

BYLAWS

of

SEATTLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

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ARTICLE I — NAME

The Church is duly incorporated under the laws of the state of Washington under the name of Seattle First Baptist Church (SFBC or Church).

ARTICLE II — COVENANTS

Section 1 — Mission Covenant: We are a community of faith united in exploring what it means to follow the way of Jesus Christ, to be a people of God, and to love and care for our neighbors. As a Church, we will know no circles of exclusion, no bridges we will not cross, and no loyalties above those that we owe to God.

Section 2 — Justice, Equity, and Diversity Covenant: As we continue to follow the way of Jesus Christ, Seattle First Baptist Church is committed to an inclusive, equitable, and diverse environment

where anyone who is a part of the community or interacts with it feels respected and valued regardless of sex, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, education level, economic status, or any other characteristic. SFBC is committed to providing equal opportunities for employment, volunteering, and advancement in all areas of its work. The SFBC community respects the value that diverse life experiences bring to the congregation and honors them all. SFBC commits to modeling diversity, inclusion, and equity; and to maintaining fair and equal treatment.

Section 3 — Faith Covenant: SFBC furthers the understanding of God’s loving nature, as revealed by Christ. We understand and acknowledge that all individuals are ministers in their own right with full freedom to interpret Scripture and its application in their everyday lives and to seek a relationship with the Sacred in whatever way they choose.

Section 4 — Church Covenant: The Church cooperates and maintains fellowship with the American Baptist Churches USA and locally with the Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches. The Church Policy Manual specifies other key organizations with which the Church maintains fellowship.

ARTICLE III — ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT

Section 1 — Government: The governing body of this Church is its membership as represented by the Council of Ministries (Council). See Article VII.

Section 2 — Administration: The Church is managed by an elected Council of Ministries, subject to the authority of the members of the Church. The Council implements the work of the Church as specified in these Bylaws.

Section 3 — Authority: Modifications to these Bylaws and the Articles of Incorporation must be approved by the Council and then by church membership before becoming effective. Church membership has the sole authority to amend the Bylaws on the following subjects:

- a. Electing members to the Council of Ministries (except for mid-term vacancies, which can be temporarily filled by the Council).
- b. Adopting the proposed budget.
- c. Buying or selling Church property.
- d. Borrowing funds from external lenders.
- e. Calling pastors to, or terminating pastors from, SFBC’s ministerial staff.
- f. Changing denominational affiliation.

ARTICLE IV — MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 — Becoming a Member: Any person who accepts the Church’s covenants in Article II and affirms them by signing a membership form may be admitted to membership.

Section 2 — Duties, Privileges, and Responsibilities of Members: SFBC encourages members, as

their means and circumstances allow, to engage in the spiritual life of the Church, share in its work, and contribute to it financially. Only members may serve on the Council or vote in SFBC's Annual Meeting and other congregational meetings.

Section 3 — Inactive Membership: The Council may declare a person's membership inactive according to criteria it sets. Inactive members do not retain voting rights, but upon appeal, and with the Council's approval, they may be restored to current status without reapplying for membership.

Section 4 — Resignation or Dismissal of Members: Membership in the Church may be ended at the request of the member or in accordance with Church policy.

ARTICLE V — SERVICES AND ALL-CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1 — Worship Services: SFBC holds worship services each Sunday and on other days, as the Council or pastors direct. Communion is observed on the first Sunday of each month except when the Council or pastors choose a different, or additional, Sunday or service.

Section 2 — Annual Meeting: SFBC holds its Annual Meeting in January. The Council chooses the date and time (the meeting typically follows the Sunday worship service) and provides advance notice of at least two weeks. The congregation is informed through at least two of the following methods: by pulpit announcement, by email, on the SFBC website, and in the church newsletter.

