Washington Heights Baptist Church

Board of Deacons

Deacon Handbook
INTRODUCTION

This handbook is written to help the deacon to better understand his role and to help him to serve faithfully and effectively. It is written to acquaint the deacon to the Biblical references related to the office of deacon and the particulars of the deacon ministry of Washington Heights Baptist Church.

At Washington Heights Baptist Church men are elected by the congregation to hold the honorable position of deacon. Men that are elected to the position of deacon must live a life which has exhibited the characteristics of faithfulness and loyalty to both the Lord and His church.

There are three passages in the New Testament that are commonly cited concerning the office of deacon: Acts 6:1-7, Philippians 1:1, and I Timothy 3:8-12. The word for deacon in the New Testament originally described a servant who “stirred up dust while waiting on tables.” A deacon’s major attention must be given to serving God under the leadership of the Senior Pastor and the Executive Pastor in the practical ministry of the church.

The general concept of deacon as a servant of the church is well established in both the Bible and church history. The deacon is intended to serve as a model to the local church through the character of his life as well as through his involvement in ministry. The role of deacon is not intended to be sought after for personal honor, but rather it is to be viewed as a call to a greater commitment of service. The desire and willingness to live the life of a servant is a critical qualification for deacon selection.

Paul wrote that the reward for faithfulness in the office of deacon is that they "obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 3:13). The selfless deacon may also feel close kinship with his Master, who walked the earth as "One who serves" (Luke 22:27). According to Jesus, the true heroes in the kingdom of God are those who assume the role of diakonos-- a servant (Matt. 20:26-28).

25 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,
26 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—28 just as the Son of Man did not come to
be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
ROLE OF THE DEACON Defined

The word deacon is defined by Wikipedia as:

The word deacon is derived from the Greek word diakonos, which is often translated servant or more specifically waiter. Some believe that the office of deacon originated in the selection of the seven men (among them Stephen) to assist with pastoral and administrative needs of the early church (Acts of the Apostles, chapter 6). Deaconesses are mentioned by Pliny the Younger in a letter dated c. 112. The exact relationship between Deacons and Deaconesses is ecclesiologically unclear; in some traditions, a deaconess is simply a female deacon; in others, deaconesses constitute a separate order.

The role of deacon in the New Testament is indeed somewhat ambiguous. As it has been stated previously, the word literally means servant, but the word can also be translated as minister and there is no further elaboration of the office given. The role of deacon in the Christian Church is generally associated with service of some kind, but the type of service rendered by the deacons varies among theological and denominational traditions. Some may argue that the deacons administrated the physical needs of the church because of the example of the seven men selected in Acts 6. While the word deacon is used in v. 1 (ministry or distribution), and the verb form is used in v.2 (to serve) the noun form is also used in v. 4 to refer to the apostles proclamation (ministry of the word). Therefore, there is reason to believe that the ministry of the deacon is limited to administration.

Deacons are usually thought of as under-shepherds who were responsible for shepherding a smaller group of people within the local church, while the elders were responsible the overall leadership of the church. Deacons are to be under the authority of the elders, which is evident from the fact that they are always mentioned after the elders, and also because the requirements for deacon are slightly less strict than for elders.

In the early years of the church, a difference of opinion arose about the role of deacons. Some church officials argued that no spiritual function had been assigned to deacons. But others insisted that deacons were a vital part of a church's ministry, with official duties to perform. Through the centuries, deacons generally have served as assistants to the clergy in the service of the sanctuary.

In the modern church deacons exist as a distinct lower order of the clergy in the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of England, the Episcopal Church, the United Methodist Church, and other liturgical churches. In other denominations, including Baptist, Presbyterian, and Congregational, deacons are ordained laymen who carry out a variety of practical and spiritual ministries that assist the pastor. Deacons are often given administrative and financial duties, such as reviewing budgets and recommending new church programs and personnel.

It should also be noted that the position of deacon, which is described in Acts 6 is an elected position. This means that although the deacon should certainly feel led to serve in that position; however the initiation of the commitment rests in the hands of the congregation of the church. Therefore, the position of deacon is not a position to which one appoints oneself.
DEACONS IN SCRIPTURE

The office of the deacon is introduced in the New Testament in Acts 6. Although, the seven men appointed in Acts 6 were not actually called “deacons”, most students of the Bible generally agree that the “seven” were the prototype of today’s deacons. In the early days of the church, the tremendous growth through the ministry of the apostles was accompanied by many demands of service, which the apostles could not adequately provide. Specifically mentioned were the increasing complaints by the Grecian Jews against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. Thus, the appointment of these dedicated individuals provided support and service for the ministry of the gospel by meeting practical needs within the church body.

Acts 6:1-7 (v.1) In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. (v. 2) So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. (v. 3) Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them (v. 4) and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.” (v. 5) This pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. (v. 6) They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. (v. 7) So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

The work of Stephen and Phillip strongly suggests that gifted deacons became a permanent part of the church’s outreach to the world very early in its history. The thrilling activities of these servants of the church sound much like the work of a traveling evangelist, missionary, or lay preacher. Stephen is described as a man "full of faith and power" who "did great wonders and signs among the people" (Acts 6:8). So convincing were his words and miracles that "they were not able to resist the wisdom and Spirit by which he spoke" (Acts 6:10). While some responded in faith, Stephen's zeal for Christ stirred up powerful enemies (Acts 6:11-13). Undaunted by false witnesses, Stephen glorified the Lord even as he was put to death for his convictions (Acts 7:59-60). Phillip was also an evangelist who "preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8:9-13). After preaching to eager crowds in Samaria, Phillip witnessed to a solitary Ethiopian in the desert and baptized him (Acts 8:26-38).

It is important to note that, in the first introduction, emphasis is placed upon the character of the men chosen to serve as deacons. Seven men were chosen who were "known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom". Among those chosen was Stephen, “a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit”. No matter what the ministry to be performed was to involve, in this case the waiting of tables and service to the widows, the life, and character of the man chosen to perform it was the determining factor.

In addition to the passages Acts 6, which refer to the role of the deacon, there are two other passages that make reference to deacons: Philippians 1:1 and I Timothy 3:8-12. The primary focus of these passages is the order and structure in the church. The appointment of a deacon can best be understood in relation to the role of co-worker and fellow servant in the Gospel.
Philippians 1:1. (v.1) Paul and Timothy, servant of Christ Jesus, to all the saints with the overseers and deacons:

1 Timothy 3:8-12. (v. 8) Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. (v. 9) They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. (v. 10) They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. (v. 11) In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. (v. 12) A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

In summary, there are several aspects of the position of deacon, which are referenced in the New Testament, that need to be understood. First, the deacon is selected to serve by his fellow members of the church and church leaders. Next, he should be recognized to faithful. Finally, the deacon is to be seen as an extension of the pastoral ministry. The deacon has the responsibility of making the truth of God’s Word come alive within the church.

Selection to the position of deacon at Washington Heights Baptist Church is based on the above standards. These standards are essential to the services that the deacon is expected to perform. In our life and indeed, in our Christian walk, what we do is normally a reflection of who we are and each deacon is expected to nurture his own personal life and relationships so that he is able to fulfill the responsibilities of ministry that have been outlined by God in the New Testament. A deacon must demonstrate a heart for God through scriptural attributes and demonstrated spiritual maturity and service as described above.
QUALIFICATIONS OF A DEACON

Spiritual Qualifications

Acts 6:1-7 (v.1) In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. (v. 2) So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. (v. 3) Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them (v. 4) and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.” (v. 5) This pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. (v. 6) They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. (v. 7) So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

◦ Full of the Holy Spirit – The word “full” means “covered in every part, thoroughly permeated with, complete, lacking nothing” concerning God’s Holy Spirit. Deacons are to be completely dedicated to the presence and guidance of God’s Spirit in their personal life and in their daily work.

◦ Full of wisdom – The word “wisdom” means the deacon, because of a relationship to God’s Spirit, knows how to both choose and act wisely in all matters. Common sense is certainly a part of the meaning.

◦ Full of faith – This is not specifically stated as a requirement, but is inferred from the selection of Stephen. It means the deacon should be clear in his understanding of his own faith, and he should be strong first in its proclamation, and then, if need be, strong in its defense as he carries out his responsibilities.

Moral Qualifications

I Timothy 3:8-12. (v. 8) Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. (v. 9) They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. (v. 10) They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. (v. 11) In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. (v. 12) A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

◦ Worthy of respect – The deacon is to be a person whose moral and spiritual character evokes esteem from others; a person that is considered honorable or noble. He should be a person that has a respectful reputation especially in spiritual matters.

◦ Sincere – The deacon is to be truthful and trustworthy. He should not say one thing to one person and something different to another. A deacon’s word must be honest; not a person that takes part in gossip, tale bearing, idle talking, or slander and does not use manipulative, insincere, or deceitful speech. He is not a liar.
Not indulging in much wine – For the deacon, there is to be no abuse or dependence on any drug – may include the regular use of alcohol even though not getting drunk, if inappropriate dependence is demonstrated. There should be a demonstrated freedom not to drink. Paul is prohibiting the abuse of wine or any other substance that could damage a deacon’s testimony and make ineffective his Christian witness.

Not pursuing dishonest gain – Not willing to manipulate or resort to illegitimate means for personal gain, either for money or for recognition, especially in the area of ministry. The person demonstrates a proper values system, including a willingness to give up money making opportunities for the sake of the gospel. The deacon is not to be controlled by a greedy obsession to obtain all the material possessions he can.

Must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience – The words “keep hold” speaks of knowing the Word of God and “clear conscience” speaks of doing the Word of God. This simply means that a deacon’s life must be consistent with Christian doctrine. The deacon should believe in sound doctrine, and should hold firm to his convictions. His spiritual integrity is beyond reproach.

Must first be tested – The deacon must demonstrate his spiritual qualifications before being elected to serve in the position of deacon. His daily attitude, speech, and conduct should be observed for an appropriate period by the elders of the church. The deacon should have a proven ability to do the work of shepherding and service effectively and without any grounds of accusation.

The husband of one wife – Literally, a “one-woman man”, this means specifically that there is at most only one wife in the deacon’s life. It means in principle that the deacon has his sexuality resolved and under control. This should not be interpreted to mean that a man must be married in order to serve as a deacon or that a man that has been divorced is ineligible to serve as a deacon.

Manages his children and household well – The primary application is to married men meaning that their family life is good. The deacon should act as a responsible Christian father, husband, and household manager providing for his family financially, emotionally, and spiritually in an active ever-present role through example and service. One key measurement when evaluating a man’s household management is the behavior of his wife and children. Because the home is often referred as a microcosm of the church, it is imperative a deacon is able to care for his family before he can care for the church of God. In the case of the unmarried, it means that they have close relationships and that those relationships are generally healthy and stable. A pattern of broken relationships suggests an inability to get along with others (especially his family and friends) and should disqualify him to serve as a deacon.

Qualifications for the wife of the deacon

I Timothy 3:11 - In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

It has been suggested that the wives of church leaders are a big factor in their husband’s success. The deacon’s wife must meet special requirements as well, because she will often need to support
her husband in his many delicate duties. Any reproach on the part of the wife, reflect on the work of her husband. The qualifications for the deacon’s wife are given in I Timothy 3:11.

- **Worthy of respect** – This refers in the same manner as the qualification of the deacon. The wife of the deacon should be truthful and trustworthy. She also should be a person that has a respectful reputation especially in spiritual matters.

- **Not a malicious talker** – Similar to the deacon the wife should be forthright in her speech; not participating in gossip or slander. She should not use manipulative, insincere, or deceitful speech. He is not a liar. The wife of a deacon should not be one who is loose with the tongue.

- **Temperate** – This usually refers to someone who is sober-minded and calm. A temperate person is one who is collected, well composed, and not easily excited. The temperate person is possessed with balanced judgment.

- **Trustworthy in everything** – The wife of the deacon must be faithful and reliable in all things. She needs to be a person that can be depended upon. She must be faithful to her husband, to her family, to the church, and above all, to Jesus Christ.

