

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

BY-LAWS

PREAMBLE

These rules and regulations have grown out of a need for a method of procedure, and are not meant to affect the faith of any member of the congregation. The by-laws were prepared to facilitate the transaction of business by the Leadership Council and/or this congregation and are not a test of fellowship, creed, or discipline.

I. CHURCH YEAR

The church year shall begin January 1 of each calendar year.

II. OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

A. Election and Term of Office

With the exception of the moderator and immediate past moderator, the following officers shall be elected by the church from its membership at its annual business meeting for the term designated below or until such time as a successor assumes office.

1. The moderator-elect for the previous year shall assume the office of moderator for a term of one year and shall not be eligible for a consecutive term of office.
2. The moderator for the previous year shall assume the office of immediate past moderator for a term of one year and shall not be eligible for a consecutive term of office.
3. The moderator-elect of the congregation will be elected for one year.
4. The secretary of the congregation, who shall also serve as secretary of the Leadership Council for one year, with the privilege of being re-elected.
5. The treasurer of the congregation, who shall also serve as trustee and as treasurer and financial secretary of the Leadership Council for one year, with the privilege of being re-elected.

Nomination and election shall be consistent with the procedure set forth in Section VI of these by-laws.

B. Vacancy

In the event an officer of the Leadership Council cannot continue in office, the moderator shall call a meeting of the nominating committee. The committee shall present its recommendation to the Leadership Council for approval and appointment for the remainder of the unexpired term.

C. Qualifications

Officers must be members of the congregation. Through regular attendance at church services and functions, officers must be active in the life of the congregation.

D. Responsibilities of Officers

The moderator shall preside at all stated and specially called meetings of the congregation and Leadership Council and perform such other duties normally associated with the office of moderator. The moderator shall also serve as trustee of the congregation.

The moderator-elect shall support the moderator, preside in his/her absence at meetings of the congregation or Leadership Council and perform other duties normally associated with the office of moderator-elect. If the moderator is unable to complete his/her elected term, the moderator-elect shall automatically succeed him/her for the remainder of the church year and then fulfill his/her own elected term of office.

The immediate past moderator shall be a member of the Leadership Council and shall serve as trustee of the congregation. The immediate past moderator will perform such other duties as may be authorized or requested by the moderator and/or Leadership Council.

The secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the Leadership Council and congregation. Minutes will be reviewed, approved by their respective bodies, and filed in the church office.

The treasurer shall disburse all funds of the church according to the authority delegated by the Leadership Council. He/she will report on finances at each regular meeting of the Leadership Council and congregation, and give such other reports to the church as may be assigned. The treasurer shall also serve as trustee of the congregation.

III. LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

A. Membership

Membership of the Leadership Council shall be composed of the moderator, moderator-elect, secretary, and treasurer of the congregation, the immediate past moderator of the congregation, the chair or co-chair of the elders, the chair or co-chair of the diaconate, the chair or co-chair of Christian Action, the chair or co-chair of the Creative Palooza committee, and the chair or co-chair of Property.

The ministers employed by the church shall serve as ex-officio members, without vote, of the Leadership Council.

B. Authority

The Leadership Council shall perform its duties according to the authority granted in the constitution or otherwise delegated to it by the congregation. Reports of its actions shall be made to the congregation.

In keeping with the traditions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the ultimate authority of the church shall rest with the congregation. All organizations within the congregation shall be responsible to and report regularly to the Leadership Council and through it to the congregation.

Decisions and actions of the Leadership Council may be subject to review and approval by the congregation.

All meetings of the Leadership Council are open to the congregation except when dealing with confidential personnel matters.

Meetings of the Leadership Council and the congregation shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Revised. A simple majority of the members of the Leadership Council shall constitute a quorum. At least six votes in favor of a motion are required for a motion to pass.

C. Responsibilities

The Leadership Council shall conduct its affairs in accordance with the constitution and the by-laws of the congregation.

It shall be the duty of the Leadership Council to consider and approve general policies on behalf of the congregation, to periodically review the existing policies of the congregation and to transact the business of the congregation.

The Leadership Council shall be the contracting agent for the church.

