

Tunnel Hill Christian Church Constitution

Preamble

As members of the Tunnel Hill Christian Church in Indiana, we join with other manifestations of the church in confessing, Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and proclaim him Lord and Savior of the world. In Christ's name and by His grace we accept our mission of the witness and service of all people. We rejoice in God, maker of heaven and earth, and in the covenant of the love which binds us to God and one another. Through baptism into Christ we enter into newness of life and are made one with the whole people of God. In the communion of the Holy Spirit we are joined together in discipleship and in the obedience to Christ. At the table of the Lord we celebrate with Thanksgiving the saving acts and presence of Christ. Within the universal Church we receive the gift of ministry and the light of scripture. In the bonds of Christian faith, we yield ourselves to God, that we may serve the One whose kingdom has no end. Blessing, glory and honor be to God forever. Amen.

Article I

NAME

The name of this church shall be Tunnel Hill Christian Church, Incorporated; 5105 Old Georgetown Road; Georgetown, Indiana, located in Edwardsville, Indiana and herein referred to as "this Church." This Church is incorporated under the laws of the State of Indiana.

Article II

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Congregation is to:

- A. proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a faithful response to God's Will and purpose as revealed through Jesus Christ in the New Testament
- B. teach and help develop in all persons a faith and commitment to Jesus Christ
- C. serve the community of which it is a part
- D. bring the gospel message to bear upon society
- E. work cooperatively with Christians in other communions
- F. seek the oneness of body of Christ G. in all ways seek and make known the love of God

Article III

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of this congregation, as a part of the whole family of God on earth shall consist of the following;

- A. Participating Members – A member of this Congregation who has demonstrated and takes an interest in the works and affairs of this Church through regular attendance, service and/or giving. Shut-ins, college students, and military members shall be carried as Participating Members.
- B. Non-Participating Members – A member of this Congregation who does not demonstrate or takes interest in the works and affairs of this church through attendance, service and/or giving.

Prospective Members are those who shall unite with this Church by confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, giving expression of their faith through baptism by immersion. In specific circumstances, exceptions may be made by approval of the Elders.

Transfer Membership – Individuals who transfer membership from denominations or faiths and whose baptism has been confirmed by a profession of faith.

Participating Members with a period of three years of inactivity with this Church will receive a call from at least two Elders. After contact from the Elders has been made, a decision of changing the membership status to Non-Participating will be made. A majority vote of the active Elders will determine the Participating or NonParticipating membership status.

Membership transfer and withdrawal shall be made in writing to the church clerk. Notation of membership status shall be made in the church records.

All Participating members, age 12 or older, shall be extended voting privileges in this Church.

Article IV

RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONGREGATION

- A. This congregation shall manage its affairs under the Lordship of Jesus Christ; determine its faithfulness to the gospel with respect to the basis of the membership; own, control and encumber its property; organize and carry out the mission and witness of the congregation; establish its budgets and financial policies; and call its minister(s) and other staff. The congregation shall demonstrate voluntarily its mutual concern for the nurture, mission, and witness of the whole church, and, among other responsibilities, it shall:
1. proclaim the gospel
 2. administer baptism and the Lord's Supper
 3. provide for the spiritual nurturing of its members
 4. grow in understanding that the church is a universal fellowship
 5. reach, love and disciple all people
 6. be faithful in Christian stewardship, striving to share proportionately in providing resources for the total life, work and witness of the Christian Church.
 7. seek to realize the oneness of the church of Jesus Christ through the community and with other churches of the community and with present and emerging ecumenical structures.
- B. The congregation shall sustain its minister(s) in faithfulness and honor, and in matters pertaining to relationships with the minister(s) seek counsel from the Elders.
- C. The congregation shall exercise and enjoy all other rights, privileges and responsibilities requisite or appropriate to carrying out its purpose.

Article V

OFFICERS, BOARD, ELDERS, DEACONS, TEAM MINISTRIES, COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

Section 1: Officers

The congregation shall approve a slate of officers selected by the church board; a chair of the board, vice-chair of the board, clerk, treasurer, financial secretary and secretary. These offices shall be approved at the annual meeting of the congregation and they shall serve as officers of the congregation and the board as set forth in the bylaws.

Section 2: General Board

Part 1: Membership

The congregation shall have a board which will be responsible to the church. It will have the authority to act on behalf of the congregation when it is not a congregational meeting.

- A. The voting personnel of this church board shall be composed of the Officers of the Board and the active Elders and the active Deacons.
- B. Honorary members, those who because of infirmities or advanced age, and whose service and consecration to the Church merit this honor, may be retired from active responsibility. These members will be known as Elder Emeritus and Deacon Emeritus respectively. They may serve as members of the board, but without vote.

Part 2: Duties of the Board

- A. The board shall be responsible for receiving reports from the minister, committees, and other organizations within this congregation. It shall act upon all business items placed on the business agenda. Business items not appearing on the agenda may be placed on the agenda by any member of the board if the motion receives a second.
- B. The board shall be responsible for conducting all legal business matters presented by the elders and deacons in behalf of the congregation and carry out such other responsibilities as defined in the bylaws.
- C. Meeting of the board shall be held monthly or at the discretion of the board chairperson. The Board Chair shall schedule meeting date, time and place. Board meetings can be called by any participating member provided the Board Chair, Pastor and three board members approve and the meeting is announced and printed in the church bulletin. Emergency meetings of the board can be called by the Board Chair and one other member of the board.
- D. Fifty percent (50%) of the members of the board constitutes a quorum. In the event there is not a quorum, the meeting shall be postponed.
- E. All meetings of the board will be governed by Robert's Rule of Order (Revised.)

Section 3: Elders and Deacons

The congregation shall have Elders and Deacons composed of men and women. Their elections, qualifications and responsibilities shall be set forth in the bylaws.

Section 4: Team Ministries, Committees and Task Forces

The congregation, through the board, shall establish standing teams, committees, task forces and other organizations necessary for the conduct of the work of the congregation as set forth in the bylaws.

Article VI

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Being a congregational church, governed by its own members, the congregation shall hold a congregational meeting during the month of November. The church calendar year begins in January.

An annual report shall be made available by the Chairperson of the board. New officers and a church budget shall be presented for consideration at the annual meeting.

A special congregational meeting may be called by any participating member, but it must be approved by the board. Notice of all stated or special board meetings shall be announced at a regular Sunday morning worship service of the congregation at least one week in advance of the meeting and by means of the church newsletter or a written notice sent through the mail and postmarked at least ten days before the meeting. Purpose, date and time shall be indicated in each notice.

Before a congregational vote is taken, the requirements for a voting member as Participating Member must be met for those present. For the purposes of voting, only those persons, age 12 or older, who are Participating Members may vote. The presence of twenty (20) percent of the Participating Members shall be required for a quorum.

A vote is considered passing when a two-thirds vote of the Participating Members present vote in favor.

All congregational meetings will be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order (Revised.)*

Article VII

INCORPORATION

The incorporation of the congregation shall be in accordance with the decree of incorporation and filed with the State of Indiana.

Article VIII

AMENDMENTS

This constitution 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.

Article IX

DISSOLUTION OR FINAL LIQUIDATION

The distribution of assets upon dissolution or final liquidation shall be to a church, religious organization or to an exempt organization under the law and regulations of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States of America. Dissolution or final liquidation will also be subject to majority vote during a regularly called congregational meeting. The Church Board shall make distribution in accordance with the mandate of the congregational meeting. The corporation shall be dissolved in accordance with Indiana State law.