

By-Laws Revisionary Document
FOR BOARD REVIEW
First Colony Christian Church
Updated: 8/13/2012

ARTICLE I – PURPOSE

The By-Laws shall govern, outline, and dictate First Colony Christian Church (hereafter referred to as the Church) within the framework of the Church Constitution.

ARTICLE II – ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Church structure shall be comprised of the following groups, Branches and positions:

- A. The General Board
- B. The Trustees
- C. Facilities Manager, reporting to the General Board
- D. The Financial Branch, comprised of:
 - 1. The Treasurer, reporting to the General Board
 - 2. The Financial Secretary, reporting to the Treasurer
- E. The Ministries Branch, comprised of:
 - 1. Educational Ministry, reporting to the General Board
 - 2. Pastoral Ministry, reporting to the General Board
 - 3. Worship Ministry, reporting to the General Board
- F. The Deaconate, reporting to the General Board
- G. The Church Elders, reporting to the General Board
- H. The Church Membership

ARTICLE III – THE GENERAL BOARD

- A. The Board shall be comprised of the following positions:
 - 1. The Chair of the Board
 - a. The Chair shall be elected by a vote of the Membership (Article X), to serve a term of 1 year.
 - b. The Chair shall chair and preside over the General Board and its meetings and call and preside at all business meetings of the Membership. The Chairman shall be an ex-officio member of all committees not described in the By-Laws. The Chair shall be the ceremonial head of the Church, representing the Church or the Membership at any official or public functions. The Chair shall hold responsibility for execution of the By-Laws.
 - 2. The Vice-Chair of the Board
 - a. The Vice-Chair shall be elected by a vote of the Membership (Article X) to serve a term of 1 year.
 - b. The Vice-Chair shall function as the Chair in the Chair's absence and shall work in conjunction with the Chair.
 - 3. The Secretary of the Board

a. The Secretary shall be elected by a vote of the Membership (Article X) to serve a term of 1 year.

b. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the General Board and of the Membership and shall be responsible for the records of the General Board. In the absence of the Secretary, an Acting Secretary may be appointed by the Chairman. The Secretary shall report to the Board the minutes of the preceding Board meeting. The Secretary shall make available the minutes of each Board meeting to any Church member who requests it, including copies of a printed or electronic nature.

4. The Treasurer of the Board (Article VI)

5. Each of the Church Elders (Article IX)

6. The Lead Deacon (Article VIII)

7. A Representative of each of the three Church Ministries (Article VII)

8. The Facilities Manager (Article V)

B. Members of the Board may hold multiple positions (ex. the Facilities Manager may also be an Elder) with the following exceptions:

1. No person may hold more than one position among Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, or Treasurer.

2. No person may hold more than one position among Deacon, Elder, or Trustee.

C. The General Board shall have:

1. Authority to employ such persons, except the Pastor, as the operations of the Church may require.

2. Authority to appoint members to positions, departments, and committees whose appointment is not otherwise specified herein.

3. Authority to call for, receive, consider, approve, disapprove, modify, and/or act on reports from all Church committees, ministries, departments, and organizations.

4. Authority to approve nominations for election, alterations of the By-Laws, alterations of the Constitution, and a fiscal Budget to be referred to the Membership for approval.

5. Authority to conduct the business affairs of the Church where not described or assigned elsewhere herein, including obligate and expel funds of the Church in accordance with the approved budget.

6. Responsibility and oversight for the care, custody and control of the property of the Church, real, personal, and monetary, but shall not have the authority to directly or request that the Trustees purchase, sell, mortgage, or transfer real property without approval of the Membership obtained through an Official Meeting of the Membership (Article XI).

7. Responsibility for nominating the Pastors of the Church for election by the Membership.

8. Any other Authority described directly or implied herein.

9. Responsibility to fulfill or delegate all duties by any Church position vacant until filled.

D. The General Board shall meet regularly and no less than once a quarter. These meetings shall be open to the public and the date, time, and all reasonable information needed to attend these meetings shall be publicized. All in attendance will have license to speak and/or bring business before the Board. Discussion of new business may be deferred to the next meeting of the General Board at the discretion of the Chair, provided that it is addressed in a timely manner.

