

# **First Christian Church, Inc. (Disciples of Christ), New Castle, Indiana**

## **Bylaws**

Amended/Updated December 15, 2019

### **Article I, General**

**Section A. Official Name:** The legal name shall be the First Christian Church, Inc. (Disciples of Christ), New Castle, Indiana.

**Section B. Principle Location:** The principle location of the First Christian Church, Inc. (Disciples of Christ), New Castle, Indiana is 2000 Bundy Avenue, New Castle, Indiana.

**Section C. Statement of Mission:** "It is the mission of the First Christian Church to offer a meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ as we reach out and make disciples for God's mission."

### **Article II. Membership**

**Section A. Definition of Membership:** The congregation of the First Christian Church will consider active members to be anyone who regularly supports the church and its programs through attendance and/or stewardship. Active members will be defined as those members who attend or financially contribute at least once annually or receive visitation if unable to attend regular services. Inactive members will include those members who no longer support the church and its programs annually through attendance and/or stewardship.

**Section B. Admission and Classes of Members:** Regular full members of this congregation, as part of the Church Universal, shall consist of:

1. those that are now members of this congregation
2. those who shall unite with it by an initial confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, affirming their faith through baptism (unless special considerations are deemed necessary by the Pastor in consultation with the Elders)
3. those who transfer their membership from another church

**Section C. Voting Privileges of Members:** Each person meeting the criteria of "Regular Full Member" shall have the right to one vote during church affairs. Inactive members are not given voting privileges.

**Section D. Powers and Responsibilities:** The congregation shall manage its affairs; own, control and encumber property; organize and carry out the mission and witness of the congregation; establish its budgets and financial policies; call its Pastor(s) and other staff; and participate, through voting representatives, in local, Regional, and General Assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The Congregation shall demonstrate voluntarily its mutual concern for the nurture, mission, and witness of the whole Church, and among other responsibilities it shall:

1. proclaim the Gospel;
2. administer baptism and the Lord's Supper;
3. provide for the spiritual nurture of its members;
4. grow in understanding that the Church is a universal fellowship;
5. be faithful in Christian stewardship, striving to share in providing resources for the total life work and witness for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);
6. seek to realize the oneness of the Church of Jesus Christ through cooperation with other churches of the community and with appropriate ecumenical structures approved by a majority of the congregation.

**Section E. Statement of Church Year:** The church year shall run from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Section F. Meetings of the Congregation:** The congregation shall hold an annual business meeting no later than the last Sunday in December of each year. This meeting shall be for the purpose of electing church officers for the coming year and approving the church budget as proposed by the stewardship committee. Special meetings may be called by the Executive Committee upon request of the General Board of Directors or by a petition signed by twenty regular full members of the Congregation. Notice of special meetings must be given by announcement in regular church service at least seven days prior to the special meeting or written notice may be given postmarked at least three days prior to the special meeting.

### **Article III. Governing Authority - General Board of Directors and Governance Overview**

General Board shall:

1. -Set policy
2. -Approve programming
3. -Approve procedures
4. -Oversee budget portions
5. -Make decisions
6. -Report to the congregation

Elders shall:

1. -Articulate and interpret core values
2. -Promote growth and welfare

3. -Review minister and other ordained staff annually

Pastor shall:

1. Implement policy and lay decisions
2. Administer day-to-day programs and activities
3. Support lay leadership by providing information and perspective for their decisions
4. Make some decisions consistent with the bylaws, covenant of call, Church policies and decisions
5. Report to the Board and Congregation

General Board and the Pastor shall have joint responsibilities to:

1. Plan, evaluate, and develop meeting agendas
2. Implement programs and activities
3. Abide by Congregation decisions

**Section A. Delegation of Power:** The congregation shall have a General Board of Directors that is responsible to the congregation and have authority to act on its behalf. The congregation delegates the duty of conducting the business affairs and planning and executing the programs of the church on its behalf. The General Board of Directors will function by such general policies as have been adopted by the congregation and thereby set forth in these bylaws. The actions of the General Board of Directors is at all times subject to review by the congregation.

