

ONE IN CHRIST - CHURCH BYLAWS

Article 1. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Who Are the Church Members

1. Requirements for church membership: Church will strive to be comprised of regenerate church members, who come as a result of the Lord's leadership and who are willing to meet the following requirements:
 - A. Express a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior evidenced by a changed life and a growing desire for intimacy and holiness before God.
 - B. Have been or willing to be baptized by immersion after profession of faith.
 - C. Attend and complete a Prospective Member's Class during which time they will, at a minimum, be made aware of the history, doctrine and governance of One In Christ (OIC) church, affiliation with the SBC (Southern Baptist Conventions) and opportunities for service.
 - D. Affirm the Church Covenant.
 - E. Meet with at least one Elder to discuss the items above and any other issue a prospective member might need.
2. Composition of church membership
 - A. Active members: those who meet the above qualifications, have been duly accepted as members of the church and are faithful in attending all the ordinances of God (public worship, the ministry of the Word, communion), in a life of obedience and service, and in financial support of the church.
 - B. Watchcare Members: those who are in the military, college or who otherwise know of a short-term residency in our community and who, because of their temporary residency, do not desire to transfer their membership. After meeting the requirements above, Watchcare members will be afforded all the privileges of members, excepting the privilege of voting during Members' Meetings. When a Watchcare member moves away, their membership shall be terminated.
 - C. Non-Resident Members: those individuals who for reasons of health and family have moved away and who cannot join a local church in their relocated area.
Non-Resident members shall not participate in voting process.
3. Reception of members: An individual shall be considered a candidate for membership once they have met the above requirements and when they present themselves, before the congregation for membership. At the next appropriate Members' Meeting, candidates for membership will be formally submitted by the Elders and voted on by the church body. Individuals may be received into the membership of the church through:
 - A. Baptism, after public profession of faith
 - B. Transfer of Membership Letter from another Baptist Church
 - C. Statement of faith, and previous church affiliation
 - D. Restoration, after church discipline.

Section 2. Privileges and Responsibilities of Members

1. Privileges of church members: (Ephesians 2:19; Romans 12:5; Hebrews 13:17; Acts 20:28-29; Ephesians 5:21; Acts 15)
 - A. Identified as a true believer.
 - B. Under the spiritual protection of Godly leaders.
 - C. Provided loving care from church family.
 - D. Provided opportunity to grow spiritually in all aspects of life.
 - E. Participate in church business and the decision-making process.
2. Responsibilities of church members: (Malachi 3:8-10; John 15:12-17; Acts 2:43-47; Romans 12:10-11, 15:30; 1 Corinthians 12:15; Galatians 6:1; Ephesians 4:11-12, 6:18-19; 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 4:9-10; Hebrews 10:23-25, 13:17-18; James 5:16; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 John 4:7-8)
 - A. Be present during worship and prayer services.
 - B. Be present during Members' Meetings.
 - C. Be in prayer for the leadership of the church, one another, and brothers and sisters around the world.
 - D. Exhibit love for all the body.
 - E. Be involved with ministry as individually gifted and impassioned.
 - F. Provide financially for the ministries of the church through tithes and offerings.
 - G. Be watchful over and encourage one another toward holiness.

Section 3. How Members May Be Dismissed

1. Membership may be terminated for an individual member through death, transfer of membership to another church, or voluntary resignation.
2. A member who does not attend any service of worship, bible study or prayer for an extended period of time, and after having been contacted about their non-attendance, continues to be absent for an additional three (3) months, shall be reluctantly released from church membership. Rare exceptions shall be made for extenuating circumstances.
3. Any member being found guilty and unrepentant after Church Discipline may be dismissed by the vote of the church.

