

BYLAWS

of

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

of

NEWBURY PARK

Revised
12.8.2024

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of
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PREAMBLE (rev.2024)

This congregation accepts the Bible as its authority. These bylaws are intended to apply biblical principles to the establishment of the structure and function of this church body.

ARTICLE I (rev.2024)

The name of this congregation is First Christian Church of Newbury Park. And is a corporation under the laws of California. This congregation will be referred to as “this church” in the remainder of the bylaws.

ARTICLE II (rev.2024)

The purpose of this church is to develop fully devoted followers of Christ who help people find and follow Jesus. We do this by seeking to fulfilling the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20), guided by the great commandment (Matthew 22:36-40).

ARTICLE III

AFFILIATION & ARTICLES OF FAITH OF THIS CHURCH

This church is an independent body and maintains the right to govern its own affairs without any denominational control. However, this church recognizes the benefits of cooperation with other churches in carrying out the purpose of Christ’s church.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

BIBLE

- We believe the Bible is inspired by God, unfailing in its directives, the only written authoritative Word of God for our rule and practice, and God’s ceaseless and purposeful activity of redeeming the world to Himself. (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

GOD

- We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (2 Corinthians 13:14)
- We believe God, the Father, is Spirit, eternal, compassionate and just, and holy and almighty (John 4:24; Hebrews 1:10; I Corinthians 2:6-7; Lamentations 3:19-23; Isaiah 6:1-5)
- We believe that Jesus Christ in the one and only Son of God, who died for our sins and arose from the dead. We also believe in Jesus’ virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His suffering and literal death, His bodily resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of

the Father, His return to earth and His reign forever as King of kings and Lord of lords. (Isaiah 53; John 3:16; I Corinthians 15:1-8; I Thessalonians 4:13-18)

- We believe the Holy Spirit is an active and operative part of the triune God, Who indwells every Christian, gifting every believer for service in the church, and enabling each Christian to live a godly life. (John 14:16-20,26-27; 16:7-16; Romans 12:4-8; I Corinthians 12:1-11)

SIN & SALVATION

- We believe that each person, created by God, has willfully sinned against God and is consequently lost and without hope apart from Jesus Christ. Anything that is inconsistent with biblical teaching is considered sin. (Acts 4:12; Romans 3:23)
- We believe that salvation and the forgiveness of sins is achieved only by God's grace through the blood of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 26:28; Romans 5:9; Ephesians 2:8-9; I Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 1:7)
- We believe that one receives God's grace by putting faith in Christ, repenting of sin, confessing Christ, and being immersed into Christ, but that none of these is sufficient in and of itself for the assurance of salvation. (Romans 5:1-2;6:1-7; 10:9-10; Luke 24:45-47; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9; Matthew 10:32; Galatians 3:27)

CHURCH

- We believe that the church is the body of Christ on earth, empowered by the Holy Spirit and exists to evangelized the lost and edify the saved. (Ephesians 4:1-16)
- We believe the church of Jesus Christ was founded on the Day of Pentecost and consists of all Christians everywhere. (Matthew 16:13-18; Acts 2:14-47)

GOD'S BIBLICAL DIRECTIVES FOR THE CHURCH

- We believe that baptism (immersion) is a sacred act of faith that symbolically connects the Christian to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. (Romans 6:2-4)
- We believe that the Lord's Supper (communion) is a sacred act of the church that is an act of worship with the Lord Jesus and an expression of thanksgiving, remembrance, celebration and fellowship. (Matthew 26:26-29)
- We believe that marriage has been established by God and is defined by the Bible as the lifelong union of one man and one woman. Hence, any sexual activity outside the bond of that union of marriage is scripturally prohibited and considered sinful. (Genesis 2:21-25; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 1:24-27; I Corinthians 6:9,18-20)

ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP (rev. 2023)

SECTION 1: To be a member of the First Christian Church of Newbury Park a person must make a public confession of faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God, repent of his/her sins, and be baptized by immersion in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; or by statement of his/her previous obedience to Christ according to the above requirements. The believer shall also attend this church's membership class as designated by the elders of this church.

