

TIMBERLAKE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)
Lynchburg, Virginia

Constitution and By-Laws for Timberlake Christian Church
(Revised September 2015)

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Timberlake Christian Church, a congregationally-governed body eager to respond more effectively to the power of the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, do hereby adopt this Constitution.

Article I. Name and Purpose

Section A. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Timberlake Christian Church of Lynchburg, Virginia, affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and participating in its co-operative life through support of and participation in the life and work of local, district, regional, and general organizations reporting to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or its legal successors.

Section B. Purpose

The purpose of this Congregation shall be the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament to win people to faith in Him and commit them actively to the Church, to help them grow in grace and knowledge of Christ that increasingly they may know and do His will, and to work for the unity of all Christians and with them engage in the common task of building the Kingdom of God.

Article II. Membership

Section A. Definition

Membership in this Congregation shall consist of those who are now members of the Congregation and those who shall unite with it by confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, giving expression to their faith through baptism and personal commitment to Him, and those who unite by transfer of membership, thereby making a reaffirmation of their faith and commitment to Christ.

Section B. Associate Membership

College students and other temporary residents are invited to associate membership in this Congregation during their residence in the Lynchburg area. Such membership does not alter their relationship with their home congregation. Associate membership includes all privileges except voting.

Article III. Ordinances

Section A. Baptism

Baptism as administered by this Congregation shall be by the mode of immersion, symbolizing for the believer in Christ, death to sin, burial with Christ, and resurrection to a new life in Christ and in the world.

(Although this Congregation believes that immersion is the scriptural and proper method of baptism, it recognizes that some Christians practice other forms of baptism in the sincere belief that they are also scriptural and proper. In accepting members by transfer from churches which practice other forms of baptism, this Congregation does not compromise its belief in the scriptural validity of baptism by immersion. Rather, this Congregation extends to these fellow believers in Christ the recognition of their right of belief and sincerity of purpose.)

Section B. Lord's Supper

The observance of the Lord's Supper is the Church's remembrance of Christ's sacrifice for humankind. By partaking of the bread, which represents His broken body and of the cup which represents His spilled blood, members of the Church are reminded of the forgiving love of God. The Lord's Supper shall be observed each Sunday in this Congregation and at such other times as the minister or Elders may deem advisable.

Article IV. Officers

Section A. Officers Elected by the Congregation

All elected positions must be filled by members of the Congregation.

The following officers shall be elected by the Congregation at its annual meeting and will serve as members of their respective boards:

1. Board of Directors: There shall be 18 members:
 - a. 12 shall be members-at-large, one third elected each year for a term of three years, an interim of at least one year shall elapse between terms of service
 - b. the chairpersons of the Administration and Finance Committee, the Elders, Deacons, and Trustees
 - c. a youth representative to be selected by the youth shall be elected for a term of one year and may serve no more than two consecutive terms
 - d. the Treasurer of the church
2. Elders: There shall be no fewer than 6, one third of whom shall be elected each year for a term of three years. An interim of at least one year shall elapse between terms of service.
3. Deacons: There shall be no fewer than 2 for each Elder, one third of whom shall be elected each year for a term of three years. An interim of at least one year shall elapse between terms of service.

Youth Deacons: In addition, four youth shall be elected for a term of one year and may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

The number of Elders and Deacons will be confirmed by the Board.

4. Trustees: There shall be 5 Trustees, one elected each year for a term of five years. A Trustee shall be eligible for re-election.
5. Emeritus Officers: Those Elders and any Deacons whose service and consecration to the Church merits this honor, may be retired from active responsibility, these to be known respectively as Elder Emeritus or Deacon Emeritus.
6. Honorary Officers: Those who because of infirmities or advanced age, whose consecration to the Church merits it, may be named as honorary officers, to be known as Honorary Elders or Honorary Deacons.
7. Treasurer of the Board and Congregation: For a term of one year. The treasurer shall be eligible for re-election.
8. Assistant Treasurer: For a term of three years. The assistant treasurer shall be eligible for re-election.

Section B. Executive Officers of the Board

Board of Directors: The following officers shall be elected by the Board from the Board membership:

- a. Chairperson of the Board and Congregation: For a term of one year and not more than three consecutive terms. It is recommended that the chairperson be selected from among those who have previously served on the Board.
- b. Vice-Chairperson of the Board and Congregation: For a term of one year and not more than three consecutive terms.
- c. Secretary of the Board and Congregation: For a term of one year and not more than three consecutive terms.
- d. The four elected members whose terms are expiring shall act as a nominating committee and submit a slate of proposed officers at the last meeting of the year.

