



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF NEW SALEM
BYLAWS

Proposed

Article I: Declaration

On [Month, Day, Year], we, the Members of the First Christian Church of New Salem, Fayette County, Pennsylvania, adopt these Bylaws for our guidance and procedure so that we may more perfectly fulfill Christ's mission for His church.

Section 1: Mission Statement

- A. We exist to raise the body to reach the broken.

Section 2: Belief Statement

- A. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity.
- B. We believe that the Bible is the perfect Word of God.
- C. We believe that the Bible - not tradition, or human invention - is the authority within Christ's church.
- D. We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God (John 1:1-3; Matthew 16:16).
- E. We believe that our relationship with God is based upon our obligation to follow His will (John 14:21; Acts 5:32; Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:9).
- F. We believe that it is God's will that all people should repent and submit to Him through Jesus Christ (Acts 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9).
- G. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

Section 3: Marriage Statement

- A. We believe that God has ordained marriage as a sacred covenant between one man and one woman, and that sexual intimacy is a gift from God to be enjoyed exclusively within this marital union.
- B. We believe that, to preserve the function and integrity of Christ's church as the body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to Christ's church Members and the community, it is imperative that all persons in Leadership (Elders + Ministers) of or employed by Christ's church should abide by this statement on marriage and sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

Section 4: Salvation Statement

- A. Faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9; John 3:16-18).
- B. Repentance of our sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; Acts 2:38).
- C. Confession of Jesus Christ as Lord (Romans 10:9-10).

- D. Baptism (Immersion) for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21; Acts 22:16; Colossians 2:11-12; Mark 16:16).
- E. After entering into salvation, we must be thereafter committed to the cause of Christ by: assembling in worship (Acts 2:42, 47; Hebrews 10:25); allowing the light of Christ to shine in us so that we may share the Gospel of Christ with others as we go (Matthew 5:16; Matthew 28:18-20); by living our lives in accordance with God's will as found in the Bible - His Word.
- F. Salvation is a process we enter into. We do not "clean ourselves up" before coming to God - we submit to God and then allow Him to work with us and in us to transform us by the renewing of our minds and spirits (Romans 12:1-2). Like all things, this takes time and dedication (commitment). Submit to God and allow Him to begin His work in you.

Article II: Ordinances and Government

Section 1: Corporate Accountability: This local congregation accepts the Old and New Testament as the inspired Word of God. We are an independent Christian Church associated with the Independent Christian Churches/Churches of Christ. We are self-governing under the influence of no outside ecclesiastical body. We are accountable only to Christ.

Section 2: Corporate Authority: We are a non-denominational church. In other words, we do not have a hierarchy over the local congregation. The more layers we place between ourselves and God, the more opportunities there are to muddle the understanding of God's Word. God is infallible, but we are not. God has given us His Word (The Bible) and that Word becomes the guide for leading the local congregation. The only authority above our local congregation is God Himself. Nothing else is needed. It is our goal to simply follow God through His Son Jesus Christ and to help others to do the same. "In essentials, unity; in opinion, liberty; in all things, love."

Article III: Membership

Section 1: To be considered a Member of the First Christian Church of New Salem, one must:

- A. Be a follower of Jesus by fulfilling His plan of salvation: Believe, Repent, Confess, Be Baptized (Immersed).
- B. Complete a Membership Agreement Form.
- C. Re-dedicate themselves every year through a Membership Agreement Form.

Section 2: Decisions on matters of membership shall be handled by the Elders.

Section 3: A Member shall be considered eligible to vote at congregational meetings upon completion of the following requirements:

- A. Be a Member for at least one (1) year.
- B. Be sixteen (16) years of age or older on the meeting date to vote.
- C. Be present at a designated service or meeting.

Article IV: Church Leadership

Section 1: Spiritual Decisions and Leadership

A. The spiritual leadership and doctrinal decisions of Christ's church will be handled by Leadership (Elders + Ministers), in accordance with Scripture (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:7, 9; 1 Peter 5:1-2; Acts 20:17, 28-31; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 3:13-17). Any question regarding whether an issue is spiritual or doctrinal shall be handled by Leadership (Elders + Ministers) at Elders Meetings and/or Leadership Meetings.

