

Philosophy of Church Leadership for Faith Bible Fellowship

Approved on 10 February 2009

Purpose

1. To articulate a Biblical church leadership philosophy that becomes the basis for the leadership structure at Faith Bible Fellowship.
2. To provide a more detailed rationale and explanation for our leadership structure than can be provided in the FBF Constitution and By-laws so that future leaders at FBF understand the intent of those who established this structure.

Principles and Forms

Forms are patterns, methodologies, means and techniques that are created to carry out Biblical functions and directives.¹ In other words, God has commanded and instructed Christians through Scripture to be and do certain things. Our forms are the personal and corporate methods that we create to fulfill God's mandates.

Principles are doctrinal guidelines that grow out of Biblical commands and teaching. Biblical principles define and encompass activities that believers engage in to meet certain spiritual needs and to reach certain goals in order to carry out Biblical commands and directives.²

In the church, our forms should be guided by and submitted to clear Biblical principles. *Biblical principles* are timeless and true of all Christians in all cultures. As the practical application of Biblical principles, *forms* change according to historical lessons and cultural considerations. For example, there is a clear Biblical *principle* that the church is commanded to teach and instruct believers in doctrine. The development of Sunday School ministries is a *form* created to help fulfill the principle.

Principles of Local Church Leadership

We believe there are certain Biblical principles of leadership in the local church that transcend time and culture. As such, these principles must direct our forms of church leadership. These principles include:

1. *Local church leadership by elders.* As we observe the Scripture (particularly the Book of Acts and the Epistles), we note that in the early years of Christianity, spiritual leaders in local churches were consistently identified as *elders (presbuteroi)*³ (Acts 11:29-30; James 1:1, 5:14; Acts 14:23; Acts 15:2,4-6,22-23; Acts 16:4) or *overseers (episkopoi)*⁴ (Acts 20:17,28; Philippians 1:1). By the time that numerous churches had been established throughout the Roman empire, these two terms were used interchangeably by the Apostles (1 Timothy 3:1-2, 5:17-20; 1 Peter 5:1-2; Titus 1:5-7).
2. *Local church leadership by a plurality of elders.* On the local church level, the New Testament plainly witnesses to a consistent pattern of shared pastoral leadership.⁵ In virtually every passage (with the exception of the passages describing the Biblical qualifications of elders in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1) addressing the establishment, roles and ministry of elders, they are referred to in the plural form (Acts 15; James 5:14-15; Acts 14:23; Acts 20:17,28; 1 Timothy 5:17; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 1:1, 5:1). Even a cursory examination of Scripture leads to a clear conclusion that as the early church became established around the Roman empire, local church leadership

¹ Elders and Leaders. God's Plan for Leading the Church, Gene Getz, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL, 2003, p. 37.

² Ibid, p. 36.

³ Ibid, pp. 183-184.

⁴ Ibid, pp. 185-186.

⁵ Biblical Eldership. An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership, Alexander Strauch, 3rd edition, Lewis and Roth Publishers, P.O. Box 569, Littleton, Colorado, 80160, 1995, p. 36.

was always through a plurality of elders rather than through a single pastor or congregational form of government.

3. *Local church leadership by elders who oversee and shepherd the flock*. The two primary roles and ministries of elders in the local church are: *managing or overseeing (prostemai)* the church and *shepherding or tending (poimaino)* the flock of God (1 Thessalonians 5:12; 1 Timothy 3:4-5; 1 Corinthians 9:7; Acts 20:28-30; 1 Peter 5:1-4). Some of the specific “functions” of overseeing and shepherding the church include: teaching Biblical truth (Acts 2:41; Acts 11:23-26; Acts 14:21-22; Titus 1:9), modeling Christ-like behavior (1 Timothy 4:12; c.f. 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12 for Paul’s example), maintaining doctrinal purity (Acts 20:30-31; 2 Timothy 2:23-26; Titus 1:11, 3:10-11), disciplining unruly believers (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Matthew 18:15-17), overseeing financial matters (Acts 11:30; 1 Corinthians 16:3-4), and praying for those who are ill (James 5:13-16)⁶. In order to avoid being distracted from these primary ministries by the varied needs of the Body, elders should follow the example of the apostles modeled in Acts 6:1-7 by *delegating* other ministry tasks to qualified and capable men and women in the church.
4. *Local church leadership by Biblically qualified elders*. The qualifications for elders are listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9⁷. These are the only qualifications that the Scripture sets for local church leadership. We must never compromise these standards and we should be very cautious about adding any other qualifications on top of these. To insist that an elder must meet certain educational criteria, or a particular level of vocational or socio-economic achievement, is to impose qualifications that are foreign to Scripture. In the early church, any man who desired “this noble task” and was qualified spiritually could serve as an elder. This is an important principle because it contradicts the view held among many Christians that elders, pastors, bishops, or “clergy” are a separate and/or superior class of Christians.
5. *Local church leadership by male elders*. The New Testament is clear that only men may serve as elders. We believe the Bible teaches that men and women are fully equal in personhood, dignity and value, but distinct in gender roles. In marriage, which is a picture of Christ’s relationship with the church, and in the church, men alone are to exercise headship (Genesis 2:20-23; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:12).