Section 4. How Members Are Disciplined

1. Realizing that the Christian church is called to be pure and holy, and realizing that we are called to gently, lovingly, but firmly correct those in error, this church will conduct, when necessary, church discipline as outlined in Scripture. (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 11; Galatians 6:1-5; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 3:10-11; 1 Peter 4:17)
2. Such actions would be directed towards any member who is known to be committing acts of unchristian conduct, or who consistently upsets the unity of the church, therefore resulting in the defamation of both the Name of Christ and the witness of this church.
3. We believe that church discipline, far from unloving, is needful to honor the name of Christ, protect the flock, educate and edify the body, and ensure purity. It is pursued in the hope that an erring brother or sister in Christ would repent and be restored into proper fellowship with the Lord and this church.

4. It will be the responsibility of the Elders to follow through on the action of Church Discipline, and any recommendation brought before the church concerning an individual member will be made by the Elders.
5. A reasonable effort must be made to secure a private resolution of personal offense in the hope that such public censure by the church will not be required.
6. The process includes:
 - A. An initial, private, one-on-one admonition by a congregation member who has personal knowledge of ongoing improper Christian conduct.
 - B. If A reveals the accusation as false or results in repentance and restoration, the process will end. If not, a second admonition in the presence of one or two other Elders will be given.
 - C. If A and B does not result in repentance and restoration, there will be a call for public correction before the gathered church at a Members' Meeting. If this also fails, then the member can be (1) publicly admonished, (2) removed from leadership position and/or (3) expelled from fellowship and his/her membership terminated with a 85% majority of the voting members present.
 - D. If along the way, the accused repents, and makes any appropriate restitution, restoration will be considered accomplished.
7. If, after having been dismissed through church discipline, an individual becomes repentant and publicly confesses their previous wrongdoing, and makes any appropriate restitution, the church will consider the sin to be dealt with and the offense removed. The disciplinary process will be considered ended, and the individual may again request membership within the body.

Article 2. CHURCH OFFICES

Section I. Summary

1. While all Christians are called to serve and minister to others in Christ's name, some are called and gifted by God to function in specific roles of ministry, such as pastors and deacons. Two scriptural officers are affirmed in the Bible for a New Testament church, pastor/elder and deacon. The pastors / elders are charged to lead, shepherd, teach, and equip the flock entrusted to them. The deacons were intended to serve the needs of the flock and to enable the pastors/elders to carry out their responsibilities.
2. Officers shall be called to office by vote of the membership of the Church as provided for in Article 2, Sections 2c.2 and 3c.2, these By-Laws.
3. All church officers must have been members of the church in good and regular standing for at least one year prior to their nomination (except for the pastor). All nominated church officers shall receive proper leadership training.

Section 2. The Office of Elder

Section 2a. Elders (General Statement)

1. The terms "elder" and "pastor" are two different titles that refer to the same office (Acts 20:17, Titus 1:5, 1 Peter 5:1-4). Although the New Testament does not designate a particular number of elders to lead the church, there is a consistent pattern of each

church being led by a plurality of elders (Acts 11:30, Acts 15:4, 22-23, Acts 20:17, 1 Tim 5:17, Phil 1:1, Titus 1:5, 1 Pet 5:1, Heb. 13:7, 17, 24).

2. Qualifications for elders: An elder or pastor shall be qualified for the office in the Bible (1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
3. The office of elder is limited to men.
4. The Elders shall be members of the church for a minimum of three (3) years prior to serving, (1 Timothy 3:6, 5:22), with the exception of the initial Elders.
5. The majority of the active Elders shall be members not in the regular pay of the church.
6. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure.
7. All decisions made by the Elders shall be reached after prayerful consideration, seeking scriptural wisdom, voting in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself, and moving toward the goal of unity with a consensus. Decisions that incur financial costs should seek consultancy of the head deacon and the treasurer. (Philippians 2:3-4)
8. An Elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified. (Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:5-9)

Section 2b. Responsibilities of Elders:

Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry, resources, and business of the church. In keeping with Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, to the ministry of the Word of God (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. Elders have at least four main roles:

