

1 CENTRAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH
2 (Disciples of Christ)
3 Austin Texas
4 BY-LAWS
5 Adopted February 10, 1999
6

7 I. The Church year shall begin on January 1.
8

9 II. The General Board shall:

10 A. Perform its duties according to the authority granted in the Constitution or otherwise
11 delegated to it by the Congregation.
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13 B. Consider 20 percent of the General Board as constituting a quorum.
14

15 C. Observe the following items of business:
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- 17 1. Call to order by presiding officer.
- 18 2. Devotions and prayer.
- 19 3. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting.
- 20 4. Minister's reports.
- 21 5. Report of Church Clerk and approval of report.
- 22 6. Report of Treasurer and approval of report.
- 23 7. Report of Trustees and approval of report.
- 24 8. Functional-department and special-committee reports.
- 25 9. Action on recommendations growing out of reports.
- 26 10. Consideration of unfinished business carried over from previous meeting.
- 27 11. New business and program suggestions for future activities.
- 28 12. Consideration of other items deemed necessary.
- 29 13. Minister's inspirational moment and benediction.
- 30 14. Adjournment.
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33 III. The plan for procedure for administering this Church's program shall be as follows:
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35 A. The task of administering the program of this Church shall be designated to the
36 following functional departments.
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- 38 1. Worship and Music Department.
- 39 2. Christian Education Department.
- 40 3. Evangelism
- 41 4. Membership
- 42 5. Christian Outreach and Service Department.
- 43 6. Stewardship and Finance Department.
- 44 7. Property Department.
- 45 8. Social and Fellowship Department.
- 46 9. Personnel Department.

- 47 10. Long-Range Planning Department.
48 11. Such other Departments as may be deemed necessary
49

50 B. Special committees, when needed to administer the work of this Church shall be
51 appointed by the Chairman, with the approval of the General Board. These
52 committees shall perform duties assigned and shall continue for such time as may be
53 designated.
54

55 C. The membership of each functional department shall be selected in the following
56 manner:

57 1. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, and ministers shall constitute a committee to
58 select the respective department chairmen.

59 2. This selection committee shall then act with the respective Department
60 chairmen in the selection of the members of each department.

61 3. Chairmen of all functional departments may be selected from the total active
62 membership of this Church. All department chairmen shall be voting members of
63 the General Board.

64 4. Membership of each functional department shall be on the basis of
65 qualification for the task regardless of membership on the General Board.
66

67 D. Each functional department shall organize itself to conduct the business for which it
68 is responsible, meet regularly to attend to its business, and plan its general program,
69 which shall be presented to the General Board.
70

71 Upon approval by the General Board, the Department shall proceed to administer its
72 program in cooperation with other functional departments. Regular written reports shall
73 be made to the General Board.
74

75 E. The purposes and duties of the functional departments shall be as follows:
76

77 1. Worship and Music Department.
78

79 a. The purpose of this department shall be to lead the membership in a
80 genuine experience of worship in the public services and to enrich
81 personal and family devotional life.
82

83 b. In cooperation with the Diaconate, the Department shall be
84 responsible for the public worship of this Church, the administration of the
85 Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, music, special prayer and worship
86 services and the encouragement of the devotional life among individual
87 members and homes of this Church.
88

89 c. Membership of this committee shall include the Chairman of the
90 Elders, Chairmen of Deacons and Deaconesses, or their representatives.
91 The Music Director and the Minister shall also attend the meetings.
92

93 2. Christian Education Department

94
95 a. The purpose of this Department shall be to develop an effective
96 program of religious education for the entire constituency of the Church in
97 keeping with the general objectives of Christian education.

98
99 b. The Department shall be responsible for planning and administering
100 the total educational program of this Church, including Church school,
101 youth activities, midweek educational projects, leadership education,
102 distribution of Christian literature and fostering Christian homelife. It shall
103 also cooperate with other groups of this Church, such as the Christian
104 Outreach and Service Department, in planning an education program.

105
106 3. Evangelism

107 a. The purpose of this Department shall be to cultivate an evangelistic
108 spirit within this Church, to plan and administer the evangelistic program
109 to maintain the closest possible contact with the entire Church
110 Membership to the end that each member may function effectively in the
111 life of this Church, and to develop a spirit of fellowship and love within
112 the congregation, founded on a common love of Christ.

113
114 b. The Department shall be responsible for: developing an evangelistic
115 Church, sponsoring a year-round program of evangelism which reaches
116 into every age level and every phase of Church life, compiling a list of
117 prospective members, planning and directing special evangelistic
118 projects, assisting the Clerk in keeping accurate and up-to-date records;
119 and promoting visitation projects, calling on the indifferent, sick and
120 unfortunate, and organizing others to do likewise.

