A PROFILE OF
THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN NEW HAVEN

The First Baptist Church in New Haven, Connecticut is seeking a Pastor.

205 Edwards Street
New Haven, CT 06511
203-562-0069
Website: www.FirstBaptistNewHaven.org

PASTORAL SEARCH TEAM
Peter Young, Chair
Darwin Keichline
Loris Sterling
Ivette Barraza
Joshua Ruzibuka
Michael Bobb-Semple

Please direct responses to the Chair of the Search Team at: youngpiyoung@sbcglobal.net

ABCCONN RESOURCE MINISTER
Rev. Dr. Harry Riggs
Our church is situated in a transitional urban neighborhood of New Haven, a city with a population of 130,000. We are quite close to the campus of Yale Divinity School and Andover Newton Seminary at Yale. (See attached map.)

Worship participants travel a variety of distances to the church building with:

- 1 less than one mile
- 11 1 to 2 miles
- 12 2 to 5 miles
- 3 5 to 10 miles
- 4 more than 10 miles

A Brief History of First Baptist Church in New Haven

The First Baptist Church in New Haven has been in existence since October of 1816. Over its more than two hundred years of existence the church has had twenty-seven settled Pastors.

On the occasions of the 100th and 150th Anniversaries of the founding of the church, significant church histories were written. The twenty-third Pastor, the Reverend Dr. Edward Kaechele, distilled these documents into a more readable paper that is recorded below.

“To the north of New Haven there had been a great deal of Baptist activity. It was closely related, in its beginnings, to the Separatist or New Light movement. Antedating the New Haven church were the ones at Wallingford, Waterbury, Meriden and Middletown; and, nearest to New Haven, the church founded in 1811 at Muddy River, or Montowese.

A New Haven tailor, Henry Lines, was a member of the Montowese Baptist Church. The Baptist movement from the beginning generally had a well-educated ministry. Yet, especially in its generations of phenomenal growth, with leadership demands so great, they welcomed to pastoral leadership any men who, in their minds, seemed touched by God’s hand. In 1813 Lines was honored with a license to preach, and subsequently ordained. His own city was his natural field of action, and in April of 1816 he baptized four residents of New Haven. Then in autumn several more were baptized.

New Haven, at long last, clearly needed a Baptist church, and the Baptists of the wider region agreed. An ecclesiastical council was called: ministerial and lay delegates from several of the churches to the north, even from Hartford, constituted themselves a
council to recognize and bless the new church. The date was October 30, 1816. The constituting members were individually examined: — nothing superficial or perfunctory here! It was unanimously voted "that we do heartily approve the standing of the said brethren, and also their sentiments relative to doctrine and practice, and that we do cordially fellowship them as a regular church of the Lord Jesus Christ." That very evening in the abandoned Episcopal Church, Lines was formally installed as pastor.

The twelve names belong in our record: Henry Lines, Pastor; John Bester Davis, Deacon; Guy C. Marsh, church Clerk; William Green, Asher Thompson, William Barth, Anthony Sherman, Miss Jenna Besto, Mrs. Hulda Johnson. Miss Emily Lord, Mrs. Sarah Dudley, and Miss Elizabeth Knight. Miss Besto was an African-American. About two weeks later, the little company was meeting in "Amos Doolittle's Lodge Room" on College Street. Here they read the Covenant together for the first time, and celebrated the Lord's Supper. It was very soon that the growing company needed another meeting place, and so in 1821 they rented the hall of the New Township Academy on the corner of Chapel and Academy Streets. Growth continued and 1822 they began worship in the Old State House. In 1824 the congregation was able to build its own place of worship on Chapel Street and continued there until 1865. In 1856 a division in the church resulted in the creation of Second Baptist Church which purchased the Wooster Place church building. In 1865 a reunion of the two churches took place and they joined together in the Wooster Place building as the First Baptist Church and worshiped there for two generations.

By the end of the lengthy pastorate of S. Dryden Phelps in 1870 FBC was known as the largest evangelical church in Connecticut with a membership around 800. Between then and 1898, cultural changes in the area, among other things, brought about the selling of the Wooster Place building to the St Michael's Catholic Church. This resulted in the merger with Hope Baptist Church and the building of a new place of worship on the corner of Edwards and Livingston Streets in the East Rock Neighborhood of New Haven.

