by overwhelming majority by the Church Assembled on May 20, 2012**

## Table of Contents

.I Preamble .....	6
.II Article One: Church Name .....	6
.III Article Two: Purpose of Forest Ridge Baptist Church.....	6
.IV Article Three: Statement of Faith .....	6
.V Article Four: Relationships .....	6
.VI Article Five: Governance.....	6
.VII Article Six: Church Covenant .....	7
.VIII Article One: Church Governance.....	8
.IX Article Two: Officers and Staff.....	8
.I Section One: Elders.....	8
Responsibilities.....	8
Qualifications.....	9
Number.....	9
Selection.....	10
Initial Elders or Reconstitution of Elder Council.....	10
Term.....	11
Termination.....	11
Organization.....	11
.II Section Two: Deacons.....	11
Responsibilities.....	11
Qualifications.....	12
Number.....	12
Selection.....	12
Term.....	12
Termination.....	13
.III Section Three: Woman’s Ministry Team.....	13
Responsibilities.....	13
Qualifications.....	13
Number.....	14
Selection.....	14
Term.....	14
Termination.....	14
.IV Section Four: Church Staff.....	15
Pastoral Staff.....	15
Senior Pastor.....	15
Youth minister.....	15
Children’s Minister.....	16
Music Minister.....	16
Support Staff.....	16
Secretary/Financial Secretary.....	16
Accountant.....	17
Custodian.....	17

.V Section Five: Other Elected Officers.....	17
Clerk.....	17
Comptroller.....	17
Selection:.....	17
Comptroller Duties:.....	17
Head Usher.....	18
.X Article Three: Church Membership.....	18
.I Section One. Church Membership Defined. ....	18
.II Section Two. Requesting Church Membership. ....	18
.III Section Three. Acceptance. ....	18
.IV Section Four. Responsibilities of Members.....	19
.V Section Five. Privileges of Membership. ....	19
.VI Section Six. Accountability and Discipline of Members. ....	20
.VII Section Seven: Termination of Membership ....	21
.VIII Section Eight: Watch-care membership.....	21
.IX Section Nine: Summary Statement on Minor Age Children.....	21
Section Ten: Relationship to Non-Members.....	22
.XI Article Four: Church Committees.....	23
Section One: Standing Committees.....	23
Church Property Committee.....	23
Missions Committee.....	24
Child Protection Committee ....	24
Scholarship Committee ....	25
Hospitality Committee.....	25
.I Section Two: Other Committees.....	25
.XII Article Five: Ordinances.....	26
.I Section One: Baptism.....	26
.II Section Two: The Lord's Supper.....	26
.III Article Six: Church Meetings.....	26
.I Section One. Annual Meeting. ....	26
.II Section Two. Special Meetings. ....	27
.III Section Three. Notice. ....	27
.IV Section Four. Presiding Official. ....	27
.V Section Five. Voting.....	27
.VI Section Six. Quorum.....	27
.VII Section Seven. Matters to be considered by FRBC. ....	27
.II Article Seven: Church Finances.....	28
.I Section One: Budget and Stewardship.....	28
.II Section Two: Accounting Procedures.....	28
.III Section Three: Fiscal Year.....	28
.III Article Eight: Amendments.....	28
.IV Article Nine: Commitment to Biblical Confidentiality.....	28
.I Section One: Biblical Teaching.....	28
.II Section Two: Extent of Confidentiality.....	29
.V Article Ten: Indemnification .....	29

Appendix One: The Baptist Faith and Message.....	30
.I The Scriptures.....	30
.II God.....	30
A. God the Father.....	30
B. God the Son.....	30
C. God the Holy Spirit.....	31
.III Man.....	31
.IV Salvation.....	31
.V God's Purpose of Grace.....	32
.VI The Church.....	32
.VII Baptism and the Lord's Supper.....	32
.VIII The Lord's Day.....	33
.IX The Kingdom.....	33
.X Last Things.....	33
.XI Evangelism and Missions.....	33
.XII Education.....	34
.XIII Stewardship.....	34
.XIV Cooperation.....	35
.XV The Christian and the Social Order.....	35
.XVI Peace and War.....	36
.XVII Religious Liberty.....	36
.XVIII The Family.....	37
Appendix Two: Statement on Elders.....	38
Historical Prologue.....	38
Basic Usage.....	38
Single versus Plural.....	39
Appendix Three: Church Covenant.....	42
Appendix Four:Accountability and Church Discipline.....	44
Appendix Five:Forest Ridge Baptist Church.....	49
Child Abuse Prevention and Response Handbook .....	49
.I Commitment to Protecting Children.....	49
.II Definitions:.....	49
.III Selecting and screening employees, workers, and volunteers.....	50
.I Paid Employees.....	50
.II Application Process.....	50
.III Ongoing training.....	50
.IV Background Check.....	50
.IV Requirements for adult ministry volunteers at FRBC.....	50
.I Threshold.....	51
.II Application Process.....	51
.III Ongoing training.....	51
.IV Background Check.....	51
Requirements for adult short term volunteers at FRBC.....	51
.I Threshold.....	51

.II Application Process.....	52
.III Training.....	52
.IV Background Check.....	52
Requirements for Teen Volunteers and Ministry Staff.....	52
.I Threshold.....	52
.II Application Process.....	53
.III Training.....	53
Application review, Background Check and interview policy for Forest Ridge Baptist Church.....	54
.I Process:.....	54
.II Review Protocol:.....	54
.III References.....	54
.IV Interview.....	55
.V Acceptance/Rejection.....	55
Annual Review.....	56
Disciplinary Review.....	56
Confidentiality Commitment of Forest Ridge Baptist Church, for the handling of Staff, Worker and Volunteer Applications.....	56
Staff and Volunteer Supervision.....	57
.I Levels of Risk.....	57
.II Principles, Policies and Standard of Care.....	58
Reporting obligations.....	61
Responding to allegations.....	64
Suggested Forms :.....	68
Personal Information.....	79
Background Information .....	79
Personal Information.....	83
Background Information .....	83

# Constitution

## ***.IPreamble***

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of the action of this body in its relationship to other churches.

## ***.IIArticle One: Church Name***

This body shall be known as the Forest Ridge Baptist Church (hereafter referred to as FRBC) located at 6890 Union Schoolhouse Road, Dayton, OH 45424.

## ***.IIIArticle Two: Purpose of Forest Ridge Baptist Church***

“To Equip believers in order to enable them to provide a continuing witness of our Lord Jesus to the community through a Christian fellowship promoting spiritual growth and dedication to winning souls to Christ.

## ***.IVArticle Three: Statement of Faith***

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for our statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. We band ourselves together as a body (All of which have undergone “Believer’s Baptism”) of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to the Non-Christian. The ordinances of the church are (believer’s) baptism by immersion and the Lord’s Supper.

## ***.VArticle Four: Relationships***

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is our beliefs and practices are in harmony this church will cooperate with and support the Greater Dayton Association and the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio through the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention (or their successors).

## ***.VIArticle Five: Governance***

FRBC is a congregational church which will be led by a plurality of elders under the authority of the Holy Scriptures alone. The Bylaws will provide the practical guidance for the regular functions of the Church, always subject to the authority of Scripture.

## **.VII Article Six: Church Covenant**

*We the Members of Forest Ridge Baptist Church, Our Commitments to One Another in the Sight of God<sup>1</sup>*

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

1. We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort of the Gospel; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; and to participate cheerfully and regularly in support of the ministries of the church, contribute to the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.
2. We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our family and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct, and to seek in all things to grow to be more Christlike.
3. We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian compassion for one another and courtesy in speech; and to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.
4. We agree that when we remove from this place we will, if possible, unite with a church of like faith.

---

<sup>1</sup> Covenant adapted from *The Peacemaker Church*. Used by permission of Peacemaker Ministries ([www. PeacemakerChurch.net](http://www.PeacemakerChurch.net)).

# Bylaws

## **.VIII Article One: Church Governance**

Having studied the organization of the early church as recorded in the New Testament we are lead to conclude that the form of church government most in keeping with Biblical principles and most appropriate to the local church in this age is leadership by a plurality of elders. For a detailed explanation of the rationale for this conclusion please refer to Appendix One: Statement on Elders. We refer to this as Elder Lead. By this we mean that a number of staff and lay elders to include the Teaching Elder or Pastor provide leadership for the ministerial and administrative functions of the local church but that all actions and decisions of the elders are subject to the concurrence of the congregation either by implication or by a vote at a membership meeting to be conducted for that purpose at such times as may be appropriate. This is discussed in considerable detail in the following sections.

## **.IX Article Two: Officers and Staff**

### **.I Section One: Elders**

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul defines the office of Elder (also referred to as Overseer or Pastor). The office of Elder is one held by a man who having met the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and having committed himself to a lifetime of service in ministry for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has been ordained and given authority over the local church. The term “Elders” refers to a group of both salaried and non-salaried men who together comprise an Elder Council. This term is used interchangeably in the Scriptures with the terms “Overseers” and “Elders” (Acts 20:17, 28).

#### **I. Responsibilities.**

The primary work of the Elders shall be to devote themselves to prayer, the ministry of the Word, and the well being of the flock. Their responsibilities shall include the following:

- A) Give general oversight of the flock (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17 and I Thes. 5:12);
  - 1. in practical matters (Acts 6:1-6, 11:29-30)
  - 2. in matters of doctrine (Acts 15, 16:4)
  - 3. in matters of discipline/character (Heb. 13:17)
- B) Shepherd the flock (I Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17; Jos. 5:14)
- C) Equip the saints for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:11)
- D) Teach the flock (I Tim. 3:2, 5:17; I Thes. 5:12)
- E) Exhort in sound doctrine (Titus 1:9)
- F) Refute those who contradict sound doctrine (Titus 1:9)
- G) Example the standard of Godliness (I Tim. 3:7; I Pet. 5:3)

#### **1. Leadership:**

The Elders are responsible to lead and shepherd the church body in all decision making matters. This means that at times they will gather the entire congregation for open discussion, proposals, information,



prayer, and/or vote. (Acts 6, 15) At other times decisions will be made solely by the Elders in the administration of their responsibilities. (Acts 6, 15; Heb. 13:17; I Tim. 5:17; I Thes. 5:12). The elders are responsible to communicate clearly with the congregation and leave a written record of major decisions, with Biblical rationale.

#### 2. Finances:

The Elders are responsible to oversee and promote a high level of financial accountability through such means as the presentation of the annual budget and quarterly financial business reports. They will ensure all financial records (with the exception of individual giving records other than their own) will be available and open to any member during normal business hours.

#### 3. Trustees:

The Elder Council shall function as the trustees of FRBC. They manage FRBC property, both real and personal, as fiduciaries. They shall represent FRBC in all of its legal matters. Elder Council may appoint other FRBC members to be Trustees as necessary.

#### 4. Communication:

At all times, church members are responsible to exercise their God-given right to communicate their thinking on any issue to the Elders for the purpose of together discovering the truth as revealed in God's Word. At all times, the Elders are responsible to help promote and develop an educated, involved, and sufficiently informed congregation. In this manner, all members of the church body participate, although not all lead.

#### 5. Balance of Authority:

The Senior Pastor holds no greater authority than the remaining Elders other than that of influence; but he is to be regarded as "first among equals." He shall be responsible for the primary preaching/teaching ministries of the church, the management and oversight of all pastoral and ministry functions of the church, and the conduct of all public and regular services. (Eph. 4:11)

### **II. Qualifications.**

The essential element needed is that of a godly character. Elders must be men exhibiting characteristics defined as: above reproach, husband of one wife (a one-woman man), temperate (sober, vigilant), prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to wine, not pugnacious (non-combative), gentle, uncontentious (not quarrelsome), free from the love of money, manages his own house well, not a new convert, good reputation with outsiders, not self-willed, a lover of good, just, fair, devout (holy) and self-controlled. (I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9) In addition, he must also be willing to make the necessary time commitments to fulfill his responsibilities to the church.

### **III. Number.**

There shall always be a plurality of Elders to lead the church with no set limit. (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1) The number will be determined by the number of men qualified and the needs of the church. At all

times, the church should seek to balance the number of salaried elders with non-salaried elders. There shall be at least two active elders to include the Senior Pastor and one non-salaried elder.

#### **IV. Selection.**

Church members shall submit nominees for potential Elders. Selection process will conform to the following:

1. The Elders will determine the necessity and/or feasibility of an additional Elder(s) and report to the church body the number required.
2. Nominees are submitted by any member to the Elders for consideration, and examination.
3. The Chairman of the Elders will inquire if the nominee is willing to be submitted for election.
4. Willing and qualified nominees will be communicated to the church.
5. During a three-week period, the church will prayerfully consider men nominated. Questions regarding eligibility brought by any church member will be directed to any member of the Elders.
6. If, upon investigation by the Elder Council, any question/comment by any member of the Church Body reveals that a nominee does not sufficiently meet the qualifications of an Elder, he will be informed and his name will be removed from further consideration.
7. Any nominees meeting the qualifications and meeting the approval of the Elders shall go before the church to be voted upon during a regular worship service. A seventy-five percent affirmative vote by the eligible members present will be required to be elected.

#### **I. Initial Elders or Reconstitution of Elder Council.**

Immediately after approval of this constitution, and at any time where there are insufficient elders to meet the requirements of this document. A transition committee will be appointed by the church to nominate sufficient elders to meet the requirements of this document. The committee will have 90 days to submit their nominations, for a vote by the church.

1. Initial Elders. A Transition Committee shall recommend to FRBC a five-member Elder Examination Team chosen from FRBC's voting membership who are in good standing, to seek the Lord's leadership, regarding the first Elder Council. The Transition Committee shall make this recommendation to FRBC in a Special Meeting for FRBC's determination of affirmation. The Senior Pastor shall serve as one of the members of the Elder Examination Team. This team will review scriptural teachings pertaining to church elders and prayerfully recommend men to serve as elders to form the initial Elder Council. When the required number of men have been affirmed by FRBC, the Elder Examination Team's function will be assumed by the Elder Council, and the Elder Examination Team shall be dissolved.
2. Elder Examination Team. When the Elder Examination Team reaches unanimous agreement, they will seek the affirmation of FRBC in a Special Meeting. A three-fourths (75%) affirmative vote of the Qualified Church Members attending the Special Meeting is required to affirm a person to be an elder. These elders shall form the Elder Council and shall begin the process prescribed in Section one, IV, Selection, seeking to appoint additional elders as God directs. (It is understood that much of this work may be performed in preparation for the possible adoption of these Bylaws to avoid an inordinate delay in the establishment of the Elders Council. In that case, the Elder Examination Team may be presented with the Bylaws.)
3. Reconstitution of Elders. In the event that it is necessary to reconstitute the Elder Council, an Elder

Examination Team shall be recommended to FRBC by the Deacon leadership in a Special Meeting (See Article VI ) for FRBC's determination whether to affirm the recommended individuals. Five individuals who are FRBC voting members in good standing shall be recommended. They are to be qualified to research and review the scriptural teachings on church elders and prayerfully recommend elders to FRBC. Once FRBC has affirmed the required number of elders to the reconstituted Elder Council, the Elder Examination Team shall be dissolved. The process in subsection "b" above shall be followed to reconstitute the Elder Council, if and when required.

