

THE CONSTITUTION

**Of Trinity Baptist Church
New Haven, Connecticut**

**Adopted on May 4, 2003
Revised on May 8, 2007 and June 10, 2010**

THE CONSTITUTION OF TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH

PREAMBLE

The name of this church will be Trinity Baptist Church. This church will be incorporated in accordance with the laws of the State of Connecticut governing religious bodies, and the handling of the property will be in accordance with Connecticut law. This church will be in association with the Western Connecticut Baptist Association, the Baptist Convention of New England, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1. Qualifications for Membership

- 1.1.1. A member will evidence a personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.
- 1.1.2. A member will participate in or have participated in believer's baptism.
- 1.1.3. A member will agree with the Doctrinal Statement, accept the Core Commitments, and agree to abide by the Constitution.

1.2. Admission of Members

- 1.2.1. The elders are responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership, exercising discretion as appropriate.
- 1.2.2. In making this determination, the elders may rely on a person's profession of faith, a letter from the person's previous church, or other evidence the elders deem appropriate.
- 1.2.3. Two or more elders will determine whether a candidate meets the membership requirements.
- 1.2.4. As soon as possible, an elder will present person(s) approved for membership by the elders to the church during a Sunday morning service.
- 1.2.5. Name(s) of person(s) accepted into membership will be communicated to the church in writing and such names will be recorded in the minutes of the next congregational meeting.

1.3. Duties and Privileges of Membership

- 1.3.1. Members are privileged and expected to gather together for Sunday worship and to participate in and contribute to the ministry of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each person has received from God.
- 1.3.2. Members are encouraged to attend all congregational meetings. Members eighteen years or older may vote.

1.4. Associate and Watchcare Membership

- 1.4.1.** Persons temporarily residing in the area not wishing to cede membership in their home churches may ask for watchcare membership.
 - 1.4.1.1.** In addition to meeting the qualifications stated above for membership, the person seeking watchcare membership will provide a letter of commendation from his or her home church.
 - 1.4.1.2.** The duties and privileges of membership are as above, with the following exceptions: 1) when absent from the New Haven area for extended periods of time, watchcare members are released from the responsibility to attend church and congregational meetings; 2) while encouraged to participate in congregational meetings, watchcare members are ineligible to stand for office or vote on changes to the Doctrinal Statement, Core Commitments, or Constitution.
 - 1.4.1.3.** Termination of watchcare membership as a disciplinary measure is the same as for other members, except that the elders will notify the pastor or elders of the person's home church. Watchcare membership will normally terminate upon the ending of the period of temporary residence in the New Haven area.
- 1.4.2.** Persons in the paedo-baptist tradition, having not received believer's baptism, may ask for associate membership.
 - 1.4.2.1.** On their discretion, the elders may approve for membership persons in the paedo-baptist tradition, having not received believer's baptism, who otherwise meet the qualifications for membership.
 - 1.4.2.2.** The duties and privileges of membership are as above with the following exceptions: 1) such persons who participate in the teaching ministry of the church are expected to teach nothing contrary to the understanding of baptism found in the Doctrinal Statement; 2) such persons are ineligible to stand for the elected offices identified in Section 3; 3) such persons agree not to change the Doctrinal Statement, Core Commitments, or Constitution insofar as each concerns the traditional Baptist commitment to believer's baptism.

1.5. Termination of Membership

- 1.5.1.** Membership is terminated by death.
- 1.5.2.** Membership may be terminated by a letter of dismissal. The Clerk, with approval of the elders, will grant the letter of dismissal.
- 1.5.3.** Membership is terminated by uniting with another church without seeking and receiving letters of dismissal.
- 1.5.4.** Membership may be terminated by absence from the church for more than one year without communication.
- 1.5.5.** Membership may be terminated as an act of church discipline, following the procedure set forth in Section 1.6.

