

By-Laws

Article I Purpose

The purpose of Faith United Church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ.

The By-Laws herein define and regulate the organization and administration of Faith United Church and the relationship of the pastor, members, council of elders, and committees with the church and with each other subject to the Articles of Agreement. The pattern of relationships and procedures so described is to enable the pastor, members, elders, and committees to accomplish their tasks and the work of the Church with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Article II Membership

Section 1 Becoming a Member

Anyone past the age of confirmation who meets the requirements stated in the Articles of Agreement may become a member by making application to the Pastor and the Council of Elders. 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, in the Statement of Faith, and in the Statement of Beliefs.

Any child may be confirmed as an adult member during the year they reach their twelfth Birthday, provided they meet the requirements stated above.

Section 2 Member Rights and Privileges

All members in good standing (active members) are entitled to speak at any meeting, vote in person at congregational meetings and hold office. Only active members may serve as Officers or Elders 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 other members.

Section 3 Member Duties

Active members should take 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 strive to conduct themselves at all times as Christians in their relations with other members, in their business and home life, and in the life of the community. They shall strive to increase their knowledge of God and His way for us. They shall strive to keep informed of the Christian church in all the world. They shall share their faith with all with whom they have contact.

Section 4 Membership Termination by Letter of Transfer

A member may request a letter of transfer to another Christian church. The Council of Elders shall issue the letter of transfer and shall see that it is entered into the church records. Upon issuance of the Letter of Transfer, the requester's membership shall be terminated.

Section 5 Inactive Membership

The Council of Elders, working with the Pastor, shall attempt to contact members who, for a period of at least two years, have not contributed, or supported the church or whose addresses are unknown. If that member does not renew active participation in the church life during the following year, they shall be placed on an inactive membership list. An inactive member shall be able to speak at any meeting, but shall not vote nor hold office.

If an inactive member resumes participation in the life and work of the church, they may be moved to active member status.

Section 6 Termination of Membership

At a member's request, their membership may be terminated.

After ten years of non-participation in the life of the church, membership shall be terminated.

In extraordinary circumstances, the Council of Elders in consultation with the Pastor may terminate membership.

Article III Services and Meetings

Section 1 Services

Services of Worship shall normally be held each Sunday morning throughout the year at stated hours. Other services may be held at such times as determined by the Pastor and the Council of Elders

Section 2 Sacraments

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at such times as the Pastor and the Council of Elders may determine. The Sacrament of Baptism shall be administered by the Pastor at the request of an applicant. In the Pastor's absence, Baptism may be performed by an ordained or licensed minister approved by the Council of Elders.

Section 3 Annual Meeting

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 report of the Pastor, Officers, Council of Elders and auxiliary organizations. Such reports shall be submitted in writing with a copy available for each member. Any business pertaining to the church may be presented at this meeting. Final approval of the church budget for the year shall occur at this meeting.

Section 4 Congregational Meeting

A congregational meeting shall 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 goals budget for the following year and for the stewardship presentation. Nominations for office may be made from the floor. Any other business to be presented at the October meeting must follow the steps outlined in Article III, Section 5.

Section 5 Special Meetings of the Congregation

Special meetings of the congregation for the transaction of business may be called by the Council of Elders. Special meetings must be called within three weeks of the receipt of a written request signed by twenty-five (25) active members of the church. Such meetings may be held following the regular Sunday worship or at such times as determined by the Council of Elders. The nature of the business to be transacted shall be stated in a letter which shall be sent by mail to each member at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting. All congregational meetings shall be announced during the Sunday worship service at least two times prior to the meeting.

Section 7 Voting

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

Article IV Governing Authority

Section 1 Congregational Authority

Final authority in all matters rests with the congregation. The general management of the church is entrusted to the various officers and the Council of Elders as specified in this document. 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 amounting to more than five percent (5%) of the annual budget; amending the Articles of Agreement; and major changes in church policy

Article V Leadership

Section 1 Pastor

The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church and shall perform the duties which usually pertain to this office. They shall lead the services of public worship, preach the Gospel, administer the Sacraments and seek to enlist people as followers of Christ. They share the responsibilities of church leadership in cooperation with the officers and the Council of Elders. They shall be an ex-officio and advisory member of the Council of Elders. They shall not be an ex-officio member of the nominating committee. They may also be an ex-officio and advisory member of committees within the Council of Elders. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a duly called meeting upon recommendation of the selection committee appointed by the Council of Elders.

The Pastor nominee shall be presently ordained or ordained within six (6) months of employment.

The church may, at any time, call for the dismissal of the Pastor by a majority vote of the members present at a congregational meeting called for this specific purpose. The shall be given ninety (90) days in which to sever their connection with the church and they shall likewise give ninety (90) days notice of their intention to leave of their own volition, unless it is mutually agreed between the Pastor and the Council of Elders that they may leave on shorter notice. The Pastor may submit their resignation to the congregation at any Sunday worship service of the church.

Section 2 President

The President shall be the lay leader of the church. They shall be elected annually by the congregation for a term of one year. They shall serve no more than two consecutive full terms and may hold no other office in the church during their term. They shall serve as Chairman of the Council of Elders. They shall work closely with the Pastor to coordinate the work of the Council of Elders, committees and organizations so that the programs of the church are carried forward in an effective manner. The President shall preside at the business portion of any congregational meeting.

Section 3 Vice-President

The Vice-President shall be elected annually by the congregation for a term of one year. They shall serve no more than two consecutive full terms and may hold no other office in the church during their term. They shall work closely with the President and Pastor to coordinate the work of the Council of Elders, committees and organizations. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall assume the duties of President for that meeting. If the office of President becomes vacant, the Vice-President shall assume the Presidency for the remainder of the year.

