

BY-LAWS

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF BREMERTON, WASHINGTON

As noted in the Constitution, Article I, Section A, the name of this organization shall be FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF BREMERTON, WASHINGTON, INC., affiliated with The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and committed to the historic principles of this body whose local congregations are variously known as Christian Churches, Churches of Christ, or Disciples of Christ.

I. The Church Council.

A. The Church Council shall meet at least once each calendar quarter. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair. The agenda for Church Council Meetings shall be posted in church, on the website, and in the newsletter, no less than two weeks prior to the meeting. All meetings will be open to any member of the Congregation.

B. Duties of the Church Council.

1. Consider and recommend general policies to the Congregation.
2. Transact the business of the Church.
3. Receive and review the annual budget drafted by the Stewardship and Finance Team. Following Council approval, the proposed budget will be presented to the Congregation for approval.
4. Follow the Church operating budget. Any unbudgeted expense in excess of \$1,000 must be approved by the Congregation prior to incurring the expense.
5. Direct the administrative programs of the Church.
6. A simple majority of the Council must be present to conduct business.

C. Voting Membership of the Church Council.

1. Chair (votes only to break a tie).
2. Vice-Chair.

3. Secretary.
4. Treasurer.
5. Chair of the Trustees, or representative of the same.
6. Chair of the Elders, or representative of the same.
7. Chair of the Diaconate, or representative of the same.
8. Facilitators of the Ministry of Worship, Ministry of Christian Education, Ministry of Christian Hospitality, Ministry of Global Missions, Ministry of Nurture, and Ministry of Resources.
9. Chairs of the Stewardship and Finance Team and the Property Team.
10. Chair of the Personnel Team.
11. Youth Representative (as available).
12. Any person filling more than one position will be allowed only one vote.

D. Selection of Council Members.

1. The Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Church Council shall be one and the same as the Officers of the Congregation as noted in Article III, Section A, of the Constitution. The Officers of the Congregation are elected by the Congregation at its Annual Congregational Business Meeting, in accordance with the Constitution.
2. The Chairs of the Trustees, Elders, and the Diaconate, shall be elected by their separate members who are elected by the Congregation at its Annual Congregational Business Meeting.
3. The Facilitators of the Ministries shall be selected by the Chair, Vice-Chair, Chair of the Elders, and the Pastor. Following the selection process, this group will meet with the Facilitators to select Ministry members.
 - (a) Terms of office for Facilitators of the Ministries shall be one year, limited to three consecutive terms. The office holder may be re-elected after a lapse of one year.

(b) Vacancies that occur during the year for Ministry Facilitator positions shall be filled by the selection of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Chair of the Elders, and the Pastor.

E. The Church financial year shall begin January 1. The Church program year shall begin July 1.

II. Ministries.

A. Each Ministry shall meet as needed to plan its general program. The draft program shall be presented to the Church Council for approval at its next meeting. Each Ministry shall administer its program in cooperation with other Ministries and with the Church Council.

B. All Ministries shall recommend and monitor the budgetary needs of the Ministry. No Ministry shall exceed its budget allotment unless it has received prior approval to do so from the Ministry of Resources' Stewardship and Finance Team. Expenses which may exceed the budget allotment by an amount greater than \$100 must be approved by the Church Council.

C. New Ministries, or changes to the responsibilities or budget of an existing Ministry, must be approved by the Church Council.

D. Ministries and Responsibilities.

1. Ministry of Worship.

(a) In cooperation with the Pastor, prepare for and lead worship services for the Congregation.

(b) In cooperation with Elders and the Diaconate, schedule members to prepare communion elements, serve communion, and receive the offering.

(c) Assist the Personnel Team in selecting the Church organist and choir director, supporting and evaluating their performance, and recommending changes to enhance the worship experience.

2. Ministry of Christian Education.

(a) Develop an effective program of Christian education for all ages throughout each program year.

(b) In cooperation with the Church Council, make policy decisions on Christian Education, including the selection of curriculum and educational materials, assignment of teaching staff, and allocation of space for classes.

(c) Provide oversight of the Church library.

(d) Select a Church Historian, approved by the Church Council, to document significant events in the life of the Church.

3. Ministry of Christian Hospitality.

(a) Make all Church members and visitors feel welcome, sharing the love of Christ with everyone.

(b) In cooperation with Church Elders, practice hospitality, integrating new members into the Church, and reaching out to inactive members.

(c) Develop fellowship events for the Congregation as a means of fostering and sustaining a unified community of faith and witness.

(d) Ensure that each member receives appropriate care and concern during special occasions such as marriage, birth, illness, death, and other life-changing events.

4. Ministry of Global Missions.

(a) Encourage individual member and Congregational participation in responding to the vision of God's purpose revealed through Jesus Christ.

(b) Prepare and recommend the Global Missions' annual portion of the general budget.

(c) Publicize and provide opportunities for members to participate in special offerings of the Church, focusing on Global Missions.

(d) Inform the Congregation of activities concerning Global Missions, encouraging prayer, participation, and support.

(e) Seek to meet the needs of persons in our community, region, and world.