The Leadership Council may establish committees and ministries as needed. Chairs of all committees and ministries may bring agenda items to the moderator for consideration at a Leadership Council meeting, in which case such chairs and appropriate members of the committee or ministry will be expected to attend the meeting and participate in the discussion. Members of the congregation may also bring agenda items to the moderator for consideration by the Leadership Council, in which case the member will be expected to attend the meeting and participate in the discussion.

The Leadership Council shall prepare the proposed annual budget of the congregation and recommend its approval, or approval with amendment, at the annual congregational meeting. Copies of the proposed budget shall be submitted to the congregation one week prior to the annual business meeting.

The Leadership Council shall transact the business of the church.

The Leadership Council shall approve all facilities use requests in accordance with church policy.

The Leadership Council shall also serve as the personnel committee for all paid church staff, including the director of Creative Palooza.

The Leadership Council shall be responsible for hiring paid staff members except for the senior minister, but including the director of Creative Palooza.

The Leadership Council shall be responsible for formulating written employment policies concerning paid personnel, such policies to include salaries, social security, sick leave, professional leave, vacations and annual performance review. The Leadership Council may periodically adjust staff salaries within budget allocations. The Leadership Council and senior minister shall administer the personnel policies formulated by the Leadership Council. All paid employees shall perform their duties under the direction and supervision of the Leadership Council and senior minister.

IV. BOARD OF ELDERS, DIACONATE, TRUSTEES

A. Election and Responsibilities of Elders

Each year the congregation shall elect from its members an appropriate number of elders.

The elders, in cooperation with the standing committees and ministries, shall promote the growth and welfare of the church and provide spiritual leadership to the members. The elders will minister to the bereaved, the sick and the homebound. The elders will give thoughtful consideration to the policies of the church and enable it to fulfill its mission. By regular attendance at church services and functions, sharing with the ministers in the conduct of their pastoral functions; serving at the Lord's Table; and performing such other duties as may be assigned, the elders will encourage by example and word the missionary, evangelical, educational and stewardship responsibilities of the church. The elders shall act as a pastoral relations committee for the senior minister, to support the senior minister and provide a regular channel of communication between the minister and the congregation, except that the pastor search committee may serve as the pastoral relations committee for a new pastor for up to one year from the employment start date.

The elders shall organize with a chairperson or co-chairs to discharge these duties and responsibilities.

B. Election and Responsibilities of the Diaconate

Each year, the congregation shall elect from its members an appropriate number of deacons.

An appropriate number of communion servers shall be procured to ensure the orderly distribution of communion each Sunday.

The diaconate shall cooperate with the standing committees and ministries and the elders in promoting the growth and welfare of the church; assist in the greeting and ushering of worshipers; be responsible for preparation and care of communion service; receive the offerings and distribute the elements of the Lord's Supper; minister to families in times of sickness or bereavement; give counsel and service in business affairs and activities of the church; and perform such other duties as may be assigned.

The diaconate shall organize with a chairperson or co-chairs to discharge these duties and responsibilities.

C. Responsibilities of Trustees

The moderator, treasurer and immediate past moderator are the trustees of the church and shall act as legal agents of the church in all business matters, under the direction of the Leadership Council and subject to the approval of the congregation. The trustees shall hold legal title to all church property and handle all business transactions related thereto; supervise all endowment and trust funds; and perform such duties as are required by North Carolina law.

D. Qualifications

The qualifications for elders and deacons shall be the same as described for the officers of the congregation in Section II C.

E. Vacancy

In the event that an elder or deacon cannot continue in his/her office, the moderator, in consultation with the appropriate chair of the elders or deacons and the senior minister, shall recommend

a replacement to the Leadership Council for approval and appointment for the remainder of the unexpired term.

V. SENIOR MINISTER

A. Responsibilities

The senior minister of the church shall provide spiritual leadership and encourage and support the church's mission and ministries. The minister will cooperate with moderator of the congregation and the Leadership Council to encourage orderly procedures in the life and work of the church in compliance with the congregation's constitution, by-laws, and the policies and procedures.