Between 1842 and 1902 First Baptist founded eight Baptist churches; some still alive today. FBC was characterized in the early decades of the twentieth century by a succession of scholarly pastors and vigorous Sunday school and youth outreach programs. The church could still claim about 400 members shortly after World War II. As the population of New Haven significantly declined in the following decades, FBC suffered a steady drop in membership. Several times the church considered uniting with
other urban congregations facing the same demographic dilemma, but it resisted that solution.

Carrying forward the tradition of its inter-racial founding, FBC is today a living testimony of the Apostle Paul’s claim that "we are all one in Christ." Over the years active participants have hailed from Poland, Liberia, Taiwan, Romania, Chile, Greece, Jamaica, Haiti, India, Myanmar (Burma), China, Guyana, Nigeria, the Congo, Belarus and throughout the United States, proclaiming together the glory of God and the transforming, reconciling power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

The most recent twenty-year period was characterized by continued excitement at the First Baptist Church in New Haven. The Rev. Frederick Lanz came to the church in 2000. At the outset of his ministry new goals were set forth such as a mission emphasis, a new brochure and handicapped access. In 2003, a sizable Hispanic group (approximately one-third of the worshipping congregation) left to start a new Spanish speaking congregation in a nearby town. Soon after this the Chinese Alliance Church approached First Baptist with a request to utilize space at the church for their Sunday afternoon worship and other activities. An arrangement with the Chinese Alliance Church has continued to the present time.

In 2005 Rev. Lanz was diagnosed with cancer and attempted to continue his ministry while undergoing treatment. The congregation supported him through a difficult 18-month period and was deeply affected by his passing in early 2007.

Following Rev. Lanz’s death, there was an almost four-year Interim Ministry by the Rev. Erica Wimber Avena. Clearly the congregation needed time to recover from its loss and refocus its ministries.

The Church called the Rev. Joseph Delahunt to be its pastor in 2011 and he served until the fall of 2020. A thoughtful man, Joe led us quietly, yet effectively. Employed by the church on a half-time basis, he also labored for the American Baptist Churches of Connecticut as an area minister. We felt enhanced by what he brought to us. He led by example in traveling each year to India to teach for a two-week period and also pursued a doctorate.

One of the most significant developments in recent years was the influx of Congolese refugees and their impact on our church. In 2013, Joshua Ruzibuka, a Congolese refugee, arrived in the United States and came to New Haven. He, along with his wife-to-be and her sister, started looking for a church to attend. Stopping at First Baptist, Joshua found the service and sermon speaking to him. Further, he was so impressed with the welcome he received, that he brought his fiancée and her sister to another service. Word spread and at present, there are many Congolese refugees attending the church. Our Sunday morning
worship features scripture reading and translation of the sermon into Swahili. The Congolese have created an additional service in Swahili each Sunday afternoon.

The congregation responded to these newcomers by creating a Resettlement Team under its Missions Team. It is this team that supports the refugees in their quest for housing, medical care, education, and the many other needs refugees have. The church could not do this alone, utilizing the significant New Haven resource IRIS (Integrated Refugee and Immigrants Services) which brings many refugees to the United States.

We are a diverse congregation with a racial/ethnic mix as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resettled Congolese</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian-American</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European-American</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/ Latino</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our Building

First Baptist Church in New Haven is blessed with a beautiful late gothic revival brick building constructed in 1903-1904 in a historic district of New Haven. The sanctuary is trimmed with Branford (CT) granite and Indiana red oak and is adorned with memorial stained-glass windows on three sides. The large “Good Shepherd” window behind the choir loft is a prominent feature of the sanctuary. An immersion baptistry is visible behind the pulpit. Our building is debt-free, and we have sought to be good stewards by sharing its use with other groups in the community.
In recent years, the building’s age and deferred maintenance have necessitated Capital Funds campaigns for building restoration. In the 1990’s approximately $70,000 was raised to replace the aging heating system and in 2007 a two-year campaign entitled “Project Renewal” was instituted to raise funds to repair the slate roof. Approximately $36,000 was pledged and raised by the congregation and combined with funds from other sources a total of about $85,000 was dedicated to Project Renewal–Phase 1.

