

BYLAWS  
UNIVERSITY BAPTIST CHURCH OF WACO, TX  
*Last Updated November 2020*

**Preamble**

In order to preserve and to secure the principles of our faith, as well as to ensure that our life as the body of Christ in the world may function in a manner that honors our calling as the people of God, we, the individuals that comprise University Baptist Church in Waco, TX, declare and establish these Bylaws.

**Article I**  
**Name and Mission**

**Section 1. Name**

The name of the church shall be “University Baptist Church of Waco, TX,” which from this point forward will be referred to as “UBC.”

**Section 2. Mission**

UBC seeks to form a community of people into the way of Christ that embraces beauty and lives missionally.

*Forming Community:*

At UBC we strive to be a community formed into the image of Christ, becoming the people God has called us to be and doing the things God has called us to do. We recognize that this formation is a lifelong process that occurs through regular practices of Christian worship, nurturing a healthy and consistent life of prayer, living authentically within mutually submissive and loving relationships, and seeking ways to realize the dream of God in our world. Our goal is not to house a collection of super-Christians who fit within a puritanical mold of sterile morality, but to congregate and send out a community of passionate pilgrims who are on an intentional journey toward Christ.

*Embracing Beauty:*

The first thing we know about God from scripture is that God is a creator and says of creation, "this is very good." At UBC we seek to be a people that recognize the beauty of God's creation, often in the ordinary, everyday affairs and relationships of our lives. Rather than separating the spiritual life (sacred) from everyday living (secular), we desire to value art, beauty, creativity, and diversity—all of which emanates from and points to God and God's creation. We also seek to imitate our creator through the act of creating. We believe that whenever we create art to

celebrate, praise, lament, or express emotion, we are participating in the nature and work of God.

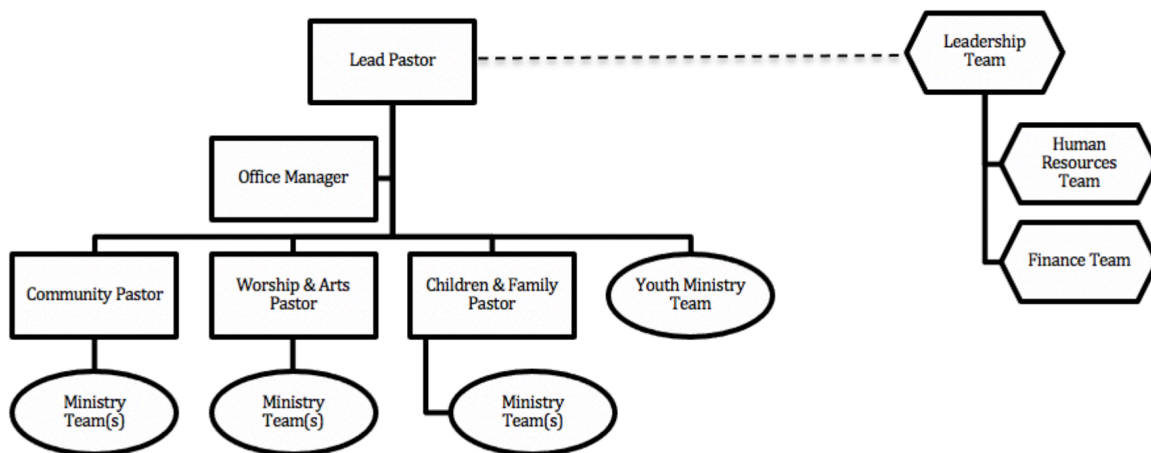
### *Living Missionally:*

As people on an intentional journey toward Christ, we are to be active participants in bringing the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. We strive to be missional, to be the incarnate Christ immersed in the world, without becoming a product of it. In each situation we find ourselves in (i.e. - work, home, school, church, the grocery store, the pub, etc.), we seek to actively love those around us through word and deed, and to consistently seek out opportunities to live and be caught up in the life Christ embodied.

## **Article II** **Governing Structure**

### **Section 1: Leadership Structure**

UBC has a layered leadership model sustained by: the direct guidance of a Lead Pastor in collaboration with staff members, the support/assistance of lay person teams (Human Resources, Finance Team, Ministry Teams), and the ultimate accountability and approval/veto power of a lay leadership body (Leadership Team). Any changes to the existing organizational structure require final approval by the Leadership Team (Refer to article V).