1. Elders Meetings

- a. Under the appointment and invitation of the majority of the Elders, Elders Meetings may consist of: Ministers, Directors, Team Leaders.
- b. Only Elders may vote at Elders Meetings.

2. Leadership Meetings

- a. All Elders and Ministers will collectively make up Leadership.
- b. Only Leadership (Elders + Ministers) may vote at Leadership Meetings.
- c. Under the appointment and invitation of the majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers), Leadership Meetings may consist of: Directors, Team Leaders, Others.

Section 2: Elders

A. Selection of an Elder

1. The candidate shall meet the qualifications set forth in Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).
2. The candidate, according to Scripture, must be a male.
3. The candidate must be a Member for three (3) consecutive years to be eligible. Any exceptions will be decided by the Elders.
4. The candidate must be interviewed and approved by a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers) before his name is placed on the

ballot.

5. The affirmation and installment of Elders shall be held at a congregational meeting.
6. A candidate for an Elder must receive eighty (80) percent approval of the votes cast at a congregational meeting to serve as an Elder.
7. Those whose terms have expired will no longer hold a position immediately after the congregational meeting.

B. Duties of an Elder

1. An Elder shall be responsible for the spiritual well-being of the congregation. This includes but is not limited to: Spiritual growth; Shepherding and care; Maintaining sound doctrine; Teaching; Protecting the flock from false teachings, unspiritual influences, and dissension; Discipling those who work with them; Providing discipline as necessary; Other responsibilities as outlined in Scripture.
2. An Elder must uphold his responsibilities outlined in his job description.

C. Removal of an Elder

1. If an Elder fails to maintain the scriptural and spiritual qualifications of his position, he shall be removed by the majority of his fellow Elders.
2. If an Elder is proven guilty of an offense that could cause damage to the reputation of Christ's church, he shall be removed by a majority of his fellow Elders.
3. If an Elder is accused of an offense that could cause damage to the reputation of Christ's church, he shall be removed by a majority of his fellow Elders until the matter is investigated. Accusations must be substantiated (e.g. 1 Timothy 5:19).

D. Length of Term for Elders

1. An Elder will be elected under one of the following terms which will be determined by their prior term:
 - a. 1-Year Term
 - b. 2-Year Term
 - c. 3-Year Term
2. An Elder must take a one-year sabbatical after their 3-Year Term given that there are a sufficient number of Elders.

Section 3: Minister(s)

- A. (See Article VI Section 1).

Article V: Church Servant

Section 1: Deacon(s)

A. Selection of a Deacon

1. The candidate shall meet the qualifications set forth in Scripture (1 Timothy 3:8-13).
2. The candidate is appointed by the majority of the Elders according to the needs of Christ's church.
3. The candidate must be a Member for one (1) year to be eligible to be considered by the Elders. Any exceptions will be handled by the Elders.

B. Duties of a Deacon

1. A Deacon shall serve the congregation as directed by the Elders as ordained by God in His Word.
2. A Deacon should set an example of faithfulness to God and service to Christ's church before the congregation.
3. A Deacon must uphold his responsibilities outlined in his job description.

C. Removal of a Deacon

1. If a Deacon fails to maintain the scriptural and spiritual qualifications of his position, he shall be removed as a Deacon by a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers).
2. If a Deacon is proven guilty of an offense that could cause damage to the reputation of Christ's church, he shall be removed by a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers).
3. If a Deacon is accused of an offense that could cause damage to the reputation of Christ's church, he shall be removed by a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers) until the accusation is investigated. Accusations must be substantiated (e.g. 1 Timothy 5:19).