In addition to the sanctuary which seats approximately 300 people, the building has adequate classroom space for Sunday School programs, music, small social gatherings and storage. A large fellowship hall with adjoining kitchen in the basement is an ideal spot for potluck suppers, receptions and fund-raising activities. This hall also has a stage with curtains. The church office has a part-time support person and is equipped with a computer, printer and copy machine. There is an adjoining pastor’s study.

**Our Worship Service**

*Lay Participation in Worship*

We encourage lay participation in worship. Each week we have a different volunteer reader who leads the worship service, with the call to worship, invocation, Lord’s prayer, welcome and responsive reading. The church has served as a site for supervised ministry for Yale Divinity School students.

*Minister’s Participation in Worship*

During worship, the minister is assisted by the lay person. The church responds well to preaching with a biblical focus, which is informed by historical, critical thinking. The congregation is accustomed to the minister using the lectionary, but leaves that choice to the pastor.
Music

We have a paid, part-time organist/pianist who is a talented master’s degree candidate at Yale. Our organ is a two-manual Austin pipe organ which was installed in 1954. There is also a Steinway grand piano in the sanctuary. We have excellent volunteer soloists and choirs are often formed for special services. Our Congolese young people have formed a singing group called “Upendo” and provide special music in Swahili.

Decision Making Style

American Baptist polity acknowledges that members be informed, consulted and involved in the decision-making process of the church as much as possible. Leadership of First Baptist consists of the Church Council whose members are identified by a Nominating Committee composed of three church members. Nominated persons are elected by the congregation at the Annual Meeting in the spring of each year. The Council is led by the Moderator, who along with the Vice-Moderator, Treasurer and Clerk are the officers elected to serve on an annual basis. Other members on the Council include three members at large, representatives of five Ministry Teams and the pastor (ex-officio).

Council meets once a month. The Church Bylaws provide the guiding document for the Council. The five Ministry Teams include the Diaconate, the Church Home Team, the Finance and Stewardship Team, the Christian Education and Discipleship Team and the Mission Team. These teams, as well as ad hoc committees and task forces likewise meet monthly on a regular basis. Meetings of these groups begin with prayer and sometimes include a short meditation by the Pastor. A copy of the Bylaws is attached to this document.

Strengths of the Congregation

We are a warm and loving congregation made up of members from a wide diversity of cultural, ethnic and racial backgrounds, joined together by the love of Christ. We warmly welcome all newcomers to join us on our journey of faith. Visitors express feeling very
welcome at our church as member greet them at the door and get to know them better during the coffee hour that follows worship.

Church members are very devoted to each other and to the church teaching. Members work together successfully on projects, giving generously of their time and talents to meet the needs of the church. They also give generously to support the mission activities and the work of ABC/USA.

It should be noted that six members of the congregation are clergy, a testimony to the work of our church. Some additional demographic data about our congregation may be of help:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>15-19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-65</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-74</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 and above</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vision for the future**

We have not done an envisioning process during recent years. It seems more appropriate to do so with a new settled Pastor. However, the ongoing work with our Congolese members is primary on our list. Two of our outside reactors have suggested we might want to return to exploring a relationship with Yale Divinity School and Andover-Newton at Yale since they are so close to our building.
The Eight Most Important Activities for our New Pastor

1) PS175 Demonstrate keen sensibilities to other language, ethnic, and/or cultural groups and settings. (multicultural sensitivity)

2) PS230 Support the preaching ministry with time for preparation/reflection on the Word, and commitment to listen for the Word’s power and its implications for individuals, the church, the community and the world. (preaching)

3) PS090 Seek to lead persons to make decisions for Christ, encouraging their identification with and participation in the local church/community. (evangelism)

4) PS160 Motivate and support persons in discovering and using their gifts for ministry in their daily lives. (Ministry of the laity development) Ties well with PS140

5) PS210 Provide by word and presence an empathetic understanding of and concern for persons in the routine and joys as well as the crises and transitions of life, giving assistance where appropriate and feasible. (pastoral care)

6) PS080 Provide a teaching ministry that is based on theological, educational and historical foundations. (education)

7) PS060 Provide opportunities (a place and/or persons) for individual, couples, families and/or groups to enter a healing relationship. (counseling)

8) PS040 Identify and evaluate the needs of the community and work to meet those needs through individual and/or corporate action. (community assessment/involvement)

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Bylaws (Including Mission Statement and Covenant)
2. 2019 Financial Summary (Prior to COVID-19 influence)
3. Map of New Haven Area
Bylaws First Baptist Church in New Haven
Approved by vote of the church February 10, 2010. Amy Johnson, Church Clerk

ARTICLE I: Name

This church shall be known as “The First Baptist Church in New Haven” and as such was legally incorporated under the laws of the State of Connecticut on February 24, 1902.