## **II. Term.**

Staff elders may serve as long as they possess the character qualities and fulfill the standards of leadership and service described above. Lay elders as long as they possess the character qualities and fulfill the standards of ministry and service described above, will be appointed for a rotating three year term, they may be affirmed for a second consecutive three years and then need to take a mandatory one year sabbatical. For accountability, all Elders shall hold their brothers to the standards given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. Additionally, any member of the church body may and should initiate church discipline against a sinning Elder who is not exhibiting the character or fulfilling his responsibilities as an Elder by bringing it to the attention of the Elder Council. An accusation against an Elder should not be received "except on the basis of two or three witnesses" (I Tim. 5:19).

## **III. Termination.**

Ordination as an Elder is to be considered to be a lifetime commitment to ministry, however any man designated as an Elder by this church may resign by written notification to the Chairman of the Elders. Any Elder may be removed from office by the unanimous decision of the remaining Elders for doctrinal change, or moral failing that disqualifies him, or other life circumstance that prevent the exercise of his duties.

An unqualified Elder who refuses to resign maybe removed by the unanimous decision of the remaining Elders and presented to the church for discipline of a sinning member and "rebuked in the presence of all so that the rest may be fearful of sinning." (I Tim. 5:20)

## **IV. Organization.**

Under normal circumstances the senior pastor will serve as chairman of the Elders. Elders will appoint an assistant among themselves, who will serve as chairman in the absence of the senior pastor.

## **.II Section Two: Deacons**

A deacon (servant in original Greek) is a man who having met the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13, has been appointed and given responsibility to assist with other ministries of the Church to free the Elders to focus on the ministry of Prayer and the Word.

### **I. Responsibilities.**

Deacons are not responsible for the spiritual or general oversight of the church, but rather for service in particular and specific areas of ministry, evangelism, and nurture as designated. Deacons serve under the general oversight of the Elders of the church. They may meet separately as a group, or with the Elders if it is essential for fulfilling a specific ministry need. They are the functionaries or administrators of a segment of the total church ministry. Deacons who administer well are to be considered for the filling of vacancies in the Elder role. Their responsibilities include:

- 1.To assist the Elders so that they may be released to devote time for “prayer and the service of the Word.” (Acts 6:2-4)
- 2.To be “in charge” (administer) any particular task assigned by the Elders. (Acts 6:3)
- 3.To be an example of servant-hood to the church body. (Acts 6:2-4; Mat. 23:11; I Tim 3:13)
- 4.To collect and administer the benevolence fund, for the service of the physical needs of the membership exhibiting the love and compassion of Christ. Specific attention is to be given to widows and widowers, the needy, and the aged.
- 5.To prepare and distribute the elements for celebration of the Lord’s Supper.

**I. Qualifications.**

The essential element needed is that of a godly character. A deacon must exhibit the characteristics of dignity, not double tongued, not addicted to much wine, not fond of sordid gain, holds to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, tested, beyond reproach, husband of one wife, and be good managers of their children and households as listed in I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3. Deacons must be willing to make the necessary time commitments to fulfill their responsibilities. Deacons, must also be voting members of FRBC.

**II.Number.**

There shall be no specified number of deacons. The number will be determined by the number of qualified individuals and the needs of the church. (Acts 6:3)

**III.Selection.**

Church members shall select potential Deacons. (Acts 6:1-5) Nomination and selection will progress through the following process:

- 1.The Elders will determine the necessity for additional replacement deacons and report this to the church body. This need will be precipitated by the necessity of deacon service in a facet of church operation.
- 2.Nominees are submitted to the Elders for consolidation.
- 3.The chairperson of the Elders will inquire if the nominee is willing to be submitted for election.
- 4.Willing nominees and the number of required deacons will be communicated to the church.
- 5.During a three-week period, the church will prayerfully consider nominees.
- 6.Questions regarding eligibility brought by any church member will be directed to the chairperson or any member of the Elders.
- 7.If, upon investigation by the Elder Council, any question/comment by any member of the Church Body reveals that a nominee does not sufficiently meet the qualifications of a deacon, their name will be removed for further consideration without comment.
- 8.The church will vote on the final list of nominees.
- 9.The Elders will appoint an interview committee who will examine the selectees for qualification. The predetermined number of deacons will be selected from the nominees who receive the highest vote by the church, and whose qualifications meet the interview committee’s approval. (Acts 6:6)

**I.Term.**

Deacons, as long as they possess the character qualities and fulfill the standards of ministry and service described above, will be appointed for a rotating three year term, they may be affirmed for a second

consecutive three years and then need to take a mandatory one year sabbatical. Any member of the church body may and should initiate church discipline against a sinning deacon who is not exhibiting the character or fulfilling the responsibilities of a deacon.

## **II. Termination.**

Any deacon may resign by written notification to the chairperson of the Elders. Any deacon may be removed from their position by the unanimous decision of the Elders for any of the following reasons:

1. Physically incapacitated
2. Spiritually or morally unqualified
3. Doctrinally unqualified; fails to agree with the doctrinal statement outlined in the Constitution under Article III.
4. Fails to fulfill their responsibilities or meet the qualifications as outlined in this document, ceases to serve in a designated ministry area.

## **.III Section Three: Woman's Ministry Team**

In his first letter to Timothy, and Titus Paul refers to the role of women in serving the Church. The Women's Ministry Team will be composed of women who having met the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:3-5, have been appointed to serve in various ministries of the Church to free the Elders to focus on the ministry of Prayer and the Word

### **I. Responsibilities.**

Women are not responsible for the spiritual or general oversight of the church, but rather for service in particular and specific areas of ministry, evangelism, hospitality and nurture as designated. The women serve under the general oversight of the Elders of the church. They may meet separately as a group or with the Elders or Deacons if it is essential for fulfilling a specific ministry need. They are the functionaries or administrators of a segment of the total church ministry. Their responsibilities include:

1. To assist the Elders and Deacons so that the Elders may be released to devote time for "prayer and the service of the Word" (Acts 6:2-4).
2. To carry out under the direction of the elders and deacons any particular tasks they are assigned.
3. To be an example of servant-hood to the church body.
4. To teach and lead by example for other women (Titus 2:4-5).
5. To provide an avenue for addressing issues that impact women in the church, as liaisons between the elders and the women of the church.
6. To coordinate the serving of meals to the ill, those who have just had a major life crisis, visiting missionaries, and students who may be worshiping or serving with us for a time.

### **I. Qualifications.**

The essential element needed is that of a godly character. A woman on the ministry team must exhibit the characteristics of: reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not slaves to much wine, self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, submissive to their own husbands, dignified, sober-minded, and faithful as listed in I Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:3-5. Women on the ministry team must be willing to make the necessary time commitments to fulfill their responsibilities. Women on the ministry team must also be voting members of FRBC.

## **II.Number.**

There shall be no specified number of women on the ministry team. The number will be determined by the number of qualified individuals and the needs of the church. (Acts 6:3)

## **III.Selection.**

Church members shall select potential Women for the ministry team. (Acts 6:1-5) Nomination and selection will progress through the following process:

- 1.The Senior Pastor and Elders will determine the necessity for additional replacement women on the ministry team and report this to the church body. This need will be precipitated by the necessity of a woman's service in a facet of church operation.
- 2.Nominees are submitted to the Elders for consolidation.
- 3.The chairperson of the Elders will inquire if the nominee is willing to be submitted for election.
- 4.Willing nominees and the number of required women on the ministry team will be communicated to the church.
- 5.During a three-week period, the church will prayerfully consider nominees.
- 6.Questions regarding eligibility brought by any church member will be directed to the chairperson or any member of the Elders.
- 7.If, upon investigation by the Elder Council, any question/comment by any member of the Church Body reveals that a nominee does not sufficiently meet the qualifications of a woman on the ministry team, their name will be removed for further consideration without comment.
- 8.The church will vote on the final list of nominees.
- 9.The Elders will appoint an interview committee who will examine the selectees for qualification. The predetermined number of women will be selected from the nominees who receive the highest vote by the church, and whose qualifications meet the interview committee's approval. (Acts 6:6)

## **I.Term**

A woman on the ministry team, as long as they possess the character qualities and fulfill the standards of ministry and service described above, will be appointed for a rotating three year term, they may be affirmed for a second consecutive three years and then need to take a mandatory one year sabbatical. Any member of the church body may and should initiate church discipline against a woman on the ministry team who is not exhibiting the character or fulfilling the responsibilities of a woman on the ministry team.

## **II.Termination.**

Any woman on the ministry team may resign by written notification to the chairperson of the Elders. Any woman on the ministry team may be removed from their position by the unanimous decision of the Elders for any of the following reasons:

- 1.Physically incapacitated
- 2.Spiritually or morally unqualified
- 3.Doctrinally unqualified; fails to agree with the doctrinal statement outlined in the Constitution under

Article III.

4. Fails to fulfill their responsibilities or meet the qualifications as outlined in this document, ceases to serve in a designated ministry area.

## **.IV Section Four: Church Staff**

### **I. Pastoral Staff.**

The Elders are responsible to discern the need for other pastoral staff. The Elders shall write a job description and select qualified candidates for these positions. Qualified candidates will be recommended to the Church for public vote at a specially called business meeting (Article XI). A  $\frac{3}{4}$  (three-fourths) majority vote is required to elect pastoral staff.

Pastoral staff members shall remain in office an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservation: If the Elder Council is in unanimous agreement (excluding the Staff member when applicable) with the decision to remove the Staff member from his position, they have the authority to dismiss Pastoral Staff members, through the affirmation of a majority vote of FRBC, in Special Meeting (Article XI, Section 2). Severance compensation shall be determined by the Elder Council. Pastoral Staff members shall give notice of their resignation to FRBC, after having informed the Elder Council.

### **1. Senior Pastor.**

#### **A) Selection.**

In the event that FRBC is without its Senior Pastor the Elder council will be responsible to fill the pulpit, either themselves or in finding an interim pastor. The lay Elders will assemble and lead a Pastor search committee. The Committee will consist of lay elders plus at least three at large members representative of a cross-section of the congregation. When they are unanimous in their recommendation of a candidate<sup>2</sup> they believe God is leading them to select, they will seek the affirmation of the members of FRBC in a Special Meeting (Article VI). A vote of at least three-fourths (75%) majority of all qualified church members voting is required to call a Senior Pastor.

#### **B) Duties.**

In addition to his shepherding role, as an elder the Senior Pastor's primary responsibility is the ministry of the Word and prayer, in order to provide strategic leadership and vision to the body. He is called to help believers mature in their faith, through insightful and accurate presentation of biblical truths, equipping them to be the true "ministers" of the body. Because of these primary roles, the ministry of the Word and his leadership, the Teaching Pastor will need to prioritize his time, focusing upon these duties first. (Eph. 4:11-12)

### **2. Youth minister.**

The Youth minister shall be responsible for supporting parents in the evangelism and discipleship of Middle School and High School students, under the supervision of the Elders.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Association can provide guidance and training for this process.

### **3.Children’s Minister.**

The Children’s Minister shall be responsible for supporting parents in the evangelism and discipleship of Grade School students, under the supervision of the Elders

### **4.Music Minister.**

The Music minister will be responsible for the Music portion of Regularly scheduled worship services under the supervision of the Elders.

## **II.Support Staff.**

The Elders are responsible to discern the need for additional support staff members (such as custodian, and secretary). A job description shall be written when the need for support staff members is determined. Qualified candidates shall be recommended to the church by the Elder Council and employed by affirmative church vote in any business meeting. A  $\frac{3}{4}$  (three-fourths) vote is required to elect all church support staff. Support staff shall give at least two weeks notice at the time of resignation. If a support staff member is failing to meet the duties of their job description, or in other way being detrimental to the wellbeing of the church, the elders will attempt to counsel the individual informally, should that not be successful the elders will issue a written letter of reprimand, that will be retained in their employee file. At any time should the elders conclude for any reason that it is in the best interests of the Church, they may request the resignation of any support staff member. Should the staff member not choose to resign, the elders have the authority to suspend (with or without pay) any support staff member, pending a formal public church review, and official vote on the issue.

### **1.Secretary/Financial Secretary.**

The secretary will be responsible to assist the Elders, Senior Pastor, and other Church officers in the administration of their duties, as such it is indispensable as a person of discretion.

Responsibilities shall include:

- A)shall issue letters of recommendation, and transfer of membership for those who are voted on by the church.
- B)Shall be responsible for updating and maintaining the membership roles
- C)Shall preserve on file all communications and written reports.
- D)Shall record all financial transactions: both income and outgo, designated and un-designated, and report financial status to the Elders and at business meetings.
- E)Shall reconcile monthly bank statement with church records.
- F)Shall deposit weekly offering
- G)Shall write checks to be signed by the finance committee
- H)Shall prepare Church birthday list, and provide cards to pastor
- I)Shall keep regular office hours, during which the phone will be answered.
- J)Shall Print materials for regular worship services, and scheduled activities.
- K)Shall care for the mail, making sure that it reaches the appropriate person, and filing necessary documents.



L) Shall maintain the Church calendar of events.

M) The church may delegate other clerical responsibilities to the church secretary. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office.

#### **1. Accountant.**

The accountant may be a hired professional or a volunteer from the Church.

Duties shall include

A) Stay current with church tax law. either as a hired professional or if a volunteer they should attend regular training to understand current law.

B) Calculate all payroll, and communicate figures with Financial Secretary.

C) Prepare and file all church tax related documents, and payments.

D) Preparing quarterly financial statement formatted to meet audit standards.

#### **1. Custodian.**

The custodian shall be responsible to maintain facilities that are clean, and well maintained, under the direction of the Property Committee.

### **.V Section Five: Other Elected Officers**

Other elected officers of FRBC shall be appointed by the voting membership at any business meeting. Church officers other than hired staff shall come from the membership of FRBC.

#### **I. Clerk.**

1. The clerk shall keep a record of all the actions of the church in formal business meetings .

2. The minutes of each business meeting shall be read and approved at the next business meeting.

#### **I. Comptroller.<sup>3</sup>**

The comptroller is responsible for supervising the quality of accounting and financial reporting of FRBC.

##### **1. Selection:**

Comptroller of the church shall be elected annually. The Elders shall select a qualified individual to fill the position and submit to the church for approval.

##### **2. Comptroller Duties:**

A) The comptroller is an ex-officio member of the finance committee and accountable to the Elders for the conduct of the financial affairs of the church.

B) The Comptroller shall be responsible for oversight in paying all church obligations and preserving records of transactions, and of all gifts to the church both un-designated and designated.

C) The comptroller is expected to be at business meetings, or send an alternate member of the finance committee

---

<sup>3</sup> Created at the recommendation of the CPA who reviewed our financial practices.

D)The comptroller will ensure that an annual audit will be performed on the Church books.