Section C. Duties of Officers

1. The Board of Directors shall:
 - a. Consider and recommend to the Congregation general policy

- b. Carry out such instructions as may be given them by the Congregation
- c. Have authority over all matters pertaining to the proper function of the Church and its organizations
- d. Sponsor an annual audit or review of financial records
- e. Establish special committees as needed. The Chairperson of the Board shall appoint the members of these committees.

The Board shall bring before the Congregation such matters as would involve the Congregation in debt, change of policy, or any matter whereby the peace and harmony of the Congregation might be impaired.

2. Executive Committee of the Board of Directors and Congregation:

- a. The Chairperson of the Board and Congregation shall call and preside at all regular or special business meetings of the Congregation and the Board, and may appoint a parliamentarian for these meetings, subject to approval by the Board.
- b. The Vice-Chairperson of the Board and Congregation shall fulfill the duties of the chairperson in his/her absence and shall preside over the meetings of the Mission Council.
- c. The Treasurer of the Board and Congregation shall keep records of the receipt of funds contributed from all sources, keep separate records of funds received for and disbursed from the regular and any special accounts; make disbursements from the accounts in accordance with the adopted budget, and other disbursements as directed by the Board; and make reports regularly to the Board.
- d. The Assistant Treasurer of the Board and Congregation shall have no active duties as an officer except in the event of the death or incapacitation of the Treasurer. His/her duties shall then become those of the Treasurer of the Board and Congregation until such time as a new Treasurer is elected by the Congregation.
- e. The Secretary of the Board and Congregation shall keep the minutes of the Congregational and Board meetings and maintain an up-to-date record of Congregational business.

3. The Elders shall:

- a. Encourage the deepening of the spiritual life of the members of the Congregation
- b. Serve at the table during observance of the Lord's Supper
- c. Visit the sick and serve communion to shut-ins

- d. Assist and advise the minister(s)
- e. Serve as liaison between the Congregation and minister(s).
- f. Nominate persons to serve as Elders

Other duties in keeping with the office may be assigned. (The chairperson of the Elders shall serve on the Board of Directors).

4. The Deacons shall:

- a. Work with the minister(s) and Elders in promoting the growth and welfare of the Congregation
- b. Take responsibility for the preparation and care of communion service
- c. Serve at the Lord's Supper
- d. Receive offerings during worship
- e. Assist in the financial canvasses and visitation projects

Other duties in keeping with the office may be assigned. (The chairperson of the Deacons shall serve on the Board of Directors).

5. The Trustees shall:

- a. Act as legal agents of the Congregation
- b. Hold title to the property of the Congregation
- c. Execute agreements and contracts on behalf of the Congregation when so authorized by the members acting in Congregational meetings

Other duties in keeping with the office may be assigned. (The chairperson of the Trustees shall serve on the Board of Directors).

Article V. Nomination and Election to Offices and Positions

Section A. Office and Positions

The Administration and Finance Committee shall select persons for nomination to the following offices and positions:

1. Assistant Treasurer

2. Board of Directors
3. Chairperson of the Administration and Finance Committee
4. Deacons
7. Memorials Committee at large members
8. Mission Council Secretary
9. Personnel Committee at large members
10. Property Coordinator
11. Secretary of the Mission Council
12. Treasurer
13. Trustees
14. Youth Deacons
15. Chairperson of the Columbarium Committee
16. Columbarium Committee at Large member

The Administration and Finance Committee will consider advance recommendations for nominees by the members of the Congregation.

Section B. Ministerial Search Committee

As required, the Administration and Finance Committee shall nominate the chairperson and 6 members for nomination to the Ministerial Search Committee whose duties are defined in Article VI, Section B.

Section C. Procedure

Nominations shall be confirmed by the Board prior to the meeting of the Congregation for the election of officers. The list shall be posted or mailed to every family in the Congregation at least one week prior to the Congregational meeting at which the election of officers is to take place. Opportunity shall be given at the annual business meeting for nominations from the floor.

Section D. Election

Election shall be by secret ballot or by voice vote. All nominees who receive a majority of the

votes cast by those members present and voting shall be declared elected.

Section E. Vacancies

Vacancies in any office of the Church shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term(s), by nominations of the Administration/Finance Committee with approval of the Board.

Article VI. The Minister

Section A. Duties

The senior minister of the Church shall perform the duties which usually pertain to that office, and as spiritual administrator of the Church shall be an ex-officio member of all organized groups, committees, without vote, and shall supervise the work of any other ministers or staff members.

