

# **UHBC Constitution & By-Laws**

10/2024

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **Article I**

This church shall be known as the University Heights Baptist Church of Huntsville, Texas. The church offices and buildings are located at 2400 Sycamore in the City of Huntsville, Walker County, Texas. The church was organized in 1933 and incorporated on November 22, 1972.

### **Article II Objective**

1. To proclaim earnestly the gospel message and to urge personal acceptance;
2. To conduct regular services of public worship;
3. To promote systematic Bible study, training for Christian service, and to encourage in every way life enlistment in the service of Jesus Christ and
4. To secure as far as possible the practice of true religion and Christian stewardship as taught in the Bible.

### **Article III Policy**

- Section 1. The church's form of government shall be truly democratic, with final authority over all matters vested in the body of believers comprising its membership, with each member having one vote.
- Section 2. The church shall cooperate with the Tryon-Evergreen Baptist Association, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention to promote missions, Christian education, evangelism, and benevolence.

### **Article IV Doctrine**

The Bible is the sole authority for faith and practice of the church. No member is required to accept any doctrine not contained in or that is contrary to scriptural authority. The church shall sustain the principles of freedom of the individual conscience subject only to God, the separation of church and state, and the right of the individual to voice and vote in the affairs of the church.

## **Article V Amendments**

The Constitution and By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote in a regular business meeting by motion from the floor, provided notice is given to the membership one week in advance.

## **BY-LAWS**

### **1.0 CHURCH ROLL**

#### **1.01 Membership**

The membership shall be composed of those persons listed on the church roll in the custody of the church clerk. Membership shall be affirmed by the church after eligibility is ascertained by a vote in a regularly scheduled business meeting.

#### **1.02 Eligibility for Membership**

Prospective members shall be eligible for membership by profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior followed by baptism by immersion, by letter from a Baptist Church of like faith and practice, or by statement from a church of like faith and practice.

#### **1.03 Termination of Membership**

1.03.1 Voluntary: Any member may receive a letter of transfer from this church to any other church of like faith and practice by vote of the members in a regular business meeting. Any member who ceases to attend for 52 consecutive weeks shall be designated inactive. Exceptions are made for members who are homebound. Members can regain active status by demonstrating regular attendance over a three month period.

1.03.2 For Cause: If any member's criminal or immoral conduct causes harm or potential harm to the church, the church may terminate membership. When possible, the Senior Pastor and deacons shall seek reconciliation as outlined in Matthew 18:15-20. Termination of membership requires a vote in a regularly scheduled business meeting.

1.03.3 By Death: The church clerk shall remove a deceased member's name from the church roll, noting the reason for such action.

### **2.0 CHURCH MEETINGS**

#### **2.01 Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once each quarter. Other regularly scheduled worship services may be held as the Senior Pastor recommends and as approved by the church.

## **2.02 Business Meetings**

2.02.1 Regular: Regular Business Meetings shall be held once each quarter. Members present at a regular business meeting will constitute a quorum to conduct business. All reports and recommendations will be made available to the membership. The Senior Pastor or designated staff will serve as the moderator. Consideration of major business, such as the sale of property, call of the Senior Pastor, construction of new building, major change in a church program, committee assignments, etc., shall be communicated to the membership in writing, including but not limited to electronic correspondence, one week prior to any regularly scheduled business meeting.

2.02.2 Called/Special: Special business meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor, the chairman of deacons, or the church clerk upon request of ten members. Notice will be given at least three days in advance. Members present at a called or special business meeting will constitute a quorum to conduct business. The business conducted shall be confined to the announced purpose of the special meeting.

## **3.0 CHURCH STAFF**

### **3.01 Senior Pastor**

Call: The Senior Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by a vote of the church on the recommendation of the Pastor Search Committee. Election shall be by secret ballot by a vote of 90% of present voting members. Resignation shall be effected by thirty days' notice given by the Senior Pastor or by recommendation of the Personnel Committee and Deacons and affirmed by a vote of the present and voting members. Termination shall be effected by recommendation of the Personnel Committee, affirmed by the Deacons and affirmation by a 2/3 vote of the present and voting members.

Qualifications: The Senior Pastor shall meet Biblical and professional qualifications (see Appendix III).

Moral Clause: As an employee of the church, the employee must understand that he is a part of a Christian church and that his employment is a God-ordained vocation. In this regard, employees must fully support and live consistently and in accordance with any Statement of Faith and Christian standards of living as may be outlined in the church's employee handbook or by-laws, by such directives as may be issued from church leadership, and most importantly, by Biblical standards.

### **3.02 Ministerial Staff**

Call: Other Ministerial Staff shall be called for an indefinite period by a vote of the church on the recommendation of the Search Committee, affirmed by the Personnel Committee and Senior Pastor with final approval by a vote of 90% of present voting members. Resignation shall be affected by at least two weeks' notice to the Senior Pastor. Termination shall be

effected by recommendation of the Senior Pastor, affirmed by the Personnel Committee with affirmation of  $\frac{2}{3}$  Deacons.

Qualifications: All Ministerial Staff shall be a member of the church, set an example of Christian living, and meet professional qualifications (see Appendix III).

Moral Clause: As an employee of the church, the employee must understand that he/she is a part of a Christian church and that his/her employment is a God-ordained vocation. In this regard, employees must fully support and live consistently and in accordance with any Statement of Faith and Christian standards of living as may be outlined in the church's employee handbook or by-laws, by such directives as may be issued from church leadership, and most importantly, by biblical standards.

### **3.03 Ministry Support Staff**

Call: Ministry Support Staff shall be appointed by the Senior Pastor or Ministerial Staff. Termination shall be effected by the staff member or by recommendation of the Senior Pastor.

Qualifications: Ministry Support Staff shall be Christian persons with the necessary skills and character to perform the duties as required (see Appendix III).

Moral Clause: As an employee of the church, the employee must understand that he/she is a part of a Christian church. In this regard, employees must fully support and live consistently and in accordance with any Statement of Faith and Christian standards of living as may be outlined in the church's employee handbook or by-laws, by such directives as may be issued from church leadership, and most importantly, by biblical standards.

### **3.04 Maintenance/Custodial Staff**

Call: The Maintenance/Custodial Staff shall be appointed by the Senior Pastor or Ministerial Staff with the knowledge and consent of the Personnel Committee. Termination shall be effected by the staff member or by recommendation of the Senior Pastor.

Qualifications: The Maintenance/Custodial Staff will be Christian persons with the necessary skills to perform the duties as required (see Appendix III).

Moral Clause: As an employee of the church, the employee must understand that he/she is a part of a Christian church. In this regard, employees must fully support and live consistently and in accordance with any Statement of Faith and Christian standards of living as may be outlined in the church's employee handbook or by-laws, by such directives as may be

issued from church leadership, and most importantly, by biblical standards.

### **3.05 Musicians/Worship Leaders**

Call: Musicians/Worship Staff shall be appointed by the Senior Pastor or Ministerial Staff with the knowledge and consent of the Personnel Committee. Termination shall be effected by the staff member or by recommendation of the Senior Pastor.

Qualifications: Musicians/Worship Staff shall be Christian persons with the necessary skills and character to perform the duties as required (see Appendix III).

Moral Clause: As an employee of the church, the employee must understand that he/she is a part of a Christian church. In this regard, employees must fully support and live consistently and in accordance with any Statement of Faith and Christian standards of living as may be outlined in the church's employee handbook or by-laws, by such directives as may be issued from church leadership, and most importantly, by biblical standards.

### **3.06 Discovery Days Preschool Assistant Director**

Call: The Discovery Days Preschool Assistant Director shall be appointed by the Minister of Preschool with the knowledge and consent of the Personnel Committee. Termination shall be effected by the individual or by recommendation of the Minister of Preschool in consultation with the Personnel Committee.

Qualifications: The Discovery Days Preschool Assistant Director shall be a Christian person with the necessary skill and character to perform the duties required by the Preschool Council.

Moral Clause: As an employee of the church, the employee must understand that he/she is a part of a Christian church. In this regard, employees must fully support and live consistently and in accordance with any Statement of Faith and Christian standards of living as may be outlined in the church's employee handbook or by-laws, by such directives as may be issued from church leadership, and most importantly, by biblical standards.

### **3.07 Discovery Days Preschool Teachers**

Call: The Discovery Days/Preschool Teachers shall be appointed by the Minister of Preschool with the knowledge and consent of the Preschool Council. Termination shall be effected by the individual or by recommendation of the Minister of Preschool in consultation with the Preschool Council.

Qualifications: The Employed Preschool Teachers shall be Christian persons with the necessary skill and character to perform the duties required by the Preschool Council.