(f) Work on behalf of justice for all God's people.

(g) Notify the Congregation of emergency needs in the community, state, nation or the world, particularly those drawn to our attention by the Regional or General manifestations of the Church.

5. Ministry of Nurture.

(a) Membership – to maintain the closest possible contact with the entire church membership, to the end that each member shall be invited, integrated and included in the life of the Church in a spirit of love through our common love in Jesus Christ.

(1) Welcome and connect new members to a shepherding Elder.

(2) Educate members to the denominational structure, history, and polity.

(3) Integrate members into the life (fellowship) and service (ministries) of the Church.

(4) LOV – Love our volunteers – to recognize the gifts that are offered in service.

(b) Elders.

(1) Support the pastor in conducting the pastoral ministry of the Church.

(2) Partner with the Ministry of Christian Hospitality and the Diaconate to assist in developing fellowship events for the Congregation.

(3) Ensure that members of the Church receive appropriate care and concern during life-changing events.

(4) Clarify doctrinal practice of the Congregation, and of the Regional or General manifestations of the Church.

(5) Participate in the life of the Church, offering leadership where called to serve.

(6) Offer prayer for communion, offertory message and prayer, and prayers for other spiritual needs and occasions.

(7) Prepare and present the sermon when called to do so.

(c) The Diaconate is a spiritual and social fellowship that supports the Pastor and the Elders in conducting the pastoral ministry of the Church. The Diaconate assists in the teaching and administrative programs of the Church through the functional ministries and assists with baptisms and in the preparation and serving of communion and homebound communion.

(d) Disciples Women's Ministry Groups. Meet regularly for fellowship, study, prayer, and outreach as well as to consider fund-raising ideas for service projects. The Coordinating Council (consisting of the officers of the group(s)) meets quarterly.

(e) Disciples Men's Ministry. A fellowship group of men meeting on the first Monday of the month for breakfast.

(f) Prayer Shawl Ministry. Began with a group of people gathering one Saturday a month to use their hands to knit and fellowship, to pray, and to trust in the healing power of their hands to touch others. The prayer shawl ministry meets quarterly. Shawls are available in the Pastor's office for distribution.

(g) Greeters shall welcome attendees at regular services and give publicity to Church life and activities.

6. Ministry of Resources.

(a) The Stewardship and Finance Team.

(1) Oversee the financial program of the Church and develop, within the membership, an understanding of the full meaning of Christian stewardship.

(2) Membership includes the Vice-Chair and Treasurer of the Church Council, as well as one Trustee and one member of the Memorials Team.

(3) Develop the proposed operating budget for presentation to the Church Council.

(b) Memorials Team. Oversee the use of memorial funds.

(c) The Personnel Team.

(1) A member of the Congregation shall be its Chair. Membership shall include the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Church Council, as well as two or three other members of the Congregation.

(2) Oversee the functions of paid staff, update position descriptions, and assess staff performance prior to making recommendations to the Stewardship and Finance Team regarding salaries for the next budget year.

(3) With regard to paid staff who may serve the Church through employment or contract, other than the Pastor, the Personnel Team shall consult with each Ministry involved with that staff person's duties, and provide recommendations to the Church Council on contract, employment, salary change, employee counseling, or job performance.

(4) Recommend to the Church Council employment and contract decisions on Church paid staff, other than the Pastor.

(5) All actions relating to Church staff shall be decided by the Church Council.

(6) Written employment agreements or contracts shall be included in the minutes of the Church Council meetings, subject to personnel confidentiality redactions. A complete, not redacted, copy of the signed agreement or contract shall be provided to the staff member, and the original document shall be retained in records held by the Trustees.

(7) The Church Council shall select and employ a Pastor in accordance with the provisions in Article IV of the Constitution.

(8) Substitute preaching shall be arranged by the Pastor in consultation with the Elders.

(d) The Property Team shall plan for the needs and maintenance of outside facilities such as gardens and parking lot, and inside facilities such as the Church interior.

III. Delegates to the Regional and General Assemblies.

A. Delegates from the Congregation to the Regional Assembly of the Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and to the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall be selected by the following process.

1. A Selection Committee shall be composed of the Council Chair, Chairs of the Elders and the Diaconate, and the Pastor.
2. The Selection Committee shall develop a list of recommended names (the number shall be governed by the rules of the Assembly for which they are selected).
3. The Selection Committee shall present the list to the Congregation for approval.

B. Within two weeks of Congregational approval, any delegate requesting financial assistance shall make their request to the Church Council. The Church Council shall consider and approve any such requests as deemed appropriate.

C. The Delegates shall be responsible to the Congregation and shall report to the same upon return from the Assembly and to the Elders upon request.

IV. Amendments.

A. Amendments to these By-Laws may be proposed by a majority vote of Council members, or by written proposal signed by ten members of the Congregation.

B. Written notice of a proposed by-law amendment shall be provided to members of the Congregation through the Church paper and direct or electronic mail no less than two weeks prior to the date of the meeting called to consider the proposed amendment.

C. Proposed amendments shall be adopted upon a two-thirds vote of members present and voting.