- a. The Annual Meeting is held to elect members to the Council of Ministries; adopt the proposed budget for the new calendar year; and receive the Annual Report from the Pastors, council leadership, and other Church members and staff regarding program activities of the previous year. The Council may also recommend other action items during the meeting.
- b. At least two weeks before the Annual Meeting, SFBC announces the slate of nominees through at least two of the following methods: by email, on the SFBC website, and in the Church newsletter. For details about voting and vote counting, including electronic voting, see Article 7, Section 5.
- c. Information regarding an item of business to be presented for vote at the Annual Meeting is also publicized at least two weeks before the meeting by at least two of the following methods: by email, on the SFBC website, and in the Church newsletter, enabling members to be informed on the matter before voting.
- d. The Council provides ballots to be distributed to members at the meeting or ballot equivalents if the meeting is held remotely.

Section 3 — Special Meetings: A special meeting of the membership may be convened at any time by the Council or by a signed petition of at least 25 current members.

- a. At least two weeks before a special meeting, SFBC publishes the reason for the special meeting through at least two of the following methods: by pulpit announcement, by email, on the SFBC website, and in the Church newsletter. The announcement states the time and place of the meeting and its agenda, including topics to be covered and votes to be taken (if any). No other business is acted on at special meetings.

- b. If the Council or petitioners want to expedite a special meeting and cannot give two weeks' advance notice, the Church must make a good-faith effort to provide advance notice to as many congregants as possible. If an emergency exists and Church action is needed, the Council may act until a special meeting is convened.
- c. The Council provides ballots to be distributed to members at the meeting or provides ballot equivalents if the meeting is held remotely.

Section 4 — Quorum: The quorum required for valid transaction of business is based on the current number of church members.

- a. Ten percent or more of the current members constitute a quorum for transacting any ordinary matter of business not otherwise addressed in the Bylaws.
- b. Twenty-five percent or more of the current members constitute a quorum for action on matters concerning 1) Bylaws amendments and revisions; 2) borrowing funds from external lenders; or 3) calling pastors to, or terminating pastors from, SFBC.
- c. Fifty percent or more of the current members constitute a quorum for action on matters of 1) changing denominational affiliation or dissolving the Church as a nonprofit corporation; or 2) purchasing or selling buildings or real property.

For reference, see the complete table of quorums in the Appendix at the end of these Bylaws.

Section 5 — Voting: Members must be present in person or electronically to vote. Proxy and absentee voting are not permitted. Unless these Bylaws set a different threshold, all votes by the congregation must pass by a majority.

For reference, see the complete table of voting thresholds in the Appendix at the end of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI – PASTORS AND OTHER STAFF

Section 1 — Partners in Mission: The Church employs pastoral, administrative, program, and support staff to help carry out its mission. The Church acts collaboratively in all its activities. The SFBC staff functions as a team.

Section 2 — Pastoral Staff:

- a. Pastoral staff cares for the congregation, conducts or arranges church services, ministers to the community at large, and collaborates with the Council in creating and maintaining church programs.
- b. Pastors are ordained ministers of the Christian clergy who will seek standing in American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA).
- c. When SFBC has a pastoral vacancy, the Council may select a diverse search committee. When formed, a search committee seeks qualified candidates and recommends them to the Council for approval by church membership.
- d. When recommended by the Council, a pastoral call must be approved by a three-fourths or greater vote of the membership at a meeting called for this purpose. Pastors report to the Council.

- e. The Council may create models of pastoral ministry that are considered useful in furthering the mission of the Church and that are consistent with these Bylaws.
- f. Pastors may be terminated by a three-quarters vote of the membership at a meeting called for this purpose.

Section 3 — Program Staff:

- a. The Church employs professional program staff, such as musicians, to support and enhance worship services and meet the needs of the congregation. The Council or its designee, such as the Personnel Committee, selects a search committee to recommend candidates. Pastors and other staff may be members of this search committee.
- b. The Council of Ministries may hire (and dismiss) program staff.
- c. Program staff report to supervisors who are selected by the pastoral team.

Section 4 — Administrative and Support Staff:

- a. The Church employs administrative and support staff to conduct SFBC's daily operations.
- b. The Council may hire (and dismiss) a church administrator, who oversees the finances, business, facilities, and other operations of the Church. The church administrator reports to the Council.
- c. The church administrator may hire (and dismiss) administrative staff, as needed, to manage SFBC's operations and facilities.

