

**BY-LAWS OF THE WOLFFVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**24 April, 2024**

A. Membership

1. Admission

a. Faith

Membership at Wolfville Baptist Church is granted upon a personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, a sincere commitment to godly living, and an agreement to support the Church and abide by the Church's Covenant; and is subject to the recommendation of the Board of Deacons and the vote of the Church.

All applicants for membership shall first be considered by the Board of Deacons and the Pastor(s), together known as the Diaconate, which shall satisfy themselves by personal examination, or inquiry, of the Christian commitment, character, and qualifications of the candidates.

The Chair of the Board of Deacons shall report to the Clerk of Membership and congregation the names of such persons the Diaconate considers eligible for membership.

A copy of the Church Covenant and the Statement of Mission shall be given to each applicant as part of the examination procedure.

b. Baptism

Baptism is one of two key means of grace given by Christ to the Church, the second being participation in the Lord's Supper or Communion. Through baptism, believers in Jesus publicly identify with Christ and the Church.

Wolfville Baptist Church practises baptism by immersion.

When a candidate for believer's baptism is unable to be baptized by immersion, as for example, on medical grounds, another mode of baptism may be used as approved by the Diaconate.

2. Transfer of Membership

a. When transferring from another Baptist church, the letter of transfer would normally state the status granted to the believer in that church. Without such a letter, a person applying for membership may be accepted on the basis of the believer's profession of faith.

b. Membership at Wolfville Baptist Church is open to individuals transferring from another Christian church, upon a demonstration of faith in Jesus and godly character, and subject to the recommendation of the Board of Deacons and the vote of the Church.]

The Diaconate shall satisfy itself by personal examination, or inquiry, of the Christian character and qualifications of candidates transferring by letter.

3. Transfer, Removal, and Restoration of Members

a. Any member who is in good standing shall be entitled to a letter of recommendation from this Church when transferring membership to another Baptist church. Members who wish to unite with a church of another denomination may be provided with a letter of introduction.

Letters of recommendation and introduction will be reported to the Church.

- b. When this Church loses touch with a member, or a member appears no longer to show interest in this Church, every effort shall be made to renew contact and rekindle fellowship. When contact has not been restored after three years, the member's name will be placed on a non-active list. After five years, the Diaconate will recommend removal from church membership. This decision will be reported to the Church.
- c. Applications for restoration of membership shall be dealt with as other applications for membership.

#### 4. Rights and Privileges of Members

Except in situations covered by the Constitution and By-Laws, all members shall be entitled to take part in all deliberations and to vote at all meetings.

Members of Boards and Committees shall be elected from the regular congregants of the Church.

### B. Pastors

#### 1. Calling and Release of Pastoral Team Members

There shall be a Pastor and other pastoral staff as determined by the Church.

##### a. Search Committee

When there is a pastoral vacancy, the Church shall name a special Search Committee to seek out and recommend a suitable candidate.

The committee will consist of nine members including three Deacons appointed by the Board of Deacons, and six members selected by the Church by secret ballot at a special business meeting called for that purpose.

The Church may also stipulate that there shall be specific representation from specific Boards of the Church.

The Search Committee shall:

- i. Elect its own chair and adopt its own operational procedures.
- ii. Present to the Church the particulars of the candidate so that the Church may call that person to its Pastoral Team.
- iii. Draft a letter of appointment containing the details of responsibilities, accountability, salary, benefits, and other conditions of ministry for the candidate they recommend to the Church.

##### b. Termination or Release from Ministry

Notice of termination or release from ministry shall be given in writing no less than ninety days in advance by the member of the pastoral team to the Chair of the Board of Deacons, or by the Church to the pastor.

#### 2. Pastoral Ministries

The Pastor of the Congregation shall care for the Church and provide overall leadership to the Church in its fellowship and outreach to the community.

The Pastor of the Congregation shall be an ex-officio member with vote of all Boards and Committees, except the Board of Management, where the Pastor of the Congregation shall have voice but no vote.

The Church may call other pastors to serve in other ministry areas such as families, outreach, music, worship, and preaching. The specific roles, responsibilities, titles, and terms of these ministries will be defined by the Search Committees and endorsed by the Church at the time of their call to the Church.

## C. Church Officers and Officials

### 1. Church Officers

The church officers are the Pastor, Moderator, Treasurer, Chair of Board of Deacons, and Chair of Board of Management.

#### a. Moderator

The Moderator shall be a member of the Church, be elected annually, and normally preside over all business meetings of the Church, including the Annual Business Meeting.