### **I.Head Usher.**

A Head Usher shall be selected by the Elders and elected by the church. The ushers are to greet people as they enter and leave the church, seat people at the proper time, and provide bulletins and/or other materials at the time of seating. The ushers will be attentive to the needs of the congregation and the Pastor. The Head Usher shall be responsible for enlisting and notifying those who will serve on any given Sunday.

## **.XArticle Three: Church Membership**

### **.ISection One. Church Membership Defined.**

Church membership is a commitment to actively function as an appendage of this local body of Christ, rather than merely affiliating with an organization. (Rom. 12:3-21; 1 Cor. 12)

### **.IISection Two. Requesting Church Membership.**

Membership in FRBC shall be open to any person who professes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and is in harmony with its doctrines and practices. Membership may be requested by an individual in public at a FRBC meeting or in consultation with an elder or those the elders designate.

I. Every person requesting membership will be asked to give testimony of his or her personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. Each person who is a current member of another church associated with the Southern Baptist Convention, or like-minded church, may request that his/her membership be transferred. Such transfer of membership will be reviewed to ensure that it is for legitimate reasons, and under legitimate circumstances. If possible the leadership from the previous church will be contacted to ensure appropriate reasons and circumstances.

### **.IIISection Three. Acceptance.**

Upon receiving and application for membership candidates will attend a new members class, during which the Elder Council (see Article IV, Section 1), or their designates, will hear the candidate's testimony of salvation, and evidence of believer's baptism. The Elder council will then recommend that membership be granted to any who offer acceptable testimony, and agrees to fulfill the responsibilities of membership. The church will vote to receive the new member, and the new member will sign the church covenant (see Appendix Three: Covenant) at a Membership affirmation ceremony during a regular worship service. (Upon initial acceptance of this constitution, the church will hold a Special Membership Affirmation Ceremony so that all current members may sign the covenant.) Once accepted, the name of the new member shall be added to the FRBC roll and publicized to the membership of FRBC. If no clear evidence of salvation is found, or the individual has left their prior church for illegitimate reasons, the applicant cannot be accepted into the membership. However, FRBC will diligently offer Christian love, prayer, and Scripture, making every attempt to lead the individual to Christ, or resolve any outstanding issues with a previous church, and then pursue church membership. (John 3:16; Rom.

1:16-17; 10:9-10; Eph. 2:8-9; James 2:14-26)

## **.IV Section Four. Responsibilities of Members.**

### **I. Growing in Personal Holiness:**

To bring to FRBC submitted and Spirit-filled life. Our relationship with the Lord is the source of everything we have to offer one another. It is impossible to help others improve their relationship with God, or others, apart from God working in us. (John 15:5)

### **II. Christian Relationships:**

To pursue godly relationships within FRBC through participation in the regular worship and support of the regular ministries of the Church. The Bible teaches that the Church is the Body of Christ in the world. We are appendages, members, of that Body. It is imperative that each part of the Body pursue healthy relationships, respecting and caring for the other parts of the Body. (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12; 2 Cor. 1:12; Heb 10:25)

### **III. The Investment Of Life:**

To seek to serve more than be served. The flesh encourages self-centeredness. As the people of God, we are called to give our time, talents, spiritual gifts and financial resources in service to this body of believers and others. (Mark 10:35-45; John 13:12-15; 1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12:3-21; 2 Cor. 4:5)

### **IV. Participation in Church Decision Making:**

All members of the congregation are expected to take an active interest in the affairs of the the Church body in keeping with their abilities.

## **.V Section Five. Privileges of Membership.**

### **I. Decision Making.**

FRBC decisions and affirmations are made by the voting members. To participate in such decisions, a member must be in attendance at such a meeting.

### **II. Care and Assistance:**

Priority is given to care first for members of FRBC in matters of ministry.

### **III. Office Holding.**

Every voting member is eligible for consideration as a candidate for offices in FRBC, subject to scriptural qualifications. (Acts 6:1-7; Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3)

### **IV. Interest in FRBC Property.**

Members of FRBC have no property rights in the property of FRBC, and upon termination of membership, shall not be entitled to any interest in FRBC's assets.

## **.VI Section Six. Accountability and Discipline of Members.**

Because the stated purpose of FRBC is to equip believers by leading them to mature in life and ministry, membership at FRBC embraces accountability to the other members and leaders of FRBC under the authority of Scripture. This accountability is exercised in a variety of ways with the express intention of aiding each member to grow to their fullest potential.

### **I. Discipleship**

Discipleship is the process whereby the church encourages each individual to grow to become more Christ like, by applying Biblical standards of ethics, thought and behavior to their life both public and private, through the working of the Spirit. In addition to the regular ministries of the church all members are encouraged to seek the counsel of the elders (or other mature Christians) in personally developing in Godliness, seeking counsel in life choices, and to seek help with any sins with which they are struggling.

### **II. Corrective / Restorative discipline**

Every member of the church is accountable to all the other members of the church to walk in a manner which is worthy of the Gospel, and consistent with Scriptural norms. All members are to encourage each other to this end. At all times when there is offense or known sin, this process will be carried out in keeping with the principles of Matt. 18:12-14; Gal. 6:1; Heb. 13:17. Any member who is a minor will be disciplined directly by their parents and FRBC will support and aid parents in this responsibility (Eph 6:1-4). This process is spelled out in detail in (Appendix Three-Redemptive Church Discipline) Corrective / Restorative discipline will be carried out in the following circumstances:

#### **1. Failure to participate in FRBC church life.**

The Christian life can not be lived alone. Any member who is not participating in the regular worship of FRBC (for reasons other than Military service, College attendance, or medical incapacity), will be sought out by the elders of the church, and exhorted to attend. Effort will be made to help that individual resolve any issues preventing their wholehearted fellowship with the congregation. Should such efforts fail, the elders will move that person to an inactive status. While in inactive status the individual will not have voting rights, and the elders will not be accountable for their care. But they are always welcome to resume attendance and request reinstatement to active status.

#### **2. Habitual or stubborn violation of a clear command of Scripture.**

If any member who has been appropriately exhorted and continues refusing to repent and seek reconciliation, the elders of the church, after exhausting all reasonable efforts toward repentance and reconciliation will bring to a public meeting of the church the recommendation of removal from membership. The church will vote on this at the end of any regular public meeting of the church. This process will be carried out whether or not the member in question is in attendance. When a member is in the process of Corrective/Restorative Discipline the process will be carried through to conclusion before their membership can be revoked, and membership cannot be withdrawn by the member merely to avoid this process. This process is essential both to warn the body that sin is not a light matter, and to remind the individual that they have removed themselves from the protection of the church. Individuals thus removed from membership may seek re-reinstatement, by applying for membership (Article two Section 2 and Section 3) at any time they demonstrate to the satisfaction of the elders their repentance and willingness to walk

in obedience to the clear command of Scripture.

## **.VII Section Seven: Termination of Membership**

Termination of Membership at FRBC will take place under the following conditions:

I. Death of the member

II. By Request - so long as the member is not under Corrective/ Redemptive discipline procedures at the time of their request.

III. Transfer of Membership to another church.

IV. Removal from membership, by public vote of the congregation at the recommendation of the Elders. The church will vote on this at the end of any regular public meeting of the church.

## **.VIII Section Eight: Watch-care membership**

Watch-care membership will be granted to individuals residing or ministering for a limited period of time in our area such as students, military personnel, and other job or family circumstances, which make attendance in their home church impossible. Watch care membership will be granted to those who provide evidence of active membership in a local church outside the local area, and who are willing to sign the membership covenant of FRBC. Watch-care membership extends full membership rights and duties during their stay in the area.

The elders of FRBC will care for those under watch-care membership as for any other member. Watch-care membership qualifies an individual to work with children at FRBC and exempts them for the six month rule, subject to the guidelines of the Child protection Policy (APPENDIX VI Child Protection Handbook). Should a member under watch care membership require redemptive church discipline during their time here, the elders and/or pastoral staff of their home church will be advised of the situation, and asked to play a key role in helping the member.

## **.IX Section Nine: Summary Statement on Minor Age Children.**

Because minors are both legally and Biblically subject primarily to the authority of their parents, and FRBC recognizes the vital role of encouraging, and empowering minors in service and ministry. Minors are eligible for membership at the age of 13 under the following guidelines.

I. Minors must apply for membership in the same way as all other applicants, subject to the same guidelines and restrictions.

II. Minors Approved for membership will sign the Membership Covenant, along with a parent or legal guardian as cosigner. Thus recognizing the parent's vital role in the minor's life. In the event of a minor between the ages of 13 and 17 who meets the requirements for membership defined herein and whose parents or guardians are unable or unwilling to sign the covenant as their sponsor, a gender appropriate elder or servant will take responsibility for their spiritual guidance until he or she is eligible for full membership.

III. Minors will be subject to church discipline in support of their parents, through counsel and removal from ministry positions (Article Five, Section Six, II).

IV. Minors who are members, may not be officers, but under the guidance of their parent/s, guardian or

sponsor, have voting privileges, may serve on committees, and may serve in any ministry for which they are qualified, subject to the guidelines of the Child Protection Policy (Appendix four: Child Abuse Prevention Handbook.) This is designed to include minors as full members of the Church while recognizing the Biblical imperative to grow in maturity, honor their parents and submit to their elders ( Ephesians 6:1-4,1 Peter 5:5 ).

V.When a member becomes a legal adult at age 18, they may become officers.

## **Section Ten: Relationship to Non-Members**

We believe that all people need to hear the Gospel, experience the fellowship of God's people, and benefit from the teaching of the Word of God. To that end participation in FRBC activities is not exclusive to members of the church. All people are welcome to attend and grow with us. While we believe church membership to be of great value, we want all of God's people to be welcome to fellowship with us.

I.Visitors are always welcome at FRBC, all we ask is respectful interaction.

II.Regular Attendees are considered to be any person/s who have a consistent pattern of participation in Church activities. While we want to encourage any regular attendee to become a member, they are welcome to continue to attend FRBC without pursuing membership.

III.Because membership at FRBC is a personal choice, the children of members are not automatically members themselves. However children are of special value to the Lord, and all children who regularly attend FRBC or any of it's children and youth programs will be considered as non-voting members, they shall have access to all the privileges and protections this church has to offer and to the best of our ability will be shepherded in the discipline and admonition of the Lord. Their parents will be encouraged, supported and equipped in their vital task.

IV.FRBC practices baptism for anyone who having professed faith in Christ wants to take this step of obedience. Baptism is a step of obedience for all believers and does not require an intention to join FRBC as a member.

V.FRBC practices open communion, it is open to all who profess faith in Christ. Although it is a solemn moment, and we warn all who are partaking that they must do so in the right spirit, before God risking judgment on themselves (1 Cor 11), partaking of Communion is for all believers and does not require intention to join FRBC.

VI.One of the duties of a Christian church is to guard the truth, and protect it's members from harm. To this end, any individual who attends FRBC and is found to be spreading open and deliberate teaching which is contrary to Scripture, or to be causing material, emotional, or physical harm (e.g. scam artists) to the members or other attendees of FRBC will be addressed by the elders. If criminal activity is taking place the civil authorities will be notified, and members will be warned of potential for harm.

VII.Ministry opportunities Regular attendees of FRBC will be encouraged to work with us

in ministry. They may join missions trips, outreach events, choir and dramatic activities, as well as participate in the the regular worship services, Bible studies and celebrations of the church. However they will not be allowed to work with children, except as helpers in limited capacity in keeping with the Child protection policy of FRBC (Child Protection Handbook).

VIII. Individuals who have had their membership revoked, because of persistent and unrepentant sin are encouraged to continue to attend FRBC. While they are regarded as unbelievers (see Appendix Three: Accountability and Church Discipline) they continue to need the the Gospel, and there is no better place to hear it than in the church. However if they are engaged in teaching False Doctrine, leading astray, fostering division or dangerous behavior, they will be asked to refrain from participating in FRBC events in keeping with the Biblical injunction to not even eat with such as these. If criminal activity is taking place the civil authorities will be notified, and members will be warned of potential for harm.

### ***.XI Article Four: Church Committees***

Church committees serve under the authority of the Elder council. Members of committees will be elected by the church unless otherwise indicated in the description below. All church committee members shall be a members in good standing of FRBC. Each committee shall elect a chairperson at the first committee meeting.

All church committee members shall be recommended by a nominating committee composed of the Elder council and three at large members, who will be nominated by the membership, approved by the Elders, and voted on by the church.

### **Section One: Standing Committees**

Standing committees exist to support the Elders in the exercise of their duties. They after initial formation of a committee members are elected unless otherwise indicated to rotating two year terms, to coincide with the fiscal year, so that there is some continuity. Member may be re-appointed consecutively if they are willing and the Elders nominate them.

#### **I. Church Property Committee**

##### **1. Function**

Assists the Elders in matters related to care of all property.

##### **2. Duties**

A) Inspects all church property and maintains an inventory.

B) Recommends policies regarding use of properties.

C) Assigns responsibilities to appropriate personnel for maintenance, repair and supervision.

D) Prepare and have accessible to all church members a “Property Repair” recommendation sheet.

#### **II. Finance Committee**

### 1.Membership

Members recommended by the Elder Council The comptroller will be an exoficio member of the finance committee. Other members will be elected by the church so that the committee will consist of no less than three members

### 2.Duties

Develop and recommend an overall stewardship information plan and administers the gifts of church members, using sound principles of financial management.

A)Develop the budget

B)Present the budget for adoption

C)Administer the budget

D)Promote stewardship education

E)Sign Checks. As check signers they are to review all checks to ensure they are spent in keeping with the budget, and that there is money in the accounts to cover those checks.

F)Plan and implement fund-raising for capital campaigns

## III.Counting Committee

The counting committee will count, receipt, and prepare for deposit all church receipts. Funds will then be delivered to the financial Secretary for deposit on a weekly basis.

## I.Missions Committee

1.Membership: The Missions committee will consist of no less than three members: the missions coordinator, The missions education coordinator, and at least one member at large.

2.Purpose:The primary purpose of this committee is to encourage the participation of Forest Ridge Baptist Church and its members in the task of taking the Gospel to all those who need to hear. This is done by encouraging participation in the Cooperative program, hosting missionaries who come through to report to us how their work is going, and encouraging people from our church to participate in short term missions, and consider long term service. The committee will approve scholarship applications to make use of the missions funds.

3.Positions:

A)Missions Coordinator, is responsible to find out from the financial secretary how much money is in the Short term missions budget line item, and in cooperation with the other two members of the committee approve funding applications for church members who are going on short term missions trips outside of the Dayton, Ohio area.

B)Missionary Education Coordinator, who is responsible to help approve scholarships from the short term budget line item, and to cooperate with the worship leader in overseeing the regular missions moments in our weekly worship service. Keeping the call of missions and the needs of the World before the members of our church.

C)At large members help approve funding of missions endeavors.

## I.Child Protection Committee



The Child protection committee (staffing team in the handbook) will review application forms For all individuals desiring to work with minors at FRBC. The staffing team will be made up of a minimum of three people, one of which will be a staff member (i.e. Elder, youth pastor, children's minister). For confidentiality purposes, the Child Protection Committee will not exceed four reviewers of any one application. The Child Protection Committee will participate in child abuse prevention training, as preparation for interviewing individuals.

