

CONSTITUTION CHANGES

December 2022

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

ARTICLE 8 - AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any business meeting of the Church by a two-thirds majority vote of the members voting on the amendment, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment has been given to each member of the congregation at least one full week prior to the meeting, or that the proposed amendment has been read at the regular Sunday worship services each week for a period of three weeks prior to the vote.

KEY TO INFORMATIONAL CHANGES

New words or phrases to be inserted

HIGHLIGHTED WORDS AND PHRASES TO BE ELIMINATED AND / OR CHANGED

CONSTITUTION ISSUES BEING CONSIDERED

- #1 Membership terminology – expectation of participation statement
- #2 Article 4
 - General Board
 - Officers
 - General Board Chairman required to be a member of the General Board
- #3 Duties Monthly Board Meetings
- #4 Deacons / Deaconess
- #5 Nominations
 - The need and effectiveness of the nomination committee.
- #6 Article 5
 - Wording change between “written contract” to “agreement”.

A CONSTITUTION FOR THE FUNCTIONALLY ORGANIZED CHURCH 2014

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the First Christian Church of New Philadelphia, Ohio, a congregationally-governed body, in order to promote the work of the church in the spirit of Christ, and thus advance His Kingdom, do hereby adopt this constitution.

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The name of this organization shall be First Christian Church of New Philadelphia, Ohio. This independent congregation is committed to the historic principles of the Restoration Movement, whose local congregations are known as Christian Churches or Churches of Christ.

ARTICLE 2 - MISSION

The mission of this Church shall be as revealed in the New Testament:
First Christian Church exists to introduce people to Jesus Christ and to help them become better acquainted, in order to become more fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.
FIND NAD FOLLOW

ARTICLE 3 – MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this Church shall consist of those who are now identified as members of this congregation and those who shall unite with this congregation by baptism into Jesus Christ by immersion or by transfer of membership when previously baptized by immersion.

The mindset of being a member of First Christian means an active participant in the mission of the church and partnering with the leadership to accomplish this purpose

ARTICLE 4 - GOVERNANCE

GENERAL BOARD

Purpose: The General Board is that group of persons vested with the management of the affairs of the Church between congregational meetings.

Membership: The General Board shall consist of the elected and appointed officers of the Church, and the chairpersons of the functional committees or their designees.

Officers: The General Board shall organize itself at a special meeting or the first regular meeting following the annual congregational meeting by electing **electing from the membership of the General Board**

a Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and also appointing a secretary.

The Chairman shall fulfill the usual duties of such an officer. He shall call and preside over all regular and special business meetings of the congregation and serve as Chairman of the General Board.

The Vice-Chairman shall fulfill the duties of the Chairman in his absence.

The Secretary shall keep minutes of all regular and special business meetings of the Church, serve as secretary of the General Board, keep a record of all its regular and special meetings, and perform such other duties as may be assigned.

Duties:

The General Board shall perform its duties according to the authority granted in this Constitution, including:

Review and approve, prior to the annual congregational meeting, the annual budget to be voted on by the congregation.

Review and approve, prior to the annual congregational meeting, the slate of officers to be voted on by the congregation.

Approve the by-laws and any amendments to the by-laws.

Establish the functional committees of the church and coordinate their activities.

Approve the monthly Treasurer's report and payment of bills.

Review and approve all financial reports submitted by the Treasurer.

Perform other such duties as may be necessary to manage the affairs of the Church.

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

Elders

There will be a minimum of five elders to lead the Church.

Duties: The Elders shall be the spiritual leaders overseeing the Church, in accordance with the principles of the New Testament. They shall lead and encourage the membership, by word and by example, in regular attendance at the Lord's Supper, in visitation of the sick and infirm, and in concern for the morally delinquent and spiritually indifferent. They shall give thoughtful consideration to the policies of the Church that will enable it to fulfill its purpose. They shall be responsible for the supervision of the Senior Minister.

Qualifications: Elders shall be male members of the Church who meet the Scriptural qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and I Peter 5:2-3.

Term: The initial term of a first-time Elder shall be one year. The subsequent term of Elder shall be three years. An elder may serve two consecutive terms and shall have a minimum one-year sabbatical before being eligible for re-election to any Church office or committee chair.

Elder Emeritus

Those elders who retire from active responsibility because of infirmity or advanced age, and who have exhibited exemplary service and dedication to the Church may be granted the honorary position of Elder Emeritus by the Board of Elders.

Deacons

Duties: The Deacons shall assist the Elders in the work of the Church. They shall serve the members of the Church with regard to material and functional needs. They shall greet and usher worshippers, distribute the Lord's Supper, visit the sick and infirm, and perform such other duties as may be appropriate or necessary.

Qualifications: Deacons shall be male members of the Church who meet the Scriptural qualifications set forth in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Term: The term of Deacon shall be two years.

DEACONESS

Duties: The Deaconesses shall prepare the Lord's Supper, coordinate Church funeral dinners, assist candidates for baptism, and perform such other duties as may be appropriate or necessary.

Qualifications: Deaconesses shall be female members of the Church who understand the Biblical role of service and exhibit the qualities set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Term: The term of Deaconess shall be two years.