### **Section 2. Leadership Responsibilities / Reporting Assignments**

The following comprise the general responsibilities and reporting assignments of UBC's paid staff and lay member bodies:

(A) Leadership Team (Leadership Team): The Leadership Team is the ultimate voting body of the church, exercising approval/veto power concerning the annual budget, hiring/termination of paid staff members, and direction of the overarching church vision. This 9-person team of lay members (including one chair\*) meets at least quarterly to provide oversight/accountability and final determinations regarding the church's finances, personnel, and vision. Qualifications and terms for Leadership Team service are outlined in the UBC Bylaws.

*\*The chairperson is nominated/selected within the Leadership Team. Chair is responsible for communication with/between Lead Pastor and Leadership Team members and leads meetings but exercises no greater voting power or influence.*

(B) Paid Staff: Staff members are responsible for various aspects of forming, guiding, and carrying out the vision and central activities of the church. Current staff positions include:

- Lead Pastor
- Community Pastor
- Worship and Arts Pastor
- Children's Pastor
- Youth Leaders
- Office Administrator

(C) Human Resources (HR) Team: The HR Team is an advisory group to the staff and Leadership Team, providing guidance, support, and oversight in personnel matters. This team of lay members meets at least quarterly to conduct annual reviews of staff, review personnel policies and procedures, make plans for staff appreciation and development, and discuss grievances brought forth by church members. Qualifications and terms for HR Team service are outlined in the UBC Bylaws (Article IV Section III).

(D) Finance Team: The Finance Team is an advisory group to the staff and Leadership Team, providing guidance, support, and oversight of the financial aspects of the church. This team of lay members, in consultation with the Lead Pastor and Office Administrator, meets at least quarterly to prepare the proposed annual budget, review the church's fiscal condition, and make recommendations and decisions regarding expenditures, investments, and other financial matters. Qualifications and terms for Finance Team service are outlined in the UBC Bylaws (Article IV Section II).

(E) Ministry Teams: Ministry teams collaborate with staff members in developing and carrying out various aspects of the UBC mission. Staff members are encouraged to utilize ministry teams comprised of members in their designated areas of ministry (e.g., worship and arts, spiritual formation, missional engagement, teaching) and publicly invite (e.g., through church announcements) diverse members of the UBC community to be involved in this capacity.

Qualifications for Ministry Team service and responsibilities of team members are determined by the staff member overseeing a particular team.

(F) Volunteers: Greeters, Coffee, Cleaning

### **Article III** **Membership**

#### **Section 1. Definition**

UBC defines membership as those persons who voluntarily choose to identify themselves with the church through regular worship attendance, which shall be defined as attendance at a majority of the Sunday services for which the person is capable of attending.

#### **Section 2. Rights and Responsibilities**

Members are expected to be people on a journey toward Christ. As Baptists we believe that every person on a journey toward Christ, through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, has equal access to God and is gifted for a unique purpose. Because of this, members are encouraged, and expected, to be open to sharing their lives, gifts and wisdom with the rest of the congregation. Conversely, members of UBC are encouraged, and expected, to receive the gifts, wisdom and guidance from the other members in the UBC congregation.

#### **Section 3. Clarifying Membership for Practical Purposes**

When it becomes necessary to receive the voice of the congregation on a given matter, and a person's membership is in question, the Leadership Team will determine, with all due diligence, if the person in question is a member in good standing.

### **Article IV** **Church Polity**

#### **Section 1. Leadership Team**

- (A) Purpose. The Leadership Team shall be the primary decision-making body of UBC. The Leadership Team shall oversee the business and property of the church, and make final decisions regarding hiring and dismissal of staff as well as the acquisition and selling of assets that are beyond budgetary provisions.