1. Leader (1 Tim. 3:4-5). An elder is called to lead the church (1 Tim 3:4-5)
 - A. The Elders shall oversee the work of the Deacons and appointed teams and agents of the church. (Acts 6:5)
 - B. The Elders shall coordinate and promote the ministries of the church. (Ephesians 4:12; 2 Timothy 4:5)
 - C. The Elders shall communicate to the congregation on a regular basis, at least quarterly, concerning the activities and concerns of the Elders.
 - D. The Elders shall establish policies and practices for the Church consistent with the church's purposes.
 - E. The Elders shall approve guidelines of church facilities and equipment for non-ministry related endeavors, including the terms and conditions of any such use.
 - F. The Elders shall be ex-officio members of all church standing teams and temporary teams, except for the Pastor's Selection Team.
2. Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:1-2).
 - A. The Elders must follow the example of Christ, "the chief Shepherd" (1 Pet. 5:4)
 - B. The Elders must be willing to protect the flock from the false teachers (Acts 20:28-29).
 - C. The Elders are called to visit those who are spiritually and physically sick or weak (Jas. 5:14).
 - D. The Elders are to care for the souls entrusted to them (Heb. 13:17)

3. Teacher (Eph. 4:11, 1 Tim 3:2, 5:17, Titus 1:9). Elders are the teachers of God's word.
 - A. The Elders must be able to teach/preach at the request of the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor. (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 4:2)
 - B. The Elders shall ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation are properly qualified and scripturally sound. (1 Thess. 3:9, 5:22; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Titus 1:9-11; James 3:1)
 - C. The Elders shall ensure that all song leaders, as well as all songs sung in our services, are God-honoring and edifying to the body. (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Titus 1:9-11)
4. Equipper (Eph. 4:11, 2 Tim 2:2)
 - A. Elders are to equip others to do the work of the ministry.
 - B. Elders are to equip the next generation of leaders and disciple-makers in the church.

Section 2c. Organization of Elders

1. The Office of Elder consists of Vocational Elders, including the pastor, and Lay Elders. Vocational Elders (Pastors): Elders who are in the employment of the church as a regular, part-time, or full-time staff member. Vocational elders (pastors) may receive compensation for fulfilling their responsibilities as employees of the church. A pastor shall neither vote on nor determine his own personal salary or benefits or designate his personal housing allowance.
2. Nomination and installation procedures:
 - A. Church members will be asked to nominate potential elders to the elders for consideration.
 - B. The elders will discuss the potential candidates from the church membership and after a season of prayer, decide which candidate they feel is most qualified. Candidates will be considered by qualifications and not the number of church members who asked the elders to consider them.
 - C. One of the elders will discuss with the candidate the qualifications and responsibilities for the position of elder.
 - D. The elders will only consider one candidate at a time.
 - E. If the candidate feels as though God may be calling him to this role, he will contact the pastor and tell him of his interest and the pastor will discuss the candidate with the other elders.
 - F. After a season of prayer by both the candidate and the elders, if both feel he is being called to this position, the candidate will be presented by the elders to the church for an affirmation vote of the members present and an ordination service shortly thereafter.
3. Each elder shall be installed by vote of the assembled congregation (see Article 2, section 2c.2). Upon installation to the office, a vocational elder shall serve for the duration of his employment. Upon installation to the office, a lay elder shall serve for a period of three (3) years. Each lay elder may serve two (2) consecutive three-year terms, but no more. A non-paid elder may be elected to the office again after at least one (1) year of sabbatical. Exception: In unusual circumstances, the Elders may ask the

congregation to allow an Elder to serve one (1) additional one-year term. Any elder's term may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal.

4. The Elders must meet at least once per month.
5. A quorum for meetings of the Elders is defined as at least one-half of the Lay Elders plus at least one-half of the Vocational Elders. In any matter affecting an individual Elder, at the request of the other Elders, that Elder shall remove himself from the discussion and vote.
6. The Elders shall organize themselves on a yearly basis to ensure orderly meetings.