ARTICLE VII — COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES

Section 1 — Responsibilities:

SFBC's Council of Ministries:

- a. Focuses on the SFBC mission: Ensures that church resources and efforts remain focused on achieving SFBC's mission.
- b. Performs strategic planning: Sets goals and establishes policies and strategic direction to fulfill the mission, but does not manage day-to-day activities. Strategic planning includes policy and program development.
- c. Fulfills SFBC's obligations: Satisfies the Church's legal and moral obligations to its membership, employees, and community.
- d. Performs oversight and management: Reviews and approves church business, such as the budget and key financial transactions; manages the Church's committees and task forces; and has final responsibility for personnel policies and management.
- e. Manages assets: Protects the church's assets and determines the use of its financial resources, and provides for SFBC's long-term economic health.
- f. Collaborates: Works together to promote SFBC's ministries and programs. Council members, pastors, and staff collaborate freely on shared projects and concerns.
- g. Entrusts to others the detailed planning: Decentralizes planning whenever possible, giving authority, responsibility, and trust to the experts, to committees and task forces, and to those who have relevant day-to-day experience.

- h. Leads by example: Council members commit to honesty, transparency, diversity, equity, and collegiality in all that they do.

Section 2 — Organization and Structure:

All current members of SFBC are eligible to become members of the Council of Ministries. The Council includes members with diverse skills, ages, and backgrounds that reflect the diversity of the SFBC congregation. See Article II.

Council members are elected by a majority vote of church membership at its Annual Meeting. See Section 5 below on Elections.

The Council consists of these members:

- a. Officers, who are the president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- b. At-large members—at least three and no more than seven—who represent the entire diversity of the congregation.
- c. BIPOC members, who must fill at least two of the elected positions.
- d. Pastors, who serve in a non-voting, advisory (“ex-officio”) status.

Voting members of the Council, including officers, serve without compensation—monetary or otherwise.

Section 3 — Terms and Term Limits for Council Members and Officers:

- a. Officers: The term for an elected officer is one year. Officers are eligible to serve four consecutive one-year terms in that office. However, officers are held to the term limits set for at-large council members and may not serve longer than four consecutive years in any capacity.
- b. At-large council members: These council members serve overlapping two-year terms, which are renewable one time. No at-large member can serve more than two consecutive terms in an elected capacity. After an absence of one year, an at-large council member may be reelected to the Council.
- c. Staggered Terms: To determine each council member’s term limit, members are divided into two groups (as equally as possible) and are designated Group I or Group II. If the number of council members in a group decreases mid-year or mid-term and causes a noticeable imbalance between the two groups, members can be moved to a different group by the Council to re-balance their numbers. However, a rebalancing of council members between groups may lengthen, but does not shorten, the term of an incumbent council member. An exception to the above is the beginning of staggered terms in 2022 where Group 1 members will serve only one year in their first term and two years in their second term for a maximum of three years before reaching their term limits.
- d. Vacancies: If a vacancy occurs on the Council (including that of an officer), the remaining council members (excluding the council member at issue) may, by a majority vote, elect a temporary successor for the unexpired term to serve until the next Annual Meeting in January.

Section 4 — Officers:

Church officers are the president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

- a. President: The president serves as President of the SFBC Corporation and acts as its registered legal agent. The president facilitates council actions, such as leading meetings, coordinating programs, and promoting the SFBC mission, but may also share these duties with other council members.
- b. Vice President: The Vice President of the SFBC Corporation understands the agenda of the president, is familiar with the president's duties, and assumes them when the president is absent. The vice president may also promote and support specific church programs of interest.
- c. Secretary: The secretary of the Church maintains council records. The secretary is responsible for keeping accurate meeting minutes are recorded and retained, and that notices are given as required by these Bylaws.
- d. Treasurer: The Treasurer of the SFBC Corporation manages the council's review of, and actions related to, the financial health of SFBC. The treasurer maintains comprehensive financial reports are reviewed by the Council at least quarterly and identifies opportunities to strengthen the Council's ability to carry out its fiscal responsibilities. The treasurer oversees SFBC's accounts and appropriate fiscal controls. The treasurer is a member of the Finance Committee.

