## **First Christian Church of Rochester, Indiana**

## **Disciples of Christ**

## **By-laws**

# Name and Affiliation.

## The name of this congregation shall be First Christian Church of Rochester, Inc.

## First Christian Church of Rochester is affiliated with the denomination known as The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and is committed to the historic principles of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

# Membership

## Membership in this congregation is open to all of God's people who have joined by profession of faith in Jesus Christ and baptism traditionally by immersion or by transfer of membership from, or dual membership with, another congregation. Members are eligible to vote on all matters presented to the congregation, and are eligible to hold elective offices, appointive offices, and any other position in the congregation.

# Year and Annual Meeting.

## The church year will be a January 1st to December 31st fiscal year.

## The congregation shall meet annually no later than November 30th for the purpose of election of officers, adoption of budget, and any other business designated by the General Board.

# Officers of the Congregation

## Election and Term of Office. The following officers shall be elected by the congregation at its annual meeting for a term designated for each or until such a time as a successor is elected and assumes office: Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Assistant Financial Secretary.

## Qualifications. All elected officers must have been members of the congregation for at least six months. Officers must be active in the congregation's life and give evidence of seeking to grow in their own understanding and practice of the Christian life, to include:

### Conduct of one's life in the light of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

### Promote First Christian Church of Rochester and support the church's mission.

### Regular attendance in worship and at stated meetings of the congregation.

### A commitment to the financial support of the congregation and its outreach program.

## Responsibilities.

### The Chair shall:

preside at all meetings of the congregation and of the General Board.

work closely with the Senior Minister to lead the congregation.

call special meetings of the congregation as needed.

serve on the Executive Team.

serve as an ex-officio member of all ministry teams.

### b. The Vice-Chair shall:

preside, in the Chair's absence, at all functional and special meetings of the congregation and of the General Board.

serve on the Executive Team.

serve as an ex-officio member of all ministry teams.

### The Clerk shall:

keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the congregation, of the General Board, the Cabinet, and Executive Team.

keep all minutes and other important information on file in the church for the preservation of the policy and history of the church.

serve on the Executive Team.

### The Treasurer shall:

keep the church checking account.

make disbursements by check for items substantiated by written order from the Financial Secretary.

perform other duties that may be assigned by the General Board.

### The Financial Secretary shall:

maintain the general ledger of the church

prepare financial reports for the church board and congregation

be responsible for accounts payable

prepare and issue the vouchers to the Church Treasurer

in cooperation with Assistant Financial Secretary, count the weekly offerings and supervise the deposit.

### The Assistant Financial Secretary shall:

in order to preserve confidentiality and integrity of financial operations, receive and be responsible for monitoring pledges and payments of members and friends,

count all income, keep accurate record of source and amount, originals of which will be kept in a locked file on church premises.

deposit all income and provide treasurer with appropriate documentation.

make regular, written reports to the General Board of all income.

send a quarterly statement of giving to each contributor.

perform other duties that may be assigned by the General Board.

# General Board

## Membership

### Membership of the General Board shall be composed of the officers of the congregation, Elder leader, Deacon leader, Little Lambs Daycare leader, leaders of ministry teams, and representatives of major constituency groups of men, women, and youth. Two members shall be elected at large from the congregation.

### The Minister(s) of the congregation shall serve as member ex-officio with vote of the General Board.

## Election and Term.

### Board officers shall be elected to a term of one year at the annual congregational meeting.

### After serving as an elected officer for two consecutive one-year terms, no person shall be eligible for re-election for the same office until one year has elapsed, except in the case of Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Assistant Financial Secretary, which will not be subject to term limits.

### Persons nominated to fill vacancies on the board shall be elected by the General Board for the unexpired term of the office. Such an election will not affect that person's eligibility to serve two terms if elected.

## Authority

### The General Board shall perform its duties according to the authority granted in the by-laws or as delegated to it by the congregation.

### Recognizing the ultimate congregational authority of the church, the Board shall regularly report its actions to the membership.

### A quorum for the transaction of business by the General Board shall consist of twelve Board members.

### Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chair, Senior Minister, or by a signed petition of at least 20% of the membership of the Board. There shall be 5 days’ notice prior to all special board meetings, designating time, place, and subject(s) to be acted upon.