- (B) Composition. The Leadership Team shall consist of nine members of the UBC community that are not staff, finance team, or human resources team. Two of the Leadership Team's nine members shall be university level students.
- (C) Qualifications. Each member of Leadership Team shall have been a member of UBC for at least one year, exhibited an understanding and commitment to the mission and values of the church. Members shall be willing to fulfill all responsibilities in the Leadership Team job description.
- (D) Selection. When a vacancy arises on the Leadership Team the congregation shall be notified immediately at a regularly scheduled Sunday morning worship service, as well as through social media and electronic communication. At that point, a call for nominations shall be made and any member of UBC will be allowed to make nominations. At least three weeks shall pass before the window for accepting nominations closes. All nominees shall then be vetted and selected by the current Leadership Team. The chair will notify the selected candidate.
- (E) Term. Members of Leadership Team may serve for a duration lasting up to three years. While they are encouraged to remain the full three years, members may voluntarily remove themselves from their position at any time. Student members shall only commit to a year with the chance to renew up to three years.
- (F) Removal. If concerns arise over a Leadership Team member's ability to serve and represent the church, the Leadership Team may vote to remove that person from the group after all attempts at restoration and recommitment have been exhausted. After removal from Leadership Team (either voluntarily or involuntarily) a person must wait at least one full calendar year before he or she can be selected to serve on Leadership Team again.
- (G) Meetings and Quorum. The Leadership Team will meet on at least a quarterly basis. Emergency meetings may be called with a notice of at least three days. A quorum for meetings will be at least one half of all Leadership Team members. Quorum for decisions regarding the hiring and dismissal of staff, acceptance and dismissal of Leadership Team members, as well as the acquisition and selling of property not included in budgetary provisions shall be one hundred percent of Leadership Team. Meetings requiring one hundred percent of Leadership Team for a quorum must be planned at least one week in advance.
- (H) Voting. Each person on the Leadership Team will be entitled to one vote on all decisions. Decisions made must be approved by at least two thirds of

the members present at a Leadership Team meeting. Votes made via email, phone, or other electronic methods are permitted, so long as the following conditions are met: (1) members have been informed (2) members have been given the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback (3) members had sufficient opportunity to review the decision and share opinions.

## **Section 2. Finance Team**

- (A) Purpose. The Finance Team shall exist for the following purposes:
- a. To serve as the primary advisory group for the Leadership Team in all budgetary and financial aspects of the church.
  - b. To oversee, in coordination with the ministerial staff, yearly budgetary processes, working to create a financial ministry plan in alignment with the ethos, mission and values of UBC.
  - c. To advise the staff and Leadership Team on any emergency financial matters that may arise with regards to the physical infrastructure of the church building, as well as those matters pertaining to compensation and benefits of personnel.
  - d. To assess the current financial status of the church on a monthly basis and advise the staff and Leadership Team on matters concerning changes in planned ministry expenses.
  - e. To advise the Human Resources/Staff Support team on all financial matters regarding new and existing personnel, including available resources concerning salaries, salary increases, insurance, taxes, etc.
  - f. To advise the church body on all matters relating to stewardship, financial integrity, etc.
- (B) Composition. The Finance Team shall consist of no less than five and no more than seven members.
- (C) Qualifications. Finance Team members shall have been an active participant in the life of UBC for at least a year, have received at least a bachelors degree level of education (or roughly an equivalent amount of experience in business or finance), and have at least a basic understanding of financial reports and budgets.
- (D) Selection. When a vacancy arises on the Finance Team the congregation shall be notified immediately at a regularly scheduled Sunday morning worship service, as well as through social media and electronic communication. At that point a call for nominations shall be made and any member of UBC will be allowed to make nominations. Not less than three weeks shall pass before the window for accepting nominations will close.

All nominees shall then be vetted by the current Finance Team and recommended to the Leadership Team for final approval.

- (E) Term. Finance Team members shall serve for a duration lasting up to five years. All efforts shall be made by the Finance Team to ensure that no more than two members in a given year rotate off of Finance Team due to duration requirements. While they are encouraged to remain the full five years, members may voluntarily remove themselves from their position at any time.
- (F) Removal. If concerns arise over a Finance Team member's ability to serve and represent the church, the Finance Team may recommend to the Leadership Team the removal of that person from the group after all attempts at restoration and recommitment have been exhausted. After removal from Finance Team (either voluntarily or involuntarily) a person must wait at least one full calendar year before he or she can be selected to serve on Finance Team again.
- (G) Meetings and Quorum. The Finance Team, including the Office Administrator (and one full-time staff member, if deemed necessary) will meet at least quarterly to review the financial status of the church and to work on budgetary, financial and other administrative proposals to be sent to the Leadership Team for final approval. A quorum for meetings in which the primary purpose is financial review of the church will be at least one half of all Finance Team members. A quorum for meetings that result in a recommendation regarding the budget to be sent to the Leadership Team will be at least eighty percent of all Finance Team members. The Office Administrator, and any full-time staff member in attendance at any meeting of the Finance Team will act in an advisory, non-voting capacity.
- (H) Voting. Any recommendations being sent to the Leadership Team must receive the approval of more than one half of all Finance Team members present at the meeting. Members are also allowed to vote via email after sufficient conversation regarding an item has been conducted.
- (I) Emergency Considerations. It may become necessary for the staff and Finance Team to make emergency financial decisions with regards to building and maintenance that go beyond approved budgetary plans. When this occurs the Office Administrator, after consulting with at least one member of the Finance Team, may approve an expenditure not to exceed \$750. If such a scenario occurs, both the Leadership Team and Finance Team will be notified before their next scheduled meeting about the emergency expense. In the case of emergency expenditures greater than \$750, at least half the members of Finance Team must be consulted and at least half the members of Leadership Team must approve the expenditure.



