



BYLAWS

Effective Upon Affirmation by the Congregation

10/26/2025

PENDING

DECEMBER 14, 2025

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING APPROVAL

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Trinity Baptist Church, having searched the Scriptures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have recognized the need to reconstitute ourselves to more closely conform to His will for the Church in this age and prepare ourselves for greater efforts in His name.

Trinity Baptist worshipped together for the first time on Sunday, October 21, 1956 with 96 charter members. The church was planted in response to a need in this growing section of Sweetwater. Since 1956, the church has been blessed by many opportunities to serve our local and global community, including efforts here in Sweetwater and in Texas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Belize, Iraq, Laos, Macedonia, Mexico and Rwanda. Trinity is called and committed to God's mission in Sweetwater and around the world.

ARTICLE ONE

A. Our Core Values

CONNECT. EQUIP. REACH.

**At the core of Trinity's mission is its vision to "CONNECT, EQUIP, AND REACH".
This vision serves as the foundation of everything the church does.**

Trinity seeks to CONNECT with God and one another through worship, heartfelt prayer, and genuine fellowship. Every Sunday, the congregation gathers to lift their voices in praise, coming together as one family in Christ.

Trinity places a strong emphasis on discipleship. Believing that the Christian walk is not a solitary journey, the church is dedicated to EQUIPPING its members to live like Jesus. Through dynamic Bible studies, small group gatherings, and intentional mentoring, Trinity encourages spiritual growth and transformation, empowering individuals to serve God in their daily lives.

Trinity's commitment to Christ doesn't stop at its doors. With a deep passion for outreach, Trinity is driven by the desire to REACH the world with the message of Christ. To allow who we are becoming both individually and collectively as disciples of Christ to overflow into the community and the world around us. As we seek to be people who CONNECT, EQUIP, and REACH, our prayer is that it would open the door for the transformational power of the Holy Spirit to move.

B. Our Central Beliefs

1. We believe there is one and only one living and true God. God is Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, and Ruler of the Universe. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being. Genesis 1:1; John 1:14
2. We believe the Bible is inspired by God and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. The Bible is true, reliable, and authoritative. The Scriptures are the standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. The Scriptures point to Jesus Christ and He is the criterion by which the Bible is interpreted. 2 Timothy 3:16
3. We believe man and woman are created by the special act of God, in God's own image. In the beginning, man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. But we rebelled against God, choosing idolatrous self-worship rather than true worship of the Creator. We became twisted by sin, inheriting from our ancestors a nature and an environment

bent toward sin. Only God's grace can restore a person to relationship with God. Genesis 1:27; Romans 3:10

4. We believe God's grace is manifested through the gospel, meaning good news. Jesus Christ, from all eternity the second person of the Trinity, put on human flesh and became one of us. John 1:14; Philippians 2:5-11 The Word became flesh and came announcing the good news that God reigns. Matthew 4:17 He offers forgiveness, salvation, freedom, transformation, and eternal life to those who REPENT (turn to Him) and BELIEVE (place their confidence in Him). Jesus offers eternal life starting now. He came to set captives free! Mark 1:15
5. We believe humanity responded to Jesus' life and message in much the same way we had responded to God since the beginning. We rejected and crucified Him. When all hope seemed lost forever, JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD! Forty days later, He ascended into Heaven. As Christians, we identify with Jesus in His death and resurrection through faith. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4
6. We believe salvation is the rescue and redemption offered by God, rooted in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Salvation is offered by God's grace and received through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. That salvation stems from God's grace, not human works. Salvation results in good works that point to God's glorious grace. Ephesians 2:8-10
7. We believe that the New Testament church is a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of baptism and communion; committed to His teachings; exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; and by seeking to extend the Gospel to the ends of the earth, making disciples. Matthew 28:18-20 The local church commits to regularly gathering for worship, teaching, prayer, and encouragement. Acts 2:42-47 The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ, which includes all the redeemed of all the ages. Matthew 16:15-18
8. We believe the Kingdom of God is the realm of God's active and good rule and reign. God's kingdom is where God reigns and where things happen according to His will. His kingdom is both 'already and not yet.' The Kingdom has been brought near by Jesus and will be fully consummated at the return of Christ. Christians are called to pray, 'your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven'. Matthew 6:9; Matthew 6:33; Romans 14:17
9. We believe God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to his promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment and separation from God. Those made righteous by Christ in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in the New Creation with the Lord. Revelation 21:1-5
10. Baptists are historically non-creedal and Trinity Baptist Church is a non-creedal church. For this reason, Trinity Baptist Church maintains that the fundamental basis of our faith and beliefs is the Holy Bible. For clarity and communication purposes, however, Trinity Baptist Church generally holds to the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message as amended in 1998.

ARTICLE TWO

A. Name and Location

1. This church shall be known as Trinity Baptist Church, Sweetwater, Texas. The street address is 1506 Santa Fe at Hailey, Sweetwater, Texas 79556. References in these Bylaws to “Trinity” refer to Trinity Baptist Church, Sweetwater, Texas.

B. Governance

The government of Trinity is vested in its members with each member having equal rights. All of the rights not expressly reserved for the members under these Bylaws have been delegated by the members to its Pastors and Teams. The Lead Pastor works with and encourages ministry leaders to build teams that carry out the congregation’s vision and mission.

1. CONNECT with God and others.
2. EQUIP each other to live like Jesus
3. REACH the world with the message of Christ
4. See “Our Core Values”, Article 1, Section A for detailed description of our church vision.