Section 5 — Elections:

SFBC members elect council members and officers at the Annual Meeting in January. All SFBC members are eligible to serve in any elected position. Except for pastors, who are nonvoting members of the Council, paid staff members may not serve as council members or officers. Members of the council, including officers, serve without compensation.

The Council prepares for the yearly election as follows:

- a. Together with the pastoral team, researches candidates to nominate for the vacant and expired terms of council members and officers.
- b. Is aspirational when reviewing candidates by including members with diverse skills, ages, and backgrounds that reflect the diversity of the SFBC congregation. SFBC actively recruits and interviews nominees who reflect the diversity of SFBC, specifically including BIPOC and newer members.
- c. Asks for and accepts nominations directly from church members for themselves or for other members who have given their permission to be nominated. When SFBC begins recruiting for council members, the Council may publicize the method for these nominations.
- d. Shares nominees' names with the congregation at least two weeks before the date set for the Annual Meeting through at least two of the following methods: by email, on the SFBC website, and in the Church newsletter.

At the Annual Meeting, the Council follows these rules when counting votes:

- a. If only one person is nominated for each open position, a voice or hand vote is accepted from members who attend the meeting.

- b. If multiple persons are nominated for an open position, members vote on that position by written ballot.
- c. If elections at the Annual Meeting are held electronically in part or in whole, the Council specifies how votes are tabulated.

All council elections (including officers) are decided by majority vote.

Section 6 — Council Meetings:

The Council adopts rules and procedures to conduct its meetings and manage SFBC programs. Council rules and procedures must be consistent with these Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, and applicable law. In addition, the church administrator and other experts, staff, and guests may attend council meetings when invited by the Council, but they may not vote. Members of the Church may attend and observe council meetings, but may not participate except by invitation of the presiding member of the council. Only voting council members and invitees may be included when the Council meets in Executive Session.

The Council holds meetings, both regular and special.

- a. Use of remote technology: Unless otherwise restricted by these Bylaws or the Articles of Incorporation, members of the council may participate in a council meeting either in person, by telephone, by video conference, or by other communications equipment. If all meeting participants can hear or communicate with each other, remote participation is equivalent to attending a meeting in person.
- b. Regular meetings: The Council sets the meeting time and place for regular council meetings, and a designated council member sends meeting reminders and agendas. Although meeting details may sometimes change with little advance notice, a good-faith effort will be made to include as many council members as possible.
- c. Special meetings: The president, or any three members of the council, may call a special meeting of the Council. Notice of the time, place, and agenda of the special meeting may be given in person; or by telephone, email, or text message. Meeting notice must be given at least 24 hours in advance unless a meeting on very short notice is required because of an emergency. The notice should specify the meeting's purpose with reasonable detail. Unless otherwise indicated in the notice, and contrary to special congregational meetings, any business may be transacted at a special council meeting.
- d. Waiver of meeting notice: If the Council calls a meeting for which the meeting notice time-requirement was not met, members may waive their meeting notice. Any council member may waive a meeting notice requirement in these Bylaws by delivering to the council president a written statement (email accepted) that states the member's waiver of notice. The written statement may be delivered before or after the time set for the meeting and must be included in the minutes.
- e. Quorum: A majority of the council members in office is required to conduct business and is known as a quorum. If a quorum is not present, a majority of the council members present may adjourn the meeting without notice.

- f. Action by majority vote: Except as required by these Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, or applicable law, the vote of council members where a quorum is present is considered an act of the Council. Regardless of how a decision is reached, the Council speaks to the congregation with one voice.

Section 7 — Action without a Meeting:

The Council may take action without a meeting if a majority of the Council consents in writing (including email) to approve the action. These votes have the same effect as a unanimous vote of the Council. After the vote, the Council must file minutes of the action.

