

BYLAWS

We, the members of the Runnells Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in order to promote the work of the Church in the spirit of Christ, and thus advance God's Kingdom, do hereby adopt these Bylaws.

ARTICLE I **Officers of the Congregation**

Section A. Church Officers

To be eligible for election as an officer a person must be a member of the Runnells Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The officers shall be elected by majority vote of the congregation at its annual meeting. Church officers are elders, diakonate, financial secretary, and the church council members.

Officers must be active in the Church's life and give evidence of seeking to grow in their own understanding and practice of the Christian life. Such evidence would include the following:

- Conduct of one's life in light of the teachings of Jesus Christ.
- Promotion of goodwill and Christian fellowship in the Church and community.
- Attendance at the worship services and stated meetings of the Church.
- Regular financial contributions to the support of the Church and its outreach program.
- Willingness to fulfill assignments on behalf of the Church.
- Demonstrate skills or evident potential in carrying out responsibilities of the particular office.

Section B. Elders

Duties of the Elders:

1. Give general supervision to the spiritual affairs of the Church.
2. Assist the minister in a loving and caring ministry for the Church.
3. Cooperate with the minister in carrying out the pastoral ministry and evangelism of the Church.
4. Preside at the communion table.
5. Each Elder is encouraged to actively participate in at least one Ministry.
6. Call on the homebound, hospitalized and those with needs.

Election of the Elders:

1. Not to exceed nine (9)
2. One-third shall be elected each year for a term of 3 years. They will become eligible for re-election with a lapse of one year following three consecutive terms.

Section C. Diakonate

Duties of the Diakonate:

1. Prepare and care for the communion table and emblems.
2. Assist in the communion service, the receiving of the offering and ushering during the public worship services and other activities in the Church.
3. Cooperate with the Minister, Elders, and Ministries of Worship and Missions and Evangelism in carrying out the pastoral ministry and evangelism of the Church.
4. Assist in baptismal services.
5. Each member of the Diakonate is encouraged to actively participate in at least one Ministry.
6. Recruit youth age 15 and above as Junior Diakonate.
7. Shepherd the Junior Diakonate.
8. Monitor communion supplies and ensure that they are purchased and available.

Election of the Diakonate:

1. Not to exceed (18).

2. One-third shall be elected each year for a term of 3 years. They will become eligible for re-election with a lapse of one year following three consecutive terms.

Section D. Church Council

The church council shall consist of the chairperson of the church council and the congregation, vice-chairperson of the church council and the congregation, secretary of the church council and the congregation, elder coordinator and ministry coordinators.

Duties of the Chairperson of the Church Council and the Congregation:

1. Set dates and times for Church Council meetings and congregational meetings, as specified by the by-laws.
2. Chair all Congregational and Council meetings.
3. Create and submit in advance, agendas for the Council meetings
4. Report to the congregation, at the annual meeting what the goals and objectives are for the current year.
5. Provide coaching and/or encouragement to all members of the Executive Team and Ministry Coordinators.
6. Review all financial activities of the Council to be familiar with the revenue and expenses of the congregation.
7. Act as liaison for the council with the congregation and the Pastor.
8. Organize and ensure Annual reports are made for the Congregational Meeting.

Election of the Chairperson of the Church Council and the Congregation:

For a term of one year, not to exceed two consecutive terms.

Duties of the Vice-Chairperson of the Church Council and the Congregation:

1. Work closely with the Chairperson in order to become familiar with the specific duties of that position.
2. Prepare to assume the duties of Chairperson of the Council.
3. Sit in place of the President in his/her absence as necessary at all Council meetings.
4. Perform such tasks as directed by the Council Chair to the benefit of the Council and Executive Team.
5. To replace the Council Chair in the event that he/she is unable to complete the current term.
6. Review and update the church by-laws and bring all necessary modifications to the Council for approval, then to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting.

Election of the Vice-Chairperson of the Church Council and the Congregation:

For a term of one year, not to exceed two consecutive terms.

Duties of the Secretary of the Church Council and the Congregation:

1. Arrange for a substitute secretary in absence.
2. Take and prepare minutes of all Council and Congregational meetings.
3. Distribute minutes to the Council and Church office within one week of each meeting.
4. Maintain records of minutes.

Election of the Secretary of the Church Council and the Congregation:

For a term of one year, not to exceed two consecutive terms.

Duties of the Ministry Coordinators:

As described in Article III.

Election of the Ministry Coordinators:

For a term of two years, not to exceed two consecutive terms.

Section E. Financial Secretary

Duties of the Financial Secretary:

1. Responsible for counting money with designated individual.

2. Keep full and accurate records and accounts of moneys received.
3. Make timely bank deposits.
4. Ability to keep confidential information.
5. Distributes contribution statements to the congregation at the end of the calendar year.