An Assistant Moderator shall be elected annually to carry out the duties of the Moderator in the Moderator's absence.

#### b. The Treasurer shall be elected for terms of three years and shall oversee all the funds of the Church.

The Treasurer shall be responsible to maintain accurate financial records, to establish and oversee the church's financial procedures and confirm all church receipts, and to act as the church's representative with the bank, Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), and other such institutions.

The Treasurer shall regularly apprise the Board of Management of the church's finances; with that Board shall supervise the investments of the Church; will submit financial statements to the Annual Business Meeting of the Church and arrange for their review for the May business meeting; provide year-to-date summary statements to the Church at business meetings; report annually to the Canada Revenue Agency as required; and develop the Church's budget.

#### Financial Reviews

The Church's financial records are to be independently reviewed at the end of every year. The Treasurer will recommend the reviewer for the upcoming year to the Church in the annual meeting of the Church in February.

### 2. Church Officials

#### a. Clerk of Membership

The Clerk of Membership shall be elected annually, be responsible to keep an accurate record.

The Clerk of Membership shall be elected annually, be responsible to keep an accurate record of church membership in the Church Roll, report changes in the Church membership at annual business meetings, and supply official membership data as required.

#### b. Clerk of Record

The Clerk of Record shall be elected annually and keep an accurate record of minutes and all decisions made at the Church Business Meetings.

## D. Boards and Committees

### 1. Guidelines.

The following guidelines apply to Boards and Committees:

- a. Members of Boards and Committees shall be elected from the regular congregants of the Church.
- b. A person may serve on only one Board at any one time.
- c. No member of any Board or Committee shall participate in discussions or voting on any issue which shall result in a material benefit to that member or their family.

- d. At the first meeting of a new year, each Board and Committee shall elect its own chair and organize its own meeting schedule.
  - e. Two-thirds of the elected members shall constitute a quorum.
  - f. Elected Members of Boards and Committees shall serve for three years with the option of re-election for up to two more terms.
  - g. After completing three terms, a one-year interval is required before being eligible for re-election to the same Board or Committee.
  - h. Boards and Committees shall produce and maintain their own operating protocols.
  - i. All Boards and Committees will evaluate annually their past activity, setting out objectives for the upcoming year, to be presented to the congregation in a written report at the Church's Annual Business Meeting.
2. Board of Deacons
- a. The Board of Deacons shall consist of eight members, all of whom shall be members of the church.
  - b. The Deacons shall:
    - act as counsellors and assistants to the Pastor(s) to advance the spiritual and numerical growth of the Church;
    - conduct a performance review annually with each member of the Pastoral Team, and review the financial and leave arrangements with each person;
    - arrange for, and assist in, the administration of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper;
    - promote among the congregation an active interest in persons who are sick, in need, and new to the congregation;
    - in the absence of the Pastor, or when the Pastorate is vacant, conduct religious services and provide pulpit supplies;
    - nominate to the Church appointments of Honorary Deacons who would serve for life;
    - administer the funds which have been collected for those in need, and submit a reviewed statement annually to the Church;
    - be responsible for education in stewardship;
    - consider all requests for Church membership and satisfy themselves as to the faith and character of each applicant;
    - with the Clerk of Membership and pastors, review and engage with non-active members of the church and annually recommend to the church non-active members to be removed from membership;
    - report regularly to the church.
3. Board of Management
- a. The Board of Management shall consist of seven elected voting members, and the Curator and the Treasurer, both of whom shall be non-voting members of the Board.
  - b. The Board of Management shall serve as the custodians of the Church's real property and financial resources and shall exercise all the functions vested in The Trustees by the Provincial Statutes as referenced in the Statutes of Nova Scotia 1857, Chapter 56, An Act to incorporate the trustees of the first Baptist Church at Horton, and as amended in 1896 and 1911.  
With the Treasurer, the Board of Management shall hold and invest funds on behalf of the church.

With the approval of the church, in the manner prescribed by S.N.S. 1857, Chapter 56, they shall negotiate the borrowing and the lending of the church's money, mortgage and sell its property and carry on the legal business of the church.