Section 8 — No Proxy Votes:

Council members may not act by proxy on any matter. A member who attends a meeting where the Council takes action is presumed to agree with the action taken unless the member's dissent is entered in the minutes, or the member submits written dissent or abstention to the secretary (email permitted). A member who votes for an action may not later file a written dissent or abstention.

Section 9 — Removal of a Council Member:

At a council meeting where a quorum is present, the Council may remove one of its members, with or without cause, by a vote of at least 75% of the members present. The member whose removal is sought may not vote and is not counted as present for the purpose of calculating the 75% quorum. A successor may be elected as specified in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII—COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

SFBC has committees and task forces that work with the Council of Ministries, pastors, and staff to perform specific ministries of the Church. SFBC has two kinds of committees: standing committees and mission-centered committees. Committee and task force members serve without compensation—monetary or otherwise.

Section 1 — Standing Committees:

SFBC has two committees that continue year to year: the Finance Committee and the Personnel Committee. The Council selects members of these committees annually by a majority vote.

- a. Finance Committee: The Finance Committee provides financial oversight for SFBC and maintains its long-term economic health. Responsibilities include financial budgeting, planning and reporting; creating accountability policies; monitoring of internal controls; managing investments; performing reviews or audits; and performing or delegating pledge drives. Members of the Finance Committee include the SFBC treasurer and church administrator.
- b. Personnel Committee: The Personnel Committee approves and maintains job descriptions for employees and contractors; conducts a periodic review of SFBC's personnel policies; maintains an Employee Handbook; works with the Finance Committee on employee compensation and benefit

matters; reviews staffing structures and needs; conducts performance reviews of staff members (or delegates reviews to supervisors); recommends diversity initiatives to the Council; sets grievance policies; and investigates and resolves grievances. The Personnel Committee includes at least one member of the Council.

The Council may also make additional requests of these committees.

Section 2 — Mission-Centered Committees:

The Council may also approve by a majority vote, year-by-year, mission-centered, ministry-focused committees. The Council requests information from these committees as needed.

Near the end of the church program year, the Council helps establish these committees in either of two ways:

- a. A group of congregants, which might include program or administrative staff, proposes a new mission-centered committee to the Council and asks for its approval. The group includes in the proposal its goals, committee member names, and chair or contact person; or
- b. The Council reviews the mission-centered committees in the current program year by requesting reports and updates.

Except for the Chair, who must be a current member of SFBC and is appointed by the Council, membership in these committees is open to any person, including non-members and staff.

All committees are advisory and report to the Council, which has the sole authority to manage SFBC business.

Section 3 — Task Forces

Task forces are groups formed by the Council to solve specific problems; or to complete goals or projects that the Council requests. Task forces disband when their tasks are completed.

The Council, by majority vote, may form any number of task forces. All task forces are advisory groups and reports to the Council. Membership in a task force is open to any person, including non-members and staff.

Task force chairs submit their respective recommendations to the Council for the upcoming year. Each task force chair presides at task force meetings; is responsible for task force functioning; notifies task force members of meetings and their agendas; and reports to the Council as requested.

Section 4 — Minutes

SFBC committees and task forces have different requirements for meeting minutes:

- a. Finance and Personnel Committees keep minutes of their meetings and forward these minutes to the Council. The Council securely files these committee minutes with other corporate

documents.

- b. Mission-centered committees and task forces are not required to keep minutes but are encouraged to do so; however, committee chairs may be asked to brief the Council and make annual reports.

Section 5 — Creating Committees and Task Forces

Except for the two standing committees, the Council may create and dissolve mission-centered committees and task forces at its discretion. Committee and task force members should be diverse in gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation or identity, disability, or any other classification to the extent reasonably possible.

Members of mission-centered committees and task forces need not be members of the Church except for the chairs.

Mission-centered committees and task forces may recruit members and work independently as long as they meet the purpose and goals that the Council approves.

Section 6 — Self-governed Committee and Task Force Meetings

Committees and task forces are self-governed. They decide how their group conducts its business, and they set their own guidelines for giving meeting notice, establishing a quorum, voting, and other procedural matters.