Election of Financial Secretary:

For a term of one year, not to exceed five consecutive terms.

Section F. Nominating committee and the election of church officers

1. A nominating committee shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Church Council, composed of:
 - One Elder (who shall be Chairperson)
 - One member from the Diakonate (whose term is not expiring)
 - Two representatives of the congregation
2. This nominating committee shall nominate the following:
 - Elders
 - Diakonate
 - Church Council Officers
 - Ministry Coordinators
 - Members of the personnel committee
 - Financial Secretary
3. It shall be the policy of this nominating committee to consider advance recommendations for nominees by the members of the congregation. The nominations must come to the Church Council prior to the annual business meeting.
4. The nominating committee shall consider the qualifications of all potential nominees, and secure the person's consent for the office. The list of nominees shall be presented to the congregation by posting in the church office, emailing members of the congregation, posting in the bulletin or by announcing from the pulpit at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting held on the **4th Sunday after June 1.**
5. The nominating committee shall report its nominations to the congregation at the annual business meeting.
6. All nominees who receive a majority of the total votes cast by members present and absentee ballots shall be declared elected.
 - (a) Such absentee ballots must be returned to the nominating committee Chairperson prior to the annual business meeting.
 - (b) Absentee ballots are to be held by the nominating committee chairperson, and upon request will be given to any member unable to attend the annual business meeting.
7. Vacancies of elected offices shall be filled by appointment by the Church Council until the next annual business meeting, at which time the congregation is to elect a replacement for the unexpired portion of the term.
8. The Elders shall meet no later than the **fourth Sunday in July** for the purpose of electing their chairperson.
9. The Diakonate shall meet no later than the **fourth Sunday in July** for the purpose of electing a chairperson.

ARTICLE II
Church Council

Section A. All church organizations, Sunday School Class groups, fellowship groups or other committees shall report to a Ministry Coordinator to the Church Council, and through the Church Council to the congregation.

Section B. The Church Council is charged by the congregation with the duty of conducting the business affairs and planning and executing the program of the Church.

1. To regularly receive, consider and act on reports from the various Ministries and standing committees or ad hoc committees.
2. To approve an annual budget, upon recommendation of the Finance Coordinator.
3. To recommend to the congregation, upon recommendation of the Search and Call Committee, the calling of the Minister.
4. To be responsible for appointing a committee of three church members to perform an annual review of financial procedures by **January 31st** and report results to the Church Council.

Section C. The Church Council **shall:**

1. Consist of:
 - a) The Elder Coordinator
 - b) All Ministry Coordinators
 - c) Chairperson
 - d) Vice Chairperson
 - e) Secretary
 - f) Pastor, Ex Officio
2. Hold regular meetings monthly or at a time determined by the Church Council.
3. Hold special meetings as needed on call of the Chairperson or on request of three or more members of the Church Council.
4. A majority of members of the Church Council shall constitute a quorum.
5. Observe the following order of business:
 - a) Meeting called to order by presiding officer
 - b) Prayer
 - c) Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting
 - d) Financial report
 - e) Old business
 - f) Reports from the Ministry Coordinators
 - g) Ad Hoc committee reports
 - h) Act on recommendations from reports of Ministry Coordinators and Ad Hoc committees. Recommendations shall either be:
 1. Approved
 2. Disapproved
 3. Referred back to the Ministry Coordinator or committee for further study
 - i) New business
 - j) Adjournment
 - k) Closing prayer

ARTICLE III **Ministries**

Section A. Procedure

1. The administration of the program of the church shall be delegated to the following Ministries under supervision of the Church Council, in coordination with the Minister.
 - (a) Worship
 - (b) Membership
 - (c) Missions and Evangelism
 - (d) Finance
 - (e) Christian Education
 - (f) Property

2. Ad hoc committees may be appointed by the Church Council when needed.
3. Each Ministry shall organize itself to study its responsibilities, plan its program, meet as necessary to attend to its business, discuss fulfillment of the year's objectives and evaluate its program. Upon approval of the Church Council, each Ministry shall proceed to administer its program in cooperation with other Ministries. Regular reports by the Ministries shall be made to the Church Council.
4. Each Ministry Coordinator shall, on the basis of its needs, submit a proposed budget to the Finance Coordinator when the annual all-church budget is being created. Each Ministry will be responsible for supervising their spending, and shall spend within the approved budget under Board supervision.