1.6. Discipline of Members

- 1.6.1.** Members will seek to build up the body of Christ, guided by an attitude of kindness and love, and will seek reconciliation at all times.
- 1.6.2.** Any member unrepentant in conduct that dishonors the name of Jesus Christ will be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the teaching in Matthew 18:15–17, 1 Corinthians 5, and Galatians 6:1–5.
- 1.6.3.** Having exhausted every reasonable measure toward the end of reconciliation, the elders may vote to terminate the membership of unrepentant members. This vote will pass when it receives the unanimous approval of the elders. (In cases involving discipline of an elder, see 3.2.6.2.)
- 1.6.4.** When discipline includes the termination of a person's membership, the elders will communicate this decision, with appropriate care and discernment, to the members for their approval. If the next congregational meeting is more than a week from the elders' decision to terminate membership, the elders may call a special congregational meeting to take place within a week.
- 1.6.5.** According to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:6-8, the elders may restore to membership any repentant person whose membership was previously terminated as an act of discipline. The elders will communicate this decision to the members. If the next congregational meeting is more than a week from the elders' decision to restore membership, the elders may call a special congregational meeting to take place within a week.
- 1.6.6.** In the case of sexual abuse that violates local, state, or federal law on church premises, associated with church events, or by an elected officer, a teacher, or a coordinator of the church, where the victim is church-related, the elders will notify the proper legal authorities in due time.

2. MEETINGS

2.1. General Meetings

- 2.1.1.** Trinity Baptist Church will hold worship services on Sunday and other meetings throughout the week to worship, evangelize, teach, pray, and fellowship.

2.2. Congregational Meetings

2.2.1. Occurrence, Type, and Notification

- 2.2.1.1.** Congregational meetings will be held at least once every quarter, with target dates of the second week in June, September, January, and March.
- 2.2.1.2.** During the June meeting, the members will consider and vote on the annual budget, which begins July 1, starting in 2004.
- 2.2.1.3.** An additional fifth meeting, designated as the Annual Congregation Celebration, will be held. The purpose of this meeting is to celebrate God's work in the church over the past year, with various ministry leaders reporting to the church and perhaps the sharing of a meal. In

addition to recognizing God's work in the previous year, the elders will communicate the vision for the upcoming year.

- 2.2.1.4.** The date, time, and place of congregational meetings will be announced in the church bulletin and during the Sunday worship service at least two weeks in advance, and on at least two separate occasions.

2.2.2. Special Congregational Meetings

- 2.2.2.1.** Special congregational meetings may be called as required by the elders or deacons, or at the written request, submitted to the elders, of twenty percent of the voting membership.
- 2.2.2.2.** When members have requested a meeting, the elders will call a special meeting within three weeks of the receipt of this request.

2.2.3. Moderator

- 2.2.3.1.** The moderator will moderate the quarterly congregational meetings and any other special meetings. See Section 3.4.2.
- 2.2.3.2.** In the absence of the moderator, the clerk will moderate the meeting.
- 2.2.3.3.** In the case of a special meeting involving matters of church discipline or removal of an elder, an elder will moderate the meeting, and the notification requirements stated above will be suspended at the discretion of the elders.

2.2.4. Agenda

- 2.2.4.1.** All items for the agenda will be submitted to the the chairman of the elders at least ten days before the congregational meeting.
- 2.2.4.2.** All items for the agenda submitted by the deacons or a member of the congregation to the elders will be automatically included on the agenda, unless a majority of the elders believe it should not be included or should be amended first. Where the membership calls for a special meeting by written request as provided in Section 2.2.2.1., this request is not subject to approval of the elders.
- 2.2.4.3.** Substantive matters for consideration at the congregational meeting must be included in the agenda. Routine matters not covered in the agenda may be addressed only after the business on the agenda is addressed. Substantive matters are those issues of major importance, such as, but not limited to, buying or selling property, expenditures for non-budgeted items greater than one percent of the annual church budget, changes in the Constitution, Core Commitments, or Doctrinal Statement, borrowing money, etc. If any member present objects to a matter deemed routine, the matter will be declared routine only after a two-thirds vote of voting members present.
- 2.2.4.4.** The moderator will ensure that the agenda is prepared under the direction of the chairman of the elders, that it is posted by the Sunday prior to the congregational meeting, and that notification of the posting is announced during the service. The moderator will have available at the meeting several copies of the agenda for those wishing to see it.

