

## **By-Laws**

### **Preamble**

The members of The First Congregational Christian Church (1867), The Trinity Evangelical and Reformed Church (1874) and The First Evangelical and Reformed Church (1892), all of St. Joseph, Buchanan County, Missouri, having voted on September 24, 1961 to merge these three churches into one united congregation under the Basis of Union, in order to more fully express their oneness in Christ and to make more effective their common witness in Him, and to serve His Kingdom in the world, adopt a Constitution and these By-Laws as a fulfillment of that basis of Union. They were united on October 15, 1961 preserving for future generations the historic traditions of each.

The provisions herein define and regulate the organization and administration of this church and the relationship of members, board, cabinet, commissions and committees with the church and with each other. The pattern of relationship and procedures so described is to enable the members, board, cabinet, commissions and committees to accomplish their tasks and the work of the Church.

### **Article I Membership**

- Section 1.** Persons who meet the requirements stated in the Articles of Agreement may become members by making application to the Pastor or the Commission on Church and ministry. The Pastor shall take the necessary steps to receive them into membership. Applicants for membership shall be instructed in the Holy Scriptures, in the Christian way of life and in the standard of faith and doctrine.
- Section 2.** Members shall be encouraged to take an active part in the life and work of the church, including regular attendance at worship services. They shall give financial and moral support to the maintenance of the church and its benevolent undertakings. They shall make an honest effort to conduct themselves at all times as Christians in their relations with other members, in their business and home life and in the total life of the community. They shall endeavor to increase their knowledge of God and His way for us. They shall keep informed on the Christian church in all parts of the world and shall share their faith with all with whom they have contact.
- Section 3.** All members in good standing are entitled to voice, vote and to hold office in the church. They are entitled to share fully in the fellowship and spiritual blessing of the church, the services of the Pastor and church officers and the sympathy and support of the members.
- Section 4.** Members may ask for a letter of transfer to another Christian church. This letter shall be given upon vote of the Commission on Church and Ministry. All the member's right to vote shall be terminated and his membership shall be terminated upon receipt of notice from the other body that his letter has been accepted. If a member wished to join a body which will not accept a letter of transfer, the church shall terminate his membership upon receipt of notice that said member has been received into the other body.
- Section 5.** Members whose addresses are unknown for two years or who for a similar period of time have not communicated with the church or contributed to its support shall, upon vote of the Commission on Church and Ministry cease to be reported and shall be placed upon the inactive list. It shall be the duty of the Commission on Church and Ministry to attempt to contact such members and renew their active participation in the church. If, after an additional year, such a member has not renewed contact with the church, he shall by vote of the Commission on Church

and Ministry, be dropped from the church roll and shall no longer be a member. Any member who joins another church without a letter of transfer shall be dropped from membership. All members who are dropped shall be notified, if possible, by letter.

**Section 6.** Any person whose membership has been terminated may have his membership restored by vote of the Commission on Church and Ministry.

**Section 7.** Members of churches not in this community may be received as associate members if, by reason of temporary residence or otherwise, they do not wish to sever connections with their home church. Such persons may have full status as members. They shall automatically be dropped upon removal from this community.

## **Article II Services and Meetings**

**Section 1.** Services of worship shall be held each Sunday morning throughout the year at stated hours. Other services may be held at such times as conditions may suggest and as may be determined by the Commission on Church and Ministry.

**Section 2.** The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at such times as the Commission on Church and Ministry may determine. Baptism shall be administered, at the request of an applicant, at such times by the Pastor or, in his absence, by an ordained minister appointed by the Church and Ministry Commission.

**Section 3.** The official year of the church shall be the calendar year. The annual meeting of the church shall be held in January of each year to receive the reports of officers, Board of Stewards, Church Cabinet, Commissions, committees and auxiliary organizations. Such reports shall be submitted in writing, with a copy available for each member.