1. A closed session may be held as part of a meeting of the General Board when:

- a. A topic sensitive to a specific individual is discussed (salary, dismissal, etc...)
- b. Only those directly affected by the topic are asked to leave
- c. The topic is announced before anyone is asked to remove themselves
- d. Only the announce topic(s) are discussed in closed session
- e. The results of the closed session are disclosed to excused individuals

E. The meetings of the General Board will follow a structured procedure and make decisions by vote.

1. A quorum of the General Board must be present to call any vote. A quorum is defined as more than 50% of the Members of the General Board defined herein under Article III Section A.
2. Only Members of the General Board may vote.
3. The Chair or anyone acting in his/her stead may only vote to resolve a tie.
4. Those voting must be present and active at the meeting where the vote is held.
5. Votes will be resolved by a simple majority.

F. The Chair may call for an electronic vote outside of a regular scheduled meeting of the General Board. In such instances all Members of the General Board must be notified of the vote and have reasonable time to consider and participate in the vote. More than 50% of the entire Board is needed to carry a motion outside of a scheduled meeting.

1. Should anyone challenge the purpose of holding the vote outside of a meeting before the vote is resolved, the Chair shall make the challenge known in the same manner that the vote was communicated. If the challenge is seconded the vote will be considered invalid, and must be addressed in a scheduled meeting only.
2. The details of such a vote shall be submitted to the Board Secretary for inclusion in Minute form to be approved by the Board.

G. The minutes, financial documents, and handouts presented by and/or to the board shall be made accessible to the Membership by request, and in an uncensored and unaltered form. Requests for information and records by non-member entities shall be handled in accordance with the Church's legal obligation.

ARTICLE IV – THE TRUSTEES

A. There shall be three Trustees.

1. The Trustees shall be elected by a vote of the Membership (Article X).
2. The Trustees shall serve for a term of three years. These terms shall be in a staggered rotation so that one term expires each year.

B. The Trustees shall be the legal representatives of the Church. The Trustees shall hold oversight on all financial records created by and/or relating to the Church and any of its activities or operating procedures.

1. The Trustees hold the power to audit the Church financials as they see fit. They shall also audit the Church financials if requested so by a vote of the General Board.

C. The Trustees shall serve on the annual Budgetary Committee (defined in Article VI).

ARTICLE V – THE FACILITIES MANAGER

A. The Facilities Manager shall be elected by a vote of the General Board, to serve a term of 1 year.

B. The Facilities Manager shall be responsible for the general upkeep of the Church's buildings, grounds, and properties.

C. The Facilities Manager shall schedule, direct, and coordinate the following on behalf of the General Board:

1. Custodial staff and/or volunteers handling custodial duties
2. Outside repair and/or construction companies/contractors
3. Membership Volunteer Workdays
4. Lawn service companies/ volunteers
5. Vermin exterminators

D. The Facilities Manager shall be present to report at all scheduled meetings of the General Board.

1. In his/her absence the Facilities Manager may instead prepare a report to be presented to the General Board.

ARTICLE VI – THE FINANCIAL BRANCH

A. Treasurer

1. The Treasurer shall be elected by a vote of the Membership (Article X), to serve a term of 2 years.
2. The Treasurer shall act as the disbursing agent of the Church, as directed by the General Board. The Treasurer shall keep accurate records of all receipts and disbursements and shall make written reports of the finances of the Church to each regular meeting of the general Board.
3. The Treasurer shall be present at the Annual Meeting of the Membership where he shall present a report of the finances of the Church, and be available to answer any questions pertaining to the Church finances (Article XI). The Treasurer shall also present the budget produced by the Budget Committee at the Annual Meeting of the Membership (Article VI Section C).