C. Church Autonomy and Partnerships/Cooperation

We are a New Testament church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Trinity is an autonomous body, choosing to partner with other congregations, associations, and conventions as led by God’s Spirit, in honor of God’s Word, for the fulfilling of God’s mission.

ARTICLE THREE

A. Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having become a member of this church, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

B. Purpose

Trinity exists by the grace of God and for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all its activities. This church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying his commands through:

1. Worshipping Him, Psalms 100, Acts 2:46-47
2. Equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study Ephesians 4:11-16
3. Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and evangelism, Mark 16:15 and any other means consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture, empowered by the Holy Spirit to fulfill Jesus' command to make disciples of as many people as possible Matthew 28:18-20
4. Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work, local, domestic, and international Mark 16:15
5. Administering the ordinances of baptism Matthew 28:19 and communion 1 Corinthians 11:26
6. Encouraging Biblical fellowship with God and fellow believers Acts 2:42, 1 John 1:3
7. Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ Matthew 23:11, 1 Peter 4:10
8. Faithfully practicing the 'one anothers' of Scripture Romans 12:9-21, Colossians 3:12-17

ARTICLE FOUR

A. Membership

Believing that Christ gave Himself for the church and identifies with it as His own body which He continues to care and provide for through His Word and Spirit, holding to His promise that He will reveal the church on the last day as His resplendent bride, we consider membership in the Body of Christ to be a beautiful and serious matter. For this reason, we set out the following path to membership as well as biblical expectations for members of the Body of Christ. Ephesians 5:23-30

B. Path to Membership

1. Believe and be baptized.

Jesus says, 'Repent and believe the good news!' Mark 1:15 Saving faith is characterized by placing trust in Jesus alone for the forgiveness of sins and new life. This decision is the beginning, but not the end of what it means to follow Christ.

Our practice is that new believers will be baptized by immersion. For those seeking to join coming from another Gospel-centered denomination, we affirm their personal baptism, and/or confirmation, expression and commit to baptizing the individual by immersion if they so request. Baptism is a beautiful, public, and visible illustration of a believer's identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

2. Be Informed and Belong.

Those expressing interest in becoming Trinity members start that process by reaching out to the Lead Pastor, any staff member or by coming forward at the end of a worship service. Those seeking membership will be directed to our membership class to learn more about what it means to be a healthy member of a healthy church family, affirm Trinity's core beliefs, and meet with a mature believer to share their story.

C. Participation in Membership

1. All who trust Christ are *positionally* members of the universal church. Those who desire to be *participating* members of this local church are expected to be connected.

2. Connect. As participating members of the Body of Christ, we expect one another to Connect in Worship, Connect in Relationship, and Connect in Mission.

a. Connect in Worship

Members meet together for corporate worship of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We meet to remind ourselves of the truth of the gospel, the love of God and our mission. We

gather to worship each Sunday, and other times throughout the week as deemed edifying and beneficial.

b. *Connect in Relationship*

Trinity is made up of several different expressions of small groups where members get connected, minister to one another, and serve others. Small groups are the primary means of shepherding, mutual accountability, loving correction, encouragement and pastoral care at Trinity. Acts 20:28-31; 1 Peter 2:9; Hebrews 13:17; Proverbs 27:17; Galatians 6:1-6; James 5:19; Matthew 18:15-17

c. *Connect in Mission*

Trinity members serve each other, our community, and our world through various local and global efforts. We encourage and expect one another to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Romans 12:1-8; Philippians 4:15-20; Ephesians 4:11-12

D. Meetings

1. Under Christ, this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend members' meetings and vote on the election of the Lead Pastor, on decisions regarding membership status, on budget approval, annual affirmation of Leadership Team and Leadership Team Chairs, and on such other matters appropriately submitted to a vote.
2. In every meeting together, members act in a spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. There will be an annual business meeting each calendar year in December to recap the year of ministry, review the updated financials and vote on the succeeding year's proposed budget, Leadership Team, and Leadership Team Chairs.
 - a. The church's fiscal year shall be from January to December annually.
 - b. Oral and electronic notice will be given to the resident membership at least one week before the meeting, unless extreme urgency dictates shorter notice.
 - c. The Lead Pastor will preside as moderator at all members' meetings of Trinity.
 - d. The Lead Pastor and Staff shall see that the stated meetings of the church are held and that required reports are submitted to the congregation by the responsible members.
 - e. Provided all provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present.
 - f. If necessary for purposes of order during a meeting, Robert's Rules of Order shall be the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure.

E. Special Called Business Meetings

The Trinity Staff, Leadership Team Chairs and Leadership Team reserve the right to hold and call “special called business meetings” as needed when major decisions or unanticipated business arise.

1. The reserved right to call a special called business meeting is with the Lead Pastor and Leadership Chairs, provided proper notice for said meeting is given under this Section.
2. In the event the office of Lead Pastor is vacant or said meeting involves removal of Lead Pastor, then a majority of the Leadership Team Chairs may call for a special called business meeting provided proper notice for the meeting is given under this Section.
 - a. Leadership Team Chairs shall meet to determine the chair who will lead said meeting. This function may be determined by the reason for the special called meeting, reflecting the Chair who best represents or can communicate that subject.
3. All special called business meetings require a minimum of two weeks’ notice, in writing, either electronically, by posting, or by mail, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such meeting.
 - a. If the necessary meeting is considered an “emergency,” the Leadership Team Chairs will call the meeting with both urgency and clear communication being considered.