Section 2d. Senior Pastor as Elder

1. The Senior Pastor shall be an Elder of the church. He shall perform the duties of an Elder described in Section 2b, above, and shall be recognized by the church as one, who in response to God's call, has devoted his vocational life to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ.
2. He shall preach, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office.
3. In the absence or incapacity of the senior Pastor the Elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

Section 2e. Associate Pastor(s) as Elders

1. An Associate Pastor shall be an Elder of the church. He shall perform the duties of an Elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as one, who in response to God's call, has devoted his vocational life to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ.
2. In addition to his duties as outlined in his job description, the Associate Pastor shall assist the Senior Pastor in the performance of his regular duties as needed.
3. In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the Associate Pastor(s) may assume the responsibility for his duties.

Section 2f. The Calling of the Senior Pastor and Associate Pastor(s)

1. In the calling of any man to these positions, the Elders will be responsible for recognizing godly and gifted men within or outside the church. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching and ministry gifts of any candidate before being asked to express judgment, and must receive assurance from the Elders that having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted agreement with our doctrine, church covenant and constitution and by-laws. Having been nominated by the Elders, the congregation will voice their prayerful judgment during a Special Members' Meeting, with a call being extended to the candidate provided that a 90% majority of the voting members present, during the Special Members' Meeting affirm the Elders' nomination. The quorum for this Special Members' Meeting shall be sixty percent (60%) of the voting membership. The call will also serve as receiving both the

Pastor and his wife, if he is married, and their children, if appropriate, into the membership of the church.

2. Terms. The term of the contract between the pastors and the church should be annually for the first two years and a three-year contract term beginning the third year. The office of elders shall discuss and evaluate the pastors' performance annually for the first two years, and then triennially thereafter. During these times, the elders shall strive to help the pastors improve their service effectiveness. At the time points mentioned above, the office of elders shall recommend to the congregation whether to extend the terms of the pastors, for which the congregation shall vote in member's meetings. While an 90% majority of votes is sufficient, all efforts shall be made to achieve unanimity among church members. In the case when a decision is made to terminate the contract, the pastors' duties shall continue for three months with normal compensation unless waived by mutual consent.

Section 2g The Termination of the vocational call of the Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors

1. By Resignation: A Pastor, after sensing the call of God in a new direction of ministry, may submit his resignation to the congregation, provided that four weeks' notice is given.
2. By Grievance: When a grievance exists against a Pastor, either due to his preaching or teaching contrary to the beliefs of this church or to alleged conduct on his part unfitting an Elder, any member may bring such grievance before the Elders. If the Elders, after thorough investigation and consideration, believe the grievance to be true and substantial, they shall call for a Special Members' Meeting. The vocational call of the Pastor may be terminated at such a meeting given the following:
 - A. A recommendation of the Elders for removal, and,
 - B. That attendance of at least sixty percent (60%) of the voting membership is present, and,
 - C. An 85% majority vote by ballot is reached.

The termination shall be immediate and any compensation shall be rendered in not more than 30 days. Unless otherwise recommended by the Elders, the church will compensate the Pastor so removed with not less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation.

Section 3. The Office of Deacons

Section 3a. Deacons (General Statement)

1. The word "deacon" comes from the Greek term *diakonos*, which normally means "servant." The term can be used more formally to designate someone who holds an office in the church (Rom. 16:1; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8, 12).
2. The office of deacon is a separate and distinct office to that of the elder (or overseer or pastor).
3. Qualifications for Deacons and nominees for Deacon: A deacon shall be qualified for the office as specified in the Bible (1 Timothy 3:8-12). The Deacons shall be active in all areas of church life.
4. The Deacons shall be members of the church for a minimum of one (1) year prior to serving, with the exception of the initial Deacons.

