

# **Tunnel Hill Christian Church Bylaws**

## **I. OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

### **A. Election and Term of Office**

1. The congregation, at its annual meeting shall approve or reject for a term of one (1) year, the following Officers:
  - a. Chair of the Congregation, who shall also serve as the Chair of the Board
  - b. Vice-Chair of the Congregation, who shall also serve as the Vice-Chair of the Board.
  - c. Clerk of the Congregation, who shall also serve as the Clerk of the Board.
  - d. Treasurer of the Congregation, who shall also serve as the Treasurer of the Board.
  - e. Financial Secretary of the Congregation, who shall also serve as the Financial Secretary of the Board.
  - f. Secretary of the Congregation, who shall also serve as the Secretary of the Board.

### **B. Qualifications**

1. Officers must be active, participating members in the congregation's life and must give evidence of seeking to grow in their own understanding and practice of the Christian life.
2. They shall be members of the congregation.
3. They shall promote goodwill and Christian fellowship in the congregation and the community.
4. They shall attend worship services, board meetings and stated meetings of the congregation.
5. They shall make financial contributions, and through other stewardships, support the congregation and its outreach programs.
6. They shall be willing to fulfill assignments on behalf of the congregation.
7. They shall demonstrate skills in carrying out responsibilities of the particular office.
8. The Chairperson, Vice Chair Person, Secretary and Clerk shall serve one (1) year and may be re-elected for a second year. After the second year, they shall set out one (1) year before being considered for another year. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary can serve up to five (5) consecutive years. After the fifth year, they must set out one (1) year before being considered for another year.

### **C. Responsibilities**

1. Chairperson
  - a. The Chairperson shall preside at all stated and called meetings of the congregation and board.
  - b. He/She shall perform such duties normally associated with the office of Chair and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
2. Vice-Chairperson
  - a. The Vice-Chairperson shall serve to support the chair and preside in his/her absence at meetings of the congregation and board, and attend committee meetings.

- b. The Vice-Chairperson shall perform duties normally associated with the office of Vice-Chair.
- 3. Secretary
  - a. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all congregational meetings and board meetings.
  - b. He/She shall provide the minutes to be reviewed and approved by the respective bodies.
- 4. Treasurer
  - a. The treasurer shall receive all deposit information from the financial secretary.
  - b. He/She shall pay all accounts of the congregation as authorized by the budget or special action of the board, when such items are not in the budget.
  - c. He/She shall provide accurate records of all income and expenditures and make regular written reports for the general board.
  - d. He/She shall provide audit information of both income and expenditures for the action by the general board and the congregation.
  - e. He/She issues checks to all church employees.
- 5. Financial Secretary
  - a. The financial secretary shall be responsible for receiving all income of the congregation and keeping accurate records of the income, source and amount.
  - b. He/She shall deposit all income in the proper accounts and provide the treasurer with copies of all deposit receipts.
  - c. He/She shall keep or supervise the pay records for all employees, calculate withholdings and communicate the amounts to the treasurer.
  - d. He/She will complete quarterly reports to the various Federal and State agencies and ask the treasurer for checks when necessary.
  - e. He/She will issue or supervise the issuing of W-2 forms to all employees and finalize the yearly reports and amounts owed to the government agencies. (Internal Revenue Service, Indiana Department of Revenue, Kentucky Revenue Cabinet and Social Security.)
- 6. Clerk
  - a. The Clerk shall keep a complete record of the church membership and vital statistics, such as births, deaths, weddings and baptisms.
  - b. He/She shall receive all transcripts of membership letters and issue them under authority delegated by the board.

## II. BOARD

### A. Membership

- 1. Members of the board shall be composed of the officers of the congregation, active Elders and active Deacons.
- 2. All members of this congregation are invited to attend meetings of the board, but without voting privileges.
- 3. The minister of the congregation shall serve as member(s) ex-officio, without voting privileges.