Section 2: Team Leader(s)

A. Selection of a Team Leader

1. Team Leaders will be appointed by the majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers).

B. Duties of a Team Leader

1. A Team Leader shall serve the congregation as directed by the Elders.
2. A Team Leader should set an example of faithfulness to God and service to Christ's church before the congregation.
3. A Team Leader must uphold his/her responsibilities outlined in his/her

job description.

C. Removal of a Team Leader

1. If a Team Leader fails to maintain a high moral and spiritual character, or fails to perform his/her duties satisfactorily, he/she shall be removed by a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers)..
2. If a Team Leader is proven guilty of an offense that could cause damage to the reputation of Christ's church, he/she shall be removed by a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers).

Article VI: Church Staff

Section 1: Minister(s)

A. Hiring of a Minister

1. The Elders shall be responsible for the search, selection, and presentation of potential Ministers.
2. The Official Board shall have the opportunity to meet with the potential candidate prior to presentation to the congregation.
3. The congregation shall vote whether to hire the candidate at a gathering designated for that purpose.
4. The candidate must have moral character that is consistent with the teachings of Scripture.
5. The candidate must receive eighty (80) percent approval of those individuals who are eligible to vote and are present at the gathering to be appointed as a Minister.
6. The candidate fulfilling the role of a Minister, whether permanent or interim, must be male.

B. Duties of a Minister

1. A Minister must uphold his responsibilities outlined in his job description and contract.
2. A Minister's job description will be prepared in advance by the Elders.
3. A Minister must faithfully preach, teach, and minister the Word of God.
4. A Minister must prepare a report to the Official Board at each monthly meeting and to the congregation at the annual meeting.
5. A Minister will be under the direction of the Elders.
6. A Minister will be part of Leadership but will not be considered an Elder.

C. Salary of a Minister

1. A Minister will be paid a salary recommended by the Elders and

approved by the Official Board.

2. A Minister's salary package shall be reviewed annually, during a board meeting.

D. Termination of a Minister

1. If a Minister is proven guilty of an offense whether unethical, immoral, or illegal, the Minister may be terminated.
2. If a Minister is proven guilty of not fulfilling his required duties as per his job description, the Minister may be terminated.
3. If the Elders have proven that a Minister should be terminated for any reason, they shall present the decision to the Official Board and the Official Board will make the final decision.
4. If a Minister is terminated or chooses to resign, at least thirty (30) days' notice shall be given by either party unless mutually agreed upon by both parties.

Section 2: Director(s)

A. Hiring of a Director

1. Leadership (Elders + Ministers) shall be responsible for the search, selection, and presentation of potential Directors.
2. The Official Board shall have the opportunity to meet with the potential candidate prior to their hiring.
3. The candidate will be required to perform supportive ministry and/or administrative duties.
4. The candidate must have moral character that is consistent with the teachings of Scripture.

B. Duties of a Director

1. A Director must uphold his/her responsibilities outlined in his/her job description and contract.
2. A Director's job description will be prepared in advance by Leadership (Elders + Ministers).
3. A Director shall make a report to the Ministers prior to the monthly board meeting. This report will be presented to the Official Board by the Ministers.
4. A Director shall be under the direction of the Elder-appointed Minister(s).

C. Salary of a Director

1. A Director shall be paid a salary recommended by the Elders and approved by the Official Board.

2. A Director's salary package shall be reviewed annually, during a board meeting.

D. Termination of a Director

1. If a Director is proven guilty of an offense whether unethical, immoral, or illegal, the Director may be terminated.
2. If a Director is proven guilty of not fulfilling his/her required duties as per his/her job description, the Director may be terminated.
3. If Leadership (Elders + Ministers) have proven that a Director should be terminated for any reason, they shall present the decision to the Official Board and the Official Board will make the final decision.
4. If a Director is terminated or chooses to resign, at least thirty (30) days' notice shall be given by either party unless mutually agreed upon by both parties.

Section 3: Other Employee(s)

A. Hiring of Other Employee

1. The Elders, Ministers, and/or Directors shall be responsible for the search, selection, and presentation of potential Employees.