**Section B. Functional Responsibilities:** The General Board shall perform the following duties according to the authority granted in these bylaws by the congregation.

1. To have the primary responsibility for discerning God's leading into the future, set directions and make strategic plans for the life of the church.
2. To establish the personnel, program teams and standing committees through which the work of the church is primarily conducted.
3. Planning and executing the programs of the church through establishing the personnel, program teams and standing committees from which the primary work of the church is performed.
4. To regularly receive, consider, and act on reports from the various program teams and standing committees.
5. Properly maintain all properties and assets of the church, manage their proper utilization, and develop the appropriate administrative functions necessary to carry out the business affairs of the church.
6. To approve an annual budget, upon recommendation of the Trustees with input from the Stewardship Team (through stewardship campaign), and refer the budget to the congregation for their approval.
7. To provide an effective process to bring new members to the church and to provide for the continual spiritual growth of the congregation.
8. Shall establish the process to secure a Pastor for the congregation.

**Section C: Composition:** The General Board of Directors shall be composed of:

1. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Elders
2. The Chairperson of the Trustees
3. A representative from fellowship groups in the life of the church
4. The Chairperson of each program team
5. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer of the congregation
6. Six at-large members of the congregation
7. Pastor(s) (ex-officio)
8. Other staff person deemed necessary by the Board

**Section D: Regular Meetings:** The General Board shall hold its regular meetings according to the following criteria:

1. Meeting Schedule: The General Board shall meet at least 10 times per year on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) Sunday of the month with no General Board meeting in the month of July.
2. Official Notice of Regular Meetings: Notice of General Board meetings will be posted/published/announced in Sunday worship service, the church bulletin and on social media and/or e-mail prior to each meeting. If the publishing schedule permits, notice will be published in The Christian Builder newsletter.
3. Quorum: A quorum of the General Board meeting shall consist of those members present at any regular or special meeting.
4. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all meetings.
5. Any member of the Board who is unable to attend a Board meeting shall submit a report in writing.

**Section E: Special Meetings:** The General Board of Directors can call a special meeting outside of its regular meeting schedule to handle situations that require immediate attention. Notice of special meetings must be given by announcement in regular church service at least seven days prior to the special meeting or written notice may be given postmarked at least three days prior to the special meeting.

**Section F: Length of Terms of General Board Members:**

Elders: As long as the Elder is the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson of the Elders

Trustees: As long as the Trustee is Chairperson of the Trustees

Chairperson of Program Teams: As long as the person retains leadership of the Program Team

President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer: One-year terms and may serve three consecutive terms of office before taking a one-year absence to be eligible again unless a term extension is proposed and favorably voted upon by a quorum of the General Board members present.

Representative of Fellowship Group: As long as the person is chosen by the Fellowship Group

At-large Members: Two-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms of office before taking a one-year absence to be eligible again unless a term extension is proposed and favorably voted upon by a quorum of the General Board members present.

.Pastor and Staff: As long as the person fills the position

**Section G: Termination of Directors:** A member of the General Board of Directors can be dismissed from their position if their behavior warrants such an action. A Board member can be removed from their position with a motion by another Board member to the Board at a regular scheduled meeting and passed by a three-fourth (3/4) vote of the Board. A Board member may be reinstated by the same procedure if warranted.

**Section H: Committee Appointments:** The General Board will look to various committees and functional departments to carry out the programs of the church. The Board will concern itself with broad matters of policy and administration, assigning special programs and activities to departments and committees who will execute them under the supervision of the Board. The Board may create new committees as they are needed.

Section I: Executive Committee:

1. An Executive Committee shall consist of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Chairman of the Elders.
2. Frequency of the meetings shall be established by the Executive Committee
3. The Secretary shall act as a recording secretary except when personnel issues require confidentiality.
4. The Executive Committee functions when the General Board is not meeting and its main function is fact finding and shall not become a legislative body to make final decisions on policy or personnel.

Section J: Conflict of Interest: Members of the General Board will act to avoid the appearance of conflict of interest. When a member of the immediate family, personal friend, or an associate in business brings a matter before the General Board, affected board members will excuse themselves from any discussion and vote, and will leave the room while the matter is under consideration.