**Section 4.** A congregational meeting will be held in October of each year to receive the report of the Nominating Committee, for the election of officers, for the presentation and adoption of a budget for the following year and for the stewardship presentation. Nominations for office may be made from the floor.

**Section 5.** Special meetings of the congregation for the transaction of business may be called by the Board of Stewards, and must be called within two weeks of the receipt of a written request signed by twenty-five (25) members of the church. Such meetings may be held following the regular Sunday worship or at such times as may be determined by the Board of Stewards. The nature of the business to be transacted shall be stated in the call, which shall be sent by mail to each member.

**Section 6.** Unless otherwise required herein, a majority vote of the members present shall be decisive. All elections for office shall be by ballot unless there is only one candidate for each office. Other elections shall be by method determined by the Church Cabinet, subject to a motion from the floor calling for a particular method.

## **Article III Government and Administration**

**Section 1.** Although the general management of the church is entrusted to the various officers and commissions as specified in this article, final authority in all matters rests with the congregation. Among these matters specifically reserved to the congregation for the decision are: the final vote in calling and dismissing a pastor; adoption of the church budget; the sale, purchase, lease and

mortgaging of real estate; the alteration or major repair of church property; amending the Articles of Agreement; and major changes in church policy.

- Section 2.** The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church and shall perform the duties which usually pertain to this office. He shall lead the services of public worship, preach the gospel, administer the sacraments and seek to enlist men as followers of Christ. He shares the responsibilities of the church in cooperation with the officers, the Board of Stewards, the Cabinet, Commissions and auxiliary organizations. He shall be an ex-officio and advisory member of each of these groups with the following exceptions. He shall not be an ex-officio member of the Nominating Committee. He may also be an ex-officio and advisory member of committees within these groups. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a duly called meeting upon recommendations of the selection committee appointed by the Board of Stewards. The church may at any time call for the dismissal of the Pastor by a majority vote of the members present at a meeting called for this specific purpose. A two week notice shall be given for this meeting. He shall be given ninety (90) days in which to sever his connection with the church and he shall likewise give ninety (90) days notice of his intention to leave of his own volition, unless it is mutually agreed that he may leave on shorter notice. In the event the Pastor loses his standing in the State Conference he shall be subject to a hearing before the Board of Stewards, with a final vote on his retention or dismissal being decided at a congregational meeting called specifically for this purpose, with notice being given two weeks in advance of the meeting. The Pastor may submit his resignation to the congregation at any Sunday worship service of the church.
- Section 3.** The President shall be the lay leader of the church and shall be elected annually by the congregation. He shall serve no more than two consecutive terms, holding no other elected office in the church during this term. He shall serve as Chairman of the Board of Stewards and as Vice-Chairman of the Church Cabinet. He shall be an ex-officio and advisory member of all commissions and organizations except the Nominating Committee. He shall work closely with the Pastor to coordinate the work of all officers, commission, committees and organizations so that the program of the church is carried forward in an effective manner. The President shall preside at the business portion of any meeting.
- Section 4.** The Vice-President shall be elected annually by the congregation and shall serve as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Stewards and as Chairman of the Church Cabinet. He shall also prepare the agenda and serve as Moderator of the October and January meetings for the congregation. He shall serve no more than two consecutive terms, holding no other elected office in the church during this term. He shall work closely with the President and Pastor to coordinate the work of all commissions, organizations and committees.
- Section 5.** The Clerk shall be elected annually by the congregation and shall be eligible for re-election. He shall keep a faithful record of the church and of the Board of Stewards of which he shall serve as Secretary. He shall maintain a complete and current register of the membership and a record of baptisms and marriages. He shall issue letters of transfer when authorized; preserve all communications and official reports; and notify all persons elected to church offices.
- Section 6.** The Treasurer shall be elected annually by the congregation and shall be eligible for re-elections. He shall keep an accurate record of all monies received and of all disbursements. He shall have custody of all papers relating to the property of the church, under the direction of the Board of Stewards. He shall pay the bills of the church as ordered by the Board of Stewards. He shall make a report to the Board of Stewards at each monthly meeting showing income, disbursements

and balance of all accounts and shall make a full written financial report giving this information quarterly with copies of the report made available to the Board of Stewards and the congregation. He shall have all vouchers available for inspection at all times. He shall be bonded for an amount equal to the amount of money generally available in the operating account of the church.