Responsibilities:

1. Review applications according to protocol.
2. Contact references.
3. Hold a personal interview.
4. Review the Background check.
5. Approve or reject the application.
6. Maintain confidentiality of all personal data, and information.
7. ensure that all approved individuals participate in annual child abuse prevention training.

### **I. Scholarship Committee**

1. Members:

The Scholarship committee will be composed of at least three members.

2. Duties

- A) Over see the administration of any scholarship funds for the education of members, dependents, or other qualified individuals pursuing ministry training.
- B) Develop and maintain eligibility requirements for scholarships
- C) Review applications for scholarships and choose qualified recipients.

### **I. Hospitality Committee**

1. Function

The hospitality committee is responsible for formulating and recommending to the church policies for food services and for communicating these policies to the church members.

2. Formulate specific dates of church wide fellowships to be submitted to the church for inclusion in the church calendar.
3. Assign different members of the committee specific church events that shall be their responsibility.
4. The committee shall also plan and carry out church fellowships for those who are moving out of the Dayton area.
5. Decorate the church building for holidays, and specially occasions.



## **.ISection Two: Other Committees**



Other committees may be appointed by the elders as they see the need to explore issues or care for needs that may arise. These committees will oversee completion of their function and then be disbanded.



## **.XII Article Five: Ordinances**

### **.I Section One: Baptism**

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith; who professes him publicly at any worship service; and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism.

  Baptism shall be by immersion in water.

  Baptism shall be administered by the Pastor or whomever the church shall authorize. The deacons, and women's ministry team shall assist in the preparations for, and observance of, baptism, as is appropriate.

  Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service.

### **.II Section Two: The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience of believers of like faith and order The church, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His Second Coming.

1. The Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly, as scheduled.
2. The Lord's Supper may be observed in any regular worship service.
3. The Pastor and Deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
4. The Deacons or Women's Ministry Team shall be responsible for the physical preparations of the Lord's Supper.

## **.III Article Six: Church Meetings**

### **.I Section One. Annual Meeting.**

There shall be an annual meeting of FRBC on the second Sunday of the last month of the fiscal year at its principal place of worship. At this meeting, the Elder Council shall finalize and obtain approval for the budget for the following year and provide detailed presentations of the activities of FRBC during the previous year. They will also present issues, events, and activities that are anticipated for the coming year. FRBC members shall have the opportunity to raise issues that they consider important and discuss such issues at this meeting. The Elder Council will moderate this "family meeting," in order to provide explanations, answers, insights, and comments as appropriate. The Elder Council shall seek counsel, insights and guidance from the members of FRBC, carefully considering their opinions and desires (See Article VI, Section 7) for decisions and affirmations reserved to FRBC membership.) The minutes of this meeting will be published to the FRBC body by the Elder Council. At least three weeks prior to this meeting the proposed budget will be made available to the membership in electronic form for review. A printed version will be available. Comments on the proposed budget should be presented in writing to the elders one week prior to the annual meeting.

## **.IISection Two. Special Meetings.**

Special meetings of FRBC membership shall be held at its principal place of worship in Riverside, Ohio. The Elder Council may call a special meeting. Also, the Senior Pastor or FRBC members totaling twenty-five percent (25%) of the average Sunday attendance of the previous four weeks can cause a special meeting to be called within thirty (30) days of such request.

## **.IIISection Three. Notice.**

Notice of the time of these meetings (Annual and Special) shall be published in writing, in a church-wide publication, to allow each member an opportunity to reasonably know of the meeting. This official notice must be published at least two Sundays prior to the meeting. The notice shall state the time and date of the meeting. Notice of a Special Meeting shall state the purpose of the meeting.

## **.IVSection Four. Presiding Official.**

The Elder Council shall provide the moderation of all such meetings.

## **.VSection Five. Voting**

The Elder Council will present issues calling for a decision of the FRBC body. These decisions shall be voted upon by the "Qualified Church Members." A Qualified Church Member is any person at least 13 years of age who has been received into church membership and is not under the process of church discipline (Article II, Section 6). Each Qualified Church Member shall be entitled to cast one vote. The method of seeking affirmation shall be determined by the moderator of the meeting.

## **.VISection Six. Quorum.**

A quorum for decision-making at a FRBC meeting shall consist of a number of ten (10) Qualified Church Members or a number equal to 10% of the people in FRBC's worship service on the Sunday morning just prior to the meeting, which ever is greater

## **.VIISection Seven. Matters to be considered by FRBC.**

The Elder Council will secure the affirmation of the FRBC body regarding:

- I. Selection or dismissal of the Senior Pastor;
- II. Selection or dismissal of deacons and elders;
- III. Selection or dismissal of other full-time or part-time pastoral staff members;
- IV. Building and facilities--major decisions relating to FRBC properties (other than regular maintenance and repair);
- V. Financial budgets of FRBC;
- VI. Amending the Bylaws (Article XIV, Section 1); and,
- VII. Other matters in which the Elder Council feel led to seek the members' advice and

counsel.

## ***.II Article Seven: Church Finances***

### **.I Section One: Budget and Stewardship**

The finance committee, in consultation with the Elder Council, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and world expenses. The budget shall be presented to the church for adoption in sufficient time to be reviewed, no later than three weeks before the annual business meeting. Copies of the budget shall be provided to church membership for review prior to adoption. The missions giving designated in the church budget shall have priority over all other accounts unless otherwise directed by the action of the church in a formal business meeting.

### **.II Section Two: Accounting Procedures**

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the financial Secretary, be reviewed by the finance and stewardship committee and be properly recorded on the books of the church. A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the finance and stewardship committee under the supervision of the Elder Council.

### **.III Section Three: Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year begins October 1 and ends on September 30.

## ***.III Article Eight: Amendments***

Changes in this constitution may be made at any regular or specially called business meeting of the church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be made available to each member. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds (2/3) vote of all members of the church present.

## ***.IV Article Nine: Commitment to Biblical Confidentiality<sup>4</sup>***

### **.I Section One: Biblical Teaching**

The Bible Teaches that Christians should carefully guard any personal and private information that others reveal to them. Protecting confidences is a sign of Christian love and respect (Proverbs 11:13; Matthew 7:12) It also discourages harmful gossip (Proverbs 26:20), and invites confession (Proverbs 11:13). Since these goals are essential to the ministry of the gospel and the work of the local church, all members and attendees are expected to refrain from gossip and to respect the confidences of others. In

---

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from *The Peacemaker Church*. Used by permission of Peacemaker Ministries([www.PeacemakerChurch.net](http://www.PeacemakerChurch.net)).

particular our leaders will carefully protect all information that they receive through pastoral counseling, subject to the following guidelines.

## **.IISection Two: Extent of Confidentiality**

Although confidentiality is to be respected as much as possible, there are times when it is appropriate to reveal certain information to others. In particular, when our leaders believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people in the following circumstances:

- I. When a leader is uncertain of how to counsel a person about a particular problem and needs to seek advice from other leaders in our church or, if the person attends another church, from the leaders of that church (Proverbs 11:14)
- II. When the person who disclosed the information, or any other person is in imminent danger of serious harm unless others intervene (Proverbs 24:11-12)
- III. When a person refuses to repent of sin and it becomes necessary to promote repentance through accountability and redemptive church discipline (Matthew 18:15-20)
- IV. When leaders are required by law to report suspected abuse (Romans 13:1)

## **.VArticle Ten: Indemnification**

The elders acting in performance of their duties as described here-in shall be indemnified and held harmless for actions consistent with the purpose and vision of FRBC.

FRBC shall be primarily responsible for liability arising from such actions or inaction of the Elder Council. Reasonable expenses to litigate or other-wise resolve issues arising from the Elder Council's performance of its duties and responsibilities shall be paid by FRBC.

This same indemnification shall extend to all individuals performing within the scope of their duties and responsibilities for the benefit of FRBC.

# Appendix One: The Baptist Faith and Message

## **.I The Scriptures**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

*Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

## **.II God**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### **A. God the Father**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

*Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.*

### **B. God the Son**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

*Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28;*

9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

## C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

*Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.*

## .III Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.*

## .IV Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

*Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John*

1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

## **.V God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

## **.VI The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

## **.VII Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.



## **.VIII The Lord's Day**

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

*Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.*

## **.IX The Kingdom**

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

*Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.*

## **.X Last Things**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

*Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.*

## **.XI Evangelism and Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.*

## **.XII Education**

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

*Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.*

## **.XIII Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

*Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.*

## **.XIV Cooperation**

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

*Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.*

## **.XV The Christian and the Social Order**

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

*Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.*

## **.XVI Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

*Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.*

## **.XVII Religious Liberty**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

*Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.*

## **.XVIII The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

*Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.*

# Appendix Two: Statement on Elders

## Why a Plurality of Elders?<sup>5</sup>

### *Historical Prologue*

Baptists, perhaps more than any other historic Protestant group, turn to the New Testament in order to justify our polity. . . .

Once when I was teaching on the topic of elders in a Baptist church, an older lady shot back to me, “But it isn’t Baptist!” While I did not say this to her, I certainly do think that being “Baptist” means, in part, being faithful to Scripture. So the question a Baptist must begin with is not “Is it Baptist?” but “Is it biblical?” To answer that question, we will examine the role of elders in the New Testament.

### *Basic Usage*

Words with the *πρεσβύτ* root, from which “elder” is taken, occur seventy-five times in the New Testament. Nine occurrences refer to people of chronologically more-advanced age.<sup>6</sup> Four times words with this root refer to ancestors of the Hebrew nation.<sup>7</sup> John uses such words twelve times in Revelation to refer to the heavenly elders, or rulers.<sup>8</sup> Twenty-nine times (all in the Gospels and Acts) the word is used to refer to the Jewish nonpriestly leaders either in the Sanhedrin or in local synagogues. The remaining twenty uses refer to elders in churches: in the Jerusalem church;<sup>9</sup> in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch;<sup>10</sup> in Ephesus;<sup>11</sup> in the towns of Crete;<sup>12</sup> and other general references.<sup>13</sup> John also refers to himself twice as “the elder,”<sup>14</sup> though whether he is referring to an office he holds or to some other type of designation that was attached to him personally, we cannot say. It is in this last set of twenty occurrences we are most interested.

It is striking that in the New Testament the words “elder,” “shepherd” or “pastor,” and “bishop” or “overseer” are used interchangeably in the context of the local church office. This is seen most clearly in Acts 20, when Paul meets with the “elders” of the church in Ephesus (v. 17). Several verses later, Paul tells these same elders to keep watch over themselves and over the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made them “overseers” (another translation for “bishop”). In the very next sentence, he exhorts these elders, these overseers, to “be shepherds [from the same root as ‘pastors’] of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood” (v. 28). In the space of twelve verses, the same men are referred to as elders, overseers, and shepherds.

In Ephesians 4:11, Paul says that Christ “gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be

---

5 Excerpted from Mark Dever: *By Whose Authority?* excerpt is copyright by 9Marks and is used by permission of 9Marks.

6 Luke 1:18; 15:25; John 8:9; Acts 2:17; Phlm. 9; 1 Tim. 5:1,2; Titus 2:2,3. 6

7 Matt. 15:2; Mark 7:3,5; Heb. 11:2

8 Rev. 4:4, 10; 5:5,6,8,11,14; 7:11,13; 11:16; 14:3; 19:4. 8

9 Acts 11:30; 15:2,4,6,22,23; 16:4; 21:18. 9

10 Acts 14:21,25

11 Acts 20:17

12 Tit. 1:5

13 1 Tim. 4:4; 5:17,19; James 5:14; 1 Pet. 5:1, 5

14 2 John 1; 3 John 1

evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers.” The word Paul uses for “pastor” is ποιμὲναφ, which, again, is related to the word for “shepherd.” Then in 1 Peter 5:1-2, Peter addresses the “elders among you,” and tells them to pastor, or “shepherd,” God’s flock, the command form of the same word Paul uses for “pastor.” So they are to pastor or “be shepherds of” God’s flock, and they are to do so by “serving as overseers,” again, the same word for bishop. The overlap of these terms is impossible to miss.

There is still more evidence of this interchangeability. In 1 Peter 2:25, Jesus is called the “shepherd and overseer of your souls.” The root of the word translated “overseer” here occurs eleven times in the New Testament. In Titus 1:7, for instance, Paul provides a list of qualifications for a particular officer he refers to as an “overseer” (the same officer and list he gives Timothy beginning in 1 Timothy 3:1). But in Titus 1:5, Paul refers to these same officers by saying that he left Titus in Crete in order to ensure that “elders” were in every town. Clearly, the New Testament refers to elders, shepherds or pastors, and bishops or overseers in the context of the local church interchangeably.<sup>15</sup>

This conclusion is not controversial. Baptists of the past knew this well. The Baptist 1689 Second London Confession reads, “The officers appointed by Christ are Bishops or Elders and Deacons.”<sup>16</sup> Though the London Confession simply re-affirmed much of the Presbyterian Westminster Confession, and in several places the Congregationalist Savoy Declaration, this particular section was wholly new, authored by the Baptist ministers who assembled in 1677. The Baptist 1833 and 1853 New Hampshire Confession says that the church’s “only proper officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons.”<sup>17</sup> Basil Manly Jr.’s 1859 Abstract of Principles reads, “The regular officers of a church are Bishops or Elders, and Deacons.”<sup>18</sup> The 1925 Baptist Faith and Message contains the same language: “Its Scriptural officers are bishops or elders and deacons.”<sup>19</sup> It was not until 1963 that the biblical and historic word “elder” was finally dropped out of official usage by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). Article 6 of both the 1963 and 2000 Baptist Faith and Message now reads, “Its Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.” Even then, the authors of the 1963 revision committee had no change in their understanding of the biblical vocabulary. Herschel Hobbs, who chaired the committee, wrote in 1964, “Pastor—this is one of three titles referring to the same office. The other two are ‘bishop’ and ‘elder.’”<sup>20</sup>

### ***Single versus Plural***

A second question about elders immediately follows. Did local congregations in the New Testament typically contain a single elder (or bishop or pastor) or multiple elders?

Before Jesus established the church, the Jewish towns of Palestine were typically governed by multiple elders. Thus, in Luke 7, a Roman centurion sends several elders of the local Jewish community in Ca-

---

15 So concluded R. B. C. Howell, pastor of First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee: “The only officers appointed by God to preach, and administer ordinances, and whose commission has come down to our times, are called indifferently, elders, bishops and presbyters; all of which names, when referring to office, convey the same idea.” R. B. C. Howell, “Ministerial Ordination,” in *The Baptist Preacher*, ed. Henry Keeling (Richmond: H. K. Ellyson, 1847), 137.