F. Church Discipline

We believe that in order to fulfill Jesus’ command set out in Matthew 22:37-40, we must endeavor to love one another to the extent that we are grieved to see a brother or sister who is suffering under the weight of unrepentant sin or who has left the fellowship of the church. We believe that such grief should move us to action.

1. Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of Trinity, shall be subject to the admonition of the Leadership Team Chairs and the discipline of this church. Restoration through loving correction shall always be the goal of church discipline Galatians 6:1-2. Jesus gives a clear description of this process in the book of Matthew.

“If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.” Matthew 18:15-17

2. Church discipline is a necessary mark of a healthy church and shall be applied in cases of arrogance, sexual misconduct, gossip, divisiveness, dishonesty, and various other expressions of sin. In accordance with the biblical pattern outlined by Jesus in Matthew 18, a member who evidences such sin will be confronted in an initial one-on-one meeting, followed by escalating engagement by close relationships (such as life group) and Pastoral Staff.
3. Where the steps of discipline are exhausted in cases of unrepentant and/or habitual sin, the Leadership Team Chairs will consider recommending to the members of Trinity the removal of a person from membership with the hope of eventual reconciliation and restoration. 2 Corinthians 2:5-8, Galatians 6:1-2

G. Termination of Membership

Trinity shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death, and may do so after he or she has voluntarily resigned or joined with another church. Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline as described in Article 4 Section F of these bylaws following the recommendation of the Leadership Team upon the vote of at least 75% of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.

ARTICLE FIVE

A. Overview of Trinity's Leadership

Trinity Baptist Church can be described as *Pastor-led, Team-led congregation*. The Lead Pastor works with and encourages ministry leaders to build teams that carry out the congregation's vision and mission. This model emphasizes shared leadership, where the Lead Pastor provides overall direction and support while empowering others to use their gifts and talents. The Lead Pastor's role is to engage, equip, empower, and encourage these teams.

1. Under the authority of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, the gathered Trinity Congregation is the final authority within this local church. This authority is normally exercised through the election of officers to govern the church, voting on the election of leadership, on decisions regarding membership status, on budget approval and on such other matters appropriately submitted to a vote.
2. The officers/offices of Trinity are Staff (Pastoral and Support), Leadership Team Chairs, Leadership Team, Deacons, and Members. The purpose of church leaders is to lovingly lead, shepherd, and equip the membership to do the work of ministry Ephesians 4:11-12. The purpose of all church leaders and members is to glorify God by making disciples who know, love and obey Jesus Christ.
3. All those filling the offices of Staff, Leadership Team Chairs, Leadership Team, Deacon or Church Member are called to lead and serve in the humility of Jesus Christ as described in Philippians 2:5-11.
 - a. All Staff, Leadership Team Chairs, Leadership Team, and Deacons of Trinity shall be members of the church in good and regular standing.
 - b. Staff serve through teaching, leading, and providing overall guidance to the church.
 - c. Deacons serve through meeting needs and providing an example of vibrant ministry.
 - d. Every Member is a minister who bears great responsibility to ensure that the church is healthy, biblical, and Christ-centered.
4. The leadership of Trinity shall be entrusted to the Pastoral Staff, who teach the Word and care for the members of the congregation. The Staff shall be equal in authority, but may be specialized in function.

B. Staff

Staff shall consist of two areas: Pastoral Staff and Support Staff.

1. Qualifications.

Staff shall be men and women of-godly character, above reproach in public and private and committed to caring for the needs of members of this congregation and to teaching and guarding sound doctrine. Staff shall demonstrate belief in Trinity's statement of faith, and embody visible commitment to the church's mission as characterized in 1 Timothy 3:1-7

2. Responsibilities.

- a. Pastoral Staff shall oversee spiritual needs of the congregation and day-to-day operations with Support Staff.
- b. Support Staff is responsible for day-to-day operations and aid Pastoral Staff to enhance Kingdom work.
- c. All Staff positions shall adjust with ministry needs on a timely basis. See Trinity Baptist Church Job Descriptions for active responsibilities.

3. Authority.

In the absence of a Lead Pastor, the Personnel Team will make any and all personnel changes with affirmation by the rest of the Leadership Team Chairs. As a pastor-led, team-led congregation, the Staff is charged with the day-to-day operations, shepherding and care for the members. Overall leadership of the church is in conjunction with the Leadership Team; the representation of the congregation.

4. Composition.

Staff shall be adjusted according to ministry needs at the time. See Trinity job descriptions for active responsibilities:

- a. The hiring process for all positions other than Lead Pastor:
 - i. In the event of a vacant staff position, the Lead Pastor will work alongside the Personnel Team to prayerfully search for and consider the next person called to the available role.
 - ii. The Lead Pastor and Personnel Team will unanimously select three to four other church members with related or corresponding experience to the staff role seeking to be filled.
 - iii. Once the Search Team (four Personnel Team members plus three to four church members) is complete, they will first make any necessary amendments to the specific job description alongside the Lead Pastor.