ARTICLE II: Belief

In harmony with Baptist usage, this Church adopts as its sole creed the New Testament as the sufficient rule of faith and practice.

ARTICLE III: Mission Statement and Covenant

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a family of faith made up of members from a wide diversity of ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds. Yet, we are joined together by the love of Christ. We invite you to join us on our journey of faith as we seek to:

• Worship in the beauty of God
• Serve in the call of Christ
• Grow in the love of God’s Spirit
• Learn in the wonder of God’s Holy Word

COVENANT

Believing that by the grace of God we have received the Lord Jesus and given ourselves wholly to Him, having been baptized into Christ, and united with His church, we do now earnestly and joyfully covenant with God and each other by the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ shall be Lord in every aspect of our lives and we will, through love and service, seek His glory, striving always to know and do His will. We will esteem the whole Church, the body of Christ, above all human institutions, supporting her ministries, and desiring her true unity in the faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

We will honor our responsibility to this local church, attending faithfully the services of worship and other meetings, working and praying for its harmony, the deepening of its spiritual life and for its prosperity, giving cheerfully of our time, abilities and financial means for the carrying on of a benevolent and evangelical ministry here and throughout the world.

We will walk together in love, watching over and caring for one another, sharing each other’s joys and bearing each other’s burdens, being always slow to take offense and quick to make reconciliation.

We will cultivate in ourselves and our children a deeper understanding of our faith through study and worship in the home and the church.
We will seek to lead lives worthy of Christ, in order to commend our faith and to win others to the
Savior, being faithful servants of Him until he comes again.

ARTICLE IV: Church Relationships

The church affirms its primary allegiance to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, affirms its membership in
and loyalty to the American Baptist Churches of America (ABCUSA), the American Baptist Churches of
Connecticut (ABCCONN), the South Central Baptist Association, and New Haven Baptist Union. It
affirms its commitment to cooperate with other Christian organizations.

ARTICLE V: Membership

Section One: Procedures

1. Any person who confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and gives public assent to the Church
covenant may upon affirmative vote of the Church Council be received into membership:
   a. After profession of faith and believer’s baptism by immersion, or
   b. After receipt of a letter transferring membership from another Christian Church, or
   c. After giving a statement of faith and assurance of having been baptized, if a letter from
      a church is not available.

2. Persons desiring Church membership shall present themselves to the Pastor. After interviewing
   them, and satisfactory completion of instruction, the pastor shall recommend them to the church
   council for a time of sharing faith. Following a positive vote of acceptance they shall be given
   the right hand of fellowship at a convenient gathering of the congregation and their names
   enrolled in the Church records.

3. Any member may be dismissed upon affirmative vote of the Church Council and a letter of
   membership granted if requested:
   - After receipt of a written request for a letter of membership from another Christian Church, or
   - After receipt of a written request from a member to send a letter of membership to a named
     Christian Church, or
   - After receipt of a written request from a member that his/her name be removed from the
     church records, or
   - After notification that a member has joined another Christian Church, or
   - After two years without contact with the church, a letter of inquiry regarding intentions
     will be sent by the Clerk at the request of the Church Council.

4. Those who have demonstrated a commitment to First Baptist Church in New Haven and are
members of other churches may be received into membership of First Baptist Church as associate
members. Associate members will hold the same obligations and rights as full members except
they may not vote on calling or dismissing a pastor or on sale of church property. Associate
members will have the right to vote on all other church matters and to serve on any Board,
Committee or Team of the church.
Those desiring to be associate members of First Baptist Church shall have demonstrated a commitment to First Baptist Church and share in the affirmation that Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. They shall express this commitment to the pastor and through him/her to the Church Council.

The Council shall vote on receiving the associate members as it does on receiving those desiring to be full members of the church.

Section Two: Listings

1. All members will be considered active and so listed as long as they attend worship with this congregation regularly and/or support through service or financial gifts the ministry of the Church. Those who are homebound shall be considered active members.