- c. The Board of Management shall oversee the development and implementation of short and long-range financial and property plans for the church working cooperatively with the Pastors and other church Boards and Committees.
  - d. The Board of Management is responsible for the selection of the Curator and Custodian.
  - e. The Curator shall supervise the Custodian and will liaise with the Board of Trustees and the Custodian concerning the current maintenance needs of the Church property. The Board of Management shall assign and supervise the Custodian's duties. The Curator shall advise the Board of Management of the conditions and structural needs of the Church property.
  - f. With the Board of Management, the Treasurer shall prepare and present the annual church budget to the church in the last business meeting before the incoming calendar year.
  - g. The Board of Management shall function as the Personnel Committee.
  - h. The Board shall report regularly to the Church and present a reviewed financial statement at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church.
4. Board of Christian Education
- a. The Board of Christian Education shall consist of five elected members plus one of the Pastors as an ex-officio member with vote.
  - b. The Board of Christian Education is responsible:
    - to work in co-operation with the Pastoral Team to develop and deliver a comprehensive year-round program of non-religious and Christian education to reach the community for Christ and help believers of all ages become mature disciples of Jesus;
    - to discover, enlist, train, support and recognize Church education leaders and workers to understand and maximize their ministries;
    - to evaluate all educational programs annually; and develop a plan and strategy for Christian spiritual formation for every age group; and,
    - to propose, co-ordinate, and administer the educational budget of the Church.
  - c. Summer Programs
    - Regarding summer programs, the Board of Christian Education, with the Pastoral Team and other leaders, will ensure that summer educational and recreational programs are fully described and properly staffed.
    - The Board will review job description(s), assist in the selection of summer personnel, and with the Treasurer, review funding applications prior to being submitted.
5. Board of Global Ministries
- a. The Board of Global Ministries shall consist of five elected members.
  - b. The function of the Board of Global Ministries is to foster within the congregation awareness of needs and opportunities for Christian missions whether globally, nationally, or locally. The Board, where possible and appropriate, initiates action.

This Board annually shall prepare a budget for Missions which, when approved by church members, shall be funded by donations designated for Mission and Outreach.

6. Music Committee

- a. The Music Committee shall consist of four elected members, including at least one elected member from the choir, plus the Director of Music.
- b. The Music Committee shall work with and support the Director of Music including special church events.

The Director of Music shall be responsible for all areas of the church's music and consult with the pastoral team regarding the music for worship services. The Director of Music shall be responsible for finding a suitable replacement when taking vacation or short-term personal time off.

- c. The Music Committee is responsible for preparing job descriptions and recommending the appointment of the Director of Music following a process similar to a pastoral search; and proposing a music budget annually.
- d. The Music Committee is the Search Committee for the Director of Music following a process similar to a pastoral search. The Director of Music is responsible to the Pastor and the Music Committee.

7. Nominating Committee

- a. The Nominating Committee shall consist of three members elected by the Church.
- b. The Nominating Committee shall:  
Maintain a list of all serving members and adherents with their terms and years of service clearly indicated;  
Receive names of nominees from Boards and Committees to fill vacancies as they occur and present these nominees quarterly to the church for approval; and, submit a complete list of all members of all church boards and committees to the Church for information and approval at the last Church business meeting of the calendar year.

8. Personnel Committee

- a. The Personnel Committee shall:  
Make the final appointments of all members of non-pastoral staff, except the Director of Music.  
Issue the official letter of appointment for all non-pastoral staff members, which shall include salary, vacation, group benefits, and any other conditions of appointment.  
Meet with non-pastoral staff members at least once a year to review all matters related to their employment by the Church.  
Receive in writing issues of concern to staff members.
- b. The Personnel Committee is responsible for the job descriptions and selection of the Custodian and the Administrative Assistant.  
The Custodian is responsible to the Board of Management through the Curator or Board of Management delegate.  
The Administrative Assistant is responsible to the Pastor for daily supervision and to the Treasurer for financial aspects.

## 9. Designated Entities

The following guidelines apply to Designated Entities that are affiliated to the Church:

Operate independently of the Church organizational and administrative structure.

Choose their own Executive annually, convene its own meetings, and select projects of special interest to the entity to support.

By agreement, raise, manage, and dispense their own funds through their own bank account.

Report to the church annually and be accountable for financial reporting to the Church Treasurer.

Donations received at any activity by a Designated Entity may be issued charitable receipts by the Church through the Church Treasurer as long as the activity is endorsed by the Church, consistent with the Church's mission, in compliance with Canada Revenue Agency's regulations, and supported by proper financial records.

- a. The Social & Benevolent Society leads the Church in ministries of compassion and hospitality through social and benevolent activities.
- b. The Wolfville Refugee Support Network leads the Wolfville community in refugee settlement work.