Moral Clause: As an employee of the church, the employee must understand that he/she is a part of a Christian church. In this regard, employees must fully support and live consistently and in accordance with any Statement of Faith and Christian standards of living as may be outlined in the church's employee handbook or by-laws, by such directives as may be issued from church leadership, and most importantly, by biblical standards.

### **3.08 Church Hostess**

Call: The Church Hostess will be appointed by the Senior Pastor or Ministerial Staff with the knowledge and consent of the Personnel Committee. Termination shall be effected by the Church Hostess or by recommendation of the Senior Pastor.

Qualifications: The Church Hostess will be a Christian person with the necessary skills to perform the duties as required (see Appendix III).

Moral Clause: As an employee of the church, the employee must understand that he/she is a part of a Christian church. In this regard, employees must fully support and live consistently and in accordance with any Statement of Faith and Christian standards of living as may be outlined in the church's employee handbook or by-laws, by such directives as may be issued from church leadership, and most importantly, by biblical standards.

### **3.09 Church Clerk**

Call: The Church Clerk, a ministry support staff employee, will be appointed by the Senior Pastor or Ministerial Staff with the knowledge and consent of the Personnel Committee. Term shall be effected by the Church Clerk or by recommendation of the Senior Pastor.

Qualifications: The Church Clerk will be a Christian person with the necessary skills to perform the duties as required.

### **3.10 Staff Sabbaticals**

Every seven (7) years, each full-time ministerial staff member shall be granted a Sabbatical. For the Senior Pastor, the length of the Sabbatical shall be three (3) months with maximum expenses of \$10,000; for all other full-time Ministerial Staff, the length of the Sabbatical shall be two (2) months with maximum expenses of \$8,000. During the Sabbatical time, the minister's salary and benefits will continue as if the minister were present at the church. When the time for the Sabbatical is approaching, the minister will prepare a "Proposal for Sabbatical" outlining in reasonable specificity the planned activities for the Sabbatical, a timeline (including calendar dates), and a budget (travel, tuition,

and conference fees, etc.). The minister will meet with the Personnel Committee to approve the Proposal for Sabbatical. This process should be started in time for grant funds to be sought to help finance the Sabbatical. When the Sabbatical is completed, the minister will report to the church the impact that the Sabbatical had in his or her life.

## **4.0 TRUSTEES**

### **4.01 Selection Process**

The board of trustees of the church shall consist of five members. This board shall be designated as the legal Agent of the church. Selection of the trustees shall be in the following manner:

The Committee on Committees shall recommend to the church, and the church shall affirm selection in a regularly scheduled business meeting. Each trustee shall be elected for an indefinite period and shall serve until, in the church's judgment, it becomes necessary to replace one or more of the members in the manner prescribed above.

### **4.02 Duties**

They shall have legal care, custody, and supervision of all property of the church and administer it under such rules as may be prescribed by the church. They may also serve in an advisory capacity to the church administrator and other staff as needed.

## **5.0 COMMITTEES**

### **5.01 General**

- A. Unless otherwise specified, every permanent committee shall consist of at least five (5) members.
- B. Every committee would have both a chair and a vice-chair.
  - 1. The Committee on Committees would have the responsibility of soliciting the Vice-Chair each year from the committee members who have two (2) years of eligibility left on that committee.
  - 2. The Chair shall serve a one-year term.
  - 3. The Chair shall be required to rotate off the committee at the end of his/her year of Chairmanship.
  - 4. The term as Vice-Chair shall be one year. The Vice-Chair shall serve a one-year term.
  - 5. The Vice-Chair shall become Chair of the committee the year following his/her Vice-Chairmanship.
- C. Every year, two committee members shall rotate off unless otherwise specified.
  - 1. Initially, each member of the committee shall be assigned a number, either 1, 2, or 3, indicating the number of years they have remaining to serve.

2. If a committee member with service eligibility remaining must cease serving as a member of the committee, then the Committee on Committees shall recommend a person to fill the unexpired term.
  3. When a member rotates off a committee, there must be one (1) year pass before they can be re-elected to that same committee. If an individual elected to fill an unexpired term in the final year of that term, such individual may be re-elected for a full three (3) year term on the committee.
- D. Every committee is encouraged to meet once a quarter and share activities with the church during regularly scheduled business meetings.
- E. Permanent committees will give reports at regular scheduled business meetings when necessary.

## **5.02 Committee on Committees**

### 5.02.1 Purpose:

1. The committee will recruit and recommend individuals annually to serve on permanent committees.
2. The committee will recommend the formation, removal, or restructuring of committees as necessary.
3. The committee shall present every committee chairperson with a copy of the by-laws pertaining to their assigned committee.

### 5.02.2 Composition:

1. The committee will consist of five (5) rotating members in accordance with the committee rotation plan.

### 5.02.3 Selection:

1. The Senior Pastor will recommend committee members to the church. In the absence of a Senior Pastor, the ministerial staff will recommend the rotating members.
2. The Church shall approve the recommendation for new committee members by affirmation in a regularly scheduled business meeting.
3. The Senior Pastor may recommend the committee chairperson.

## **5.03 Permanent**

- A. Permanent Committees will be filled by the Committee on Committees. Permanent Committees and their duties are listed in this document. In choosing committee members, an attempt will be made to represent the entire congregation. To use every member's spiritual gifts and talents, each member may serve on one permanent committee at a time. However, church members may serve on an ad hoc committee while serving on a permanent committee.

- B. Special or ad hoc Committees may be formed at any regularly scheduled business meeting by recommendation of the Senior Pastor or by motion from the floor, with church approval.
- C. The Senior Pastor is an ex officio member of every Committee/Council. He may attend meetings as he deems necessary or is requested.
- D. The Senior Pastor may recommend the committee chairperson for each permanent or ad hoc committee.

5.03.1 Benevolence:

1. The committee will consist of three members.
2. The committee will assist the church in ministering to those in financial need.
3. The committee will make a budget recommendation of funds needed to the Finance Committee each year.
4. The committee will meet when a written application for assistance has been submitted.
5. The committee will decide to whom assistance will be given, provided funding is available and applicants meet applicable criteria.
6. The committee will make a written record of applications processed to include notes and decision vote.
7. Decisions in emergencies may be handled by the ministerial staff provided such assistance meets applicable criteria and does not exceed \$100. All such assistance will be reported to the Chair of the Benevolence Committee.

5.03.2 Finance:

1. The committee will coordinate the planning and presentation of the annual budget to the church for approval.
2. The committee will administer the budget with a monthly review of income/expenditures.
3. The chairperson will present a quarterly finance report to the church during the quarterly Business Meetings.
4. The Financial Administrative Assistant will attend all meetings to provide information needed by the committee.
5. The finance committee will supervise the Offering Team.
6. The committee will evaluate and approve all church-wide special offerings.
7. The committee will review all church-wide fund-raisers for approval.
8. Non-budgeted expenditures will be presented to the Finance Committee for evaluation and approval. Unbudgeted requests greater than \$5,000, except for emergency repairs and/or to comply with mandated governmental regulations, shall be submitted for church approval.

5.03.4 Personnel:

1. The committee is responsible for coordinating personnel acquisition, supervision, and termination as approved by church vote in a regularly scheduled business meeting.

2. The committee will continually survey the personnel needs of the church and work with the Senior Pastor/Ministerial Staff in recruiting, interviewing, and recommending employees to the church.
3. The committee will review and recommend changes needed in the Personnel Manual every two years and prepare job descriptions for new personnel.
4. The committee shall present any ministerial staff compensation package to the Finance Committee for approval before employment, including salary, housing allowance, annuity, ministry expense, and benefits. The committee may recommend salary increases to the Finance Committee each year.
5. The committee will act as a liaison in resolving disagreements between church employees and between church members and employees.

#### **5.04 Ad Hoc**

- A. Ad hoc Committees may be formed at any regularly scheduled business meeting by recommendation of the Senior Pastor or by motion from the floor, with church approval.

##### **5.04.1 Long-Range Planning**

The Committee on Committees will recommend the committee members for approval by the church in a regularly scheduled business meeting.

##### **5.04.2 New Building**

The Committee on Committees will recommend the committee members for approval by the church in a regularly scheduled business meeting.

##### **5.04.3 Crisis Management**

The Committee on Committees will recommend the committee members for approval by the church in a called business meeting.

#### **5.05 Senior Pastor Search**

1. The church will elect the Senior Pastor search committee. Notice will be given at least one week before such an election. The election will be held during morning worship, with each member present nominating five (5) members by secret ballot. The seven (7) members receiving the most votes will be elected. The Deacon officers will collect and count the ballots.
2. The committee will secure an intentional interim pastor, recommend a preaching schedule, guide the church through a self-study to determine the specific needs of the congregation and the qualities of potential pastors, and develop and provide information on the church and community to be shared with prospective pastors.
3. The committee will investigate available information on the most likely candidates for pastor, develop a list of names of prospective pastors, arrange to visit a prospective pastor's worship service, interview the

individual(s) who best meet the qualifications, and arrange for a visit of the prospective pastor at our church.