### B. Election and Term of Office

- 1. Officers of the Congregation

- a. Officers of the congregation shall serve on the board by virtue of the office held and for the current term of office.
  - b. They shall serve as members of the board and the congregation, as chair, vice-chair, treasurer, financial secretary, secretary and clerk.
  - c. Newly elected officers of the board shall assume their duties upon election at the stated January meeting.
2. Officer Selection and Nominating Committee
- a. At the October meeting of the church board, each member shall present, by secret ballot, the names of five (5) board members.
  - b. The five (5) members receiving the highest vote will become the nominating committee. The member receiving the highest vote will act as the chairperson of the nominating committee.
  - c. The nominating committee shall submit nominations at the November congregational meeting for Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Secretary and Clerk.
3. Advance Notice to the Congregation
- a. The nomination(s) will be announced two (2) weeks prior to the date that nominations are due, and shall so be announced.
  - b. The respective elections shall be announced two weeks in advance.
  - c. Elections of the officers shall be by secret ballot.
  - d. All Participating members present, age 12 or older, shall be eligible to vote.
4. Nominating Committees for Elder and Deacon Selection
- a. The Elders shall constitute the nominating committee for prospective new Elders.
  - b. The Elders shall constitute the nominating committee for prospective new Deacons.
5. Elder Election
- a. The congregation may submit recommendations of names for Elders to the chair of the Elders by the first Sunday in September.
  - b. The ballot of Elders shall consist of those candidates being considered to fill the vacant active Elder positions. The congregation shall approve from those ~~t~~ nominations the required number to bring the total active serving Elders to at least six (6) and no greater than eight (8).
  - c. Elders are elected for a term of four (4) years, after which they shall rotate off. To become active again, their name must be placed on the ballot.
  - d. Elections for the Elders shall be held every year in November.
6. Deacon Election
- a. The congregation may submit recommendations of names for Deacons to the chair of the Elders by the first Sunday in September.
  - b. The ballot of Deacons shall consist of those candidates being considered to fill the vacant active Deacon positions. The congregation shall approve from those nominations the required number to bring the total active serving Deacons to at least twelve (12) and no greater than twenty (20).
  - c. Deacons are elected for a term of four (4) years, after which they shall rotate off. To become active again, their name must be placed on the ballot.

- d. Elections for the Deacons shall be held every year in November.

### **C. Vacancies on the Board**

1. Vacancies on the Board between elections shall be filled in the following manner For officers the chairperson of the board shall appoint a nominating committee of three (3) board members.
  - a. In the event that a new Elder is required to fill a vacancy, then a nominating committee of Elders shall be formed.
  - b. In the event that a Deacon is required, a nominating committee of Elders will be formed.
  - c. The appropriate committee shall present the name(s) of the nominee(s) to the board for election.
  - d. Election must be held with at least seventy-five (75) percent of the board members present at regular monthly meeting.

### **D. Authority**

1. The board shall perform its duties according to the authority granted in the constitution or otherwise delegated to it by the congregation and the bylaws.
2. In keeping the tradition of the Christian Church, the ultimate authority shall rest with the congregation. All organizations within the congregation shall be responsible to and report regularly to the board and through it to the congregation.
3. The board shall be responsible for conducting the business affairs of the congregation and provide planning through committees and other responsibilities, including: coordinating, providing resources, implementing and evaluating the work and activities of the congregation.
4. The board shall concern itself with policy rather than administrative matters, taking into full account the responsibility of the congregation to the total nurture, witness and mission of the Christian Church and the needs of the immediate community in which the members of the congregation live.
5. The board may revise the annual budget by no more than ten percent (10%) to meet the needs of the church, provided funds are available.

### **E. Procedures**

1. All business meetings of the board shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order (latest revision).
2. The presence of fifty (50) percent of the board members shall be required for a quorum.
3. They shall follow the following order of business:
  - a. They shall hold business meetings on the first Sunday of the month. They may be scheduled on the second Sunday if there is a conflict with a holiday or special event. Board chairperson shall select the regular time of the meeting. In case of a time change, the chairperson shall notify members one week in advance.
  - b. Meetings shall be called to order by the presiding officer.
  - c. There will be a devotional and/or prayer.
  - d. There shall be a reading and/or approval of the minutes from the previous meeting.
  - e. The board shall act on all reports and take any necessary actions.

