



Madison Christian Church

256-837-8182 www.mccdoc.org

1400 Hughes Road. Madison AL 35758

August 25, 2019

TO: Members of Madison Christian Church
FROM: The Governing Documents Review Committee
RE: Proposed New Constitution and Bylaws

Introduction

On Sunday, August 25, the Board unanimously voted to recommend to you the attached Constitution and Bylaws to guide and govern the mission and ministry of Madison Christian Church. You will have the opportunity to consider these new governing documents at a congregational meeting after worship on September 22. We would now like to let you know more about this process, including how this document was prepared and why we are presenting it to you at this time.

Background

In January of 2019 a committee to review and revise the Church's governing documents was appointed by Board Chair Jim Samuelson. Since then, this committee has met in person over a period of eight months, for two hours or more each session, coming together for prayer, study, and discernment about the best practices to organize the church for mission and ministry. We reviewed governing documents from other Disciples of Christ congregations, read articles by church governance experts to learn about best practices, and discussed at length the strengths and challenges in our current Constitution and Bylaws.

We have rewritten our governing documents seeking to address best practices and modeling them around our Mission Statement. We have attached our work to this letter for your review.

Document Changes

Simplify and Streamline

Wherever possible, we have sought to streamline the governing documents so that we have *enough* leadership to carry out our mission faithfully and effectively, but not *too many* to become burdensome. Using our four Mission areas of Becoming, Belong, Believe, and Befriend, we have removed most of the old committee structure and replaced it with Missions and Ministry Teams to better match the ways our ministries currently operate. Please note: these changes do not in any way reduce our programs or areas of service, but instead seek to honor the sacrifice of time and dedication made by our faithful volunteers through fewer positions, fewer meetings, and more efficient work.

- The number of Missions will be in accordance with our Mission Statement.
 - The Becoming Mission will combine the work of property, administration, IT, and personnel.
 - The Belong Mission will combine the work of worship and music, fellowship, pastoral care, evangelism, and pastoral relations
 - The Believe Mission will combine the work of Christian education, spiritual formation, finance, stewardship, and Disciple men and women.
 - The Befriend Mission will combine all of our outreach ministries, including Trunk or Treat, Easter Egg Hunt, Veteran's Dinner, 5th Sunday, food pantry, and our financial support to local mission partners.
- We have removed the Cabinet by moving our governing structure to a representative Board that will include the Chairs of each Mission. This will allow for more streamlined communication and ease of coordination for our ministries.

Additionally, we have combined our two current governing documents (a Constitution that may only be changed by the congregation, and Bylaws that may be changed by the Board) into a single document entitled *Constitution and Bylaws*. This single document may only be changed by the congregation (**Article III.6.**). There is no legal need for multiple documents, and best governing practices indicate it is simpler and easier to keep track of one document than to flip between two. This single document is 9 pages, compared to 27 pages of the current two documents combined.

- The appendices of the current Constitution and Bylaws will become policies.
 - Reviewing/updating current policies (appendices) will be important work for the Board upon the adoption of a new *Constitution and Bylaws*.

A Representative Governing Structure (Article IV)

A change in our Board makeup was designed to allow for a structure that is representative of our mission and ministries. To this end you will note the following changes:

- Elders and Deacons will each select a Chair to serve on the Board each year. This decision was two-fold:
 - Elders and Deacons are spiritual and disciple-oriented leadership bodies rather than administrative and policy-making bodies. The *Constitution and Bylaws* outlines the work of each body. (**Article IV, Section B**). Each body will select a Chair to serve on the Board (**Article IV, Section B, 2.a.iii. and 2.b.iii.**).
 - Past Nominating committees have reported difficulty in finding persons to serve as Elders and Deacons, in part because it included Board service. This new structure will open up opportunities for spiritually gifted persons to serve in these positions.
- The chairs of each of the four Missions will serve on the Board (**Article IV, Section A.**). This eliminates the need for a second layer of governance (formerly called the Cabinet).
- The Fiduciary Trustees will select a representative to serve on the Board each year (**Article IV, Section C.2.h.**).
- The number of Board members will remain the same as in the past with 12 members.

