

BY-LAWS of HILL COUNTRY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Amended on February 19, 2004

I. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONGREGATION

Through the grace and guidance of Jesus Christ, the Congregation shall manage its affairs; own, control and encumber its own property; organize and carry on the mission and witness of the Congregation; establish its budgets and financial policies; call its minister(s) and other staff; and participate, through voting representatives, in the area, regional and general assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in forming the corporate decisions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

II. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

An annual meeting of the Congregation shall be held in the month of November. The General Board shall have authority to call other meetings of the Congregation when needed. Notice of Congregational Meetings shall be announced at a regular Sunday morning worship service of the Congregation at least one week in advance of the meeting, and by means of the church newsletter or a written notice sent through the mail at least ten days before the meeting. Purpose, date, time and place of meeting shall be indicated in each notice. All business meetings of the Congregation shall be conducted in an orderly fashion as suggested by Robert's Rules of Order (Revised).

III. TRUSTEES OF THE CONGREGATION

The Congregation shall elect from its members no more than three (3) Trustees to serve as legal agents of the Congregation in all business matters under direction of the General Board and subject to the approval of the Congregation.

A. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

1. The Congregation, at its annual meeting, shall elect Trustees as needed for a term of five (5) years. The terms of the Trustees shall be staggered in order that no more than one Trustee should normally be elected each year.

2. When a Trustee cannot or will not complete his or her elected term of office, then the Nominating Committee shall select a candidate to be nominated to fill the unexpired term of the office, and the candidate shall be presented to the Congregation for election at a Congregational Meeting.

B. QUALIFICATIONS

1. Trustees must be members of the Congregation.
2. Trustees must be active in the Congregation's life and give evidence of seeking to grow in their own understanding and practice of the Christian life by conducting one's life in light of the teachings of Jesus Christ.
3. Trustees may serve concurrently as officers of the Congregation.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees will provide for the safekeeping of important church papers and records, for procuring proper insurance for the needs of the church, and for supervising all endowment and trust funds.

IV. OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

The Congregation shall elect from its members a Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Secretary, and Treasurer. These individuals shall serve as officers of the Congregation and as Executive Officers of the General Board beginning in January.

A. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

1. The Congregation, at its annual meeting, shall elect these officers for terms of one (1) year. No officer shall serve in any specified office for more than two full consecutive terms nor as any officer of the Congregation for more than four full consecutive terms.
2. When the Moderator cannot or will not complete his or her elected term of office, then the Vice-Moderator shall assume the office and duties of Moderator until the expiration of the current term of office.
3. When an officer, other than the Moderator, cannot or will not complete his or her elected term of office, the Nominating Committee shall select a candidate to be nominated to fill the unexpired term of the office. The candidate shall be presented to the Congregation for election at a Congregational Meeting.

B. QUALIFICATIONS

1. Officers must be members of the Congregation.

2. Officers must be active in the Congregation's life and give evidence of seeking to grow in their own understanding and practice of the Christian life by conducting one's life in light of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the Congregation and General Board and perform such other duties normally associated with the office of Moderator.

2. The Vice-Moderator shall support the Moderator, preside in his or her absence at meetings of the Congregation or General Board, and perform such other duties normally associated with the office of Vice-Moderator. The Vice-Moderator shall act as the chairman of the Personnel Committee as described in section IX, B, 2, b.

3. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the Congregation and General Board, and submit these minutes for review and approval. The Secretary shall maintain a permanent file of all minutes for reference.

4. The Treasurer shall oversee the financial transactions of the Congregation. The Treasurer shall keep accurate records of pledges, receipts, and disbursements and shall report on the financial status of the Congregation at General Board meetings.

5. The Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Secretary and Treasurer will serve as Executive Officers of the General Board and shall have authority to act on behalf of the General Board when it is not practical for the General Board to meet. All actions by the Executive Officers will be subject to subsequent approval by the General Board at the next regular Board meeting. The Executive Officers shall also serve as the supervising body for the senior minister.

V. GENERAL BOARD

The Congregation shall have a General Board, which shall have authority to act on behalf of the Congregation when it is not in a Congregational Meeting. In keeping with the traditions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), ultimate authority shall rest with the Congregation.

A. MEMBERSHIP

1. The General Board shall be composed of the Officers of the Congregation, Elders, Deacons, and chairmen of standing committees.
2. The minister(s) of the Congregation shall serve as member(s) ex-officio without vote on the General Board.
3. Major constituency groups of men, women, youth and CYF not already mentioned may each elect one representative as an ex-officio member without vote of the General Board.

B. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The General Board shall perform its duties according to the authority and responsibility granted in these by-laws or otherwise delegated to it by the Congregation.
2. All organizations and committees within the Congregation shall be responsible to, and report regularly to the General Board and through it to the Congregation.
3. The General Board shall be responsible for conducting the business affairs of the Congregation and providing for the planning, coordination, resourcing, evaluation and implementation of the work and activities of the Congregation.
4. Stated meetings of the General Board shall be held at least once a month.
5. Special meetings of the General Board shall be called by the Moderator upon written request of the minister(s) or twenty (20) percent of the members of the General Board or twenty (20) percent of the current participating members of the Congregation. Notice of special meetings shall be made by telephone, by mail, or by announcement at a regular Sunday morning worship service of the Congregation at least one week in advance of the meeting. The purpose, date, time and place of the meeting shall be indicated in each notice.
6. All business meetings of the General Board shall be conducted in an orderly fashion as suggested by Robert's Rules of Order (Revised).
7. Fifty-one (51) percent of the members of the General Board shall constitute a quorum.
8. The General Board shall establish standing committees related to the basic

needs and activities of the Congregation, as follows: Worship, Church Growth, Education, Youth Ministry Council, Membership, Outreach, Stewardship, Fundraising, and Property. The work of these committees shall be as described in section IX, A.

9. The General Board shall establish, when necessary, a Pulpit Committee for the purpose of securing a minister for the Congregation as outlined in section VI, B.

10. The General Board shall establish other committees as needed for the conduct of its work.

11. The General Board shall receive a report from the Stewardship Committee annually, outlining proposed expenditures for programs and activities, ministry goals, and proposed budget of the Congregation for the upcoming year. The General Board shall recommend its approval or approval with amendment to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation.

VI. MINISTER(S)

A. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The senior minister of the Congregation shall serve as the chief administrator of the church staff and spiritual leader of the Congregation, encouraging the growth of the church in faithfulness to the call of Jesus Christ. He or she will promote the Congregation's outreach ministries and serve as a representative of the Congregation in denominational and ecumenical gatherings. In cooperation with the Congregation's officers and Elders, the senior minister will foster the development of lay leadership to carry out the ministries of the church.

2. The senior minister shall be an ex-officio member without vote on all boards, committees, departments, commissions, task groups and constituency groups of the Congregation.

3. Associate and licensed ministers of the Congregation will assist the senior minister and Elders in developing and fostering the spiritual life of the church. Associate and licensed ministers shall carry out assigned ministries and duties, and serve under supervision of the senior minister.

4. The minister(s) will maintain his or her standing within the ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and will encourage orderly procedures within the Congregation's life in compliance with the Constitution, by-laws and

policies of the Congregation and General Board

B. SELECTION

The salaried minister(s) shall be chosen by the Congregation as hereinafter described:

1. A Pulpit Committee shall be an ad-hoc committee appointed by the Moderator and approved by the General Board. It shall be composed of the Moderator, the chairman of the Elders, and eight (8) persons representative of the whole Congregation. The Moderator shall name one of these members to chair the committee. Whenever possible, specific individuals appointed to the Pulpit Committee shall remain the same through the minister calling process, for continuity purposes.
2. The Pulpit Committee shall utilize the services of the Congregation's Area Minister for information and counsel concerning prospective candidates and shall follow the Area/Region recommended procedures for seeking a minister.
3. The Pulpit Committee shall recommend a prospective minister to the General Board.
4. The General Board must approve the recommendation of the Pulpit Committee by at least a two-thirds majority. Upon approval, the General Board shall recommend employment of the prospective minister to the Congregation.
5. The Congregation must approve the recommendation of the General Board by at least a two-thirds majority vote of congregational members present.
6. Upon approval of the Congregation, a call shall be extended to the prospective minister by the General Board, on behalf of the Congregation.

C. TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

1. An agreement of employment setting forth the salary to be paid to the minister and other conditions of the call shall be provided the minister, with a copy filed in the church office and with the Area Office.
2. The term of ministry shall be for an indefinite period and may be terminated upon forty-five (45) days notice.