16 Chapter 26, paragraph 8

17 Article 13

18 Article 14

19 Article 12

20 Herschel H. Hobbs, *What Baptists Believe* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1964), 85.

pernaum to Jesus to plead for help on his behalf. This practice of calling the local town leaders “elders” had its roots in the Old Testament. The book of Deuteronomy refers to the town leaders as elders (always conceived of in the plural). These town leaders were responsible for retrieving people from cities of refuge, for solving murders, for dealing with disobedient children, and so forth (Deut. 19:12; 21:1-9,18-21). Centuries later, elders continued to exercise rule within towns after the Jews returned from the Babylonian Exile (Ezra 10:14). It is this kind of elder the centurion seems to have employed in Luke 7.

Local Jewish synagogues, which probably originated during the Babylonian exile in the absence of the temple, were also governed by a plurality of leaders. The synagogues were where the Jews gathered for worship and for common action. Ten adult males were required to have public worship at a synagogue. Various officers facilitated the work of synagogues, including the office of ruler<sup>21</sup> The references to the Jewish elders all clearly indicate that they were a body of men.

When we turn to the New Testament, it is clear that the heavenly elders in the book of Revelation are plural. In fact, there are twenty-four of them. As for the Christian churches, on the other hand, someone might observe that Paul may have established churches with the help of several people, yet he clearly played a singular role as an apostle. Further, the young churches could not have financially supported a large number of elders. And Paul did not write to “the elders” of the church in Ephesus, but to Timothy alone. And Jesus did not write to the “angels” or “messengers” of the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3, but to the “angel” or “messenger” (singular) of each church. Are all these indications that there was only one elder in each church in the New Testament?

With the twenty references to Christian elders in churches, the evidence suggests otherwise. The normal pattern in the New Testament is for a congregation to have more than one elder. One possible exception to this occurs in 2 and 3 John, where John refers to himself as “the elder.” Presumably, he was known by this title. But if he was writing to those outside his own congregation, the title may have suggested his widespread recognition, rather than his office. It is difficult to say on such slight information.

The other four New Testament authors who refer to Christian elders are James, Peter, Paul, and Luke, and each of them appears to assume a number of elders will be present in every congregation. James instructs his readers to “call the elders (plural) of the church [singular] to pray over” a sick person (James 5:14).

Peter writes as an elder to the “elders (plural) among you” (1 Pet. 5:1). If 1 Peter 5:5 should be translated “elders” instead of “older men,” it would again appear Peter assumes a plurality of elders in a single congregation—or at least this assumption could not be ruled out.

---

21 Examples of the “rulers” of synagogues mentioned in the New Testament are Jairus in Mark 5:22 (plural rulers); Acts 13:15 (plural); Crispus in Acts 18:8 (singular)



Paul greets the bishops (plural) in the church (singular) at Philippi in his letter to the Philippians (Phil. 1:1). And he exhorts the elders of the church at Ephesus to be “bishops” (plural) to the “flock” (singular) that God had given them (Acts 20:28). Paul also mentions elders in writing Timothy and Titus. He reminds Timothy of the body of elders who laid their hands on him (1 Tim. 4:14). He then refers to the elders (plural) who direct the affairs of the church (singular) (5:17). Two verses later, he refers to accusations not against *the* elder, but against *an* elder—πρεσ-βυτ'ερου, used without an article. This would be consistent with Paul assuming that Timothy would have multiple elders in his congregation. Paul also exhorts Titus to “appoint elders [plural] in every town” (Titus 1:5).<sup>22</sup> So certainly the churches established by Titus in Crete were at least supposed to have a plurality of elders in each local congregation.

Luke records Paul’s sending for the “elders” (plural) of the “church” (singular) in Ephesus (Acts 20:17). At the end of Paul’s first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas “had elders [plural] elected for them in each church [singular]” (14:23). And references to the elders of the Jerusalem church always occur in the plural. Neither multiple congregations nor house churches are referenced. A reference to meeting together is found in Acts 2:42, which occurs in the Temple courts. Luke never refers to “churches” in Jerusalem; he only refers to the congregation (singular). On the other hand, he always refers to the elders in the plural.<sup>23</sup> In other words, any Baptist who argues a single group of elders should lead more than one house congregation is unwittingly making an argument for Presbyterianism, not for historic Baptist congregationalism. If one sharpens the point by arguing a single individual should lead a number of house churches, then he has stumbled into arguing for an episcopalianism by divine right, which not even the Episcopalians argue.

That is all the direct evidence in the New Testament. As best I can tell, it indicates that the common and expected practice in the New Testament church was to have a plurality of elders in each local congregation.<sup>24</sup>

---

22 The NIVs “every town” (κατ’ α πόλιτι) is better translated distributively—“each town”

23 Acts 11:30; 15:2,4,6,22-23 (throughout the account of the Jerusalem council); 16:4; 21:18

24 The Anglican scholar and pioneer missiologist Roland Allen came to this same conclusion: “... it seems to be an irresistible conclusion that the elders appointed by St. Paul were definitely appointed with power to add to their number and thus to secure to new Churches a proper order and certainty of sacramental grace. Finally, St. Paul was not content with ordaining one elder for each Church. In every place he ordained several. This ensured that all authority should not be concentrated in the hands of one man.” Roland Allen, Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul’s or Ours* (London: Robert Scott, 1912), 138-139.

## **Appendix Three: Church Covenant**

The Church Covenant here provided has lines for signature purposes, and does not otherwise vary from the content in the Constitution.

This page intentionally blank

Covenant is on next page

# Covenant

## WE THE MEMBERS OF FOREST RIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH OUR COMMITMENTS TO ONE ANOTHER IN THE SIGHT OF GOD

*Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.*

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

*We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our family and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct, and to seek in all things to grow to be more Christlike.*

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

*We agree that when we remove from this place we will, if possible, unite with a church of like faith.*

*Finally, we acknowledge that we have received and read the Bylaws of this church, and we hereby covenant and agree to support and submit to them.*

Covenant adapted from *The Peacemaker Church*. Used by permission of Peacemaker Ministries ([www. PeacemakerChurch.net](http://www.PeacemakerChurch.net)).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's or Sponsor if minor: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

Elder's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix Four: Accountability and Church Discipline

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Heb. 10:24).

*The principles and practices described below apply to all the people who attend our church (both members and attenders).*

## A. Accountability and Discipline Are Signs of God's Love

God has established the church to reflect his character, wisdom and glory in the midst of a fallen world (Eph. 3:10-11). He loves his church so much that he sent his Son to die for her (Eph. 5:25). His ultimate purpose for his church is to present her as a gift to his Son; thus Scripture refers to the church as the “bride” of Christ (Rev. 19:7). For this reason the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are continually working to purify the church and bring her to maturity (Eph. 5:25-27).

This does not mean that God expects the church to be made up of perfectly pure people. He knows that the best of churches are still companies of sinners who wrestle daily with remaining sin (1 John 1:8; Phil. 3:12). Therefore, it would be unbiblical for us to expect church members to live perfectly. What we can do, however, is confess our common struggle with sin and our mutual need for God's mercy and grace. We also can spur one another on toward maturity by encouraging and holding each other accountable to love, seek after, and obey God with all of our hearts, souls, minds and strength, and to love others as we love ourselves (Mark 12:30-31; Heb. 10:24-25).

The Bible sometimes refers to this process of mutual encouragement and accountability as “discipline.” The Bible never presents church discipline as being negative, legalistic or harsh, as modern society does. True discipline originates from God himself and is always presented as a sign of genuine love. “The Lord disciplines those he loves” (Heb. 12:6). “Blessed is the man you discipline, O LORD, the man you teach from your law” (Ps. 94:12). “Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline” (Rev. 3:19).

God's discipline in the church, like the discipline in a good family, is intended to be primarily positive, instructive and encouraging. This process, which is sometimes referred to as “formative discipline,” involves preaching, teaching, prayer, personal Bible study, small group fellowship and countless other enjoyable activities that challenge and encourage us to love and serve God more wholeheartedly.

On rare occasions God's discipline, like the discipline in a family with growing children, also may have

a corrective purpose. When we forget or disobey what God has taught us, he corrects us. One way he does this is to call the church to seek after us and lead us back onto the right track. This process, which is sometimes called “corrective” or “restorative” discipline, is likened in Scripture to a shepherd seeking after a lost sheep.

*If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off (Matt. 18:12-13).*

Thus, restorative or corrective discipline is never to be done in a harsh, vengeful or self-righteous manner. It is always to be carried out in humility and love, with the goals of restoring someone to a close walk with Christ (Matt. 18:15; Gal. 6:1), protecting others from harm (1 Cor. 5:6), and showing respect for the honor and glory of God’s name (1 Pet. 2:12).

Biblical discipline is similar to the discipline we value in other aspects of life. We admire parents who consistently teach their children how to behave properly and lovingly discipline them when they disobey. We value music teachers who bring out the best in their students by teaching them proper technique and consistently pointing out their errors so they can play a piece properly. And we applaud athletic coaches who diligently teach their players to do what is right and correct them when they fumble, so that the team works well together and can compete for the championship.

The same principles apply to the family of God. We, too, need to be taught what is right and to be lovingly corrected when we do something contrary to what God teaches us in his Word. Therefore, we as a church are committed to help one another obey God’s command to be “self controlled, upright, holy and disciplined” (Titus 1:8).

The leaders of our church recognize that God has called them to an even higher level of accountability regarding their faith and conduct (James 3:1; 1 Tim. 5:19- 20). Therefore, they are committed to listening humbly to loving correction from each other or from any member in our church, and, if necessary, to submitting themselves to the corrective discipline of our body.

### **B. Most Corrective Discipline Is Private, Personal and Informal**

God gives every believer grace to be self-disciplined. “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline” (2 Tim. 1:7). Thus discipline always begins as a personal matter and usually remains that way, as each of us studies God’s Word, seeks him in prayer, and draws on his grace to identify and change sinful habits and grow in godliness.

But sometimes we are blind to our sins or so tangled in them that we cannot get free on our own. This is why the Bible says, “Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently” (Gal. 6:1). In obedience to this command, we are committed to giving and receiving loving correction within our church whenever a sin (whether in word, behavior or doctrine) seems too serious to overlook (Prov. 19:11).

If repeated private conversations do not lead another person to repentance, Jesus commands that we ask other brothers or sisters to get involved. “If he will not listen, take one or two others along” (Matt. 18:16). If informal conversations with these people fail to resolve the matter, then we may seek the involvement of more influential people, such as a small group leader, Sunday school teacher or church leader. If even these efforts fail to bring a brother or sister to repentance, and if the issue is too serious to overlook, we will move into what may be called “formal discipline.”

### **C. Formal Discipline May Involve the Entire Church**

If an individual persistently refuses to listen to personal and informal correction to turn from speech or behavior that the Bible defines as sin, Jesus commands us to “tell it to the church” (Matt. 18:17a). This first involves informing one or more church leaders about the situation. If the offense is not likely to cause imminent harm to others, our leaders may approach the individual privately to personally establish the facts and encourage repentance of any sin they discover. The individual will be given every reasonable opportunity to explain and defend his or her actions. If the individual recognizes his sin and repents, the matter usually ends there, unless a confession to additional people is needed.

If an offense is likely to harm others or lead them into sin, or cause division or disruption, our leaders may accelerate the entire disciplinary process and move promptly to protect the church (Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Titus 3:10-11).

As the disciplinary process progresses, our leaders may impose a variety of sanctions to encourage repentance, including but not limited to private and public admonition, withholding of the Lord’s Supper, removal from office, withdrawal of normal fellowship, and, as a last resort, removal from membership (Matt. 5:23-24; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; Matt. 18:17).

If the straying individual does not repent in response to private appeals from our leaders, they may inform others in the church who may be able to influence that individual or be willing to pray for him or her, or people who might be harmed or affected by that person’s behavior.<sup>25</sup> This step may include close friends, a small group, a Sunday school class, or the entire congregation if our leaders deem it to be appropriate (Matt. 18:17, 1 Tim. 5:20).<sup>26</sup>

---

25 For example, it is not uncommon for a person to attend a church, develop relationships of trust, persuade people to give him money to invest, and then fail to return the money as promised. Senior citizens are particularly vulnerable to these schemes, and many people have lost much of what they had saved for retirement. When such sinful men are discovered, they usually leave a church, but continue to prey on members who have not heard about their schemes. If our leaders found such a man in our church, they would call him to repent and confess his wrongs. If he refused, they would bring him under formal discipline, and also warn the congregation not to trust him with their money.

26 If our leaders inform our entire congregation about a disciplinary situation, they have discretion whether to divulge the individual’s name. This decision usually will depend on a variety of factors, such as: how widely known the situation already is; whether there might be people in the congregation who could persuade the individual to repent; or whether the congregation needs to be on guard against potential harm he might cause (see previous footnote). Even if our leaders decide it is not necessary to identify an individual specifically, they may still inform the congregation of the general situation and the disciplinary steps they have followed. This general information can help to enlist wide prayer support,

“If, after a reasonable period of time, the individual still refuses to change, then our leaders may bring the situation before the congregation, with the recommendation that the individual be removed from membership and normal fellowship. If the congregation supports that recommendation, we will treat the individual as an unbeliever.” This means that we will no longer treat him as a fellow Christian. Instead of having casual, relaxed fellowship with the individual, we will look for opportunities to lovingly bring the gospel to him, remind him of God’s holiness and mercy, and call him to repent and put his faith in Christ (Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20).

We realize that our natural human response to correction is often to hide or run away from accountability (Gen. 3:8-10). To avoid falling into this age-old trap and to strengthen our church’s ability to rescue us if we are caught in sin, we agree not to run away from this church to avoid corrective discipline. Therefore, we waive our right to withdraw from membership or accountability if discipline is pending against us. Although we are free to stop attending the church at any time, we agree that a withdrawal while discipline is pending will not be given effect until the church has fulfilled its God-given responsibilities to encourage our repentance and restoration, and to bring the disciplinary process to an orderly conclusion, as described in these Commitments (Matt. 18:12-14; Gal. 6:1; Heb. 13:17).

If an individual leaves the church while discipline is in effect or is being considered, and our leaders learn that he or she is attending another church, they may inform that church of the situation and ask its leaders to encourage the individual to repent and be reconciled to the Lord and to any people he or she has offended. This action is intended both to help the individual find freedom from his sin and to warn the other church about the harm that he or she might do to their members<sup>27</sup> (see Matt. 18:12-14; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 3 John 1:9-10).

Loving restoration always stands at the heart of the disciplinary process. If an individual repents, and our leaders confirm his or her sincerity, we will rejoice together and gladly imitate God’s forgiveness by restoring the person to fellowship within the body (see Matt. 18:13; Luke 15:3-7, 11-32; 2 Cor. 2:5-11; Col. 3:12-14).

People who have been excluded from another church will not be allowed to become members, or to participate in the regular fellowship of our church until they have repented of their sins and made a reasonable effort to be reconciled, or our leaders have determined that the discipline of the former church was not biblically appropriate.

---

let the congregation know that our leaders are obeying the Lord’s command to seek after those who stray, and warn people who may be flirting with secret sin that they, too, may face discipline if they do not turn back to God.

<sup>27</sup> For example, if we confronted a man in our church for seducing young women, or for acting inappropriately around little children, or for sowing gossip and division, and he left and started attending another church, we would consider it our duty to urge the leaders of that church to counsel with him and to protect their people from his harmful behavior.