SECTION 2: Voting privileges shall be accorded to all active members of First Christian Church of Newbury Park, 18 years or older, who are engaged in this church through regular attendance and financial support and regular service in the church. Interpretation of this article is left to the discretion of the elders of this church.

ARTICLE V

GOVERNANCE

SECTION 1: All persons who hold any office of any kind or character, whether of elder, ministry leader, or officer, shall be an active member.

SECTION 2: ELDERS

A. The elders of the First Christian Church of Newbury Park are to exercise authority over this local congregation. (Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

B. Elders shall be elected for a term of three years or less by 2/3 votes of the voting members present at the annual congregational business meeting. After serving six consecutive years, a one-year leave of absence shall be taken.

C. The elder nominees shall have such qualifications as are found in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) Each elder nominee needs to have completed the Leadership Training course for elders and be a tithing member of this church.

D. The elders are responsible for:

1. The spiritual oversight and guidance of the church.
2. The corporate management for church business.
3. Appointments of all ministry leaders, committee chairs, and officers not required to be elected by these bylaws.
4. Functioning on the Pulpit Committee as stated in accordance with Article VII.

E. Release of an elder:

When an elder's conduct is not found in keeping with the biblical qualifications of an elder or when he is accused of not keeping these qualifications, the elder board will follow the guidelines set in Matthew 18:15-17 and I Timothy 5:19-20.

An elder who has been absent from three consecutive regular meetings without submitting in writing a satisfactory reason and so noted in minutes, will be notified by the chairman, and after such notice is still absent from the next regular meeting, or has not sent to the chairman a satisfactory reason for absence, the elders may recommend release of the elder to the congregation.

Release of an elder will be by two-thirds majority vote of the congregation at a congregational meeting called by the elder board in keeping with ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 4.

SECTION 3: ELDER BOARD

A. The elected elders and executive pastoral staff* shall constitute the board of directors (hereafter referred to as elder board) of this Corporation. The board will consist of no less than five or more than twelve members.

*The executive pastoral staff consists of the pastors on the church staff who are approved by the lead pastor and elected elders to serve on the executive pastoral staff.

B. The elder board shall be responsible for the spiritual oversight of the church and shall formulate the general policy of this Corporation overseeing the management of its business and material affairs, including the nomination and employment of employees.

C. Fifty one percent (51%) of the members shall constitute a quorum at a meeting of the elder board.

D. The elder board shall refer to the congregation all matters pertaining to the purchase/sale of real or personal property or placing encumbrances thereon and all matters pertaining to a decision to erect buildings or major additions and the spending of all non-budgeted funds over ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), or ten percent (10%) of a budget category, whichever is greater, except for approved salaries.

E. The elder board shall have the authority to fill an elective office which becomes vacant during its term by appointing a qualified person to that office for the remaining term.

F. The elder board may appoint elder emeritus candidates to serve on the elder board. Qualifications for this position would include previous outstanding service on the church elder board and a desire to serve in that capacity. An elder emeritus would have full voting rights while attending meetings but would be exempted from the normal meeting requirements, as stated in ARTICLE V SECTION 2. They would be eligible for annual terms.

G. Any interpretation of the bylaws shall be the responsibility of the elder board.

ARTICLE VI

MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

SECTION 1: The ministry of the church shall be delegated by the elder board to various teams which carry out the ministries of the church. These are functional groups as deemed acceptable and necessary by the elder board. Each ministry area will be led by a ministry coordinator, overseen by an elder, and guided by a staff member.

A. A ministry coordinator will be selected by the elder board and appointed to lead a specified ministry area

B. All ministry leaders (coordinators and team leaders) shall be active, responsible members of the church, qualified as servants as stated by the New Testament scriptures (Acts 6:1-7; Romans 16:1-2; I Timothy 3:8-13; Galatians 5:22-23) and who have completed the training for ministry leadership as directed in the church Policy and Procedure Manual. This training will include, but not be limited to, the use of Training Manuals, Job Descriptions, On-the-Job with the predecessor leader, and the incorporation of Accountability and Responsibility into each leadership function.

