

# Reverently Leading and Serving

"BYLAWS BITS" — MAY 2016

The Board of Deacons prayerfully leads and serves the First Church of Christ by supporting our worship, participating in the Sacraments of Baptism and Communion, providing



spiritual care for individuals, and overseeing our membership process.

This article provides an opportunity for you to consider a draft of the proposed revised bylaw provisions pertaining to the Board of Deacons. You are invited to share your thoughts about the language, which will be presented for ultimate approval at a future congregational meeting. The draft provisions are as follows:

**PURPOSE:** The men and women of the Board of Deacons (BOD) are chosen by the congregation to work with and closely support the pastoral staff, serving and leading the church in worship, spiritual care, and membership.

**ROLES AND DUTIES:** To further its purpose, and not in limitation of its actions, the BOD shall have the following roles and duties:

1. Embrace the First Church vision and mission statements and encourage others to live them out.
2. Lead and serve First Church in worship, in concert with the pastoral staff, to help make worship services mean-

ingful, dignified, orderly, and reverent occasions of fellowship and communion with the Lord.

3. Prepare and administer the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion in support of the pastoral staff.
4. Support First Church membership by encouraging individuals in the congregation spiritually, assuring that aid and comfort are given in times of need.
5. Oversee membership at First Church by approving, welcoming, and encouraging assimilation of new members into the church body, and by managing the roster of First Church members.
6. Coordinate with and regularly report to the Executive Board.

**AUTHORITY:** The BOD shall have authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties and in addition:

1. The BOD has the authority to create and disband committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties. Deacons may serve as members of these committees.
2. The BOD has authority to include and remove individuals from First Church membership.
3. The BOD has authority to change worship service times, structure and format.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** The BOD reports to the Executive Board.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Deacons are to be elected from among members of the church whose character is in accord with biblical standards for deacons. The BOD shall consist of at least 15 members, excluding the Senior Pastor, who shall serve as a non-voting member. The Deacons shall elect from among their members a chairperson who will represent them on the Church Council.

If there are to be over 15 deacons, then the total number of deacons shall be determined based on a recommendation of the BOD and the Leadership Committee. Deacons shall be elected by the congregation during its annual meeting for terms of three years, such that no more than one-third of the BOD is replaced during any given election. Deacons shall be eligible to serve a second consecutive term. After serving two consecutive terms, a deacon shall be ineligible for reelection until after a period of one year.

The Committee—**Tina Balmer, Amber Bird, John Davis, Anton Hertle and Steve Soderberg**— encourages any First Church member to share his or her views regarding updating the bylaws. This can be done by mail, email, or notes to the Committee delivered to any Committee member, the Board chairperson, the chairperson of the Research and Long-Range Planning Committee (R&LRP), or the senior minister. Notes to the Committee may also be dropped off with the church receptionist, for the R&LRP mailbox. For your convenience, the current First Church Bylaws are available at [firstchurch.org/bylaws](http://firstchurch.org/bylaws) and at the Church Office.

[www.firstchurch.org/BylawsCommittee](http://www.firstchurch.org/BylawsCommittee)