

## **Report of the Special Committee on Church Membership Process – New Members**

In December 2020 the Deacons requested a Special Committee be formed to consider the process of joining the church as outlined in the By-Laws

The Special Committee presented their report at the February 21, 2021 Business Meeting.

The general recommendation provided by the committee which requires no action was:

*In the spirit of “creating a more welcoming” experience for new members and to more accurately reflect other current practices, the Special Committee recommends that those requesting membership upon invitation in a public worship service be considered by the church for full membership upon request and the consideration not be delayed until the next Business Meeting.*

To implement that recommendation the Committee then moved specific revisions to the By-Laws. Per the By-Laws any amendments will be considered at the next regular Business Meeting in May 2021.

While general discussion was held on February 21<sup>st</sup> it was announced that two Virtual Sessions would be held to further discuss the motion. These sessions are scheduled for March 22 and April 22 at 7:00 pm via Zoom.

This document details the transition from current By-Law language (page 2) to that which was part of the Committee motion (page 6). The simple “3 Step” language transition process is detailed on pages 3, 4 and 5:

Page 2: Current Relevant By-Law Language on Membership

Page 3: STEP 1: Mark-up of language to be removed and added (removes prescriptive language of processes between the request for membership and being granted membership and replaces with more general language around the Deacons working with staff to facilitate membership).

Page 4: STEP 2: Mark-up of language to be removed and added (removes language about business meeting and voting and replaces it with language on “affirmation upon request”)

Page 5: STEP 3: Minor grammar revisions.

Page 6: Final recommended language.

## **Current Relevant By-Law Language on Membership**

### **Article I – Membership**

#### **A. Qualifications and Procedure**

Membership in this congregation will be open to all who confess a personal faith in God through Jesus Christ, the Savior and Lord, who have expressed this faith through the ordinance of baptism by immersion, and who sincerely desire to associate themselves in this mutual effort to advance the cause of the Kingdom of God.

Membership shall be open to members of other Christian communions who confess a personal faith in God through Jesus Christ the Savior and Lord, but who have been baptized by means other than immersion.

Upon request for membership during a public invitation or after private consultation with the pastor, the candidate will be presented to the members as a potential church member.

Between the public request for membership and the vote of the church, the candidate will meet with the Membership Committee/Deacon for the following purposes:

1. To give new Christians a chance to share a testimony of their Christian experience and willingness to serve Christ.
2. To provide transfer members an opportunity to tell of their responsibilities and services in their previous church membership. This will assist the church in helping them serve.
3. To provide the opportunity for instruction of the new members concerning the programs, functions, services, opportunities, and responsibilities of a member of Faith Baptist Church.

The Membership Committee/Deacon will be obligated to report to the church the name of each potential member, with its recommendations, at the next regular business session of the Church.

The vote in a regular business session for the receiving of new members into Faith Baptist Church shall be by a majority vote of all members present and voting immediately after consideration of the recommendations of the Membership Committee.

### **Article II - Officers J. Deacons**

2. The deacons shall select the Membership Committee from among their number and have a direct relationship to this Committee and its functions.

## STEP 1

Remove prescriptive language (in yellow) about Membership Committee and processes.

Add general language (in green) to Deacon description regarding facilitating membership.

## Article I – Membership

### A. Qualifications and Procedure

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Membership shall be open to members of other Christian communions who confess a personal faith in God through Jesus Christ the Savior and Lord, but who have been baptized by means other than immersion.

Upon request for membership during a public invitation or after private consultation with the pastor, the candidate will be presented to the members as a potential church member.

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## Article II - Officers J. Deacons

2. The deacons shall select the Membership Committee from among their number and have a direct relationship to this Committee and its functions. It shall be the responsibility of the Membership Committee of the Deacons to work with the pastoral staff to facilitate the entrance of any new members into Faith Baptist Church.

## STEP 2

Remove language (in yellow) about business meeting and voting.

Add language (in green) on affirmation upon request.

### Article I – Membership

#### A. Qualifications and Procedure

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Membership shall be open to members of other Christian communions who confess a personal faith in God through Jesus Christ the Savior and Lord, but who have been baptized by means other than immersion.

Upon request for membership during a public invitation or after private consultation with the pastor, the candidate will be presented to the members as a potential church member. The pastor or associate pastor may immediately call for an affirmation on membership. This is the only church business that may take place outside of a regular or special business meeting and without the Moderator, Associate Moderator or Clerk presiding. Affirmation of membership is by majority of active members present and participating. A quorum shall be fifteen active members present, the same as regular or special business meetings.

The Membership Committee/Deacon will be obligated to report to the church the name of each potential member, with its recommendations, at the next regular business session of the Church.

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### **STEP 3**

Provides minor grammar revisions (deletions in yellow, additions in green) in paragraphs one and two.

## **Article I – Membership**

### **A. Qualification and Procedure**

Membership in this congregation ~~will be~~ **is** open to all who confess a personal faith in God through Jesus Christ, the Savior and Lord, who have expressed this faith through the ordinance of baptism by immersion, and who sincerely desire to associate themselves in this mutual effort to advance the cause of the Kingdom of God.

Membership ~~shall be~~ **is also** open to members of other Christian communions who confess a personal faith in God through Jesus Christ the Savior and Lord, ~~but~~ **and** who have been baptized by means other than immersion.

Upon request for membership during a public invitation or after private consultation with the pastor, the candidate will be presented to the members as a potential church member. The pastor or associate pastor may immediately call for an affirmation on membership. This is the only church business that may take place outside of a regular or special business meeting and without the Moderator, Associate Moderator or Clerk presiding. Affirmation of membership is by majority of active members present and participating. A quorum shall be fifteen active members present, the same as regular or special business meetings.

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**Final By-Law Recommendation on Membership after revisions on pages 3 through 5**

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