Encourage Leader Development

We believe the following changes may provide a more fruitful environment for calling new leaders:

- Terms of Service for Elders and Deacons will be reduced from three years of service to two years of service.
 - The committee learned from past Nominating committees that the three-year term of service was prohibitive to people agreeing to serve.
- Terms of service for Mission Chairs will be one year with the ability to be re-elected for a total of 3 consecutive terms (**Article IV, Section D. 2.**).
- The coordinators of each Mission will be clearly laid out, so that there should be a number of people with experience from which to choose when it is time to nominate a new Chair (**Article IV, Section D. 4.**).

Clarify Responsibilities

We believe the following changes may help us better to know who is responsible for what within our church:

- We will make clear exactly what decisions the Congregation reserves for itself, with all other decisions delegated to the Board, or subsequently delegated by the Board to other bodies (**Article III**).
- To clear up confusing language of the word “trustee” which was formerly used for two separate groups within the governing structure (Board Trustees and Fiduciary Trustees), we will change the name of “Board Trustees” to “Executive Committee” (**Article IV, Section C. 2. i.**).
- The responsibilities of Elders and Deacons will be laid out more fully (**Article IV, Section B.**).
- The creation of a Personnel Committee will clarify accountability of all paid staff. The Personnel Committee will be responsible for performance reviews of all staff, including the Senior Minister.
 - The Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) will remain as an essential part of pastor-parish relations. The role of the PRC will move from one of evaluation to one of pastoral support and communication between the pastor(s) and the congregation.

Other Changes

Here are some of the other significant changes in the proposed Constitution and Bylaws:

- Congregational Meetings (**Article VI, Section B.2.**):
 - The number of yearly Congregational meetings will decrease from three to one. The February meeting was informational, and its work can be accomplished without the need for a formal meeting. The two

fall meetings will be combined into one Annual Meeting for the purposes of electing congregational leaders and approving the annual operating budget.

- The Congregation will retain the right to hold special meetings in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws.

- **Property Rights**

In order to protect the church's interests in the case of unforeseen circumstances, we expanded the language of the former Constitution to outline a much more specific process in the case of dissolution (**Article VIII**).

While we have tried to highlight the significant changes in the proposed document, we invite you to read this draft carefully. **We did not simply tweak our existing documents but started with a fresh sheet of paper.**

Approval Process

The Board received an initial draft of the proposed Constitution and Bylaws in July. At the special July Board meeting, we discussed the new document, responded to questions, and listened to suggestions for improvement. The committee made appropriate changes in light of that important feedback and presented a revised document that was discussed at Board meeting on August 25, at which time it was unanimously approved for recommendation to the congregation.

We will hold a meeting of the congregation following worship on September 22. There will be one item on the agenda:

- The congregation will consider the recommendation from the Board that the new Constitution and Bylaws be approved, effective September 23, 2019.

Questions and More Information

Members of the Governing Documents Review Committee will be available in Classroom #1 after worship on September 8 and 15 if you have comments or questions. Also, please feel free to contact any member of the committee with your questions.

Conclusion

This has been a labor of love on the part of the committee. We have spent many long hours away from our families, wrestling with what God would have us do, and who God would have us be. While this process has been tiring, it has not been tiresome. We have left meetings energized and excited about what God has in store for us here at Madison Christian Church. As you study this proposed *Constitution and Bylaws*, we trust that you, too, will catch a vision of the church that fills you with hope.

Blessings,

The Governing Documents Review Committee

Sharyn Meade

sharynmeade@yahoo.com

Mark Underwood

pastormu@hiwaay.net

Beth Thomason

bcthom66@yahoo.com

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
Madison Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Madison, Alabama

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Madison Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Madison, Alabama, a congregationally governed body, in order to gather and nurture a growing community of disciples who faithfully worship and serve in the name of Christ, do hereby adopt this Constitution and Bylaws.