To summarize, then, the qualifications of the deacon’s wife include holding a serious view of life, avoiding the spreading of gossip, striving to maintain a balanced sense of judgment, and dependability in every area of life. A wife such as the one described can be a real asset to any man, especially to the deacon who has official responsibilities in the church of God.
DUTIES OF A DEACON

PRACTICAL DUTIES UNIQUE TO A DEACON AT WASHINGTON HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

- Must be committed to the church’s Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, and the Vision/Purpose Statement
- Loyal support of the pastor and the pastoral staff
- Faithful attendance at the services of the church
- Regular attendance at the meetings of the Board of Deacons
- Encouragement of and the participation in the organization and ministries of the church
- Assist in the ministering of the gospel to believers and unbelievers
- Demonstrate Christ-like consecration, loyalty, prayer support, and faithfulness to the church body
- Assist in visiting the sick and needy of the church
- Assistance with new membership assimilation
- Participation as a Team Leader for at least one of the Deacon Ministry Teams

SPECIFIC DUTIES UNIQUE TO A DEACON AT WASHINGTON HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

- Cooperate with the Pastor and the Board of Deaconesses in visiting the members, in the care of the sick, needy, and distressed members of the church. (Article VI, Section II, (g), ‘Duties of the Deacons:’; Constitution of WHBC)
- Cooperate with the Pastor and the Board of Deaconesses in the preparation for and the observance of the ordinances of the Church. (Article VI, Section II, (g), ‘Duties of the Deacons:’; Constitution of WHBC)
- Manage the collection and distribution of the Fellowship Fund to provide financial relief to members or others suffering financial hardships in accordance with the Fellowship Fund Policy. (Article VI, Section II, (g), ‘Duties of the Deacons:’; Constitution of WHBC)
- The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall serve as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Church. (Article VI, Section III; Constitution of WHBC)
- A member of the Board of Deacons, which is usually the Chairman or his appointee, shall serve on the Church Finance Committee. (Article VII, Section I; Constitution of WHBC)
- A member of the Board of Deacons, which is usually the Chairman or his appointee, shall serve on the Church Nominating Committee. (Article VII, Section II; Constitution of WHBC)
- A member of the Board of Deacons, which is usually the Chairman or his appointee, shall serve on the Church Endowment Committee. (Article VII, Section III; Constitution WHBC)
- The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall serve on the committee to select the seven members to serve on the Pastoral Search Committee whenever such a committee needs to be established. (Article IX, Section II, (b), “The Formation of the Pastoral Search Committee”; Constitution of WHBC)
Along with the Church Finance Committee, assess and approve the need of a new pastoral ministry position as may be determined by the Pastoral Staff. (Article XI, Section III, (c); Constitution of WHBC)

Responsible for approving all candidates for a Pastoral Staff Member position that have been submitted by a Search Committee. (Article XI, Section III, (b); Constitution of WHBC)

In the event the Senior Pastor decides to resign, he is to submit his written notification to the Chairman of the Board of Deacons. (Article IX, Section II (c); Constitution of WHBC)

The Senior Pastor is to consult with the Executive Committee of the Board of Deacons prior to asking for the resignation or terminating a Pastoral Staff Member. (Article IX, Section III (d); Constitution of WHBC)

The Chairman of the Board of Deacons is to make himself available to the members of the congregation to hear his or her concern regarding some aspect of the Church ministry; members should initially share his or her concern with the responsible ministry leader or a member of the Pastoral Staff before sharing his or her concern with the Chairman. (Article V, Section V (c); Constitution of WHBC)

When necessary, terminate a person’s church membership by taking official action in accordance with the Board’s Policy of Dismal. (Article V, Section VI, (d); Constitution of WHBC)

Vote to restore those members that have been dismissed by the Board of Deacons action to terminate the person’s membership. (Article V, Section VII; Constitution of WHBC)

When necessary the Chairman may call a “Specially-called” business meeting providing he gives the congregation at least one week notice thereof. (Article XIII, Section II; Constitution of WHBC)

The Board of Deacons has final authority regarding the interpretation of the Constitution whenever any questions may arise. (Article XV; Constitution of WHBC)

Although, not specified in the church constitution, the board may be asked by the Senior Pastor to assess and ratify decisions made by him or the pastoral staff that may affect the ministries or members of the church.

The Senior Pastor meets with the Executive Committee in order to increase communications with the Deacons and to gain advice and assistance from the Deacons on more frequent and regular basis.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS

The organization and structure of the Board of Deacons is outlined in the Constitution of Washington Heights Baptist Church. It would be worthwhile for every deacon to take the time to study the church’s constitution if for no other reason than to better understand the organization of the Board of Deacons.

Size of the Board – The Board of Deacons must consist of at least twelve (12) members. There is nothing in the church constitution that limits the number of deacons; however, the size of the board
is usually kept at less twenty (20) deacons in order to have a more manageable board. It is always necessary to have a majority of the board members present in order to have a quorum, which is required to conduct a board meeting.

**Selection of a Deacon** – The Church Nominating Committee will prepare a list of name of qualified men to serve on the Board of Deacons. The qualifications of each nominee proposed will be thoroughly discussed by the Nominating Committee to be certain that the nominee is indeed qualified to serve. Once it has be determined that the nominee is qualified to serve the Chairman will call the nominees to ask if he feels led to serve on the Board of Deacons. Those nominees that affirm they have been called are presented to the congregation at the next Annual Business Meeting for their approval.

**Term of office** - Deacons are elected for a term of three years and at the end of his three year term, he may be re-nominated and elected to serve a second three year term. The Deacon must then leave the Board of Deacons and he can not be elected to serve another three year term until one year has lapsed.

**Board Meetings** – Deacon Board Meetings are held each month (except August and December are usually skipped). The meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month and the meetings usually begin around 6:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. The Meeting Agenda and the Minutes from the previous Board Meeting are sent out to each member via email prior to the monthly board meeting.

**Officers of the Board** – The Board of Deacons has four officers: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasure. Each year the Senior Pastor selects from among the board members someone to serve as the Chairman, which the Board must ratify by a majority vote. The Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Board then select the other officers for the Board.

**The Executive Committee** – The Executive Committee is made up of the Senior Pasto, the Chairman of the Board, the Vice Chairman, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and at least one member at large. The member at large that serves on the Executive Committee is selected annually by the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Board. The Executive Committee is a smaller working group that works on more of a day-to-day basis in order to maintain constant communications with the Pastoral and to provide advice and assistance to the Pastoral Staff.

**Duties of the Chairman** – The Chairman is the primary liaison between the Pastoral Staff and the Board of Deacons and meets the Senior Pastor and the Executive pastor on a regular basis to keep informed of current church business. He is responsible for creating the monthly Board Meeting Agenda along with the Senior Pastor and the Executive Pastor. The chairman is responsible for conducting the monthly board meeting. He is also responsible for serving on several Church Committees: the Nominating Committee, the Endowment Committee, the Board of Trustees, the Finance Committee, and the committee that forms the Pastoral Search Committee

**Duties of the Vice Chairman** – The Vice Chairman works closely with the Chairman of the Board and is ready to serve as the acting chairman in the event the Chairman is unable to meet his obligations. He also serves with the Chairman on the Executive Committee and meets with Senior Pastor along with the rest of the Executive Committee on a regular basis.

**Duties of the Treasurer** – The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining the accounting of the Deacon Fellowship Fund. The Treasurer is usually the first deacon to be contacted regarding the distribution of funds. He is responsible for screening the written requests and interviewing those
that are making the requests. It is the Treasurer that will bring the requests to either the Executive Committee or the Board for action regarding the request. If the request is approved, he will then request the Church Treasurer to distribute the funds as approved. He also serves on the Executive Committee and meets with the Senior Pastor along with the rest of the Executive Committee on a regular basis.

Duties of the Secretary – The Secretary is responsible for keeping accurate minutes of the Board of Deacons Meetings as well as other meetings involving the deacons. He is responsible for recording the meeting minutes during the meeting and then presenting the minutes to the designated church secretary to prepare for distribution to the other deacons on the Board. The Secretary will also be responsible for reading any official correspondence for the Board. He also serves on the Executive Committee and meets with the Senior Pastor along with the rest of the Executive Committee on a regular basis.

Ministry Teams – The Board of Deacons is responsible for serving the congregation and the pastoral staff through five ministry teams. Each team will consist of two deacons who will serve as co-chairmen of the team and several church members that have agreed to serve on the ministry team. The idea of the team is to reduce the burden the ministries create on a few deacons and to allow more members to receive God’s Blessing through serving others. This method allows church members who do not have the time or the energy to serve on a continuous basis the opportunity to serve occasionally at their convenience, which means more will have the opportunity to serve without the service becoming burdensome to anyone. The Ministry Teams are as follows:

- **Prayer Team** – The prayer team is responsible for ensuring the Board and the church body is involved in praying for the pastoral staff, the sick and injured, the needy, our country, and our community. The co-chairmen are responsible for establishing prayer teams and prayer times, maintaining the Deacon and Deaconess Prayer Tree, and ensuring the e-prayer is sent out weekly and as needed.

- **Communion Team** – The Communion Team is responsible for preparing the elements to be served and to participate in the serving of the elements to the congregation during communion services. The Communion Team is also responsible for serving communion to those who are considered “shut-ins” and unable to attend the communion service at the church. The co-chairmen of the Communion Team are responsible for ensuring there are church members available to serve communion and that each member has been adequately trained in serving communion.

- **Baptism Team** – The Baptism Team is responsible for preparing the baptismal area and assisting the candidates for baptism. The team members will help the candidates in selecting a baptismal gown, directing the candidate to a room where he or she can change his or her clothes, pray with the candidates when requested, help each candidate up and down the steps leading to and from the baptismal font, and giving the candidate a dry towel after leaving the baptismal font. After the baptismal service, the team members are responsible for cleaning the baptismal area and also taking some of the wet baptismal gowns and the wet towels home to clean and return to the appropriate place for storage. The co-chairmen of the Baptismal Team are responsible for ensuring there are enough members of the baptismal team available to assist the candidates and to ensure the team members are adequately trained.
Financial Counseling Team – The Financial Counseling Team members are responsible for meeting with individuals in the congregation that request financial counseling. Those requesting counseling may be someone who is requesting funds from the Deacon Fellowship fund or it may be someone is would like information or assistance in setting up a home budget. The co-chairmen of the Financial Counseling Team are responsible for ensuring that there are team members available to counsel with those making requests and that the team members are adequately trained in financial counseling.

Connection Center Team – The Connection Center Team is responsible for serving in the Connection Center where people may visit to seek information about the church, information about church membership, information regarding salvation, Information about church ministries, information about requesting financial assistance, or prayer. The co-chairmen of the team is responsible for ensuring there are enough people serving in the Connection Center each worship service and whenever requested, and ensuring those serving in the Connection Center have been adequately trained.
Washington Heights Baptist Church

Board of Deacons

Policies, Procedures, and Position Statements
Board of Deacons

Policy, Objective, and Procedure

Communion Ministry

Purpose
This ministry is responsible for serving communion to the congregation monthly (generally the 1st Sunday of the month) and other designated special times (Christmas Eve). The ministry will be comprised of qualified Deacons, Deaconesses and lay volunteers. Volunteers must be members of WHBC and approved by the Deacon Board.

Objective
Provide a team of ministry members to prepare, pray over, and serve the Communion elements to the congregation in each service. Serve the elements in a manner of due respect to our Lord and Savior that allows the congregation to faithfully respond through participation and remembrance of our Lord’s sacrifice for each and everyone one of us.

Process
The ministry is lead by a Deacon Chair and Co-chair as well as the Deaconess Chairperson. The chairs are responsible for maintaining an inventory of supplies to include grape juice, serving cups, and other serving supplies (trays, fillers, baskets, etc…). The chairs will also recruit volunteers to bake the bread and ensure that there is enough on-hand as needed. Purchases for supplies are coordinated through the Church Office Financial team.

Each service will have team member leaders, preferably one male and one female to assist in scheduling team members to serve each month. This includes contacting team members for their service by email/phone or other method to ensure we have 8 male servers (to include 2 prayers) for the front and 5-8 servers to assist from the back. The one exception to these numbers is the 4th service. Communion is not passed to the congregation during 4th service, so team volunteers are needed to setup and cleanup; but not to serve.

Service responsibilities:
- **1st Service team will:**
  - Retrieve the serving materials from closet storage.
  - Fill the grape juice trays.
  - Fill the bread trays.
  - Place the table cloth, juice (8-10) and bread (8-10) trays up front.
  - Place the reserved signs (8) in the front row chairs.
  - Place the cup collection baskets with napkins under the front row chairs.
Serve Communion at the designated time.
Start preparations for 2nd Service.

2nd Service team will:
- Consolidate and re-fill the grape juice trays.
- Re-fill the bread trays if needed.
- Place juice (8-10) and bread (8-10) trays up front.
- Place the cup collection baskets with napkins under the front row chairs.
- Serve Communion at the designated time.
- Start preparations for 3rd Service.

3rd Service team will:
- Consolidate juice trays.
- Re-fill the bread trays if needed.
- Place juice (10-12) and bread (10-12) trays up front.
- Place the cup collection baskets with napkins under the front row chairs.
- Serve Communion at the designated time.
- Prepare elements for 4th Service.
- Place 12 filled juice trays in the walk-in refrigerator.
- Place 8 bread trays in the walk-in refrigerator.
- Wash and dry serving trays not needed for 4th Service.
- Replace juice cups in the clean trays and stow them.
- Properly dispose of left over bread and juice NOT needed for 4th Service.