B. Financial Secretary

1. The Financial Secretary shall be elected by a vote of the General Board, to serve a term of 2 years that stagger with the Treasurer's term.
2. The Financial Secretary shall hold responsibility for all financial deposits and the upkeep of financial records related to contributions.
3. The Financial Secretary shall issue Quarterly and Annual Statements to the Membership detailing their personal donations for the reflected period. These statements may be distributed by mail, in person, by email or electronic transmission, or any other way that the Financial Secretary sees fit so long as the material is in a written format acceptable for submission to or reference by the Internal Revenue Service.
4. At no time and through no other Church position may the Financial Secretary be a signer on any financial account the Church holds with a financial institution including but not limited to Banks and Credit Unions.

C. Budget Committee

1. The Budget Committee shall to prepare a financial plan (hereafter referred to as the Budget) for the following fiscal year.
2. The Budget Committee shall be comprised of:
 - a. The Treasurer, who shall chair the committee
 - b. The Trustees

- c. The Financial Secretary
 - d. Additional volunteers from the General Board or membership, not to exceed three and not to include the Chair of the General Board or any paid employee of the Church.
3. During the Budget Committee process, the Pastor must be allowed to present his vision for the upcoming year for the committee's consideration.
 4. Upon completion, the Budget Committee shall submit the Budget to the Board for approval and acceptance by vote, no later than the November Board meeting.
 5. Once the budget is approved by the Board, it shall be presented to the Membership at the Annual Meeting of the Membership by the Treasurer for final approval.
 6. Should either the Board or the membership reject the presented Budget, the Budget Committee shall re-convene until a Budget is produced that is accepted.

ARTICLE VII – THE MINISTRIES BRANCH

A. Pastoral Ministry

1. The Pastor provides spiritual oversight and leadership direction to Church leaders and the Membership. He/She is to preach, teach, disciple, evangelize, and counsel those in need. He is to be a champion of the Church's mission statement and vision.
2. The responsibilities of the Pastor are:
 - a. To preach and/or teach the Sunday morning services
 - b. To lead the Membership in Communion
 - c. To perform baptisms
 - d. To work with the Worship Minister in preparing appropriate worship services
 - e. To maintain contact with all supported Church missionaries and missions and see that the Membership is also involved therein
 - f. To delegate and oversee outreach activities
 - g. To oversee the assimilation of new attendees
 - h. To create an inviting environment in accordance with the Church's vision
 - i. To participate and interact with Christian education of all ages
 - j. To provide short term counseling as needed; will be available and responsive to crisis situations
 - k. To select replacement preacher/speaker when absent
 - l. The Pastor is responsible for the Church office and administration including hiring/dismissing staff within budget given and coordinating volunteers
 - m. To provide spiritual leadership and oversight to the Education Ministry
3. To select a new Pastor, a committee will be formed to seek out and interview candidates. Selections made by the committee shall then be submitted to the Board for review. Once the Board approves a prospective Pastor, an Official Meeting of the Membership shall be called where the prospective Pastor will be presented and voted on. Should the Membership reject a prospect, the process shall begin again until the Membership approves a Pastor.
4. The Pastor shall be evaluated annually in private meeting by the Lead Elder and the Chair of the General Board. The Chair shall then recommend any action needed as a result of the evaluation to the General Board including but not limited to recommendations of pay raise, reward, censure, penalty, or dismissal.

B. Educational Ministry

1. The Educational Ministry shall hold responsibility for the education, growth, and discovery of the children, youth, and adults within the Membership.
2. The General Board shall oversee the organization of the Education Ministry and appoint and/or dismiss Directors as required by the needs and size of the Membership (ex. Youth Ministry).
3. Each Education Director shall be responsible for the following within their domain:
 - a. Selecting, planning, and scheduling programs
 - b. Recruiting, training, and scheduling volunteers
 - c. Managing and allocating specifically designated funds as dictated by the Annual Budget
4. The Education Directors shall select one from their number to represent the Education Ministry as a member of the General Board.
5. Each Director maybe called upon by the General Board to give a report of assessment of their program to the Membership at an Official Meeting of the Membership.
6. The General Board may promote any Director to a Minister as they see fit to indicate an increased spiritual role within their duties, and to assign all legal connotations of the minister title to that individual.