This Constitution and Bylaws establishes a framework which facilitates and governs both the mission and business of Madison Christian Church and shall be read and considered together.

This Constitution and Bylaws replaces and supersedes in their entirety all previous constitutions and bylaws of Madison Christian Church. To the extent the provisions of any existing policies, procedures, manuals, or other similar documents of Madison Christian Church conflict with or are inconsistent with any provisions of this Constitution and Bylaws, then the provisions of this Constitution and Bylaws shall control.

ARTICLE I – NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION A. NAME

The name of this organization shall be Madison Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Madison, Alabama, affiliated with the denomination known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and committed to the theology, values, and practices of this body.

SECTION B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be guided by, and all missions of the Church shall be in accordance with, the following Madison Christian Church Mission Statement:

*We are **BECOMING** Disciples of Christ*

- We are constantly evolving as disciples. In order to do this:
- We are part of a movement known as The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
- We value both faith and reason.
- We affirm discipleship as a life-long process where questions are valued as part of growth.
- We follow Jesus by putting our faith in action locally and around the world.

*We **BELONG** at the table, everyone*

- All means all - You are welcomed and celebrated for who you are here!
- Come as you are. We mean it!
- No matter who you are, what your beliefs are, what you've done or haven't done we want you here with us.
- You are welcome to participate in all areas of church life.
- Participate as you feel comfortable.

*We **BELIEVE** in life-changing connections*

- Jesus calls us to genuine relationships of love.
- The Bible is alive with relevance today.
- We take the Bible seriously; not literally.
- We interpret scripture in the light of Jesus' life and teaching.
- Through our gifts of time, talent, and money we build loving relationships with our community.

*We **BEFRIEND** the world around us*

- We are a church of open doors.
- We are called to reach out beyond ourselves with love to others in need.
- Compassion compels us to act to help others in any and every way we can.
- We work with other churches, faith groups, and organizations to bring hope and fight injustices.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this church shall consist of those who are now identified as members, those who shall unite with it by making an affirmation of faith or transfer of membership from another congregation, and those who have actively participated in the mission and ministry of the Church for a period of twelve (12) consecutive months. Accurate membership of the Church shall be recorded in the Clerk's Report.

All active members shall be eligible to vote in any meeting of the Congregation. Active members are those members who have participated in the life of the church through attendance, financial stewardship, or other active involvement within the last twelve (12) months. All other members shall be considered inactive on the Clerk's Report.

ARTICLE III – AUTHORITY

The Congregation is the highest governing body of the Church. The Congregation shall elect Elders, Deacons, Officers, and Mission Chairs at an annual meeting of the Congregation. A subset of which will comprise The Board.

The Board shall be responsible for:

1. Directing the administration, mission, and ministry of the Congregation (which includes making decisions concerning policy and procedures);
2. Transacting business on behalf of the Congregation; and
3. For making appropriate recommendations to the Congregation as needed.

The Congregation reserves for itself final authority in the following matters:

1. Approval of the Church's annual operating budget and any modifications of that budget equal to or greater than ten percent (10%) of the total budget during any given Fiscal Year;
2. Election of Elders, Deacons, Officers, and Mission Chairs;
3. Acquisition, encumbrance, and conveyance of real property;
4. Incurring debt equal to or greater than ten percent (10%) of the total annual budget;
5. Calling or dismissing the Senior Minister of the Church;
6. Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws; and
7. Any merger, consolidation, or dissolution of the Church.

ARTICLE IV – CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP

SECTION A. BOARD

1. The voting members of the Board shall be:
 - a. Board Chair
 - b. Board Chair-Elect
 - c. Secretary
 - d. Treasurer
 - e. Financial Secretary
 - f. Chair of Elders
 - g. Chair of Deacons
 - h. Fiduciary Trustees Representative
 - i. BECOMING Mission Chair
 - j. BELONG Mission Chair
 - k. BELIEVE Mission Chair
 - l. BEFRIEND Mission Chair
2. The Church's Minister(s) shall be *ex officio* members of the Board without vote.
3. The Board shall constitute and be deemed to be the "Board of Directors" of Madison Christian Church.
4. The Board shall:
 - a. Articulate the Church's mission, vision and values;
 - b. Identify the Church's strategic priorities;
 - c. Oversee and evaluate the Church's ministries and business affairs; and
 - d. Ensure the responsible stewardship of the Church's resources.

