

Venice Bible Church Church Organization

Section 1

As an Elder led church, the administrative control of the church shall be vested in the members of the church acting through an Elder Board. The “VBC Elder Board Organization Chart” will be maintained in the policy manual.

Section 2. – Elders

The Elders shall shepherd and lead the church, teach the Word, encourage those who are hurting, protect the church from false teachers and divisions, and exhort and admonish the church body in sound doctrine. As shepherds, the Elders are to protect, feed, lead, and care for the church and ensure that the church’s purposes and objectives are met. They shall assist, when called upon, in administering the ordinances and preaching the Word of God.

Qualifications:

1. A candidate shall satisfy the Biblical qualifications of an Elder listed in 1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and be willing to serve in the manner found in 1 Peter 5:1-3.
2. In addition to the Biblical qualifications required for an Elder, the prospective Elder shall also have “proven” his abilities in ministry at VBC as a small group leader, Bible teacher, Team chairman, pastoral staff member, or any other leadership role in an approved ministry.
3. Any man aspiring to the office of Elder at VBC shall be required to complete the Leadership Training Program.
4. The candidate must have the ability to defend the doctrine of VBC and effectively teach the Bible.
5. The candidate for Elder shall have been a member in good standing of VBC for a minimum of two consecutive years.

Approval:

6. The candidate shall submit his request for consideration in writing to the Chairman of the Elder Board for review and examination by the Elder Board.
7. The candidate shall be unanimously approved by the Elder Board.
8. After approval by the Board of Elders that the candidate is qualified in accordance with (1) through (5) above, the candidate’s name shall be submitted to the congregation for four consecutive weeks prior to a Quarterly Business Meeting. The candidate’s written testimony and qualifications shall then be made available to the congregation.
9. If objections arise regarding the candidate’s qualifications or character, they must be submitted to the Elder Board in writing and signed by the party making the objections stating why they do not believe the candidate should be allowed to serve as an Elder. The Board of Elders shall investigate the objections and determine if the candidate’s name should be withdrawn, and notify the objecting individual of the Elder Board’s decision. If the Board of Elders unanimously determines that the objections do not warrant withdrawal of the nomination, the candidate’s name shall remain for the congregation to vote on.
10. A candidate must receive two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast to be commissioned as an Elder.

Tenure:

There shall be no numerical limit to the number of qualified men who fill this position. Once a man is commissioned as an Elder, he shall be so recognized by VBC until such a time as he:

11. Submits written resignation.
12. Resigns his membership from VBC.
13. Is unable to continue meeting the Biblical qualifications found in 1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-3 as determined by the Elder Board.
14. Fails to minister to the body as outlined in the Elder Job Description contained in the VBC Policy Manual for a period of 6 months without approval by the Elder Board.

Elder Board:

15. The Elder Board shall be composed of a minimum of seven (7) elders, a minimum of six approved by VBC members plus the Senior Pastor. No more than thirty percent (30%) of the board may be from the Pastoral Staff.
16. The Elder Board shall elect annually from its members (excluding the Sr. Pastor) the following officers: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Recording Secretary.

Elder Board Responsibilities:

The Elder Board's responsibility and authority shall include the following:

17. The spiritual leadership and oversight of the ministries of the church.
18. The long term spiritual and strategic planning and vision for the church.
19. The development of leaders within the church. The Elder Board shall work with the Pastoral staff to select and equip individuals for the ministries of the church.
20. The Elders primary responsibility is to shepherd the congregation and attend to spiritual matters. They have oversight to see that the appropriate groups perform their duties for all legal, administrative (including policies and procedures) and fiscal affairs of the church. The Elder Board, as servant leaders, recognizing their accountability to the membership, is empowered to act on all matters on behalf of the church.
21. They are to communicate decisions to the membership at the Quarterly Business Meetings and other times as necessary.
22. They have responsibility for oversight of relationships with other churches and organizations.
23. They approve and oversee an annual budget.
24. They arrange for the financial records to be reviewed annually by a qualified CPA or professional audit team. Upon completion of the review, the auditor's written report shall be submitted to the Administrative Team and the Elder Board.
25. They shall take measures to assure that the church is following the By-Laws and church Policy. As needed, the Elder Board may delegate the task of revisions to the By-Laws to an ad-hoc committee.

Chairman of the Elder Board:

The Chairman of the Elder Board shall direct the work of the Elder Board and shall preside at the Congregational Meetings of the church. The Vice Chairman shall fulfill the duties of the Chairman during his absence.

