

BY-LAWS OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
STOW, OHIO

ARTICLE I - CHURCH YEAR

The church year shall begin January 1st and end on December 31st.

ARTICLE II - CHURCH STAFF CONTRACTS, DUTIES

A. Contracts

Yearly contracts for all employees shall be finalized and signed in quadruple (one each for the office file, Elders or Trustees, Treasurer and Employee), by January 1st of each year. Only those with a signed contract shall be paid by the Treasurer.

B. Minister

1. The Minister of the Church shall perform the duties which usually pertain to that office, among them being the spiritual leader of the church. He/she shall be a member of all organized boards, groups, auxiliaries or teams.
2. The Minister shall in cooperation with the Chairman of the Governing Board, encourage orderly procedures in the life and work of the Church through effective use of the Constitution and the Bylaws of the Governing Board.
3. He/she shall appoint members to the Helping Hand Committee.
4. Child abuse shall be reported immediately to the Pastor who will take appropriate action as prescribed by law.
5. All references for employment shall be made and/or authorized by the Pastor.

C. Associate Minister

The duties of the Associate Minister shall be to assist the Minister, make calls on the members and perform other duties as may be assigned by the Minister, with the knowledge of the Elders.

D. The Office Secretary

The office secretary will perform the duties as prescribed by the Minister.

E. Director of Music

1. The Director of Music shall be responsible for the selection and presentation of all music performed in the name of the church.
  - a. Choirs
  - b. Bell Choirs
  - c. Organist
  - d. Special features

2. The Director shall be responsible for selecting and supervising all paid or volunteer assistants as needed in the music program. A job description for each position shall be on file.
  3. The Director shall work cooperatively with the Pastor and other teams to coordinate the music program into the life of the church.
  4. The Director shall be responsible to the Worship Ministry Team and attend their meetings.
  5. The Director shall in matters involving volunteers in the program have the safety of the youth uppermost.
    - a. A form shall be on file stating personnel information for the purpose of screening child abusers.
  6. The Director shall establish and furnish to all staff involved in the music program a copy of the procedure pertaining to the release of youth up to and including 6th grade.
  7. The Director shall formulate guidelines for youth participation in and transportation to regularly scheduled and special activities.
    - a. Require written parental permission for all youth to belong to organized activities as outlined by the Constitution. Included shall be permission for those leaders, supervisors and/or teachers to act in loco parentis in case of emergency. Include doctor, ambulance and hospital of choice. Significant physical problems should be included.
    - b. Require written parental permission for those attending church sponsored events beyond the usual activities of regularly scheduled programs. State date, time, event, number of adults in attendance and the nature of activities planned. Included should be permission for those leaders and/or teachers to act in loco parentis. Include the question, "Does your child have any physical problems that could create a danger for him/her participating in this event?" Attendance would be possible only with parental consent.
    - c. Require written parental permission for a child to be transported by an individual other than his/her parent or guardian.
  8. The Director shall inform with a written notice all personnel involved with the music program that any evidence of child abuse should be promptly reported to the Pastor and/or the Chairman of the Board of Elders.
- F. The Church Organist
- The Church Organist shall be responsible to the Minister and the Director of Music; be available for all Sunday services, all scheduled and special rehearsals, (except for vacations and illness) and all special services that are regular programs of the church.

G. Director of Christian Education

1. Coordinate the operation and activities of the Vacation Bible School, Sunday School, Chi Rho, C.Y.F., and Extended Session, receiving and disbursing funds for each individual program and providing publicity as needed.
  - a. Select, disburse and inventory materials and equipment necessary to maintain the various programs.
  - b. Serve on and coordinate with the Nursery School Team as to use of rooms and their contents.
  - c. Select personnel for the above.
2. The Director of Christian Education shall have as a prime consideration in the selection of all personnel the safety and well being of the youth. She/he shall have on record a form with that intent covering the following personnel.
  - a. Those acting in the capacity of supervisor and/or teachers.
  - b. Those acting in the capacity of drivers to specific functions.
3. Establish and furnish to all staff involved with the youth program a copy of the procedure pertaining to the release of youth up to and including 4th grade involved in organized youth activities.
4. Same as Article II, E 8a, b, c.
5. The Director should inform with a written notice all personnel involved with youth that any evidence of child abuse should be promptly reported to the Pastor and/or the Chairman of the Board of Elders.
6. Youth Activities:
  - a. Vacation Bible School:

