BOARD OF DEACONS

It shall be the purpose of the Senior Minister and the Board of Deacons to pursue all the interests of the church. They shall be held responsible to the congregation.

FUNCTION:
The Board of Deacons shall cooperate in carrying out the policies of the church in the areas of administration and ministry through the Council, Staff, Committees, Officers and Trustees. Deacons shall nominate chairs of all administrative division committees, as well as the divisional liaisons. Deacons are called for unique service to God and the church. The ongoing goals and objectives of the church will determine the ministry response of the deacons in cooperation with the Senior Minister. The Senior Minister and Board of Deacons shall recommend policies, practices, or procedures they deem advisable to the church in conference. The Board of Deacons and Senior Minister shall be responsible for the overall function of the Church as carried out through the Church Council, Church Staff, Church Committees and Teams, Church Officers, and Trustees of First Baptist Foundation.

Each year the Board of Deacons shall choose their own officers from those serving as active Deacons. These officers, which normally include a Chair-Elect and recording Secretary, are selected using internal procedures as developed and adopted by the Deacons. The Chair Elect of the Board of Deacons must have at least 2 years remaining on his/her term serving 1 year as Chair-Elect and then assuming the role of Chair at the beginning of the following church year. In the event a current Chair-Elect cannot assume the role of Chair at the appropriate time, the Deacons must choose a new Chair and Chair-Elect. The Secretary may serve successive terms.

The Board of Deacons nominates the Chairs-Elect of each of the Administrative Committees: the Finance/Stewardship Committee; the Nominating Committee; the Personnel Committee; and the Property Management Committee. These Chairs-Elect serve in addition to the membership. The Board of Deacons also shall nominate the rotational members of the Nominating Committee and the Chair of the Memorial Council. Likewise, the Board of Deacons nominates Active Deacons to
serve as Deacon Liaisons for each of the Divisions. Leadership of the Board of Deacons shall submit all these nominations to the Nominating Committee for inclusion in the Nominating Committee report for approval by the Church in Conference.

A. **Eligibility for Membership on the Board of Deacons**
   The position of deacon shall be open to all *resident adult members of First Baptist Church, Athens, Georgia who, as of the date of the Nomination Ballot are twenty-one (21) years of age and have been a member for two (2) years.

B. **Election to the Board of Deacons**
   1. **General**
      Deacons shall serve a term of three (3) years commencing September 1st following their election. At the expiration of this three-year term, these individuals will not be eligible for re-election for a period of two (2) years. The Board of Deacons and other appropriate church committees or staff will be responsible for informing the congregation as to the purpose and responsibilities of Deacons prior to and/or during the election process. This may be done through written materials, Sunday School lessons, continuing education programs, etc. The Board of Deacons shall provide orientation and education for new and existing Deacons to assist them in understanding and carrying out their responsibilities.

2. **Nominations**
   Starting at least thirty (30) days prior to mail out of the Nomination Ballot, notices will appear in all church news publications strongly encouraging eligible members who do not wish to serve to notify the Church Office either by letter or e-mail; no calls. The names of those members who have provided this notification to the Church Office will be placed on an “Opt-Out” list.

No later than the first Tuesday in February, one (1) Nomination Ballot for each Church member in the family will be mailed to the family address. Only the ballot mailed will be available and no additional ballots will be distributed. The Church Office will keep a record of the number of ballots printed and the ballots will be numbered or otherwise marked in a distinctive way. Each *resident church member is eligible to nominate up to twelve (12) resident adult members, but ballots with less than twelve (12) names will be counted. A list of the *resident adult membership will be available
in both church foyers and the Pulaski Street Vestibule. If desired, a copy of this roster can be obtained at the Church Office or by e-mail or postal request.