5. The Board is accountable to the Congregation and maintains regular communication and dialogue with the Congregation.
6. The Board shall have authority to act on behalf of the Church according to such guidelines as set forth in this Constitution and Bylaws and in all matters in which the Congregation has not specifically reserved authority for itself as stated in Article III.

SECTION B. ELDERS AND DEACONS

1. Election

- a. The following shall be elected annually by the Congregation by its active membership for a term as designated for each or until such time as a successor is elected and assumes office, whichever is earlier.
 - i. Elders: A minimum of four (4) Elders will serve on a staggered basis, each for a term of two (2) years. Elders will be eligible to serve a second term. Elders who have served for two (2) full terms shall not be eligible for re-election until one year has elapsed following their last term.
 - ii. Deacons: A minimum of six (6) Deacons, one-half (1/2) of whom shall be elected each year for a term of two (2) years. Deacons will be eligible to serve for two (2) consecutive terms. Deacons who have served for two (2) full terms shall not be eligible for re-election until one year has elapsed following their last term.

2. Responsibilities

a. Elders

- i. Elders are spiritual leaders devoted to the Church, whose lives demonstrate their commitment to God through Jesus Christ in the following ways:
 1. Elders are charged with discerning an overall sense of the spiritual life of the Church and encouraging the Church's spiritual growth. Their role is one of guidance of the Church and support of the Church leadership.
 2. Elders are called to be spiritual leaders of the Church, presiding at the Lord's Table in worship, developing pastoral care strategies, and attending to the spiritual life of the Church.
 3. Elders are called to serve as role models to the Church through their conversation, attitude, action in everyday life, and responsible financial support of the Church.
 4. Elders are called to be teachers and learners. They are committed to spiritual growth through a life-long learning process.
 5. Elders are called to be visionaries; mindful of the Church's mission and able to articulate the vision of the Church.
- ii. The Elders are not an administrative or policy-making body, but Elders serve individually in key areas of Church leadership.
- iii. The Elders shall select a chair each year who will serve on the Board.
- iv. The Elders shall select a representative each year to serve as the Pastoral Care representative to the BELONG Mission.

b. Deacons

- i. Deacons are faithful disciples who have demonstrated spiritual gifts for a ministry of service to Jesus Christ and the Church in the following ways:
 1. Deacons are active in the life of the Church and support the programs and activities of the Church.
 2. Deacons prepare communion, ensure the distribution of communion each week, and serve as greeters to provide a welcoming atmosphere for worship.
 3. Deacons participate actively in one or more of the Missions of the Church.
 4. Deacons share generously, as they are able, of their gifts of time, talent, and money.
- ii. Deacons are not an administrative or policy-making body but serve the Church and its ministries in a variety of ways.
- iii. The Deacons shall select a chair each year who will serve on the Board.
- iv. The Deacons shall select a representative each year to serve on the BEFRIEND Mission.