Summary of Biblical principles that will govern the leadership of Faith Bible Fellowship

1. FBF is an elder-led church. The elders are the only governing body of our church and they alone hold final authority and responsibility for the actions of the church.
2. FBF will be governed by a plurality of elders (2 or more)⁸, who are co-equals in terms of voice and authority. Although all elders at FBF are equal in stature and authority, there will naturally be one man who rises up as leader of leaders in the church. This person will, in practice, be the shepherd of shepherds. He will lead as a servant leader without exercising authority over the other elders and he will still be accountable to the entire group of elders.
3. Elders at FBF will primarily give themselves to two things: overseeing the affairs of the church and shepherding the flock. At FBF, overseeing and shepherding primarily involve the ministries of teaching Biblical truth, modeling Christ-like behavior, maintaining doctrinal purity, disciplining unruly believers, overseeing financial matters, equipping the saints to do the work of ministry⁹ and praying for the flock.

⁶ Elders and Leaders, pp.191-199.

⁷ It is outside of the scope of this Philosophy Paper to define every Biblical qualification for elders. Alexander Strauch’s book Biblical Eldership provides a comprehensive explanation of each Biblical qualification for elders.

⁸ By definition, a plurality is two or more. However, in practice we believe that it is preferable to have 3 or more elders in the local church (Proverbs 15:22).

⁹ We believe that as the early church was established, the elders of local churches inherited the responsibilities of the apostles and the pastor-teachers mentioned in Ephesians 4:11-12 for “*equipping the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...*”

4. The elders of FBF are responsible to the Lord for the ministry of FBF. However, much of the actual work of ministry, although remaining under the authority of the elders, may be *delegated* to other qualified men and women in our church body. This is both Biblical and practical as it is simply not possible for the elders to do all of the work of ministry in the church.
5. The only qualifications to serve as an elder at FBF are the Biblical qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. No man shall be preferred in their consideration simply due to economic or educational achievement. Only qualified *men* shall serve as elders at FBF.

From Principles to Forms

Books have been written on other identifiable principles of New Testament church leadership found in the Scriptures, but the ones listed above are sufficient to provide a solid foundation for understanding the Biblical *principles* and functions that govern the *forms* of modern church leadership. Regarding these various forms, we affirm the following:

1. The New Testament is intentionally silent regarding the *forms* of church leadership. Nearly everything about church leadership that is taught, commanded or modeled in the New Testament, falls into the category of *principle*. However, how these principles are applied in various historical and cultural forms, God has left to the wisdom and understanding of the elders who lead local churches.
2. Local churches have great freedom to develop culturally relevant forms of church government, based on the clear Biblical principles of church government. This includes many details about church government that the Scripture does not address: number of elders, their length of service, methods for making decisions, specific delegated responsibilities, volunteer and paid staff positions, frequency and duration of elder meetings, etc.

A Word of Caution: Permissible is Not Always Beneficial

We would apply Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 10:23 "All things are lawful, but not all things are beneficial" to the forms of church leadership that churches create. Some forms of church government may be lawful in the sense that they don't directly violate a Biblical principle of church leadership; however, they may still be undesirable because they don't produce beneficial results in the local church. We believe that many prevalent forms of church government today would fit into this category and are producing undesirable and unbiblical ideas and opinions about church leadership. Among these are:

1. An artificial clergy/laity distinction¹⁰.
2. The development of a class of "professional" Christian leaders.
3. Conflict and competition between church "boards".
4. A view that elders are simply a management board for the church.
5. The idea (and practice) that elders exist to support or guide the pastoral staff, who do the "real work" of ministry.