Deacons / Deaconess

Duties: These titles come from a Greek word "diakonos" which mean "servant" Whether male (deacon) or female (deaconess) the individual is simply a servant of the church. The role a deacon / deaconess as a servant is fulfilled but not limited to the following examples. Greeting, ushering, funeral dinners, baptisms, assisting with special activities and events, assisting the elderly and those with special needs.

Qualifications: Deacons / Deaconess qualifications are set forth in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Term: The term of Deacon/Deaconess shall be two years.

Trustees

Duties: The Trustees shall act as the legal agents of the church in all business matters, with the counsel of the Board of Elders and the approval of the General Board. They shall hold legal title to all Church property and handle all business transactions relative thereto, have supervision over all endowment and trust funds, and perform such duties as required by the laws of the State of Ohio. Trustees shall also be responsible for the oversight of all real property and business personal property/equipment. They shall further be responsible for studying needs, making recommendations for improvements, maintaining adequate insurance on all real property and business personal property/equipment.

Qualifications: Trustees shall be members of the Church who understand the Biblical role of service and exhibit the qualities set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Church Historian

Duties: The Church Historian shall be responsible for the historic documents and artifacts of the Church.

Qualifications: The Church Historian shall have been a member of the Church for an extended period of time.

Term: The term of Church Historian shall be two years.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Nominations

Organization: A nominating committee consisting of six members shall be appointed. Three members of the committee shall be selected by the congregation at the annual congregational meeting and three members shall be appointed from the General Board. General Board members shall be those whose terms of office do not expire in the current year. Members selected by the congregation shall not be members of the General Board. Notice of appointment of the nominating committee shall be given to the congregation.

Duties: The nominating committee shall make nominations and seek nominations from the congregation for Church officers. The nominating committee shall review the individuals in nomination for qualifications and prepare a proposed slate of nominee candidates for review by the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders will evaluate the proposed slate with regard to Scriptural qualifications. The Board of

Elders will then return their recommendations for nominee candidates. The Board of Elders shall secure consent to serve from Elder nominee candidates. The nominating committee shall secure consent to serve from all other nominee candidates. The nominating committee shall then prepare a slate of candidates for election and present it to the General Board for approval at least thirty days preceding the annual congregational meeting.

Proposed wording Change

The Board of Elders and the General Board shall provide oversight and assistance to the church office with the nomination process which includes but is not limited to the following steps.

- Receiving nominations from the congregation for church officers.
- Communicating with qualified nominations, the General Board and the Eldership
- Preparing a qualified slate of officers for the Eldership & General Board approval at least thirty days prior to the Annual Congregational Meeting.
- Preparing & processing the ballot of officers for the Annual Meeting.

Elections

Church officers shall be elected at the annual congregational meeting.

Each nominee who receives a majority of the votes cast by ballot of those members present and voting shall be declared elected to office.

Vacancies

At the direction of the General Board, vacancies in any office of the church, except Elders, shall be filled for the current term by nomination by the Elders in consultation with the Senior Minister. The General Board shall then act on the nomination.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Church officers shall be accountable to God, to each other, and to the Congregation.

ARTICLE 5 - SENIOR MINISTER

The Senior Minister of the Church shall perform the duties which usually pertain to that office, and, as spiritual administrator of the Church, he shall be a member of the General Board and an ex-officio member of organized groups, auxiliaries, committees, and departments of the Church. The Senior Minister shall report to the Board of Elders.

The Senior Minister shall be chosen by the Church as hereinafter provided:

A pulpit committee shall be responsible for recommending a candidate.

The Elders must approve the recommendation.

The General Board must approve the recommendation.

The recommendation must be accepted by a two-thirds majority of the members voting in a regular or special business meeting of the Church before the call may be extended.

The term of the Senior Minister may be an indefinite period. **A written contract setting**

An **agreement** setting the salary to be paid and other conditions of the call shall be made in duplicate, one copy for the Senior Minister and one copy for the Church. **Details of the job descriptions and salary will be in accordance with the Employee Handbook**

The Senior Minister may be dismissed, **and his contract terminated**

and the **agreement** terminated by a majority vote cast by ballot of those members present and voting at a congregational business meeting.

ARTICLE 6 - MEETINGS

MEETINGS

The Church shall hold an annual business meeting of the congregation in the month of December.

Special business meetings of the congregation may be called as required. Such meetings may be called by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the General Board, or upon request of the General Board, or by written petition of at least seventy-five voting members of the Church.

An emergency meeting of the congregation may be called by the Senior Minister, Chairman of the General Board, and Chairman of the Board of Elders, or their respective designees, providing that written notice has been given to each member of the congregation at least one full week prior to the meeting date.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Notice of all regular and special meetings of the congregation shall be given at the regular Sunday worship services of the church each week for a period of three weeks in advance of the meeting.

Announcements of special meetings and emergency meetings shall include a statement as to the purpose of the meeting.

MEETING CONDUCT

All business meetings of the Church shall be conducted according to Roberts' Rules of Order.

ARTICLE 7 – BY-LAWS

The General Board may establish such By-Laws, consistent with this Constitution, as may be deemed appropriate for the conduct of its business.

ARTICLE 8 - AMENDMENTS

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_____ Chairman of the Elders

_____ Chairman of the Board

_____ Chair of the Constitution Committee