

# **Slater Baptist Church**

## **Interim Leadership**

When a local church is without a pastor, it can be a time of frustration and confusion when it comes to “who is in charge?”. Slater Baptist Church has taken a couple steps to meet that challenge.

First, the Slater Baptist Church constitution states, “The Chairman, in the absence of the pastor(s), shall be responsible for the on-going ministries of the church.” (Article VI B. Deacons 5. Chairman b.).

Secondly, the deacons proposed the creation of a Transition Team to help shoulder the load of responsibility during the pastoral search since they constitute the pastoral search committee (Article VI A. The Pastor 2. His Call a.). This team of four would take care of pulpit supply (making sure there would be someone to speak at all public services), hospital and other visits, and other issues as they arise. The Transition Team is composed of Dick Gifford (Deacon Chairman), David Blazer and Joel Newman (Deacons), and Bob Schultz.

This proposal was presented to the church and accepted with no opposing votes at the annual business meeting on January 31, 2016.

At the first Transition Team meeting, Bob Schultz was voted to chair the Transition Team meetings.

At that same meeting, it was voted to have the Deacon Chairman determine if an issue would be handled by the Deacons or by the Transition Team.

Also, at that first meeting, Bob Schultz volunteered to make the hospital visits and David Blazer mentioned that he had a ministry among the senior members of the church consisting of visits and the Keenager Choir.

Phone calls to the church are transferred to a cell phone when no one is in the church to answer it. That cell phone is kept by someone on the Transition Team who will forward information to the appropriate person.

There is a trait of human nature that seems to equate authority with frequency of a person “taking charge” publically and privately. For example: announcements (David Blazer and Joel Newman), making visits (David Blazer and Bob Schultz), and responding to a variety of requests from members for practical help and advice (Joel Newman).

This division of labor in the local church is positive as it allows several people to use the spiritual gifts and talents God has given to them and does not “burn out” one person trying to do everything. It is important, however, to keep in mind that the “official” authority for ministry when there is no pastor resides with the Chairman of the Deacons.

Slater Baptist Church Deacons

May 2, 2016