4. The committee and the Personnel Committee will determine the compensation for the prospective pastor and recommend to the church the call of the prospective pastor along with the agreed compensation.
5. The committee will communicate the vote of the church to the church and the prospective pastor (the vote must be nearly unanimous) and will receive the reply of the prospective pastor and communicate it to the church.
6. The committee will assist in transitioning the new pastor to our church in cooperation with ministerial staff and necessary committees.

#### **5.06 Minister Search Committee**

1. The Senior Pastor shall recommend at least two committee members from the applied ministry area cooperate with the personnel committee to identify and call ministerial staff.
2. The committee, in cooperation with the Senior Pastor, will recommend to the church the call of the prospective minister along with the agreed compensation.
3. The church shall vote to extend a call to the prospective minister in a regularly scheduled business meeting. The vote must be at least 90% of present voting members..

### **6.0 TEAMS**

#### **6.01 Kitchen**

1. The team will assist in the planning and preparing of meals as directed by the ministerial staff.
2. The Church Hostess will serve as the leader of this Team.
3. The team will recommend an annual budget to the Finance Committee.

#### **6.02 Ushers**

1. The team will be responsible for the receiving of offerings at Sunday services.
2. The team will be responsible for the distribution of worship bulletins.

#### **6.03 Sunday Offering**

1. The team will consist of counters screened and reviewed annually for final church approval in a regularly scheduled business meeting.
2. The team will receive offerings, record amounts using the appropriate form, and deposit them in the safe.
3. The team chairperson will ensure a minimum of two team members will be present each time an offering is collected and counted.
4. All team members will undergo a criminal background check.

## **6.04 Security**

1. The team will include volunteers to be screened and reviewed annually for final church approval in a regularly scheduled business meeting.
2. Volunteers must be licensed Peace Officers.
3. The team will monitor the premises when the church is in session.
4. All team members will undergo a criminal background check.
5. To ensure the congregation's security, team members will be allowed to carry means of deadly force when on duty.

## **7.0 MINISTRY COUNCILS**

### **7.01 Purpose:**

Ministry Councils shall serve in an advisory capacity to the ministerial staff of each ministry area, including Preschool, Children, Students, College, Small Groups, Relational Care, and Worship Arts. The Pastor Advisory Council will serve in an advisory capacity to the Senior Pastor and be comprised of representatives from each ministry area along with a Deacon representative.

### **7.02 Composition:**

Ministerial staff shall select members of each Ministry Council. Ministerial staff shall select a representative to serve on the Pastor Advisory Council. The Chairman of Deacons shall select a representative to serve on the Pastor Advisory Council.

### **7.03 Ministry Council Duties:**

1. Give input to the ministerial staff regarding the ministry.
2. Make recommendations for improvements/changes to existing ministry.
3. Support the ministry and ministerial staff in recommendations to the church.

### **7.04 Pastor Advisory Council Duties:**

1. Assist the Senior Pastor in reviewing and implementing church objectives and goals.
2. Give input to the Senior Pastor regarding the state of existing ministries.
3. Support the Senior Pastor in recommendations to the church.

## **8.0 DEACONS - SEE APPENDIX I**

## **9.0 FISCAL MANAGEMENT & TRANSACTIONS - SEE APPENDIX II**

## **10.0 PERSONNEL - SEE APPENDIX III**

## **11.0 BUILDING/FACILITIES USE - SEE APPENDIX IV (Building Use Policy)**

## **12.0 MISSIONS - SEE APPENDIX V (Missions Handbook)**

**13.0 MINISTERIAL LICENSING AND ORDINATION PROCEDURES - SEE APPENDIX I**

**14.0 CHURCH OPERATIONAL POLICY AND BY-LAWS**

**14.01 Review:** By-laws shall be reviewed every five years. Recommendations for updates/changes/additions shall be made to the Pastor Advisory Council for review.

**14.02 Amendment:** All changes shall be presented and approved by the membership in a quarterly business meeting.

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## **APPENDIX I**

# DEACON HANDBOOK

## THE ROLE OF DEACONS AT UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

Deacons are servant-leaders who can be found in almost every age-group, bible study, worship setting, and ministry of UHBC. They are called by God to lifelong service to Him and His church, and in the process of that service, to lead, encourage, and provide personal spiritual help to fellow Christians at UHBC.

**Historical Role:** Since the first century the scriptural role of the deacon has remained constant: to assist widows and orphans, to assist with the administration of the ordinances of Baptism and The Lord's Supper, and to help the pastor as needed. In Baptist churches the role of deacons has steadily evolved over the last 100 years. Deacons at UHBC do not govern the church because our committee-led church operates democratically. Major decisions are recommended and ratified by active church members serving on committees and voting at business meetings. Church trustees, not deacons, represent the church in business dealings (acquiring land, for example). Thus, the deacon role at UHBC falls under the pastoral ministry, best described by the word "caring."

**Corporate Role:** UHBC Deacons have a *special calling* from God to serve God in deeper and more intensive ministry than most laypersons. Each man is gifted by God to perform ministries, some of which are deacon-specific ministries and others that are either personal or church-wide ministries, where deacons work side by side with members. Deacons are expected to be leaders and servants just as Jesus modeled servant leadership during his ministry.

With their involvement and ministry experience, deacons are prepared to help the pastor guide the church through challenging and unexpected times of difficulty, division, or adversity. Deacons are available to the Pastor and staff to offer counsel (act as a "sounding board") when the Pastor requests it. Because of their diverse ages and ministries throughout the church, deacons serve as a thermometer by which the Pastor may check the health of the church. They are an increasingly vital communication link between the Pastor and church members as the church grows in size and outreach. Since deacons are called for a lifetime of service, they provide continuity to the church. Because their call is for a lifetime, deacons provide a means of sensing the spiritual temperature of the church over time.

**Personal Role:** As leaders in the church, deacons are to exhibit meekness, grace, and humility in their dealings with other members. Deacons are to be accessible and available for serious conversations with members about the church, about deacon work, about personal concerns, or whatever important matters members may want to discuss. Deacons are not all trained counselors, but they can offer biblical counseling and help bear another's burdens. In a sense, they are called to be "channels of blessing" to church members, conduits of the Holy Spirit. Put another way, just as Christians are to be "salt and light" to the world (Matt 5:13-14), deacons are to be salt and light to church members, exhorting and encouraging weak and strong, old and young alike.

## DEACON QUALIFICATIONS

“Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons beyond reproach...Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. (I Tim 3:8-15, NASB)

The office of deacon is a position of service and should never be considered as an honorary position. Since the selection of the seven recorded in Acts 6:1-7, deacons have been an important part of the spiritual leadership of churches. Paul concluded in his letter to Timothy that “those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” (I Tim. 3:13, NASB).

Every year churches are facing the question: Who should be elected as a deacon? Of course, every church has to make its own decision, since no set of qualifications will suit all churches. In his book, *Emerging Role of Deacons*, Charles W. Deweese reminds us that “as a rule, Baptist churches have tended to be only as strong as their deacon bodies. The future maturity of these churches will depend heavily on the willingness of their deacons to heed biblical qualifications, to engage in a variety of ministries, to provide high-grade leadership, and to establish an exemplary life-style.”

Although no one set of deacon qualifications is acceptable to all churches, there are some guidelines which churches will find helpful as they go about the selection of deacons. In his book, **The Ministry of the Deacon**, Howard B. Foshee has suggested four such guidelines, that we have adopted.

1. **Maintain biblical qualifications:** These are set forth primarily in Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3:8-13. Though there is not always complete agreement on what certain verses mean, every effort should be made to live out the intent of the biblical conception of deacons. Church members should read these passages carefully before electing deacons.
2. **Choose men who can serve well:** The work that will be required of those elected to be deacons should be kept in focus. If the deacons are going to devote their time to ministry, persons should be chosen who have or can develop skills in witnessing, counseling, visiting, ministering, maintaining fellowship, and interpreting the work of the church to others. Before anyone is elected as deacon, it should be determined whether he is willing to serve according to the desires of the church.
3. **Choose men who can work well with others:** People who are sensitive and get their feelings hurt easily will find it difficult to minister to the hurts of others. Deacons need to be rightly related to fellow deacons and other church leaders and members if they are to strengthen the fellowship of the church.
4. **Choose men who will train for service:** The work of deacons has been changing over the past ten to twenty years. More attention than ever is being given to the deacon as a spiritual leader and his involvement in pastoral ministries. Therefore, the deacon will need to be willing to engage in ongoing training.