## **Article IV. Elected Officers of the Congregation**

**Section A. Elected Officers:** The following officers shall be elected by the church congregation at its annual business meeting and serve as members of the General Board of Directors for the term elected:

**President of the Congregation:** The President shall fulfill the usual duties of such an office. They shall preside at all meetings of the General Board and business meetings of the congregation. Also they are responsible for reviewing and updating the bylaws. In the absence of the President, the Chair will be filled by the Vice President, Chairperson of the Board of Elders, and Chairperson of Trustees in that order. The term of office shall be one year and a person may serve three consecutive terms before a one-year absence to be eligible again unless a term extension is proposed and favorably voted upon by a quorum of the General Board members present.

**Vice President of the Congregation:** The Vice President shall represent the President in his or her absence in all official capacities with reference to meetings of the General Board and congregation. The Vice President shall chair the Personnel Committee of the church. The Vice President shall also perform other duties as may be assigned by the President. The term of office shall be one year and a person may serve three consecutive terms before a one-year absence to be eligible again unless a term extension is proposed and favorably voted upon by a quorum of the General Board members present.

**Secretary of the Congregation:** The Secretary shall act as a recording secretary at all meetings of the General Board and congregation. Other responsibilities shall include keeping a current copy of the bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, and policy and procedural guidelines as passed by the General Board and congregation. The Secretary shall also perform other duties as may be assigned by the President. The term of office shall be one year and a person may serve three consecutive terms before a one-year absence to be eligible again unless a term extension is proposed and favorably voted upon by a quorum of the General Board members present.

**Treasurer of the Congregation:** The Treasurer shall receive a report of all income of the congregation, authorize payment of all accounts as authorized by the budget or by special action of the General Board, provide accurate records of all expenditures and income, and make regular written reports to the General Board. The Treasurer shall also perform other duties as may be assigned by the President. The term of office shall be one year and a person may serve three consecutive terms before a one-year absence to be eligible again unless a term extension is proposed and favorably voted upon by a quorum of the General Board members present.

**.Section B: Nomination and Election:** The Nominating Committee shall publish via newsletter and worship bulletin inserts a slate of officers four weeks before the Annual Meeting of the Congregation. The congregation shall elect by a majority vote of those present a slate of officers at its annual meeting. However, at that meeting, nominations to any position may be made from the floor. Prior to the voting any person so nominated for any position must have consented to be a nominee. In the event that two or more members are nominated for one position, a written ballot shall be taken for that position.

## **Article V. Elected Delegates of the Congregation**

**Section A: Board of Elders:** The Elders shall:

1. promote the general growth and welfare of the church
2. articulate and interpret to the congregation the core values of the church
3. conduct visitation to members that are unable to attend regular services due to illness or age
4. provide spiritual leadership in developing policy and procedure that will assist the church in fulfilling its mission
5. serve on a program team or standing committee (one Elder/team or committee)
6. serve at the Lord's Table during services
7. perform other duties as may be assigned by the President
8. Annually oversee the Job Performance Review of the pastor and the other ordained staff
  - a. A Review Team shall consist of the Chair of the Elders, the Vice-President of the Board, and another Elder selected by the pastor.
  - b. The pastor will submit his/her goals and objectives for the upcoming year
  - c. The Review Team will meet with the pastor and review the performance in the goals set for the current year for each item in the pastor's job description.
  - d. The Review Team will review the pastor's goals for the upcoming year and help to further develop these goals for each item in the pastor's job description.
  - e. A written report of this review will be provided to the General Board, the Elders, and the pastor.

Elders shall not exceed twelve (12) in number. The term of office shall be two years and after a one-year absence a person may be eligible again unless a term extension is proposed and favorably voted upon by a quorum of the General Board members present.