- iv. Once job description is completed, it shall be posted for an agreed-upon time to gather and filter through resumes.
- v. The first round of interviews with selected candidates can be either via video call or in person.
- vi. Once the finalists are selected for a second interview, in person interviews are required. For out-of-town candidates, second interviews are recommended to include a time to meet the existing staff, and an “incognito” visit on a Sunday morning for the candidate to get an honest feel for the church.
- vii. Questions for both rounds of interviews are determined by the Search Team.
- viii. If a third round of interviews is necessary, it shall be conducted in a manner that is edifying to both the church and the candidate.
- ix. Once the final candidate is selected by the Search Team. They will officially recommend the candidate and finalize compensation with the Budget and Finance Team.
- x. Once all the necessary details are completed, an official offer of employment will be given to the candidate.
- xi. In the case of absence of a Lead Pastor, the Interim Pastor will assume the role of Lead Pastor in this process.

b. The hiring process for Support Staff positions:

- i. Recommendations may be taken to the Personnel Team from the Lead Pastor as received from the other staff members.
- ii.. A Search Team is not needed to fill these positions. A decision can be made between the Lead Pastor and the Personnel Team unless otherwise determined.

5. *Call by the Church*

- a. Upon the departure of a Lead Pastor, an Interim Pastor will be selected by the Personnel Team in conjunction with the church Staff. Compensation for said Interim Pastor will be determined between the Personnel Team and the Budget and Finance Team. The general role of the Interim Pastor will be:
 - i. Preach the Word
 - ii. Attend/lead Staff meetings
 - iii. Attend Leadership Team meetings

- iv. Maintain the overall unity between the Staff and Leadership Team
 - v. Conduct Staff evaluations
 - vi. Aid the Pastor Search Team in the calling of Trinity's next Lead Pastor.
- b. **Intentional Interim Program:** In the case of church discord, dissension, and disunity, the Leadership Team may choose to utilize the Texas Baptist Intentional Interim program, designed to help churches through difficult transitions.
6. ***Calling a Lead Pastor.*** When calling a Lead Pastor, the congregation will be given four (4) weeks to submit the Personnel Team names for a Pastor Search Team. Personnel Team will tally nominations, obtain persons willing to serve and present to the church for approval. The Interim Pastor shall serve as a reference, but not a member of, the Pastor Search Team.
- a. **Presentation of Candidate.** Upon choosing a recommended candidate, the Pastor Search Team will present the candidate to the congregation in view of a call. The congregation will have opportunity to interact with the candidate and ask questions. The candidate will preach a sermon and the gathered congregation will vote on whether to affirm or deny the recommended candidate as Lead Pastor.
 - b. **Affirmation of Candidate.** The gathered membership shall affirm the candidate for Lead Pastor (1) by ballot and (2) by at least two-thirds majority of those members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose. Oral and electronic notice will be given to the membership at least one week before said meeting.
7. ***Organization.*** The Lead Pastor, together with Personnel Team, will organize the Staff however it determines to be best to achieve the mission of the church. The Staff will meet consistently for prayer, exhortation, planning and seeking God's counsel for matters pertaining to the congregation
8. ***Evaluation.*** The Lead Pastor will conduct annual evaluations at the end of every calendar year. These evaluations will be 360° evaluations. Each staff member, excluding nursery assistants and cleaning staff, will receive two evaluation forms, one to evaluate themselves and another to evaluate the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor will also evaluate himself/herself during this time period. 360° evaluations are for the purpose of clarity, openness, and unity in a joint pursuit of the church's mission alongside one another. Once written evaluations are completed for the staff member, the Lead Pastor, will set a meeting at the end of the year to verbally connect, encourage, and challenge each other as the Lord leads. When the evaluation meeting is completed, each copy of the evaluation shall be signed by both parties and filed by the Lead Pastor.
8. ***Lead Pastor Sabbatical.*** After every seventh year of service, the Lead Pastor will take a paid Sabbatical period of an established number of weeks (determined by the Personnel Team), in order to reconnect to Christ and be refreshed and renewed by Christ. Prior to the Sabbatical, the Lead Pastor will submit a general plan of study, reflection, and intentionality for sabbatical time.

C. Leadership Team

1. Leadership Team Members

The Leadership Team is comprised of competent and Christ-like Trinity members in good standing with the church. Members of this Leadership Team shall serve three-year staggered terms. The Leadership Team works alongside the Lead Pastor and Staff to address administrative and ministry needs. Collectively, they serve as a point of reference for the Leadership Team Chairs when decisions are to be made.

- a. *Qualifications.* Leadership Team members must be competent and Christ-like disciples who have been Trinity members for at least one year prior to serving in this capacity.
- b. *Responsibilities.* The Leadership Team will make recommendations to the Staff, Deacons and congregation as needed.
- c. *Composition.* The Leadership Team will be composed of between sixteen (16) and twenty-four (24) Trinity members who will serve three-year staggered terms. In addition, Lead Pastor, Administrator and Deacon Chair will serve as ex-officio members of the Leadership Team. The four (4) Leadership Team Sub-groups are assembled as follows:
 - i. *Budget and Finance Team:*

The Budget & Finance Team serves by providing faithful oversight of the church's financial resources. This team is responsible for developing and monitoring the annual budget, reviewing and approving monthly financial reports, and ensuring that all tithes and offerings are stewarded with integrity and wisdom. Through careful planning, accountability, and prayerful decision-making, the Budget & Finance Team helps support the mission and ministries of Trinity.
 - ii. *Personnel Team:*

The Personnel Team serves by partnering with the Lead Pastor to provide guidance and support for all church staff. This team helps oversee staffing needs, participates actively in the hiring process for vacant positions, and works to ensure that staff members are cared for spiritually, professionally, and relationally. Committed to encouragement and advocacy, the Personnel Team strives to foster a healthy work environment where staff can thrive and effectively serve the mission of the church.
 - iii. *Building, Grounds & Transportation Team:*