Another qualification which needs to be considered is the choice of men with a positive commitment. There are at least five specific areas of commitment needed:

1. **Commitment to Christ:** Each person being considered should have had a life-transforming experience with Christ--the foundation for all other commitments.
2. **Commitment to Family:** A church has a right to expect that one who is asked to serve as a deacon should provide an example of stable leadership in his own family.
3. **Commitment to Stewardship:** A deacon's heart will follow his investment of time and possessions.
4. **Commitment to the Church's Ministry:** Deacons must work together to see that the local church achieves its mission.
5. **Commitment to Deacon Ministry:** Before a person is asked to serve as a deacon and before he accepts the responsibility, he should be committed to the task.

Paul emphasized that persons being considered for the office of deacon should first prove themselves. He did not mean that they have to be perfect, for no person would qualify. However, prospective deacons need to answer some key questions for themselves, as well as for their church.

1. Am I sure that I am a Christian and that my experience with Christ has changed my life?
2. Am I growing as a Christian and am I willing to keep growing in the qualifications set out for deacons in Acts 6 and I Timothy 3?
3. Do I love other people and enjoy ministering to them?
4. Am I willing to train for more effective service?
5. Will I be faithful in working alongside my pastor and fellow deacons in a shared ministry?

As deacons, do not be afraid to ask prospective deacons questions. Also, remember that deacons who are elected have a right to expect full support and cooperation from the members in making their ministry effective. **A church will only be as effective and as strong as the pastor, deacons, and members want it to be.**

“But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.” (Acts 6:3, ASB).

## **DEACON COMMITTEES**

Deacon committees will be chaired by a deacon and members shall serve a two-year term.

### **Deacon Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee will include the three current deacon officers and two former deacon officers. Committee members will be nominated by the current deacon officers and approved by the deacon body. This committee will be the central planning organization within the deacon body. This committee will:

1. Identify deacon body planning needs and goals.
2. Help the deacon body adapt to changes in the church mission or organization.
3. Ensure that all other deacon committees are functioning as they should.
4. Act as an advisory panel for the deacon officers and pastor.
5. Act as an executive arm of the deacon body as needed.
6. Respond to and process requests from transferring deacons, if appropriate.
7. Respond to and process requests from deacons who wish to go to inactive status.
8. Meet as needed.
9. Make regular reports to the deacon body.

In addition, the Executive Committee will be the recruitment arm for new deacons. In this capacity, the committee will:

1. Operate the process for deacon recruitment and recommend changes as needed,
2. Streamline the current deacon selection process as needed, and
3. Determine the frequency of the new deacon recruitment and selection process.

### **Ordinance Committee**

A deacon ordinance committee headed by the deacon chairman shall be formed biannually to assist the pastor in the administration of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper and baptism of new believers. The committee shall have two subcommittees: the Lord's Supper Administration Subcommittee and the Baptism Assistance Subcommittee. The committee will meet as necessary to prepare for and administer the ordinances with the pastor. The committee will enlist the support of other deacons when larger numbers are needed, such as preparing and serving the Lord's Supper or multiple baptisms.

#### **Lord's Supper Administration Subcommittee**

This subcommittee will include five to seven deacons and will be headed by a subcommittee chairman who reports directly to the Chairman of Deacons. The committee will:

1. Ensure sufficient supplies of the elements are purchased and maintained.
2. Be prepared to conduct at least one Lord's Supper service per quarter.
3. Prepare elements for both services.
4. Clean up and store supplies and serving equipment after use.
5. Ensure that the Benevolence and Usher Committees are informed of upcoming Lord's Suppers.

#### **Baptism Assistance Subcommittee**

The ordinance of Baptism is the second of two ordinances UHBC recognizes. Designated deacons participate in this important event through the Baptism Assistance Subcommittee.

The Baptism Assistance Subcommittee is to be headed by one deacon (and his wife), selected by the deacon officers. Additional deacons and wives may be asked to assist in performing necessary duties when more than one baptism occurs involving different genders, and at either or both services.

Deacons and their wives will serve two-year terms. Volunteer lay couples may be appointed from the congregation, serving one-year terms, and may continue for one additional year at their request and approval of the Baptism Assistance Subcommittee leader. Service terms are to be on a calendar year basis.

Duties of the Baptism Assistance Subcommittee: The duties of the Baptism Assistance Subcommittee are to assist the pastor and the candidates in preparing for pre-baptism and post-baptism functions. The Pastor or designated staff member will contact the subcommittee leader about an upcoming baptism.

### **Pre-Baptism Tasks:**

1. Place gowns/robes, towels and plastic bags for personal clothing, after obtaining them from the storage closet, in the dressing room of each candidate before the service.
2. Turn on lights and open the doors in the dressing room(s) for the candidate(s).
3. The deacon and his wife/or the assisting couple will meet the Pastor and the candidates prior to the service for orientation and directives.
4. Escort female candidates to the dressing rooms on the left of the baptistery as you face the front. Escort male candidates to the dressing rooms on the right side of the baptistery as you face the front.
5. Provide any assistance necessary to the candidates to be properly dressed, enter, and exit the baptistery safely.

### **Post Baptism Tasks:**

1. Assist candidates from the baptistery back to appropriate dressing rooms. Watch for wet spots if there are additional candidates. Assist candidates in removing gowns/robes if requested.
2. Mop up all standing water from the baptistery to the dressing rooms with available towels.
3. Ensure hair dryers are not to be used in the dressing rooms. If hair dryers are used, the women are to use them in the women's restroom near the music room and the men will use the men's restrooms in the foyer.
4. Collect wet towels, robes, gowns and put them into the laundry basket from both dressing rooms as applicable.
5. Straighten the dressing rooms and collect all articles that have been left. Collect any personal articles that may have been left and carry them to the desk in the foyer.
6. Leave the dressing room doors open if floors are wet.
7. Turn off the dressing room lights.
8. Take the laundry basket with the wet items to the Pre-School area (Bldg. C) washer/dryer room. Place the basket on the washer.

### **Note:**

1. The laundry will be done by another volunteer and returned to the appropriate storage closet in the dressing room.
2. The baptistery will be emptied and filled by the custodian as directed by the office staff.

3. **IMPORTANT:** Deacons will employ the two-person rule when assisting in baptisms, regardless of age or gender. Deacons will be assisted by their spouse or another deacon, or both, as the situation dictates.

### **Widow Care Committee**

See Widow Care Ministry section.

### **Deacon Training Committee**

See Deacon Training section.

## **DEACON OF THE WEEK**

The Deacon of the Week Program at University Heights Baptist Church helps the membership become better acquainted with the deacon. The deacon, in turn, gets new insight into the needs of the people. Through this plan, the church as a whole becomes familiar with each deacon and his family and is made conscious of the deacon's willingness to minister. This increases the deacon's effectiveness as a church leader.

The Deacon(s) of the Week represents the deacon body to the church during his week of duty. They set the best example he can to encourage church members to be faithful in service and attendance. They will serve as the pastor's chief assistant during this week (after his DOW Sunday, thru the following Saturday) and should stay in contact with the pastor.

### **Responsibilities of the Deacon of the Week:**

1. Attend Sunday Morning Bible Study and assigned morning service.
2. Be available to the pastor to assist with new members or counsel during the invitation.
3. Participate in the current Sunday morning outreach and/or welcome ministry, and any other duties, as assigned by pastor.
4. Be particularly visible during your DOW (week), specifically Wednesday night activities.
5. Communicate with the pastor to be advised of any special needs.
6. Participate in prayer for the Sunday morning service.
7. Perform offertory prayer on Sunday morning, and any other additional ministries on Sunday morning, if requested.
8. Provide bereavement ministry assistance - on call from the Pastor. Visit family or provide other assistance as requested.
9. Conduct hospital visitation – **communicate with church office** on hospital admissions of members Monday through Friday. Visit each new admission at least once during the week, and telephone new out-of-town hospital admissions.
10. Communicate with the other deacon of the week to ensure all ministry activities are accomplished, when necessary.
11. Each Deacon of the Week is responsible for securing a replacement if he will be absent on Sunday. The replacement will perform all duties for the entire week. The DOW should notify the church office of the change no later than the Wednesday prior to the affected Sunday.

## SELECTION OF DEACON OFFICERS

Deacon officers are Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary-Treasurer, and Past Chairman. Deacon officers will be elected to serve one-year terms normally, but a term may be extended by one year with deacon body approval.

**Election of Deacon Officers:** The succession system will be as follows:

The deacon officers will follow a line of succession so that the Chairman is succeeded by the Vice-Chairman and the Vice-Chairman is succeeded by the Secretary-Treasurer.

Only the Secretary-Treasurer will be nominated and elected each year.