121
122 4. Membership

123 a. It shall be the purpose of this committee to maintain the closest
124 possible contact with the entire Church membership to the end that each
125 member may function effectively in the life of the Church, and to develop
126 a spirit of comradeship, and love within the congregation, founded on a
127 common love of Christ.

128
129 b. It shall be responsible for the pastoral oversight of the membership;
130 assisting the Clerk in keeping accurate up-to-date records; promoting
131 visitation projects, calling on the indifferent, sick and unfortunate, and
132 organizing others to do likewise; and providing an adequate program of
133 social life for the Church.

134
135 c. It shall be responsible, working cooperatively with the Evangelism
136 Committee, for orienting new members into the life and fellowship of this
137 Church.

138

139 5. Christian Outreach and Service Department

140 a. The purpose of this Department shall be: (i) to create and foster a
141 world vision within this Church and its auxiliary organizations; (ii) to lead
142 in planning and promoting the outreach program of the Church, at home
143 and abroad; (iii) to follow a program of study, education and action in the
144 following fields of concern: peace and world order, racial and minority
145 group relations, citizenship and civil liberties, alcohol and narcotics
146 problems, social welfare concern for the aged, handicapped, juvenile
147 delinquent, persons with marriage and home-life problems, or housing
148 problems, community health and recreation facilities, physical and mental
149 health pursuits, crime and its prevention, economic life, relief and
150 rehabilitation, immigration and refugees, and public education.

151
152 b. The Department shall be responsible for: (i) planning and promoting
153 a definite program of missionary education in every department of this
154 Church; (ii) recommending the Church's annual missionary and
155 benevolence budget; (iii) enlisting support for missions and brotherhood
156 causes; (iv) caring for local and general benevolent needs not otherwise
157 provided for; (v) promoting conventions, conferences, and retreats; (vi)
158 recruiting and supporting life-work recruits; and (vii) keeping records of all
159 missionary giving and action in this Church.

160
161 6. Stewardship and Finance Department

162
163 a. The purpose of this Department shall be to develop within the
164 membership an understanding of the full meaning of Christian
165 stewardship and so to direct the financial program of this Church that it
166 will not only supply the financial needs but prove a means of spiritual
167 enrichment and character building for each one participating.

168
169 b. The Department shall be responsible for keeping alive in the
170 Congregation the realization of its stewardship education, supervising the
171 preparation and subscribing of the Church budget, providing for an
172 annual audit of the records, and encouraging financial help for future
173 development in the church and its outreach. The annual audit shall be
174 performed by an independent auditor who is not a member of this church.

175
176 7. Property Department

177
178 a. The purpose of this Department shall be to care for all properties of
179 this Church.

180
181 b. The Department shall be responsible, in cooperation with the
182 Trustees, for keeping all property and equipment in proper condition,
183 studying needs and making recommendations for improvements in
184 coordination with the Senior Minister, supervising the day to day work of

185 the custodian, caring for grounds, and keeping the properties adequately
186 insured against possible loss or damage.

187
188 8. Social and Fellowship Department

189
190 The purpose of this department shall be to promote social activities which foster
191 a spirit of fellowship and love within the congregation.

192
193 9. Personnel Department

194
195 There shall be a Personnel Committee consisting of a member of the Pastoral
196 Relations Committee along with a representative from each of the following
197 committees: Property, Worship and Music, and Education.

198
199 a. The purpose of this Department shall be to provide a management
200 function for all of the staff members of the church except members of the
201 Clergy. This shall be achieved by working directly with staff and through
202 the appropriate committees.

203
204 b. This committee shall be responsible for, but not limited to the
205 following:

- 206 1. Providing job descriptions for staff positions.
- 207 2. Identifying chains of responsibility.
- 208 3. Providing reviews of staff performance, and establishing goals
209 for each calendar year.
- 210 4. Providing technical support to the specific committees for hiring
211 new staff positions.
- 212 5. Recommending salary increases and/or disciplinary action to
213 the board.
- 214 6. Providing support for volunteer positions.

215
216 c. The committee shall meet on a regular basis and report to the General
217 Board.

218
219 10. Long-Range Planning Department

220 The purpose of this department shall be to provide suggestions, analysis,
221 planning, and guidance related to long range projects designed to meet the
222 goals of the Church.

223
224 IV. The auxiliary organizations shall include the following groups and functions:

225
226 A. The basic auxiliary organizations in this Church are: Christian Women's
227 Fellowship, Christian Men's Fellowship, and Youth Groups and the Children's Ministry
228 Council.

229 B. The purpose and responsibility of each of these groups shall be outlined in its own
230 constitution, by-laws, or plan of procedure.