2.2.5. Voting Requirements

- 2.2.5.1. A quorum of one-fourth the voting membership is required for amendments to the Constitution, Doctrinal Statement, or Core Commitments; church discipline; and the election and dismissal of church officers. A two-thirds majority vote of quorum will carry amendments to the Constitution or Core Commitments, church discipline, and the election of deacons and other church officers. A three-quarters majority vote of quorum will carry amendments to the Doctrinal Statement and the election of elders.
- 2.2.5.2. Abstention votes shall be counted towards the determination of a quorum, but shall not otherwise count in determining whether a motion passes.
- 2.2.5.3. For all other matters, quorum is not required, and voting requirements shall be dictated by Robert's Rules of Order. Where that does not specify a requirement, a simple majority of those present and voting is required.
- 2.2.5.4. If at the time appointed for a meeting, attendance is exceptionally low and is unlikely to reach a reasonable number after a short recess, the acting moderator may refuse to call the meeting to order, due to insufficient attendance.
- 2.2.6. All meetings are governed by Robert's Rules of Order. Where Robert's Rules conflict with the Constitution, the Constitution will supersede. If interpretation of a rule is required, it will be made by the moderator.

3. ELECTED OFFICES

3.1. General

- 3.1.1. The biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons. In addition, Trinity Baptist Church recognizes the administrative positions under this Constitution of moderator and clerk. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

3.2. Elders

3.2.1. Qualifications

- 3.2.1.1. Elders will be men who meet the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9.
- 3.2.1.2. Elders will give wholehearted assent to the Doctrinal Statement and Core Commitments.
- 3.2.1.3. All pastors employed by the church shall meet the Biblical qualifications for elders and serve on the board of elders.

3.2.2. Guiding, Non-Binding Principles Regarding Number

- 3.2.2.1. The number of elders not paid by the church should exceed the number of elders paid by the church.
- 3.2.2.2. The number of elders should be at least one elder for every 50–75 persons who attend on a regular basis.

3.2.2.3. No more than half the elders will be up for election in any one year.

3.2.3. Responsibilities

3.2.3.1. The elders will devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word, and shepherding God's flock as their first priority, in keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6 and 1 Peter 5:1–4. **3.2.3.2.** The elders will lead the development of the church's vision and mission.

3.2.3.3. The elders will communicate budget priorities to the deacons, and grant final approval before submitting the church budget to the congregation.

3.2.3.4. The elders will choose and equip as necessary all persons who participate in the teaching ministry of the church. Such persons include Sunday school teachers and small group leaders. This function may be delegated to a ministerial staff member or a ministry team leader as determined by the elders.

3.2.3.5. The elders will oversee church discipline as appropriate and in accordance with the guidelines set forth in Section 1.6.

3.2.3.6. The elders will approve persons for church membership as set forth in Section 1.2.

3.2.3.7. The elders will regularly encourage and admonish one another, in regard to marriage and family, commitment to prayer and the Word, and the numerous other areas of life that shape character and ministry.

3.2.3.8. The elders will have ultimate responsibility for leading the church, within the framework of authority and accountability set forth in this Constitution, and within the context of congregational church government.

3.2.4. Selection

3.2.4.1. Selection of the elders will follow the procedures set forth in 6.1.

3.2.4.2. Prior to beginning their service, elders selected under this procedure will be commissioned before the church.

3.2.5. Term

3.2.5.1. Elders, excluding pastors, will serve a three-year term, renewable.

3.2.5.2. Elders, excluding pastors, will take at least one year off following six consecutive years of service.

3.2.6. Resignation or Removal

3.2.6.1. An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by removal.

3.2.6.2. Any two members (1Timothy 5:19) in good standing with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express this concern to the elders, and if necessary, to the congregation. With the approval of all the elders excepting the elder(s) subject to discipline, the elders will then present the issue to the members as soon as possible. Any of the elders

may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of a quorum comprising one-fourth of the voting membership.