If the Vice-chairman is unable to succeed the Chairman as planned, the Secretary-Treasurer will automatically succeed the Chairman, and a new Secretary-Treasurer and Vice-Chairman will be elected at the earliest opportunity.

**Deacon Secretary-Treasurer selection:** the meeting, prior to when the new deacon chairman takes over, a deacon committee will be formed to nominate a candidate for the Secretary-Treasurer (which in succeeding years will be the Vice-Chairman and the Chairman of Deacons).

The deacon nominating committee will be composed of the following persons:

1. Current Vice-Chairman (head of committee)
2. Current Secretary-Treasurer
3. Immediate past chairman (not current)
4. Two other deacons, voluntary or selected

The deacon nominating committee will conduct its business so that a candidate for the Secretary-Treasurer position may be presented for approval at the meeting in which the new deacon chairman takes over.

The deacon nominating committee must be unanimous in its recommendation of the Secretary-Treasurer candidate.

The pastor may serve as *ex-officio* member of the deacon nominating committee.

## DEACON EMERITUS

*Deacon Emeritus* status was created as a way to acknowledge the years of faithful service that a deacon has given to his church. It will generally apply to those who elect to request this status due to age or incapacitation. When a deacon reaches an advanced age or health condition which in his opinion prevents him from performing in an active status, he may request “*Deacon Emeritus*” status which confers on him all the rights and privileges of an active deacon. Likewise, the designated deacon officer or committee may approach a senior deacon and ask him to consider emeritus status. The status of *Deacon Emeritus* will be approved by the deacons at a regular meeting and voted upon by the church at business meeting. *Deacon Emeritus* status lessens the responsibilities, compared to the active deacon, but the deacon emeritus may:

1. Attend deacon meetings
2. Attend deacon fellowship activities
3. Participate in other deacon activities as desired

The *Deacon Emeritus* Committee will include three to five deacons and will be headed by the Deacon Secretary-Treasurer. The Committee will:

1. Keep and update records of *deacons emeritus* and maintain contact with those deacons
2. Handle requests from deacons for emeritus status.
3. Ensure deacons granted emeritus status are recognized in a church service and provided a certificate denoting their new status.
4. Make regular contact with *deacons emeritus*.
5. Include and invite *deacons emeritus* to deacon activities.
6. Report to the deacon body regularly.

### **INACTIVE STATUS OF DEACONS**

There are times when a deacon feels the need to go on temporary inactive status because of personal, medical, family or other problems he considers a hindrance to his ministry. He should bring his situation to a deacon officer's attention; then, the deacon officer will bring this request to the next Deacon Executive Committee meeting for approval. These steps are to be communicated to the deacons at their next meeting.

Each inactive deacon must ultimately decide if he is to return to service as an active deacon or cease to bear the designation of deacon by the church. Active deacons will exhort inactive deacons to return to active status, as soon as the inactive deacon deems possible. The process for reactivation requires the deacon to contact a current deacon officer and request active status. The deacon officer will bring the request to the Deacon Executive Committee. The deacon body will be apprised at the next deacon meeting.

Following are minimum criteria to be met to remain an active deacon:

1. Must attend at least 50% of meetings annually unless the deacon has an excused absence.
2. Must contribute to the annual deacon operational fund.
3. Must perform duties assigned, i.e., personal deacon ministries, committee assignments, widow, etc.
4. Must remain an active and involved member of UHBC.

The Deacon Executive Committee will note shortcomings in the four criteria above and bring them to the attention of deacons who fail to meet one or more. Continued failure may result in the deacon's removal.

# WIDOW CARE MINISTRY

## Widow Care Committee

Providing care is an essential element in the mission of the church. Jesus gave primary attention to meeting the needs of all people during his ministry. His church should continue his example.

Paul often spoke to the churches about their concern for individuals. He wrote: Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2 (NASB). But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. 1 Thessalonians 2:7 (NASB). Deacons are in a natural position to serve and a Widow Care ministry is an excellent opportunity for that service.

The deacon Widow Care Committee will ensure that each UHBC member who is a widow is assigned to a deacon and included in the ongoing Widow Care ministry.

The Deacon Vice Chairman will serve as the Widow Care Ministry Coordinator and chair of the Widow Care Committee. and will lead in planning deacon-widow social activities, as well as leading the committee to assign new widows to deacons and remind deacons of the widow ministry at deacon meetings. Three to five deacons shall serve two-year terms on this committee in assisting the Deacon Vice Chairman.

Two widows may be enlisted to serve as *ex officio* members of the Widow Care Committee. Their responsibility will be to help identify widows in the congregation, especially among transferring members, and to report widow care needs among UHBC widows to the committee.

This committee will train deacons in their responsibilities to assigned widows, ensure each widow has an assigned deacon, and ensure deacons are uniformly caring for widows as prescribed. The committee will report to the deacon body regularly and ask deacons to report on their widow ministry.

At UHBC each deacon is assigned no more than two widows to whom he is to minister. Below is a list of opportunities that are suggested for the care of these women: (by the deacon and his wife).

Each deacon will:

1. Contact his assigned widow as often as necessary to be aware of on-going needs and concerns; at least once per month is recommended.
2. Meet as many needs as possible, such as transportation for shopping, church, doctor's office, mowing, repairs, cleaning gutters, etc.
3. Remember special days: birthday, Mother's Day, Easter, Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas (if written communication sent, please sign along with your wife).

Deacon Body will:

1. Led by the Vice Chairman, organize and support a minimum of one social activity per year; consider April or later after daylight savings time when there are longer daylight hours.
2. Ensure widows are invited and transported as necessary.

## DEACONS TRANSFERRING TO U.H.B.C.

The Deacon Body will observe the following procedures for Deacons moving their letter to UHBC.

1. Determine if a new member joining University Heights Baptist is a deacon from previous churches and has been ordained in a Baptist church.
  - a. Find through UHBC deacons having personal knowledge of new incoming deacons.
  - b. Find through visitation.
2. Make formal visit from the Deacon Body.
  - a. The Chairman of Deacons and/or the Vice Chairman will visit each prospective new deacon.
  - b. The formal visit is used to determine the interest of the prospective new deacon in actively serving in the church.
  - c. Deacon officers will report back to the Deacon Body on their visit.
3. A deacon officer will invite the new deacon to the next deacon meeting, to give his personal testimony and commence a six-month waiting period as a prospective deacon of University Heights Baptist Church. During the six months the new deacon prospect will attend but not vote at meetings.
  - a. If the transferring deacon has been a member of UHBC for six months or more, a further waiting period is not necessary.
  - b. If paragraph 3a above applies, the steps described in paragraph 4 below may be taken immediately, without a six-month delay, and the transferring deacon(s) approved by the church at the earliest opportunity.
4. After the six-month period is completed:
  - a. Deacon Chairman asks the new Deacon if he wants to become an active deacon of University Heights Baptist Church
  - b. The Deacon Body votes on the acceptance of the new deacon.
  - c. At the deacon's completion of his six-month waiting period, he will also give his testimony to the congregation during worship.
  - d. The new deacon's name is announced during the next church business meeting of the church and his selection to active deacon service is voted upon by the church.
5. With transferring in deacons, as well as new deacons, use Appendix questionnaire.

## SELECTION OF NEW DEACONS

**QUALIFICATIONS:** The deacon shall meet the scriptural qualifications set forth in Acts 6:1-3 and I Timothy 3:8-13. He shall practice Biblical giving and shall be faithful to the total program of the church. He shall have exhibited servant leadership in at least one area of the church program.

**DUTIES:** It shall be the duty of the deacons to cooperate with the Pastor in the work of the church. They shall be regular in attendance at deacon meetings. They shall be charged especially with: (1) the spiritual advancement and interest of the church and the watchcare (including spiritual encouragement) of its members; (2) preparation of and assistance in the observance of the Lord's Supper and Baptism; and (3) the care of widows. The deacons shall endeavor to work harmoniously with the pastor to advance the church program.

### SELECTION PROCESS:

#### Step 1. Assess the need for new deacons.

1. Death of deacon(s).
  2. Deacon moves/transfers letter to another church
  3. Deacon becomes Deacon Emeritus or inactive
- or**
4. New ministries or church growth require additional deacons
  5. At request of Pastor
  6. Upon deacon body recommendation
  7. Upon deacon executive committee recommendation

#### Step 2. Decide to select new deacons and announcement.

1. Deacons vote to start a new selection process.
2. An announcement is placed in church media for one month prior to nomination date, to include: responsibilities, qualifications, and a list of current deacons.
3. Pastor preaches one sermon on the selection or role of deacons.