The Director of Christian Education shall appoint or act as Bible School Superintendent with the Christian Education Team approval, working closely in all matters pertaining to the Bible School especially those involving the selection of curriculum, music and/or crafts. The Bible School Superintendent shall serve in the capacity of or appoint the Bible School Staff as follows:

Teachers	Pianist
Kitchen Staff	Attendance Secretary
Vocal (music teacher)	Materials Secretary
  - b. Sunday School shall include those from the nursery to the adult classes, each being organized according to age or grade level with an appropriate and sequential curriculum.
  - c. Extended Session shall include nursery through fifth grade, this to be an experience in addition to Sunday School. The curriculum for each shall be unique to the age groups with the goal being preparation for the Sunday Church Services.
  - d. The Chi Rho Youth Group shall be composed of 6th, 7th and 8th grade girls and boys. Their program shall consist of worship, discussion and recreation. They shall meet with other church youth groups, have district meetings and enter into many varied activities pertaining to Christian fellowship and understanding. The Church shall sponsor attendance with one week each year at Camp Christian near Delaware, Ohio.

- e The Christian Youth Fellowship group shall be composed of 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade young people. They shall meet Sunday evening. Their program shall be essentially the same as the Chi Rho Youth program
7. Special Events:  
The Director of Christian Education shall be responsible for specific special events as follows:
- a. Any Sunday School Attendance Recognition
  - b. Teacher Appreciation Sunday
  - c. Graduation Sunday
  - d. Promotion Sunday
  - e. Sunday School Christmas Program
  - f. Learning Festival
  - g. Others assigned by the Pastor

H. The Custodians

It shall be the duty and responsibility of the custodian(s) to maintain the entire property in a clean and orderly condition as directed by the Trustees. This shall include responsibility for necessary security of the buildings.

A written statement or contract setting forth the salary to be paid and other conditions of employment shall be made in quadruple (one each to the office file, one to the Trustees, one to the Treasurer and one to the employee) by the Trustees by January 1st.

### ARTICLE III - ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- A. A nominating team for the elective Church offices, composed of four (4) members of the Governing Board and three (3) members of the congregation who are not members of the Governing Board, has the responsibility of providing the slate of officers.
- B. A candidate for any elected office must be an active member of this church for at least one year.
- C. All suggestions from the congregation for the ballot of officers shall be in the hands of the nominating committee at least thirty (30) days prior to the annual membership election. The committee shall review all nominations submitted by church members and add names recommended by committee members. The committee shall determine the eligibility and qualifications of all nominees and make recommendations to the Elders.

With the approval of the Elders the team shall then seek the consent of those nominated. The entire ballot shall be presented to the congregation for election. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor on the day of election.

- D. The Assistant Treasurer shall serve at the invitation of the Treasurer and the approval of the Governing Board.
- E. An installation service will be held before January 1 for the new slate of officers, the date to be chosen by the Minister.
- F. The members of all boards including electees will elect their own Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary at the last meeting of the church year prior to the July meeting of the Governing Board. The Chairman shall always be an incumbent.
- G. Vacancies to any elective office shall be filled by the Nominating Team, approved by the Board of Elders, and confirmed by the Governing Board.