FBF Forms of Church Leadership

At FBF we desire to implement a leadership structure that is true to God's revealed principles of church leadership, that fosters a Biblical view of church leadership among our flock, and is practical for our contemporary culture. To this end, we believe the following forms of church government are preferable for FBF.

1. *Appointment of Elders*. We believe it is both wise and Biblical to include the flock in the selection of their leaders. However, since the congregation is composed of both immature and

¹⁰ This distinction is maintained in some denominations that teach, for example, that only ordained clergy can administer the Lord's Supper, baptize, or fill the pulpit. We see no basis in Scripture for this distinction. We believe that all Christians who have been properly trained and equipped (Ephesians 4:12) can perform all works of ministry in the church.

mature Christians, we do not believe the decision of who should serve as an elder should be left to the flock. Elders will be appointed according to the following process:

- a. The elders will notify the congregation that one or more men are needed to serve as elders, and will solicit the recommendations of the congregation over a period of two weeks. In doing so, the elders will teach the congregation the Biblical qualifications of an elder and remind the congregation of the duties and responsibilities of an elder.
 - b. The elders will also consider their own list of names of men who they believe are qualified. Once recommendations have been received from the congregation, the elders will make a final list of men whom they believe are good candidates to serve as elders at FBF.
 - c. Once one or more candidates have been identified, the elders will invite these men to go through a formal elder candidating process to establish their desire and qualification to serve as an elder at FBF. This process will include:
 - i. A written questionnaire.
 - ii. One or more visits with the candidate and his wife (if married) in their home by a sub-team of elders.
 - iii. A formal interview with all of the elders where candidates are questioned on matters of doctrine and lifestyle.
 - iv. If the elders believe the candidate is qualified and desires to serve as an elder at FBF, their name will be brought to the congregation for a period of two weeks in order for the congregation to make known any hidden areas of sin that could disqualify the candidate.
 - v. The candidate will be formally installed as an elder at FBF in front of the entire congregation. The congregation will be reminded that they are called by God to submit to the spiritual authority of this man as an elder of the church.
2. *Term Limits.* Elders do not serve a “term” at FBF and will continue to serve as elders as long as they are qualified and desire to serve. We have three primary reasons for not having term limits:
- a. There is no Biblical mandate for term limits.
 - b. Term limits have the potential to disrupt and bring discontinuity to the effective elder leadership of the church.
 - c. Elders should be among the most spiritually mature men in the church, and as such should be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit pertaining to their continuing service as an elder.
3. *Resignation or Dismissal from the Elders.* An elder may resign his position at any time, with no advance notice required. We would expect that normally an elder would resign due to one of the following reasons:
- a. Health or medical problems (of himself or family members) render him unable to fulfill his responsibilities.
 - b. Leaving the church for any reason.
 - c. No longer willing or desiring to serve.
 - d. No longer Biblically qualified to serve as an elder.

There may, in the life of the church, be a time when the qualifications or continued ability of an elder to serve the flock comes into question. In this situation the following steps will be followed:

- a. One or more elders will speak privately with the elder in question regarding the situation.
- b. Following this conversation, these elders shall report back to the larger group of elders in order to provide information and make a recommendation as to whether this man should

continue to serve. Based on this recommendation, the elders have three courses of action available to them:

- i. No action deemed necessary. There is no reason the elder in question may (or should) not continue to serve.
- ii. Some action needs to be taken on behalf of the elder in question, although the situation does not warrant asking him to step down from service as an elder. Some degree of counseling or assistance by the elders may be necessary.
- iii. Based on the information presented, the elders believe that the elder in question may need to be asked to step down (temporarily or permanently) as an elder at FBF. In this situation, the following process will be followed:
 - a. An appropriate period of time will be allowed in which to ask further questions, get more information about the situation and pray. If the elder in question voluntarily steps down during this time, no further action is needed.
 - b. A business meeting will be scheduled with an agenda item to discuss the concerns, qualifications and continued ability to serve of the elder in question.
 - c. At this meeting, after further discussion and prayer, if one or more elders still believe that the elder in question is not qualified or can no longer serve effectively as an elder, a formal vote as to whether to remove the elder in question from service may be called.
 - d. A 2/3 majority of all elders is required to remove an elder from service at FBF.
 - e. If the vote passes, the elder in question will be immediately removed from service as an elder, and the congregation will be notified that he is no longer serving as an elder at FBF.