- f. The board shall receive a minister's report.
- g. The board shall receive and/or approve the treasurer's report.
- h. The board shall consider any unfinished business carried over from a previous meeting.
- i. The board shall receive written regular and special committee reports.
- j. The board shall take action on recommendations growing out of reports.
- k. The board shall receive new business.
- l. The board shall adjourn and have a benediction.

### **III. COMMITTEES**

**A. The board shall establish standing committees relating to the basic characteristics of the congregations.**

The chair, vice-chair, secretary and minister shall constitute a committee to select the respective committee chairpersons

**B. General Committee Organization**

- 1. The chairpersons of all functional committees shall be selected from the membership of the church board, or the congregation-at-large.
- 2. Membership of each committee shall be reported to the board.
- 3. A committee shall consist of at least three (3) members, selected by committee chairperson.
- 4. Each committee shall organize itself and meet regularly to conduct business. These committees shall obtain the approval of the church board in all matters of policy and before making major expenditures. Major expenditures shall be defined for each committee in the budget.
- 5. In the event the above procedures cannot be met, a request to the Board shall be made for a temporary variance.
- 6. It is intended that every activity of the church will fall under the responsibility of one of the committees, the Elders or Deacons.

**C. Organization of the Committees**

- 1. Stewardship
  - A. Fund raising subcommittees
- 2. Finance
- 3. Memorial/ Wills/ Bequests
- 4. Property
- 5. Christian Education
- 6. Social
- 7. Evangelism
- 8. Membership
- 9. Worship
- 10. Mission / Outreach
- 11. Special Committees and Task Forces

**D. Purpose of the Committees**

1. These committees shall have meetings at least quarterly. Each committee shall meet on its own to discuss plans for upcoming events.
2. It will be the responsibility of committee members to assist in advertising and planning. They will also make sure all events are placed on the church calendar and information is given to the church secretary for placement in the newsletter and bulletin.
3. Committee Chairs or a designated committee representative will take requests to the general board on behalf of the committees.

## **E. Function of Committees**

### **a. Stewardship**

- i. It shall be the purpose of this committee to develop, within the membership, an understanding of the full meaning of Christian Stewardship.
- ii. Members shall be responsible for promoting stewardship education, keeping accurate records and encouraging endowments for future developments in the church and world work.
- iii. The Stewardship Committee shall be responsible for promoting the regular and special offerings of the Church.
- iv. This committee shall run regular fund raisers through the fund raisers subcommittees.
- v. The committee chairperson shall submit a committee budget by the first Sunday in September each year.

### **b. Finance**

- i. This committee incorporates the chairpersons from all committees in order to create a yearly budget for the church and oversee the financial needs of each functioning committee.
- ii. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary are also members of this committee.
- iii. The committee will elect a Chair at their first meeting following the Congregational Election.
- iv. Members shall direct the financial program of the church, to supply the financial needs, and provide spiritual enrichment and character building.
- v. This committee shall meet with each committee chair by the first Sunday in September to plan and discuss the budget requests for the following year.
- vi. This committee shall prepare an annual budget and submit it to the board by the first Sunday in October.
- vii. An auditing committee shall be appointed by the incoming Board Chairperson, following the Congregational Election, to audit the Treasurer's books at the end of the previous year. All accounts, vouchers and other documents are made available to this committee for the audit purpose. A report from this committee will be made to the Board in April.

### **c. Memorials/ Wills/ Bequests**

- i. In cooperation with the Finance Committee, this committee will oversee wills, bequests and direct gifts to the church in memoriam.
- ii. It shall be the purpose of this committee to determine projects and direct funds in such a manner to honor those members' requests.