### Notice shall be by mail, or electronic mail at an email address, as is provided by the board member.

## Responsibilities

### The General Board shall conduct its affairs in harmony with the by-laws of the Church.

### The General Board shall be responsible for conducting the business affairs of the congregation and providing for the planning, coordination, resourcing, evaluation, and implementation of the work and activities of the congregation.

### The General Board shall establish ministry teams for the work of the congregation. The teams will include Worship, Evangelism, Adult Christian Education, Outreach, Stewardship, Membership, Finance, Children and Youth Christian Education and Pastoral Relations.

### The General Board will provide guidelines for the ministry teams' duties and responsibilities.

### The General Board may also combine or join ministry teams as recommended by the Minister or Chair.

### The Chair, Vice Chair and Senior Minister shall be ex-officio members of all ministry teams.

### The General Board shall establish, when necessary, a Pastoral Search Team for the purpose of securing a ministerial candidate or other clergy employees for the congregation's consideration and vote.

### The General Board shall establish special task forces as needed, defining their task.

### The General Board shall receive the proposed annual budget from the Finance Team for approval and submission to the congregation.

### The General Board shall meet at every month but July and December.

# Senior Minister

## Responsibilities

### The Senior Minister shall be the chief administrator of the congregation, and in cooperation with the Chair and the General Board, define the mission and direction of the church.

### The Senior Minister shall be an ex-officio member of all boards, ministry teams, task forces, and groups of the congregation.

### The Senior Minister shall hold the right to vote in all church matters.

### The Senior Minister must be ordained with full standing, rights, and privileges in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or another denomination holding mutual recognition.

### The Senior Minister shall fulfill the duties according to the letter of the Calling and Agreement.

### The Senior Minister shall meet regularly with the Pastoral Relations Team.

## Selection

### A Search Team of seven members shall be appointed by the Executive Team, not including the Senior Minister, and ratified by the General Board to serve during the entire time of the search process.

### Three of the seven members shall be members of the General Board when the Search Team is formed.

### The Search Team will utilize the counsel and services of the office of the Regional Minister of the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana.

### The Search Team shall recommend a prospective minister to the General Board.

### The General Board, at a stated or called meeting, must approve the candidate recommended by the Search Team by at least 75%. Upon approval, a recommendation supporting the candidate shall go to the congregation.

### The congregation, in a duly called meeting, must approve the recommendation of the General Board by at least 75% of the voting members present.

### Upon congregational approval, a Letter of Calling and Agreement, and a ministerial job description shall be extended to the Minister on behalf of the congregation by the General Board.

## Terms of Employment

### The Letter of Calling and Agreement shall set forth the initial salary and other benefits to be provided to the Minister.

### The terms of severance will be stated in the Letter of Calling and Agreement will be met in the event of termination.

### The term of ministry shall be for an indefinite period.

## Resignation or Termination.

### The Minister shall submit a letter of resignation to the General Board 60 days in advance, after consultation with the Moderator and the Elders.

### Should the Pastoral Evaluation Team consider seeking a termination of the Senior Minister it shall consult with the Regional Minister of the Christian Church of Indiana.

### Termination of the Minister's calling can only be enacted by a majority vote at a duly called congregational meeting. Prior to a vote for termination, a recommendation of resignation shall be discussed confidentially by the Pastoral Evaluation Team.

# Eldership and Deacons

## Election and Term of Office

### The number of members for Eldership shall be no fewer than 12 nor more than 18.

### The number of Deacons shall be no fewer than 30.

### The congregation, at its annual meeting, shall elect for terms of three years, Elders and Deacons.

### After serving for two terms of three years, each shall become ineligible for re­election until one year has elapsed.

### 'Junior' deacons will not fall under the term limits given above and, but will rather remain eligible until they graduate high school.

## Qualifications

### Qualifications for Elders and Deacons shall be the same as described for Officers above.

### In addition, Elders shall demonstrate spiritual maturity, which enhances the ministry of the church.

### Junior Deacons shall be high school students active in the life of the church, without regard to membership, and shall be elected each year for a one-year term.

## Responsibilities

### Elders shall be responsible for the spiritual leadership of the church, assisting the Minister in all areas of pastoral care, and presiding and assisting at the table.