The Building, Grounds, & Transportation Team serves the church by overseeing the care, maintenance, and functionality of all church facilities and vehicles. This team is responsible for ensuring that the physical campus, equipment, and transportation resources remain safe, welcoming, and fully operational. Through diligent stewardship and proactive planning, the Building, Grounds, & Transportation Team helps keep every space and resource in the best possible condition so they can be effectively used for for Kingdom work as God leads.

iv. Ministry Development Team

The Ministry Development Team serves Trinity by providing leadership and support in all structured areas of congregational opportunities to serve. This team helps guide and strengthen service-oriented teams in their specific areas of ministry (Ministry Teams), ensuring alignment with the church's mission and values. They also cultivate relationships with Trinity's supported ministry partners, helping the church stay engaged in local and global Kingdom work. Through encouragement, coordination, and vision, the Ministry Development Team fosters a spirit of selfless service and equips the church family to joyfully use their gifts for God's glory.

- d. *Call by the Church.* New members for the Leadership Team will be recommended to the church by existing Leadership Team members and presented to the congregation for vote at the annual business meeting. Oral and electronic notice will be given to the membership at least one week before the meeting. After serving a 3-year-term, one year must pass before the same individual can serve in any role on the Leadership Team.
- e. *Organization.* The Leadership Team will organize itself in sub-groups of four to six members each as needed to offer administrative, ministry and leadership assistance to the Staff, Deacons and congregation. Subgroups will evaluate monthly the health of Trinity's ministries, finances, and facilities as defined by respective area of ministry in Article 5(B). The team will make necessary recommendations to Staff, Leadership Team Chairs, Deacons and congregation as needed. The team will endeavor to grow and assist one another to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

2. Leadership Team Chairs

The Leadership Team Chairs are comprised of competent and Christ-like Trinity members who are considered to be in good standing with the church.

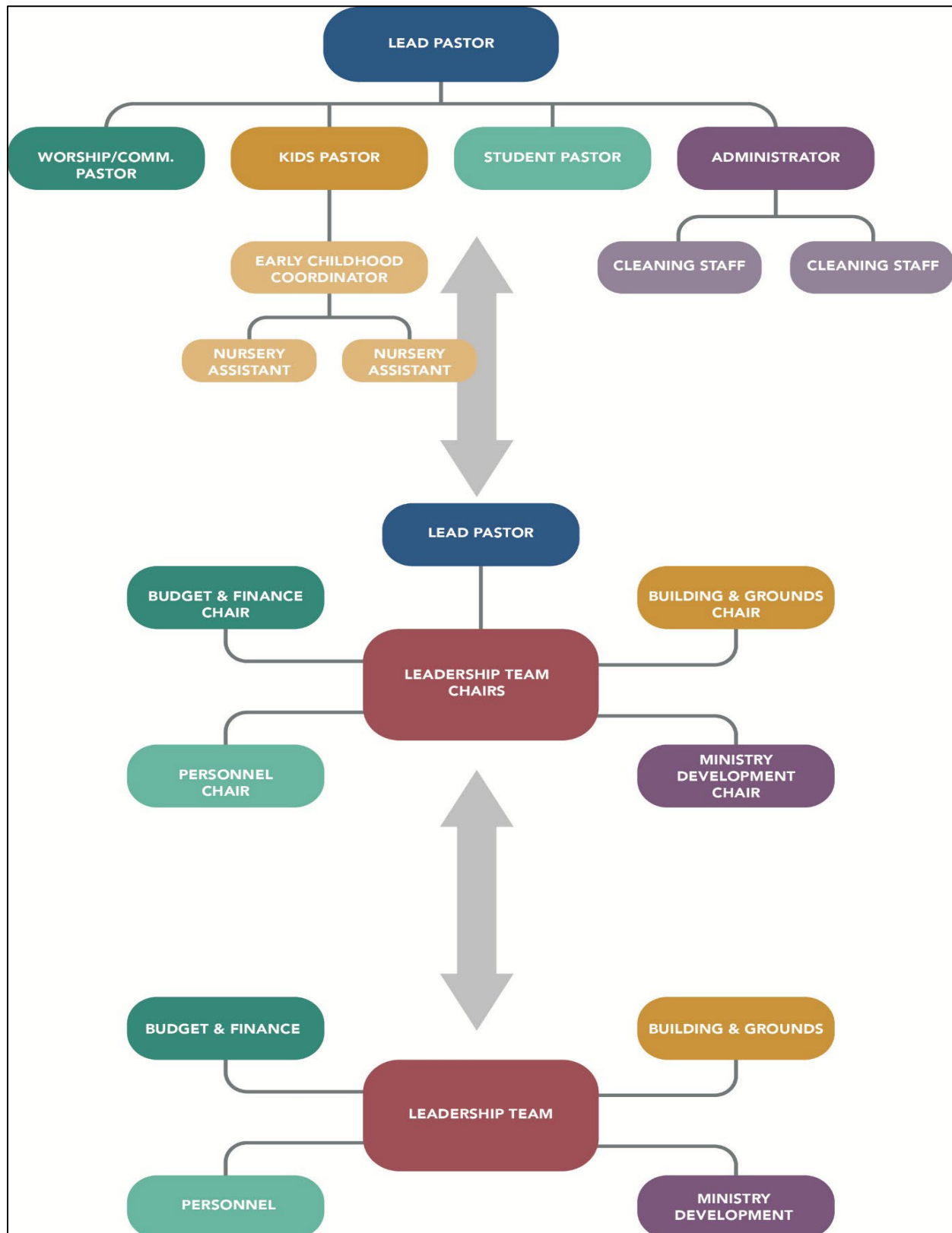
- a. *Qualifications.* A Leadership Team Chair may only serve in his or her role during the second and/or third year of his/her maximum 3-year Leadership Team term. A person must serve their first year in a leadership team sub-group prior to becoming chair of said group.
- b. *Responsibilities.* Leadership Team Chairs work hand-in-hand with the pastor to finalize all major decisions in communication to the overall Leadership Team and in reference to the church body.
- c. *Composition.* Leadership Team Chairs shall be comprised of five (5) individuals whose positions are as follows: Lead Pastor, Budget and Finance Team Chair, Personnel Team Chair, Building, Grounds and Transportation Team Chair, and Ministry Development Team Chair.
- d. *Call by the Church.* As Leadership Team Members are all to be previously affirmed by the church, each sub-group of the Leadership Team shall submit their unanimous recommendation to the church for affirmation at the end of year business meeting. In the case that a Leadership Team Chair serves in said role during his/her second year of the three-year maximum term, he/she will be up for reaffirmation prior to his/her third year being served.