- iii. This committee is responsible to bring all requests for funds and projects to the board for approval.
  - iv. This committee works with the financial secretary to receive names of those giving memorials. The committee will send out letters of recognition of receipt, along with letters to members that have lost loved ones to make them aware of opportunities to memorialize their loved ones.
  - v. This committee will help maintain the memorial gardens along with church members, through scheduled work days and clean-ups to maintain and replenish the needs of these areas.
  - vi. The committee chairperson shall submit a committee budget to the finance committee by the first Sunday in September each year.
- d. Property
- i. This committee shall care for all properties of the church.
  - ii. Members shall be responsible for keeping all property and equipment in good condition. They shall study the needs of the church and make recommendations for improvements.
  - iii. They shall oversee the work of the custodian and grounds keeping. They shall also maintain adequate property and liability insurance.
  - iv. Non financial donations of property for the church must be approved by the property committee before accepting the donation.
  - v. The committee chairperson shall submit a committee budget to the finance committee by the first Sunday in September each year.
- e. Christian Education
- i. It shall be the purpose of this committee to develop an effective program of religious education for the entire constituency of the church.
  - ii. Members shall be responsible for planning and administering the total education program of church school, junior worship, youth activities, midweek educational programs, leadership education, Vacation Bible School distribution of Christian literature and fostering a Christian home life.
  - iii. The committee chairperson shall submit a committee budget to the finance committee by the first Sunday in September each year.
- f. Social
- i. This committee shall plan the yearly social calendar of the church. These events include but are not limited to special events, dinners and family night programs.
  - ii. The committee chairperson shall submit a committee budget to the finance committee by the first Sunday in September each year.
- g. Evangelism
- i. It shall be the purpose of this committee to cultivate and administer the evangelistic program of the church.
  - ii. Members shall be responsible for developing year-round program of evangelism which reaches into every age level and every phase of the church life.

- iii. It shall be the purpose of this committee to maintain a spirit of fellowship and love within the congregation, founded on the common love of Christ.
- iv. The committee chairperson shall submit a committee budget to the finance committee by the first Sunday in September each year.

h. Membership

- i. The committee shall be responsible for maintaining contact with the entire membership.
- ii. Members shall work with the clerk to maintain accurate membership records. They shall report to the pastor and secretary changes and needs of the congregation.
- iii. The committee shall maintain and update directories at least every five years. Update phone directories bi-annually. Provide new members with welcome packets about the church with phone directories included.
- iv. The committee shall hold dinners to honor the new members on a regular basis. The picture board will be kept up to date in order to recognize the new members.
- v. The committee shall work with the elders and the deacons to provide mentors for members of the church.
- vi. The committee shall direct activities that foster active participation, retention, discipleship and lead all members to identify and use their spiritual gifts.
- vii. The committee chairperson shall submit a committee budget to the finance committee by the first Sunday in September each year.

i. Worship

- i. It shall be the purpose of this committee to lead the membership in a genuine experience of worship and public service and to enrich personal and family devotional life.
- ii. The committee shall be responsible for the public worship of the church, administration of baptism, pulpit supply, the Lord's Supper, dedications and other special events. They are also responsible for music, ushering, special prayers and worship services.
- iii. The committee shall encourage the devotional and spiritual life among individual members.
- iv. They shall coordinate the music program with the Music Director, Organist and Minister.
- v. The committee chairperson shall submit a committee budget to the finance committee by the first Sunday in September each year.

j. Mission /Outreach

- i. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to plan and promote a definite program of missionary education.
- ii. Members shall recommend the church's annual outreach missionary and benevolent budget.
- iii. They shall care for local and general benevolent needs.
- iv. The committee chairperson shall submit a committee budget to the finance committee by the first Sunday in September each year.



- v. This committee shall select and submit to the Board for approval the Mission and Outreach Activities/Organizations to receive funds from the "THCC Mission Fund" line item in the Annual Budget, for the calendar year.

**F. Selection of the Pastoral Search Committee (when required)**

1. A representative committee of five (5) nominated by the Chair and elected by the general board, shall serve as the Pastoral Search Committee and be responsible for recommending the prospective minister to the church board.
2. The pastoral search committee shall negotiate with only one prospective minister at a time; however, information may be secured on several persons in a given period.
3. The pastoral search committee shall recommend a minister to the general board.
4. The general board, at a stated or called meeting, may approve the recommendation of the pastoral search committee by at least two-thirds majority of those present and voting. Upon approval, the general board shall recommend employment of the prospective minister to the congregation.
5. The congregation, in a stated or called meeting, may approve the recommendation of the general board by at least seventy-five (75) percent majority of those members present and voting.
6. Upon approval of the congregation, a call shall be extended to the prospective minister by the general board, in behalf of the congregation.