#### ARTICLE IV - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- A. Chairman of the Governing Board:
  - 1. Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer shall sign a form indicating he/she has received and read the current constitution and bylaws, this to be filed with the January minutes.
  - 2. By January 1 the officers-elect under the leadership of the Chairman shall plan and make appropriate preparations for the ensuing year. By June 30 of the following year the Chairman shall be responsible for the presentation and acceptance of the budget for the ensuing year.
  - 3. The Chairman shall provide a copy of the Constitution to each team and board member he/she appoints.
  - 4. The Chairman shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Governing Board as well as regular and special meetings of the congregation.
- B. The Vice-Chairman shall assume the duties of the Chairman in the absence of that officer. He/she will also serve on special teams or handle special assignments as requested by the Chairman.
- C. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all regular and special business meetings of the Church, serve as secretary of the Governing Board and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Chairman of the Governing Board.
- D. The Church Treasurer shall disburse all funds of the Church according to the authority designated to him/her by the Governing Board, serve as a member of the Finance Team, make reports at each regular meeting of the Governing Board.
- E. The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the treasurer in any manner directed by the Governing Board.

ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF ELDERS, DIACONATE, TRUSTEES, FINANCIAL SECRETARY,  
HISTORIAN

- A. Elders: It shall be the duty of the Elders to:
1. Serve as members of the Governing Board with one vote each.
  2. Be responsible for and require timely reports from the Worship Ministry Team and Nominating Team.
  3. Encourage a deepening of the spiritual life within the congregation.
  4. Serve at the Lord's Table as assigned.
  5. Take Communion to those who cannot attend Church and to others who request it or would appreciate it.
  6. Be available to serve First Communion to new converts after their baptism.
  7. Be available to counsel with the minister; be supportive of the minister as he/she fulfills his/her obligations.
  8. Consider incidents of communicable diseases, special problems of morality or any emergency which would not be brought before the Governing Board.
  9. Have representation on and cooperate with the functioning teams to undergird the work of the entire church.
  10. Support the program of the Church by regular attendance at the Worship Service and Church School classes.
  11. Shall serve as pulpit committee between pastorates and as pulpit supply committee during the temporary absence of the Minister. Maintain constant concern in the evangelistic work of the Church and evidence that concern by assisting in evangelistic projects when requested.
  12. Shall annually prepare and cooperate with the Finance Committee in making salary recommendations for all paid staff except custodian(s).
  13. Shall consider, make recommendations and/or approve the annual slate of officers.
  14. It shall be the duty of the Chairman to receive child abuse accusations and respond according to the law.
  15. Consult with the minister in the hiring of all Church employees except the custodian(s).
  16. To FULFILL his duties an Elder will:
    - a. Read and study for inspiration and enrichment to enlighten the service to the Church as an Elder.
    - b. Dress respectfully and appropriately when serving at the Lord's Table.
    - c. Speak distinctly - with head raised - when praying in public.
    - d. Keep prayers brief and to the subject at hand -- the Lord's Supper.
    - e. Set a worthy example in daily living.
    - f. Exhibit interest in the youth program, new members, guests, older people, in all phases of the Church.
    - g. Become familiar with, cooperate and participate in local, regional and national programs sponsored by the Church.
    - h. Discourage gossip, encourage the brokenhearted, support inter-church activities -- be a worthy Elder and member.
    - i. Assist in and work to promote the well being of the Church.
  17. Will adopt and use the Issue Resolution Process (See article VII, B-4 of the Bylaws.)