3.2.7. Review

- 3.2.7.1.** The elders may review any major recommendation or major decision made by the deacons, other elected officers, or a ministry team prior to implementation, or if church approval is necessary, prior to presentation for approval at a congregational meeting.
- 3.2.7.2.** This power of review should not be exercised so as to distract the elders from their primary responsibility of prayer, ministering the Word, and shepherding the flock; nor should it be exercised so as to limit the reasonable range of choice that accompanies the responsibilities of the deacons, other elected officers, or a ministry team.
- 3.2.7.3.** If the elders decide to review a recommendation or decision, the elders may: 1) return the recommendation or decision to the deacons, other elected officer, or ministry team for further study or consideration of different issues; 2) veto the recommendation or decision.
- 3.2.7.4.** This power of review does not apply to those actions approved by the members during a congregational meeting or mandated in this constitution.

3.2.8. Relationship to the Deacons

- 3.2.8.1.** The chairperson of the deacons and the chairman of the elders or a pastor will regularly communicate, no less often than the deacons meet. This communication will both inform the elders of the work of the deacons and make the deacons aware of issues needing consideration.
- 3.2.8.2.** The elders and the deacons will share a meeting together no less than twice annually.
- 3.2.8.3.** The secretary of the deacons will forward the minutes to the chairman of the elders or a pastor no less than one week after the deacons meet.

3.2.9. Chairman of the Elders

- 3.2.9.1.** The elders will select an elder other than a pastor as chairman of the elders. His responsibilities include chairing the elders' meetings and other responsibilities as mentioned above.
- 3.2.9.2.** For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Connecticut, the chairman of the elders will serve as president of the corporation.

3.3. Deacons

3.3.1. Qualifications

- 3.3.1.1.** Deacons will be persons who meet the qualifications for the office of deacon set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8–13 and Acts 6:1–7.

3.3.2. Guiding, Non-binding Principles

- 3.3.2.1.** The number of deacons should be at least one deacon for every 25–50 persons who attend on a regular basis.

3.3.3. Responsibilities

- 3.3.3.1. The deacons will organize care for the temporal needs of the members.
- 3.3.3.2. The deacons will prepare, approve, and submit an annual budget to the elders.
- 3.3.3.3. The deacons will oversee the facilities for worship and ministry, including the audio/visual needs of the church.
- 3.3.3.4. The deacons will administer the financial activities and properties of the church.
- 3.3.3.5. The deacons will oversee the welcoming ministries of the church, including ushers, greeters, and hospitality.
- 3.3.3.6. The deacons will annually review the compensation package of all paid staff, and make recommendations to the church regarding any changes.
- 3.3.3.7. The deacons will perform other tasks commissioned by the church or elders.

3.3.4. Selection

- 3.3.4.1. Selection of the deacons will follow the procedures set forth in 6.
- 3.3.4.2. Prior to beginning their service, deacons selected under this procedure will be commissioned before the church.

3.3.5. Term

- 3.3.5.1. Deacons will serve a maximum two-year term.
- 3.3.5.2. After serving two consecutive terms, a person may be elected to the office of deacon only after one year has elapsed.

3.3.6. Resignation or Removal

- 3.3.6.1. A deacon's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by removal.
- 3.3.6.2. A deacon's term of office may be terminated by an act of church discipline, following the principles set out in section 1.6.

3.3.7. Relationship to the Elders (see 3.2.8, 3.2.9)

3.3.8. Deacon Offices

- 3.3.8.1. **Chairperson of the Deacons.** The deacons will select a deacon as chairperson. His or her responsibilities include chairing the deacons' meetings and communicating regularly with the elders as described in Section 3.2.9.
- 3.3.8.2. **Secretary.** The deacons will select a deacon as secretary. His or her responsibilities include taking the minutes of the meeting, forwarding the minutes to the elders as described in Section 3.2.9, and informing other deacons about the time and place of upcoming meetings.
- 3.3.8.3. **The Deacon of Finance.**
 - 3.3.8.3.1. The deacons will select a deacon as the deacon of finance. The deacon of finance shall not be a paid staff member. His or her responsibilities include: 1) Ensuring that all funds and

securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as the deacons designate as a depository; 2) ensuring that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church; 3) render to the elders and the church annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as deacon of finance and of the financial condition of the church.

3.3.8.3.2. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Connecticut, the deacon of finance will serve as treasurer of the corporation.

3.4. Other Offices

3.4.1. General

3.4.1.1. The moderator and clerk will satisfy the requirements for deacons set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8–13 and Acts 6:1–7.