**G. Pastoral Relations/Personnel Committee**

1. Purpose
  - a. The purpose of the Pastoral Relations committee is to cultivate and maintain the most fruitful relationship possible between the church and the minister(s) and all staff personnel. It is an official channel through which the minister and the members of the congregation may be in constant communication. The members will provide opportunity for an effective ministry within the church and its community.
2. Function
  - a. The committee shall be constituted and its function shall be initiated as the new minister begins his or her ministerial calling, and shall serve as a personnel committee.
  - b. It may meet monthly for the first six months when a new minister arrives. Afterwards, the committee should meet quarterly. A special meeting may be called by any member of the committee should the need arise.
  - c. Constant and regular attention shall be given to the relationship of the minister and the church, and not just when a crisis arises.
  - d. The committee has no authoritative capacity. It functions primarily on a consulting basis for collaboration and communication.
3. Membership of the committee
  - a. The committee consists of five (5) to seven (7) members. (Seven should be the maximum although the given situation will determine the number.)
  - b. It should consist of a representative of the elders, deacons, and one to three additional members of the congregation. All members on the committee should be active church

- members, emotionally mature and capable of looking objectively at the work of the church and its relationship to the minister.
- c. The chair of the board should serve as an ex-officio member.
  - d. The board appoints a chair for the committee, based upon recommendation from the Pastor.
  - e. The pastor(s) selects two of the members. The committee chair chooses the rest of the members. All members are subject to approval by the board.
    - i. Two (2) members will rotate off of the committee after the first year of service and three (3) members will rotate off the second year. After the initial rotation, a term shall be for two (2) years.
4. The committee chairperson shall submit a committee budget and salary recommendations to the finance committee by the first Sunday in September each year.

#### **IV. Duties and Responsibilities of the Church Leaders**

##### **A. ELDERS**

The Elders will organize to carry out their assigned duties. They will elect a Chair at their first meeting following the Congregational Election. The name of the Chair will be communicated and noted in the minutes of the Board at the next regular Board meeting.

The elder is a leader in the Christian church. It is a divinely appointed office that is held by individuals who strive to fulfill the duties of the Elders:

1. Elders must be persons of mature faith and spiritual insight. Elders will be primarily responsible for the Spiritual life and development of the congregation.
2. The role of Elder also includes:
  - a. Serve at the Lord's table
  - b. Prayerfully seeking to give proper spiritual guidance
  - c. Lead the Church in making disciples for Christ
  - d. Provide spiritual nourishment to all members
  - e. Promote the spiritual teaching of the congregation
  - f. Strive to maintain a spirit of unity within the Church
  - g. Serve communion to the homebound
  - h. Visit the sick and bereaved
  - i. Be faithful in financial stewardship
  - j. Actively participate in the Church program.
  - k. Serve on the board.
    - l. Be open to the leading of the holy Spirit
    - m. Take Heed (Acts 28, 29)
    - n. Give to those in need (Acts 20:35)
    - o. Be an example (1 Peter 4:3)
    - p. Call on the sick (James 5:14)
    - q. Teach and seek to be taught (Titus 1:9)
    - r. Exercise Faithfulness (2 Timothy 2:2).

The Elder's chairperson shall submit a budget for the elders to the finance committee by the first Sunday in September each year.

Elders who retire may be appointed Elder Emeriti and will not count in the number of active elders.

## **B. DEACONS**

The Deacons will organize to carry out their assigned duties. They will elect a Chair at their first meeting following the Congregational Election. The name of the Chair will be communicated and noted in the minutes of the Board at the next regular Board meeting.