### **Section B: Trustees:**

- a. The Trustees shall act as the legal agents of the church in all business matters as directed by the General Board and congregation
- b. Prepare the annual budget and present to the Board
- c. They shall hold legal title to all church property
- d. Have custody of all church insurance policies
- e. Supervise over all endowment and trust funds of the church

- f. Provide leadership in the business and program activities of the church
- g. Make recommendations and provide for the maintenance, preservation and protection of the property of the church
- h. arrange for the acquisition and disposal of the church's real property
- i. give a report to the Church Board monthly and perform other duties as may be assigned by the President
- j. Trustees shall not exceed four (4) in number. The term of office shall be two years and after a one-year absence a person may be eligible again unless a term extension is proposed and favorably voted upon by a quorum of the General Board members present.

### **Section C: Nomination and Election:**

The Nominating Committee shall present to the congregation four weeks before the Annual Meeting of the Congregation the following nominees:

- 1. President of the Congregation
- 2. Vice President of the Congregation
- 3. Secretary of the Congregation
- 4. Treasurer of the Congregation
- 5. Six Elders
- 6. Two Trustees
- 7. Three At-Large Board Members

**The Nominating Committee may nominate persons who are no longer able to actively serve this congregation to be honored with the title “Elder Emeritus” or “Deacon Emeritus”. This designation is honorary and carries no responsibilities. This designation continues until the designee’s death or until the designee asks for the title to be removed.**

## **Article VI. Standing Committees & Program Teams**

**Section A. Nominating Committee:** The Nominating Committee will:

- 1. nominate all Congregational Officers, Elders, Trustees and At-Large Members of the Board
- 2. fill vacant positions in Article VI, Section A, 1, upon the request of the general board, which occur during the church year. A vacancy shall be declared by actions of the general board due to death, change of congregational membership, resignation, failure to meet qualifications, or failure to perform the duties of that position over an eight week period without justification. The general board shall elect the nominees, if acceptable, to fill these vacancies by a majority vote of the board members present at a general board meeting.



3. the Nominating Committee may nominate a person who is not a member but does participate in the life of the church by attendance, stewardship and service.
4. recruit people to serve as Chairperson of Program Teams and report names to the General Board.

The Nominating Committee shall consist of five (5) members, one of which will be a chairperson, chosen by the Board of Directors as early in the church year as possible. Nominating Committee members shall serve a term of one year and may serve two consecutive terms before a one-year absence makes them eligible again unless a term extension is proposed and favorably voted upon by a quorum of the General Board members present.

**Section B. Worship Team:** The Worship Team will be responsible for all aspects of the worship life of the church:

1. music and other arts
2. baptisms: providing robes and assisting with baptisms
3. sanctuary adornments such as paraments and banners and flags
4. communion preparation and clean-up
5. serving communion to the congregation
6. worship schedule
7. special worship services such as Advent, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunrise and any other deemed appropriate for the life of the church
8. secure devotional material for worshippers to receive or purchase
9. schedule ushers and greeters
10. prepare a budget request

**Section C. Membership Team:**

1. The Membership Team will provide care for the following:
  - a. Shut-ins
  - b. Hospitalized
  - c. Death and grieving
  - d. Inactive members
  - e. Orientation of new members
2. The Membership Team will provide training for ministry with a person in categories a.-e.
3. The Membership Team will prepare a budget request

**Section D. Evangelism Team:** The Evangelism Team shall:

1. determine how to secure names and contact information from visitors
2. make contact with visitors in a timely manner after the first visit

3. provide church membership information sessions for interested persons
4. other activities to enable a person to become a follower of Christ
5. prepare a budget request

**Section E. Mission Team:** The Mission Team will:

1. promote all Special Day Mission Offerings
2. prepare for the annual budget the amount to support Disciple mission
3. prepare for the annual budget the amount of money to support local missions
4. seek ways to involve the church in mission such as an annual mission trip and Kids Hope USA

**Section F. Family Team:** The Family Team shall:

1. plan fellowship events for the congregation such as the "Birthday Bash" and "Fat Tuesday"
2. work with the Culinary Committee to plan the All-Church Christmas Dinner
3. Schedule persons to prepare and clean after Coffee Fellowship between worship services
4. other activities to promote fellowship within church life
5. prepare a budget request