Section B. The Purposes and Duties of the Ministry of Worship shall be:

1. Be responsible for the public worship services of the Church, including order of service, ushering, enlisting worship leaders and greeters, and physical aids to worship.
2. Promote the spirit of fellowship through proper reception and greeting of all those attending regular Church services.
3. Be responsible for the baptismal services, including care and preparation of the baptistery and care of baptismal robes.
4. Develop a program of personal devotional life throughout the membership of the Church, including promotion of daily and seasonal devotions.
5. Maintain and supervise the musical program of the Church, including choir and other musical groups.
6. Secure qualified Nursery Worker.

Section C. The Purposes and Duties of the Ministry of Membership shall be:

1. Stimulate the largest possible interest for the entire membership of the Church, during the public worship service by including the promotion of attendance.
2. Encourage fellowship through friendly calls and visits to the members and promote the growth of Christian fellowship in every possible way.
3. Maintain a working roll of the Church membership showing: (a) degree of activity of each member (using the attendance sheets), (b) family relationships, (c) church offices held, etc.
4. Keep in touch with our members including young people away at college, our "special friends" and the men and women serving in the Armed Forces.
5. Continue to have contact with our members who may be sick, at home or in nursing homes, and others who are temporarily out of contact with the Church.
6. Responsible for postage on all Church publications.
7. Promote the spirit of fellowship through general church social and fellowship functions.

Section D. The Purposes and Duties of the Ministry of Missions and Evangelism shall be:

1. To educate the Church membership and create in them interest in and support of the denominational program of missions, benevolence, Christian higher education, and ecumenical concerns.
2. Maintain effective contact between the Church and the various denominational missionary, benevolent, and educational agencies and with recognized interdenominational agencies.
3. Study the denominational needs and requests and the local needs and requests, and ensure that the Church's annual budget provides for world and community causes.
4. Create, promote, and sustain a year-round program of evangelism that is vital and compelling

Section E. The Purposes and Duties of the Ministry of Finance shall be:

1. Plan and carry out a comprehensive program of Christian stewardship.
2. Sponsor special stewardship emphasis and projects.

3. Prepare the Church's annual budget after consultation with the various Ministries and Ad Hoc committees. The budget is to be submitted to the Church Council for approval and then to the congregation for final action.
4. Work with the Church bookkeeper, creating regular reports to be passed on to the Church Council at its regular meetings. (At the annual meeting make a complete financial report covering receipts and expenditures of the previous year.)
5. Oversee the distribution of funds within the current budget.
6. Receive, invest, and administer the permanent funds of the Church.
7. Cooperate in the annual financial procedure review of all funds and accounts as directed by the Church Council.
8. Designate an individual to work in conjunction with the Financial Secretary to reconcile each offering collected, with both persons initialing the deposit.

Section F. The Purposes and Duties of the **Ministry of Christian Education** shall be:

1. Facilitate learning by providing materials and supplies for Sunday School and Christian Education (e.g., Men's and Women's ministries).
2. Select and purchase curriculum for the Sunday School.
3. Secure Sunday School teachers and provide training.
4. Coordinate children's Christmas program.
5. Encourage young people to attend Camp and Conference and other youth activities throughout the year.
6. Secure sponsors for Chi-Rho and CYF.
7. Coordinate, plan and implement Vacation Bible School.
8. Coordinate and plan a Fall Rally Day.
9. Coordinate and plan 2nd grade Bible distribution.
10. Prepare and stock the kid's church activity bags.
11. Prepare church bulletin boards in Fellowship Hall.
12. Decide on Summer Sunday School.
13. Coordinate Sunday School Teachers Appreciation.

Section G. The Purposes and Duties of the **Ministry of Property** shall be:

1. Supervise the Church building and grounds and all general equipment, including care, repair, decoration, and protection.
2. Supervise the purchase and installation of all new equipment.
3. Maintain adequate insurance as approved by the Church Council.
4. Handle all requests for the use of the building or equipment (e.g. weddings and reception coordination), including permission or refusal to use, amount of rental, etc.
5. Contract a custodian as approved by the Council.

ARTICLE IV

The Purpose and Duties of the Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) shall be:

1. Serve to enhance the communication and relationship between the Minister and the congregation. It will not be a Ministry, but will seek to strengthen the minister-parish relationship to enable faithful ministry by both the Minister and the congregation.
2. This committee shall consist of three (3) members of the congregation, each serving a three-year staggered term.
 - a) The Minister shall present to the Church Council each year the person to be considered for this committee.
 - b) The members shall be persons who are respected in the Church, have the courage and capacity to express themselves well, have a strong sense of compassion and understanding, but who are not afraid to deal with conflict.

- c) Immediate family members (parent, child, grandparent, spouse or sibling) shall not serve simultaneously.
 - d) One of the three members of the committee shall be appointed chairperson each year by the Chairman of the Church Council.
3. To fill unexpired terms, the Minister shall bring a nominee to the Board for approval.