Section 4 Clerk

The Clerk shall be elected annually by the congregation and shall be eligible for re-election. They shall keep an accurate and complete record of all congregational meetings and all meetings of the Council of Elders. They shall act as parliamentarian for congregational meetings and Council of Elder meetings. They shall maintain a complete and current register of the membership and a record of baptisms and marriages. They shall issue letters of transfer when requested and preserve all communications and official reports.

Section 5 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be elected annually and shall be eligible for re-election. They shall keep an accurate and complete record of all monies received and of all disbursements. They shall have custody of all papers relating to the property of the church, under the direction of the Council of Elders. They shall make a report to the Council of Elders 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 Council of Elders and the congregation. They shall have all vouchers available for inspection at all times. They shall be bonded for an amount determined by the Council of Elders. They shall be a member of the finance committee, but shall not be the committee chair.

Section 6 Financial Secretary

The financial secretary Treasurer shall be appointed by the Council of Elders annually and shall be eligible for re-appointment. They shall collect and deposit all funds received by the church. They shall keep an accurate and complete record of all funds received by the church and shall issue quarterly reports of giving to the individual members. All individual giving shall be kept confidential. They shall be bonded for an amount determined by the Council of Elders. They shall be a member of the finance committee, but shall not be the committee chair.

Section 7 Council of Elders

The Council of Elders shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary and nine(9) other members elected by the congregation for terms of three(3) years in such manner that the terms of three members shall expire each year. Members of the Council of Elders shall be ordained by the church. An Elder shall be ineligible for re-election after serving one full term.

Unexpired terms may be filled by the Council of Elders by appointment until the next Congregational Meeting in October. The congregation shall elect persons to fill the unexpired terms at that congregational meeting. No one may serve more than five years consecutively without being off the Council of Elders at least one year.

The following are the Qualifications of Elders:

1. An Elder shall be willing to faithfully carry out the work of the church.
2. An Elder shall be above reproach.
3. An Elder shall be temperate, disciplined, and self-controlled.
4. An Elder shall be honest, respectable, and hospitable.
5. An Elder shall be just and devout.
6. An Elder shall be an adult member (at least 21 years old) of the church.

The President, Vice-President, Clerk, and Treasurer shall be the officers of the Council of Elders and 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 Council of Elders shall be responsible for the legal aspects of the church, property, maintenance, and general business management.

The Council of Elders shall prepare the annual goals budget of the church for presentation to the congregation at the annual meeting in October. It shall be mailed to the members at least 15 days prior to the meeting. After the stewardship campaign, the Council shall balance the budget to the income available and present a final budget for congregational approval at the January congregational meeting.

The Council of Elders shall appoint an Historian who shall keep a record of all occurrences of interest to the church.

The Council of Elders shall meet at least monthly for the transaction of business. A quorum shall consist of a majority (seven).

The President shall appoint chairs for the following standing committees:

The Finance Committee shall be responsible for the financial activities of the church including Stewardship, Budget, Special Funds (including the Hilda Rumpf Scholarship Fund and the Warrington Fund), Church Finances and other financial matters.

The Personnel Committee shall be responsible for all employees of the church except the Pastor, including Employment and Releases, Job Specifications, Performance Reviews, Salary Recommendations and other personnel issues.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee shall be responsible for maintenance of the physical property of the Church, including Building Upkeep, Property Upkeep, Vehicle Upkeep, Equipment Upkeep, and other physical property issues.

The Christian Education Committee shall be responsible for all church education, including Church School, Children's Church, Vacation Bible School, Bible Studies, Youth Organizations, Church Camps, Confirmation, Youth Leaders, and other Christian education issues. The committee shall recommend church school superintendent appointments to the Council of Elders.

The Fellowship Committee shall be responsible for the Church Social Life, including Visiting the Sick, Visiting the Shut-in, Shepherding New Members and other fellowship issues.

The Evangelism Committee shall be responsible for spreading the Word, including all Missions, Prospective Member Contacts, Follow-up Contacts of Guests, Outreach Programs and other evangelism issues.

The Worship and Music Committee shall be responsible for all aspects of Church Worship, including Administering the Sacraments, Ministering to Spiritual Interests, Guest Speakers, Ushers, Altar Preparations, Special Services, Music Issues, Pulpit Supply and other worship and music issues.

The Nominating Committee shall consist of two members of the Council of Elders and three members of the congregation at large. They shall elect their own chair and shall be responsible for proposing a slate of officers and council members to present to the congregation at the October annual meeting.

The Audits Committee shall be responsible for auditing the financial records of the church and all groups associated with the church to assure the monies are received, recorded and spent in a proper manner.

The Council of Elders, by majority vote, may modify or add standing committees as needed.

Ad-Hoc committees shall be appointed by the Council of Elders as needed. This includes nominating committee, pastor selection committee and others.

The committees shall meet as needed and the Chair shall report their findings to the Council of Elders for approval.

Article VI Auxiliary Organizations

Section 1 Duties and Responsibilities

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 Council of Elders and shall issue a written report to the congregation of their activities and finances at the October annual meeting.

Section 2 New Organizations

The Council of Elders shall approve the establishment of any new organization connected with the church.

Article VII Finances

Section 1 Contributions

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

Section 2 Special Offerings

Special offerings may be received at such times and for such purposes as the Council of Elders may determine. All offerings thus received shall be placed in the proper fund and used only for the purposes designated.

Section 3 Responsibility

All general expenses, benevolences, and all special expenditures as voted by the congregation shall be paid from the proper fund. The Council of Elders shall have charge of these funds.

Section 5 Gifts

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 Council of Elders.

Article VIII Parliamentary Authority

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