#### Step 3. Nominate deacon candidates.

1. A ballot is provided to each church member at Sunday morning services. Ballots are passed out on the last Sunday of the four-week announcement period. Ballots are collected on the first Sunday following the end of the announcement period. Ballots may be picked up and turned in at the church office for those members who miss either of the two Sundays. Each ballot will be signed by the church member voting. One ballot per member.
2. The ballot has deacon qualifications and lists current deacons and deacon emeritus on back.
3. The Executive Committee will count and tally nominations.
4. Any nominee receiving less than twelve (12) nominations is not further considered.
5. The Deacon body has the option to complete the slate of nominees.

#### Step 4. Deacons screen nominees.

1. The deacon executive committee and Pastor will screen the nominees to ensure all meet deacon qualifications. Other deacons may be enlisted in the screening process if needed.
2. Nominees are then voted on by all deacons present, by secret ballot. Each nominee must receive a 2/3 yes vote of deacons present and voting in order to be further considered. If a deacon does not know the nominee, he may abstain from voting on that person.

3. Nominees approved for candidacy are then interviewed, followed by an interview with the candidate's wife. He will be asked to complete a questionnaire concerning his agreement with Baptist doctrine. (See Appendix A)
4. Each candidate will be asked to give his testimony to the Deacon Body prior to being recommended to the church.

**Step 5. Deacons vote to approve candidates.**

1. The deacons will meet to consider the candidates after the screening phase is complete. Each candidate must be approved by 3/4 of deacons present and voting.
2. The slate of deacon candidates' names will be presented to the church for church approval of their candidacy.

**Step 6. Deacon candidates complete a period of self-examination and training.**

1. This period will be a minimum of 2-3 months, beginning on the day of approval of their candidacy by the church.
2. The deacon executive committee will ensure that all candidates receive instruction, engage in on-the-job training, and attend deacons' meetings.
3. Each candidate will be assigned a mentor by the deacon chairman.
4. If a candidate removes himself from consideration during probation, there will simply be fewer candidates.
5. Each candidate shall present his testimony to the church during the self-examination period.

**Step 7. Deacon body gives final approval of candidates.**

1. The deacon candidates are brought before the deacon body for a final vote of approval.
2. An affirmative vote of a quorum of deacons present and voting is required.

**Step 8. New deacons are ordained**

1. Deacon candidates will be ordained in a worship service within four (4) weeks following church approval.
2. Each deacon shall be presented with a Certificate of Ordination, signed by the deacon chairman and the Pastor.

## **DEACON TRAINING**

Training for deacons will include pre-service training (prior to ordination) as prescribed for new deacons and in-service training for all active deacons as needed. In-service training may include topics such as hospital and hospice visitation, church security awareness, mental health issues, and others as needed.

The Deacon Executive Committee shall have ultimate responsibility for accomplishing deacon training and may delegate actual training to the deacon training committee. The training committee may enlist deacons with relevant skills in coordinating and delivering training.

## **DEACON PRAYER CHAIN**

Whenever the pastor or a church member requests special prayer by the deacons for a particular person or situation, the deacon prayer chain will be activated by the pastor, a ministry assistant, or a deacon.

The deacon prayer chain/address list will be revised as needed by the church office and reviewed by the new chairman of deacons during his first month in office. Email is the desired mode of communication.

## **DEACON OFFICER DUTIES**

### **Chairman:**

- Communicate frequently with, and pray for our church leadership, particularly, but not limited to, our pastor
- Responsible for organizing the Lord's Supper
- Responsible for getting the two deacons selected for the Baptism Committee
- Each new year, with each new chairman, all deacons who have NOT been regular in attendance, should be contacted by the new chairman, and asked to revisit the Deacon Questionnaire or Appendix A to the Deacon Handbook
- Support the new officer group with your prayers and attendance, specifically in the year you serve as immediate past chairman
- Communicate on a timely basis:
  - The new year's schedule of Deacon of the Week
  - The new year's schedule of meetings, with current reminders of immediately upcoming meetings
  - An updated prayer chain list
- Conduct your meetings with an agenda, which you have consulted with your other officers, and the pastor, for their input on the agenda
- Arrange, when necessary, the process for the selection of new and/or transferred in deacons
- Be sure that they receive a copy of the deacon handbook as soon as possible, as they are considering this responsibility
- Assign mentors to new deacons, as well as to incoming deacons
- Prayerfully study the deacon handbook, to enhance your effectiveness as a leader of this group of servant leaders
- Obtain deacon body approval, formally, on any additional duties to be added to the officers, as they would be prescribed by this handbook

### **Vice Chairman:**

- Responsible for coordinating/organizing the Widow/Deacon list
- Responsible for organizing the Widow/Deacon Banquet or similar event
- Each NEW Vice Chairman should review this list of responsibilities to propose changes or additions to the list of responsibilities for the officers of the Deacon Body
- Be available in case the Chairman is indisposed

### **Secretary/Treasurer:**

- Provide timely reporting of the minutes of the Deacon meetings
- Report on the balance available in the Deacon Ministry Fund
- Pursue the current year membership for their "contribution" to the Ministry Fund
- Be available in case the Vice Chairman is indisposed

## **APPENDIX A DEACON'S QUESTIONNAIRE**

**As servant leaders of UHBC, deacons must be unified in their core beliefs. Therefore, take time to prayerfully examine the following statements of belief. There may be areas that you wish to discuss with the Deacon Officers. If you fully agree with the statements, prayerfully state your agreement with them as indicated at the end of this document. This is not intended to be a creed, but a guide to our core beliefs.**

### **THE BIBLE:**

The Bible is God's word to all men. It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the written record of God's self-revelation to man. Therefore, it is the final authority in both faith and practice. Because it is inspired by God, it is truth without any mixture of error. 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20,21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Psalm 119:105,160, 12:6; Proverbs 30:5)

### **GOD:**

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God. Each person in the Trinity possesses equally, the attributes of deity and personality. Genesis 1:1,26,27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

### **JESUS CHRIST:**

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus, miraculously born of a virgin and existing as fully God and fully man, lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all men by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again to earth to reign as King of kings, and Lord of lords. Matthew 1:22,23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14,15; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4; Romans 1:3,4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14,15; Titus 2:13

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT:**

The Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son as God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He equips and empowers as the Christian seeks to live under His control daily. 2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16,17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:1

### **MAN:**

Human beings are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. As the supreme object of God's creation, we were designed for dignity. However, Adam's sin catapulted the creation into a fallen state, and plunged all his descendants into depravity. Thus, all of us are marred by rebellion and disobedience toward God, which is called "sin." Sin separates people from God. Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1,2

## **ETERNITY:**

Man was created to exist forever. He will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or in union with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are places of eternal existence. John 3:16; John 2:25; John 5:11-13; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:15; 1 John 5:11-12; Matthew 25:31-46

## **SALVATION:**

Salvation is a gift from God to man. Man can never make up for his sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can man be saved from sin's penalty. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith. Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8,9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1

## **ETERNAL SECURITY:**

Because God gives man eternal life through Jesus Christ, the believer is secure in salvation for eternity. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives this security. John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25; 10:10,14; 1 Peter 1:3-5

## **THE CHURCH:**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation, members are equally responsible. Its Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages.

Mat 16:15-19; 18:15-20 Acts 2:41-42, 47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23, 27 Acts 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Rom 1:7 1Co 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12 Eph 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11, 21; 5:22-32 Php 1:1; Col 1:18; 1Ti 3:1-15; 4:14

## **SOUL-WINNING:**

Every deacon, like all believers, should be a personal soul-winner using the Scriptures to win individuals to Jesus even as Philip the Deacon won the Ethiopian eunuch. Acts 8:26-40 (NASB)

## **STEWARDSHIP:**

A deacon, like all followers of Christ, should practice stewardship of his resources by scriptural tithing to the church, and giving above that minimum as led by the Holy Spirit.

## **FAMILY LIFE:**

A deacon should be the husband of one wife leading his house well.

A deacon should lead his family to live at peace with all.

A deacon should lead his family in Scripture reading and prayer daily.

A deacon and his wife should lead the body by modeling Christian marriage and service.

## **PERSONAL CONVICTIONS OF WILLINGNESS TO SERVE:**

1. Will you support the pastor as the servant leader of UHBC?
2. If the pastor should fall into sin, will you help to restore him by following the guidelines of 1 Timothy 5:19-21 and Matthew 18:15-17?
3. As a deacon will you be a servant of the church and not a ruler? Will you support the total ministry of the church?
4. Will your wife graciously serve and support the church?
5. Will you attend all the deacons meetings that you can? Will you hold in confidence all matters discussed until and if those matters need to be discussed by the body as a whole?
6. Will you prioritize the good of the whole of the church over the feelings of an individual?
7. As a deacon, will you help in keeping down dissension rather than stirring it up, so that you may undergird the pastor at all times and all places except those identified in question number two?
8. Would you be willing to resign the office of deacon voluntarily if you or your wife ever felt that you could not support the work of the church?
9. Will you commit yourself to grow in Christ, to fellowship with the body, to worship with the body weekly, to pray for the body daily and to serve the body selflessly?