The senior minister shall lead Sunday and special worship services, providing a thought-provoking and interesting message relating faith to our daily lives. The senior minister shall conduct weddings and funerals for members as needed.

The senior minister shall advise and assist in selecting and training the congregation's leaders.

The senior minister will share direct supervision of paid staff members with the Leadership Council.

The senior minister shall visit sick and homebound members, and shall work with the elders and members to coordinate regular visitations.

The senior minister shall submit a report of his/her activities at each regular meeting of the Leadership Council.

The senior minister shall be an ex-officio member, without vote, of the Leadership Council, all ministries, all standing, operating and special committees and auxiliary groups within the congregation.

The senior minister will perform such other duties as may be set forth in the letter of call or otherwise established by the Leadership Council.

B. Selection, Terms of Employment, Resignation, and Dismissal

Selection of the senior minister must be in accordance with Article VI, Section B of the church constitution.

An agreement of employment setting forth the salary to be paid the minister and other conditions of the call shall be provided to the minister, with a copy filed in the church office and with the regional office.

The term of ministry shall be for an indefinite period and may be terminated by either the minister or the church upon ninety (90) days written notice.

Voluntary resignation of the senior minister must be in accordance with Article VI, Section C of the church constitution.

Dismissal of the senior minister must be in accordance with Article VI, Section C of the church constitution.

VI. NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

The nominating committee shall be composed of the moderator-elect, the chair of the elders, and the chair of the diaconate. In addition, the moderator-elect shall appoint two (2) members of the congregation who are not members of the Leadership Council. The moderator-elect shall chair this committee.

All suggestions for nominees shall be presented to the nominating committee no later than one (1) month prior to the annual business meeting. The committee shall then consider qualifications, secure the consent of the nominees and prepare a slate for each vacancy. The committee shall submit a nominee for each of the following positions: moderator-elect, secretary and treasurer of the congregation, elders, the diaconate, and the chairs of the standing operating committees and ministries.

The nominating committee shall report its nominations to the congregation one week before its annual business meeting.

At the annual meeting, any member of the church may make nominations from the floor provided the nominee consents and meets the qualifications of the office to which he/she is nominated. Nominees who receive a majority of the votes of those present and voting in the annual congregational business meeting shall be declared elected.

VII. OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES AND MINISTRIES

The Leadership Council shall establish committees and ministries as needed to support the mission of the church. The purpose and duties of the standing committees and ministries are described in the Appendix to these by-laws and may be changed at the discretion of the Leadership Council.

Committee and ministry chairs shall be elected by the congregation from its members at the annual business meeting in a manner consistent with Section VI of these by-laws. Committee and ministry chairs may choose their members, and members of the congregation may choose to serve.

In the event the chair of a standing operating committee or ministry cannot continue in his/her office, the moderator, in cooperation with the outgoing chair and the senior minister, shall recommend a replacement to the Leadership Council for approval and appointment for the remainder of the unexpired term.

VIII. CREATIVE PALOOZA MINISTRY

Creative Palooza is a mission of First Christian Church to provide after-school care and such other services as may be required to elementary and middle school students. The services may include overseeing homework, enrichment classes in various subjects, Children Worship & Wonder programs, and enrichment for autistic children, and other services.

The Director, who is hired and supervised by the Leadership Council, has responsibility for hiring and training teachers and other needed personnel, developing the curriculum, planning activities, and such other tasks as are required for the successful operation of the mission.

Creative Palooza is responsible for covering the expenses of its programs with its fees, including reimbursement to the church of the estimated utility costs of its operation. Its finances shall be kept in a separate account of the church out of which all expenses will be paid, including compensation of all paid

personnel, supplies, maintenance of the vans and pickup, insurance, and such other expenses as may be needed for the operation of the ministry. All accounting by the Creative Palooza ministry will be done in the ACS program integrated with the church program, and the church bookkeeper will issue any needed checks and prepare a monthly financial report for the Creative Palooza director and the Leadership Council.

IX. AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

The men, women, and children of the church may organize into groups such as the Christian Men's Fellowship, the Christian Women's Fellowship, and the Christian Youth Fellowship to further the mission of the church.