**Section G. Christian Education Team:** The Christian Education Team shall provide educational opportunities for the congregation to deepen spiritual life, knowledge of the faith and to assist persons in their Christian journey and prepare a budget request

**Section H. Youth Ministry Team:** The Youth Ministry Team shall:

1. work with various ages of youth to create fellowship/education/service opportunities such as Vacation Bible School and King's Kids
2. promote the camp/conference program of the Christian Church in Indiana (Disciples of Christ)
3. prepare a budget request

**Section I. Property Team:** The Property Team shall:

1. provide for the care and upkeep of all church property and plan for future needs
2. oversee the work of the custodian
3. prepare a budget request

**Section J. Stewardship Team:** The Stewardship Team shall:

1. promote tithing among the members of the church
2. plan and do an annual stewardship program that includes:
  - a. preparation and promotion of an annual budget

- b. plan an annual giving campaign
- 3. oversee the appropriate recording and reporting of pledges and giving
- 4. review the financial position of the church during the year
- 5. provide for an annual internal financial review of both income and expenditures
- 6. prepare a budget request

**Section K. Culinary Team:** The Culinary Team shall:

- 1. plan for all "Fifth Sunday All-Church Dinners
- 2. plan and serve meals that non-church groups request
- 3. keep the kitchen stocked with necessary food items and equipment
- 4. work with the Family Team to plan the Christmas All-Church Dinner
- 5. semi-annual cleaning of the kitchen

**Section L. Personnel Committee:**

- 1. Purpose: As a means of increasing the efficiency of the employed church staff, exclusive of the Pastor and other Ordained Staff, and to insure the employment of qualified persons, this committee is established
- 2. The Vice President of the General Board shall be the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee
- 3. Membership: The Committee shall include one Elder, two members of the General Board and two members of the congregation not on the General Board and appointed by the President of the congregation
- 4. Term of Office: The term of office is two years except for the chairperson which could be as many as three years.
- 5. Procedure for employment of church staff
  - a. The appropriate program team(s) shall create qualifications and a job description to be used by the Personnel Committee for hiring staff
  - b. The Personnel Committee shall review all applications and make a recommendation to the General Board for final approval
  - c. The Personnel Committee shall conduct a criminal background check on any applicant recommended to the General Board and keep a record on file
  - d. All applicants for employment of church staff, all questions concerning conditions of pay, all questions concerning performance or release of employees shall be referred to the Personnel Committee before any action is taken by the General Board
  - e. Upon recommendation of the Personnel Committee, the Board shall approve the employment or release of such employee
  - f. Each employee shall be responsible to the Program Team or

- Committee responsible for his/her area of work, and in turn responsible to the General Board, but direct supervision of the staff employees shall be the responsibility of the Pastor
- g. A written contract covering terms of employment and job description shall be included in the minutes of the General Board and a copy given to the employee
- h. Appraisal of performance of staff members
- i. Recommend annual salary for staff
- 6. The Personnel Committee shall reserve the right to randomly drug test any employee of the staff and King's Kids staff.

## **ARTICLE VII. ORDAINED STAFF**

**Section A. The Role of the Pastor:** The Pastor of the church shall perform the duties which usually pertain to that office. In general, the Pastor shall preach and teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, provide pastoral care and work closely with the leadership of the General Board to encourage orderly procedures in the life and work of the church. The Pastor shall have signed the Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), have Standing with the Christian Church in Indiana (Disciples of Christ) or another of the Regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The Pastor will be required to attend a Healthy Boundaries Workshop when provided by the Christian Church in Indiana.