A man who has been removed from service as an elder at FBF may at a later time, depending on the situation and at the discretion of the elders, be invited to serve again as an elder if he becomes qualified and capable of serving.

There may also be times when an elder believes he may need to resign for any of the above reasons, but is not certain. In this situation he should seek the counsel of the larger group of elders. They will recommend an appropriate course of action, depending on the situation, that he should be prepared to follow. This may include counseling, taking a sabbatical, resigning as an elder, or continuing to serve.

4. *Annual Evaluation.* Elders who are mature men of faith can still be blinded to their own shortcomings and sin¹¹. In order to ensure that actively serving elders remain spiritually qualified and are serving as elders according to God's call and not just their own desires, the elders will undergo an annual evaluation near the beginning of each calendar year.
 - a. A date for the evaluation will be chosen by the elders.
 - b. The congregation will be notified by placing a notice in the bulletin at least three weeks before the evaluation, and will be given an opportunity to express to the elders *in writing* any questions or concerns about the service of any individual elder or the overall leadership of the elders as a whole. The congregation should be reminded of the seriousness of bringing an unfounded charge or an accusation against an elder (1 Timothy 5:19).
 - c. Each elder will be asked to prayerfully evaluate his own continued Biblical qualification and desire to serve as an elder.

¹¹ Romans 7:14-25

- d. As a group, the elders will evaluate their service over the past year, considering any response from the congregation, and will discuss any concerns or issues that arise relating to the ongoing service of individual elders.
5. *Perceptions of Elders at FBF: What elders are and are not.* Far too often in our culture, elders are viewed in business terms as members of a managing board for the church. The legal aspects of incorporating a church foster this perception, as well as the language we use, i.e.—“board of elders” or “elder board.” While FBF will do everything necessary to comply with the law, hence operating as a board to the extent required by our Constitution and By-Laws, we desire to avoid this perception among our congregation. Our flock should view elders as shepherd leaders who have a divinely appointed responsibility to oversee the church. To this end we will do the following to foster a Biblical understanding of elders at FBF:
- a. We will teach and preach about the Biblical role of elders with some regularity. We will help our congregation to understand that eldership is fundamentally a spiritual undertaking. Elders will be held responsible by the Lord for how well they have led Christ’s flock.
 - b. We will avoid referring to our elders as a “board” or as “board members”.
 - c. We will promote openness and transparency with the congregation. We want our flock to understand how elders work together to make decisions and what the elders are doing to protect, defend, train and nurture the flock. We want our flock to know that elders are approachable. Although elders do exercise spiritual authority over the flock, elders are servant leaders and do not lord their position over the flock, or seek personal gain through being an elder.
 - d. We will encourage our congregation to think of their elders as their pastors¹². Our elders are responsible for all of the work of the ministry, including those duties that are usually considered the “pastor’s” responsibilities such as: making hospital visits, preaching and teaching, officiating weddings and funerals, counseling, confronting and reproving sin, etc. We recognize that not all elders are equally gifted and that among elders there needs to be some specialization. One elder may be especially gifted at preaching, while another is gifted at leading a small group, and another is gifted with the ability to handle finances. The point is, even though not every elder will do everything, our congregation needs to know and believe that their elders are their shepherds and should be looking to the elders first and foremost for spiritual leadership.
6. *Elders and Professional Pastors.* We believe that the common church practice of hiring “professional” pastors, while not always a violation of Biblical principle, contributes to some of the unbiblical beliefs and attitudes within the church that have already been listed. This would include a laity-clergy distinction and the perception that while elders are the church “board” the pastors are the real spiritual leaders. Additionally, we believe this also fosters a “consumer mentality” among Christians that is rampant in Christ’s church today, where people choose a church because the pastor is entertaining, because of the programs they offer or because they like