When a ministry coordinator position becomes vacant, the elder overseeing that ministry shall prayerfully consider a qualified replacement for the position. After consulting with the ministry staff person, the elder shall present the member's name along with the qualifications listed above and may make a motion for the approval of the member to be a ministry coordinator. ONLY after being approved by the elder board, will the member be asked if they would like to be the ministry coordinator. The member should be approached by the elder and the staff person for that ministry. If no staff person is available, two elders should be present.

Note: No matter how sure one might feel about their choice for a ministry coordinator, that person should not be asked until such time that they are nominated, considered and approved by the elder board.

C. The duties of ministry coordinators:

1. To support the spiritual objectives of the congregation as determined by the elder board. To work under the direction of staff and elder to carry out a specific scope of ministry.
2. To coordinate and lead a specified ministry area in accordance with the Training Manuals.
3. To attend the Ministry Coordinators' meetings.

SECTION 2: The dissolution of a ministry team will be decided by the elder board. Each elder will be responsible for making an annual recommendation for their individual Ministry Team.

SECTION 3: Any new Ministries will have to first be submitted to the board of directors in writing and approved and/or funded by that group.

ARTICLE VII

MINISTERS AND OTHER STAFF

SECTION 1: The ministers (members of the ministerial staff of the church) must believe in the full and final inspiration of the Bible and that it is the infallible Word of God, and therefore is all sufficient for faith and life. They must believe in the Deity and Lordship of Christ; obedience to God's Word; the edification of the Church and the restoration of its unity as modeled by the New Testament; and the positive program of evangelism demonstrated in the New Testament. All ministers must comply with qualifications of being a church member as stated in ARTICLE II and support the purpose and objectives of the church.

SECTION 2: SELECTION OF THE LEAD MINISTER (Pastor): Each candidate for the position of lead minister (pastor) of this church shall first be considered by the Pulpit Committee, as determined by the elder board, and make recommendation to the elder board. The elder board shall consider only one candidate at a time and if they unanimously approve any candidate, they shall inform the congregation of their action. The candidate shall be considered and voted upon at the next meeting of the congregation, and the purpose of the meeting shall be announced from the pulpit two Sundays proceeding the time of the meeting. A candidate for the position may be voted upon by the congregation at that special meeting.

Approval shall be by two-thirds majority vote of all active members present and voting.

SECTION 3: A WRITTEN AGREEMENT shall be entered into between a minister and the congregation. The elder board and the minister shall jointly draft the agreement on behalf of the congregation. This WRITTEN AGREEMENT shall be reviewed and updated every five years, at a minimum. Reference in the document should also be made to the current church Policy and Procedures Manual for needed changes in benefits, Holidays, Vacation, Vacation Pay at Release, etc.

SECTION 4: RELEASE OF THE LEAD MINISTER (PASTOR) shall be by two thirds majority vote of all active members present and voting at a congregational meeting called by the elders and in compliance with the congregational meeting guidelines as specified in ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 4. Salary due him for thirty days shall be given to the minister if his resignation is requested. The minister shall give the congregation sixty days written notice before leaving the congregation and, until the expiration of that term, shall conscientiously perform all the regular duties of the minister. By mutual consent of the lead minister and the elders, the period of notice with its attendant conditions may be waived.

SECTION 5: All ministers of the church have voting rights at congregational meetings.

SECTION 6: SELECTION OF ALL STAFF, other than lead minister, will be made jointly by the lead minister and the elder board.

SECTION 7: A WRITTEN AGREEMENT shall also be entered into between staff, other than the lead minister, including other ministerial staff, directors, clerical support or full-time personnel. The elder board and the lead minister shall jointly draft the agreement on behalf of the congregation. This WRITTEN AGREEMENT shall be reviewed and updated every five years, at a minimum. Reference in the document should also be made to the current church

Policy and Procedures Manual for needed changes in benefits, Holidays, Vacation, Vacation Pay at Release, etc.

SECTION 8: RELEASE OF OTHER STAFF, other than the lead minister, shall be by the decision of the elder board and the lead minister. Salary due for thirty days shall be given to the staff member if their resignation is requested. The staff member shall give the elder board thirty days written notice before leaving the congregation and, until the expiration of that term, shall conscientiously perform all the regular duties as outlined. By mutual consent of the minister, or staff member, and the elders, the period of notice with its attendant conditions may be waived.