4th Service team is required to:
- Ensure communion serving tables and candles (2 per table) are placed by the janitorial staff.
- Place table cloths on the table in the front and the 3 tables in the back of the sanctuary along the walls.
- Retrieve the elements from the walk-in refrigerator.
- Place 2 juice and 2 bread trays on the table up front.
- Place 3 juice and 2 bread trays on each of the 3 tables in the back.
- At the end of the service:
- Wash and dry serving trays.
- Replace juice cups in the clean trays and stow them.
- Properly dispose of left over bread and juice.
Board of Deacons

Policy, Objective, and Procedure

Connection Center Ministry

Overview

This ministry is responsible for the after service counseling at the Connection Center (CC) and in the sanctuary with the Pastor. This ministry is comprised of qualified deacons, deaconesses, and lay volunteers. Volunteers must be members of WHBC and approved by the deacon board.

Scheduling:

The schedule is set up so at a minimum, two people will be in the CC and a male / female team in the sanctuary with the Pastor after each of the three services. A deacon or deaconess will serve as coordinator for each of the services and it is their responsibility to maintain the schedule for their assigned service. It is the individual’s responsibility to find a substitute if they cannot make their scheduled assignment. If an individual knows he or she will be unavailable for their assignments in advance, they should contact their coordinator so the schedule can be changed.

Requirements for Ministry:

Each counseling situation is different and requires individual judgment as to the best way to handle it. Members selected for this ministry must be mature Christians who know how to share the Gospel and use the scriptures to meet people’s spiritual needs. Because of this, a detail of how to talk to people about salvation, encouragement, consolation for grief or hardship, assurance of salvation, etc., is not included in this document.

Process

• **General**
  Those scheduled for the CC should be available a little before the service is over and stay towards the back of the CC. The hosts and hostesses will be at the front of the CC to greet people and provide general information about the church. If individuals indicate a need other than general information, the host or hostess will direct them to one of the counselors. If all the hosts and hostesses are helping people and others come into the center, the counselors should go forward and help with host and hostess duties.
  Those scheduled to be in the sanctuary should go to the front immediately after the service. As the pastor meets with people, he may direct them to the counselors for further information, prayer or other needs. The counselors may use the counseling rooms by the sanctuary or take the individual(s) back to the CC.

• **Counseling/Prayer:**
  The only documentation required is the church Contact card. This should be used whenever a counselor talks and prays with an individual and follow-up is required. Have the individual write
at least their name and phone number on the card, and after they leave write on the back of the card a summary of what took place. This will help those who will call or visit these people.

If a situation is beyond a counselor’s skills, they should say so. The counselor should pray with the individual(s) and let them know someone will call during the week to set up a time to meet with them. On the back of the Contact form, write “ATTN: Mike Sanders” and what the request is about. Also, write your name and phone number on the back of the card so you can be contacted if more information is required. When the card is received in the office, the card will be given to a senior staff person. Staff personnel will call or have a qualified person from the church call this individual and set up a time to meet.

• **Membership:**
If an individual or family requests membership, have them sign up for the new member’s class. Answer any questions they may have, but the class is a requirement for membership and the Membership Request Sheet is no longer required to be filled out in advanced. If they cannot attend the Wednesday night new member’s class, a pastor will contact them and set up a time convenient for them.

If they sign up for the membership class, the Contact card does not need to be filled out. If they do not sign up for the class at this time, request that they fill out a Contact card and someone will contact them during the week.

• **Follow-up:**
Although everyone who fills out a contact card will be called by someone in the church, it is important that the counselors also call those in which they have talked and prayed. After the people leave, copy their name and phone number from the Contact card, so you can call them later in the week.
Board of Deacons

Policy, Objective, and Procedure

Fellowship Fund Distribution

Overview
The purpose of the Deacon Board Fellowship Fund is to provide financial aid to church members and individuals who frequently attend our church who have a crisis situation. The funds are designated to help provide for these individuals basic living needs and are distributed only as a last resort; once all other means of meeting the need has been exhausted.

Policy
1. The Board of Deacons will be responsible for collecting, managing, and distributing funds donated by the church family to the express purpose of providing financial assistance to church family members as funds are available.

2. The funds shall be distributed as follows:
   a. The Pastor and Chairman of the Deacons both have authority to write checks at their discretion up to but not over one hundred dollars ($100.00).
   b. The Deacon Executive Committee has authority to direct the Treasurer of the Deacons to issue a check up to but not over one thousand dollars ($1,000.00). The Treasurer must obtain a majority vote from the Executive Committee before issuing a check.
      i. The members of Executive Committee of the Board of Deacons are as follows: Chairman of the Deacons, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and the three members of the Deacon board selected by the Chairman of the Deacon Board.
      ii. A majority Vote must be obtained by the Treasurer to issue funds
   c. A request for funds over one thousand dollars ($1000.00) for an individual or family is to be taken to the next scheduled Deacon Board meeting for resolution. However, in cases where the funds are needed prior to the next Board of Deacons meeting, the request for funds may be resolved via telephone vote or email vote, which is to be conducted by the Board of Deacons Treasurer.

3. If a person(s) makes a first time request for funds, there may be no other action required by that person(s). If the event of a second request for funds within one year of receiving funds, or if the Deacon Contact determines that, there is a need for the person(s) to receive financial counseling, an appointment will be made with a financial counselor appointed by the Deacon Contact or a lay counselor serving with the Financial Counseling Ministry Team.
4. Distributions of Deacon Fellowship Funds are on a priority basis with member’s first and regular attendees second. This information can be determined by calling the Deacon Board staff secretary, who will check the person’s status on the computers.

5. Distributions of Deacon Fellowship Funds are intended, primarily, to aid people in maintaining basic needs of life. This would include, but is not limited to rent/mortgage payments, electricity, gas, water, food, medications, etc. Other needs, such as basic phone service, special clothing, and transportation to facilitate employment would also be included. In general, debt payments other than mortgages, legal fees, school tuition, and medical payments would not be addressed through the Deacon Fund, but through other resources. However, these are guidelines and should not hamper the Deacon Board in creative solutions to achieve the primary objective of covering basic needs.

6. All applicants will be interviewed by either the Treasurer or other deacon appointed by the Treasurer to clarify the individual’s need and prepare a report, which is to be presented to those responsible for approving the distribution of the funds.

7. Funds are only to be distributed for the exact amount owed and only to the agency or person that is owed the money; funds are never to be distributed directly to the person making the request.

8. No gifts will be accepted which specify named individuals or designated hardship situations.

9. Deacons and Deaconesses should not use the Fellowship Fund nor should they request funds for their family members. A deacon or deaconess should discuss his or her financial crisis with the Senior Pastor or, if he is unavailable, another pastor on staff, who will try to arrange financial aid.

10. All request information is confidential and should be shared only with those who have a need to know. (This should be stressed at the Board of Deacons Meeting from time to time as you report on the fund requests.)

**Objective**

To manage contributions received from the church congregation, to manage the Fellowship Fund, and to regulate the distribution of those funds to those members or regular attendees who may have a financial crisis.

**Procedure**

1. Any member of the Deacon Board or the Pastor may act as deacon contact for individuals requesting funds.

2. All requests for funds are called into the church office, where one of the church secretaries will inform the person requesting the funds that he or she must complete the Fellowship Fund Request Form, and then forward the call to the Deacon Board voice mailbox. The purpose of the form is to provide insight as to the cause of the crisis and a financial “snapshot” of the current situation, as well as, the immediate future so that the Deacon Board has a chance to make recommendations that would have a long term impact. (The individual requesting the funds may either pick up a copy of the Fellowship Fund Request Form from the church office or he or she may download the form from the church’s web site.)
3. The Deacon Treasurer or other Deacon appointed by the Treasurer, contact will retrieve the message from the voice mailbox, make telephone contact with the person requesting funds, and verify the applicant is aware of the request form and is able to complete it. The deacon may at this time discuss the individual’s problem, which necessitates the need for funds. The deacon will also instruct the applicant to return the completed form by either leaving it at the church office or sending the form via facsimile, in which case the person is instructed to call the church office in order to insure confidentiality.

4. The returned completed form will be placed in a manila envelope and placed in the deacon mailbox located in the church office. The Deacon Board staff secretary in the church office will then notify the Deacon Treasurer, or other deacon appointed by the Treasurer of the form being returned.

5. After reviewing the completed form the Deacon Treasurer, or other Deacon appointed by the Treasurer in accordance with Policy number 4 shall decide if someone who is serving with the Financial Counseling Ministry Team should meet with the applicant. (Financial Counseling in simply coming along side of the person(s) and helping them find a way to resolve their financial crisis, and is available anytime upon request.)
   a. If the deacon contact decides someone serving with the Financial Counseling Ministry Team should be involved, he is to contact the Financial Counseling Ministry Team Leader or the Chairman of the Deacon Board, and ask him to have someone serving with the Financial Counseling Ministry Team to visit with the applicant.
   b. If the deacon contact decides someone from Financial Counseling Ministry Team does not need to be involved, he will route the request as per policy.

6. The Deacon Treasurer, or other deacon appointed by the Treasurer will obtain, either using the request form or by way of interview all information pertinent to the request, such as:
   a. Why the funds are needed, why relatives can’t help, try to determine if the situation is short term or long term, see if they qualify for state help, determine if they would benefit from financial counseling.
   b. Determine if financial counseling may help; see if they are a member of the church, regular attendee, or other. Ask what they have done so far to alleviate the situation before they decided to request funds from the Deacon Board, i.e., have they sold personal items, or pawned goods, borrowed from relatives, applied for a loan, etc. This may help confirm that the Deacon Fellowship Fund is the assistance of last resort.
   c. Try to determine if the need is real or can be met another way, i.e., they request money for food. Could the need be met by sending them to the Ogden Rescue Mission, Helping Hands, etc. To ensure there is some sort of support group, see if they are connected with the church, i.e., do they attend Sunday school, Life Group, or Wednesday Night program, etc. Don’t be afraid to ask them what they do around the church or what Sunday school class he or she belongs.

7. Once you have all the information, as deacon contact for the applicant, it to be brought to the Executive Committee/ Deacon board members, whichever is the appropriate step according to policy.
8. The Deacon Treasurer is not to tell any of the committee members how the other members voted until each committee member has had a chance to vote or abstain. The Deacon Treasurer does not need to share how any of the deacons voted unless he thinks it is necessary and appropriate or if the vote is called into question.

9. Once the appropriate individual, committee, or board approves the request for funds, the Deacon Treasurer is then directed to have the Church Treasurer issue a check from the Deacon Fellowship Fund bank account for the exact amount approved by the Deacon Board to the person or agency the money is owed; not to the person making the request.
Positional Paper on the Role of WHBC Staff and Deacons
First Draft: 1/22/07

Foundational Issues:

• “Servant leadership”: Regardless of leadership role at WHBC, we believe that the nature of biblical leadership is, at its core, service. The greatest leaders in the Bible exemplified this by “shepherding” others and not “lording it over them.” (I Peter 5:1-4) Some serve in specific roles of leading others. However, all Christians should be leaders in several arenas of life, such as managing our homes, managing our careers for eternal impact and positively influencing anyone around us. We should also be followers – of Christ and of those placed in authority over us. In all of these roles we are serving in mutual submission to each other.

• Deacons and Elders are two distinct offices in the New Testament Church:

  “Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:” (Phil. 1:1) There are two offices of the New Testament Church mentioned together in this verse as well as I Timothy 3 – overseers and deacons. In I Timothy 3, the qualifications are spelled out for the two offices, overseers in :1-7, and deacons in :8-13. The qualifications are similar, but not identical. For example, the overseer is required to be “able to teach” whereas the deacon does not have that expectation. The differences in title and qualifications indicate a distinction between the roles.

The Bible and the Roles of Elders and Deacons

• Three words are used interchangeably in the New Testament to refer to the same office:

  The word “overseer” literally means, “to look upon, inspect, oversee, look after, care for” and refers to the care of the church which rested upon the elders.” The term “overseer” is found in two passages together with the words “elder” and “shepherd” (pastor) and are used to refer to the same office.

  “From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When they arrived, he said to them...keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God…” (Acts 20:17-18, 28)

  “To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” (I Peter 5:1-3)

• It was the elders who were charged with the general oversight of the church:

  “The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.” (I Timothy 5:17)

• The word “deacon” literally means “servant.”

• The office of deacon was established for a real need:
“In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Greecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them.”

• While “men” are mentioned in Acts 6, women also occupied the role of “servant” or deaconess:

“I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea.” (Romans 16:1)

• The office of deacons was established to free the apostles (who functioned as the first pastors) to pray and to prepare to minister the Word:

Some understand the birth of the office of deacon to mean that it is the deacons role to oversee the business of the church. The text in Acts 6 refers to “this business” not “the business.” The Greek word for “business” in Acts 6, “chreia” basically means “need.” That’s how it is translated 25 times in the New Testament.

So, if the primary task is not to make the financial decisions, what is the emphasis of the role of deacon? The deacons are to share with the pastor(s), the burdens of church ministry. They are to assist the pastors in practical ways as agreed upon so that the ministry may go forward and flourish. There is a relational partnership formed that is not rigid, but one that responds to needs as they arise.