- e. *Organization.* Leadership Team Chairs will schedule to meet once per month, with a minimum consistency of every other month. Meetings shall include updates from staff via the Lead Pastor and any new/existing business originating from the Leadership Team sub-groups, presented by the corresponding Leadership Team Chair. Leadership Team Chairs communicate on behalf of their sub-groups' input and are to consult with his/her sub-group consistently for the sake of clarity, continuity, and purpose.

D. Deacons

1. *Qualifications.* Deacons and nominees for Deacon shall be men and women who demonstrate godly character and possess particular gifts of service. Deacons will exemplify the godly characteristics set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 and Mark 10:45
2. *Responsibilities.* The Deacons shall advise and be ready to assist the Elders in any service that shall support and promote the ministries of Trinity, and the care for the members of the congregation. Their responsibilities may include: administering a deacon fund; assisting in administering the ordinances of the Gospel; providing hands-on service as needed within the congregation and community. These responsibilities are rooted in Acts 6:1-6 and the calling of the first Deacons.
3. *Composition.* The Deacon body may be comprised of both men and women. Deacons may or may not be employed by Trinity. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men and women in the church.
4. *Call by the Church.* The members shall call Deacons (1) by ballot upon recommendation of the Deacon Body and (2) by at least a two-thirds majority of those members present and voting at a meeting. Oral and electronic notice will be given to the membership at least one week before the meeting. Deacons shall stand for reaffirmation not later than the three-year anniversary following their call or previous reaffirmation. Reaffirmation of Deacons shall be by two-thirds vote of those members present and voting at the meeting.
5. *Organization.* The Deacons shall organize themselves however they determine to be best to achieve the mission of the church. The Elders or the Deacons may designate any specific Deacon or group of Deacons to specialize in some particular deacon function. Meetings of the Deacons, or subgroups thereof, shall be held as needed to best fulfill the responsibilities of the Deacons.
6. *Evaluation.* Deacons will annually (i) affirm the Deacon role and expectations, and (ii) assess themselves, their calling and commitment to continue in the role of Deacon.

PASTOR-LED/TEAM-LED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



3. *Decisions by Vote*

All major decisions (for hiring of personnel, see Article 5, Section B) of Trinity Baptist Church will be completed by vote via the Leadership Team Chairs in reference to the input of the Leadership Team.

- a. "Major decision" is defined as *a choice being made that has a significant, lasting, and organization-wide impact, often shaping the church's direction, resources, and ability to fulfill its mission.*
 - i. Examples of major decisions include things like changing the church vision, sale, purchase or significant renovation of property, adjustments of policies and procedures, etc.
 - ii. All votes on major decisions shall require all Leadership Team Chairs present to vote.

4. *Evaluation*

Leadership Team members will annually:

- a. Affirm their role and expectations
- b. Assess themselves, their calling and commitment to continue in the role.
- c. In a situation where an active member of the Leadership Team chooses to resign his/her role prior to the completion of their three-year term, his/her resignation will be accepted and the vacancy will be filled as needed. The sub-group in which the member belonged will be tasked with finding the individual to fill the open role. That individual will be recommended with other new Leadership Team candidates at the end-of-year business meeting in December.

D. Removal of Staff Member

Removal Process. Removal of a staff member(s) is relative to the situation but must always be completed by the following process:

- a. Prayerful consideration and deliberation between Personnel Team and Lead Pastor;
- b. Personnel Team and Lead Pastor collect and assemble documented evidence and occurrences that are determined to be grounds for termination of employment and are considered,
- c. Once evidence and occurrences are assembled, the Personnel Team shall present them to the Leadership Team Chairs;
- d. Once the Leadership Team Chairs have reviewed the constructed document, they will vote on the termination of employment for said staff member; a minimum of a 75% vote is required for termination to be finalized.
- e. During cases of alleged legal misconduct, the staff member will be placed on administrative leave (with or without pay determined by Personnel and Budget and Finance Teams) until a decision of employment is made.

E. Removal of Church Leaders

1. *Resignation.*

Leadership Team Chairs, Leadership Team, and Deacons may resign their office at any time if they find they are no longer able or willing to discharge the duties of the office.

2. *Grievance.*

Where a grievance exists against a Leadership Team Chair, Leadership Team member or Deacon due to teaching contrary to the beliefs of the church as set forth in these bylaws or to alleged conduct on their part unfitting such office, a grievance may be brought before the Leadership Team by any two (2) members of Trinity in good standing. 1 Timothy 5:19-20.