As we pursue the blessings of accountability and church discipline, we will hold fast to the promise of Scripture: “God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it” (Heb. 12:10-11).



# **Appendix Five: Forest Ridge Baptist Church Child Abuse Prevention and Response Hand- book**

## ***.I Commitment to Protecting Children***

Children are a blessing from God, and He calls the church to support parents in their responsibility to train children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Therefore, the church should be a safe and blessed place for children, where they can grow, play, form friendships, and learn to experience and share the love of Christ.

Since sin affects every person and organization in the world, however, it is possible that children could be harmed even during church activities. We cannot guarantee that such things will never happen within our fellowship, but we are committed to taking every reasonable precaution to protect our children from foreseeable harm. Furthermore we are committed to abiding by the Child Abuse Reporting Laws of the State of Ohio, and have procedures in place to help this happen. Our commitment to protecting children includes, but is not limited to, the following steps:

All the applications and policies are attached as appendix to the Church constitution.

## ***.II Definitions:***

**CHILD or YOUTH:** Any individual under the age of eighteen (18) or any person with a physical or mental impairment or disability under the age of twenty-one (21).

**PHYSICAL ABUSE:** Any non-accidental injury intentionally inflicted upon a child by an adult or another child.

**SEXUAL ABUSE:** any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child and an adult. This includes any activity, which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the adult or the child. Sexual abuse is not always touching. It can involve showing children pornographic material, obscene phone calls, exhibitionism, or verbal comments.

Another child can also perpetrate sexual abuse. This type of abuse is any contact or activity of a sexual

nature that occurs between a child and another child when there is no consent, when consent is not possible or when one child has power over the other child. This includes any activity, which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of children.

**UNSUPERVISED ACCESS TO CHILDREN:** A person who routinely has access to a child or children and: (1. No other person eighteen (18) years of age or older is present in the same room with them, or (2. If outdoors, no other person eighteen (18) years of age or older is within a thirty (30) yard radius of the child or children or has visual contact with the child or children.

### ***.III Selecting and screening employees, workers, and volunteers***

#### **.I Paid Employees**

In an effort to protect and serve the children and youth of FRBC the following requirements are required of all, Pastoral Staff of our church, and Paid Employees who work with youth or children in all areas, including but not limited to: Sunday School Teachers, VBS, AWANA, Youth sponsors, Vehicle drivers, and Camp Chaperons.

#### **.II Application Process**

- 1 . He or She has completed the written application for Employment.
- 2 . Gone through an interview by the staffing team, and/or search committee
- 3 . Submitted to a Criminal Background Check.
- 4 . Been officially accepted by the church body.

#### **.III Ongoing training**

All Staff and employees will go through an initial training program in the fundamentals of:

1. Child abuse prevention and reporting.
2. Guidelines for Staff/ student interaction.
3. All Employees will be required to update their application information yearly.

#### **.IV Background Check**

All potential paid employees will agree to a full background check.

### ***.IV Requirements for adult ministry volunteers at FRBC***

In an effort to protect and serve the children and youth of FRBC the following requirements are required of all ministry volunteers who serve for an extended period of time (any amount of consecutive service which exceeds two weeks a year) with youth or children in all areas, including but not limited to: Sunday School Teachers, VBS, AWANA, Youth sponsors, Vehicle drivers, and Camp Chaperones.

## **.I Threshold**

He or She will have been an active formal member of Forest Ridge Baptist Church or their equivalent for a minimum period of six months.

1. Formal Church membership
2. Watchcare membership
3. Participation as a part of ongoing education through Cedarville University.

## **.II Application Process**

1. He or She has completed the written application for worker status.
2. Gone through an interview by the staffing team.
3. Submitted to a Criminal Background Check.
4. Received formal approval from the staffing team.

## **.III Ongoing training**

1. All workers will go through an initial training program in the fundamentals of:
  - a) Child abuse prevention and reporting.
  - b) Proper worker/ student interaction.
2. All workers will annually update their application information.
3. All workers will annually review:
  - a) Child abuse Prevention and Reporting
  - b) Proper volunteer/student interaction.

## **.IV Background Check**

All potential adult ministry workers will agree to a full background check.

## ***Requirements for adult short term volunteers at FRBC***

In an effort to protect and serve the children and youth of FRBC, the following requirements are in place for all volunteers from our church, or who come in from outside to help with special events, who work in the short term (a period not to exceed two weeks in any one calendar year) with youth or children in all areas, including but not limited to: Sunday School Teachers, VBS, AWANA, Youth sponsors, Vehicle drivers, and Camp Chaperones. Volunteers are not to have any unsupervised access to children or youth.

## **.I Threshold**

He or She will have been active formal members or their equivalent for a minimum period of six

months.

1. Formal Church membership at FRBC or with a recognized Church of similar faith and practice.
2. Watchcare membership
3. Participation as a part of ongoing education through Cedarville University.

## **.II Application Process**

1. He or she has completed the written application for volunteer status.
2. Gone through an interview by the staffing team, or been personally recommended by a ministry leader at his or her home church, or ministry office.
3. Released us to perform a sexual predators database check.

## **.III Training**

1. All volunteers will go through an initial training program prior to any period of service in the fundamentals of:
2. Child abuse prevention and reporting.
3. Guidelines for volunteer/ student interaction.
4. All volunteers will be required to update their application information for each two-week period.

## **.IV Background Check**

All potential adult short-term volunteers will agree to an examination of public record to see whether or not they are registered sex offenders.

## ***Requirements for Teen Volunteers and Ministry Staff.***

We recognize that service and ministry are valuable experience for our youth. In an effort to protect and serve the children and youth of FRBC the following requirements are required of all Teen-age Volunteers and ministry staff from our church, or who come in to help with special events, who work in the short term (as volunteers) or in the long term (as ministry staff) with youth or children in all areas, including but not limited to: Sunday School Teachers, VBS, and AWANA. Teen volunteers 7<sup>th</sup> grade and above, may assist approved adult ministry staff, in recognized church activities. They are subject to all the guidelines for church activities, and are not to have any unsupervised access to children or youth.

## **.I Threshold**

He or she will have been active formal members or their equivalent for a minimum period of six months.

1. He or she or a parent/s will hold formal church membership at FRBC or with a recognized Church of similar faith and practice.
2. He or she or a parent/s are under watchcare membership

## **.II Application Process**

1. He or She has completed the written application.
2. Gone through an interview by the staffing team, or been personally recommended by a ministry leader at his or her home church, or ministry office.
3. He or She has a signed Parent/Guardian release form

## **.III Training**

1. All volunteers will go through an initial training program prior to any period of service in the fundamentals of:
  - a)Child abuse prevention and reporting.
  - b)Guidelines for volunteer/ student interaction.
- 2.All teen volunteers and ministry staff will be required to update their application information annually or prior to each term of service.

## ***Application review, Background Check and interview policy for Forest Ridge Baptist Church.***

All People either hired or welcomed as workers or volunteers at Forest Ridge Baptist Church will:

1. Submit a completed application.
2. Sign a Release form so that we may contact their references.
3. Agree to a Background Check, or Search of Public sex offender records as applicable.

### **.I Process:**

The staffing team will review application forms. The staffing team will be made up of a minimum of three people, one of which will be a staff member (i.e. pastor, youth pastor, deacon). The staffing team will not exceed four reviewers of any one application. Staffing team members will have undergone child protection training, as preparation for interviewing individuals.

Staffing team responsibilities:

1. Review applications according to protocol.
2. Contact references.
3. Hold a personal interview.
4. Review the Background check.
5. Approve or reject the application.
6. Maintain confidentiality of all personal data, and information.

### **.II Review Protocol:**

#### **Application**

1. Has this person completed the form in a satisfactory manner?
2. Does it leave any large gaps in the person's history?
3. Does this person profess to be a Believer?
4. Has he or she been baptized?
5. Does he or she have a consistent pattern of verifiable church attendance?
6. Does he or she have verifiable pattern of service and involvement in their churches?
7. Does his or her residence/employment history show a degree of stability?
8. If the or she has indicated past problems have these problems been dealt with satisfactorily?
9. Has he or she signed the release allowing us to contact references?

#### **.III References**

1. Were you able to contact a minimum of three references?
2. Were the references positive or negative about the applicant?

3. Did the references raise any red flags about the applicant?
4. Was there anything inconsistent between the applications and the references?

#### **.IV Interview**

1. Make the applicant feel welcome.
2. Ask any questions that came up during reference checks, or on the basis of the applications.
3. Ascertain the applicant's stated reasons for wanting to work with FRBC.
4. Ask about the applicants prior experience, and practice
  - a) What does the applicant view as the strengths he or she brings to FRBC?
  - b) What does he or she view as the weaknesses he or she brings to FRBC?
  - c) How has the applicant handled discipline problems in the past?
  - d) How did the applicant end up at FRBC? Does he or she have past baggage he or she needs to deal with?

#### **.V Acceptance/Rejection**

1. Upon review of the Criminal Background Check or the Sex offender Records the team will make a decision to accept or reject the applicant.
2. The team may choose to deny an application because (a. the applicant demonstrates a need for more stability before assuming a position of role model to children, (b. because the applicant has beliefs or practices that are in conflict with those of FRBC, or (c. because the applicant has a past history which indicates a potential for unhealthy relationships with minors.
3. If the application and interview process was positive and the background check reveals no further issues, the person may be accepted.
4. If the background check reveals something, which was not discussed or appropriately disclosed in the application, this is grounds for rejection of the applicant, or at the team's discretion to re-interview the applicant and clear up the issue if it is a misdemeanor infraction.
5. If in the course of the application, the interview process, or the background check, it is disclosed that the individual has *ever* been convicted of sexual molestation, the application will be denied. The individual may still be accepted as a member of the church at the discretion of the leadership and as per membership guidelines on forgiveness and restoration, but will *not ever* be allowed to serve in a direct roll with children.
6. If an applicant has been convicted of a felony, or has long record of misdemeanors, this also will be grounds for denial of the application. With the exception that if the applicant has been forthright about the situation, and repentance can be established in keeping with the church principles of forgiveness and restoration, and the team has no reason to believe that this record demonstrates unreasonable risk to minors.
7. If it is demonstrated that an applicant has an ongoing problem with pornography, that application will be denied.

## ***Annual Review***

Once a year an annual review will be made of all church volunteers, and staff. For the purpose of updating address and records, and to ensure that all volunteers are serving in their areas of best effectiveness.

## ***Disciplinary Review***

If a current staff member or volunteer is involved in any of the disqualifying factors discussed in the approval of his or her application (i.e. Lack of stability, conflicting beliefs, child abuse, sexual molestation, felony conviction etc.) he or she will be removed from, volunteer status and advised by the church leadership that they are not to serve in a direct role with children. This suspension may be permanent or temporary in keeping with the original acceptance policies.

## ***Confidentiality Commitment of Forest Ridge Baptist Church, for the handling of Staff, Worker and Volunteer Applications.***

All Staff and Volunteer information recorded in the Application Process will be handled in accordance with the Church Confidentiality Policy. Copies of the policy are available upon request.



## **Staff and Volunteer Supervision**

### **.I Levels of Risk**

Levels of risk can be assessed using three criteria.

1. *Isolation* (Risk increases as isolation increases.)
2. *Accountability* (Risk increases as accountability decreases.)
3. *Power and control* (Risk increases when there is an imbalance of power and control)

Church activities that have a lower risk profile will require only adherence to the policies and guidelines established for Church events. These events include:

- Sunday School,
- Awana's,
- VBS

Any activities that involve higher risk profile, will maintain a higher degree of supervision, using the higher risk profile policies, these activities include:

1. Meeting in a Private Home.
2. Any one-on-one session.
3. Overnight activities, lock-ins, camping trips or hotel stays.
4. Changing clothes, or becoming undressed, such as locker rooms or dressing rooms.
5. A mixed age group with differences in age being greater than five years.

## **.II Principles, Policies and Standard of Care**

### **1. General Guidelines for Church activities:**

These guidelines will be posted in a conspicuous place where they may be observed by any participant in church activities.

Since we cannot predict all circumstances or possible scenarios that may occur we will endeavor to instill the following principles as general standards:

a) Guideline #1. Do not put yourself in a compromising situation. Be careful where you meet.

Procedure: No one-on-one contact between staff and student in private. Always meet in a totally public place in plain view of others in-group.

b) Guideline #2. Do not rely on your good reputation or put yourself in a position where it's your word against another individual's.

Procedure: Use the "buddy system" (two staff with a student(s) in private setting) as standard procedure when counseling, transporting and working with children or youth. This includes helping children in the restroom, and sleeping arrangements. This also includes not leaving two youth or children unattended in a private setting.

c) Guideline #3. Be aware of what you say.

Procedure: In athletic activities check your conduct carefully to ensure you are not the cause of verbal, physical or negligence abuse. Refrain from idioms or vernacular that could be viewed as negative or suggestive.

d) Guideline #4. Sometimes there is a fine line between discipline and abuse.

Procedure: Follow recommended policy and guidelines for discipline.

e) Guideline #5. Watch what you do. Be cautious of and avoid "bad" touch. Physical contact in-group settings are OK and can be a positive dynamic.

Procedure: It is recommended you avoid full frontal hugs and back rubs. Both actions can be misleading to individuals receiving and those observing. Use the bathing suit rule of thumb.

f) Guideline #6. Be aware of fantasy relationships.

Procedure: Refrain from spending an inordinate amount of time with any one child or youth that could lead to a child or youth misreading your interest in him or her. Be aware of how you express your concern for the child or youth. When you express love, be sure children and youth know you mean Christian love.

g) Guideline #7. Athletic activities could be opportunities for an abusive situation.

Procedure: Be aware of the physical needs of the children and youth such as fatigue, the need for fluids, treatment of an injury and weather conditions like electrical storms or extreme heat.

h) Guideline #8: Focus on these spiritual guidelines while working with children and youth:

i. I Thessalonians 2:11,12 – "For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory."

ii. I Thessalonians 5:22 – "Avoid every kind of evil."

iii. Philippians 4:8 – "Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever

is pure, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.”  
iv. James 3:8-10 – “...but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be.”

## **2. Official Policies for all Church related events:**

- a) We require that all church related activities conducted with youth or children be scheduled either through a regular business meeting or through consultation and approval with a staff-member and deacon/elder.
- b) We require that, whenever practicable, volunteers and staff serve in teams of two or more (preferably non-related) and be visible to other volunteers and staff, by means of open doors, windows or other staff coming into the teaching area unannounced.
- c) We require that for all activities where there are multiple classrooms, and/or small groups of children, that there be a monitor or monitors who actively help assist staff in applying the guidelines.
- d) We require that all volunteers and staff go through a training program on prevention of abuse and proper worker/child-youth interaction, upon original acceptance and that they have a review of these principles on a yearly basis.