### **Section 3. Human Resources**

- (A) Purpose. The Human Resources/Staff Support Team shall exist for the following purposes:
- a. To establish procedures for the hiring of ministerial and non-ministerial staff, and to enact those procedures when advised by Leadership Team to do so.
  - b. To advise Leadership and Finance teams on issues regarding long-term staff needs.
  - c. To create and implement staff review procedures.
  - d. To advise Leadership and Finance teams on matters regarding staff compensation, benefits, grievances and termination.
  - e. To be a liaison between the congregation and staff during times of conflict after all attempts at personal, one-on-one resolution has been made.
- (B) Composition. The Human Resources/Staff Support Team shall consist of no less than three and no more than seven members. The team shall have at least as many members per full-time staff member.
- (C) Qualifications. HR/Staff Support Team members shall have been an active participant in the life of UBC for no less than one year, have received a bachelor's degree (or roughly an equivalent amount of experience in personnel management, ministry, or other related field,) and have a demonstrable understanding of organizational management.
- (D) Selection. When a vacancy arises on the HR/Staff Support Team the congregation shall be notified immediately at a regularly scheduled Sunday morning worship service, as well as through social media and electronic communication. At that point a call for nominations shall be made and any member of UBC will be allowed to make nominations. Not less than three weeks shall pass before the window for accepting nominations will close. All nominees shall then be vetted by the current HR/Staff Support Team and recommended to the Leadership Team for final approval.
- (E) Term. HR/Staff Support Team members shall serve for a duration lasting up to five years. All efforts shall be made by the HR/Staff Support Team to ensure that no more than two members in a given year rotate off of the team due to duration requirements. While they are encouraged to remain the full five years, members may voluntarily remove themselves from their position at any time.
- (F) Removal. If concerns arise over a member's ability to serve and represent the church, the HR/Staff Support Team may recommend to the Leadership



Team the removal of that person from the group after all attempts at restoration and recommitment have been exhausted. After removal from HR/Staff Support Team (either voluntarily or involuntarily) a person must wait at least one full calendar year before he or she can be selected to serve on HR/Staff Support Team again.

- (G) Meetings, Quorum and Voting. Since the HR team serves primarily in an advisory capacity, policies and procedures regarding meetings, Quorum and Voting will be established and amended by the team itself and communicated to the Leadership Team.

#### **Section 4. Other Considerations**

- (A) Concurrent Team Membership. For communication and understanding purposes, the Leadership Team may, when deemed necessary, suggest that one of its members be placed on another team in an ex-officio capacity. They may also suggest, when deemed necessary, that a member from either the Finance or HR/Support Team sit in on Leadership Team meetings, also in an ex-officio capacity. Aside from these, no person shall occupy a position on more than one team concurrently.
- (B) Spouses.
  - a. The spouses of staff members may not serve on the Leadership or HR teams. Spouses of staff members may serve on the Finance Team, but must recuse themselves in any conversation regarding staff salaries and budget items affecting their spouse.
  - b. No married couple may serve on a particular team concurrently.

#### **Article V** **Church Policies and Procedures**

- (A) Handbook: The church shall develop and keep updated a Personnel and Organizational Handbook. This handbook may be developed by a special committee or by the HR Team as directed by the Leadership Team. This handbook should include church policies and procedures, organizational charts indicating lines of responsibility to be used in the administration of the church. The most recent version of the handbook shall be kept in the church office and in possession of the Office Manager and be made available for viewing by any member of the church.
- (B) Review: The Leadership Team, HR Team or a special committee formed for that purpose, shall review the manual at least annually, and shall recommend changes for the Leadership Team to consider at any regular or a called business meeting for that purpose.

**Article VI**  
**Adoption and Amendments**

- (A) Changes: Changes to the by-laws may be made at any regular Leadership Team meeting provided each amendment shall have been introduced at a previous Leadership Team meeting. Additionally, copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the time the amendments were first presented. After presentation of an amendment, reasonable efforts shall be made to receive input from the congregation regarding the amendment.
  
- (B) Ratification: Amendments to the by-laws shall be by a two-thirds vote of Leadership Team members present, with a quorum consisting of 100% of all Leadership Team Members.