5. The Deacons shall be nominated by members of the church. The Elders and a Deacon team will compile and confirm the nominations and submit the names to the members for affirmation at an appropriate Members' Meeting.
6. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men and women in the church. This number shall be recommended by the Elders and Deacons and approved by the congregation.
7. A Deacon's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal if he/she is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified. (Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:5-9)

Section 3b Responsibilities of Deacons

In keeping with the principles in Acts 6:1-6, deacons shall not exercise spiritual authority, but shall enable the elders to devote themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word, and deacons shall also work to maintain the unity of the church. Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of church members and attend to the accommodations for public worship. Deacons have four main responsibilities (as detailed in the Deacons Handbook):

1. Operations: The Office of Deacons shall form a department to maintain the building and other properties of the church, make purchases approved by the office, and ensure the security of the congregations and properties.
2. Finances: The Office of Deacons shall form a department, which includes a treasurer and an assistant treasurer to manage the financial asset of the church. The department ensures that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in the banks, financial institutions, or depositories held by the church. The department shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The department shall also present reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the church at regular members' meetings.
3. Administration: The Office of Deacons shall form a department to manage the administrative need of the church, which included, but not limited to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church and to render reports as requested by the elders or the church.
4. Communications: The Office of Deacons shall form a department to ensure the effective communication within the church body and with audiences outside the church.

Section 3c Organization of Deacons

1. The Office of Deacon shall elect a chairperson, who 1) shall call and organize regular monthly deacons meeting to discuss outstanding church ministry issues within the Deacon's duties as described in Section 3b, 2) serves as the moderator for Member's Meetings using the Robert's rule of order, and 3) ensure the integrity of the record and or minutes of such meetings.
2. Nomination and Installation Procedures:

- A. A deacon nomination committee shall be formed which consists of at least one each of the elders, deacons, and elected members from the congregation. A deacon shall serve as the chair of the committee. The committee shall consider potential candidates based on the qualifications according to 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and based on nomination frequency.
- B. Church members will be asked to nominate potential deacons to the nomination committee for consideration.
- C. One of the committee members will discuss with the deacon candidates the qualifications and responsibilities for the position of deacon.
- D. If a candidate feels as though God may be calling him/her to this role, he/she will contact the committee and tell them of his interest.
- E. After a season of prayer by both the candidates and the committee, both feel the candidates are being called to this position, the candidates will be presented to the church for voting and ordination.
- F. A Deacon's term of office shall be for two (2) years. If a Deacon has served two (2) consecutive two (2) year terms, he/she may only be elected as an active Deacon after at least one (1) year following the close of his/her last term of service as Deacon. Exception: In unusual circumstances, the Elders may ask the congregation to allow a Deacon to serve one additional one (1) year term.

Section 4. Board of Trustees

1. The board of trustees are legal representatives who represent the church in the Commonwealth of Virginia, in courts of law, and sign legal documents in business transactions. Their responsibilities include protecting the legal rights and material possessions of the church.
2. The Board of Trustees shall consist of the chairperson of the Office of Deacons, the Treasure and three (3) active church members elected by the church. The Board will serve annually and will hold in trust the church property.
3. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, the Board of Trustees shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property, with at least three signatures of the Trustees appearing on any legal document.

Section 5. Church Staff

If any church member feels it may be time to consider adding another paid position, a recommendation needs to be made to the elders. The elders will utilize their decision-making process to determine how to proceed.

Section 6. Vacancies

In case of a vacancy in any office, except that of the pastor and staff members, the vacancy shall be filled by the church at a regular or called Member's Meeting as soon as possible after the vacancy has occurred.

Article 3. CHURCH TEAMS

Temporary and standing church teams shall be formed, as needed, for successfully accomplishing the mission and purpose of the church.