**Section 7.** The Board of Stewards shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, the Treasurer, the Clerk, who shall serve as Secretary and nine (9) other members elected by the congregation for terms of three years in such manner that the terms of three members shall expire each year. After serving one full term a member shall be ineligible for re-election for one year.

The Board of Stewards shall be responsible for the legal aspects of the church, property, maintenance and general business management. They shall be available for consultation and advice in the entire church program.

The officers of the Board of Stewards shall be deemed to be the chief officers of the church for transaction of corporate business under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Missouri.

The Board of Stewards shall maintain the church property in good repair within the limitations of the budget, referring all major repair items and alterations to the congregation. They shall employ a custodian and shall supervise his work. They may grant approval to any outside group wishing to use church property and make necessary custodial and business arrangements.

The Board of Stewards shall prepare the annual budget of the church in cooperation with other officers, commissions and committees, and shall mail it to the members 15 days prior to the congregation meeting in the month of October at which time it will be presented for adoption.

The Board of Stewards shall appoint a Financial Secretary who shall receive all payments on annual pledges, take charge of all offerings and special collections and pay all such monies to the Treasurer. He shall keep an accurate account of payments on pledges and shall furnish a quarterly statement to each subscriber. He shall be bonded for an amount equal to the amount of money generally entrusted to his care.

The Board of Stewards shall appoint annually a Stewardship chairman who shall direct the canvass of members during the month of November for the purpose of underwriting the budget adopted by the church. The chairman may appoint his own committee and may request the help of the Commission on Church and Ministry, the Pastor and the Board of Stewards.

The Board of Stewards shall meet once each month for the transaction of business. They shall appoint the pastor selection committee when necessary and such other committees as may be required. They shall determine their own method of procedure. A quorum shall consist of a majority.

**Section 8.** The Church Cabinet shall be composed of: the President, Vice-president, the Clerk, the Chairmen of all Commissions, the Chairmen of all auxiliary organizations and the Chairman of the Music Committee. The Vice-President shall serve as Chairman. In the absence of the Vice-President, the President of the Board of Stewards shall serve as Chairman. They shall select their own secretary.

All members of the Cabinet shall have a vote. The Cabinet shall meet once each month for the transaction of business. A majority shall constitute a quorum.

It shall be the duty of the Church Cabinet to coordinate all activities of the church so that they constitute an integrated and well rounded program. The Cabinet shall advise the Pastor and the various commissions, committees, and organizations within the church on the general direction of the church's activities and shall cooperate with them in organizing their programs. All commissions, committees and organizations shall seek the advice and approval of the Cabinet before embarking on matters of import.

The Church Cabinet shall each year appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of one member of the Commissions on Church and Ministry, one member of the Commission on Christian Education and Youth Work, one member of the Commission on Lay Life and Work and one member of the Board of Stewards and two additional members from the congregation at large. This committee shall elect its own chairman and shall submit its report at the congregational meeting in October. Such report shall propose a slate of officers, Board of Steward members and Commission members to be elected for the following year.

The Church Cabinet shall annually appoint an auditing committee to audit the accounts of the church. The Church Cabinet shall designate the chairman of such committee. The committee shall submit its report no later than the February Board of Stewards meeting and it shall be published in the newsletter immediately following presentation to the Board.

The Church Cabinet shall annually appoint all delegates to conferences, associations and all other official delegates for the church. The Cabinet shall also fill by appointment any vacancies in office which occur during the year. Such appointments shall be valid only until the next elections. The Church Cabinet shall approve new organizations. The Church Cabinet shall appoint a Historian who shall keep a record of all occurrences of interest to the church.