## 10. Working Groups and Ministry Teams

Working Groups and Ministry Teams may be struck for specific purposes and ministries from time to time by a Board or a Committee.

### a. Visitation Team

The Visitation Team is appointed by the Board of Deacons.

The Visitation Team shall conduct and coordinate visits to those who are sick, seniors, or in special need of Christian support and fellowship.

The Visitation Team shall work under the authority and direction of the Board of Deacons, in co-operation with the Pastoral team.

### b. Newcomers Team

The Newcomers Team shall watch for newcomers at Church services and welcome them and invite them to make this their Church home.

The Newcomers Team shall work under the authority and direction of the Board of Deacons, in co-operation with the Pastoral team.

### c. Welcoming Team

The Welcoming Team shall greet worshippers at the regular services and to encourage new worshippers to register in the Church's Guest Book.

The Welcoming Team shall work under the authority and direction of the Board of Deacons, in co-operation with the Pastoral team.

- d. Ushers  
Ushers assist with seating and collect congregational offerings. They work under the direction of Head Usher who works closely with the Head Teller. Training is the responsibility of the Head Usher.
- e. Tellers  
The Tellers are responsible to count, record, and deposit all moneys collected at church-related gatherings in the Church. They work under the direction of a Head Teller who ensures that tellers are trained in compliance with good practice and directions of the Treasurer and the Church's Administrative Assistant.
- f. Fundraising Team  
The Fundraising Team is used for raising funds for specific purposes beyond normal stewardship and regular offerings, typically for capital projects or special events. Established and authorized by the Church, the Fundraising Team operates under the direct authority and supervision of the Board of Management.
- g. Licensing Team  
When needed, a Licensing Team consisting of one Deacon and two members elected from the Church shall be convened to receive, review, and recommend action regarding applications for a license to ministry. The Team is to follow the guidelines and regulations established by the Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada (CBAC).
- h. Church Historian  
The Historian shall be elected annually and keep a record of all major occurrences of interest to the Church. The Historian will deposit the church's historical documents in the Esther Clark Wright Archives of Acadia University.
- i. The Wolfville Area Inter-Church Council  
The Church will seek to minister in the community by providing two representatives to the Wolfville Area Inter-Church Council.

#### E. Meetings

- 1. Public Worship  
Regularly weekly worship meetings will be held every Sunday of the year. The Lord's Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of each month.
- 2. Anniversary  
The Church's Anniversary shall be held annually on the fourth Sunday of October.
- 3. Slate and Budget Meeting  
The slate of officers and church budget for each new year will be received at the Church Business Meeting held annually on the fourth Wednesday of November. The essential items of business are the Nominating Committee's report and the Treasurer's proposed Budget for the coming year. Once the budget has been adopted for the current year, changes or additions to expenses .can only be made after notice is given at least two Sundays previous.



4. Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting of the Church shall be in the fourth Wednesday of February, unless determined otherwise by the Moderator.

The Annual Report of the Church for the previous year shall be distributed not later than two Sundays preceding the meeting.

The essential items of business shall be Minutes of the preceding Annual Business Meeting, the Report of Clerk of Membership, Pastor(s)' Report(s), and reports by all the various Boards, Committees, officers, and designated entities.

All reports will include an evaluation of past activities and plans for the future with definite objectives for the upcoming year.

5. Additional Business Meetings

In addition to the Annual Business Meeting in February, and the Slate and Budget Meeting in November, additional meetings will be held on the fourth Wednesdays of May and September, unless determined otherwise by the Moderator.

6. Special Business Meetings

Extraordinary business meetings may be called at any time by the Moderator or on the signed petition of at least ten Church members, provided that notice is given in the Bulletin at least two Sundays in advance of the meeting stating the main purpose of the special business meeting.

A special business meeting restricted to admission of new members may be called without notice and may be held prior to or after the service of worship on a Sunday morning.

The Moderator may call the chairs, presidents (or alternates) of any or all boards, committees, or societies of the Church to act as an Advisory Council, at the request of any one of them.

Twenty-five members of the Church shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of Church business.

F. Representation at Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada (CBAC) and the Eastern Valley Baptist Association (EVBA)

Delegates and Alternate Delegates to Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada (CBAC) and the Eastern Valley Baptist Association (EVBA) shall be elected annually, the number subject to the CBAC and EVBA regulations.

G. Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended at any regularly called Church business meeting by a two-third vote of the members present, provided notice of the proposed amendment has been given in the call of the meeting, or has been given in writing at a previous business meeting of the Church.