2. Any member who does not fulfill the above obligations of an active member may upon affirmative vote of the Church Council be placed on an inactive list. While on the inactive list such persons shall have voice but no vote and not be counted among active members.

ARTICLE VI: Business Meetings

Section One: Administrative Year

The administrative year of this church shall begin January first and close December thirty-first of the same calendar year.

Section Two: The Annual Business Meetings

The Annual Financial Business Meeting shall be held during the months of January or February. The Annual Report Business Meeting shall be held during the months of May or June. Notice of both the annual meetings shall be given by announcement at least two Sunday morning services of the Church, or by a notice sent by mail or email at least one week in advance of the meetings.

Fifteen members of the church shall constitute a quorum. The moderator shall preside.

Section Three: Other Business Meetings

Special business meetings may be called by the moderator or may be called by the church clerk who shall have received written request for such a meeting signed by no less than ten adult members of the church. Notice for such a special business meeting shall be given in the same manner as prescribed for the annual business meetings in Article VI, Section Two. The purpose of such meetings shall be stated in the notice and no other business may be transacted at such meetings. Fifteen members of the church shall constitute a quorum.

Section Four: Age Requirements

Active members of any age may vote in the church business meetings except where law may require legal age.

Section Five: Rules and Definitions

At any business meeting of the church, Robert’s Rules of Order Revised shall govern the procedure.
ARICLE VII: Dissolution

As long as it remains in existence, the Church, its property, and its assets shall be devoted to religious purposes. No officer, director, member or employee thereof shall receive any pecuniary profit from the Church, except whatever reasonable compensation has been approved by the Church in effecting one or more of its stated purposes.

A three-fourths vote of active members who are of legal age will be necessary to:

- to sell the property
- to dissolve

In the event of the dissolution of the church its functions, if any, shall be administered by the American Baptist Churches of Connecticut.

ARTICLE VIII: Officers

Section One: The Pastor

The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period, at a salary to be determined by the Church at a special meeting of the Church in accordance with ARTICLE VI, Section Three, and upon the recommendation of the Pastoral Search Committee. Pastoral selection shall be by ballot and at least three-fourths of all votes cast shall be necessary to extend or to terminate a call. The Pastor shall perform those duties common to such office and shall serve ex-officio on all teams, committees, and organizations related to the Church, without vote except as otherwise stated.

When requested to do so, the Pastor shall present a report of his/her activities in connection with the work of the church at meetings of the Council and shall report to the Church at the Annual Report Business Meeting. The Council shall have oversight of the Pastor in consultation with the Pastoral Relations Committee. The Church shall make contribution on behalf of the Pastor to the Retirement Pension Fund of the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB) of American Baptist Churches, USA providing the Pastor is a member thereof.

Section Two: The Moderator

The Moderator of the Church shall be elected annually at the Annual Report Business Meeting of the Church and shall preside at all regular and special business meetings of the Church and at all meetings of the Council unless unable in which case the Vice-Moderator shall preside. The Moderator shall be a member of the Council with vote; shall be an ex-officio member of all boards, teams, and committees related to the Church and shall not serve more than three consecutive years.

The Moderator shall work with the Vice-Moderator, mentoring him/her in order that s/he may subsequently serve as Moderator.
Section Three: The Vice Moderator

The Vice-Moderator shall be elected annually at the Annual Report Business Meeting and shall assist the Moderator and in the absence of the Moderator, assume all duties. The Vice-Moderator shall be a member of the Council with vote and shall not serve more than three consecutive years.

Section Four: The Clerk

The Clerk of the Church shall be elected annually at the Annual Report Business Meeting and shall provide Council members with notification of meetings, keep minutes of all actions of the Council, be responsible for all church records including the list of all members, associate members, and inactive members, write and receive all communications on behalf of the Church and Council, unless other provision is made. The Clerk shall review and recommend any changes necessary to membership lists. The Clerk shall be a member of the Council with vote.

Section Five: The Treasurer

A Treasurer shall be elected annually at the Annual Report Business Meeting and shall have custody of all money contributed for local expenses, missions, the Fellowship Fund, and the funds of the Church School. The Treasurer shall keep a separate account in the books for each fund and shall not borrow from account to account, except on authorization of the Council. The Treasurer shall present a statement of receipts and disbursements at the regular meetings of the Council and complete a financial report for the Annual Financial Business Meeting of the Church. If the ability of the Treasurer to perform these duties should be in question, the Council shall decide the matter. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Council with vote. The Treasurer shall provide the Assistant Treasurer with all pertinent current financial records and information.