D. RESIGNATION/TERMINATION

1. Voluntary resignation of the minister shall be submitted to the General Board in writing and communicated to the Congregation, after consultation with the Moderator and the Elders.
2. Involuntary resignation of the minister shall be dealt with confidentially between the minister, the Moderator, the Elders and the Area Minister. The General Board must approve the involuntary termination of the minister by a two-thirds majority. The Congregation must finally approve the involuntary termination of the minister by a majority vote of congregational members present.

VII. ELDERS AND DEACONS

A. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

1. The Congregation at its Annual Meeting shall elect one-half of its Elders for terms of two (2) years and other Elders as needed to fill any vacant and unexpired terms.
2. The Congregation at its Annual Meeting shall elect Deacons for terms of one (1) year.
3. The total number of Elders shall be determined annually by the General Board at its August meeting, and be based on the current size of the congregation.
4. The total number of Deacons shall be two per Worship Team.

B. QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications for Elders and Deacons shall be the same as described for the officers of the Congregation in section IV, B.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Elders will assist the minister(s) in developing and fostering the spiritual life of the Congregation, will provide supportive counsel for the minister(s), and will assist and share in the minister's pastoral and priestly functions.
 - a. The Elders shall meet regularly to plan, evaluate, and prepare for their activities. They shall choose from their number a chairman who will coordinate the work of the Elders and participate in the Worship Committee.

b. An Elder shall assist as needed during each worship service and provide support and counsel to other worship leaders.

2. The Deacons of the church shall be the Worship Team Leaders. Deacons will assist in promoting the growth and maintenance of the Congregation through service on the General Board and coordination of the Congregation's worship life, enlisting all members of the Congregation in voluntary service.

a. Deacons shall meet as needed to plan, evaluate, and prepare for their activities. They shall choose from their number a chairman who will coordinate the work of the Deacons and participate in the Worship Committee.

b. Deacons shall coordinate the work of volunteers who serve during each worship service and provide support and training in the duties and methods appropriate to the worship service.

3. Ministers, Elders and Deacons shall work together to assure that members of the Congregation who are not able to attend worship services, or have special needs, are provided with opportunities to participate in the worship and fellowship life of the Congregation.

VIII. WORSHIP TEAMS

Worship Teams will be organized annually for the purpose of assisting with the worship service. All members of the Congregation shall be assigned to one of the Worship Teams. The number of Worship Teams shall be determined annually by the General Board at its August meeting. The Worship Teams shall promote fellowship among the members. Meetings of each Worship Team shall be called as needed by the Worship Team Leaders.

IX. COMMITTEES

A. STANDING COMMITTEES

1. The chairman of a standing committee holds voting membership on the General Board by virtue of their selection.

a. The chairman of each standing committee shall be elected within the committee.

b. The chairman of a standing committee shall provide a report, in the

form specified by the Moderator, to the General Board of the activities and needs of the committee.

2. The Moderator, minister(s) and Worship Team Leaders, shall recruit members to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the standing committees.

a. Worship Committee: will organize the worship life of the Congregation on Sunday morning and at other times to give honor to God. The committee will be responsible for the decoration of the worship space, for the procurement of worship materials, and for the training of worship leaders and servers. The committee will be responsible for assisting the Congregation in celebrating the various seasons of the church year with the goal of deepening the faith of the gathered community.

b. Church Growth Committee: will encourage the growth of the Congregation by identifying and welcoming persons within the community who are without a church home. It will train the Congregation to be inviting in all its activities and develop programs to respond to those who inquire about the Congregation. The committee will be responsible for communicating news and information about the church to the public at large.

c. Education Committee: will organize opportunities for members of the Congregation to extend their knowledge of the Christian faith and the Bible. It will coordinate all Sunday School activities and encourage the development of study groups at other times and in other settings.

d. Youth Ministry Council: will oversee all youth activities outside of the Sunday School time period. It will include the youth sponsors, three parent representatives, and one from each of the following age groups: CYF, Chi-Rho, and Juniors, two CYF youth, and two Chi-Rho youth.

e. Membership Committee: will seek to foster a sense of community and fellowship within the Congregation by developing opportunities for members of the church to know one another and work together. It will plan regular fellowship events, including meals, which bring the members of the church together in informal settings. It will oversee the fellowship aspect of the Sunday morning schedule so that all who come feel welcomed and refreshed. It will organize the Congregation's response to those who are ill, hospitalized, in crisis, or in grief, and will monitor the involvement of all members giving particular attention to the inactive.