C. Worship Ministry

1. The Worship Minister shall be appointed by the Pastor, and confirmed by a vote of the General Board.
2. The Worship Minister shall do the following with regards to each Worship service:
 - a. Select music
 - b. Recruit, practice, and lead musicians
 - c. Managing and allocating specifically designated funds as dictated by the Annual Budget
3. The Worship Minister shall be a voting member of the General Board with all the duties and responsibilities that it entails.
4. The Worship Minister shall be evaluated on an annual basis by the Pastor, or in his absence the General Board.

ARTICLE VIII - THE DEACONATE

A. The Deaconate provides service to the Membership at worship within the Church, and serves as ambassadors of the Church to guests and the local community. Duties include but are not limited to:

1. Serving Communion
2. Greeting and ushering service attendees
3. Assisting with the organization and facilitation of Church events and projects

B. There shall be one deacon for every ten members of the Church or portion thereof with a minimum of eight. There is no maximum limit to the Deaconate.

C. The deacons shall select one of their own to be the Lead Deacon. The Lead Deacon shall be responsible for assignation and scheduling of duties, and shall represent the Deaconate as a member of the General Board and on the Nominating Committee.

D. Deacons shall be elected by a vote of the Membership (Article X) to serve a 2 year term.

E. Deacons must hold membership within the Church.

ARTICLE IX – THE CHURCH ELDERS

- A. The Church Elders shall serve as the spiritual leaders of the Church. This shall be accomplished by but not limited to:
1. Promoting the growth and welfare of the Church
 2. Encourage by example and word the missionary, evangelistic, and educational responsibilities of the Church
 3. Give spiritual counsel to the Pastor
 4. Serve Communion
 5. Visitation to homebound or hospitalized members
- B. There shall be one Elder for every 25 members of the Church or portion thereof with a minimum of three.
- C. The Church Elders shall be elected by a vote of the Membership (Article X) to serve a 3 year term on a staggered cycle.
- D. Elders must hold membership within the Church.
- E. The Elders shall meet at least quarterly to:
1. Provide spiritual feedback to the Pastor
 2. Evaluate to spiritual impact of the Church's program of works and policies
 3. Agree upon suggestions, criticisms, and observations to be presented to the General Board
- F. The Elders shall select one of themselves to handle the scheduling of Elder duties, to be referred to as Lead Elder. The Lead Elder shall be first among equals and shall hold no authority, only responsibility.

ARTICLE X – ELECTION OF POSITIONS BY MEMBERSHIP

- A. The Membership shall elect representatives to serve in the following positions:
1. Chair of the Board
 2. Vice-Chair of the Board
 3. Secretary of the Board
 4. Treasurer
 5. Trustees
 6. Elders
 7. Deacons
- B. The following positions shall not be elected by the Membership, instead being selected directly by the General Board:
1. Facilities Manager
 2. Financial Secretary
- C. Nominating Committee
1. The Nominating Committee shall be comprised of:
 - a. The Lead Elder
 - b. The Lead Deacon
 - c. Additional volunteers from the Membership or General Board, not to exceed three, with preference given to non-Board volunteers.
 - d. The Nominating Committee shall select a Chair from its own members.

2. The Nominating Committee shall secure consent from potential nominees, and shall present nominations to the General Board for each existing and anticipated vacancy to be approved by the Board. This presentation will take place no later than the November meeting of the General Board.

a. If the General Board rejects the nominations presented, the General Board shall provide guidance to the Nomination Committee for revision of nominations.

b. The Nominating Committee shall then present a revised list of nominations for approval by the General Board in advance of the Annual Meeting of the Membership.

3. Once the nominations have been approved by the General Board, they shall be presented to the Membership at the Annual Meeting for vote.

a. Election for a position is granted by a simple majority of the eligible Members present and casting a vote at the Annual Meeting of the Membership.

b. If the Membership rejects the nominations presented, in whole or in part, nominations shall be accepted from the Membership at the Annual Meeting of the Membership (from the floor) and voting shall be conducted by secret ballot for any positions for which more than one nomination has been tendered.

ARTICLE XI –OFFICIAL MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP

A. The Chair with approval of the General Board may call an Official Meeting of the Membership as they see fit or need.

B. All Official Meetings of the Membership shall be open to the public and none shall be denied attendance, though candidates for Membership elected positions may be asked to briefly remove themselves in the event of a secret vote (see Article X) at the Annual Meeting.