The function of the Deacon is to assist the Elders in matters pertaining to the spiritual leadership of the church by assuming responsibility for the service and caring functions of the congregation.

Deacon Selection:

1. The Deacons shall present a prospective candidate to the Elder Board for review.
2. All candidates shall satisfy the Biblical qualifications for a Deacon listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13
3. Deacon candidates shall also have demonstrated abilities in serving and caring in a compassionate manner, have a heart for the welfare of people, have a commitment to confidentiality and know how to lead a person to salvation through Christ. Deacons also must be able to listen and exercise discernment.
4. Candidates shall have been a member of VBC for a minimum of one year.
5. Candidates will submit to a Deacon training process which includes completing a written application, and personal statement of faith; an interview with existing leaders; acknowledgement of agreement with and ability to explain Venice Bible Church's doctrinal position listed in Article III; and completion of an in-depth biblical study on Leadership.
6. After completing the above process, a candidate who desires to serve as a Deacon, and meets the qualifications listed for the office of Deacon shall be submitted to the Elder Board for final approval and then presented to the congregation for its approval.
7. A candidate must receive two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast to be commissioned as a Deacon.

Deacon Tenure:

8. There shall be no time limits on those persons who fill this position. Once a person is commissioned as a Deacon, he shall be so recognized by VBC until such time as he:
 - a. Submits written resignation from the office of Deacon.
 - b. Resigns membership from VBC.
 - c. Is unable to continue meeting the Biblical qualifications and/or the additional qualification as found in Deacon Selection (2) above.
 - d. Demonstrates character or conduct that is detrimental to the effectiveness of Deacon Responsibilities.

Deacon Team:

9. The Deacon Team shall be comprised of the number of Deacons required to serve the congregation as determined by the Elder Board.
10. The Deacon Team shall elect annually from its members the offices of Chairman and Secretary.

Deacon Duties:

The Deacons shall oversee the service and caring functions of the congregation as follows:

11. The Body Life Treasury.
12. Widows and others who ask the church for assistance.
13. A structure for visiting those who are sick and shut-in.
14. The Usher and Greeting Ministry.
15. Preparation for Communion Services.
16. The upkeep of the buildings and grounds belonging to Venice Bible Church.
17. Assist in providing transportation needs of those without means in the congregation to

and from Church services and meetings.

18. Assist the Pastoral staff when requested with regards to Baptism and church Membership.
19. Other Special Projects which may arise to assist the ministerial staff and elders in pursuing the mission of the Church.

Section 4 - Pastors

1. Senior Pastor: The Senior Pastor, as an Elder shall preach the Word of God, communicate the vision and provide leadership to enable the church to fulfill its purposes and meet its objectives, as defined in the By-Laws. Organizationally, he shall be responsible to the Elder Board and shall be accountable for the Pastoral staff.
2. Pastoral staff: The Pastoral staff shall assist the church in fulfilling its purpose and meeting its objectives, particularly in their areas of assigned responsibility. They shall assist, when called upon, in administering the ordinances and preaching the Word of God. Organizationally, Pastoral staff shall be directly supervised by the Senior Pastor. They shall lead those Ministry responsibilities as assigned.
3. The term "Pastoral Staff" shall include all pastors and other full time staff members that are assigned to a specific ministry.

Section 5 - Teams

1. The Elder Board shall establish Teams to facilitate the ministries and the administrative needs of the church, to assure that the purposes and objectives of the church are fulfilled. The Elder Board, at its discretion, may appoint ad-hoc committees to assist in fulfilling its responsibility. These ad-hoc committees shall be established for specific purposes and their members and chairperson are to be selected by the Elder Board. Ad-hoc committees shall be dissolved upon completion of their work.
2. Team members must be members of VBC. Membership on these Teams must be approved by the Elder Board. Membership on these Teams, excluding pastoral staff, shall not exceed three consecutive years followed by a minimum of one year sabbatical unless approved otherwise by the Elders. If a Team member resigns, the Elder Board and Church Clerk shall be notified.
3. The Elder Board shall assign an Elder to be responsible for each of these Teams. That Elder or his representative is expected to meet with the Team's chairman or to attend the Team meetings and to report Team activity to the Elder Board.
4. The Elder Board and the Senior Pastor or his Pastoral Staff representative is an ex-officio member of all Teams.
5. The Teams shall elect annually from their members a Chairperson and Secretary subject to Elder Board approval.
6. Minutes from Team meetings shall be provided to the Elder Board and Church Clerk.
7. The Team chairperson shall be responsible for coordination with the Administrative Team regarding budgets.
8. Teams shall submit written reports to the Church Clerk prior to the Annual Business Meeting. Each report shall detail the Team's work of the previous year, list the planned projected activities for the following year and list the Team members for the next year.