Section B. Selection of Ministers

Ministers, whether the senior minister, co-minister, or associate minister, shall be selected as follows:

1. Members of the Ministerial Search Committee shall be responsible for recommending a prospective minister to the Board.

The Ministerial Search Committee shall hold consultation with the Regional Minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Virginia, or his or her substitute, to review procedures and obtain names of possible candidates.

2. The Board of Directors shall consider the recommendation of the Ministerial Search Committee and, if approved by a majority vote by secret ballot of those present and voting, shall recommend the prospective minister to the Congregation. It shall be the policy of the Church to consider only one prospective minister at a time.
3. The recommendation of the Board must be accepted by at least two-thirds majority vote by secret ballot of participating members present and voting in a regular or special business meeting of the Congregation before a call may be extended.

Section C. Term of Service

The minister shall be called for an indefinite period of time and his/her services terminated by either him/herself or by the Congregation on ninety days' written notice, unless an otherwise mutually acceptable termination time is agreed upon.

Article VII. Congregational Meetings

Section A. Meetings to be Held

1. An annual meeting at least thirty days prior to the beginning of the year shall be held for general elections, approving the budget, and caring for special items of church business.
2. Special meetings as required shall be called by the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the Board or upon request of the Board or written petition of 25 or more members of the Congregation.

Section B. Quorum

A quorum is required to conduct a special meeting. A quorum is defined as one third of the participating members of the Congregation. A quorum is not required for annual meetings.

Section C. Acceptance of Motions

Items for Congregational approval shall be considered accepted if approved by a simple majority of participating members present and voting in a regular or special meeting of the Congregation.

Section D. Notice of Meetings

1. Annual Meetings: Notice of all annual meetings of the Congregation (except for amending the Constitution) shall be announced at Sunday morning worship services of the Church at least one month in advance of the meeting, and also by means of the Church newsletter or a written notice sent through the mail and postmarked at least one week before such a meeting. The purpose of the meeting shall be indicated in each notice.
2. Special Meetings: Notice of all special meetings of the Congregation (except for amending the Constitution or by laws) shall be announced at Sunday morning worship services of the Church at least one week in advance of the meeting, and also by means of the Church newsletter, or a written notice sent through the mail and postmarked at least one week before such a meeting. The purpose of the meeting shall be indicated in each notice.

Section E. Rules of Order

All business of the Congregation shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order (Revised).

Article VIII. Amendments

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any duly called business meeting of the Congregation, provided that the proposed amendment has been approved by the Board of Directors upon recommendation from the Administration and Finance Committee, and provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been distributed at least thirty days in advance.

BY-LAWS

I. Organization for the Administration of Church Programs

The Church year shall begin on January 1.

The Church's mission shall be carried out primarily through Standing Committees and Mission Teams in keeping with policies set by the Board of Directors.

A. Board of Directors:

1. Shall hold meetings at least quarterly
2. Shall hold special meetings as required on call of the acting chairperson, by the minister, or upon written request of five or more members of the Board, provided that seven days notice has been given.
3. A quorum of one half (50%) of the members of the Board shall be necessary to conduct business.

B. Mission Council

1. The Mission Council shall be composed of:
 - a. The Minister(s)
 - b. The Vice-Chairperson of the Board and Congregation, who shall preside over all Mission Council meetings
 - c. The chairpersons of the standing committees or their representatives
 - d. The leaders of the Mission Teams
 - e. The Mission Council Secretary
 - f. Such others as needed and assigned by the Board of Directors.
2. It shall be responsible for:
 - a. Sharing of joys and concerns from the Committees and Mission Teams
 - b. Coordinating schedules of the various Committees and Teams as needed
 - c. Mutual support and training of Committee and Team leaders

C. Standing Committees

1. The church shall have the following standing committees:
 - a. Administration and Finance
 - b. Memorials
 - c. Personnel
 - d. Columbarium
2. The leadership and membership of the following shall be selected as indicated below:
 - a. The chairperson of the Administration and Finance Committee, the chairperson of the Columbarium Committee, and the Property Coordinator shall be elected by the Congregation as defined in Article V of the Constitution for terms of two years each.
 - b. The chairpersons of the Memorials and Personnel Committees shall be the senior elected members of the committees.
 - c. The Chairperson of the Board and the minister(s) shall meet with the chairperson of the Administration and Finance Committee to select the members of this committee, which shall include a representative of the Trustees and the Property Coordinator.
 - d. One member of the Columbarium Committee shall be elected each year for a term of three years.
3. Organization:
 - a. Each committee shall organize itself to conduct the business for which it is responsible, meet regularly to attend to its business, and plan its general program which shall be presented to the Board. Upon approval by the Board, the committees shall proceed to administer their program in cooperation with other committees.
 - b. Any committee may appoint sub-committees to more effectively perform its work, such sub-committees to function under the supervision of the committees and be responsible to them.