## **3. Official Policies for Higher risk church events:**

- a) For overnight events on the Church grounds, No participating youth/child may leave the premises, except for official program activities. Any youth of driving age must surrender their keys (if they have any) and if he or she does need to leave early for a reasonable cause, their parents will be notified at the time of the youth’s departure.
- b) For over-night events on the Church grounds, there will be a 10 P.M. curfew, for the safety of all concerned, at which time all participants must be inside the building and the door’s locked.
- c) There will be an adequate number of chaperones, for the participants, this requires a minimum of two chaperones per gender, per ten participants. This also requires that for any activity which is considered higher in risk that a minimum of three adults will need to be present no matter how many youth are present. For purposes of this policy married couples count as one person. (If these numbers cannot be maintained for whatever reason, volunteers and staff should alert an elder or deacon and ask for either assistance, or added supervision).
- d) For overnight, or travel arrangements, youth will be grouped with youth, preferably in groups of four or more, chaperones will be roomed with chaperones if possible, and sleeping arrangements will be divided strictly by gender in different rooms. If chaperones must be in the same room as youth there will be at least four youth per-chaperone.
- e) It is preferred that most activities take place in groups however For one-on-one discipleship, counseling, or Bible studies which may arise, they may only be done by approved staff or volunteers, and must be carried out in a open, public and observable place.
- f) For any Church related activities which might take place in a private home, beyond regular approval, and for one-on one situations off the Church grounds another church staff member or elder/deacon should be informed as to the time, and nature of the event, for accountability, and supervision.

#### **4. Forest Ridge Baptist Church Volunteer Driver Policy**

Approved Volunteer Drivers for Forest Ridge Baptist Church Shall:

- a) Be already approved volunteers, or staff of Forest Ridge Baptist Church.
- b) Have a valid drivers license, copied and on file with their staff application
- c) Provide proof of valid insurance with passenger protection totaling a minimum of \$50,000.00 per person.

#### **5. Forest Ridge Baptist Church Non-Parent pick up and transportation policy**

For a child to be picked up and dropped off from an activity of Forest Ridge Baptist Church by any person other than their parent or legal guardian that person must have:

A signed parent release on the child's registration form or Parental/Guardian consent given over the phone directly to a ministry leader, at the time of pick-up.

In the event that a Forest Ridge Baptist Church Volunteer or Staff member who does not have prior parental signed release, shall need to transport the child for any reason, to or from the child's home,

- There will be a minimum of two non related adult's present in the vehicle,
- A third staff member will call the child's home within an appropriate period of time (not more than 15 min. from time of departure) to ensure the child has arrived home safely.

## **Reporting obligations**

### Child Abuse Reporting Procedures For Staff and Volunteers of Forest Ridge Baptist Church.

If we have reasonable evidence to believe that abuse is taking place outside of Forest Ridge Baptist Church activities or, if we believe there is probable cause we will contact the county and allow them to do any further investigation.

#### **I. Concern about inappropriate behavior**

If we think that a volunteer or staff member is failing to comply with child protection guidelines, is behaving inappropriately or, demonstrates techniques of leadership that might cause problems:

1. Go to that person and express our concern about their behavior.
2. If that is insufficient, or we feel intimidated by the situation and the behavior continues we will talk to the event leader and/or an elder, and express our concerns.
3. Church leadership will evaluate the situation and decide what steps to take.
4. This is not to accuse or harm anyone this is to help protect one another, and encourage one another in walking in godliness.

#### **II. Allegations of actual abuse**

Although FRBC does not exist for the purpose of caring for or discovering abuse, you may become aware of abuse, through the unusual behavior of the student, physical signs and/or them telling you what is going on.

Some potential signs of abuse are:

1. Physical Signs possibly including:
  - a) Unexplained Lacerations and Bruises
  - b) Nightmares
  - c) Irritation, pain or injury to the genital area
  - d) Difficulty with urination
  - e) Discomfort when sitting
  - f) Torn or bloody underclothing
  - g) Venereal disease
2. Behavioral Signs possibly including:
  - a) Anxiety when approaching the church
  - b) Nervous or hostile behavior towards adults
  - c) Sexual self-consciousness
  - d) "Acting out" sexual behavior.
  - e) Withdrawal from church activities and friends
3. Verbal Signs possibly including:

- a)“I don’t like (a particular church worker, or other adult).”
- b)“(A church worker, or other person) does things to me when we’re alone.”
- c)“I don’t like to be alone with (a church worker, or other person).”
- d)“(A church worker, or other person) fooled around with me.”

Obviously many of these signs could be associated with things that have nothing to do with abuse. Please don’t jump to conclusions about things, but you should report the situation when:

- 4. There are several of these factors together.
- 5. A child tells you that there is a problem.
- 6. Your gut reaction is that something is just not right.

Failure to report an abuse situation is merit for immediate dismissal from service assignments within Forest Ridge Baptist Church staff or volunteers.

**III. If allegations of abuse surface in the context of the Forest Ridge Baptist Church family:**

- 1. Any abusive situations you observe or become aware of (whether occurring at a church activity or involving past experiences of a student) must be reported immediately to event leader and Church Pastor. And together you will decide when and how to contact authorities if necessary.
- 2. Stabilize the immediate abusive situation by stopping the abuse. Separate the individuals involved.
- 3. When reporting, state facts not opinions “This is what the individual said.” (Exactly as possible). “This is what the individual did” (as exact a description as possible). “This is what I observed (without explaining how it got there).” Do not tell me what you think caused it, or what you surmised from the information, unless you observed it in context and is not self-explanatory.

**IV. If a child or adult comes to you with allegations of abuse about a staff member or volunteer.**

- 1. Never make a blanket promise to keep a secret for a child or youth. If someone is being hurt you are morally and legally responsible to let the proper authority know and take action
- 2. Leave questioning and analysis of the situation to the proper authorities. You are not to ask any leading questions, just make sure the child is safe right now, and report to your director.
- 3. Do not blame the child or reporter: no matter how you want to react, try to respond in a loving, open and caring way, as much as possible try to let the child or adult feel that he or she is still loveable, and that you are not repulsed by him or her. (Even if what happened to them is repulsive)
- 4. Thank the child or adult for having the courage to share
- 5. Assure the child or adult that you will take this seriously
- 6. Let the child or adult know that there are procedures in place to handle the situation.
- 7. Re-assure the child or adult that he or she has done the right thing.

Any allegation of abuse should be reported immediately to the senior pastor who is responsible to contact appropriate county officials. He may consult with the church elders as appropriate.

Failure to report an abuse situation is merit for immediate dismissal from service assignments within

Forest Ridge Baptist Church staff or volunteers.

## **V.Applicable Ohio Law, and Reporting Agencies**

1.Ohio Code states that reportable Child abuse is: “physical or sexual abuse committed by anyone, or mental abuse inflicted by a parent, guardian, or custodian.” [2151.031]

2.Mandated Reporters: “includes any employee of a child day-care center, residential camp, or child day camp; school teacher or employee; professional counselor, while acting in an official of professional capacity, and “a person rendering spiritual treatment through prayer.” [2151.421]

3.Where to Report: public children’s service agency of a municipal county peace officer in the county in which the child resides or in which the abuse occurred.

a)Montgomery county public children’s service agents

b)24 HR Hotlines: 937-224- KIDS (5437) and 937-276-612

4.Reports can be made anonymously, are always confidential, and if you are fair and honest in your report (i.e. done in good faith), you cannot be held liable for the report. (according to Gene Merica-Montgomery County Office in an interview 2005)

5.What to Report:

a)Name and Address of Child(ren)

b)Child birthdates

c)Who they live with (i.e. Mom, Dad, other)

d)Description of the reason for concern

## ***Responding to allegations***

If a child is harmed in our church, we will take immediate steps to inform the parents, to accept responsibility for our role in the situation (not accepting blame for actions outside of our control, but doing all within our power to help bring healing for the victim), and to hold offending workers fully responsible for their actions, including not only church discipline but cooperation in civil or criminal action against those who would harm children. We will also evaluate our practices and procedures, considering changes that might reduce the likelihood of such harm to children in the future.

Forest Ridge Baptist Church  
Alleged Child Sexual Abuse Response Protocol  
Event Leader and Pastor Response

### **I. Understand that it can happen, and it can happen here**

Sexual abuse can happen in all churches of all sizes of all denominations. Do not panic. But respond with grace.

### **II. Provide a caring and affirming response**

When a person reveals what is going on in their life or blows the whistle on someone else it will be emotional, you need to affirm their courage in sharing the facts.

1. Don't express disbelief or minimize the accusation, take it seriously.
2. Be prepared for strong emotions, yours and theirs.
3. Don't jump to conclusions a few probing questions may be necessary to clarify what the person is saying, but don't try to figure out what happened, figure out what the person is saying
4. Re-assure them that they have done the right thing in sharing what has gone on, and that steps will be taken to deal with the problem.
5. Re-assure them that the church will do everything in its power to help in this situation.

#### 6. Document the allegation

You need to collect some basic information that you can use to report this incident to the authorities if necessary. This is not an investigation; you are merely documenting the allegation, please be careful to use objective measurements in reporting as this is a serious accusation;

- a) Name, age, gender of the child
- b) Name gender and relationship to child of the abuser
- c) The nature of the incident that allegedly took place



- d)How many times this has allegedly happened.
- e)Dates and locations if they are known
- f)Other evidence that you are aware of such as: eyewitnesses, medical exams, confessions, etc.

### **III.Seek Professional Assistance**

In addition to reporting to the appropriate authorities, if the incident took place on church property, or during a church event:

- 1.Contact the Church insurance agent.
- 2.Contact an attorney.

If the event is not related to the church but is something that comes to light regarding a child's home life, or other context, report it immediately to the County Child services, or a law enforcement officer.

### **IV.Provide support for the victim**

When allegations of sexual misconduct arise, the temptation is to deny that it could happen, minimize the severity of the incident, and blame the victim. But this makes matters worse.

Church leaders should maintain contact with the victim and the victim's family to:

- 1.Assure them that the church takes very seriously any allegation of sexual misconduct.
- 2.The church does not tolerate incidents of sexual misconduct, and considers such incidents unscriptural, subjecting the perpetrators to discipline.
- 3.The complaint will be investigated thoroughly and immediately.
- 4.The church will not tolerate any retaliation against a victim (or family) for filing a complaint, no matter how the matter is finally resolved.

### **V.Report to the State**

- 1.Follow the steps laid out in the Child Abuse Reporting Procedures documents.
- 2.You need to call child protection services within 24 hours of becoming aware that enough evidence exists to support the allegations.
- 3.When in doubt call child protection services and let them decide if there is enough evidence to require an investigation.

### **VI.Decide on how to respond to the Accused**

***Do not contact the alleged perpetrator until given permission to do so by law enforcement, or child protection services.*** Otherwise you could inhibit the investigation, or the individual in question may try to flee, or get the victim to change their story.

- 1.If an allegation has been made and reported to child protection services or law enforcement has been filed the staff member or volunteer will be suspended from all roles serving children at FRBC until the investigation is completed.
- 2.If the individual is a paid staff member they will be placed on a paid leave of absence, until the charges can be substantiated
- 3.If the charges are substantiated, the individual confesses, the individual is incarcerated or found guilty on a lesser charge; the staff member will be immediately dismissed from service at FRBC.

4.If the Charges are found to be false the staff member will be re-instated.

5.If the investigation is inconclusive, the individual is prosecuted but found innocent, or pleads down, the elder board, and pastoral staff will evaluate the totality of the evidence, and make a joint decision. The decision should first of all be in the best interests of the church, protecting it's children and the witness in the community. The decision should also extend as much grace and redemption as is possible toward the accused individual (It is suggested that the investigating officer be asked for their input on the case).

a)A person can be reinstated without restrictions

b)A person can be reinstated with restrictions on their interaction with children and youth,

c)Or they can not be reinstated

#### **VII.Address the concerns of the Body**

Sharing information with the Church in this kind of a situation has inherent difficulties. Balancing the privacy of the individuals involved, with the need of the congregation to know and be at ease with the fact that the situation is being handled well.

Important to remember is that communicating anything of this nature could be construed as defamatory in nature. So it is of utmost importance to:

1.Communicate only with official active members of the church about things that directly affect the congregation.

a)The fact that someone is on leave of absence,

b)The fact that someone needs to pick up the duties of the individual on leave,

c)The fact that someone is suddenly gone,

2.Communicate only factual information, and without intent to harm offender or victim.

a)Inform them of who has been accused of what. Do not include details.

b)That the accused denies the allegations, or has confessed to the allegations

A confession should only be included if there is a signed release by the confessor allowing you to tell the church, and is best done quoting from a written confession.

c)That the allegations are being investigated by the police,

3.Communicate only on a strictly confidential and need to know basis.

4.Designate a Communications Spokes person who will do all the communicating, in consultation with Legal Council.

5.Informing the Church Body can be accomplished either through a member's only meeting, or a confidential letter.

Either of which needs to be strictly confidential, and whoever does the speaking needs to know what they can and cannot say.

6.It is highly advised to have a Lawyer review any written communication regarding the incident, before it is sent.

### **VIII. Respond to the Media**

Any incident of child molestation or abuse in a church setting will draw media attention. This is an opportunity to stand for the truth and proactively demonstrate that Forest Ridge Baptist Church in no way condones or supports this kind of behavior. This is not a time for silence, or “no comment” but communication must be done wisely

1. Designate a sole spokesperson for the church to interact with the media, all other church staff and members should defer to this one individual.

2. The spokesperson should communicate clearly

3. The church's concern for the victims

4. The fact that the church takes the allegations seriously

5. The spokesperson should not make any statements about the facts of the case without consultation with legal council.

6. Use the following or similar prepared statement to inform the media and the public that Forest Ridge Baptist Church is aware of the problem of Child abuse, and has taken active steps to prevent it, and demonstrate our concern for the victims,

“Forest Ridge Baptist Church has long been concerned about the prevalence of Child sexual abuse. We have undertaken extensive steps to prevent this from happening here, including implementing policies and procedures, staff and volunteer screening, staff and volunteer training and regular review to minimize the risk of such things occurring at our church. We make it clear to all of our members that we do not tolerate this kind of behavior, and will not shelter anyone found to have engaged in it. Our hearts go out to the victims of such actions and we are prepared to do all we can to help any families and children that have suffered this kind of outrage to achieve substantial healing.”

### ***Suggested Forms :***

The following forms are suggested for the fulfillment of the requirements of this policy. These forms may be amended as necessary to best apply the principles of this policy.

Child Registration Form and Release of Liability

Off Campus Travel Release of Liability

Abuse Reporting form for Pastor or event Leader

Staff and Volunteer Child abuse Reporting Form

Appended are the Staff and Volunteer application Forms

Forest Ridge Baptist Church  
Abuse Reporting form for Pastor or event Leader

Victim information: Name: _____ Gender: male / female Birth date: _____ they live with: Mom, Dad, other: _____
---

Alleged Abuser: Name: _____ Gender male/female Address: _____ Relationship to the abused: _____
---

**Nature of Concern:**

What is alleged to have taken place:

---

---

---

---

---

How many times this has taken place:

---

---

Dates and locations if known:

---

---

---

---

Other evidence that supports the allegation (eyewitnesses, medical exams, confessions etc.):

---

---

---

---

---

Please attach any staff reporting forms, contact the Church insurance adjustor, and legal council, and call local law enforcement or Montgomery county children's Services at tel.: 224- KIDS.