Conclusions:

1. Deacons and Elders are the offices in the church. The offices are distinct. Elders are not deacons. Deacons are not elders. The elders at WHBC refers to the pastors of the church.

2. In the New Testament, elders had the role of the general oversight of the church.

3. In the New Testament, deacons served the church to help ministry move forward.

Practically speaking, what do Pastors do and what do deacons do?

Pastors as a whole or individually are responsible for:

• The Senior Pastor serves as the primary teacher to the corporate Body.

• Set the Mission, Vision and Strategy of the church.

• Establish policies for the church and its staff.

• Develop new programs and/or services.

• Assure that the church balances its mission with the resources available.

• Engage in day-to-day management of the church.

• Hire support staff as needed within the framework of the Annual Ministry Fund.

• Monitor income/expenses on a regular basis (in consultation with the Finance Committee).

• Conduct performance reviews on all staff with the exception of the Senior Pastor.
• Develop the annual budget (in consultation with the Finance Committee).

Deacons as a team are responsible for: (insert John’s list here)

Beyond just the responsibilities:

A job description is one thing, but it’s not everything. Within every organization there is a culture that is not found in a list of duties. At WHBC, we long to have a vital partnership between the pastors and the deacons that benefits the ministry overall and makes everyone’s service meaningful. With this goal in mind, there are some ways in which the relationship between our staff and our deacons plays out.

The Senior Pastor is the primary conduit between the staff and the deacons. The staff works for the Senior Pastor, not the board. Since the overall leadership of the staff is delegated in part to an Executive Pastor, he too, is a vital part of the partnership between staff and deacons. The Senior Pastor emphasis is on vision while the Executive Pastors focus is on tactics to accomplish the vision. The deacons do not manage the staff or give the staff direction. Certainly, deacons can interact with staff and ask questions (as can anyone else in the church), but we must recognize there is a “line” between conversation and management/oversight.

The deacons seek to work in harmony with the Senior Pastor to accomplish the overall mission/vision of the church. They conduct an annual review of the Senior Pastor, meant to give relevant feedback about his efforts toward the mission of the church.

The Senior Pastor will seek to provide the deacons with relevant information about important developments and directions at WHBC. We recognize that is as much art form as it is science. The goal is two-fold: 1) To utilize the deacons as a sounding board for important decisions/ideas, while recognizing that the final decision rests in with the Senior Pastor; 2) To reduce the amount of surprises for the deacons. Much of this communication is informational in nature but certainly factors into decision made.

The Senior Pastor will seek to regularly communicate: 1) Vision related initiatives; 2) New programmatic developments; 3) Issues that may/do have legal implications; 4) Staffing needs; 5) Yearly Ministry Plan. The means of communicating these elements will not necessarily be verbal. For example, e-mail and staff meeting notes are other ways to provide relevant, up-to-date information.

Deacons should always feel free to ask any question about anything at WHBC. We want to facilitate an atmosphere of openness, honesty and trust.

WHBC is Staff Led – Deacon Protected

In choosing an analogy of how the staff and deacon roles play out, let’s suggest this: On a highway, there are lanes of a road and there are guard rails on the side of the road. The road is a means to get to a desires destination. The destination at WHBC is the mission/vision. The Deacons are like the guard rails that want to keep everything on the road to accomplishing the mission/vision of the church. The staff is the one leading (“driving” like with a car) the church on a practical level toward the destination (the mission/vision). The staff has the freedom to change
lanes in order to lead well, but not to leave the road. This type of partnership maximizes each groups role in a realistic way.

The Top 5 Things Pastors wish that Deacons knew (and probably already do ☺)

By Roy Gruber on behalf of the entire staff

1. We appreciate you, and need you more than you know. It is a huge blessing in a pastor's life to have deacons that love God and support the ministry of the pastors. Looking out in worship services and seeing you there is an encouragement. Knowing that you are praying for us is very motivating. Knowing that you share the vision of a growing, bridge-building, evangelistic church challenges us to do our very best. Deacons, you make a major impact on the ministry of the pastors.

2. Pastors don't have all the spiritual gifts. Our responsibilities include preaching/teaching, administration, hospital chaplains, counselors, leaders, visionaries, evangelists, etc. Our gifts vary as they do with folks within the Body. We will be very strong at certain things and not so strong at others. Thanks for accepting us for who we are.

3. Pastoral leadership is complex. While there are certain similarities to the business world, there are also many differences with leadership in the local church. There is not one supervisor but numerous constituencies within the church. Balancing the many needs, diverse ideas and multiple endeavors is an ongoing joy and effort. Complexity brings a lot of opportunity for misunderstanding. Having you work with us to promote unity within the Body is a huge help. We don't think you need to have every answer to every question, but knowing that you have our backs is a great encouragement. This is not to imply covering anything up, but simply to giving one another the benefit of the doubt.

4. Pastors don't have the power many parishioners think they have. Pastors don't “own” the church, but answer to the Lord and various groups within the church such as committees, etc. Overall leadership takes place through a growing consensus where an undefined relationship of trust exists rather than clear cut roles of organizational structure. Staff leadership in the local church is dependant on the good will of each staff member and their own ability to lead others based on his/her moral influence. Bad staff situations are rarely resolved by merely dismissing someone but brings with it numerous challenges.

The church is more of a movement than an institution. What needs to be front and center more often than not is the mission/vision, not the structure. Just like with a human body, a structure is necessary (the skeleton) but if the structure is too visible it’s an indication of a lack of health.
The following paper is an overview of the position of the WHBC Pastoral Staff. These views are not mandatory for membership or fellowship with the church but the position present here represents the principles by which the leadership of the church operates. We understand other churches may view these matters differently. It is out of a desire for the best in all relationships and to do ministry in a biblical manner and “decently and in order” that we offer this paper. This paper is not intended to prove our position, only state it.

I. Preliminary Principles

- **The Bible**
  The Bible serves as our source of authority in all matters of faith. (II Timothy 3:16) We strive to evaluate all issues through the grid of the Bible over culture, public opinion or any other source of norms.

- **Interpretation**
  There are times when the Bible is interpreted in light of the culture in which it was written. A guiding principle for any portion of the Bible would be: literal if possible, figurative if obvious. We also recognize that some references in the Bible deal with specific issues taking place at a particular place at a particular time. Other times the Bible gives permanent principles followed by a cultural application. Even in the case of specific application, there is still a principle that is transferable beyond that specific instance.

  For example, women are encouraged to dress “modestly.” That is a permanent principle. The Bible goes on to say, “not with braided hair.” That was sign of prostitution in that day and stands as a cultural application of a permanent principle that in our own day would be applied with different specifics.

  Another example, “Don’t cause your brother to stumble.” This is a permanent principle encouraging all believers to positively influence the spiritual growth of other believers. It then says, “Don’t eat meat sacrificed to idols.” That was custom of that day and represents the cultural application of the permanent principle.

  The Scriptures that relate to marriage/divorce/remarriage contain specific application and principle. But, in either case, there is principle that spans time and situation to guide us in our understanding and decision-making.

- **The Issue**
  The issue of divorce/remarriage is one charged with emotion for all concerned. It is an issue increasing in our culture. It is also an issue on which there are many different opinions held by those who love God and take the Bible seriously.
As we function as a church, it is our conviction that on essential issues, like salvation, we must have unity. One step down from the essential level, are important issues such as this one. It is not essential in that it affects a person’s eternal future, but it does significantly impact one’s life and walk with Christ. Hopefully, a difference on this issue would not cause a break in fellowship, but it is fair to know which principles WHBC embraces and from which it makes its decisions as it relates to the issue of divorce/remarriage

• **The Staff's heart on this issue**

The Staff of WHBC is committed to bringing benefit to the lives of those under our spiritual care. The area of marriage and re-marriage is one that the Staff treats as a matter of great importance since the potential exists for great blessing, or sadly, great pain. Our common desire is to avoid the terrible pain caused to all involved in a divorce and pursue blessing through the application of Biblical principles and wisdom gained through experience. The Staff does not claim to know the experience of those who have gone through the pain of divorce, but we do commit ourselves to working toward health, healing and adequate preparation for future marriage so that the ideal of permanence becomes a reality. We recognize that not everyone who is divorced sought or desired such an outcome nor do we believe that divorce is the “unpardonable sin.” Yet, we believe it is a serious issue that we do not want to see repeated in anyone’s life. It is with that heart we approach this important issue.

**II. Relevant Scripture**

Following are several passages that are central in the discussion concerning divorce/remarriage. Our purpose is not to give a complete exegesis or interpretation of the passage, but rather to help the reader understand our basic approach to each text.

• **Genesis 2:15-25.** This passage details the account of the very first marriage between Adam and Eve, officiated by God Himself. God joins a man and a woman together for their mutual benefit.

**Principles:**
Priority of marriage – “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother…”

Unity/Permanence of marriage – “…and be united to his wife…”

Intimacy of marriage – “…and they will become one flesh.”

• **Deuteronomy 24:1-4**. This passages gives certain procedures and parameters for divorce. The heart of this passage contains a concern for women who were being dismissed with little or no cause from their marriages and their homes. This passages also hints at God’s desire that divorce not become casual. It also demonstrates the reality of the fallenness of human beings and relationships can end despite God’s goal of permanence.

**Principles:**
The protection of each member, especially women in this case.
The need for an appropriate process
The expectation is not to remarry a wife who has been divorced and is now remarried to someone else.

- Malachi 2:16 God expresses His displeasure at the at divorce due to His knowledge of the pain it inflicts on those who go through it and His desire to see covenant relationships maintained.

**Principles:**
The end of a marriage will inflict pain on those involved

Divorce is never God’s ideal or plan and He is strongly opposed to it

- Matthew 19:1-12 Jesus addresses a question meant to trick Him into taking one of two sides on the issue of divorce/remarriage in His day. Instead of choosing one of those sides, Jesus goes back to the beginning and God’s goal in marriage. He stresses the permanence that takes place when a man and a woman are joined in marriage. Jesus also comments on the Deuteronomy 24 permission for divorce as a “condescension” to the hardness of the human heart. Once again this shows God’s desire for permanence in marriage. Jesus does give an exception here, namely that sexual immorality (a fairly broad term), is a permissible reason for divorce. This sexual immorality is long-term, unrepentant participation in sexuality outside of God’s parameter of the marriage covenant.

**Principles:**
God’s original plan for marriage should be our goal in marriage – permanence

The reality of human frailty must be recognized

One exception for divorce is “sexual immorality”

- I Corinthians 7:10-15 In the context of addressing numerous marital situations, Paul addresses divorce. Once again, the appeal is made not to pursue divorce but to seek permanence. Paul does speak to the issue of one spouse being deserted by the other and gives a second permissible reason for divorce, namely, desertion. By desertion we understand Paul to be describing behavior equivalent to the abandonment of the marriage. Again, this most likely includes a long-term pattern of behavior and does not refer to a couple that does not speak to each for a week or so. To that person, Paul gives a permission to remarry in the words that such a person (one who has been abandoned by an unbeliever) “is not bound in such circumstances.”

**Principles:**
Couples are to seek permanence as a goal

A believing spouse who is deserted by an unbeliever is “not bound” – which understand to imply that he/she is free to remarry

**Washington Heights Baptist Church Position on Divorce/Remarriage**

Because marriage has been established by God as a permanent union, and since it is an earthly copy of the relationship between God and His people, it is to be maintained through a life-long, mutual commitment between a husband and a wife. However, because of the
fallenness of human nature, the Bible permits divorce in the following cases as a condescension to human frailty for the protection of the innocent part:

1. **Divorce for the cause of immorality** – with the understanding that the obligation to maintain or reinstate the marriage may not be imposed upon the innocent spouse.

2. **Divorce for desertion by an unbeliever** – desertion being defined as behavior equivalent to the abandonment of the marriage relationship.

In such cases, the offending party becomes subject to church discipline in order to bring about repentance and reconciliation. Should efforts to achieve restoration fail, the innocent spouse is not bound. He or she is free to remarry in the Lord if the divorce included the two biblical reasons stated above.

**The remarriage of believers may not be approved when:**

1. The present relationship led to the demise of a previous marriage.
2. There is no evidence of repentance and brokenness over the circumstances that caused divorce.
3. Restoration of the original marriage remains a viable option.
4. The issues contributing to the demise of the previous marriage have not been identified and worked through and adequate healing has yet to take place.

Each case of divorce or remarriage has to be dealt with on an individual basis from the perspective of God’s inexhaustible capacity to forgive human sin and to restore broken lives.

**Separation**

There are times when it may be beneficial for couples to separate geographically due to the intensity of the situation and/or behavior in the home. When separation occurs, the goal is to work toward reconciliation and restoration. As a general principle, the pastoral staff will work toward restoration rather than divorce and counsel toward an appropriate level of protection for all while giving God an opportunity to perform a work of healing.