- a. Deacons must be persons of proven faithfulness, dedication, and discipline. Deacons will be responsible primarily for assisting the Elders in promoting the growth and welfare of the Church.
- b. The role of Deacon also includes:
  - i. Assisting in the orderly flow of worship.
  - ii. Distributing the Lord's Supper and receiving the offering
  - iii. Assisting Outreach.
  - iv. Assisting with the clean-up of the sanctuary following the Sunday morning services
  - v. Assisting with baptisms and other worship service activities as needed.
  - vi. Serving on the board.
  - vii. Assisting the elders in visiting the sick and bereaved.
- c. The Deacon's chairperson shall submit a budget for the Deacons by the first Sunday in September each year.

## **C. MINISTER**

1. The minister(s) of the congregation shall be the spiritual leader of the congregation, and, in cooperation with the chair of the congregation and the board, encourage orderly procedures in the life and work of the congregation in compliance with the congregation's constitution and bylaws and the policies and procedures of the congregation and the general board.
2. The minister(s) shall give special attention to the selection and training of the congregation's leaders.
3. The minister(s) shall be an ex officio member, without vote, of all boards, committees and constituency groups of the congregation.
4. Terms of Employment
  - a. A written statement setting forth the salary to be paid and other conditions of the call shall be made in duplicate, one copy for the minister, and one for the church.
  - b. The term of his or her ministry shall be for an indefinite period, and may be terminated by either party upon a written sixty (60) day notice, or any other period agreed upon by both parties.
5. Salary Review

The salary review will be conducted as set forth in these Bylaws. Article III, G., 2, e.
6. Resignation
  - a. Voluntary resignation of the minister shall be submitted to the board in writing, after consultation with the board chair and the elders.

- b. Involuntary resignation of the minister shall be dealt with confidentially between the minister, chair, and the elders.
- c. The board shall approve the resignation, voluntary or involuntary, of the minister, by at least two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting and recommend approval to the congregation.
- d. The congregation, in stated or called meeting, shall take final action in approving or disapproving the resignation of the minister. Seventy-five (75) percent of members present and voting shall finalize the decision.

#### **D. EMPLOYEES OF THE CHURCH**

- 1. Employees, with the exception of the minister, shall be recommended by the respective committee.
- 2. The church board shall designate the proper committee to recommend back to the board the employment or release of such employees as shall be deemed necessary. Final authority in all such matters, except the calling of the minister, shall reside in the church board.
- 3. Employment shall be by two-thirds majority of the Board members present and voting. Each employee is responsible to the church board through the proper functional committee and as specified in their employment contract filed in the church office.
- 4. The Minister shall oversee, supervise and evaluate the work of the Church Secretary.
- 5. The Property Committee shall oversee, supervise and evaluate the work of the Custodian.
- 6. The Worship Committee shall oversee, supervise and evaluate the work of the Music Director and Organist.
- 7. The Elders shall oversee, supervise and evaluate the work of the Minister/Pastor.
- 8. Any prospective employee, other than the minister, shall be interviewed by the following five persons: (1) the committee chairperson of the committee the employee is responsible to, (2) the minister, (3) the chairperson of the Pastoral Relations Committee, (4) an Elder appointed by the Elders and (5) the Board Chairperson. Each shall have input in making a recommendation to the Board.
- 9. An annual meeting shall be conducted in October for review and performance evaluation concerning the work and salary of the minister and the congregation's participation in the church ministry. In October the other employees will also be evaluated for job performance and salary. During the annual meeting(s) a representative from the Financial Committee shall be present to review the terms of the employment giving consideration to adequate provision for cost-of-living increases.

#### **V. AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended at any congregational meeting by a two-thirds vote of the Participating members present, age 12 or older, and voting on the amendment, provided written notice of the proposed amendment has been sent through the mail to the members of the congregation at least ten days prior to the time the vote is taken, or the proposed amendment has been read at or following two successive Sunday morning worship services immediately prior to the time the vote is taken.

#### **VI. DISSOLVEMENT**

In the event the corporation is dissolved. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Treasurer shall serve as trustees as spelled out in the Articles of Incorporation.