ARTICLE VIII

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

SECTION 1: THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING of the CONGREGATION shall be held within the first two (2) weeks of December of each year or at such time approximate to this time as may be determined by the elder board.

SECTION 2: At each annual meeting an election shall be held for all elders who have been nominated for the office of elder. The congregation will vote to approve the proposed budget for the coming year at the annual meeting.

SECTION 3: An annual written report shall be given at the annual meeting to the congregation by the board of elders, ministry leaders and ministerial staff. The board of elders may call for any other written reports which they deem necessary.

SECTION 4: Special meetings of the congregation may be called at any time by majority vote of the elder board. Two weeks public notice, listing the purpose of the special congregation meeting, shall be given the congregation before such special meetings.

SECTION 5: The chairman of the elder board shall preside at congregational business meetings, unless some other officer is designated for that purpose by the chairman or elder board.

SECTION 6: A two-thirds (2/3) majority of votes of active members present shall be required for election or approval of business.

ARTICLE IX

OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED BY THE ELDER BOARD

SECTION 1: The elder board shall elect a chairman, vice chairman, a secretary, and treasurer annually, and these officers shall serve for a term of one (1) year.

SECTION 2: The chairman of the elder board, vice chairman and the secretary shall be the officers of the corporation authorized to execute any necessary legal documents, upon authorization by the board, or the congregation as recorded in the minutes of the meeting which authorized the transaction.

SECTION 3: The power to manage the general affairs of the corporation shall be given to the elder board.

ARTICLE X

VOTING

SECTION 1: All votes shall be cast in person, whether at membership meetings or meetings of the elder board. No proxy votes shall be permitted. Voting at the congregational meeting shall be by secret ballots unless determined otherwise by the elder board. Absentee ballots will be permitted at annual congregational meetings only.

SECTION 2: The presiding officer at any meeting shall appoint such necessary election committee as may be required from the responsible active members present to supervise the voting procedure.

SECTION 3: After the votes are received at the annual congregational meeting, they shall be counted by the Elder at Large and witnessed by the Vice Chair.

- A. After the vote is counted, the Elder at Large certifies the vote results
- B. After having received the certified results, the elder board shall ratify the results in the next meeting

ARTICLE XI

NOMINATIONS

SECTION 1: THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE shall consist of the elders whose terms are not expiring, one (1) ministry leader, and the lead minister. This committee shall consist of at least five (5) members.

SECTION 2: Written nominations shall be received by this committee from the active membership of the congregation by the end of August. No anonymous nominations will be received and no spontaneous nominations shall be made from the floor at the time of the election.

SECTION 3: The nominating committee shall review all nominations to determine whether the nominees are qualified to serve. Those persons qualified for the offices to be filled as approved by the nominating committee, shall personally be contacted by the members of the elder board to determine if they will serve if elected. The name of nominees approved as stated above, shall be nominated.

SECTION 4: The names of all persons nominated shall be made public at least fourteen (14) days prior to the congregational meeting at which officers are to be elected.

ARTICLE XII

AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1: The bylaws may be amended at any time provided that such amendment shall be first approved by the elder board and then presented to the congregation for approval at a general or special meeting.

SECTION 2: At least two (2) weeks prior to any meeting at which it is intended to consider an amendment to the bylaws a public notice shall be made to the congregation, stating the date, time and place of the meeting, the purpose of the meeting and containing the text of the proposed by-law change.

SECTION 3: Amendments may be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active members present and voting.

ARTICLE XIII

DEVOLUTION of ASSETS on DISSOLUTION

On dissolution for any reason, the elder board shall make provision for the payment of all liabilities, and thereafter dispose of all assets of the corporation only for corporate purposes or transfer such assets to Christian organizations organized and operated only for charitable, educational, or religious purposes as shall then qualify as exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

ARTICLE XIV

INDEMNIFICATION

The church shall indemnify designated officers while serving as a member of the board of directors or those persons so identified in the Manual of Policies and Procedures of the church in their actions and services on behalf of the church.

ARTICLE XV

BYLAW REVIEW

The elder board of the church shall review the church bylaws every two years and bring any proposed changes to the congregation according to ARTICLE XII.