### Deacons shall be responsible for communion preparation.

### They, will be in charge of greeting and ushering worshipers, distributing the Lord's Supper, receiving the offerings, and preparing candidates for baptism.

## Elders and Deacons Emeritus

### This is a position to honor and elect for life, Elders and Deacons who have displayed worthiness through example and service.

### Candidates for these positions will be recommended according to procedures developed by the respective groups.

### Emeritus servants will be welcomed at the meetings of the Elders and Deacons and may, according to their desire and ability, serve upon request of the current leadership.

# Nominating Team

## Membership.

### The Chair shall appoint a Nominating Team by the August Board Meeting to serve for a term of one year.

### The Nominating Team shall consist of two Elders, two Deacons and two representatives from the congregation who are not members of the General Board.

### No member shall be related to another member of the team.

## Responsibilities

### The Nominating Team shall submit a proposed slate of elders, deacons, at-large board members, and officers to the General Board for approval in writing at least four weeks prior to the annual meeting.

### The proposed slate shall be mailed to the congregation and be available on premises at least 14 days prior to the annual meeting.

### The Nominating Team shall place in nomination those candidates to be considered for election at the annual meeting. Nominations from the floor will be taken, provided the nominee has given consent.

### Vacancies shall be filled by nomination from the previous Nominating Team and upon approval by the General Board.

# Ministry Teams

## Selection and Term

### Ministry Team leaders are selected by the Senior Minister and Chair.

### The Ministry Team leader may serve three consecutive one-year terms and shall be eligible to serve after a lapse of one year.

### The General Board has the authority to form other ministry teams as necessary.

## List of Ministry Teams

### WORSHIP TEAM shall coordinate meaningful worship experiences for all.

### EVANGELISM TEAM shall promote growth in membership.

### ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TEAM shall plan and supervise a wide, inclusive educational program for the adult congregation.

### CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHRISTIAN EDUCATION shall plan and supervise a wide, inclusive educational program and youth group programming.

### OUTREACH TEAM shall promote and coordinate local and global missions.

### STEWARDSHIP TEAM shall coordinate all stewardship activities of the church and promote stewardship education.

### MEMBERSHIP TEAM shall assimilate new members and promote fellowship and love among all people of the faith community.

### FINANCE TEAM shall oversee the financial records of the church and prepare an annual proposed budget to be submitted to the General Board and congregation.

### PASTORAL RELATIONS TEAM shall support the Minister and his/her family and provide a regular channel of communication between the Minister and the congregation.

### PROPERTY TEAM shall be responsible for all church property, making arrangements and contracting with sources to see that all church building and grounds are properly maintained and kept in good repair. The Property Team shall ensure that there is always adequate insurance coverage on all church property. The leader of the Property Team shall be the contracting agent for any repairs and modifications to the church property.

## Responsibilities

### Ministry Teams are delegated to administer the programs of the congregation under the supervision of the General Board and Senior Minister.

### Each team shall organize itself to study its responsibilities, plan its program, meet regularly to attend to its business, discuss fulfillment of the year's objectives, evaluate its program and plan its report to the General Board.

### Regular reports shall be in writing to the General Board.

### Each team shall, on the basis of its needs, submit a proposed budget to the Finance Team for the purpose of preparing the annual budget. Each committee shall be responsible for monitoring its budget.

# Executive Team

## Members. The Executive Team will consist of the Senior Minister, Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk and Elder leader.

## Responsibilities

### The Executive Team shall serve as the Personnel Team. It shall oversee non-clergy employees. This includes job descriptions, benefits, hiring and terminating, and disciplinary action.

### The Executive Team in an emergency may make decisions that are in harmony with the spirit of the by-laws.

### The Executive Team shall report and present its actions to the General Board.

### The Executive Team shall meet at least four times a year.

### The Executive Team, together with the Property Team leader and the chair of the Pastoral Relations Team shall serve as the Pastoral Evaluation Team, meeting with the Pastor at least twice a year with one of the meetings being by September 30th.

# Amendments.

Amendment of these bylaws may be recommended by a majority vote of the General Board. Upon the recommendation by General Board these by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the congregation provided written notice has been provided at least 14 days before consideration.

Submitted for Amendment at the Nov. 13, 2016 annual meeting.

If approved, effective date shall be Jan. 1, 2017.