#### **Section 9.**

The Commission on Church and Ministry shall be composed of nine (9) members elected by the congregation for terms of three years in such manner that the terms of three members shall expire each year. After serving one full term a member shall be ineligible for re-election for one year.

The Commission on Church and Ministry shall cooperate with the Pastor in ministering to the spiritual interests of the church and community. They shall be responsible for the worship program of the church, the preparation and administrating of the sacraments, evangelism and membership cultivation, and the care and comfort of the sick, the poor, the sorrowing, the indifferent and the stranger. In the absence of the Pastor, they shall be responsible for the supply of the pulpit and the conduct of the worship service.

The Commission on Church and Ministry shall each year appoint a Music Committee consisting of one member of the Board of Stewards, one member of the Commission on Church and Ministry, one member of the Commission on Christian Education and Youth Work, one member of the Commission on Lay Life and Work, and two members at large from the congregation, all of whom shall have an interest in music and an understanding of its purpose in the worship service. The Pastor, Chairman of the Commission on Church and Ministry and the Music Director shall be ex-officio members of the committee. The Music Committee shall be responsible for the music of the worship services and shall employ a Music Director and such additional personnel as are needed, subject to budget limitations and the financial advice of the Board of Stewards. The Music Committee shall submit a budget request to the Board of Stewards no later than the August leader's meeting.

The Commission on Church and Ministry shall appoint the Chairman of an Ushers Committee. The chairman shall select his own committee and shall be responsible for ushering at all church services under the general direction of the Commission on Church and Ministry.

The Commission on Church and Ministry shall appoint the Chairman of a Hospitality Committee whose responsibility it shall be to welcome those entering and leaving worship services, and to maintain a register of guests.

The Commission on Church and Ministry shall appoint the Chairman of an Altar Committee whose members shall be responsible for the supply of flowers for the sanctuary and for their removal and distribution at the conclusion of services, and care and decoration of the altar as may be needed.

The Commission on Church and Ministry shall appoint the Chairman of the Communion Committee whose members shall be responsible for the preparation and care of Communion services.

The Commission on Church and Ministry shall meet monthly for the transaction of business. They shall appoint such additional committees as they deem necessary. They shall elect their own officers and shall determine their own method of procedure. A quorum shall consist of a majority.

The Commission on Church and Ministry shall submit their budget requirements for the following year by the August leader's meeting, to the Budget committee.

**Section 10.** The Commission on Christian Education and Youth Work shall be composed of nine (9) members elected by the congregation for terms of three years in such manner that the terms of three members shall expire each year. After serving one full term a member shall be ineligible for re-election for one year. The Pastor, the President, and the church School Superintendent shall be ex-officio members of the Commission.

The Commission on Christian Education and Youth Work shall have charge of the Christian Education programs of the church. They shall have charge of the Church school and shall inaugurate and maintain other activities for Christian education.

The Commission on Christian Education and Youth Work shall annually appoint a Church School Superintendent. Said Superintendent shall conduct the activities of the Church School under the general direction of the Commission. The Commission shall annually appoint a budget committee consisting of Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer and a member at large of the Commission to prepare an annual budget request for the Church School and shall be submitted to the Budget Committee no later than the August leader's meeting. Upon approval of the Commission on Christian Education and Youth Work it shall be included as part of the Commission's budget request for the year. The superintendent shall appoint a Secretary-Treasurer who shall keep a record of attendance and contributions shall turn over all monies collected to the treasurer of the Church for deposit in the general fund. The Superintendent with counsel and advice of the commission on Christian Education and Youth Work shall appoint teachers and such additional officers for the church School as he may deem necessary.

The Commission on Christian Education and Youth Work shall meet once each month for the transaction of business. They shall appoint such committees as they deem necessary and shall

determine their own method of procedure. They shall elect their own officers. A quorum shall consist of a majority.