Section Six: The Assistant Treasurer

An Assistant Treasurer shall be elected annually at the Annual Report Business Meeting and shall assist the Treasurer as that officer shall direct. In the absence of the Treasurer or in the event that the Treasurer is unable to perform these duties, the Assistant Treasurer shall assume all the duties of the Treasurer. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer shall be from different families.

Section Seven: The Financial Secretary

A Financial Secretary shall be elected annually at the annual Report Business Meeting of the Church and shall collect all monies for local expenses; mission, special projects and fellowship fund and shall post a record of all pledges and provide yearly statements to contributors. Money collected shall be deposited to the credit of the Church.

Section Eight: The Auditor

An Auditor shall be elected annually at the annual Report Business Meeting of the Church and shall audit the books, examine the vouchers of the Treasurer and those of the Financial Secretary and make a report of the same to the Annual Financial Business Meeting of the Church. Special audits may be requested by the Church or any officer.
ARTICLE IX: Ministry Teams

The following Ministry Teams shall be standing Committees with at least three members each and shall meet regularly as needed. They shall provide a report of their ministry and activities at least once a year at the Annual Report Meeting of the Church.

Each Ministry Team shall have at least three members who are nominated yearly by the Nominating Committee on a rotating basis. Each ministry team shall elect a chairperson and vice chairperson. A representative of each team will serve as a member of the Church Council.

Section One: The Diaconate

The Diaconate will be members in good standing, will serve with the Pastor as spiritual leaders of the congregation, and be responsible for the following:

- Weekly and special services of worship throughout the year
- Oversee with musicians and pastor the music ministry of the Church
- Giving attention to issues related to an intentional ministry of Christian hospitality and evangelism
- Overseeing and planning for growth and nurture among current and future members
- Research the physical and spiritual needs of the congregation and community
- Insure that Church members receive spiritual care and nurture

Section Two: The Church Home Team

The Church Home Team will:

- Oversee maintenance of the building and grounds including oversight of contracts let for maintenance projects
- Conduct a biennial review of insurance coverage and make recommendations for changes to the Council
- Insure that the building and grounds are kept clean and attractive
- Formulate and institute helpful policies and procedures regarding: opening and closing the building, security for the building, conservation measures, and building use
- Promote and oversee building use
- Make recommendations for improvements to our building and grounds
- Communicate building needs or concerns with the congregation using the facility
- Train someone from each group using the facility to properly implement the policies and procedures established

Section Three: The Finance and Stewardship Team

The Finance and Stewardship Team will be members in good standing and are responsible for:

- Preparing the yearly budget
- Monitoring and reporting on the budget throughout the year
- Recommending to the council any changes to the budget throughout the year
- Bringing issues of stewardship to the attention of the congregation, including
overseeing an ongoing and/or stewardship effort each year

• Preparing Pastoral and other staff salary compensation recommendations for the Church Council in consultation with the Pastoral Relations Committee.

Section Four: The Christian Education and Discipleship Team

The Christian Education and Discipleship Team is responsible for helping the congregation and visitors to grow in their discipleship in Jesus Christ.

The Christian Education and Discipleship Team shall:

• Plan and manage the Christian education program of the Church
• Help the Minister plan and/or lead Membership and Baptismal classes
• Oversee adult, youth and children’s ministry programs for the Church
• Review, discern, and present the Christian Education budget for the year.

Section Five: The Mission Team

The Mission Team shall encourage, inspire, and coordinate mission and outreach efforts for and on behalf of the congregation.

The Mission Team shall:

• Promote United Mission Giving to American Baptist Churches, USA
• Promote the four special ABC offerings received each year
• Promote and consider mission and outreach invitations, opportunities, and requests and recommend which
• might best be undertaken by the Team and the congregation at large
• Review, discern, and present the mission budget for the year
• Represent and advocate for mission interests and concerns by way of regular representation and participation on the Church Council

ARTICLE X: The Church Council

The Council shall oversee, coordinate, and govern the overall ministry of the Church. The Council shall be comprised of Church members representing the Ministry Teams: The Diaconate, Church Home Team, The Finance and Stewardship Team, The Christian Education and Discipleship Team, and The Mission Team; Officers of the Church: the Moderator and Vice Moderator, the Treasurer and the Clerk shall serve on the Council, and the Pastor and Building Manager who shall serve ex-officio. Three at-large members of the Council shall serve to complete the Council in representing the congregation regarding age, gender, culture, and ministry interest.