ARTICLE V
The Purpose and Duties of the Personnel Committee

Under the direction of the church council the **Personnel Committee** shall:

1. Annually review performance and receive feedback from all employees with the exception of new employees. Initial evaluations should be done with in the first six months for new employees and on an as needed basis for all employees.
2. Annually, and as needed, evaluate compensation and salary, and make recommendations to the council and the appropriate coordinator at the April Council meeting.
3. Assist with the completion of employment paperwork.
4. Assess and make recommendations for modifications of job descriptions.
5. The committee will be composed of three members of the congregation for three year staggered terms. The nominating committee shall submit names to the council for approval at the June meeting.

ARTICLE VI
The Minister

Section A. The Role of the Minister

The Minister shall be an *ex-officio* member of all organized groups, auxiliaries, and committees. The Minister shall, in cooperation with the Chairperson of the Church Council, encourage orderly procedures of the life and work of the Church through effective use of the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

Section B. Selection

The Minister shall be chosen by the Church as hereinafter provided (when anticipated to be employed for over three months):

1. The Chairperson of the Church Council shall nominate for Council approval a Search and Call Committee to recommend the calling of a new Minister. The Search and Call Committee shall have seven (7) members (consisting of three (3) Elders, one (1) member of the Diakonate and three (3) members from the congregation). Immediate family members (parent, child, grandparent, spouse or siblings) shall not serve simultaneously. Each member shall be an active participant in the life of the congregation. One of the seven shall be designated chairperson by the Church Council. The Chairperson of the Church Council shall serve *ex-officio*, without vote, on the Search and Call Committee.
2. The Search and Call Committee will utilize the services of the Regional Minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Upper Midwest for information on prospective candidates.
3. The Search and Call Committee will recommend a prospective minister to the Church Council. The recommendation must be accepted by at least two-thirds majority of Council members present and voting in a regular or specially called meeting of the Board, with one week written notice.
4. The Church Council will recommend the prospective minister to the congregation.
5. The recommendation of the Church Council must be accepted by at least a two-thirds majority of Church members present and voting in a regular or specially called meeting (after two weeks publication in the bulletin, announcement from the pulpit or notification via email.)
6. The Minister's term shall be for an indefinite period.

Section C. Resignation/Termination of Minister

1. Voluntary resignation of the Minister shall be submitted to the Church Council in writing, 60 days prior to leaving if possible.
2. The Regional Minister shall be consulted **prior** to the convening of the Elders to vote on the involuntary termination of the Minister.
3. Involuntary termination of the Minister shall require a majority recommendation of the Elders and be confirmed by a majority vote of the Church Council present and voting at a meeting specifically called for the purpose of considering the termination of the Minister. The Church Council will provide the minister with 60 days written notice.
4. Following the notification of resignation/termination of the minister, the Chairperson shall announce the action to the congregation.

ARTICLE VII

Meetings of the Congregation

Section A. Meeting to be Held

1. The congregation shall hold a business meeting on the **4th Sunday after June 1**.
2. This annual meeting shall be for the purpose of electing the Church officers for the coming year.
3. The Church Fiscal year shall begin **July 1**.
4. Hearing reports of the year gone by.
5. Approving the proposed Church budget and projected program.
6. Receiving the auditors' report.
7. Caring for special items of business.

Section B. Notice of Meetings

1. Notice of all regular or special business meetings shall be posted in the bulletin, announced from the pulpit or communicated via email at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.
2. Purpose of the meeting shall be indicated in each notice or announcement.

Section C. Quorum

1. All other resolutions (not specifically covered herein) that are presented to members of the congregation shall be decided by a majority vote.

ARTICLE VIII

Membership Requirements

1. Confession of Faith and Baptism.
2. All persons who have never been baptized shall be baptized by immersion in order to become a member of this congregation.
 - a) Consideration shall be given to those with special needs.
3. Any person who has been baptized, regardless of form, may become a member of this congregation without the necessity of being re-baptized.

ARTICLE IX

Amending the Bylaws

1. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members of the congregation present and voting in a regular or special meeting, provided:

- a) The proposed amendment has been read at a regular meeting of the Church Council two weeks prior to the vote thereon, **AND**
 - b) The proposed amendment has passed the Church Council by a two-thirds vote of members present and voting, **AND**
 - c) A copy of the proposed amendment shall be presented to the congregation by posting in the church office, emailing members of the congregation, posting in the bulletin or by reading from the pulpit at least two weeks prior to the congregational meeting.
2. Any section of the bylaws can be temporarily suspended with a 90% approval of the Church Council with notification to the congregation.

Amendment History

2006/09
2008/06
2013/10
2014/09
2017/06