¹² In the New Testament, a pastor is simply one who tends or “shepherds” the flock. Ephesians 4:11 is the only instance in the New Testament where the Greek noun *poimen* is translated into the English word “pastor.” *Poimaino*, the verb form of *poimen*, meaning “to tend as a shepherd”, is used three times in the New Testament in the context of Christian leaders (John 21:16, 1 Peter 5:1-2, Acts 20:28). We note that apart from Ephesians 4:11, the noun *poimen* is never used of church leaders, however, on three separate occasions Christian leaders are commanded to “shepherd” or “pastor” (*poimaino*) the flock. Those who advocate a pastor-led form of church government often suggest that Ephesians 4:11 establishes the “office” of pastor. Our understanding of this verse, in the larger context of Ephesians 4:1-16 and other Scriptures, is that Paul is not establishing a normative office of “pastor” or “pastor teacher” as a separate, distinct or superior office from elders, for the local church of all ages.

the style of music. This leads to personality driven churches that are often built upon one man: the pastor. This was one of the problems that Paul addressed in 1 Corinthians 1 and 3.

We also observe that often, due to size and budgets, churches are organized and run like mini-corporations, where elders function primarily as a corporate board and the pastor is not only a spiritual leader, but the CEO as well. While it is necessary for churches to abide by the laws of our state and to excel as stewards of God's resources, we do not believe that God intended the church to exist and operate primarily according to a business model. The consistent testimony of Scripture is that the church is to be thought of as a household (Ephesians 2:19, 1 Timothy 3:15) or a body (1 Corinthians 12:12-27); a living *organism*, rather than a business, political or religious *organization*.

In order to not only avoid reinforcing existing wrong beliefs and perceptions, but to develop new and Biblical views among our FBF family, we prefer to avoid (as much as possible) the contemporary model of "professional clergy." At the same time, we acknowledge that we have to accommodate some deeply held traditions and terminology that American Christians are comfortable with. To this end, **when possible we prefer:**

- a. To minimize the distinction between pastor and elder at FBF.
- b. To avoid the perception of "professional" ministers and staff.
- c. To equip and train our own people to do the work of ministry in the local church.
- d. To teach our flock to think Biblically, rather than culturally, in terms of when, how and why we should financially support those who labor in our church.

How do we do this?

- a. All elders at FBF function as pastors/shepherds. Depending on the needs of the church, one or more of our elders may be vocational¹³ elders.
- b. Vocational elders are not hired and paid for their professional services at FBF. Rather, they are elders who are devoting such time and service to the church that their ability to provide financially for their family is hindered, and therefore it is necessary for the church to support them financially. This could be in a part-time or full-time capacity, and could include a salary and/or various benefits. In this arrangement, financial support is based on need¹⁴, rather than services provided.
- c. While all elders must be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9), we recognize that one particular elder, due to education and gifting, may be better equipped to be the primary preaching and teaching elder. We believe that it is likely that this elder will also rise up to become a "leader of leaders"¹⁵ in the church. Often, due to the amount of time

¹³ By "vocational elder" we simply mean that this elder's financial provision comes partially or fully through the financial support of the church, according to the teaching of 1 Timothy 5:17-18.

¹⁴ We believe that as a general rule of thumb, those who serve the Lord in full time ministry ought to have a standard of living that is similar to those to whom they minister and/or the community from which the church draws its members. Therefore, in determining how a vocational elder should be financially supported by the church, we would seek, if possible, to provide a salary and/or benefits that will provide for a lifestyle consistent with the majority of the congregation or the community where the church is located.

¹⁵ Although there is no evidence that among the elders in the early church some held a higher "rank" or office than others, it is clear that certain individuals, due to divine calling, gifting and personality, rose up to become leaders of leaders. Among his disciples, Jesus focused on equipping Peter to be the primary leader. At Pentecost, Peter's leadership role in the church was affirmed, and throughout the book of Acts, we see Peter and then John (the brother of James) taking the lead. Among the Gentiles, the Apostle Paul was clearly the leader of leaders, assisted by other leaders among leaders like Timothy, Titus, Silas and Luke. In the church in Jerusalem, James, the half brother of Jesus, emerged as the leader among leaders, representing the Jerusalem elders.

required to adequately fulfill the responsibilities of this ministry, this leader of leaders will be a vocational elder who receives partial or full financial support from the church.

- d. Since one of the major ministries of the elders is “to equip the saints for the work of ministry” (Ephesians 4:12), we believe that when the church needs a vocational elder to fill a particular ministry role, we should first look “within the church” for the right person to fill that need. The logical first place to look would be among actively serving elders. If possible, it would be wise to identify, several years in advance, a ministry area that the elders anticipate needing a vocational elder to lead, and to spend the needed time and resources to equip someone in the church to serve in that role. If this is not possible or a suitable person is not found within the church who can be equipped to fill the role, the next choice would be to look outside of the church.