C. All Official Meetings of the Membership shall be held in the worship place of the Church, or in another location easily accessible to the Membership, and scheduled at a time and on a day that is considerate of the membership body as a whole.

D. The leadership of the Church (General Board and Pastor holding responsibility) shall notify the Membership of the intent to hold a meeting and the date and time of such meeting, as well as any other information necessary to attend the meeting, multiple times beginning no later than two weeks prior to the meeting.

1. The notification shall be delivered by whatever medium deemed appropriate, but in a minimum of two separate ways (ex. – Announcement from the podium in service, posting on bulletin board, and email blast to membership).

2. The notification shall stipulate the purpose of the meeting and the business to be discussed and addressed. No business may be handled in the meeting other than what is identified in advance in the notification. Should new business be raised, a new meeting must be scheduled and held, following all rules outlined herein (Article XI).

E. The Chair of the General Board shall preside over the Official Meeting, except where the Chair is being discussed or dealt with in some manner, at which point the Vice–Chair or Lead Elder shall preside.

F. Where voting is needed, the Chair shall call, tally, and announce the results of each vote, except where a conflict of interest concerning the Chair is expressed. In this instance an appropriate person holding a Membership Elected Position shall intercede.

1. Only Members shall vote, and each Member shall cast only one vote. No proxy or absentee votes will be accepted.

2. Each vote and its results will be made known publicly to the Membership.
- G. An Official Meeting of the Membership must be held as an annual meeting during the second week of December. The specific business of the December Annual Meeting of the Membership shall include but is not limited to:
1. A report of the general health and welfare of the Church, given by the Chair of the General Board
 2. The Treasurer shall give the following reports:
 - a. A Report covering in detail the finances of the current and concluding Fiscal Year. The Treasurer shall open the floor to questions about this report in open forum, and shall answer all such inquiries to the best of his ability and to the satisfaction of the questioner. Should the Treasurer not be able to give an appropriate answer by his own admission or by general consent, (s)he shall provide an answer in a future public forum, such as a worship service, provided that no more than one month has passed from the Meeting in which the question was asked and public notification of the answer presentation is made in advance.
 - b. The Budget produced by the Budget Committee (Article VI.C.) and approved by the board, for acceptance by simple majority vote of the present and voting Membership.
 - c. All reports submitted by the Treasurer shall be available in written form prior to the date of the Annual Meeting for review by the Membership.
 3. The Chair shall present General Board approved nominations for electable positions (Article X) for acceptance by simple majority vote of the present and voting Membership. Each nomination shall be presented separately.

ARTICLE XII - REVISION OF BY-LAWS

- A. The current By-Laws shall be provided to each member of the General Board, for review, at the beginning of each fiscal year and to any member of the Church, upon request.
- B. During any meeting of the General Board, any member of the Church may request a review of the By-Laws by the General Board. The requesting member shall provide an indication of specific areas of concern and the review will occur during the next scheduled meeting of the General Board, to evaluate the necessity of revisions and updates to the By-Laws.
 1. Revision of the By-Laws shall be initiated only by a vote of the General Board.
- C. By-Laws Revision Committee
 1. Once revision is approved by the General Board, a committee of not less than four members of volunteers from the General Board and/or Membership shall be commissioned to draft recommendations for revisions of the By-Laws.
 2. The committee shall be headed by the Chair of the General Board or a delegate appointed by the Chair.
 3. The By-Laws Revision Committee shall present a revised draft of the By-Laws to the General Board for approval.
 - a) If the General Board rejects the draft presented, the General Board shall provide guidance to the By-Laws Revision Committee for revision of the By-Laws draft. The By-Laws Revision Committee shall reconvene to consider the Board's guidance.

4. Once the draft of the By-Laws has been approved by the General Board, it shall be presented to the Membership for voting, either at the Annual Membership Meeting or at a special meeting called for such purpose.

a) No draft of the By-Laws, or portion thereof, shall be in effect until approved by a vote of the Membership.