

Date: March 28, 2023

To: True Vine Missionary Baptist Church Deacon Board

From: Congregational members of True Vine Missionary Baptist Church

Dear Deacon Board:

It is with great sadness and concern that we write to you today on behalf of the congregation. It is evident that many members of our church have lost faith in your leadership, and we are writing to express our feelings.

Over the past several months, there have been numerous incidents that have caused concern and unrest within the congregation. Many members feel that their concerns have not been heard or taken seriously by the leadership, and that decisions are being made without proper consultation with the church body.

As leaders of our church, it is your responsibility to provide spiritual guidance and support to the congregation. However, recent actions and decisions have led many to question your ability to fulfill this role. Some members feel that the leadership has become detached from the needs of the congregation and is more focused on personal agendas. When leaders exhibit an excessive sense of self-importance and refuse to listen to the opinions and concerns of others, it can create a culture of fear and intimidation. This can lead to a lack of transparency and accountability, as well as a disconnection between leaders and their congregations. Additionally, prideful hubris can lead to a failure to address issues within the church, as leaders may believe they are above criticism or questioning. This can ultimately damage the reputation of the church and undermine its mission, as well as lead to the loss of members who feel disillusioned or betrayed.

It is important that the leadership of our church be transparent, accountable, and responsive to the needs of the congregation. As members of this church, we expect our leaders to lead with integrity, honesty, and compassion.

Regrettably, the current leadership has failed to meet our expectations and has lost our faith in their ability to lead effectively. Despite our hopes and optimism, their actions and decisions have left us disappointed and disillusioned. After careful consideration, we believe that there is no other course of action but to elect new leadership that will bring a fresh perspective and a renewed sense of purpose to the challenges we face. We must move forward with determination and courage, confident that we can find leaders who will restore our confidence and guide us towards a brighter future.

This letter serves as notification that a special meeting was held at Truevine Missionary Baptist Church (TVMBC) on March 27th, 2023, at 6 PM in the church's sanctuary. The meeting had been called by a group of at least **60 TVMBC members, constituting a quorum**, and was announced by Deacon Dave Coaty during a church service on March 19th, 2023.

The ability of members of a church to call a special meeting without the approval of the church's authority is permissible when it follows the specifics bylaws and governing documents of the church.

The meeting was called (and announced) by Deacon Dave Coaty who serves as a co-chair of the Deacon Board.

Roman number IX: CHURCH MEETINGS (verbatim according to the constitutional bylaws of TVMBC)

Section 3: Special Business Meetings reads: “Specially called meetings may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one (1) week notice must be given for the specially called meeting.”

Section 4: Notice of Called Meetings reads: “Notice of all specially called of the church shall be given by announcement one (1) week prior to the meeting, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical at the pastor’s discretion.”

Section 5: Quorum reads: “The quorum consists of ten percent (10%) of the total membership provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.”

At the meeting, several motions were proposed, and a vote was taken to approve changes to the leadership of TVMBC, based on the majority. The list of motions, along with the number of votes each motion received, is provided below. Attached are the minutes, which include the names of the church members who made and seconded each motion, as well as the corresponding vote counts for each motion. The transcript will also include points of discussions that were made for each motion following the Robert’s Rules of Order.

A motion was proposed by Ms. Stephanie Ford and second by Mr. Steve Chark to dismiss Deacons Jeffery Hall, Charlie Taylor, and Marvin Crawford from their positions on the Deacon Board and request that they return their church keys. The motion received 60 affirmative votes and 2 opposing votes, resulting in its passage by majority vote. *(Please find a transcript of the meeting minutes attached.)*

It was also voted unanimously to move Deacon Dave Coaty to the Chair of Deacons

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Steve Chark and second by Ms. Bernadette Piper to remove Attorney Tammy Brown as the attorney for TVMBC. The motion received 60 affirmative votes with 1 vote opposing, resulting in it’s passage by majority vote. *(Please find a transcript of the meeting minutes attached.)*

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Fred Washington and seconded by Mr. Steve Chark to remove Deacon Charlie Taylor and the Henrys from the right and ability to sign checks for TVMBC and to add Deacon Dave Coaty and Mr. O’bern Davis as the new authorized signatures. The motion received 62 affirmative votes and 1 opposing vote, resulting in it’s passing by majority vote. *(Please find a transcript of the meeting minutes attached.)*

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia Wilkins and seconded by Ms. Diane Clark Stephens to remove Ms. Barbara Glasper as a Deaconess from TVMBC. The motion received 59 affirmative votes with 3 votes opposing, resulting in it’s passing by majority vote. *(Please find a transcript of the meeting minutes attached.)*

Motion:

A motion was Mr. Garcia Wilkins and seconded by Ms. Bernadette Piper to pay Mr. Stephen Spurgeon's attorney fees. The motion received 60 affirmative votes with 1 opposing vote, resulting in it's passing by majority vote. *(Please find a transcript of the meeting minutes attached.)*

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Mary Short and seconded by Mr. Jonathan Davidson to nominate Rev. Wilfred Gallien, Jr. as a senior pastoral candidate for TVMBC. The motion received 62 affirmative votes with no opposing votes, resulting in it's passing by majority vote. It was agreed that an announcement will be made at least one (1) week before voting on his election to take place *(Please find a transcript of the meeting minutes attached.)*

Motion:

A motion was made by Dr. Francis Powell and seconded by Mr. Steve Chark to not accept the results of the previous election held by TVMBC due to the fact that it was held fraudulently and in contempt of court by not following it's constitutional bylaws. The motion received 62 affirmative votes with no opposing vote, resulting in it's passing my majority vote. *(Please find a transcript of the meeting minutes attached.)*

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Diane Stephens and seconded by Mr. Brian Jackson to Barbara Glasper from the "One Call" and add Ms. Stephanie Ford to have access to the "One Call." The motion received 63 votes in the affirmative with no opposing votes. The motion passed by majority vote. *(Please find a transcript of the meeting minutes attached.)*

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Brian Jackson and seconded by Ms. Diane Stephens to have the election for the new senior pastor for TVMBC to be held April 3rd, 2023 from 10am until 8pm. The motion received 63 affirmative votes with no opposing. The motion passed by majority vote. *(Please find a transcript of the meeting minutes attached.)*

Motion:

A motion was made by Ms. Mary Short and seconded by Mr. Brian Jackson to pay the attorney fees for Ms. Tammy Brown. The motion received 41 votes in the affirmative with 6 opposing votes. The motion passed by majority vote. *(Please find a transcript of the meeting minutes attached.)*

The instruction in Matthew 18:15-16 is to settle disputes privately and seek help if necessary. Our intention was never to be confrontational. Despite silently observing for over a year, we have witnessed TVMBC's current leadership making unilateral and autocratic decisions without regard for the members' opinions. TVMBC does not solely belong to a select few members, but rather the entire church body. The contents of this letter clearly indicate that the members of TVMBC have spoken.

May God bless and keep all of us during this difficult time!