9. A Team member may be removed by the Elder Board for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Submits written resignation from the Team.
 - b. Resigns membership from VBC.
 - c. Reflects conduct or doctrine opposed to the church's doctrine and faith.
 - d. Is unable or fails to perform the tasks as assigned.
 - e. Demonstrates character or conduct that is deemed detrimental to the effectiveness of the Team.
10. All standards required for Team members apply also to all committee members.

Section 6 - Teams reporting to the Elder Board

1. Deacon Team: (see section 4)

Deacons shall meet with Elder Board on concerns, problems and issues related to the church as well as serve as a consultant to the Elder Board for new ideas and proposed changes.

2. Global Mission Team: This team shall consist of five or more members. It shall direct and administer the missions activities of the church including:

- a. Establish criteria for giving to mission activities and organizations;
- b. Select missionaries to support;
- c. Develop long range mission plans;
- d. Direct short term mission programs;
- e. Prepare budgets for giving to missions, under the guidance of the Administrative Team;
- f. Communicate regularly the mission vision and mission activities to the church; and
- g. Present mission reports at the Annual Business Meeting.

3. Administrative Team: This team shall consist of five or more members called Administrators. The Church Treasurer is automatically a member of the Administrative Team. An Elder from the Elder Board shall serve on the Administrative Team and shall be the liaison between the Elder Board and the Administrative Team. The Administrative Team shall select a chairman from its members. It shall direct and administer the administrative affairs of the church, including:

- a. The establishment of policies, procedures, systems and controls over all aspects of church administration, finance and accounting including receipts and disbursements of funds.
- b. The examination of the membership records annually.
- c. The preparation of ministry fund budgets.
- d. The preparation of capital budgets.
- e. The systems to control compliance with approved budgets.
- f. The preparation of financial reports and financial statements.
- g. The presentation of financial reports at each Quarterly Business Meeting and the Annual Business Meeting.
- h. The presentation for approval of the proposed annual budget to the membership.
- i. The recommendation to the Elders concerning staff pay, appropriate salary and benefit levels and developmental programs for the pastoral staff and all other employees of the church.

- j. The development, implementation and monitoring of the employee benefit programs.
- k. The assurance that the supervisor's performance appraisals for their individual staff members have been completed each year.

The Administrative Team shall develop the annual budget based upon written direction from the Elder Board which shall clearly state the ministry direction and priorities for the up-coming budget year. The proposed budget(s) shall be submitted for Elder Board approval or rejection, but not modification, prior to the Administrative Team presentation to the church membership. Budgets and revisions to budgets for all church activities must be reviewed by the Administrative Team. For the presented budget to be adopted, it must receive at least a 67% majority approval at the annual business meeting.

Section 7 - Team Leadership

1. All chairmen of Teams shall be approved annually by the Elder Board prior to the annual meeting.
2. A chairman may be removed by the Elder Board for the following reasons:
 - a. Submits written resignation from the Team.
 - b. Resigns membership from VBC.
 - c. Reflects conduct or doctrine opposed to the church's doctrine and faith.
 - d. Is unable or fails to perform the tasks as outlined in that Team's Job Description contained in the VBC Policy Manual.
 - e. Demonstrates character or conduct that is deemed detrimental to the effectiveness of the Team.

Section 8 - Church Treasurer

The Church Treasurer shall be selected by the Elder Board prior to the Annual Business Meeting and presented for approval by the membership. The Treasurer shall serve for one year and shall be responsible for receiving and disbursing all funds and shall maintain accounts under the direction of the Administrative Team and the Elder Board. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the true financial status of all funds entrusted to him/her at all times. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Administrative Team. It is understood that certain duties may be delegated to office staff of the church as approved by the Administrative Team.

Section 9 - Church Clerk

The Church Clerk shall be appointed by the Elder Board and shall keep a permanent record of all proceedings of the Elder Board and other church and Team meetings. The Clerk shall see that a permanent record is kept of admissions to membership, current membership status, baptisms, dedications, dismissals, letters of good standing, deaths, marriages, and shall conduct correspondence relating to the official affairs of the Elder Board and church. The Clerk shall see that all policy manuals are maintained and current. Certain duties maybe delegated to office staff as required.