- B. Diaconate: It shall be the duty of the Diaconate to :
1. Will be responsible to the Governing Board with 2 votes.
  2. Attend worship services and Church School classes regularly.
  3. Arrange, prepare and serve the Lord's Supper as assigned.
    - a. Prepare the Communion Emblems.
    - b. Keep the Communion set and the offering plates clean and polished.
    - c. See that an adequate supply of bread and grape juice is always in reserve.
  4. Plan for the distribution of the flowers used at the hour of worship.
  5. Have representation on the all teams.
  6. Receive the offering at the hour of worship.
  7. Study and recommend improvements for the services of worship in cooperation with the Worship Team.
  8. Perform detail tasks concerning ventilation, neatness and moving of chairs.
  9. Assist the Pastor with baptismal services.
  10. Act as a "service group" for special occasions.
  11. Study materials on churchmanship in relation to the Diaconate.
  12. Help with the financial and other canvasses when requested.
  13. Hold occasional business and social events to become better acquainted with the new members and instruct them in their duties -- to improve over-all work.
  14. Help maintain reverence during worship.
  15. Greet and introduce guests.
  16. Decorate church exterior and interior for holidays under the direction of the C.A.R.E. Team.
  17. Attend Diaconate meetings regularly.
  18. Assist individuals attending church in anyway necessary.
  19. The chairman of the Diaconate shall have the responsibility to set and chair meetings, regular and special, and to assign and direct ushers, junior diaconate and acolytes.
  20. To FULFILL his/her duties a Diaconate will:
    - a. Present a friendly manner.
    - b. Be reverent, especially during the Communion Service.
    - c. When appropriate acquaint visitors and new members with others attending church as well as with the facility.
    - d. Help make the office of Diaconate dignified, significant and reverent.
    - e. Set an example by his daily Christian living.
    - f. Dress neatly and appropriately.
    - g. Discourage gossip.
    - h. Encourage and promote harmony.
    - i. Grow spiritually as a Diaconate that other offices in the church might prove a challenge for service.
- C. Specific Teams:
1. Christian Education Ministry Team
    - a. Responsible for supervision of the nursery school and Sunday School
    - b. Available for cross-functional activities with other teams.

2. Stewardship Ministry Team
  - a. Analysis of proposals involving financial consideration.
  - b. Financial planning of projects with teams.
  - c. Analysis of annual operating plan
3. Membership Ministry Team
  - a. Responsible for the following sub teams:
    - i. Membership
    - ii. Fellowship
    - iii. Evangelism

D. Trustees:

1. Shall be under the direction and approval of the Governing Board with one vote each.
2. The Property Management Ministry and other teams specifically designated shall be responsible to the Trustees.
3. Shall act as the legal agent for the church in business matters.
4. Hold legal title to all church property and handle all business transactions including insurance coverage.
5. Shall be responsible for hiring, recommending salaries, dismissal of all custodians with Governing Board approval.
6. Shall maintain all church property (real and equipment) in a safe and usable condition.
7. Make recommendations to the Governing Board pertaining to repairs and improvements to buildings and equipment.
8. Records shall be maintained, current appraisals shall be kept for a three-year period as furnished by insurance companies gratis.
9. Insurance coverage shall be reviewed annually and adequate coverage maintained.
10. Rules and regulations shall be established and implemented in regard to the use of buildings and equipment.
11. Will adopt and use the Issue Resolution Process. See Article VII, B-4 of the Bylaws

E. Financial Secretary:

The Financial Secretary shall receive and make a record of all funds and deposit them in the proper Church accounts, keep an individual account record of each contributor, send out statements as directed by the Governing Board, serve as a member of the Stewardship Ministry Team, present a report at each regular meeting of the Governing Board and at the Annual Congregation Meeting.

F. Historian:

The Church Historian shall maintain a permanent file of annual reports and preserve data pertaining to the history, life and work of the Church, making available for publication any historical material authorized by the Governing Board.