f. Outreach Committee: will seek to involve the Congregation in projects that address the needs of both our local and global communities. It will serve as an interpreter to the Congregation of the ministries they support through their giving, particularly the mission programs of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The committee will encourage the participation of the church in the ecumenical and interfaith activities of the community that are consistent with the faith and belief of the Congregation, and seek to involve the membership in the active expression of their commitment by providing opportunities for service.

g. Stewardship Committee: will seek to educate the Congregation about opportunities for giving as an expression of faith and thanksgiving. The Stewardship Committee shall give periodic reports to the Congregation, and in cooperation with the Treasurer, will encourage orderly procedures for the counting, recording, depositing, and disbursing of church funds. The committee will appoint qualified individuals not involved in the subject year's financial record keeping to perform an internal review of the church's financial records on an annual basis. It will conduct an annual pledge campaign to gain financial support for the total program of the church and to survey volunteers service interests. The committee will prepare an annual budget as a way of projecting the Congregation's needs for its ministry and mission.

h. Fundraising Committee: will organize and oversee fundraising events of the Congregation, will seek volunteers to assist, and will report regularly to the General Board. The Committee will organize at least one major fundraising event per year.

i. Property Committee: will see that the land, buildings, and equipment that are owned by the Congregation are properly inventoried, insured, and maintained. Subject to approval by the General Board, the Property Committee, in consultation with the Worship Committee, shall develop, maintain, and administer written guidelines concerning the use of, and access to, Church property, including statement of fees to be collected for such usage.

B. SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Nominating, Personnel, and Pastoral Relations Committees are established as permanent bodies. The chairman of a special committee does not hold voting membership on the General Board unless the person also holds an elected office or standing committee chair position that has voting privileges. The chairmen of the

Nominating, Personnel, and Pastoral Relations Committees shall provide a report to the General Board, in a form specified by the Moderator, of the activities and needs of the committee.

1. Nominating Committee

a. At or before the July General Board meeting, the Moderator shall appoint and the General Board approve the Nominating Committee. The committee shall consist of four members, and shall elect its own chairman. No less than two, nor more than three, of the members shall have served on the Nominating Committee in the previous year.

b. The Nominating Committee shall nominate all those to be elected by the Congregation at its annual meeting.

c. The Nominating Committee shall also make nominations to fill vacancies of any uncompleted terms of office.

2. Personnel Committee

a. The Personnel Committee will establish employment policies on behalf of the Congregation including job descriptions, vacation time, sick leave, family leave, and performance review.

b. The committee will be chaired by the Vice-Moderator of the Congregation and will include the chairman of the Elders, the chairman of the Stewardship Committee and three members of the Congregation.

c. The Moderator will appoint one member from the Congregation each January for a three-year term and also fill any vacancies on the committee, with all appointments approved by the General Board.

d. In the selection and supervision of all non-ministerial staff, the committee will cooperate with the appropriate standing committees, for example: Worship Committee and musicians; Education Committee and children/youth workers and nursery attendants; and Property Committee and custodial staff.

e. The committee will make salary recommendations to the Stewardship Committee after consultation with the employee and the applicable supervising committee.

f. The Personnel Committee will review and seek to resolve employee grievances with fairness for the employee and Congregation. The committee also has authority to dismiss an employee, if required.

3. Pastoral Relations Committee

a. Pastoral Relations Committee will meet at least once each quarter to provide supportive counsel for the minister(s). It will nurture both the person and the office of the minister(s) by serving as a liaison between the Congregation and the minister(s), and as a soundboard for problems or issues.

b. At the November General Board meeting, the Moderator shall appoint (with counsel from the senior minister), and the General Board approve the Pastoral Relations Committee. The committee shall consist of four members, and shall elect its own chairman.

C. AD-HOC COMMITTEES

1. Ad-hoc committees generally address special requirements of the General Board and are established only as long as necessary to fulfill assigned tasks.

2. The chairman of an ad-hoc committee does not hold voting membership on the General Board unless the person also holds an elected office or standing committee chair position that has voting privileges.

a. The Moderator of the General Board shall appoint the chairman and members of an ad-hoc committee with approval by the General Board.

b. The chairman of an ad-hoc committee shall provide a report in a form specified by the Moderator to the General Board of the results, progress, and needs of the committee.

3. Pulpit Committee shall be appointed for the purpose of identifying and recommending a prospective minister. The Pulpit Committee's makeup and duties are described in section VI, B.

X. AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Board, provided the proposed amendment has been read at the previous month's board meeting.