

**Bylaws to the Constitution
of
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Huntsville, Alabama**

1.0 Introduction: “The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4.11). This document describes the functions, duties, and responsibilities for those positions defined in the constitution.

2.0 Elected Officers:

2.1 Elders: (I Peter 5.1-11) The Elders shall promote the growth and welfare of the church; give spiritual oversight to the life of the congregation; actively promote evangelism of the church; meet regularly as a group; give thoughtful consideration to policies of the church that will enable it to fulfill its complete mission; encourage by example and work the missionary, evangelistic, educational, and stewardship responsibilities of the church: share Mission Family leadership responsibility with a Convener, members of the Diaconate, serve at the Lord’s Table; and perform such duties as required. The Elders shall conduct ministerial evaluations at least annually and report them to the Personnel Committee.

2.2 Diaconate: (Mark 10.43-45, Luke 22.26-27) The Diaconate shall cooperate with the Elders to promote the growth and welfare of the congregation; actively promote evangelism of the church; provide leadership for care given to members of the Mission Family, assist in financial canvasses, visitation projects, and preparation of candidates for baptism; give counsel and service in the business matters and the program activities of the congregation; cooperate in ministering to the needy; share Mission Family leadership responsibility with an Elder, and a Convener, and serve as voting members of the Board and report business of the Board to their Mission Family as well as perform other duties as required.

2.3 Convener: The Conveners shall cooperate with the Elders and Diaconate to promote the growth and welfare of the congregation; actively promote evangelism of the church; provide primary leadership for the Mission Family; meet with other Conveners regularly as a group; give counsel and direction in the program activities of the congregation; share Mission Family leadership responsibility with an Elder, and members of the Diaconate, and perform other duties as required.

2.4. Representatives to the Board: The Mission Family Members elect two representatives to the Board to serve each Mission Family from the Diaconate . At least one (1) representative from each Mission Family shall be present to constitute a quorum. If either elected deacon cannot attend, he/she is responsible for getting a representative form the MF leadership.

2.5 Trustee: The Trustees shall perform those duties as set out in Alabama law. Duties shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Execution of deeds.
- (b) Execution of mortgages.
- (c) Develop, foster and manage a plan for receiving, investing, and dispersing gifts, bequests, annuities, trusts, etc.
- (d) Report to the Board quarterly.

2.6 Financial Secretary: (Nehemiah 12.44) The Financial Secretary shall receive and make record of all funds and arrange for deposit in the proper church accounts. The Financial Secretary shall serve as a member of the Stewardship/Finance Committee.

2.7 Assistant Financial Secretaries (2): (Nehemiah 12.44) The Assistant Financial Secretaries shall assist the Financial Secretary and assume the duties of the Financial Secretary in his/her absences.

2.8 Church Treasurer: The Church Treasurer shall disburse all funds of the church according to authority designated by the Board; keep books showing monies drawn from the budget, designated, and special funds; serve as a member of the Stewardship/Finance Committee; and report monthly to the Board.

2.9 Assistant Church Treasurer: The Assistant Church Treasurer shall assist the Church Treasurer and assume the duties of the Church Treasurer in his/her absence.

2.10 Moderator: The Moderator of the Board shall fulfill the usual duties of such an office, call to order and preside at all regular or special business meetings of the Board and of the membership. The Moderator shall appoint a secretary, parliamentarian, chairs of committees and Task Groups with the assistance of the Vice Moderator.

2.11 Vice-Moderator: The Vice-Moderator of the Board shall fulfill the usual duties of such an office, call to order and preside at all regular or special business meetings of the Board and of the membership in the absence of the Moderator. The Vice Moderator shall serve as Long Range Committee chair, and as needed, serve as chair of the Ad hoc Constitution/Bylaws committee.

3.0 Board:

(a) Meetings shall be held monthly on a day to be decided by the new Board.

(b) Special meetings shall be called when the Moderator deems it necessary.

(c) The Secretary of the Board shall attend and keep minutes of all Board meetings and meetings of the membership. Additional duties of the secretary include: Take minutes and attendance of Cabinet, Congregational, and Board meetings. Send draft of minutes to Moderator for review & editing. Congregational minutes will be posted & filed within ten (10) days of the meeting. The secretary shall send edited minutes of Board meetings [by email] to the Board one (1) week before the scheduled Board meeting and shall keep two (2) copies of the corrected minutes and reports for archives of the church.

3.1 Board Duties: Duties of the Board shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Receive periodic reports from the Task Groups, Early Childhood Ministries, Trustees, and Officers, all Committees, other ministries and auxiliary groups as appropriate.