3. *Termination.*

If the Leadership Team Chairs, after thorough investigation and consideration, believe the grievance to be true and substantial, the call of the said person may be terminated by a vote of the Leadership Team Chairs as set forth above.

4. *Communication.*

Once termination is complete, proper clear communication shall be made to the church by the Lead Pastor with the support of the Leadership Team Chairs.

- i. Communication is to be conducted in a manner that is edifying to the church.
- ii. The truth shall be communicated with clarity and integrity that also maintains loving respect for those involved.

ARTICLE SIX

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

A. Indemnification

1. *Powers of Indemnification.*

- a. Power to Indemnify and Hold Harmless. Trinity may indemnify, defend, and hold harmless to the full extent permitted by applicable law each person who was, is made a party to, is threatened to be made a party to, or is involved with a proceeding by reason of the fact that he or she is or was an Officer, employee, or agent of the church. For the purpose of this section, a “proceeding” shall be defined as broadly as allowable by applicable law and shall include both formal and informal proceedings, whether civil, criminal, or administrative, regardless of how characterized.
- b. Power to Pay Expenses in Advance of Final Disposition. Trinity may, to the extent allowed by applicable law, pay expenses incurred in defending any proceeding in advance of its final disposition (hereinafter “advancement of expenses”); provided, however, that any advancement of expenses shall be made to or on behalf of an Officer, employee or agent only upon delivery to the church of a commitment, by or on behalf of such Officer, employee or agent, to repay all amounts so advanced if it shall ultimately be determined by final judicial decision from which there is no further rights to appeal that such Officer, employee or agent is not entitled to be indemnified under this article or otherwise, which undertaking maybe unsecure and maybe accepted without reference to financial ability to make repayment.
- c. Limitation of Indemnification. Indemnification shall not be made with respect to any proceeding in which the person has been found liable for gross negligence or willful or intentional misconduct in the performance of his or her duty to Trinity, nor in any instance where a person is found liable to the Trinity or to another on the basis of improperly receiving a personal benefit. No indemnification shall be provided to any person if Trinity is prohibited to indemnify by the applicable provisions of state or federal law.

2. *Mandatory and Permissive Indemnification.*

- a. Mandatory Indemnification. To the maximum extent permitted by law, Trinity shall indemnify and advance expenses to any person who is or was an Officer of Trinity, or to such person’s heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, for the defense of any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, and whether formal or informal, to which such person was, is, or is threatened to be made, a named defendant or respondent, which indemnification and advancement of expenses shall include counsel fees actually incurred as a result of the proceeding or any appeal thereof, reasonable expenses actually incurred with respect to the proceeding, all fines,

judgments, penalties and amounts paid in settlement thereof, subject to the following conditions: (i) the proceeding was instituted by reason of the fact that such person is or was an Officer of Trinity, and (ii) such person conducted themselves in good faith with respect to the actions underlying the proceeding. The termination of a proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, is not, of itself, determinative that the Officer did not meet the standard of conduct herein described; however, intentional misconduct in violation of state or federal law, or in contradiction of the Central Beliefs of the church, may be considered an act of bad faith.

- b. Permissive Indemnification. For any employee or agent of Trinity other than an Officer, which shall include any staff member, Leadership Team Chair, Leadership Team member, or member of Trinity acting at the direction of and on behalf of Trinity, Trinity may, as allowable by law and as consistent with public policy, to the same extent and manner as is provided for Officers above, indemnify and advance expenses in a proceeding to such person, or to such person's heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives.
- c. Character of Rights. Without regard to anything to the contrary elsewhere in these Bylaws, the permissive rights established in this article shall be exercised at the sole discretion of the Leadership Team Chairs exercised in accord with the powers granted to them in these Bylaws. In that respect, the rights to indemnification and advancement of expenses conferred by or pursuant to this article to Officers shall be deemed contract rights. For all other categories of persons eligible to receive indemnification under this article, the rights to indemnification and advancement of expenses shall be deemed contract right only to the extent approved by a 75% majority vote by Leadership Team Chairs at a duly called meeting.
- d. Rights Not Exclusive. The right to indemnification and advancement of expense conferred in this article shall not be exclusive of any other right which any person may have or hereafter shall acquire under any statute, provision of the Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws, agreement of disinterested directors, or otherwise.
- e. Survival of Benefits. Any repeal or modification of this article shall not adversely affect any right of any person existing at the same time of such repeal or modification.
- f. Prohibition Against Private Inurement. In the event and to the extent any part or whole of this article is determined to be in violation of the United States Federal Income Tax laws with regard to prohibition against "private inurement" (as such term is understood in the context of United States exempt organization taxation rules) by a final non-appealable order of a court of competent jurisdiction or by any United States Internal Revenue Service action which Trinity in its discretion determines not to challenge in a judicial forum, any such offending provision or if the whole of this article is determined as offending the prohibition against private inurement, then the whole of this article shall be deemed ineffective so as to prevent any negative United States Federal Income Tax law consequences to Trinity or its tax-exempt status.

g. Insurance. Trinity may purchase and maintain insurance, at its expense, to protect itself and any Officer, employee or agent of the church or who, while an Officer, employee or agent of the church, whether or not Trinity would have the power to indemnify such person against such expense, liability or loss under applicable law.

h. Definition of "Officers." For the purpose of this section, the term "Officer" shall include any Staff Member, Deacon, or the Lead Pastor of the Church.