3.4.1.2. Removal from any of these offices will follow the same procedure as for the removal of deacons set forth in Section 3.3.6.2.

3.4.2. Moderator

3.4.2.1. Selection. The moderator will be selected by the church from among the members at the January election meeting, in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 6.1. The moderator will be neither an elder nor a deacon.

3.4.2.2. Term. The moderator will serve a maximum two-year term. After serving a two-year term, a person may be elected to the office of moderator only after one year has elapsed.

3.4.2.3. Responsibilities. 1) Prepare agendas as set forth in Section 2.2.4; 2) prepare any other handouts and reports; 3) ensure that the required announcements of meetings are made as set forth in 2.2.1.5; 4) call congregational meetings to order; 5) call on persons to speak in meetings; 6) move meetings forward to the next item on the agenda as appropriate.

3.4.3. Clerk

3.4.3.1. Selection. The clerk will be selected by the church from among the members, in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 6.1.

3.4.3.2. Term. The Clerk will serve a two-year term.

3.4.3.3. Responsibilities. 1) Record the minutes of all regular and special congregational meetings of the church; 2) preserve an accurate roll of the membership; 3) provide a copy of the minutes or an up-to-date

record of church membership when requested by the church, elders, or deacons; 4) ensure that copies of the most recent version of the Constitution are available upon request; 5) provide letters of dismissal under the request of the elders; 6) keep track of all church officers' terms of service.

- 3.4.3.4.** For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Connecticut, the Clerk will serve as the Secretary of the corporation.

4. PASTORS

4.1. Pastors

- 4.1.1.** Pastors will perform the responsibilities described above for the elders, but are also recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the ministry of preaching, teaching, and pastoring.
- 4.1.2.** The pastors will preach on Sundays, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, and perform other duties as usually pertain to this office according to the Constitution, their job descriptions and determination of the elders.

4.3. Selection

- 4.3.1.** Selection of pastors will follow the procedures set forth in 6.3.2.
- 4.3.2.** Prior to beginning his service, the church will commission each pastor.

4.4. Employment Agreement

- 4.4.1.** An employment agreement, including the duties and responsibilities for each pastor, lines of accountability, compensation, and benefits, will be prepared by the deacons, submitted to the elders for approval, and finally presented to the church for approval.

4.5. Termination

- 4.5.1.** General. Each pastor will serve under a continuing call until the relationship is dissolved at the request of the pastor or of the church, or according to the removal procedure for elders described in Section 3.2.7.
- 4.5.2.** Request of a pastor. The pastor must give at least eight weeks advance notice in writing to the elders of his intention to resign his position, unless otherwise mutually agreed.
- 4.5.3.** Request of the church. In cases other than discipline (Section 4.5.4), such as senility or severe infirmity associated with old age, two-thirds of the elders may call a special congregational meeting to discuss terminating a pastor's call, following the requirements in Section 2.2.1.5 and 2.2.4.4. Where a quorum of one-fourth the voting membership is present, two-thirds of the members present and voting may vote to terminate the relationship.

- 4.5.4.** Removal. Removal of a pastor will follow the procedure set forth in 3.2.7 for removal of an elder.

5. CHURCH STAFF

5.1. The church may employ as many ministerial staff members, interns, and support staff as it deems in the best interest of the ministry of the church.

- 5.1.1.** Ministerial staff are servants of the church called to minister in specific areas of the church with specific abilities and gifts.
- 5.1.2.** Interns serve for a limited period of time, as part of a larger training program or in a short-term ministry capacity to fulfill a discrete need.
- 5.1.3.** Support staff include administrative assistants, facility management personnel, and other staff who serve the practical needs of the church.

5.2. Employment Agreement

- 5.2.1.** An employment agreement, including the duties and responsibilities for each position, lines of accountability, and compensation and insurance where applicable, will be prepared by the deacons, submitted to the elders for approval, and finally presented to the church for approval.

5.3. Selection

- 5.3.1.** The elders will make recommendations for the selection of pastoral, ministerial, or support staff or interns according to the procedures set forth in Section 6.2.

