



NOTICE OF SENIOR/LEAD PASTORAL SEARCH FOR THE FIRST INSTITUTIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH IN THE CITY OF PHOENIX

The First Institutional Baptist Church is seeking a **Senior/Lead Pastor** to lead this traditional Baptist congregation of global esteem into the next phase of the 21st century.

After 48 years of faithful and visionary service, **Dr. Warren H. Stewart, Sr.** has announced he is retiring on June 30, 2025. At this pivotal moment in the 120-year history of First Institutional Baptist Church, the **Senior/Lead Pastor Search Committee** is embarking on a comprehensive search for a Senior/Lead Pastor to guide our world-renowned Baptist church into the 21st century.

Applicants must embody pastoral characteristics that are grounded in the tenets of the Black Baptist Church, have a deep-rooted biblical foundation in historical, theological, and socio-political consciousness, and exhibit a passionate commitment to social justice, as well as community and spiritual development of a wide-ranging member demographic. Since its inception, **First Institutional Baptist Church** has allowed God to lead, do, go and grow. And with that ministry work continues to speak throughout the Greater Phoenix area, and around the world.

Following the Civil War and the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, many now freed slaves headed west, seeking to build a better life. Baptist Missionary John B. Bell was sent to the Arizona Territory to minister and found that over time, one third of the cowboy population was African American. We know that some of the earliest members of our congregation came from the Southern and Eastern parts of the United States and joined Missionary Bell in the early 1900s. Their journey continued as they organized in downtown Phoenix in 1905, with just ten members, as a Sunday School class, to be known as Second Baptist Church.

Since our early days, **FIBC** has become a body of believers who are ***“Believing and Living, Going and Growing, Sharing and Caring, as Active Witnesses of the Kingdom of God on Earth”***. With evangelism and discipleship as our top priorities, we endeavor to fulfill the Great Commission of our loving and liberating Lord, Jesus Christ. The vision for **FIBC** is ***“Becoming a Discipling Fellowship through Evangelism and Emancipation”***. We spread the love and good news of Christ to all who believe, and work to set people free from whatever might be oppressing them and keeping them from becoming all that God created them to be.

The Church seeks a leader whose pastoral vision mirrors **First Institutional Baptist Church’s** mission to advance the Kingdom of God through its core values:

- **VALUE #1:** We model Jesus Christ in whom we believe and live through love.

- **VALUE #2:** We spread the Good News of Jesus Christ everywhere to whomever we interact in our circles of influence beginning at home.
- **VALUE #3:** We set people free through the good news of Jesus Christ from that which limits them from fulfilling the purposes God has for their lives.
- **VALUE #4:** We grow and mature as disciples of Jesus Christ the rest of our lives.
- **VALUE #5:** We share our resources beginning with ourselves and give to the Lord's work through the church and to those in need.

Our Values give birth to our **FIBC Strategy: “We Love Everybody, We Grow Individuals, We Share Christ, We Set People Free, and We Give Generously”!**

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE:

An ideal candidate exhibits a proven record of at least 3+ years of successful leadership over a Black Baptist Church of 500 or more members and a minimum of 3+ years of experience in direct staff supervision.

The candidate should have served directly under a Senior/Lead Pastor for a minimum of 3 years in significant capacity.

The candidate should be a licensed and ordained Gospel preacher coming from and/or having a working knowledge of being Baptist. Ordination should be preferably by a Baptist church, denomination, ministry or organization that is aligned with FIBC's Purpose, Vision, Values and Strategy.

The candidate's ideology must be anchored in the teachings of the Holy Bible, as well as in the African American historical experience, spirituality, consciousness, and culture. Specific qualifications include:

- Sound interpretation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the tradition of African American prophetic and pastoral preaching.
- Experience managing complex religious organizations, including oversight of affiliate and/or other non-profit community and development related entities, and serving in an ex-officio capacity on the boards of such entities. Current affiliates of The First Institutional Baptist Church of Phoenix, Arizona include:
 - **FIBCO Family Services, Inc.**
 - **Broadway House Corporation**
- Ability to lead within the framework of church by-laws.
- Skillful promotion of diverse theological convictions.
- Superior communication and elocution skills that reach various demographics.
- Superior Finance and Administrative Management acumen.
- Exhibit community, local, and national presence and engagement through association and board service.
- Exhibit firm commitment to institutional accountability and transparency.

- Extensive experience in working closely with clergy, staff, ministries and ministry leaders, to advance development and programmatic efficiency.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Candidate must be a baptized believer firmly committed to the purpose of, and dedicated to the total ministry of Jesus Christ.
- Candidate must be an ordained minister of the Baptist faith.
- Candidate must have Master of Divinity degree, and/or preferably, a Doctorate degree from accredited Theological Seminary.
- Candidate must have relevant Pastoral experience as Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor.
- Candidate must exhibit values of the church, professionally and personally.
- Candidate should be available July 1, 2025.

The First Institutional Baptist Church seeks a ministerial leader of unquestionable spiritual and moral integrity, and one who is of sound mind and character. The candidate must embrace traditional and contemporary forms of worship, and understand intergenerational and cultural nuances that are critical in continuing the positive trajectory of the church established 100+ years ago. The **Senior/Lead Pastor of First Institutional Baptist Church** is head of the Clergy and Ministerial staff, Administrative staff, Music Ministry staff, and church ministries. The **Senior/Lead Pastor** is accountable to the congregation through the **Deacons Ministry** and **Governance Council**, and adheres to the **First Institutional Baptist Church** official by-laws.

An applicant who does not meet the above criteria need not apply.

Interested candidates should send a letter of interest and application for consideration to searchcommittee@fibcaz.org.

The First Institutional Baptist Church, Senior/Lead Pastor Search Committee will correspond with inquiries through email only. Please note that no phone calls will be accepted for application questions.

Submissions must be received by **March 14, 2025**.

All materials sent to **The First Institutional Baptist Church Senior/Lead Pastor Search Committee** will be kept confidential, and are non-returnable to the applicant. No exceptions.