B. Conflict of Interest Policy. Trinity shall maintain in its records a copy of the Conflicts of Interest Policy signed by each Staff member, Leadership Team Chair, Leadership Team member, and Deacon as the term is defined in that policy. The Conflicts of Interest Policy shall be provided to and signed by each officer, member, agent, or employee of the church who has been granted decision making authority whether through these Bylaws, by delegation, or otherwise. The Conflicts of Interest Policy shall be adopted by the Staff, Leadership Team Chairs, Leadership Team members, and Deacons and shall remain in effect for each individual until the revocation or expiration of their respective decision-making authority.

It is also noted that any conflict of interest involving a decision to be made by a spouse or family member of said Staff, Leadership Team Chairs, Leadership Team members or Deacons will require that member to abstain from decision-making process.

C. Amendment. The name of the church, Central Beliefs, denomination, and Church Covenant may be amended by a three-quarters vote of the members present and voting, at a members' meeting, provided the change or amendment shall have been made available in writing, either electronically, by posting, or by mail, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote. All other provisions of the Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been made available in writing, either electronically, by posting, or by mail, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

D. Reservation of Powers. Unless otherwise directed in these Bylaws, the members of Trinity delegate the authority to act on behalf of Trinity to its Lead Pastor, Staff, Leadership Team Chairs and Leadership Team, according to the requirements applicable thereto. To the extent necessary or required by law, the Lead Pastor, Staff, Leadership Team Chairs and Leadership Team shall also serve as trustees of Trinity.

E. Dissolution. "Dissolution" means the complete disbanding of Trinity so that it no longer functions as a congregation or as a corporate entity. Upon the dissolution of Trinity, its property shall be applied and distributed as follows: (1) all liabilities and obligations of the Trinity shall be paid and discharged, or adequate provision shall be made therefore; (2) assets held by Trinity upon condition requiring return, transfer, or conveyance, which condition occurs by reason of the dissolution, shall be returned, transferred, or conveyed in accordance with such requirements; (3) assets received and not held upon a condition requiring return, transfer, or conveyance by reason of the dissolution, shall be transferred or conveyed to one or more domestic or foreign corporations, societies, or organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the

Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), and are engaged in activities substantially similar to those of Trinity; this distribution shall be done pursuant to a plan adopted by a specially appointed ad hoc dissolution committee; and (4) any assets not otherwise disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of Trinity is then located, for such purposes and to such organizations as said court shall determine, provided such organizations are in agreement with the Christian religion. In the event of a merger of Trinity with another church, the net assets of Trinity shall be contributed to the surviving entity.

- F. Severability.** If any provision of these Bylaws or any application thereof is determined by any court or agency of competent jurisdiction, to be invalid, unenforceable, or contrary to applicable law or public policy, the remainder of the Bylaws, or the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid, unenforceable or contrary to applicable law, shall not be affected thereby and shall continue in full force and effect.
- G. Governing Law.** The Bylaws shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas. All references in the Bylaws to statutes, regulations, or other sources of legal authority shall refer to the authorities cited, or their successors, as they may be amended from time to time. Trinity will practice a review of bylaws at least every five (5) years.
- H. Bylaws Supersede Prior Bylaws and Policy.** Upon affirmation by Trinity, these Bylaws shall supersede and replace, in their entirety, all prior bylaws and policies of Trinity.

Effective this the **(INSERT ADOPTION DATE)** by a vote of _____ yeas and against _____ nays, at a meeting duly called of the members of Trinity, being the vote necessary to amend or replace the bylaws of Trinity effective as of that date.

Witnessed and attested to by the following:

Trinity Administrator

Building & Grounds Team Chair

Trinity Lead Pastor/Elder

Ministry Development Team Chair

Budget & Finance Team Chair

Personnel Team Chair

Elder

Elder

ADDENDUM TO TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH BYLAWS

Transfer of Authority to a Pastor-Led, Team-Led Congregational Structure

PREAMBLE

This Addendum is adopted by the members of Trinity Baptist Church to affirm a transition in leadership structure, moving from an Elder-led model of governance to a Pastor-led, Team-led Congregational model. This change is intended to strengthen pastoral leadership, foster collaborative ministry and empower the congregation to fulfill its mission under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

SECTION ONE

Authority Superseded

This Addendum shall stand as an official attachment to the Trinity Baptist Church Bylaws and shall govern where inconsistent with prior provision, unless subsequently amended.

SECTION TWO

Role of Elders

1. The office of Elder as a governing body shall be dissolved effective **[insert date]**.
2. Current Elders shall serve in an advisory capacity for a transitional period of **[insert time frame]**.
3. Former Elders may continue serving in leadership, discipleship or ministry roles as active members of the congregation.

SECTION THREE

Accountability

1. The Lead Pastor shall remain accountable to the congregation through the Leadership Team.
2. The Leadership Team Chairs serve to provide counsel, encouragement, and partnership with the Lead Pastor.
3. In case of misconduct, incapacity, or resignation of the Lead Pastor, the Leadership Team shall appoint an interim pastor until a new pastor is called.

SECTION FOUR

Effective Date

This Addendum shall take effect on **[insert date]**, upon approval by congregational vote, and shall remain in force unless further amended by the congregation.

Adopted by congregational action on **[insert date]**.

J. T. Thornton, Lead Pastor

Janie Davis, Church Administrator

Bill Stein, Elder

Eddie Mitchell, Elder