They set their members' terms of office and may make, alter, and repeal their rules and procedures for conducting their business as long as they succeed in their missions.

The exception to these guidelines is that the two standing committees must keep minutes and forward them to the Council.

ARTICLE IX — FINANCES

Section 1 — Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of SFBC is January 1 through December 31.

Section 2 — Solicitation of Funds: No funds are solicited for any purpose unless the Council or the church administrator approves them.

Section 3 — Budget: The church administrator, together with committee and task force chairs, pastoral and program staff, and the treasurer, prepare a unified budget for the new fiscal year. The proposed budget is first presented to, and approved by, the Council; and is then presented to the members for a vote at the Annual Meeting. The budget submitted to the Council and members is a balanced budget.

Section 4 — Spending Authority: The Council and church administrator supervise the spending of budgeted monies.

Section 5 — Deposits, Accounts, Negotiable Instruments, and Funds: All monetary funds not in use are deposited in general or special accounts in banks or other depositories as the Council selects. When depositing and collecting monies for any SFBC account, the church administrator or authorized agent of SFBC may endorse, assign, and deliver checks and other items on behalf of SFBC. The church administrator or authorized agent of SFBC signs or endorses all checks, orders for the payment of money, obligations, insurance certificates, and other financial documents by using a method as determined by the Council. The Church may establish funds, such as a fellowship fund, to support its religious and charitable missions.

Section 6 — Investments: SFBC funds may be held in liquid assets or may be invested and reinvested in stocks, bonds, or other securities as the Council deems prudent, as are consistent with SFBC's Investment Policy, and that are permitted investments of organizations exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE X — INDEMNIFICATION

SFBC's Council and officers are indemnified to the greatest extent provided by law for actions they take in service to the Church, except for any action that the Council determines was taken in bad faith. The Council has the authority to indemnify employees and agents of the Church to the greatest extent provided by law for actions they take in service to SFBC, except for any action that the Council determines was taken in bad faith.

In any suit or legal action, the Council has the authority to advance legal fees and other costs that are incurred by an indemnitee. If a suit or action results in a determination of bad faith, the indemnitee will reimburse SFBC for any advanced fees and costs.

ARTICLE XI — AMENDMENTS

SFBC may amend, rescind, or revise these Bylaws at any all-church meeting by a two-thirds vote of members present. Requirements for quorum and timely notice of time, place, and purpose for the meeting must be satisfied.

SFBC adopted the above revisions to the Bylaws at the 2022 Annual Meeting of the congregation, and they are effective January 23, 2022.

Jim Ginn, President, Seattle First Baptist Church

Date: _____

Dick Miller, Secretary, Seattle First Baptist Church

Date: _____

APPENDIX

Quorum and voting thresholds at congregational meetings

Vote subject	Minimum attendance	Minimum vote to pass	Bylaws reference
Budget, adopt annual	10%	Majority	Art. V, Sec. 4(a); Art. V, Sec. 5
Business, ordinary	10%	Majority	Art. V, Sec. 4(a); Art. V, Sec. 5
Bylaws amendments and revisions	25%	Two-thirds	Art. V, Sec. 4(b); Art. XI
Change denominational affiliation	50%	Majority	Art. V, Sec. 4(c); Art. V, Sec. 5
Elections, Council	10%	Majority	Art. V, Sec. 4(a); Art. VII, Sec. 5
Funds, borrow (external)	25%	Majority	Art. V, Sec. 4(b); Art. V, Sec. 5
Pastors, call and dismiss	25%	Three-fourths	Art. V, Sec. 4(b); Art. VI, Sec. 2(d and f)
Purchase or sale of buildings or real property	50%	Majority	Art. V, Sec. 4(c); Art. V, Sec. 5

GLOSSARY

administrative staff — Employed staff who conduct SFBC’s daily operations and manage church facilities. For details, see Article VI, Section 4.

American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) — The national organization of Baptist churches with which SFBC cooperates and maintains fellowship. For details, see Article II, Section 4.