**Washington Heights Pre-marital Process**

The following process if offered in the attempt to benefit the preparation of those seeking marriage or remarriage. WHBC is committed to working with prospective couples in a way that will help work through issues that will result in relational health and joy.

These are difficult days for marriages in our culture. Our hope and prayer is to see the trend reversed. Part of that reversal can happen through thorough preparation for a lifetime commitment. It is in that spirit we offer this process:

- A couple should contact the church as quickly as possible once they decide to marry or feel as though marriage is likely even with out an official engagement. To state it another way, couples are asked to contact the church even **before** a wedding date is set. A minimum of six months notice prior to the intended marriage is asked.
• Engaged couples are asked to attend a “Pre-marital course” which will be offered twice during the year (once in spring and once in the fall).

• Engaged couples, especially in the case of divorce, are asked to partner with a Pastor and a counselor chosen together with the respective Pastor for pre-marital counseling. A process ensues that customizes the counseling experience for that couple to identify relevant issues and develop a plan through which they will work together. Couples are asked to sign a release so that the counselor may communicate as needed with the respective Pastor regarding the couple. Once each person involved affirms proceeding with the wedding, a date will be confirmed.

• Due to spiritual and/or personal reasons, the Pastor reserves the right not to marry a couple. The reason(s) for this would be discussed at the appropriate time.

• Couples affirmed to proceed with their wedding will then be put in contact with WHBC’s wedding coordinator.

**Wedding Policies**

All related policies, church assistance and fees are available through the wedding coordinator via Women’s Ministries. This contact will be made once the above procedure has taken place.
Washington Heights Baptist Church

Positional Paper on Homosexuality Practice and Leadership roles

(2nd Draft: 5/4/06)

An issue facing not only our nation but our churches is that of homosexuality practice. The leadership of WHBC believes it is necessary to state our understanding of the biblical teaching about homosexual practice. This paper will state, not seek to prove, our position on this current issue.

The Role of the Bible:

WHBC believes that the Bible in its entirety is the inspired and infallible Word of God (II Tim. 3:16). The Bible is the final authority on issues to which it speaks. The basis for our morality comes from the Bible alone as God’s loving communication of His will for humanity for all time. We believe that the Bible alone is mankind’s source for moral authority and direction. Therefore sexual attitudes and behavior are to be understood in light of the Bible, rather than the Bible being reinterpreted, modified or overturned by current cultural trends in thought and behavior.

We also believe one of the characteristics of the Bible to be clarity. God has not made it intentionally difficult to grasp His teachings. While not all parts of the Bible are equally easy to understand, the boundaries of sexuality are clearly stated. We believe that God’s words are to be taken literally whenever possible and figuratively when the context is obviously so.

We believe the current trend of “genetically-based morality” to be a flawed method of interpreting the Bible and/or God’s direction for our lives. In recent years, various scientific studies have been put forth which claim to prove that homosexuality is a matter of orientation at birth rather than a moral choice. If this is the case, it is argued, homosexuality cannot be immoral in that it is part of one’s genetic makeup. In response to this, the studies cited to “prove” genetic orientation are tenuous at best. Beyond that, we dispute the premise which would base morality on scientific study. A larger question looms: How are we to determine what is right and wrong at all? While we affirm scientific study, we assert that it is an illegitimate form or moral reasoning to suggest that one can reason from what “is” to what “ought to be.” We believe a biblically based theology to be a more reliable source of truth and the grid through which other disciplines of study (philosophy, psychology, morality) should be filtered.

Further, the Bible teaches that since the fall of people, mankind has been born with a sinful nature. The Bible teaches that greed, lust, envy, strife, etc., are characteristic of fallen man, and in that sense are our orientation from birth. But while they may be our natural orientation, they are still sin.
The Teaching of the Bible:

Man in the image of God: Man’s nature is not self-enclosed, but must be understood in terms of his relationship to God. Man as created in the image of God is affirmed in the Genesis 1:27 which states, “So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him: male and female He created them.” An understanding of biblical sexuality begins with the opening chapters of Genesis, which introduce the first and the exemplary family. Adam and Eve, God’s perfect design for marriage and sexual expression. How beautifully simple and yet profoundly revealing is Adam’s own description of Eve when God brought her into Adam’s presence: “The man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman for she was taken out of man.” (Genesis 2:23) God’s commentary follows, spelling out the sanctity and intimacy of marriage, and the bonding of male and female in physical oneness: “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.” (Genesis 2:24) This statement is reaffirmed by Jesus (Matthew 19:5) and by Paul (Ephesians 5:31).

In the Bible we find the very foundation of human sexuality and discover the distinctives that give man and woman their God-ordained sexual identities. In the words that follow, we have not only God’s provisions for the complementary relationship of male and female, but also His plan for the propagation of the human race: “God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it…” (Genesis 1:28). When God saw that Adam was alone and needed something beyond all the wonders of the beautiful animal creation, He observed, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” (Genesis 2:18) The result was woman who is equal in worth/value due to also being created in the image of God and sharing God’s call together with her husband in expressing responsible rulership over the created world.

Homosexual practice is not a part of the picture of the perfect world created by God which included sexual intimacy and expression found in a marriage between a man and a woman. Homosexuality does not conform to the command given “to be fruitful and multiply.”

Homosexual Behavior in the Old Testament: The Old Testament views homosexual behavior as a sin, along with numerous other sexual behaviors deviating from God’s ideal. For example, Leviticus 20:13 states: “If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. Their blood will be on their own heads.” Genesis 19:4-18 recounts the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, two cities given over to homosexual lust and murderous hostility. God judged these two cities for numerous sins, among which was homosexual behavior.

Homosexual Behavior in the New Testament: Jesus did not refer directly to homosexuality. However, He did make it clear that He came not to destroy the Law, but fulfill it. He not only fulfilled it, He strengthened it. For example, He challenged the external behavior of adultery and declared that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Matthew 5:27-28). In numerous ways, Jesus affirmed the continuing validity of the Old Testament moral law, which would include prohibitions against homosexual behavior.

The Pauline epistles include specific statements which speak directly to the issue: Romans 1:26ff, I Corinthians 6:9 and I Timothy 1:10. The Roman’s passage is the most detailed. Paul begins with the phrase, “Because of this…” which refers back to the previous verses 24 – 25. These verses trace immorality and self-destructive behavior, which is described as having exchanged God's truth for falsehood and having turned to idolatry which is the worshiping and serving of the creature rather than the Creator. “Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their
woman exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way, the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.” (Romans 1:26-27) Romans 1:26 points back to the relations God established at the dawn of human history, namely that of a husband and wife being one flesh. Any attempts to define "natural" in Romans as homosexual due to genetics we reject because it takes the normative, literal understanding of this passage and tries to make it mean the opposite of what it clearly says.

I Corinthians 6:9-11 refers to several sinful lifestyles including “homosexual offenders.” Paul goes on to say how these behaviors are part of the past, having been abandoned: “And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

**Redemption:**

The spiritual impact of homosexual practice is no different from any other sin in terms of offending a holy God. All sin is judged by Almighty God. However, as from all sin, redemption from homosexuality is mercifully offered in the atoning work of Jesus Christ. The word of hope that the church presents in is that through the death and resurrection of Christ, God offers to sinners both the forgiveness of sin and the power to live a life pleasing to Him (Romans 8:1-4).

The attitude of Jesus is that of one who consistently loved and embraced the sinner without condoning the sin. John 8 recounts our Lord’s gentle response to the woman caught in the act of adultery. He affirmed her value as a person without approving her behavior. In mercy He forgave her and the same moment told her, “Go and sin no more.” Mercy is no less available to all engaged in sexual sin of all kinds.

**Conclusions:**

1. The Bible clearly states that homosexual behavior is a sin. (Lev. 20:13; Genesis 19:4-18; Romans 1:26ff; I Cor. 6:9-11; I Tim. 1:10)

2. Homosexual behavior is not in a category by itself, rather all sexual sin in condemned in the Bible under a broad heading of “sexual immorality,” referring to all sexual activity outside of a marriage commitment. (Romans 1:29; I Cor. 6:13-18; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; I Thess. 4:3)

3. God forgives repentant sinners. Anyone belonging to God’s redeemed family has come by grace and the forgiveness of our diverse and numerous sins. An aspect of repentance involves leaving behind our sin and turning more and more in Christ’s direction.

4. Unrepentant homosexual behavior (i.e. willfully continuing in the behavior that we know is outside of God’s will for us or believing that homosexual behavior is part of God’s plan for us) is incompatible with our statement of faith and therefore incompatible with church membership. (From the Membership Brochure: Christian Conduct: “We believe that the supreme task of believers is to glorify God in their lives and that they should seek to live in such a way that their conduct be blameless before the world.”)
5. Unrepentant homosexual behavior (see above) is incompatible with leadership roles at WHBC including, but not necessarily limited to, teaching, serving as an officer of the church and representing the church in an official manner (i.e. speaking in roles that connect someone to the church’s leadership like Missions Trips, projects, etc).
Washington Heights Baptist Church

Board of Deacons

Forms
We welcome information from you. Please fill out this card and hand it to one of our Connection Center attendants.

Date
Service Attended:
- 9:00 am
- 11:00 am
- 1:00 pm
- 7:00 pm

Name (Mr. Mrs. Ms.)

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone
- Adult
- 13-5
- 16-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- 66+

Child's Name
Age
Sex

Child's Name
Age
Sex

Please check all applicable:
- First time visitor (New information)
- Add to mailing list
- Tell me about Christianity
- I have a question
- I want to know more about WHBC
- Change of address, Phone or Email
- How did you hear about us?

Prayer Request

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." 1 John 5:14

Name:

Phone #

Date

(Place where the offering plate goes)
WHBC CANDIDATE FOR DEACON

NAME:

DATE:

1. PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW YOU BECAME A CHRISTIAN AND HOW THIS HAS MADE A
   DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE.

2. WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

3. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE, BOTH PAST AND CURRENT
RESPONSE INFORMATION and MEMBERSHIP REQUEST SHEET

Date ____________________
Name ____________________
Address ____________________
City ______________ State ______ Zip ______
Home Phone ______________ Work Phone ______________

Previous Church Membership – If applicable
(Please obtain complete information)
Church ____________________
Address ____________________
City ______________ State ______ Zip ______

Comments (Include salvation experience and spiritual journey) ____________________


Reason for Response to Invitation
□ Salvation  □ Rededication
□ Baptism  □ Prayer
□ Membership

Baptism Record
Has the person been baptized by immersion?  □Yes □No
Is the individual willing to sign our church’s Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, and Purpose/Vision Statement?  □Yes □No

Recommendation For Membership:

□ I believe this person knows Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior and I recommend he or she be scheduled to attend a Membership Class.

□ I am not sure of this person’s Salvation and would recommend that a deacon or deaconess or a pastor counsel with this person to be certain that he or she has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Comments ____________________


Counselor______________________________ Date________________________

Membership Class:
□ Class attended by Member Candidate
□ Statement agreeing to our church’s Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, and Purpose/Value Statement signed.

Pastor’s Recommendation for Church Membership and/or baptism: □Yes □No

Pastor ____________________________ Date________________________

Board of Deacons Action: □Approved □Denied

Chairman ____________________________ Date________________________
Washington Heights Baptist Church

Deacon Board Fellowship Fund
Request for Financial Support

Date: ___________________

Name ___________________________________________________________________ Phone Number ________________

Address __________________________________________________________________ City, Zip ___________________

Member of WHBC?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  If “No” – Regular Attendee?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  Years in Attendance: __________

Have you previously requested funds from the Deacon Board?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  If “Yes”, when? __________

Have you previously received funds from the Deacon Board?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No  If “Yes”, when? __________

Are you willing to see someone from Open Door Ministry for issues related to this request?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

Amount of this Request: __________________________________________________________________ Date the funds are needed ________________

Name and address to whom the check is to be issued: __________________________________________________________________

Please, briefly describe your home situation: (i.e., number of children, employed, single or married, or any other important information you think the Deacon Board should be aware of in reviewing this request.)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Please, describe your specific need in detail:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Please, describe the circumstances that have led to this emergency:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Please, explain how you plan to avoid these circumstances in the future:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Washington Heights Baptist Church

Board of Deacons

Church Organization
JOB DESCRIPTION: DEACON

Overview

At Washington Heights Baptist Church men are elected by the congregation to hold the honorable position of deacon. Men that are elected to the position of deacon must live a life which has exhibited the characteristics of faithfulness and loyalty to both the Lord and His church.

There are three passages in the New Testament that are commonly cited concerning the office of deacon: Acts 6:1-7, Philippians 1:1, and I Timothy 3:8-12. The word for deacon in the New Testament originally described a servant who “stirred up dust while waiting on tables.” A deacon’s major attention must be given to serving God under the leadership of the Senior Pastor and the Executive Pastor in the practical ministry of the church.