4. The purpose and duties of the committees shall be as follows:

a. Administration and Finance committee

Responsibilities include:

- 1) Overseeing the business of the church and submitting recommendations to the Board for approval
- 2) Supervising the preparation and proper distribution of the Church budget; keeping financial records; and informing the Congregation of the financial standing of the Church
- 3) Selecting the Financial Secretary who shall keep a record of the financial commitments and amounts contributed by each member, or family, as the case may be, and furnish statements to all members, or families, who have made financial commitments or contributions
- 4) The Property Coordinator shall be responsible for keeping all property and equipment in proper condition, furnishing adequate supplies and equipment for the care of Church property, studying needs and making recommendations for improvements, superintending the work of the custodian or custodial service, and in cooperation with the Committee, keeping the properties adequately insured against possible loss or damage
- 5) Selecting persons for nomination as listed in Article V of the Constitution

b. Memorials Committee

- 1) A Memorials Committee shall serve for the purpose of receiving, recording, and maintaining a fund for memorials and special gifts, and for overseeing The John W. Johnson Scholarship Fund.
- 2) The committee shall function in coordination with the Board of Directors, using a set of guidelines as approved and reviewed periodically by the Board. Such guidelines shall be made available to members of the Congregation and to others requesting them in making a contribution to the Memorials Fund.
- 3) The committee shall be composed of six members as follows:
 - a. A representative from the Trustees
 - b. The Chairperson of the Administration and Finance Committee

- c. Three members-at-large. Each at-large member shall serve for three years, one elected each year as specified in Article V of the Constitution, with eligibility to serve one additional term of three years. After serving for three years (or six years, if re-elected), a person will not be eligible for re-election until an interim of at least one year shall elapse.
- d. A youth representative chosen by the youth
- e. The at-large member whose term is expiring shall be the Chair in the year of their term's expiration.

c. Personnel Committee

- 1) The Personnel Committee shall be considered a subcommittee of the Administration and Finance Committee and report to that committee.
- 2) Duties shall include preparing job descriptions and contracts, if necessary, for each staff position, functioning as a review committee, conducting and annual evaluation and performance review of each staff member, recommending staff compensation and benefits to the Administration and Finance Committee, and recommending the employment of non-ministerial staff to the Board.
 - a. The Committee, with approval of the Administration and Finance Committee, shall have the authority to offer probationary employment for non-ministerial staff for 60 days.
 - b. At the conclusion of the 60 days the Personnel Committee shall review the employee's performance and present its recommendation to the Administration and Finance Committee, who will forward it to the Board of Directors.
- 3) The committee shall consist of the following:
 - a. One representative of the Deacons selected by the Deacons each year
 - b. One representative of the Elders selected by the Elders each year
 - c. One representative of the Trustees selected by the Trustees each year
 - d. The chair of the Administration and Finance Committee
 - e. Three at large members, one elected each year for a three year term as specified in Article V of the Constitution
 - f. The at-large member whose term is expiring shall be the Chair in the year of their term's expiration.

d. Columbarium Committee

- 1) The Columbarium Committee shall be responsible for the care and maintenance of the columbarium and the surrounding landscaping.

- 2) The Chair of the Committee shall be the person authorized to sell niches and to sign contracts on behalf of the Church.
- 3) The Committee shall be responsible for the management of the Columbarium Fund, including approval of any and all expenses related to the columbarium.

D. Mission Teams

- 1) Mission Teams are small groups of people who covenant together for personal growth, spiritual growth, and to explore a common interest.
- 2) Each Mission Team must have one or two leaders, who agree to commit themselves to ongoing training.
- 3) Teams must operate within the boundaries of the congregation's current Mission, Vision, Bedrock Beliefs, and Core Values. Otherwise they are free to determine how their common interest may further the growth of their members and the mission of the congregation.
- 4) Teams may be started with the permission of the minister(s) or the Elders.
- 5) Team leaders automatically become members of the Mission Council.

E. Auxiliary Organizations

- 1) The purpose and responsibility of each of these groups shall be outlined in their own constitutions, by-laws, or plans of procedure.
- 2) These organizations shall develop their individual programs in the best interest of the congregation.

II. Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any duly called business meeting of the Congregation, provided that the proposed amendment has been approved by the Board of Directors upon recommendation from the Administration/Finance Committee, and provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been distributed at least thirty days in advance