Annual Meeting — The yearly all-church meeting, which is typically held in January at the beginning of the new program year. For details, see Article V, Sections 2-4 and Article VII, Section 5.

at-large members — The members of the Council of Ministries who represent the diversity of the entire congregation. Together with the SFBC officers and with input from pastors, they form the Council. For details, see Article VII, Sections 2 and 3.

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) — Refers to members of nonwhite communities. For details, see Article II, Section 2 and Article VII, Section 2.

Church or church — A shorthand way to refer to “Seattle First Baptist Church” in these Bylaws.

commissions — An outdated term from the former Bylaws (2021 and earlier). Beginning with the 2022 Bylaws, SFBC uses the term “committees.”

committees — The term that replaces what SFBC previously called “commissions.” For details, see “committees, mission-centered” directly below.

committees, mission-centered — Ministry-focused, year-by-year committees that are approved by the Council to fulfill specific goals. For details, see Article VIII, Sections 2, 5, and 6.

Council — The shorthand name for the Council of Ministries.

Council of Ministries — The body of SFBC members elected by the congregation to manage its self-governance. Replaces what was previously called the Diaconate. For details, see Article VII.

covenant — A pledge or promise. See Article II for the four SFBC covenants: Mission Covenant; Justice, Equity, and Diversity Covenant, Faith Covenant, and Church Covenant.

Diaconate — Through 2021, the governing body of SFBC. Effective with the 2022 Bylaws, the governing body of SFBC is the Council of Ministries. For details, see Article VII.

Evergreen Association of American Baptist Churches — The local association of Baptist churches with which SFBC cooperates and maintains fellowship.

Executive Session — A meeting of the Council of Ministries where attendees are limited to voting council members and invitees. For details, see Article VII, Section 6.

Finance Committee — One of two standing committees that continue year to year. For details, see Article VIII, Section 1(a).

fiscal year — A 12-month time period that an organization uses for accounting purposes, including calculating taxes. At SFBC, the fiscal year is based on a calendar year (January 1 through December 31). See Article IX, Section 1.

mission-centered committees — Ministry-focused committees that are approved by the Council to fulfill specific purposes. For details, see Article VIII, Sections 2, 5, and 6.

officers — The president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer of SFBC, who are also voting members of the Council of Ministries. For details, see Article VII, Sections 2-4.

Personnel Committee — One of two standing committees that continue year to year. For details, see Article VIII, Section 1(b).

program staff — Employed professional staff, such as musicians, who support and enhance worship services and congregational needs. For details, see Article VI, Section 3.

quorum — The minimum number of members who must be present at a meeting in order to conduct business, including to hold a vote. The Bylaws set quorum levels for *all-church* meetings in Article V, Section 4; and for *council* meetings in Article VII, Section 6. See also Appendix.

SFBC — A shorthand way to refer to “Seattle First Baptist Church” in these Bylaws; the acronym for our church. See Article I.

special meeting — An *all-church* meeting that is not the Annual Meeting (see Article V, Section 3). Or a *Council* meeting that is not one of the regularly recurring meetings (see Article VII, Section 6c).

standing committees — Two committees (Finance and Personnel) that continue year to year. For details, see Article VIII, Section 1.

task force — Groups formed by the Council of Ministries to complete specific projects or to solve specific problems. Task forces disband when their tasks are completed. For details, see Article VIII, Sections 3-6.

term limits — The maximum number of consecutive years that a council member can serve without being off of the Council for at least one year. Term limits renew after an absence of a year. For details, see Article VII, Section 3.

terms, staggered — The method by which SFBC confirms that the entire Council does not turn over in a single election. For example, while three or four at-large council members are serving the first year of a two-year term, three or four other at-large council members are serving the second year of a two-year term. For details, see Article VII, Section 3(c).

waiver of meeting notice — A written statement (paper or email) sent by a council member to the council president. The statement waives the council member's right to have adequate meeting notice for a specific meeting that the member is or was unable to attend. Obtaining the waiver may enable the Council to establish a quorum and conduct business. For details, see Article VII, Section 6(d).

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