(b) Approve the discharging or permanent hiring of persons for non-ministerial staff (positions that are directly related to worship or the spiritual welfare of the Membership (this includes, but is not limited to, Director of Music, Organist, and Pianist.)

- (c) Oversee the budget and expenditures of the Church on a monthly basis. Adjustments may be limited by specific instructions of the membership.
- (d) Establish the number of Mission Families, Elders, and Members of the Diaconate, in February of each election year at least two (2) months before the Congregational meeting to elect officers.

4.0 Mission Family: The Mission Family is the major nurturing arm of the church and shall function under the leadership of the Mission Family Coordinator, who shall give information, advice, and guidance to Mission Families. The Mission Family Coordinator is appointed by the Moderator. The Leadership Team in each Mission Family shall work together to accomplish its goals, including:

- (a) welcoming new members, providing them with information about the congregation and nurturing them as they find places to serve in the church family
- (b) celebrating births and assisting bereaved families as needed
- (c) tending to the needs of those who are ill or elderly
- (d) encouraging closer relationships among MF members through regular get-togethers
- (e) taking regular turns to serve communion and arrange the coffee time.

5.0 Task Groups: (Ephesians 4.11) The ministries of the church shall be planned and directed by Task Groups in accordance with the church's Mission Statement. The following Task Groups shall be formed:

- (a) Christian Education
- (b) Community Outreach
- (c) Evangelism
- (d) Habitat for Humanity
- (e) Hospitality
- (f) World Outreach
- (g) Youth

All activities of the Task Groups are subject to the direction of the Board and the budget established by the membership. The Task Groups are to function in cooperation with the ministerial staff. The Chair of each of the Task Groups shall be appointed by the Moderator of the Board. No chair shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms as the Chair of the same Task Group. The Chair of each Task Group shall recruit membership in sufficient number to accomplish its mission and organize immediately on appointment. Each Task Group shall:

- (a) Provide an annual budget request to the Stewardship/Finance Committee.
- (b) Make timely reports (at least quarterly) to the Board so that everyone is clear about the work of the group.
- (c) Coordinate activities with Mission Families.

5.1 Christian Education: (Deuteronomy 6.1-3, Mark 4.1-2a, 10.13-16, Acts 2.42) It shall be the purpose of this Task Group to develop and carry out an effective program of religious education for the church in keeping with the general objectives of Christian education. This program shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Church School
- (b) Vacation Bible School
- (c) Leadership education
- (d) Distribution of Christian literature
- (e) Mid-week educational projects
- (f) Fostering Christian home life
- (g) Providing employee performance information to the Personnel Committee

5.2 Community Outreach: (Matthew 25.34-40) It shall be the purpose of this Task Group to create and foster the local social conscience within the church and to lead in planning and administering the local social work of the membership.

5.3 Evangelism: (Matthew 5.14-16, 28.19-20) Evangelism is living out Jesus' Great Commission of Matthew 28:19 to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...." Bringing someone to Jesus Christ is a calling for church members individually but God's faith community at large can strengthen it. It shall be the purpose of the Evangelism Task Group to support such efforts by:

- (a) Coordinating strategic planning.
- (b) Visitation and calling training.
- (c) Advertising, press releases, and public relations.
- (d) Special promotional events.
- (e) Securing and disbursement of information and promotional literature.

The task group will assist the ministers and member care coordinator in identifying worship guests and member prospects and following through with personal contacts.

5.4 World Outreach: (Matthew 25.34-40) It shall be the purpose of this Task Group to create and foster a world vision within the church and to lead in planning and administering the world work program of the membership. It shall promote the six (6) Special Offerings through out the Church year.

5.5 Habitat for Humanity: (II Corinthians 5.1) It shall be the purpose of this Task Group to provide leadership for our involvement on Habitat projects.

5.6 Hospitality: (Genesis 18.1-5, Acts 2.42, I Peter 4.8-11) It shall be the purpose of this Task Group to plan, budget, and implement ways to welcome with genuine interest and Christian fellowship all persons who enter First Christian Church. This activity shall include:

- (a) Commons Time coordination.
- (b) Church-wide events such as fellowship dinners, etc.

5.7 Youth: (Mark 10.13-16) It shall be the purpose of this Task Group to provide oversight, coordination, publicity, planning, and overall support to all youth programs. These include Celebrate, Chi Rho, and Christian Youth Fellowship, Youth Choirs and other youth programs (including supporting parent programs). The Youth Task Group shall work in close coordination with the ministers associated with youth program activities.

