Types of Figures of Speech

Classifications: (adapted from notes by Dr. Allen P. Ross, adapted from Bullinger)
Note that this list includes many things not commonly considered figures of speech. This list is based on a broader idea of a figure of speech being anything that departs from an ordinary way of speaking.

1) **Simile** ("like" or "as") Ps 1:3
2) **Metaphor** (representation) Ps 84:12
3) **Hypocatastasis** (implied metaphor) Ps 22:17
4) **Parable** (extended simile intended to teach a lesson)
5) **Allegory** (extended metaphor) Isa 5:1-7
6) **Personification** (investing non-human objects with human qualities) Joel 1:10
7) **Anthropomorphism** (comparing God to some corporeal aspect of a human) Ps 11:4
8) **Zoomorphism** (comparing people or God to animals or parts of animals) Ps 63:8
9) **Proverb** (a brief, witty statement concerning the general truth of life) Ezek 18:2
10) **Idiom** (figures of speech that become so regular as to be a major part of the language)
11) **Metonymy** (change the word for an object with another word that has a close relationship) Deut 17:6; Ps 74:15; Isa 38:18; Gen 42:38
12) **Synecdoche** (exchange of one idea for another connected idea, usually a part for the whole, or the whole for a part) Isa 40:5; Ps 44:7; Jn 12:19; Gen 22:17
13) **Merism** (use of two opposite statements for the whole) Ps 139:2
14) **Hendiadys** (use of to coordinate terms for one idea) Gen 3:16
15) **Euphemism** (substituting an inappropriate/offensive for a more appropriate/inoffensive one) “Adam knew his wife”
16) **Apostrophe** (Turning aside of direct subject matter to address another) Ps 6:9
17) **Type** (a version of predictive prophecy that works through prefigured illustrations) Ps 22:2
18) **Symbol** (material object that represents some truth or idea) Isa 42:6
19) **Irony** (expression in a form that conveys its opposite) Deut 32:32
20) **Chleuasmos** (mocking) Ps 2:4
21) **Maledictio** (expressing feelings in a way that calls down divine judgment) Ps 109
22) **Parallelism** (correspondence of one verse or line with another)
23) **Repetition** (expressing intense emotion or other ideas by repeating words or phrases)
24) **Paronomaisa** (repetition of similar sounding words, usually only noticeable in original language) Gen 1:2
25) **Acrostic** (repetition of same or successive letters) Ps 119
26) **Inclusio** (when a unit begins and ends with the same word/phrase to frame an idea)
27) **Hyperbole** (exaggerated terms for emphasis) Deut 1:28
28) **Ellipsis** (omission of a word, usually in poetry)
29) **Aposiopesis** (sudden silence) Ps 6:3
30) **Rhetorical Question** (asking a question without expecting an answer) Gen 18:14
31) **Meiosis** (belittling one thing to magnify another) Num 13:33
32) **Tapeinosis** (lessening of a thing in order to increase it) Ps 51:19