The general concept of deacon as a servant of the church is well established in both the Bible and church history. The deacon is intended to serve as a model to the local church through the character of his life as well as through his involvement in ministry. The role of deacon is not intended to be sought after for personal honor, but rather it is to be viewed as a call to a greater commitment of service. The desire and willingness to live the life of a servant is a critical qualification for deacon selection.

Qualifications of a Deacon

Spiritual Qualifications

Acts 6:1-7 (v.1) In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. (v. 2) So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. (v. 3) Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them (v. 4) and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.” (v. 5) This pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. (v. 6) They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. (v. 7) So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

- Full of the Holy Spirit – The word “full” means “covered in every part, thoroughly permeated with, complete, lacking nothing” concerning God’s Holy Spirit. Deacons are to be completely dedicated to the presence and guidance of God’s Spirit in their personal life and in their daily work.

- Full of wisdom – The word “wisdom” means the deacon, because of a relationship to God’s Spirit, knows how to both choose and act wisely in all matters. Common sense is certainly a part of the meaning.
- Full of faith – This is not specifically stated as a requirement, but is inferred from the selection of Stephen. It means the deacon should be clear in his understanding of his own faith, and he should be strong first in its proclamation, and then, if need be, strong in its defense as he carries out his responsibilities.

Moral Qualifications

I Timothy 3:8-12. (v. 8) Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. (v. 9) They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. (v. 10) They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. (v. 11) In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. (v. 12) A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

- Worthy of respect – The deacon is to be a person whose moral and spiritual character evokes esteem from others; a person that is considered honorable or noble. He should be a person that has a respectful reputation especially in spiritual matters.

- Sincere – The deacon is to be truthful and trustworthy. He should not say one thing to one person and something different to another. A deacon’s word must be honest; not a person that takes part in gossip, tale bearing, idle talking, or slander and does not use manipulative, insincere, or deceitful speech. He is not a liar.

- Not indulging in much wine – For the deacon, there is to be no abuse or dependence on any drug – may include the regular use of alcohol even though not getting drunk, if inappropriate dependence is demonstrated. There should be a demonstrated freedom not to drink. Paul is prohibiting the abuse of wine or any other substance that could damage a deacon’s testimony and make ineffective his Christian witness.

- Not pursuing dishonest gain – Not willing to manipulate or resort to illegitimate means for personal gain, either for money or for recognition, especially in the area of ministry. The person demonstrates a proper values system, including a willingness to give up money making opportunities for the sake of the gospel. The deacon is not to be controlled by a greedy obsession to obtain all the material possessions he can.

- Must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience – The words “keep hold” speaks of knowing the Word of God and “clear conscience” speaks of doing the Word of God. This simply means that a deacon’s life must be consistent with Christian doctrine. The deacon should believe in sound doctrine, and should hold firm to his convictions. His spiritual integrity is beyond reproach.

- Must first be tested – The deacon must demonstrate his spiritual qualifications before being elected to serve in the position of deacon. His daily attitude, speech, and conduct should be observed for an appropriate period by the elders of the church. The deacon should have a proven ability to do the work of shepherding and service effectively and without any grounds of accusation.

- The husband of one wife – Literally, a “one-woman man”, this means specifically that there is at most only one wife in the deacon’s life. It means in principle that the deacon has his sexuality resolved and under control. This should not be interpreted to mean that a man
must be married in order to serve as a deacon or that a man that has been divorced is ineligible to serve as a deacon.

- **Manages his children and household well** – The primary application is to married men meaning that their family life is good. The deacon should act as a responsible Christian father, husband, and household manager providing for his family financially, emotionally, and spiritually in an active ever-present role through example and service. One key measurement when evaluating a man’s household management is the behavior of his wife and children. Because the home is often referred as a microcosm of the church, it is imperative a deacon is able to care for his family before he can care for the church of God. In the case of the unmarried, it means that they have close relationships and that those relationships are generally healthy and stable. A pattern of broken relationships suggests an inability to get along with others (especially his family and friends) and should disqualify him to serve as a deacon.

### Responsibilities of a Deacon

#### Routine Responsibilities of a Deacon

- Must be committed to the church’s Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, and the Vision/Purpose Statement
- Loyal support of the pastor and the pastoral staff
- Faithful attendance at the services of the church
- Regular attendance at the meetings of the Board of Deacons
- Encouragement of and the participation in the organization and ministries of the church
- Assist in the ministering of the gospel to believers and unbelievers
- Demonstrate Christ-like consecration, loyalty, prayer support, and faithfulness to the church body
- Assistance with new membership assimilation
- Participation as a Team Leader for at least one of the Deacon Ministry Teams
- Cooperate with the Pastor and the Board of Deaconesses in visiting the members, in the care of the sick, needy, and distressed members of the church
- Cooperate with the Pastor and the Board of Deaconesses in the preparation for and the observance of the ordinances of the Church
- Manage the collection and distribution of the Fellowship Fund to provide financial relief to members or others suffering financial hardships in accordance with the Fellowship Fund Policy
- Although, not specified in the church constitution, the board may be asked by the Senior Pastor to assess and ratify decisions made by him or the pastoral staff that may affect the ministries or members of the church.

#### Special or Occasional Responsibilities of a Deacon

The Chairman of the Board of Deacons serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Church.

A member of the Board of Deacons, which is usually the Chairman or his appointee, serves on the Church Finance Committee.

A member of the Board of Deacons, which is usually the Chairman or his appointee, serves on the Church Nominating Committee.

A member of the Board of Deacons, which is usually the Chairman or his appointee, serves on the Church Endowment Committee.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Deacons serve on the committee to select the seven members to serve on the Pastoral Search Committee whenever such a committee needs to be established.

Along with the Church Finance Committee, the Board assess and approves the need of a new pastoral ministry position, which may be recommended by the Pastoral Staff.

Responsible for approving all candidates for a Pastoral Staff Member position, which have been submitted to the board by a selected Search Committee.

The Senior Pastor consults with the Executive Committee of the Board of Deacons prior to asking for the resignation or terminating a Pastoral Staff Member.

The Chairman of the Board of Deacons makes himself available to the members of the congregation to hear his or her concern regarding some aspect of the Church ministry; members share his or her concern with the responsible ministry leader or a member of the Pastoral Staff before sharing his or her concern with the Chairman.

When necessary, terminate a person’s church membership by taking official action in accordance with the Board’s Policy of Dismal.

Vote to restore those members that have been dismissed by the Board of Deacons action to terminate the person’s membership.

When necessary the Chairman may call a “Specially-called” business meeting providing he gives the congregation at least one week notice thereof.

The Board of Deacons has final authority regarding the interpretation of the Constitution whenever any questions may arise.

26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:26-28
WASHINGTON HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

Job Description: Senior Pastor
(DRAFT)

Mission: Helping people experience God’s grace and transforming power.

Vision: We envision people along the Wasatch Front experiencing God’s grace and transforming power by building a network of like-minded churches.

Position Overview: The Senior Pastor is responsible to provide overall leadership to WHBC. This leadership will especially focus on the vision, mission, direction and corporate teaching. The Senior Pastor will partner in the broad leadership roles with the Executive Pastor, with the EP working primarily on the tactical realm and the SP working primarily on the strategic realm of leadership.

Reports to: Board of Deacons

Oversees:
1. The Executive Pastor
2. Personal Ministry Assistant

Leadership Responsibilities:

- **Teaching:** Be the primary communicator to the assembled church, delivering relevant and biblical messages on a regular basis.
  
  *Expectation:* The SP will speak between 36-48 times annually, unless otherwise deemed necessary.

- **Vision:** Discern God’s direction for the WHBC body and also clearly communicate that vision to the congregation in appropriate ways through relevant means.
  
  *Expectation:* The vision for the church will stretch the congregation beyond status quo, is culturally relevant and is biblically true. The SP will be a change agent.

- **Cultural Architect:** Create the cultural “feel” of WHBC through values and a clear stylistic approach to ministry.
  
  *Expectation:* WHBC increasingly become a place that balances grace, love & truth.

- **Shepherding:** Be responsible for the spiritual well being of the pastoral staff and the congregation as a whole. Due to the size of the church, the shepherding responsibilities will largely be delegated to the congregation through a wide variety of means.
  
  *Expectation:* The SP will know the staff of WHBC well and see that the congregation receives adequate care.

- **Leadership Development:** Create and sustain a leadership community at WHBC.
  
  *Expectation:* There will be new leaders emerging on a regular basis.

- **Planning:** In coordination with the pastoral staff, develop, articulate and execute a Ministry Plan to lead the church further toward realizing the vision. On the tactical level, this plan will be implemented by the EP.
  
  *Expectation:* There will be a clear tactical plan that flows out of the mission & vision.
• **Public Relations:** Due to the high profile position of SP, he will interact with community at large and the congregation specifically.
  
  *Expectation:* The SP’s conduct will result in people speaking well of WHBC.

• **Model the Mission:** On a personal basis, enthusiastically “own” the mission of WHBC.
  
  *Expectation:* People will be reached for Christ and grow in Christ through personal contact.

**Necessary Competencies:**

• **Shepherd’s heart:** Exhibit genuine care and protection for the congregation and the staff.

• **Growing leadership:** Demonstrate strong leadership of the church. Set an example of Christ that others can follow. Demonstrate enthusiasm for the mission and the ministries of the church.

• **Personal development:** Understand himself better and better and actively pursue development in areas of responsibility that will benefit him and the congregation.

• **Management:** Be able to manage through the efforts of others. While having few direct reports, the SP is still responsible for the overall management of the Pastoral Staff and key leaders. He must be a “leader of leaders.”

• **People development:** Be able to move people from where they are to where they can be.
WASHINGTON HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

Job Description: Executive Pastor
(Draft)

Mission: Helping people experience God’s grace and transforming power.

Vision: We envision people along the Wasatch Front experiencing God’s grace and transforming power by building a network of like-minded churches.

Position Overview: The Executive Pastor is responsible to ensure organizational alignment with the mission/vision of WHBC, to oversee the ministry outcomes and personal and professional development of direct reports and ensure effective internal (staff) communication resulting in all strategic ministries to flourish to their fullest potential. The EP is responsible for the oversight of the business function of the church (tactical).

This position is designed to partner with and provide a compliment to the Senior Pastor position, freeing the Senior Pastor to devote greater time to vision, strategic leadership, preaching/teaching and leadership development. The EP will understand and carry out the vision of the Senior Pastor and provide advice, counsel and feedback for the Senior Pastor.

Reports to: Senior Pastor

Supervises: (Direct Reports)
1. Pastor of Adult Education
2. Pastor of Music & Worship
3. Pastor of Student Ministries
4. Pastor of Children’s Ministries
5. Director of Women’s Ministries
6. Director of Men’s Ministries
7. Office Manager

Leadership Responsibilities:

• Ministry Development: Develop and oversee all aspects of the Pastoral Staff in partnership with the Senior Pastor.
  Expectation: The EP will work to create alignment between the day-to-day operations of the church and overall church mission/vision.

• Personnel Development: Develop and supervise all direct reports. Responsibilities include: coaching, organization, training, evaluation, delegation, leadership development, and hiring staff in consultation with the Senior Pastor.
  Expectation: The EP will work toward developing the Pastoral Staff members in a way that is beneficial to the team member and the ministry.

• Team Development: Set calendar and agendas for Pastoral Staff and facilitate Pastoral Staff meetings, off-sites and retreats.
**Expectations:** The EP will organize the large scale management issues to provide clarity of direction and implementation.

- **Team Member:** The Executive Pastor is a serving member of the Pastoral Leadership Team.
  
  **Expectations:** The EP shall assume all appropriate Pastoral duties as do all the other members of the Pastoral Staff.

- **Ownership of the Ministry Plan:** Develop a Ministry Plan in partnership with the Senior Pastor and then “own” or drive the plan forward while seeking to make everyone involved in the plan successful in their contribution.
  
  **Expectation:** There will be a clear tactical Ministry Plan being implemented and the EP will work to make all contributors to the plan successful.

**Necessary Competencies:**

- **Team Leadership:** The EP will monitor organizational dynamics and proactively meet the needs so that the Staff Team flourishes in their roles.

- **Administration:** The EP will ensure all personnel practices within the Pastoral Leadership Team are in compliance with the WHBC Employee Handbook as well as oversee the administration of those office procedures and policies necessary for support of the Pastoral Leadership Team.

- **Communications:** The EP will develop/maintain a high level of quality and effectiveness of communication from church leadership to the congregation and from the church to the greater Ogden area.

- **Financial Development:** The EP will ensure that WHBC has the financial resources, both operating and capital, in order to meet the current and long term needs of the church.