6.0 Committees:

6.1 Long Range Planning: The Moderator of the Board shall appoint at least one (1) new member to the Long Range Planning Committee each year for a three (3) year term. The Vice Moderator shall serve as chair of this committee. The function of the Long-Range Planning Committee shall be to provide an overall vision for the congregation. Duties of the Long-Range Planning Committee shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Annually updating ten (10) year visions.
- (b) Developing and maintaining a detailed three (3) year plan that shall be presented to the Board in February of each year.
- (c) Developing a master plan for use of all available land and facilities.
- (d) Work with the minister(s) in Long Range planning

6.2 Nominating: The Moderator of the Board shall appoint the Chair and no less than five (5) and no more than eight (8) members to the Nominating Committee to serve a term of two (2) years. A majority of the committee shall be current elected officers. The duties of the Nominating Committee shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Obtaining suggestions from the congregation for nominees at least thirty days prior to the annual election meeting.
- (b) Considering qualifications.
- (c) Securing consent of the nominees after informing them of the duties of the office.
- (d) Presenting a slate of nominees to the Board for approval to go to the membership.
- (e) Should a vacancy occur, presenting nominees to the Board in accordance with paragraph 3.10 of the *Constitution*.

6.3 Personnel: The Personnel Committee shall consist of six (6) members. The Moderator of the Board shall appoint two (2) members to the Personnel Committee each year for each to serve a 3-year term. The function of the Personnel Committee shall be a liaison among the church membership, the ministers, and other church employees. The duties of the Personnel Committee shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Evaluating staffing levels and organizational efficiency.
- (b) Developing and revising job descriptions and personnel policies as need to be approved by the Board. The Senior Minister should review job descriptions before they are presented to the Board.
- (c) Conducting annual interviews with each non-ministerial staff member, providing staff an opportunity to express themselves concerning their job.
- (d) Making annual recommendations to the Stewardship/Finance Committee regarding salary revisions of non-ministerial staff persons after consulting with the Senior Minister regarding performance review.

(e) Making annual recommendations to the Stewardship/Finance Committee regarding salary and benefits revisions for ministers after consulting with the Elders.

6.4 Property: (Genesis 1.28-31a, Psalm 127.1a) It shall be the purpose of this Committee to care for all properties of the church. This shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Keeping all property and equipment in proper condition.
- (b) Studying needs and make recommendations for improvements.
- (c) Superintending the work of the custodian and maintenance personnel.
- (d) Caring for the grounds of the church.
- (e) Planning and supervising of workdays at the church.
- (f) Providing employee performance information to the Personnel Committee.

6.5 Stewardship/Finance: (Deuteronomy 26.1-2, Matthew 6.19-21, 25-33) It shall be the purpose of this Committee to develop within the membership an understanding of the full meaning of Christian stewardship. Duties shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Supervising the preparation and subscribing of the church budget.
- (b) Keeping accurate records.
- (c) Providing for an annual review of expenditures.
- (d) Directing the annual financial campaign.
- (e) Encouraging and assisting in establishing testamentary gifts.
- (f) Providing opportunities for major gifts.
- (g) Providing materials for stewardship education.

6.6 Worship: (Psalm 100, I Corinthians 14.26, Revelation 19) It shall be the purpose of this Committee to lead the membership in a genuine worship and to enrich personal and family devotional life. This activity shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) All aspects of worship.
- (b) Special worship events. Appoint with assistance of the Senior Minister, co-chairs for Advent, Easter, and other special worship services as needed. Meet regularly to plan services with the Minister of Music and other Ministers.
- (c) Providing devotional materials.
- (d) Music & drama events.
- (e) Providing employee performance information to the Personnel Committee.

The Worship Committee shall conduct an annual survey among the Congregation regarding members' satisfaction with individual components and practices of worship, and the Committee shall report its findings along with recommendations as indicated by the surveys to improve the worship experience to the Board.

6.7 Pastoral Relations Committee: Each Minister shall choose three to eight members of the church to serve on this committee. They shall meet monthly for the purpose of supporting the Minister. If issues arise that require special action, the members of the committee shall interact with the Elders, and all will work together for a resolution.

6.8 Ad Hoc Committees: The Moderator of the Board may appoint ad hoc committees and the Chairs thereof. Such committees shall be temporary and shall automatically terminate upon the end of the term of the Moderator who appointed the committee.

7.0 Auxiliary Organizations:

- (a) The purpose and responsibilities of each group (such as Early Childhood Ministries or Christian Women's Ministries, Christian Men's Ministries) shall be outlined in a constitution, bylaws, or plans of procedures of each respective group.
- (b) All organizations shall cooperate with the overall program of the church and report at least quarterly to the Board or as otherwise requested.
- (c) For organizations with paid Directors, the Church Board shall be responsible for the permanent calling and discharge of the Director (as recommended by the organization's Board of Directors).

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