7. *Bringing in a Vocational Pastor-Elder from Outside of FBF*

- a. While our preference would be to teach, train and prepare elders to serve FBF vocationally from within our church family, we recognize that this is not always possible.
- b. When a ministry need arises that cannot be filled by someone in our own congregation, we must first determine whether this is a role that should be filled by an elder, whether it is a ministry role that can be delegated to someone in the church who is not an elder, or whether it is a functional or administrative role that could be filled by most anyone with the appropriate skills and training. Once the need is identified, some questions to be answered include:
 - i. Is it a ministry/leadership role that should be filled by an elder?
 - ii. Is this a role that requires one to exercise spiritual authority over others?
 - iii. Can the role be best filled by a woman, a man or either?
 - iv. What level of Christian maturity and experience is needed to fill this role?
 - v. What types of spiritual gifts will best be suited to this role?
- c. If the elders determine that the ministry role requires the attention of a vocational elder and that there are no men in the church who can or will fill that role, then the elders will oversee the process of searching for and finding a man from outside the church who is qualified and suitable to fill the needed ministry role. (If the elders determine that the ministry role need not be filled by an elder then refer to point 8: *Hiring workers to meet other needs at FBF.*)
- d. In considering any candidate, the top considerations must be:
 - i. Is this man qualified first, to serve as an elder, and second to fill the needed ministry role?
 - ii. Does this person understand and agree with our philosophy of leadership?
 - iii. Does he understand that we are not hiring a “professional” pastor, but rather, are searching for a man who can serve as a vocational elder at FBF, whose primary ministry will be in one or more particular areas of service in the church?
 - iv. Can the church afford to support this man and his family at a reasonable financial level?
 - v. Is his personality and leadership style a good fit for FBF? In particular, will he compliment and serve well alongside the existing elders?
- e. Any man who is brought in from outside of FBF to serve as an elder will go through our established elder candidate evaluation process. Additionally, since he is unknown to the congregation, opportunities must be provided for him and the flock to evaluate each other. Will the flock follow and respond to his leadership? Does he have the ability to love and shepherd this flock? The FBF elders will seek counsel from the flock during the evaluation period, but ultimately the FBF elders will make the final decision whether to invite him to join FBF as a vocational pastor-elder.

8. *Hiring workers to meet other needs at FBF.* The FBF elders may hire employees of the church as needed in order to provide specified services for the church. This could include roles such as: children’s director, junior high intern, secretary, custodian, babysitter for special events, gardener, etc. We prefer that if it is necessary to pay someone to do a job at FBF we look to our own congregation first to meet the need. If no one in our congregation is qualified or willing to meet the need then the elders may look outside our own congregation to fill the need.
9. *Delegated Responsibility: the Ministry of Deacons.* We believe that the New Testament only identifies two “offices” in the local church: elder and deacon¹⁶. Elders oversee the church and shepherd the flock. Deacons assist the elders in these duties, by assuming responsibilities delegated by the elders. Although the word for deacon (*diakonoi*) has the connotation of being a “table server”, we understand the office to encompass more than simply serving the physical needs of the local body. The high spiritual qualifications required of deacons in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, imply that they too are spiritual leaders, and therefore they, like the elders, need to be above reproach.
 - a. Deacons may be appointed by the FBF elders, as needed, for particular ministry needs. The elders will determine, according to Biblical principles and guidelines, the process for how deacons are selected and appointed.
 - b. Deacons will serve at the discretion of the elders, for as long as needed or until they are no longer willing or are unable to serve.
 - c. Deacons, like elders, are not to be thought of as a “board” at FBF.
 - d. Because deacons are appointed to meet particular ministry needs in the church, there are many different roles that deacons could occupy. For example: a deacon could be called to take responsibility for the physical facilities of the church. Or a deacon could be asked to lead a Sunday School class for the youth of the church. Or the elders could require that every small group in the church be led by a deacon.
 - e. Under the authority of the elders, deacons may be called to exercise spiritual authority over those in the church family. Therefore it is vitally important that they meet Biblical qualifications and are spiritually mature.

¹⁶ By the term “office” we mean a formal, Biblically ordained ministry role in the local church.