



FIRST
BAPTIST
CHURCH
HALIFAX

Lay Ministers

Position Description

A cornerstone of Baptist identity is the concept of the *priesthood of all believers*. A priest is one who takes the world's needs to God and reflects Christ's presence to the world.¹ Baptists believe that every follower of Christ is called and equipped to serve as a priest within a faith community. While congregations call people to specific roles, including clergy, Baptists maintain that there is no hierarchy within the church.

Along with calling clergy, FBCH has a history of acknowledging the unique gifts of members within our local church who have pursued theological and practical ministry training, typically through a lay (non-clergy) study program. Traditionally, the congregation of FBCH has acknowledged the calling of these individuals by licensing them to minister within our congregation and local community setting.

The position of Lay Minister of First Baptist Church Halifax seeks to further recognize those who have pursued a unique calling within our congregation and who have completed a course of theological and practical ministry training. Typically, Lay Ministers pursue a specific ministry focus like visitation, connecting with the university community, teaching Bible within the congregation, and/or assisting with worship. The title, Lay Minister, is rooted in our Baptist tradition of recognizing the calling of clergy and laity alike.

Position and Term

This position carries the title of Lay Minister of First Baptist Church Halifax and is a volunteer (unpaid), part time position. Hours are to be determined by the individual Lay Minister. Those interested in serving the congregation in this way should consult with the Senior Minister and Diaconate about their interests.

Those serving as Lay Ministers will be approved by the congregation and renewed annually at the Congregation's Annual Meeting by: 1) recommendation to the congregation by the Diaconate; and 2) approval by the congregation.

In their first year, a Lay Minister will engage in regular feedback at three, six and twelve months and annually thereafter. The purpose of the feedback is to explore one's calling and how that calling fits with the needs of FBCH and our surrounding community.

¹ Rosalie Beck, et. al., *Beliefs Important to Baptists* (Baptistway, 2001) 145.

Reporting Relationship

Lay Ministers are called by and accountable to the Congregation. They work in partnership with the Diaconate, also appointed by the Congregation. Lay Ministers work under the guidance of the congregation's clergy to serve the spiritual needs of the Church.

Lay Ministers serve as members of the FBCH ministry team, working collaboratively with church staff, the Diaconate, and lay leaders.

Duties and Responsibilities

It is recognized that the duties and responsibilities will develop as opportunities present themselves and are unique to each individual serving in the role. Lay Ministers are encouraged to attend a monthly staff gathering to reflect on the work of the entire ministry team.