1. The Duties and Responsibilities of the pastor shall be:
  - a. Provide spiritual leadership to the congregation.
  - b. Provide administrative leadership for the total church program and direct the day- to- day activities of the congregation.
  - c. Oversee visitation of the congregation.
  - d. Proclaim the Gospel and lead the church in proclaiming the Gospel to the church and community.
  - e. Work with the Worship Planning Team to plan and lead the worship services of the congregation.
  - f. Preach at all morning worship services or arrange for someone to fill this task
  - g. Recommend and advise on the selection of all other staff members and the determination of their duties.
  - h. Provide direct supervision for all other church staff.
  - i. Plan and administer Baptism.
  - j. Conduct funeral service and wedding ceremonies as able and delegate to others on staff when not available.
  - k. To serve as an ex-officio member (without vote) in congregation, Board and other meetings of church groups.
  - l. Maintain regular office hours to be available for conference and counsel.
  - m. Manage time to include service to the community, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and others.
  - n. Assure that the life and work of the congregation complies with the congregation's Bylaws, policies and procedures.
  - o. Adapt responsibilities of ministerial position to meet current congregational needs

2. Authority. The pastor shall have the authority to fulfill all pastoral duties and make appropriate decisions related to them within the framework of the bylaws, congregational decisions and Board decisions, and the covenant of call.

**Section B. Selection of the Pastor:** The Pastor shall be chosen by the church as hereinafter provided:

1. A pulpit/call committee shall be appointed by the President of the Congregation and composed of an Elder, a youth, a male and female from the General Board and a male and female from the congregation who are not on the Board and the immediate past President of the congregation. The General Board shall designate the chairperson of the pulpit/call committee.
2. The pulpit/call committee will utilize the services of the Regional Minister of the Christian Church in Indiana (Disciples of Christ) for information about the call process and prospective candidates.
3. It shall be the policy of the congregation to consider only one prospective candidate at a time. However, information may be secured on several in a given period.
4. The pulpit/call committee will recommend a prospective Pastor to the General Board. The recommendation must be accepted by at least a two-thirds majority of members present and voting in a regular or special called meeting of the General Board.
5. The General Board will recommend the prospective Pastor to the congregation.
6. The recommendation of the General Board must be accepted by at least a two-thirds majority of members present and voting in a regular or special called meeting of the congregation before a call may be extended.
7. The term of the Pastor's ministry at First Christian Church shall be for an indefinite period and may be terminated by either party upon a notice of sixty (60) days. A written statement setting forth the salary, benefits and other conditions of the call shall be made in duplicate, one copy for the Pastor and one for church records.

### **Section C. Resignation of the Pastor**

1. Retirement or harmonious resignation
  - a. Voluntary resignation of the Pastor shall be submitted to the President of the Congregation and thus the General Board in writing. Following action on the resignation by the General Board, the President of the congregation shall announce the action to the Congregation.

b. The Pastor shall continue his normal preaching responsibilities from the pulpit until the agreed time the employment by the church ends. The Pastor shall vacate the church office and remove all personal belongings sometime before the agreed final date of employment.

c. The President of the Congregation shall review with the Pastor the obligations set forth in the Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with the specific promise “to encourage the minister of my successor upon retirement or other departure from a ministry position, without interfering or intruding and by making it clear to former parishioners that I am no longer their pastor.” The President shall discuss with the pastor the potential problems from continued association and socialization with church members after the ending date of their employment.

d. Depending on the resigning Pastor’s financial and housing situation as well as the church finances, a severance package will be designed that is as fair and equitable to both parties as possible. The President of the Congregation and the Executive Committee will be ultimately responsible for this. The severance package terms shall be reported to the General Board but will not require their approval. Some of the issues that will need to be negotiated and agreed upon include but are not limited to:

- 1) If currently living in the church parsonage, how long they may remain in the parsonage;
- 2) Who will pay for utilities, while in the parsonage, during this interim time;
- 3) How long they will be paid their salary;
- 4) How long the church will pay their benefits currently in place;
- 5) Who will have the authority to oversee, with the church office, the execution of the agreement;
- 6) All terms of the agreement shall be put in writing and signed by both parties;

## 2. Hostile resignation or termination:

a. If a Pastor leaves the employment of First Christian Church because of a hostile resignation or church directed termination, the Pastor shall immediately terminate his preaching from the pulpit, surrender all of his keys, and other church property to the President of the Congregation. The Pastor shall immediately remove all personal belongings from and vacate the church office.

b. The President of the Congregation shall review with the Pastor the obligations set forth in the Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with the specific promise “to encourage the ministry of my successor upon retirement or other departure from a ministry position, without interfering or intruding and by making it clear to former parishioners that I am no longer their pastor.” The President shall discuss with the Pastor the potential problems from continued association and socialization with church members after the ending date of their employment.