- **Financial Management:** The EP will provide accurate and timely financial information for informed decision-making and manage the biblical stewardship of WHBC’s resources.
LEADERSHIP VISION: Roy and Deacons – March 14th

What are the three greatest strengths of the church in priority order:

1) Worship Services
   - clear theme
   - practical
   - genuine/informal atmosphere

2) Building Bridges – Outreach
   - many guests come
   - openness to new ideas
   - willingness to try something new/different

3) Leadership (staff & laity)
   - cohesiveness of staff
   - depth of Bible teachers
   - depth of lay leaders & potential lay leaders
   - depth of artistic talents

What are the three most significant weaknesses in your church in order of the greatest need first?

1) Communication
   - to new attenders
   - of the vision to the congregation
   - of the plan to achieve the vision

2) Growing Pains
   - auditorium constraints
   - connecting new people to the church body/each other
   - communication challenges with a wide diversity
   - church size an intimidate people
   - revenue base not keeping pace with overall growth

3) Recruitment
   - we go to the same “pool” of volunteers

What three changes would you like to see made in your church in order to become more effective – listed in priority order:

1) Establish effective communication system – diversity of methods to communicate

2) More small groups & small group involvement

3) Keep pace with attendance growth in our physical plant
How ready is the church’s leadership and laity for change? Are people willing to pay the costs required to make any necessary changes?

Yes – on a scale of 1 – 10 with 10 representing total readiness, the consensus was: 7.5

Here is the master list of all the responses without the “voting” that established the priorities of each category:

**Strengths:**

- Openness to new things - try something
- Size - critical mass
- Welcoming/comfortable environment
- Clear gospel and key doctrines
- Name recognition - WHBC known
- Outreach - effective - many guests
- Depth of Bible teachers
- Depth of lay leaders/potential lay leaders
- Depth of artistic talents
- Reach broad demographics
- Cohesive leadership (staff)
- Youth/Children’s programs
- Missions
- Worship services - clear theme - practical
  – Genuine/informal atmosphere
- Consistency through years toward comm
- “Building Bridges” approach - effective
- Physical location

**Weaknesses:**

- Rapid growth - growing pains
- Church discipline
- Auditorium constraints
- Growth = challenge to connect people
- Growth = intimidation to new people
- Growth = challenge to communicate effectively
- Growth = challenge to connect relationally
- Recruitment - go to same “pool”
- Outdoor culture = less commitment
- Communication to new attenders
- Communication of vision to congregation
- Communication of plan to achieve the vision
- Revenue base vs. attendance
- Transient nature of area
• Number of people in small groups
• Mormon bashing in places
• Not much Xian infrastructure

3 Changes to Make:

• Small Group involvement
• Keep pace with physical building/facility
• Communication system
  — diversity of methods

Readiness for Change

Scale 1-10 7.5
WASHINGTON HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

Board of Deacons

AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Board of Deacons recommends to the members of Washington Heights Baptist Church amending Article V, Section III of the Church Constitution Process for Membership, whereby membership applications will no longer be made through the Board of Deacons, instead applications will henceforth be made through the pastoral staff.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP
SECTION III - PROCESS FOR MEMBERSHIP

All applications for membership shall be made through the Board of Deacons Pastoral Staff whose action to receive or reject an applicant shall be regarded as the action of the church.

Approved by the Board of Deacons:

__________________________________________ ______________________
John Smith, Chairman      Date
CONSTITUTION OF WASHINGTON HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

PREAMBLE

Statement of Faith

THE BIBLE – GOD’S WORD

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, complete as the revelation of God's will for salvation, and the supreme and final authority in all matters to which they speak. (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21)

THE TRINITY

We believe in one God, creator and sustainer of all things, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; we believe that these are equal in every distinct perfection and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption. (Matthew 3:16-17; Matthew 28:19; I Peter 1:2)

GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God the Father: an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, righteousness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of humanity, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (Genesis 1:1; John 4:23-24; John 3:16)

JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ is God’s eternal Son, who has precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. We believe further that He is not only true God, but true man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. We also believe in His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, His priestly intercession on behalf of His people, and His personal, visible, premillennial return from heaven. (John 1:1; John 14:6, John 10:27-30)

HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the Holy Spirit, His personality, and His work in regeneration, sanctification, and preservation. His ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, to implement Christ's work of redeeming the lost, and to empower the believer for godly living and service. (Genesis 1:2; John 14:26; Acts 5:3-4; I Corinthians 12:12,13)

MAN

We believe God created persons, male and female, in the image of God and free from sin. We further believe all people are sinners by nature and choice and are spiritually dead. We also believe that those who repent of sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:26, 27; Romans 3:23)
SALVATION

We believe in salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We further believe that this salvation is based upon the sovereign grace of God, was purchased by Jesus Christ on the cross, and is received by man through faith, apart from any human merit, works, or ritual. We further believe salvation enables and results in righteous living, good works, and proper social concern. (Ephesians 2:8,9,10; Romans 6:23)

THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church is the spiritual body of which Christ is the head. We believe that the true Church is composed of all persons who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. We believe that this body expresses itself in local assemblies whose members have been immersed upon a credible confession of faith and have associated themselves for worship, for instruction, for evangelism, and for service. We believe the ordinances of the local church are believer’s baptism by immersion and the Lord’s Supper. We also believe in the interdependence of local churches and the mutual submission of believers to each other in love.  

(Matthew 16:18; Matthew 18:15-17)

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

We believe that each local church is self-governing in function, and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority. We further believe that every human being is directly responsible to God in matters of faith and life, and that each should be free to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. (Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:27-29)

CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

We believe that the supreme task of believers is to glorify God in their lives and that they should seek to live in such a way that their conduct be blameless before the world. We further believe that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions and that they should seek to realize for themselves the full stature of maturity in Christ. (Romans 12:1-2; Romans 6:13-14; Colossians 3:1-2)

LAST THINGS

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the saved and lost, the eternal existence of all people either in heaven or hell, and in divine judgment, rewards and punishments. (Hebrews 9:27,28; I Corinthians 3:10-15; II Corinthians 5:10)
ARTICLE I
NAME AND PRINCIPLE OFFICE

This church shall be known as the Washington Heights Baptist Church, also doing business as Washington Heights Church or WHBC. This Corporation will be further referred to in the Constitution as the "Church." The Church maintains its principal office at 1770 East 6200 South, Ogden, UT 84405.

ARTICLE II
PURPOSE AND VALUES

Our purpose is to lead people to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, to integrate believers into the life of our church, and to demonstrate to our world the dynamic reality of life together in Christ. Our values include:

• God’s Word, the Bible, is our ultimate source of authority for our faith and practice.
• Recognizing our need for God’s direction and blessing, we make prayer an integral part of all our planning and programs.
• Celebrative worship is a vital part of what we do, as we express to God our adoration, praise and thanksgiving, and listen as He would speak to us by His Spirit through His Word.
• We seek to challenge, inspire and encourage people in their spiritual growth and ministry, rather than motivate through guilt.
• We expect that all believers will desire to serve the Lord in some capacity, and thus we seek to involve them in ministry for the Lord as soon as possible.
• Our focus is on reaching our community and the world for Christ, rather than turning inward in a mode of maintaining the status quo.
• We encourage creative, innovative ways of doing ministry that are within our vision and values, and this gives us freedom to not fear failure.
• In our efforts to reach our community with the good news of Jesus Christ, we seek to build bridges rather than creating barriers.
• We seek to study and apply God’s Word to every aspect of our personal lives and to our society without becoming an issues-oriented church.
• Since all are created in the image of God, we welcome all to our church, regardless of race, ethnic background or social level.
ARTICLE III
CHURCH COVENANT

In becoming a member of Washington Heights Baptist Church, we joyfully enter into covenant with one another:

- We will seek to develop a growing relationship of love for God.
- We will seek to foster a spirit of love, respect, honor, and trust for each other.
- We will refuse to initiate or encourage any spirit of gossip or criticism of a fellow member.
- We will seek to clarify any disagreements that should arise.
- We will be ready both to seek, as well as to give forgiveness, so that any strained or broken relationship can be restored.
- We will seek to demonstrate to all who observe us how Christians with differing backgrounds, personalities, and views love one another, forgive one another, and support one another in serving the Lord.
- We will seek to understand and develop our God-given gifts for building up the Body of Christ.
- We will endeavor to contribute regularly to the support of the ministries of the Church both in our community and around the world.

ARTICLE IV
AFFILIATION

WHBC has voluntarily associated itself with the Conservative Baptist Association of America and the Rocky Mountain Conservative Baptist Association.

ARTICLE V
MEMBERSHIP

SECTION I - General

The membership of this Church will be composed of qualified believers who have met the qualifications for membership and are listed on the membership role. Members of this Church have certain responsibilities and rights.

SECTION II - Requirements for Membership

The Requirements for Membership include a personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ and baptism by immersion as an expression and testimony of that faith, as well as:

- For those eighteen years or older, a signed agreement to the Church’s Statement of Faith, the Church Covenant and Vision/Purpose Statement.
- For those under eighteen years of age, completion of the Church’s membership class and its requirements.
SECTION III - Process for Membership

A person may unite with this fellowship of this Church in one of the following ways:

a) Transfer of letter from a church of like faith and practice;

b) Profession of faith through believer’s baptism; or

c) Reaffirmation of faith.

All applications for membership shall be made through the Board of Deacons whose action to receive or reject an applicant shall be regarded as the action of the Church.

SECTION IV - Rights of Members

a) All members eighteen years of age or older shall have equal rights and may vote in all matters to be determined by the congregation as defined by the Church Constitution.

b) Members eighteen years of age or older may be nominated and elected to serve as officers of the Church.

c) Members of this Church shall have no property rights. Upon termination of membership they shall be entitled to no personal interest in the assets of the Church.

SECTION V - Responsibilities of Members

a) All members will strive to walk according to Biblical principles as stated in the Church Covenant, regularly support the ministries of the Church, and promote the unity of the fellowship.

b) Any member who has a conflict with a fellow member shall follow the instructions given in Matthew 18:15-17.

c) Any member who has a concern regarding some aspect of the Church ministry shall first share his/her concern with the responsible ministry leader. If the concern cannot be substantially resolved after good faith discussions between the parties, the member may carry his or her concern (in order) to a member of the Pastoral Staff and Deacon Chairman. (Matthew 18:15-17) At each level, the member shall attempt in good faith to resolve the problem before involving the next higher level of care. Members shall avoid gossip and other unnecessary discussion of conflicts.

d) Each member acknowledges that the decision of the Church leadership on any matter shall be binding, and that he or she will not file a lawsuit, complaint, or any other claim in any civil court or before any governmental authority against the Church or any of its members, employees, or agents with respect to any act or failure to act that occurred while he or she was a member of the Church. (I Corinthians 6:1-8)

SECTION VI - Termination of Membership

A person’s membership may be terminated in the following ways:

a) Death;

b) Transfer of membership to another church;

c) Personal request by a member in good standing; or

d) Removal by official action by the Board of Deacons in accordance with its Policy of Dismissal:
• A member who is inactive in church attendance and financial giving for over one year period without reason; or
• A member whose conduct is detrimental to the honor of Christ (including repeated unrepentant conduct inconsistent with fundamental biblical teaching and/or failure to honor the Church Covenant, Purpose and Values). Once duly notified of such action, a member's right to resign membership is restricted until the process is completed and the matter is resolved.

SECTION VII - Restoration of Membership
Members dismissed by the Deacon Board shall be restored by a majority vote of the Deacon Board according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8, when their lifestyles are judged to be in accordance with the Church Covenant and Values.

ARTICLE VI
GOVERNMENT

SECTION I - Congregation
Congregational authority shall include:
   a) Approval of changes to the Articles of Incorporation and this Constitution;
   b) Approval of the calling or removal of the Senior Pastor;
   c) Approval of the annual budget to fund the Operational Plan;
   d) Approval of the purchase or sale of land and buildings;
   e) Election of the officers of the Church; and
   f) Election of members of standing committees.

SECTION II – Duties and Terms of the Officers
a) The officers of the Church shall consist of:
   • Moderator and Vice Moderator
   • Church Clerk
   • Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Finance Committee
   • Treasurer
   • Financial Secretary
   • Board of Deacons and Board of Deaconesses
   • Four members of the Endowment Committee
   • Two members of the Nominating Committee
b) All officers shall be members of this Church in good standing.

c) The Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Finance Committee, Treasurer, Financial Secretary and the two members of the Nominating Committee shall be elected annually at the time of the annual business meeting.
d) The Deacons, Deaconesses and members of the Endowment Committee shall be elected for a term of three years. At the end of their three-year term, they may be re-nominated and elected to serve another three years. No Deacon, Deaconess or Endowment Committee member shall be eligible for re-election to this office until one year has elapsed from the expiration of his or her second term of office.

e) All officers shall assume office beginning March 1st of the year for which they are elected. The one-year term will extend into the following year to the end of the month of February.

f) The resignation of any officer shall be delivered to the Church in writing, and shall be effective on the date specified in the resignation.

g) The qualifications and duties of officers shall be as follows:

• **Duties of the Moderator:** The Moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the Church.