B. Duties of Other Employee

1. An Employee must uphold his/her responsibilities outlined in his/her job description and contract.
2. An Employee's job description will be prepared in advance by the Elders, Ministers and/or Directors.
3. An Employee shall be under the direction of the Elder-appointed Minister and/or Director.

C. Salary of Other Employee

1. An Employee shall be paid a salary recommended by the Elders and approved by the Official Board.
2. An Employee's compensation packages shall be reviewed annually, during a board meeting.

D. Termination of Other Employee

1. If an Employee is proven guilty of an offense whether unethical, immoral, or illegal, the Employee may be terminated.
2. If an Employee is proven guilty of not fulfilling his/her required duties as per his/her job description, the Employee may be terminated.
3. If the Elders, Ministers, and/or Directors have proven that an Employee should be terminated for any reason, the employee may be terminated after a majority decision at a Leadership Meeting.

4. If an Employee is terminated or chooses to resign, at least fourteen (14) days' notice shall be given by either party unless mutually agreed upon by both parties.

Article VII: Church Official Board

Section 1: Board Members

- A. The business decisions of the congregation will be handled by the Official Board. The Official Board will be comprised of twelve (12) members: Three (3) from Leadership (Elders + Ministers) and nine (9) shall be elected by eligible Members of Christ's church.
- B. Selection of a Board Member
 1. Congregational Members
 - a. A candidate must be a Member for at least one (1) year to be eligible to be on the ballot.
 - b. A candidate must be interviewed and approved by a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers) before his/her name is placed on the ballot.
 - c. The election and installment of Board Members shall be held at a congregational meeting.
 - d. A candidate for Board Member who receives eighty (80) percent approval of the votes cast at a congregational meeting may be considered a part of the Official Board if there is an open position. Open positions will be filled in the order of highest approvals to the lowest approvals – maintaining the eighty (80) percent approval.
 - e. Those whose terms have expired will no longer hold a position immediately after the congregational meeting.
 2. Leadership (Elders + Ministers) Members
 - a. Elders (See Article IV, Section 2).
 - b. Ministers (See Article VI, Section 1).
- C. Duties of a Board Member
 1. A Board Member is expected to be at all Official Board meetings.
 2. A Board Member should set an example of faithfulness to God and service to Christ's church before the congregation.
 3. A Board Member must uphold his/her responsibilities outlined in his/her job description.
- D. Removal of a Board Member
 1. If a Board Member misses four (4) times within one (1) year, he/she

shall automatically be removed from the Official Board.

2. If a Board Member fails to maintain a high moral and spiritual character, or fails to perform his/her duties satisfactorily, he/she shall be removed by a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers).
 3. If a Board Member is proven guilty of an offense that could cause damage to the reputation of Christ's church, he/she shall be removed by a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers).
- E. Length of Term of a Board Member
1. A Board Member will be elected under one of the following terms which will be determined by their prior term:
 - a. 1-Year Term
 - b. 2-Year Term
 - c. 3-Year Term
 2. A Board Member must take a one-year sabbatical after their 3-Year Term.

Section 2: Board Officers

A. Selection of a Board Officer

1. A candidate must be a Member for at least one (1) year before being eligible to hold an office on the Official Board. Exceptions may be made with the recommendation of a majority of the Elders and a majority of the Official Board.
2. The election and installment of new officers shall be done at the first meeting following the annual congregational meeting.
3. The Official Board shall elect its own Chairman and Vice-Chairman from the Elders, Treasurer, Secretary, and Assistant Secretary.
4. A Board Officer of the Official Board shall serve a 1-year term.

B. Duties of a Board Officer

1. Chairman
 - a. The Chairman shall preside over all regular and special meetings of the Official Board and all congregational meetings.
 - b. The Chairman shall be an Elder.
 - c. The Chairman shall have the right to table any motions.
 - d. The Chairman is responsible for overseeing an external annual audit and/or review of financial operations.
2. Vice-Chairman
 - a. The Vice-Chairman shall fulfill the duties of the Chairman during his absence or inability to fulfill his duties.

3. Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer must be a member of the Financial Operations Team and meet the qualifications, instructions, and requirements of the team.
- b. The Treasurer must provide a monthly and annual financial report to the board and congregation.
- c. The Financial Operations Team will assume the Treasurer's responsibilities in the event the treasurer is unable to perform his/her duties.
- d. If the Treasurer is not an elected Board Member, he/she shall have no vote on the Official Board.

4. Secretary

- a. The Secretary shall record the minutes of all regular and special meetings of the Official Board and all congregational meetings and shall be responsible for the safekeeping of said minutes.
- b. The Secretary will keep a copy of the Bylaws at each regular and annual meeting.
- c. If the Secretary is not an elected Board Member, he/she shall have no vote on the Official Board.

5. Assistant Secretary

- a. The Assistant Secretary shall fulfill the duties of the Secretary should the latter be absent or unable to perform his or her duties.
- b. If the Assistant Secretary is not an elected Board Member, he/she shall have no vote on the Official Board.

C. Removal of a Board Officer

1. If a Board Officer does not fulfill his/her required duties as per his/her job description, he/she shall be removed from the position by a majority vote of the Official Board but remain a member of the Official Board, given they are a Board Member.
2. If a Board Officer does not feel that he/she can perform the required duties as per his/her job description, he/she may resign from the position, but remain a member of the Official Board, given they are a Board Member.

Section 3: Board Quorum

- A. A quorum for Official Board meetings shall consist of at least six (6) Board

Members and at least three (3) members of Leadership (Elders + Ministers) present.

Section 4: Board Meetings

- A. A regular board meeting will be held monthly on the second Monday.
- B. A special board meeting may be called by the Chairman of the Board, a majority of the Official Board, or a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers).

Article VIII: Congregation

Section 1: Congregational Nominations

- A. The Selection of the Nominating Team
 - 1. The Nominating Team shall be appointed by Leadership (Elders + Ministers).
 - 2. The Nominating Team shall be appointed at least two (2) months before the annual congregational meeting.
- B. The Duties of the Nominating Team
 - 1. The Nominating Team shall receive nominations from the congregation. All nominations must be made to the Nominating Team at least three (3) weeks prior to voting.
 - 2. An Elder on the Nominating Team shall present the slate of nominees for vote.

Section 2: Congregational Quorums

- A. A quorum for congregational business shall consist of a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers) and at least forty (40) percent of eligible voting Members.
- B. A quorum for elections and affirmations shall consist of a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers) and at least forty (40) percent of eligible voting Members.
- C. A quorum for amendment(s) to these Bylaws shall consist of a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers) and at least forty (40) percent of eligible voting Members.

Section 3: Congregational Meetings

- A. A regular congregational meeting will be held annually. The date shall be determined by the Elders.
- B. A special congregational meeting to conduct business may be held at any regular service or worship experience of Christ's church. If a valid objection

arises, a new date shall at least one (1) week later than the original. The Elders shall determine if the objection is valid.

- C. A special congregational meeting may be called by a majority of the Official Board, a majority of Leadership (Elders + Ministers), or one-third of the Members of Christ's church.

Section 4: Congregational Decisions

- A. An election/affirmative decision for an Elder requiring a vote shall follow the criteria stated in these Bylaws (See Article IV Section 2A).
- B. An election/affirmative decision for a Board Member requiring a vote shall follow the criteria stated in these Bylaws (See Article VII Section 1B).
- C. An amendment decision requiring a vote shall be approved only upon receiving two-thirds of the votes cast.
- D. All other decisions requiring a vote shall be approved only upon receiving a majority of the votes cast.
- E. A Member eligible to vote who abstains shall be considered present for purposes of establishing a quorum but shall not be counted as a vote cast.

Article IX: The Church Year

Section 1: The First Christian Church of New Salem year shall begin January 1 and end on December 31 of the same year.

Signatures

Board Chairman

Elder

Board Member

Minister

Revised and Approved: [Month, Day, Year]

Proposed