## **DESIRE TO BE A SERVANT LEADER AT UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH:**

1. Are you willing to actively commit to this church, and to practice the above-mentioned aspects of Christian life, as laid out above in this guide to the core beliefs of UHBC?
2. Do you truly desire to do the work of a deacon and are you willing to accept the responsibility of the office?

## **APPENDIX II**

# FISCAL MANAGEMENT & TRANSACTIONS POLICY

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of these financial procedures is to ensure proper management, accountability, and stewardship of church finances.

## 2. Financial Oversight

- The church will establish a Finance Committee to oversee financial matters.
- Regular financial reports will be presented to the church leadership and congregation.

## 3. Budgeting

- The Minister of Administration will prepare an annual budget, which the Finance Committee will review and present to the congregation for approval.
- Budget adjustments can be made with the approval of the Finance Committee.

## 4. Income

- Income will primarily come from tithes, offerings, and above and beyond donations.
- All income will be recorded and deposited in a timely manner.
- Ushers collect the tithes and offerings in each Sunday service and immediately hand off the offerings to meet two designated Deacons (not church staff).
- Both Deacons count the number of envelopes/checks given and note the total on the summary envelope. Each Deacon then counts the cash, and each initial the totals.
- Deacons walk the summary envelope with all monies collected and deposit them into the safe after each service.
- Two Counters (not staff) meet at UHBC early in the week. A designated staff member opens the safe and gives all of the envelopes and loose checks to the Counters (the Financial Administrative Assistant does not have access to the safe).
- Counters set up in a designated separated office to count and record all monies. Both sign off on the report.
- Both Counters immediately take the deposit to the bank, make the deposit, and then return to the church to attach the deposit slip and receipt to the deposit.
- The Financial Administrative Assistant collects the recorded deposit envelope and online giving records in SubSplash, creates the Deposit Summary Report, and records in ACS (financial software).
- Each weekly deposit (all records and reports) is placed in that week's designated envelope and is kept in the locked closet.

## 5. Expenditures

- Receipts or invoices must be submitted for reimbursement (Payment Request Form available).
- All expenditures must be pre-approved by the Minister of Administration and initialed.

- Upon approval, the Financial Administrative Assistant prepares the payment. All checks require two signatures by approved check signers, and no UHBC staff member is authorized to sign.

## **6. Financial Reporting**

- Monthly financial statements will be prepared and reviewed by the Finance Committee.
- Quarterly financial reports will be prepared and reviewed in each quarterly business meeting.

## **7. Audit**

- An independent financial review will be conducted annually to ensure financial integrity.

## **8. Use of Funds**

- Funds must be used in accordance with the church's mission and budget.
- Restricted funds will be used only for their designated purpose.

## **9. Financial Confidentiality**

- The personal financial information of members and donors will be kept confidential.

## **10. Review and Amendments**

- This policy will be reviewed annually and amended as needed.

## **Conclusion**

This financial management and transaction policy promotes trust and transparency within the church community. Regular communication and adherence to these guidelines will help maintain financial health and integrity.

## **APPENDIX III**

# PERSONNEL HANDBOOK

## ARTICLE ONE

### Employment & Termination Policies

#### I. Structure of Church Staff

##### A. Ministerial Staff

1. Senior Pastor
2. Minister of Administration
3. Minister of Worship Arts
4. Minister of Students
5. Minister of Children
6. Minister of Preschool
7. Minister of College
8. Minister of Small Groups/Relational Care

##### B. Support Staff

1. Financial Assistant
2. Ministry Assistants
3. Custodians
4. Employed Preschool Teachers
5. Worship Service Accompanists
6. Building Security
7. Discovery Days Preschool Director
8. Church Hostess
9. Wednesday Night Cooks

#### II. Ministerial Staff

##### A. Call of Ministerial Staff

1. Senior Pastor  
The Senior Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by vote of the church on the recommendation of the Pastor Search Committee. Election shall be by secret ballot by a vote of 90% of present voting members.
2. Ministerial Staff  
Other Ministerial Staff shall be called for an indefinite period by a vote of the church on the recommendation of the Search Committee, affirmed by the Personnel Committee and Senior Pastor, with final approval by a vote of 90% of present voting members.

##### B. Termination of Ministerial Staff

1. Senior Pastor
  - a) Resignation shall be effected by 30 days' notice given by the Senior Pastor or by recommendation of the Personnel Committee and Deacons and affirmed by a vote of the present and voting

members.

- b) The Senior Pastor may be terminated by recommendation of the Personnel Committee, affirmation of the Deacons, and affirmation by  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote of the present and voting members.

## 2. Ministerial Staff

- a) Resignation: Resignation shall be affected by at least two weeks' notice to the Senior Pastor.
- b) Termination: Ministerial Staff may be terminated upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor, affirmed by the Personnel Committee with affirmation of  $\frac{2}{3}$  Deacons.

### III. Support Staff

#### A. Employment of Support Staff

1. The Senior Pastor or Ministerial Staff shall appoint Ministry Assistants, Custodians, Church Hostess, and Accompanists.
2. The Minister of Preschool shall appoint the Discovery Days Preschool Assistant Director.
3. The Minister of Preschool shall appoint the Discovery Days/Preschool Teachers with the knowledge and consent of the Preschool Council.

#### B. Termination of Support Staff

##### 1. Support Staff

- a) Resignation: Support staff shall give at least two weeks' notice to the Senior Pastor or Ministerial Staff.
- b) Termination: Support staff termination shall be by recommendation of the Senior Pastor or Ministerial Staff. Any requests for review of termination shall be made within 14 days of termination to the Personnel Committee for investigation and subsequent action, if any.

##### 2. Discovery Days/Preschool

- a) Resignation: DDP staff shall give at least two weeks' notice to the Minister of Preschool.
- b) Termination: termination shall be effected by the Minister of Preschool in consultation with the Preschool Council.

## **ARTICLE TWO**

### **Compensation**

#### **I. UHBC Compensation Program**

##### **A. Salaried Staff**

1. The salaried staff consists of ministry and support staff, including Ministry Assistants, Custodians, the Financial Assistant, and the Discovery Days Preschool Assistant Director.
2. Full-Time Ministerial staff will receive the following reimbursements:
  - a) Housing Allowance
    - (1) Amount to be determined by Personnel Committee
  - b) Medical Insurance
    - (1) A sum (to be determined year by year) will be paid to help offset the cost of medical insurance.
    - (2) Amount subject to increase as dictated by insurance premiums
  - c) Ministry Expenses
    - (1) Amount to be determined by Personnel Committee
    - (2) To include a phone allowance of \$1200
  - d) Annuities
    - (1) Ministerial staff shall receive an annuity equal to 9% of their annual salary.
    - (2) Ministry Assistants and Custodians are eligible for a matching annuity of up to 3%
  - e) Sabbaticals
    - (1) Ministerial staff shall be entitled to a Sabbatical after seven consecutive years of full-time ministry at University Heights. The Sabbatical Policy is incorporated by reference into this manual.
3. Conferences
  - a) Ministerial Staff may attend two conferences annually (up to ten days) at the church's expense. Attending conferences does not count against the employee's vacation or personal days. No more than 2 Sundays per year may be missed for conferences.
  - b) Ministry Assistants and Financial Assistants may attend up to five conference days annually at the church's expense. Attending conferences does not count against the employee's vacation or personal days. Ministry Assistants and Financial Secretary are allowed two conferences annually.

##### **B. Wage and Contract Staff**

1. Wage and contract staff consists of all non-salaried positions. Salaried positions are indicated above.
2. A review of each wage or contract position will be made by the Minister of Administration according to their job description. Following this review, recommendations for any increase in compensation will be made

to the Finance Committee in the budgeting process.

## **II. Pay Periods**

### **A. All employed persons**

1. All employed persons will be paid bi-monthly on the 15th and the final day of each month.
2. If the 15th or the final day of the month falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, the compensation checks will be received on the preceding business day.

### **B. Non-salaried employees**

1. The pay period for non-salaried employees will end at the end of business one week prior to payday.

## **ARTICLE THREE Staff Policies and Benefits**

### **I. Holidays**

- A. The ministerial and full-time support staff will be given the following holidays: MLK Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving (2 days).
- B. The weeks of Christmas and New Year will be determined year-to-year at the direction of the Senior Pastor.
- C. Part-Time Staff - no paid holidays are available.