Section 1. Task Teams

1. When the elders decide a team is necessary to accomplish a specific task for the church, the elders will discuss the task and possible candidates from the current church membership to lead the team. One of the elders will ask the person to pray about leading the team and if he/she is willing to serve the church in this way. If he/she agrees to, the team leader will ask the other team members if they will serve. It will be left to the teams' discretion as to whether other church members will be asked to join the team.
2. If the team thinks having financial resources may be necessary to complete their task, the team shall develop a budget and present it to the deacons for consideration.
3. The team will perform the assignment as asked by the elders and report to the elders whenever necessary as to their progress towards the goal.
4. For temporary tasks, once the goal has been completed, the team will be disbanded.
5. Chairs of standing teams shall be elected by the congregation at the recommendation of the elders in the annual member's meeting.

Section 2. Nominating Team

Meeting as needed, this team of five (5) members, including one (1) Elder, will be discerning of the people resources that the Lord has given us and be responsible for ensuring that those having particular gifts are matched appropriately with the leadership/servant needs of the church and present their nominations to the church for approval. The policies and procedures of this team are outlined in the Nominating Team Handbook. The members of the Nominating Team will serve for a one (1) year term and will be presented to the congregation by the Elders for approval.

Section 3. Church Life Team

Other teams may be needed to help maintain the health of the life of the church in such areas as Discipleship, Outreach/Missions, Worship, Counseling, Member Care and Fellowship. In accordance with Article 2, Section 2b, the Elders shall examine, discern the need for, and recommend to the congregation the creation and dissolution of all such teams. At the time of their creation, a description of their composition, term and responsibilities shall also be presented to the congregation for affirmation. Teams will be expected to give a brief report outlining past actions and future opportunities at each Regular Member Meeting.

1. Cell Groups
 - A. The church shall consist of small groups whereby church members are discipled and cared for by group leaders and by each other. Group leaders are designated by the elders at the nomination of the group members. Group members are encouraged to reach the community and invite Christians and non-Christians to join the group. When a group exceeds a certain size with emerging leaders, the group shall divide to grow.

B. Operations of Cell Groups are detailed in the Cell Group Manual.

Article 4. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Worship Meetings

The church will meet corporately at least on the Lord's Day and other designated days for the purpose of worship through God-centered preaching, praise and prayer. The Elders will be responsible for the direction of each of these services. (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 2:43-47).

Section 2. Special Worship Meetings

Special worship meetings may be called when the Elders perceive there is a special need for prayer, renewal, and/or when a sense of the Lord's stirring toward revival necessitates such meetings.

Section 3. Additional Meetings

Other small-group/cell group / home-based discipleship, evangelism or prayer meetings may be organized and promoted throughout the week by members of the church. Such meetings must have the approval of the Elders to be considered a church-sponsored activity.

Section 4. Regular Member's Meetings

The church will hold Regular Members' Meetings on an annual basis for the purpose of prayer, and congregational business, including, but not limited to approving the annual budget. These meetings will be held on the second Sundays of December. It is the expectation that all members will be encouraged to attend these meetings. The quorum consists of those present at the business meeting and a minimum of 60% of active members shall constitute a quorum. The voting membership is considered to be those who are active members and who are not under church discipline.

Section 5. Special Member's Meeting

Special Members' Meetings may be called in order to consider matters of a significant and urgent nature to the life of the Church. Special Members' Meetings may be called as required by the Elders, or at the written request, submitted to the Elders, of ten (10) percent of the voting membership. The date, time, and purpose of any Special Meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church within two (2) weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request from the members, the Elders shall call a Special Meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request. The quorum and voting membership for a Special Members' Meeting will be the same as for a Regular Members' Meeting.

Section 6. How Member's Meetings Will Be Conducted

Members' Meetings will be conducted with a sense of decency and order (1 Corinthians 14:40), with an attitude of love and selflessness (Philippians 2:2-5; Colossians 3:12-17). If any Members' Meeting begins to become disorderly, a time of prayerfulness will be called for by the Moderator in the hopes that by doing so, both peace and order will be restored. As necessary, and at the

discretion of the Moderator, Roberts Rules of Order will be utilized to help with the orderliness of any Members' Meeting.