c. Depending on the terminated Pastor’s financial and housing situation as well as the church finances, a severance package will be designed that is as fair and

equitable to both parties as possible. The President of the Congregation and the Executive Committee will be ultimately responsible for this. The severance package terms shall be reported to the General Board but will not require their approval. Some of the issues that will need to be negotiated and agreed upon include but are not limited to:

- 1) If currently living in the church parsonage, how long they may remain in the parsonage
- 2) Who will pay for utilities while in the parsonage during this interim time;
- 3) How long they will be paid their salary;
- 4) How long the church will pay their benefits currently in place;
- 5) If the Pastor should gain employment before the end of the agreed times, all payments of any type will end and First Christian Church will no longer have any financial responsibility to this Pastor;
- 6) Who will have the authority to oversee with the church office the execution of the agreement;
- 7) All terms of the agreement shall be put in writing and signed by both parties;

**Section D. Other Ordained Staff:** When deemed necessary by the General Board of the church, other Ordained Staff may be called to serve using the same procedure as the call process for the Pastor. The Pastor of the church shall be part of the call team.

**Section E. Pastoral Relations Committee:** If so desired by the Pastor(s) or other Ordained Staff, a Pastoral Relations Committee will be established. Guidelines for such a committee may be obtained at the office of the Christian Church in Indiana (Disciples of Christ).

**Section F: Involuntary release of the Pastor:** .When there are complaints or problems with the ministry of the pastor, any member may report this to the President of the Board. The President will seek to understand fully the details of the problem. The President will discuss the matter with the pastor. Should these steps not resolve the issue, the President may appoint a Fact-finding Panel consisting of the Executive Committee, one Elder appointed by the Elders Chair and another Elder selected by the pastor.

1. The Fact-finding Panel shall meet, in confidence, with the person(s) raising the issue and shall meet, in confidence, with the pastor
2. The Panel shall consult with the Regional Minister of the Christian Church in Indiana.
3. If this resolves the issue, a written report shall be forwarded to the General Board with copies provided to the person(s) raising the issue and the pastor.
4. If this does not resolve the issue, the Panel may recommend to this General Board that the tenure of the pastor be ended. Grounds for this recommendation are gross moral failure or willful failure to perform pastoral duties.
5. Voting members of the General Board shall consider and act on the recommendation to end the tenure of the pastor in a confidential session. A two-thirds majority of the members present and voting shall be required to end the tenure of the pastor. This special Board meeting requires a quorum of two thirds of voting members. If the decision is not to end the tenure, written notification of

this shall be provided to the person(s) raising the issue, and the pastor, and entered in the minutes of the General Board.

6. If the General Board votes to end the tenure of the pastor, the congregation will vote whether to confirm the dismissal at a special meeting called for that purpose. The President of the Board and the Fact-finding Panel will explain the reasoning for ending the tenure of the pastor. Notice of this special meeting must be given by announcement in regular church service at least seven days prior to the special meeting, or written notice may be given postmarked at least three days prior to the special meeting. A vote of two-thirds of regular full members of the church, present and voting, shall be necessary to dismiss the pastor.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. Amendments**

Amendment(s) to the bylaws may be proposed by any member of the congregation. The proposal shall be in writing and given to the members of the General Board. After at least thirty days have elapsed, the General Board may approve the proposed amendment(s) by at least a two-thirds majority of those members present and voting at a general board meeting. Upon approval by the General Board, the proposed amendment(s) shall be sent to the congregation through the mail via church newsletter postmarked at least three days prior to the time the vote is to be taken, or written notice at least seven days prior to the time the vote is to be taken, or the proposed amendment has been read during or following two regular Sunday morning worship services before the vote is taken. The congregation may approve the amendment(s) by a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting.

Approved by the General Board 8/10/2004

Approved as amended by the Congregation 9/9/2004

Approved as amended by the General Board 11/11/2012

Approved by the Congregation 12/2012

Approved as amended by the Congregation 12/15/2019