The purpose and responsibility of each group shall be outlined in its constitution, by-laws, or plan of procedure, which must be consistent with the church constitution, by-laws and mission and must be approved by the Leadership Council.

X. AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended at any congregational meeting by a majority vote of the members present and voting on the amendment. Written notice of the amendment with both the current provision and the proposed amendment shall be sent to the members of the congregation at least one week prior to the vote.

APPENDIX TO THE BY-LAWS

MINISTRIES AND OPERATING COMMITTEES OF FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The purpose and duties of the ministries and operating committees described in this Appendix may be changed at the discretion of the Leadership Council.

I. MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH

A. Worship Ministry

The purpose of the Worship Ministry, working with the ministerial staff, is to provide opportunities for effective and reverent corporate worship, and develop a strong personal and family devotional life within our congregation.

In order to achieve this purpose, the ministry is responsible (in coordination with the ministerial staff) for planning regular services of worship, special worship and/or prayer services. The ministry is also responsible for providing resources for individual and family devotional life.

It shall be organized with a chair or co-chairs and other leaders and subcommittees necessary to discharge its responsibilities.

B. Christian Education Ministry

The purpose of this ministry is to develop an effective program of religious education for the entire constituency of the church in keeping with the general objectives of Christian education.

It is responsible for planning and administering the total educational program of the church, including church school, youth activities, educational projects, leadership education, and distribution of Christian literature and fostering Christian home life. It shall also cooperate with other groups of the church in planning for education programs.

It shall be organized with a chair or co-chairs and other leaders and subcommittees necessary to discharge its responsibilities.

C. Christian Life Ministry

The purpose and responsibility of this ministry is to maintain close contact with the church membership and to promote the assimilation and development of new members into the church family.

To achieve this purpose, the ministry is responsible for gathering information from/about church members, including attendance records, talents and interests, and disseminating the information to the appropriate congregational groups. This ministry is also responsible for planning special events for the entire congregation, such as dinners, special studies, etc. These activities should provide opportunities for spiritual growth, inspiration, service and fellowship.

It shall be organized with a chair or co-chairs and other leaders and subcommittees necessary to discharge its responsibilities.

D. Christian Action Ministry

The purpose and responsibility of this ministry is to oversee the church's program of local relief and service by identifying and reporting community needs and issues to the congregation, promoting special offerings and enlisting volunteer service to work with community and church agencies where needed. This ministry is also responsible for fostering the world-wide mission of the church by educating the membership about and promoting the Basic Mission Finance budgeted and Special Offering Day gifts for this goal.

This ministry shall also oversee and coordinate volunteers, fundraising, and related mission activities conducted with partner programs, such as the Backpack Program and New Communion.

It shall be organized with a chair or co-chairs and other leaders and subcommittees necessary to discharge its responsibilities.

E. Creative Palooza Ministry

This purpose and responsibility of this ministry is to liaise with and provide support for the Creative Palooza Afterschool and Summer Camp ministry program of the church. It shall also promote

awareness in the congregation of the activities of Creative Palooza and encourage volunteers and support of this ministry in a variety of ways.

It shall be organized with a chair or co-chairs and other leaders and subcommittees necessary to discharge its responsibilities.

II. OPERATING COMMITTEES OF THE CHURCH

A. Stewardship and Finance Committee

The purpose and responsibility of this committee is to develop within the membership an understanding of the full meaning of Christian stewardship. It shall direct the financial program of the congregation to enhance spiritual growth in the church. It shall also promote awareness in the congregation of its stewardship responsibilities, promote stewardship education, supervise the preparation of the church budget, keep accurate records and encourage endowments for future development in the church and for outreach.

It shall be organized with a chair or co-chairs and other leaders and subcommittees necessary to discharge its responsibilities.

B. Property Committee

The purpose and responsibility of this committee is to keep all church property and equipment in proper condition, to study needs and make recommendations for improvements, to care for the grounds, including the memory garden, and, in cooperation with the Stewardship and Finance Committee and/or Leadership Council, to keep all church property adequately insured against loss, damage and liability.

It shall be organized with a chair or co-chairs and other leaders and subcommittees necessary to discharge its responsibilities.