5.4. Termination

- 5.4.1.** Ministerial staff, interns, and support staff will serve in their positions under continuing employment unless otherwise provided in their employment agreement. Ministerial staff and support staff must give four weeks advance notice in writing of his or her intention to resign to the elders, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.
- 5.4.2.** Involuntary termination will follow the procedures set forth in the employment agreement.

6. SELECTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF

6.1. Nominations for Church Officers

- 6.1.1.** At least once a year, with no more than one year passing between announcements, the elders will publish an announcement for the congregation requesting nominations for any church offices that will be open, allowing at least 10 days, including two Sundays, after such publication before closing the nomination process.

- 6.1.2.** The elders will receive all nominations from the members of the congregation and assess the qualifications of each suggested nominee.
- 6.1.3.** The elders will interview each qualified nominee to determine his or her sense of call and availability.
- 6.1.4.** The elders will publish the nominations they approve one month before the Congregational Meeting in which they will come up for vote.
- 6.1.5.** The elders will present the nominees they approve to the church at a congregational meeting according to the procedures set forth in Section 2.2.5.1.
- 6.1.6.** As a guiding but non-binding principle, the list of nominees for diaconal and other church offices should be published at least two weeks prior to the election. The list of nominees for elder should be published at least four weeks prior to the election.

6.2. Church Staff Search

6.2.1. Interns, Ministerial, or Support Staff Search

- 6.2.1.1.** The elders will draft a job description and present to the church a candidate for their approval.
- 6.2.1.2.** The deacons will draft an employment agreement for paid positions to present to the elders for their approval.

6.2.2. Pastoral Search

- 6.2.2.1.** The elders will draft a job description and present it to the congregation for their approval.
- 6.2.2.2.** The elders will publicize the church's interest in filling this position as appropriate.
- 6.2.2.3.** The elders will establish procedures for seeking candidates, including substantial congregational involvement.
- 6.2.2.4.** The elders will present a candidate in person to the congregation prior to a congregational vote.
- 6.2.2.5.** The elders will make a recommendation to the church for their evaluation and approval at a congregational meeting.
- 6.2.2.6.** The deacons will draft an employment agreement to present to the elders for their approval.

7. BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

7.1. Summary of the Budget Process

- 7.1.1.** The deacons will first discuss budget priorities with the elders, solicit budget requests from other appropriate persons, and then produce an initial draft of the budget. (Section 6.2.1.1)
- 7.1.2.** After approving the budget, the deacons will then submit the budget to the elders. (Section 3.3.2.2)

- 7.1.3. Having approved the budget, the elders will then submit the budget to the congregation at a congregational meeting for final approval. (Section 3.2.4.3)

7.2. Expenditure Rules

- 7.2.1. Each ministry team leader, pastor, elected board, or other designated leader responsible for spending money under the church budget may exercise discretion in making spending choices in accordance with the relevant line items.
- 7.2.2. Each ministry team leader, pastor, elected board, or other designated leader responsible for spending money under the church budget must not spend in excess of the amount budgeted for a given expenditure.
- 7.2.3. Proposed expenditures in excess of the budgeted amount require approval of the deacons. Where such expenditures exceed 1% of the total annual budget, approval of the congregation is first required.
- 7.2.4. Persons seeking reimbursement must present a valid receipt and completed reimbursement form to the deacon of finance or other designated member of the deacons. Where reimbursement as a means of payment is not feasible, a check may be requested in advance from the deacon of finance.

8. INDEMNIFICATION

8.1. Mandatory Indemnification

- 8.1.1. If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care a reasonably prudent person in a similar situation would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

8.2. Permissive Indemnification

- 8.2.1. At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

8.3. Procedure

- 8.3.1. If a majority of the elders is not available to grant indemnification because of the number of elders seeking indemnification, the required determination may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

9. DISSOLUTION

- 9.1. In the event of dissolution of Trinity Baptist Church for any reason, the assets will be distributed in this order as follows:
- 9.2. All real and personal property owned by the Church will be sold.
- 9.3. All debts will be paid to the extent possible.
- 9.4. All church employees will be given three months salary. If the remaining funds are insufficient toward this end, the funds will be split proportionately, based on salary, between church employees.
- 9.5. All remaining funds will be given to a tax-exempt organization under the applicable tax laws, as determined by the church membership.