By letter from the Deacon Chair, to be enclosed with the Nomination Ballot, members will be urged to thoughtfully and prayerfully consider their nominations, taking into consideration, from personal observation, those members who are:

- Regular in attendance & support for FBC church services
- Financially supportive of the Church
- In the opinion of the person making the nomination, meet the Biblical principles and conditions set forth in Acts 6:3-6 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Current Deacons, Deacons Emeritus and those required by Church Policy to take a two (2) year hiatus are not eligible to be nominated and will be listed as a part of the Deacon Chair’s letter to the membership.

Church members will be responsible for either mailing their ballots to the church, putting them in the collection plate, or in foyer or vestibule ballot boxes to be received no later than the Tuesday following the second Sunday after the ballot is received (i.e. church members will have two (2) weeks to complete and return their ballot.)

After the ballots are counted, the twenty-four (24) members receiving the highest number of votes (the “Nominees”) will be listed on the Election Ballot.

3. Election Ballot

Immediately following the completion of the First Ballot count, the Deacon Election Counting Committee will contact each of the twenty-four (24) nominees and inform them that their name will be placed on the Election Ballot. The Deacon Election Counting Committee Chair will thereafter advise Nominees by letter that they will be required to (1) provide the Church Office with a brief biographical sketch and (2) sign an enclosed Certificate, both of which must be returned to the Church no later than the second Sunday following the counting of the Nomination Ballots. The biographical sketch will include information on length of Church membership, Sunday School
involvement, committee assignments, other Church-related activities and service to the community. The enclosed Certificate will provide for the Nominee to affirm that they will serve if elected and, to the best of their ability, (1) be regular in attendance & support FBC church services, (2) be financially supportive of the Church and (3) strive to meet the Biblical principles and conditions set forth in Acts 6:3-6 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

A ballot with the names of the twenty-four (24) Nominees, along with biographical sketches, will be mailed to church members no later than six working days following the deadline for the receipt of the biographical sketches and Certificate. Only the ballot mailed will be available and no additional ballots will be distributed. The Church Office will keep a record of the number of ballots printed and ballots will be numbered or otherwise marked in a distinctive way. Each *resident church member is then eligible to vote for twelve (12) of these twenty-four (24) names. Church members will be responsible for either mailing their ballots to the church, placing them in the collection plate the following two Sundays or in foyer or vestibule ballot boxes. All ballots must be received by the second Sunday following the mailing of the ballots.

C. Policy for Counting Nomination and Election Ballots

Counting will take place on the first Wednesday night following the deadline for receiving ballots for each election. The Chair of the Deacons will appoint one person from the Board of Deacons to serve as chair of the counting procedure. The counting can be done by the Deacons at large or by the outgoing Deacons (the “Deacon Election Counting Committee”). The Deacon Election Counting Committee will be furnished a list of those church members who have previously “Opted-Out” and will not total any votes those members might have received on a Nomination Ballot. A list of the 20 persons receiving the most votes in the Election Ballot shall be given to the Church Administrative Secretary, who will maintain the list in the event vacancies on the Board occur prior to the next election cycle. Any vacancies shall be filled in the order of the top vote receivers on that list.

*Resident member is one who belongs to First Baptist Church of Athens and who resides close enough to attend church functions on a regular basis. (Approved Church Conference 9-7-86)
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Athens, Georgia
DEACON EMERITUS STATUS

{Previously Approved in Church Conference - May 6, 1984}

Deacon Emeritus Status shall be open and available to any current member of the First Baptist Church who has both served one or more terms on the Board of Deacons and attained the age sixty-five (65). Deacon Emeritus status is totally voluntary. It shall be up to the discretion of the church members meeting these criteria to request this status of Board membership. Deacon Emeritus status may be made at any time by notification in writing to the Secretary of the Board of Deacons and requires no further action by the Board. Unless otherwise requested, Deacon Emeritus status shall continue for the lifetime of the requesting member, unless he/she chooses to cancel their earlier acceptance of this designation by written notification to the Secretary of the Board of Deacons.

Church members designated as Deacon Emeritus shall be eligible for service on such committees as requested by the Chair and, with the exception of a voting right, shall be further entitled to all the privilege and perform all the duties and responsibilities, etc. of the Board of Deacons.