Other members of the Church are welcome to attend Council meetings or to attend by invitation of the Council. In both cases, these attendees shall have ex-officio status. The council shall not have more than twelve members, including officers but not staff. In the event of a vacancy on the council a successor shall be elected by the Council as soon as possible.
The council shall meet at least nine times annually and at other times as may seem advisable to the
Moderator and/or the Pastor.

In the event that the pulpit becomes vacant through resignation or continued inability of the Pastor, the
Council shall appoint a Pastoral Search Committee whose membership shall be representative of the
congregation. The Pastoral Search Committee in consultation with American Baptist Churches of
Connecticut shall seek a new American Baptist pastor and present their recommendation to the Church
for its consideration and vote. The Council shall also appoint a task force to recommend a trained Interim
Minister who is recognized by American Baptist Churches, USA to serve the congregation until a
permanent Pastor is called.

At any Business Meeting of the Council Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the
procedure.

ARTICLE XI: Committees

Section One: The Pastoral Relations Committee

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall foster constructive communication between the congregation
and the pastor and implement the congregation’s responsibility for the pastor’s professional and personal
well-being. This should include mutual exploration of the role of Pastor, being a channel for
congregational response to the Pastor’s leadership as well as the Pastor’s response to the congregation’s
responsiveness, reviewing annually the Pastor’s position description and compensation including cash
salary, non-monetary compensation items (for example, health insurance), and professional expense
allowance and making recommendations to the Church Council, educating the congregation regarding
pastoral salary guidelines, and counseling with the Pastor regarding continuing education. The Pastoral
Relations Committee shall seek to help parties manage congregational conflict that may arise and shall
seek outside help in doing so if necessary.

The Committee shall be elected by the Council in consultation with the Pastor and shall report its
activities annually to the congregation. It shall be composed of three active church members. Each
member may serve two consecutive terms of three years, being eligible for reelection after an absence of
one year. The Committee shall name its own chairperson and meet at least three times a year.

Section Two: Nominating Committee

A Nominating Committee of three members shall be elected each year at the Annual Report Business
meeting of the Church. They shall be nominated by the Church Council. They shall take office
immediately and shall serve until their successors are elected. When possible, two members shall carry
over from the previous year. No member shall serve more than three consecutive years. The Pastor and
the Moderator shall consult with the Committee.

It shall be the duty of the Committee to nominate any positions that become vacant during the year.
Ministry Teams, upon mid-term vacancy of their membership shall themselves secure members to fill the
vacant term.

All officers of the Church will be members in good standing.
Tasks Forces/Task Groups

Ministry Teams and/or Staff may appoint committees or task forces to perform a time limited ministry. Such Task Forces will work under the authority of and report to a related standing Ministry Team or Staff person.

ARTICLE XI: Amendments

Section One: How to Amend

These by-laws may be amended at any business meeting of the Church by a two-thirds vote of those present, provided a written copy of the proposed amendment has been mailed to the Church membership or read from the pulpit or posted on the bulletin board of the Church at least two weeks prior to said meeting.

Section Two: Review

These by-laws shall be reviewed by the Church at least every five years.
FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2019 (Last year without influences of COVID 19)

Our operating budget for 2019 totals $155,610. 5% of this total is our goal in support of mission work. The congregation usually surpasses these goals. About 30 pledge units provide 73% of our income with building use fees contributing about 10%. The remaining 17% comes from designated gifts, mission offerings and fundraisers.

Disbursements are divided as follows: Church Home $38,645 (25%), Pastoral Ministry $68,500 (44%), Worship and Service $38,015 (24%), Christian Education $3,250 (2%), and Missions $7,200 (5%). Mission goals for the year include United Missions Giving of $4,400, $600 each for America for Christ, One Great Hour of Sharing, World Mission Offering and Retired Ministers and Missionaries. Local groups and Africa missions are also addressed but often with special offerings.