1. Decision Making Process:
 - A. Elders will hear the accounts of the witnesses (Acts 15:7-11, 12)
 - B. Elders will find the wisdom Scripture offers (Acts 15:13- 19)
 - C. Elders will inform the body of the issue (Acts 15:12)
 - D. Elders will listen to the input of the body (Acts 15:22)
 - E. The Elders will formulate a decision (Acts 15: 19-21)
 - F. The Elders will bring that decision to the congregation for affirmation (Acts 15:13, 22)
 - G. The body follows the decision of the leadership (Acts 15:19-31)
 - H. The body will go the extra mile in seeking a solution (Acts 15:27)
 - I. The body will seek unity in the decision (Acts 15:22, 25, 31)
2. The elders and the deacons need unanimous agreement before presenting an item for congregational vote. All objections should be thoroughly addressed before voting. With unresolved objections, the voting should be postponed if practical to allow time for further communications.
3. All decisions are only final when an affirmative vote by 85% of the active members present. However, we shall strive for unanimity in all decisions. Sensitive matters should be voted on using anonymous ballots. If more than 15% of the members present do not vote in affirmation, the matter is returned to the elders for consideration on how to proceed.
4. All items for church consideration must be made known to elders prior to the matter being brought to the church. If a matter comes up during the discussion at a church meeting that is unexpected, the moderator has the authority to table the discussion and ask the elders to consider the matter.

Article 5. OTHER GENERAL INFORMATION

Section 1. Fiscal Year and Budget Plan

The fiscal year for One In Christ (OIC) will run from January 1 to December 31 of the year. The church will operate under a unified budget plan, meaning all of an individual's undesignated gifts will go towards the general budget of the church. Designated gifts can only be made for those accounts that have been approved by the church. For details on this and other financial procedures, please see the Deacons Handbook.

Section 2. Annual Leadership Nominations and Affirmations

1. *Elections:* With the exception of the initial officers, regular elections for officers will be held annually, unless special elections should be necessary. On the first Sunday of May, congregational nominations for new Elders, Deacons, and team leaders will be received

by ballot and given to the Elders for review. Election for officers, by ballot, will be held on the first Sunday of June. The time of service will begin on July 1 of the same year. Ordination for new Elders and new Deacons will be scheduled as appropriate and convenient to the church and to the individuals.

2. *Contract Renewal:* Contract renewal or denial for Pastors, if their terms are due, will be presented by the elders and voted by the congregation in the same meeting.
3. *Appointments:* Each May, the Nominating Team will present a slate of servant leadership for the upcoming year including Trustees, Standing Church Resource Teams, any Church Life Teams and any other position as requested by the Nomination Team. These positions will begin August 1 of the same year.

Article 6. AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

Amendments to these by-laws may be made at any Members' Meeting of the church, regular or special, provided:

1. That each proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at the previous Members' Meeting.
2. That each proposed amendment shall have the support of the Elders before coming before the congregation for official consideration.
3. That copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to the members no less than two (2) weeks prior to the one in which the amendment is to be considered.
4. That the Members' Meeting at which the proposed amendment will be considered is announced from the pulpit on two (2) successive Sundays prior.
5. That the proposed amendment must pass by a 85% majority of the members present, while all efforts shall be made to achieve unanimity among church members, and that at least sixty percent (60%) of the voting membership of the church be present at such meeting.

The revised version of these By-laws shall be made available to all church members.

Article 7. ADOPTION:

These Bylaws shall be considered adopted and will take immediate effect when 85% of the members present vote and affirm these Bylaws and voting at the members meeting. This vote shall be taken not less than 30 days after formal presentation of the bylaws to the church. These bylaws abolish, supersede, and take the place of any bylaws that preceded it. A copy of these bylaws is available for all church members to review.

Ratified by action of the church in its members meeting on **04/30/2023**.