231 C. These organizations shall cooperate with the functional departments of this Church,
232 not only in planning and administering the total program of this Church, but also in
233 developing their individual programs in the best interest of the total program.
234

235 V. The procedure governing employment of staff shall be as follows:
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237 A. Employees, other than heretofore provided, shall be secured upon recommendation
238 of the respective functional department concerned.
239

240 B. The General Board shall designate the proper functional department to recommend
241 back to the Personnel Committee the employment or release of such employees as
242 shall be deemed necessary from time to time, final authority in all such matters, except
243 calling the ministers, to reside in the General Board. (ref. Constitution, Section 7.2)
244

245 C. Employment shall be by a two-thirds vote of the Board members present and voting,
246 each employee to be responsible to the General Board through the proper functional
247 department.
248

249 D. A written statement covering terms of employment shall be given to the employee
250 and a copy shall be retained by the Church.
251

252 VI. Pastoral Relations Committee
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254 There shall be a Pastoral Relations Committee consisting of the current Chair of the
255 General Board, current Vice Chairman of the General Board, and past immediate
256 Chairman of the General Board, the Chair of the Board of Elders and two (2) members
257 of the congregation at large, one appointed by the Chair of the Board of Elders, one
258 appointed by the Chair of the General Board. The purpose of the Committee shall be
259 to maintain the most fruitful relationship possible between the Clergy and the
260 Congregation. In furtherance of this purpose, the Committee shall have such
261 jurisdiction and purview as the Committee deems necessary within the boundaries of
262 the Constitution, the Bylaws, any employment contracts as may exist, any job
263 descriptions as may exist and any policy guidelines as may be promulgated by the
264 current General Board.
265

266 Furthermore, the Committee shall:
267

268 -Meet at least once every two months to give guidance and encouragement to
269 members of the clergy
270

271 - Observe Committee procedures which secure and preserve appropriate confidentiality
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273 - Observe Committee procedures which encourage and facilitate useful input by
274 members of the General Board, the Congregation, the Clergy and the Staff
275

276 -Review each Clergy member's job description during the first quarter of each year,
277

277 revise as appropriate and submit the revisions, if any, to the General Board for
278 acceptance and approval.

279
280 -Serve as the only official conduit and agency for guidance and Congregational
281 regulation toward members of the Clergy

282
283 The Vice Chairman of the General Board shall serve as Chair of the Pastoral Relations
284 Committee.

285
286 (Lines 288 through 339 are a By-Laws Amendment proposed on 12/12/06 and officially adopted on 2/13/07)

287
288 VII. ORDAINED AND LICENSED MINISTRY:

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290 a. Central Christian Church recognizes that licensed ministry and ordained ministry are
291 offices in the order of ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and that both
292 have full standing as ministers in our denomination. It is an honor and a blessing for
293 this congregation to sponsor suitable candidates for ministry.

294
295 b. Any member in good standing may apply to the Senior Minister for sponsorship for
296 ministerial licensing or ordination. If approved by the Sr. Minister the applicant shall then
297 be considered by the Pastoral Relations Committee. Final consideration and approval
298 will be by the General Board.

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300 c. The terms "licensing", "license" and "ordination" shall have the meanings intended by
301 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

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303 d. The General Board may suspend or terminate sponsorship for licensing or ordination
304 at any time and for any reason.

305
306 e. Mere sponsorship for licensing or ordination does not constitute an offer to hire.

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308 f. Mere sponsorship for licensing or ordination does not constitute a "call" to a paid
309 ministerial position as provided in the Constitution, Article VII.

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311 g. Any sponsored ordained minister who maintains membership here but is not called
312 to a paid ministerial position by this congregation has no obligation beyond that of any
313 other member in terms of accountability to the Sr. Minister or the Pastoral Relations
314 Committee.

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316 h. The ministerial field or specialty of the sponsored licensed minister shall be assigned
317 by the Senior Minister.

318
319 i. Any sponsored Licensed Minister shall be accountable to the Senior Minister,
320 however, in individual cases the Sr. Minister may delegate this duty to another Minister.

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322 j. Matters related to the sponsored licensed ministers shall be under the jurisdiction of
323 the Pastoral Relations Committee.

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k. The Sr. Minister and other supervisory ministers shall report the status and activities of the sponsored licensed ministers to the Pastoral Relations Committee as often as the Committee shall direct. The Committee may require personal appearance by the sponsored licensed minister.

l. The Sr. Minister and the Pastoral Relations Committee, acting together, may, at any time, excuse a sponsored licensed minister from accountability, subject to endorsement by the General Board.

m. Every minister of this church, whether called or sponsored, licensed or ordained, shall remain familiar with and conform to the Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

~~VII.~~ VIII. These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the members of the General Board present and voting in regular or special meeting, provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the membership of the General Board at least thirty (30) days prior to the vote thereon.