**Section 11.** The Commission on Lay Life and Work shall be composed of nine (9) members elected by the congregation for terms of three years in such manner that the terms of three members shall expire each year. After serving one full term a member shall be ineligible for re-election for one year. The Pastor and President shall be ex-officio members.

This Commission shall have charge of organizations involving men and women. It involves the in-depth study in the very nature and life of the Church.

This Commission shall appoint the Committee on Social Action, Stewardship and Missions and other committees as they may deem necessary.

This Commission is responsible for increasing, developing and coordinating the activities and participation of lay men and lay women in the church.

They shall appoint such committees as they deem necessary, shall elect their own officers and determine their own method of procedure. A quorum shall consist of a majority.

The Commission on Lay Life and Work shall submit a budget requirement for the following year to the Budget Committee no later than the August leader's meeting.

**Section 12.** The Chairman of each Commission shall be an ex-officio member of all committees under the Commission of which he is Chairman.

Each Commission and the Cabinet shall submit its annual budget request to the Board of Stewards by the August Leader's meeting.

#### **ARTICLE IV AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS**

**Section 1.** All organizations connected with the church and using its equipment and facilities are regarded as integral parts of the church and are under its general jurisdiction. They are responsible to the Church Cabinet and shall report annually to the congregation.

**Section 2.** Approval for the establishment of any new organization shall be sought from the Church Cabinet.

#### **ARTICLE V FINANCES**

**Section 1.** Monies for the full support of the annual budget shall be acquired by membership subscriptions and free-will contributions of individuals and organizations. All members of the congregation shall be offered the opportunity to make written subscriptions in support of this cause.

**Section 2.** Special offerings may be received at such times and for such purposes as the Board of Stewards may determine. All offerings thus received shall be placed in the general fund and used only for the purposes designated.

**Section 3.** All general expenses and benevolences and all special expenditures as voted by the congregation shall be paid from the general fund. The Board of Stewards shall have charge of such fund.

**Section 4.** All legacies, gifts or donations not specifically designated by the donor shall be credited to the general fund and shall be used as determined by the Board of Stewards.

**Section 5.** The annual budget of the church shall be prepared and adopted as provided in other sections of these By-Laws. Such budget shall include and provide for the total program of the church as adopted and carried out by its Officers, Board, Cabinet, Commissions and Committees. The budget of auxiliary organizations shall not be included.

#### **ARTICLE VI PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedures not specifically covered by the By-Laws.

Copy of Constitution and By-Laws dated September 1971

Revised	December 15, 1963
Revised	October 1970
Revised	October 17, 1993
Revised	January 7, 2001

The Memorial Fund - established for Memorial Gifts upon death of member or family of said member. Funds shall be used for special projects not included in Annual Administration Budget.

Hilda Rumpf Scholarship Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Stewards with one member from Church and Ministry, Lay Life and Work, Christian Education and Youth, Board of Stewards and two members at large.

**Faith United**

Pastor

Elected by Congregation

Board of Stewards

Corporate and Legal  
Property (building & uses)  
Finances ( appoint Financial Secretary  
Stewardship  
Employ (all but Pastor)  
Guidance and Council of Program

Cabinet

Co-ordinate Programming  
All Organizations Represented

Appoint:

Nominating Committee  
Auditing Committee  
Historian  
Publicity  
Delegates to Associations and Conferences, etc.

Fill Vacancies by Appointment

Commission on Lay Life & Work

Missionary Education  
Fellowship Program  
Stewardship Education  
Social Service  
Women's Fellowship  
Lydia  
Dorcas  
Men's Fellowship  
Brotherhood

Commission on Christian  
And Youth Work

Church School  
Appoint:  
Church School Superintendent  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Youth Fellowship  
Adult Education

Music

Worship Music

Commission on Church  
and Ministry

Spiritual Life  
Sacraments  
Worship  
Evangelism  
Membership  
Ushers  
Altar  
Hospitality  
Nursery  
Confirmation