• **Duties of the Vice Moderator:** The Vice Moderator shall, in the absence of the Moderator, preside at all business meetings of the Church or other occasions as the Moderator may request.

• **Duties of the Board of Deacons:** The Board of Deacons shall assist the pastor in his work, and with him consider all applications for Church membership, requests for letters of transfer and termination of membership. The Board shall cooperate with the Pastor and the Board of Deaconesses in visiting the members, in the care of the sick, needy and distressed members of the Church, and in the preparation for and the observance of the ordinances of the Church. The Board shall manage the collection and disbursement of the Fellowship Fund to provide financial relief to members or others suffering financial hardships in accordance with the Fellowship Fund Policy.

The Board of Deacons shall consist of no less than twelve (12) members. As the needs of the Church and its programs are assessed by the Pastor and Deacons, the Board of Deacons, through the normal nominating process, may present additional Deacons and/or Deaconesses to the Church for their election.

An Executive Committee of the Deacon Board shall consist of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and at least one member-at-large from the board. The Chairman of the Deacon Board shall be appointed annually by the Senior Pastor and ratified by a majority vote of the Deacon Board. The Chairman and Senior Pastor on an annual basis shall appoint the Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and the member(s)-at-large to serve on the Executive Board. The Executive Board will provide assistance to the Pastor as required on a day-to-day basis within the limits of authority allowed for by the Board of Deacons and its policies. The Executive Board shall annually conduct a performance review with the Senior Pastor reflecting on the past year achievements and discuss objective plans for the year.

Annually, the Chairman of the Deacon Board shall appoint Deacon member representatives to serve on the various committees where a member from the Board of Deacons is required by this Constitution. The Chairman of the Deacon Board shall serve as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Church.

• **Duties of the Board of Deaconesses:** The Board of Deaconesses shall assist the Pastor in developing the spiritual life of the Church. It shall cooperate with the Pastor and the Board of Deacons in visiting the members, in the care of the sick, needy and distressed members of the Church and in the preparation for the observance of the ordinances of the Church. The Senior Pastor shall appoint the Chairperson of the Deaconess Board annually. The Board of Deaconesses shall consist of no less than twelve (12) members. Annually, the Chairperson of the Deaconess Board shall appoint Deaconess member representatives to serve on the various committees where a member from the Board of Deaconesses is required by this Constitution.
• **Duties of the Church Clerk:** The Church Clerk shall keep accurate records of the minutes of the annual and specially called business meetings. The Church Clerk shall preserve and properly file all letters, reports and other documents pertaining to business meetings and assist in the preparation of all other reports that may be required. The Church Clerk shall deliver immediately to the successor, all books, files, records and other documents in his/her possession.

• **Duties of the Treasurer:** In cooperation with the Administrator (Article X), the Treasurer shall review and verify the records of all monies contributed and disbursed for the general expenses of the Church, special funds, missionary and other benevolent purposes. The Treasurer shall also review all financial reports. The Treasurer shall report and be accountable to the Finance Committee.

• **Duties of the Financial Secretary:** The Financial Secretary shall keep an account for each contributor of record, showing pledges made and contributions received for each fund and render annual statements and quarterly statements as requested by the Administrator or Chairman of the Finance Committee. The Financial Secretary shall immediately deliver to his/her successor all books and records in his possession.

• **Duties of the Chairman of the Finance Committee:** The Chairman of the Finance Committee shall chair the finance committee and serve as a member of the Board of Trustees.

• **Duties of the Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee:** The Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee shall preside at the Finance Committee meetings in the absence of the Chairman or at other occasions as the Chairman may request. The Vice-Chairman serves as a member of the Endowment Committee.

**SECTION III – The Board of Trustees and their Duties**

Members of the Board of Trustees shall include Chairman of the Board of Deacons, Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Administrator (defined in Article X). The Board of Trustees shall hold in trust all buildings and grounds belonging to the Church and shall take all necessary measures for its protection. It shall perform such other duties as are imposed upon it by the Articles of Corporation and the Statutes of the State of Utah.

**ARTICLE VII
STANDING COMMITTEES AND THEIR DUTIES**

**SECTION I - Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee shall consist of the following members: Chairman of the Finance Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Administrator, and one member of the Board of Deacons. The committee shall:

a) Look after the financial interests of the Church;

b) Meet at the call of its Chairman or the Administrator;

c) In conjunction with the Administrator, prepare and present to the Church the proposed annual budget at the annual business meeting; and

d) On a quarterly basis, review and post the financial status of the church with respect to the operating budget.
SECTION II - Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Administrator, two members selected at-large (elected by the congregation annually), one member from the Board of Deacons and one member from the Board of Deaconesses. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the committee. The committee shall:

a) Prepare a list of names from the active membership of the Church of those qualified to fill various offices;

b) Interview each nominee proposed, and ascertain his or her willingness to serve, in case of election; and

c) Nominate one person for each office to be filled and report the names to the Church at least two weeks before the election is to be held.

SECTION III - Endowment Committee

The Endowment Committee shall consist of the Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee, one member from the Deacon Board, the Administrator, and four members at-large elected by the congregation. The committee shall:

a) Annually elect the chair and vice-chair from among the four members elected by the congregation;

b) Responsibly manage the Endowment Fund according to the comprehensive policy statement approved by the congregation;

c) Present a written report summarizing the financial transactions, fund performance and balance at the annual business meeting; and,

d) Maintain records evidencing compliance with the intended use of funds.

ARTICLE VIII
ELECTIONS

SECTION I - Time

The annual election of officers shall be held at the Annual Business Meeting. Announcement shall be given to the congregation at the morning worship services for two consecutive Sundays prior to the annual election.

SECTION II - Procedure

The Nominating Committee shall provide a slate of nominees as provided by Article VII, Section II, two weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting.

SECTION III - Vacancies

Vacancies occurring during the year may be filled for the remainder of that year through appointment by the respective chairperson in consultation with the Senior Pastor and ratification by the members of the affected committee or board.
ARTICLE IX
PASTORAL STAFF

SECTION I - General Qualifications

Members of the Pastoral Staff must:

a) Be willing to become a member of Washington Heights Church;
b) Affirm the Statement of Faith (Preamble), the Church Covenant (Article III), and abide by WHBC Purpose and Values (Article II);
c) Seek to meet the Biblical standards for Church leaders (1 Timothy 3);
d) Practice proportional giving; and
e) Possess the experience, education and abilities deemed necessary by the appropriate search committee.

SECTION II - Senior Pastor

a) **Duties/Responsibilities**: The Senior Pastor shall faithfully preach the Gospel, lead the Church in fulfilling its God-given vision, promote the spiritual interest of the Church, direct care of the membership, and administer the ordinances. The Senior Pastor shall oversee the Pastoral Staff. He shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees. The Senior Pastor shall annually appoint the Chairman of the Deacon and Chairperson of the Deaconesses from members of the respective Boards.

b) **The Calling of the Senior Pastor**: When it becomes necessary to call a Senior Pastor, a nine-member Pastoral Search Committee shall be formed. The Search Committee shall be comprised of seven (7) members from the church body and two (2) members from the Pastoral Staff.

**The Formation of the Pastoral Search Committee**

The seven-member candidates to serve on the Pastoral Search Committee shall be selected by a committee comprised of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Deacon Board, Chairperson of the Deaconesses and two members of the Pastoral Staff selected by the Executive Pastoral Staff.

The two-member candidates from the Pastoral Staff to serve on the Pastoral Search Committee shall be selected by the Pastoral Staff.

The seven-member nominees shall be confirmed by a majority of those members of the church present and voting in a specially called business meeting.

At its first meeting, the nine-member search committee shall elect a chairperson and secretary. The committee will develop a profile for the position and a program for presenting the potential candidate to the congregation that maximizes his exposure to the Church. Only one candidate shall be presented to the Church at a time.

A decision by the Search Committee to present the potential candidate to the Church requires a 2/3 approval from the Search Committee followed by a 3/4 approval by the Board of Deacons. If the potential candidate fails to receive a favorable vote by either the Search Committee or the Board of Deacons, the candidate shall be dismissed.
Having successfully gained an acceptance by the two aforementioned entities, the Search Committee shall present the candidate as their nominee recommendation to the Church in a specially-called business meeting. Notice of such meeting and its purpose shall have been posted one (1) week in advance of said meeting. A 3/4 vote of the members present and voting shall be necessary to extend a call. The vote shall be by secret ballot. The committee will dissolve upon the successful calling of a Senior Pastor.

c) **Resignation/ Termination of Senior Pastor**: The Senior Pastor may resign giving thirty (30) days’ written notification to the Chairman of the Board of Deacons.

Termination of the employment of the Senior Pastor by the Church shall be preceded by a Board of Deacons’ recommendation of termination secured by 3/4 vote of its members. The termination of the Senior Pastor shall be decided by the Congregation at a specially-called business meeting. A notice of such meeting and its purpose shall be posted and communicated to the Church for two successive Sundays before the said meeting. A 3/4 vote of the members present and voting shall make valid the termination of the Senior Pastor. The vote shall be by secret ballot.

**SECTION III - Pastoral Staff**

a) **Duties/Responsibilities**: The member of the Pastoral Staff shall lead his/her area of ministry in fulfilling its God-given vision consistent with the Church Covenant, Purpose and Values of the Church. The Pastoral Staff member shall be ultimately accountable to the Senior Pastor.

b) **Calling of a Pastoral Staff Member (Existing Position)**: The process for filling an existing position is, first, the formation of a Search Committee which represents a cross-section of members involved in the specific ministry. The Senior Pastor will appoint a member of the Pastoral Staff who will select members to the Search committee and serve on that committee.

Second, the Search Committee shall, upon forming, select its Chairperson and Secretary. The Committee will develop a profile for the position and a program for presenting the potential candidate to the congregation that maximizes his/her exposure to the Church. Only one candidate shall be presented to the Church at a time.

A successful candidate for the position will gain approval (3/4 majority vote) through the following entities, in order: (1) Search Committee, (2) Pastoral Staff, and (3) Board of Deacons.

c) **Calling of a Pastoral Staff Position (New Position)**: When it becomes necessary to establish a new pastoral ministry position determined by the Pastoral Staff, the need will be assessed and approved by the following entities: Board of Deacons and Finance Committee. A recommendation for the new position will be proposed to the congregation for approval. The position will be considered and approved by a 2/3 majority of the voting members present and voting at a specially-called business meeting. Once approved, the position will be filled in accordance with Article IX, Section III, part b) Calling of a Pastoral Staff Member (Existing Position).

d) **Resignation/Termination of Pastoral Staff Member**: The Pastoral Staff Member may resign giving thirty (30) days’ written notification to the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor may ask for the resignation or terminate a member from the Pastoral Staff after consultation with the Executive Committee of the Board of Deacons.
ARTICLE X
ADMINISTRATOR

The Administrator shall oversee the administrative business of the Church and perform those duties in accordance with and cited in this Constitution. The Administrator is appointed and reports to the Senior Pastor and may be a member of the Pastoral Staff. The Administrator is a member of the Finance Committee, Board of Trustees, Nominating Committee, and Endowment Committee.

ARTICLE XI
FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall coincide with the calendar year.

ARTICLE XII
AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any regular or specially-called business meeting of the Church by a 2/3 vote of those present and voting, provided a quorum is present and voting, and provided that notice of such amendment stating the proposed change shall have been given to the Church on two consecutive Sundays.

ARTICLE XIII
BUSINESS MEETINGS AND RULES OF ORDER

SECTION I – Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting shall be held by the end of February each year. The primary purpose of the meeting shall be the election of officers, review of year-end financials, and adoption of the new year’s annual budget.

SECTION II – Specially-Called Business Meetings

Specially-called business meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor or Chairman of the Board of Deacons giving the congregation at least one week notice thereof. In an emergency situation (i.e. a major fire involving the Church building, community disaster, etc.), a specially-called business meeting may be called at any time with the consent of the Executive Board of Deacons.

SECTION III – Quorum

Twenty-five (25) members shall constitute a quorum. A quorum, present and voting at an annual or specially-called business meeting shall be sufficient to decide any question presented unless otherwise provided by the Constitution.
SECTION IV – Qualification of Voters
All matters, as provided in Article VI, Section I, shall be voted on by members, eighteen years of age or older, present at the business meeting.

SECTION V – Rules of Order
The rules contained in Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern the business proceedings of this Church, except as otherwise provided for in this Constitution.

ARTICLE XIV
DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH
Should conditions prevail that the ministry of Washington Heights Baptist Church cannot continue, title to the assets shall be transferred to the Rocky Mountain Conservative Baptist Association, provided that: (a) no part of the net earnings shall be distributed or inure to the benefit of any individual; and (b) the assets shall be distributed to one or more organizations having like tax-exempt status and purposes in compliance with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

ARTICLE XV
CONSTITUTIONAL INTERPRETATION
When questions arise with regard to the interpretation of the Constitution, the decision of the Board of Deacons will be considered as the final authority.