### **II. Vacations**

- A. Full-Time Ministerial and Support staff will be granted vacation time according to their length of service: less than five years - 10 work days, 5-10 years - 15 work days, ten or more years - 20 work days.
- B. Four weeks of paid vacation will be the maximum amount any employee will be allowed.
- C. Employees will earn vacation time on the anniversary date of their employment.
- D. Vacation time for all employees is noncumulative except in the year it is earned.
- E. Requests for vacation time off must be made in writing and submitted to the pastor for approval. Vacation requests will be approved on a first-come, first-serve basis, and only if the time off does not interfere with the normal operations of the Church's ministry.

### **III. Denominational/Missionary Work**

- A. All requests of ministerial staff for long-term (anything longer than two weeks) denominational or missionary work will be presented to the Personnel Committee for approval.

### **IV. Denominational Conventions**

- A. The Senior Pastor shall be given time off to attend conferences and conventions, especially TEBA, BGCT, and SBC, with expenses to be taken from convention expenses designated in the budget.
- B. Other ministerial staff will be given time off to attend conferences and conventions - especially TEBA, BGCT, and SBC with expenses to be taken from convention expenses designated in the budget with the approval of the Senior Pastor.

**V. Revivals/Conference Requests**

- A. The Senior Pastor will be permitted ten days each budget year, with pay, to assist other churches in revivals, Bible studies, or conferences. This may entail not more than two Sundays from church responsibilities.
- B. With the approval of the Senior Pastor, other ministerial staff will be permitted ten days each budget year, with pay, to assist other churches in revivals, Bible studies, or conferences. This may entail two Sundays from church responsibilities.

**VI. Sick Leave**

- A. Ministerial Staff and Full-time Support Staff—Seven sick days will be granted in 2025 and five for each budget year following. (Two days may carry over per year, never exceeding seven days total per year.) Any absence exceeding seven days will be counted as vacation. Any absences exceeding vacation days will be without pay. However, upon cessation of employment, all accumulated sick leave is forfeited. Sick days may only be taken in half or full-day increments.
- B. Part-Time Staff - no paid sick leave is available.

**VII. Emergency Leave (Death of Family Members)**

- A. Due to death in the immediate family (Spouse, Child, Parent, Sibling), Ministerial Staff and other full-time employees will be paid for the absence from scheduled work for a period not to exceed three days.
- B. Due to the death of relatives other than the immediate family, Ministerial Staff and other full-time employees will be paid for the absence from scheduled work for a period not to exceed three days.
- C. The Personnel Committee will decide leave allowances for other emergencies concerning the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Personnel Committee, will decide leave allowances for other ministerial and support staff.

**VIII. Parental Leave**

- A. Maternity: Due to the birth or adoption of a child, ministerial staff and other full-time employees will be paid for the absence from scheduled work not to exceed six weeks.

- B. Paternity: Due to the birth or adoption of a child, ministerial staff and other full-time employees will be paid for the absence from scheduled work not to exceed two weeks.

**IX. Civic Duties Leave**

- A. Absence of any salaried employee for jury and/or witness duty shall be paid to the employee for the time spent.
- B. Absence of any wage employee for jury and/or witness duty shall be paid to the employee for the time spent.

**X. Minister's Day Off**

- A. All ministerial staff will have Fridays off from their regular duties.

**XI. Anniversary Recognition**

- A. On each five-year increment of service to University Heights (5, 10, 15, 20, etc), the Personnel Committee will honor the employee with appropriate recognition.

**XII. Office Hours**

- A. The Church Office will be open 8 AM till 5 PM Monday through Thursday, with thirty minutes off for lunch totaling 34 hours. This will result in a 6-hour cache to be utilized for ministry purposes outside of regular office hours, resulting in a 40-hour work week. If any employee anticipates needing more than 6 hours of non-office time, they must notify the Minister of Administration to determine if their daily schedule can/should be adjusted during that given week to ensure they do not exceed 40 hours.
- B. When more than 40 hours of salaried support staff/wage staff are required to properly carry on the church's ministry, time and one/half compensation will be given. This overtime will be paid only when the pastor requests additional work.

**XIII. Outside Employment**

- A. No ministerial staff shall accept outside employment without approval given in writing by the pastor and the Personnel Committee.
- B. The Personnel Committee of University Heights views all aspects of church employment as ministry. All employees of University Heights who are involved in a home-based business should refrain from soliciting other church employees to work with/for them in such an endeavor. In addition, since church employment is viewed as ministry, no direct solicitation from any enrollment files shall be used in any employee's home-based business.

**ARTICLE FOUR  
Personnel Manual Review**

- I. The approved Personnel Manual of University Heights will be reviewed by the Personnel Committee every two years.

A. This review will be done in the fourth quarter of the year.

The Personnel Manual will be presented to the church for approval at the 4th Quarter Business Meeting (January).

## **APPENDIX IV**

## BUILDING/FACILITY USE POLICY

The following guidelines are designed to enhance your event's environment and protect the church facilities' beauty. Please understand your responsibility for any damages to carpets, furniture, or buildings. It is important that you understand and follow these policies by signing the attached agreement.

### EQUIPMENT

- Church property within our facilities may only be moved by the UHBC custodial staff. Furniture may not be rearranged or moved from one part of the building to another. UHBC musical instruments, plants, or panels on stage shall not be moved at any time.
- Round and Long Tables are available upon request. See page 3 for details on which equipment is available to you. On the Event Request Form, please indicate the number of tables and chairs needed.
- Any specific setup arrangements for the event must be communicated on the event request form or by email to [office@uhbc.net](mailto:office@uhbc.net) at least two weeks before the event.

### DECORATIONS

- You may access any of the buildings as early as 8:30 a.m. on the day of the event. PLEASE NOTE: The A/C will be turned on two hours before the event. Temporary key sets are available to check out through the church office.
- **Only sticky tack** is approved for hanging posters on walls. Any other wall hanging materials, such as Demand Hooks, nails, pins, or adhesives, are prohibited as they have damaged our walls in the past.
- We encourage using **battery-operated candles** to minimize the risk of a fire hazard and damage to carpets that wax candles can cause.
- Due to a lack of storage space in our facilities, anything brought in must be removed immediately after the event.
- **Glitter and confetti are strictly prohibited in any of our facilities. In cases containing glitter and confetti, an additional custodial fee will be charged.**
- Nothing should be hung from the ceilings or walls in any portion of our facilities.
- Plants, wall art, and other decor throughout the buildings must not be removed or rearranged.
- Custodians are not available to clean up the decoration setup before the event unless an On-Site Custodian is requested.

### FOOD RESTRICTIONS

- Any food or beverage that would stain the carpet or furniture (colored punch, mustard, ketchup, tomato-based foods, etc.) is not allowed in any UHBC facility with carpet.

### KITCHEN USE

- The UHBC Church Hostess will be notified once the Event Request Form has been received and approved.
- Minimum custodial fees do not cover kitchen cleanup except for trash disposal and sweeping the floor. **Please make sure that all Kitchen Use guidelines are followed to ensure no additional fee is incurred.**
- No kitchen items are to be removed from UHBC property.
- Kitchen equipment used outside the kitchen area should be signed out and returned to the kitchen the same day of the event.
- Any used kitchen equipment or utensils must be washed, dried, and returned to their proper storage place.
- If the steam table, salad bar, or stove top is used, it must be cleaned and dried thoroughly.

- The kitchen sink must be cleaned, including drain catchers, and dried with a kitchen towel.
- Dirty linens, such as aprons, cup towels, or dish rags, should be left in a neat pile in the kitchen. Our kitchen team will launder them.
- UHBC is not responsible for any items left in the refrigerator or freezer.

**CHURCH EQUIPMENT**

UHBC has the following items available for use at receptions on church property only. Anything not included on this list will need to be provided on your own. Please contact office@uhbc.net to reserve these items.

- 27 Round Tables (60”W x 29”H) -- seats 6-8
- 3 Rectangular 8-ft. Tables (96”L x 30”W x 29”H)
- Up to 216 Chairs

**BUILDING KEYS**

Temporary building keys can be checked out from the church office as early as 8:30am one business day prior to the event. Please be sure to pick them up before the church office closes. Please return the keys to the church office by closing time of the following business day.

UHBC office hours: Monday-Thursday 8:00 am-5:00 pm

**RESPECT OF CHURCH PROPERTY**

Please remember that these facilities are dedicated to the Lord, and we ask that all parties treat them with reverence and respect.

- The use of inappropriate language is prohibited.
- Proper dress is required for preparation and the event.
- Use of alcoholic beverages or items resembling such beverages is strictly prohibited at any time on the premises, whether in a building or on the church grounds.
- Smoking is prohibited in any of the church buildings or on the church grounds at any time.

**FACILITY USE AGREEMENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and agree to abide by the facility policies stated above for University Heights Baptist Church.

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Signature Date Signed

Name of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Hours of Event: \_\_\_\_\_