Forest Ridge Baptist Church  
Staff and Volunteer Child abuse Reporting Form

If you are concerned that a child in one of our programs is being abused please fill out this form and turn it in as soon a possible to your program leader, or the pastor. All reports will be taken seriously. All reports remain confidential, and will be shared only with those who need to know this information for the protection of the child. The State of Ohio guarantees that a good faith report of concern will not lead to any recriminations. Forest Ridge Baptist Church will not tolerate recriminations against anyone within the Body, who has submitted a report in good faith.

Report Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please give us as much information as you know:**

Name of Victim: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Age of Victim: \_\_\_\_\_ who the Victim lives with: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Alleged Abuser: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Their relationship to the child: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of incident/s: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Specific Location/s if known: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Explain how you know of what happened (i.e. witnessed, told by someone, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you discussed this with anyone else?  Yes  No if yes, Please list: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

Are you aware of anyone else who witnessed this incident? \_\_Yes \_\_No if yes, Please list:

---

---

---

**Physical signs:** please describe what you saw, or observed to give you concern:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Behavioral Signs:** Please describe how the child was acting and what the child did to give you concern:

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Verbal Signs:** Please tell us what was said or told to you (quote as exactly as possible) and give us some context:

---

---

---

---

**Incident Description** Please explain what you observed take place:

---

---

---



If you have reason to believe that the child is in a situation where they could be harmed, contact your event leader and or the pastor. You can always call Child Protection Services at: 224-KIDS (937-224-

Office Use Only:

Date Received by Event Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received by Senior Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments by Senior Pastor:

---

---

---

---

Actions Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Forest Ridge Baptist Church  
EMPLOYEE APPLICATION FORM**

Thank you for considering service with Forest Ridge Baptist Church. Please complete this form and return to the church office: Forest Ridge Baptist Church, 6890 Union Schoolhouse Rd. Dayton, OH 45424). The information provided here will help us to make an informed evaluation of your compatibility with the goals and needs of Forest Ridge Baptist Church.

**Confidentiality Notice:** The information on this form will be kept confidential in keeping with the policies of Forest Ridge Baptist Church.

**Personal Information**

**Name:** First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Other names used (alias, maiden, nicknames) \_\_\_\_\_

**Social Security Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_      **Gender** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** mm/dd/yy \_\_\_\_\_  Please check box if 18 years of age or older.

**Address:**      **Street:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Driver's License Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_

**Marital Status** (*check one*) Single \_\_\_ Married \_\_\_ Widowed \_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_ Separated \_\_\_

**Background Information**

*Please write out a brief statement of your Christian testimony: (use another sheet of paper if necessary)* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you been baptized? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_

What Church/ Churches Have you been a member of for the past five years?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

In what ways have you served in church or worked in a secular environment with children or youth?

List any participation that is pertinent (i.e. Sunday school, VBS, youth, music, school, scouting, sports, coaching). \_\_\_\_\_

### Residential History

1. Please provide a complete residential history for the past five years.

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(If more space is needed, you may use an additional sheet of paper.)

### Employment History

Please share with up the past three employment positions held.

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number; \_\_\_\_\_ May we contact this employer? \_\_\_ (If not please explain)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Salary \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number; \_\_\_\_\_ May we contact this employer? \_\_\_ (If not please explain)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Salary \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number; \_\_\_\_\_ May we contact this employer? \_\_\_\_ (If not please explain)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Salary \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

**Education**

Circle the Highest Grade Completed:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 GED College 1 2 3 4 5 Graduate School

Schools	Name and Location	Dates Attended	Course of Study	Degree/Diploma
High School		To		
College		To		
Graduate or Professional		To		
Educational, or Vocational School		To		

2. Complete the following: I am interested in serving at Forest Ridge Baptist Church because:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Information**

- 1. Have you ever used illegal drugs? Yes\_\_ No\_\_
- 2. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense? Yes\_\_ No\_\_
- 3. Have you ever been charged with child abuse or neglect? Yes\_\_ No\_\_
- 4. Has your driver's license ever been suspended or revoked? Yes\_\_ No\_\_

5. Other than the above, are there any facts or circumstances involving you or your background that might call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of children and or youth? Yes\_\_ No \_\_

6. If you answered “yes” to any of the above questions please explain on a separate sheet of paper:

**References:** Please list three people who are familiar with your background as it relates to your professional capacities, and your personal character. These references must have known you for at least a full year, and may not be family members.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list three people who are familiar with your character as it relates specifically to working with children or youth. These people must be either co-workers, or supervisors and may not be family members. (They may be the same individuals as listed above.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that: To the best of my knowledge I have given true, accurate, and complete information on this form. In the event confirmation is needed in connection with my work, I authorize churches, educational institutions, associations, registration and licensing boards, and others to furnish whatever detail is available concerning my qualifications. I authorize investigations of all statements made in this application made by and understand that false information or documentation, or a failure to disclose relevant information may be grounds for rejection of my application, disciplinary action, and/or dismissal if I am employed, and/or criminal action. I further understand that dismissal or unemployment shall be mandatory if fraudulent disclosures are given to meet position qualifications.

I Authorize Forest Ridge Baptist Church through it’s independent contractor, LexisNexis, to procure information (also known as a “consumer report and or investigative consumer report”) about me. This report may include my driving history, including any traffic citations; a social security number verification; present and former addresses; criminal and civil history/records; and state sex offender records.

I understand that I am entitled to a complete copy of any background information report of which I am the subject upon my request to Forest Ridge Baptist Church, if such request is made within a reasonable time from the date it was produced. I also understand that I may receive a written summary of my rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

**Be advised that all applicants will need to furnish a criminal background check, before we can consider your application for employment at FRBC.**

---

Signature

---

Date



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

In what ways have you served in church or worked in a secular environment with children or youth? List any participation that is pertinent (i.e. Sunday School, VBS, youth, music, school, scouting, sports, coaching).

\_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about any other area that you would be interested in helping with: (Such as: planning, teaching, crafts, drama, other) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a complete residential history for the past five years.

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(If more space is needed, use another sheet of paper.)

Do you know how to lead someone to Christ, to receive Him as Savior? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Complete the following: I want to serve at Forest Ridge Baptist Church because

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Additional Information

1. Have you ever used illegal drugs? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

2. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

3. Have you ever been charged with child abuse or neglect? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

4. Has your driver's license ever been suspended or revoked? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

5. Other than the above, are there any facts or circumstances involving you or your background that might call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of children and or youth? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

6. If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions please explain below:



**References**

Please list three people who are familiar with your character as it relates to working with children or youth.

(These people may not be family members)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that: To the best of my knowledge I have given true, accurate, and complete information on this form. In the event confirmation is needed in connection with my work, I authorize churches, educational institutions, associations, registration and licensing boards, and others to furnish whatever detail is available concerning my qualifications. I authorize investigations of all statements made in this application made by and understand that false information or documentation, or a failure to disclose relevant information may be grounds for rejection of my application, disciplinary action, and/or dismissal if I am employed, and/or criminal action. I further understand that dismissal or unemployment shall be mandatory if fraudulent disclosures are given to meet position qualifications.

I Authorize Forest Ridge Baptist Church through it’s independent contractor, LexisNexis, to procure information (also known as a “consumer report and or investigative consumer report”) about me. This report may include my driving history, including any traffic citations; a social security number verification; present and former addresses; criminal and civil history/records; and state sex offender records.

I understand that I am entitled to a complete copy of any background information report of which I am the subject upon my request to Forest Ridge Baptist Church, if such request is made within a reasonable time from the date it was produced. I also understand that I may receive a written summary of my rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

**Be advised that all applicants will need to furnish a criminal background check, before we can consider your application for service at FRBC.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**Forest Ridge Baptist Church**  
**VBS VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM**

Thank you for considering service with Forest Ridge Baptist Church. Please complete this form and return to the church office: Forest Ridge Baptist Church, 6890 Union Schoolhouse Rd. Dayton, and OH 45424. The information provided here will help us to make an informed evaluation of your compatibility with the goals and needs of Forest Ridge Baptist Church.

**Confidentiality Notice:** The information on this form will be kept confidential in accordance with the policies of Forest Ridge Baptist Church, which are available for review upon request.

**Personal Information**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** mm/dd/yy \_\_\_\_\_ Please check box if 18 years of age or older.

**Address:** Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Background Information**

Please write out a brief statement of your Christian testimony: (use another sheet of paper if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

What Church are you a member of? How long have you been a member?

Church Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of membership: \_\_\_\_\_

In what ways have you served in church or worked in a secular environment with children or youth? List any participation that is pertinent (i.e. Sunday School, VBS, youth, music, school, scouting, sports, coaching).  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about any other area that you would be interested in helping with: (Such as: planning, teaching, crafts, drama, other: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about the opportunity to volunteer at Forest Ridge Baptist Church?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Complete the following: I want to serve at Forest Ridge Baptist Church because,

---

---

---

**Additional Information**

- 1. Have you ever used illegal drugs? Yes\_\_ No\_\_
- 2. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense? Yes\_\_ No\_\_
- 3. Have you ever been charged with child abuse or neglect? Yes\_\_ No\_\_
- 4. Has your driver's license ever been suspended or revoked? Yes\_\_ No\_\_
- 5. Other than the above, are there any facts or circumstances involving you or your background that might call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of children and or youth? Yes \_\_ No\_\_
- 6. If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions please explain below (attach another page if necessary)

**References**

Please list three people who are familiar with your character as it relates to working with children or youth. These may not be family members. (One of them must be a Pastor/Youth pastor/ Sunday School superintendent or other ministry coordinator in your church.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that: To the best of my knowledge I have given true, accurate, and complete information on this form. In the event confirmation is needed in connection with my work, I authorize churches, educational institutions, associations, registration and licensing boards, and others to furnish whatever detail is available concerning my qualifications. I authorize investigations of all statements made in this application made by and understand that false information or documentation, or a failure to disclose

relevant information may be grounds for rejection of my application, disciplinary action, and/or dismissal if I am employed, and/or criminal action. I further understand that dismissal or unemployment shall be mandatory if fraudulent disclosures are given to meet position qualifications.

I Authorize Forest Ridge Baptist Church through it's independent contractor, LexisNexis, to procure information (also known as a "consumer report and or investigative consumer report") about me. This report may include my driving history, including any traffic citations; a social security number verification; present and former addresses; criminal and civil history/records; and state sex offender records.

I understand that I am entitled to a complete copy of any background information report of which I am the subject upon my request to Forest Ridge Baptist Church, if such request is made within a reasonable time from the date it was produced. I also understand that I may receive a written summary of my rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

**Be advised that all applicants will need to furnish a criminal background check, before we can consider your application for service at FRBC.**

---

Signature

---

Date

## Alphabetical Index

abuse.....	25, 29, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 56, 58, 59, 61, 62, 63, 64, 67, 68, 71
Abuse.....	49, 61, 64, 65, 68, 69, 71
ABUSE.....	49
accountability.....	9, 11, 20, 29, 44, 45, 47, 48, 57, 59
Accountability.....	20, 23, 44, 49, 57
accountant.....	17
Accountant.....	17
Accounting Procedures.....	28
amendment.....	28
Amendment.....	28
authority.....	6, 8, 9, 15, 20, 21, 23, 62
Authority.....	9
baptised.....	6, 7, 54
baptism.....	6, 18, 22, 26
Baptism.....	6, 22, 26
budget.....	9, 24, 26, 27, 28
Budget.....	28
children.....	
age. .6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 38, 39, 44, 46, 47, 49, 50, 52, 55, 57, 59, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 67	
Age.....	21, 71
child 7, 12, 21, 22, 23, 25, 40, 44, 45, 49, 50, 51, 52, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 70, 71, 72, 73	
Child.....	16, 21, 23, 24, 25, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 61, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 71, 73
CHILD.....	49, 50
child protection.....	61, 65
Child protection.....	21, 23, 25
Child Protection.....	21, 23, 24, 25, 73
children.....	7, 12, 21, 22, 23, 25, 40, 44, 45, 49, 50, 51, 52, 55, 56, 58, 59, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 70
Children.....	16, 21, 49
CHILDREN.....	50
clerk.....	17
Clerk.....	17
committee.....	12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 23, 24, 25, 28, 39, 50
Committee.....	1, 10, 15, 17, 23, 24, 25
communion.....	22
Communion.....	22
comptroller.....	17, 18, 24
Comptroller.....	17
confidences.....	25, 28, 29, 54, 56
congregation.....	6, 8, 9, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 39, 40, 41, 46, 47, 66
Congregation.....	39

covenant.....	7, 18, 21
Covenant.....	7, 18, 21, 42
custodian.....	16, 17, 63
Custodian.....	17
discipline.....	7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 27, 29, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 55, 58, 64, 65
Discipline.....	20, 23, 44, 45, 46
doctrine.....	7, 8, 18, 45
Doctrine.....	23
elder council.....	
elder.....	6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29, 38, 39, 40, 41, 59, 62
Elder.....	1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 38, 39
Elder council.....	15, 18, 23
Elder Council.....	8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29
elders.....	6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29, 38, 39, 40, 41, 62
Elders.....	1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 38, 39
Staff elder.....	11
Staff elders.....	11
finance.....	9, 16, 17, 19, 24, 27, 28, 40
financial secretary.....	24
financial Secretary.....	24, 28
Financial Secretary.....	16, 17
fiscal year.....	23, 26, 28
Fiscal Year.....	28
gossip.....	28
Governance.....	6, 8
liability.....	29
meetings.....	8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 28, 41, 57, 59, 66
membership.....	1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 44, 46, 47, 51, 52, 54, 55, 66, 67
ministers.....	
Music minister.....	16
Music Minister.....	16
Youth minister.....	15
name.....	7, 10, 12, 14, 18, 45, 71
Name.....	6, 63, 64, 71
offices.....	19
ordained.....	8
ordinances.....	6, 7
Ordinances.....	26
Other committees.....	25
Other Committees.....	25
overseer.....	38, 39
Overseer.....	8
pastor.....	9, 11, 15, 16, 21, 25, 27, 29, 38, 39, 54, 66, 71, 73
Pastor.....	8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18, 26, 27, 39, 50, 62, 64, 68, 69
Pastor search committee.....	15

plurality.....	6, 8, 9, 40, 41
Plurality.....	38
purpose.....	8, 9, 20, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 42, 44, 45, 56, 59
Purpose.....	6
quorum.....	27
Quorum.....	27
records.....	9, 16, 17, 41, 54, 56
Records.....	55
relationships.....	19, 55, 58
Relationships.....	6, 19
restoration.....	47, 55
secretary.....	16, 17, 24
Secretary.....	16, 17, 24, 28
servants.....	
servant.....	11, 12, 13, 26, 27, 39, 54, 59
women.....	26
Standing committees.....	
Child protection committee.....	25