## ARTICLE VI - GOVERNING BOARD

- A. The Governing Board shall hold its regular meetings on the second Monday of every other month (6 times per year). In the event of this being a legal holiday or the eve of a legal holiday the meeting may be changed by the Chairman at the previous meeting.
- B. The Governing Board shall hold special meetings as called by the Chairman, or upon the request of five (5) or more members of the Governing Board.
- C. The Governing Board shall consider one-third of the members as constituting a quorum.
- D. The Governing Board shall observe the following order of business:
  - 1. Opening devotions
  - 2. Presiding officer will call the meeting to order; the secretary will record the roll
  - 3. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting
  - 4. Report from the Elders
  - 5. Report from Trustees
  - 6. Report from Diaconate
  - 7. Reports of the Team Ministries
    - a. Christian Education Ministry Team
    - b. Stewardship Ministry Team
    - c. Membership Ministry Team
  - 8. New Business
  - 9. Benediction
  - 10. Adjournment
- E. The personnel of the Governing Board shall be members of the Church and shall consist of the following:
  - 1. Chairman of the Governing Board
  - 2. Vice-Chairman of the Governing Board
  - 3. Secretary
  - 4. Elders
  - 5. Ministry Team Leaders
  - 6. Chairman of the Diaconate
  - 7. Trustees
- F. It shall be the duty of the Governing Board:
  - 1. To consider and recommend general policies to the congregation.
  - 2. To consider and approve all expenditures related to the treasury of the Church and Bible School. Any expenditure exceeding \$5,000.00 outside of the approved budget shall be submitted to the congregation for approval.
  - 3. To transact business.
  - 4. To direct the administration of the program of the Church through the functioning teams.
- G. The Governing Board shall perform its duties according to the authority granted in the Constitution and Bylaws. Annual reports shall be prepared and made available to the members of the congregation prior to the first congregational meeting of the following church year.

- H. The Governing Board shall call for an audit of all Church funds at the close of the fiscal year.

#### ARTICLE VII – TEAMS; MEMBERSHIP, ORGANIZATION AND DUTIES

##### A. Team Membership

1. The Chairman of the Governing Board shall select the following team ministry leaders in consultation with the pastor.
  - a. Christian Education Ministry Team
  - b. Stewardship Ministry Team
  - c. Membership Ministry Team
2. Role of Ministry Team Leaders
  - a. To lead not dictate.
  - b. To delegate wherever possible to those team members with expertise.
  - c. To keep the Issue Resolution process on track.
  - d. To report to Governing Board the status of all issues that are the responsibility of the team.
  - e. To cooperate with other teams to meet the overall objectives of the church.
3. The team ministry chairman shall select their team members on the basis of qualification and hold a minimum of six (6) meetings per year.
4. Team ministers are members of Governing Board and will have 1 vote each.
5. In the event a Team Minister cannot be secured by March 1, the Chairman of the Governing Board may ask the Elder on that team to act as temporary chairman for a period not to exceed three (3) months.

##### B. Team Organizations

1. Each team minister and chairmen of specific teams shall read to his committee the pertinent sections of the Constitution and Bylaws and shall organize the team to conduct the business for which it is responsible (establish objectives, budgets and formulate plans to achieve these objectives) and make reports to the proper authority.
2. Minutes of each meeting shall be recorded and passed on each year and shall be kept for three years.
3. The team shall approve all budgetary expenditures for which they are responsible.
4. All teams shall use the Issue Resolution Process.
  - a. All meetings are Issue/Action Plan Oriented
  - b. 1<sup>st</sup> – Issue definition (What is the issue?)
  - c. 2<sup>nd</sup> – Develop action plan (What are we going to do?)
  - d. 3<sup>rd</sup> – Prioritize or rank with other pending issues.
  - e. 4<sup>th</sup> - Keep track of all issues pending and reason why pending and report to Governing Board. Elders and Trustees exempt for those issues dealing with staff or other issues determined by Elders/Trustees (as a group) to be confidential.
  - f. Once action has been taken and issue resolved, issue is then reported to Board as “Resolved” and entered into Ministry Archive.

- g. #1 rule at all meetings – we will begin and end the meeting with prayer
  - h. #2 rule at all meetings – “Silence is Acceptance”
- C. Property Management Ministry will work cooperatively with teams for the preservation and beautification of the church and grounds

#### ARTICLE VIII - SPECIAL PROJECT TEAMS

When needed to administer the work of the church, the Chairman shall appoint, with approval of the Governing Board, such special project teams as may be needed. These teams shall perform duties assigned and shall continue for such time as designated. The appointed chairman shall be a member of and report to the Governing Board until the responsibilities of the teams are terminated.

#### ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS OF THE BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-third vote of members of the Governing Board present at any regular or special meeting, providing the proposed amendment(s) have been submitted to the members of the Governing Board at least two weeks prior to the vote.