SECTION C. OFFICERS

1. Election

- a. Annually, the following shall be elected by the Congregation from its active membership for a term as designated for each or until such time as a successor is elected and assumes office.
 - i. **Board Chair:** for a term of one (1) year. He/she will not be eligible for election as Board Chair-Elect for the Program Year immediately following his/her service
 - ii. **Board Chair-Elect:** for a term of one (1) year. He/she will be nominated to serve as Board Chair the Program Year immediately following his/her service as Chair-Elect
 - iii. **Secretary:** for a term of one (1) year. He/she may be re-elected for consecutive terms.
 - iv. **Treasurer:** for a term of two (2) years. He/she will be eligible for election as Assistant Treasurer for the term immediately following service as Treasurer.
 - v. **Assistant Treasurer:** for a term of two (2) years. He/she will be nominated to serve as Treasurer the term immediately following his/her service as Assistant Treasurer.
 - vi. **Financial Secretary:** for a term of two (2) years. He/she will be eligible for election as Assistant Financial Secretary for the term immediately following service as Financial Secretary.
 - vii. **Assistant Financial Secretary:** for a term of two (2) years. He/she will be nominated to serve as Financial Secretary the term immediately following his/her service as Assistant Financial Secretary.
 - viii. **Fiduciary Trustees:** Three in number, for a term of six (6) years. One new Trustee will be elected every other year. Fiduciary Trustees may be elected for consecutive terms.

2. Responsibilities

- a. The **Board Chair** shall fulfill the usual duties of such an officer and shall call and preside at all regular or special meetings of the Board and of the Congregation.
- b. The **Board Chair-Elect** shall fulfill the usual duties of such an officer and shall assume the duties of the Board Chair upon his/her request or absence.
- c. The **Secretary** shall keep minutes of all regular and special meetings of the Board and Congregation and perform such other duties as may be assigned.
- d. The **Treasurer** shall be responsible for the disbursing of all general and designated funds for the Church according to the authority designated by the Board, make regular reports to the Board and Congregation, and serve as chair of the Finance Sub-Committee.
- e. The **Assistant Treasurer** shall participate with the Treasurer in on the job training to develop proficiency in the Church-provided accounting system in order to fill the role of Treasurer after term as Assistant Treasurer is complete and will serve as a member of the Finance Sub-Committee.
- f. The **Financial Secretary** shall be responsible for receiving all funds for the Church according to the authority designated by the Board, provide members with giving statements each year, and serve as chair of the Stewardship Sub-Committee.
- g. The **Assistant Financial Secretary** shall participate with the Financial Secretary in on the job training to develop proficiency in order to fill the role of Financial Secretary after term as Assistant Financial Secretary is complete and will serve as a member of the Stewardship Sub-Committee.
- h. The **Fiduciary Trustees** are responsible for overseeing the administration of all Fiduciary Funds, in accordance with the Fiduciary Funds Policy, for the benefit of the Church. The Fiduciary Trustees shall make regular reports to the Board and Congregation. The Trustees shall select a representative each year to serve on the Board.
- i. The **Executive Committee** shall consist of the Board Chair, Chair-Elect, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Fiduciary Trustee Chair, and Secretary. The Executive Committee shall act as the legal agents of the Church in all business matters, under the direction of the Board and subject to the approval of the Congregation, and perform such duties as are required by this Constitution and Bylaws and the State of Alabama. The Executive Committee, in accordance with the Executive Committee Policy, shall have the authority to act in emergency financial situations, in accordance with Article III.1 of this Constitution and Bylaws where the Board or Congregation cannot be convened.

SECTION D. MISSIONS

1. Based on the Mission Statement, the Congregation will organize its ministries into the following Missions
 - a. The BECOMING Mission shall provide vision, direction, and oversight for the following ministries:
 - i. Property and Maintenance
 - ii. Administration and Office Support
 - iii. Information Technology
 - iv. Personnel
 - b. The BELONG Mission shall provide vision, direction, and oversight for the following ministries:
 - i. Worship and music ministries
 - ii. Fellowship ministries
 - iii. Pastoral Care ministries
 - iv. Evangelism/Hospitality
 - v. Pastoral Relations Committee
 - c. The BELIEVE Mission shall provide vision, direction, and oversight for the following ministries:
 - i. Christian education, camps, and retreats
 - ii. Spiritual formation
 - iii. Finance and budgeting, stewardship education and annual campaigns, planned giving
 - iv. Disciple Men, Disciple Women
 - d. The BEFRIEND Mission shall provide vision, direction, and oversight for the following ministries:
 - i. Food outreach ministries
 - ii. Fifth Sunday missions
 - iii. Outreach ministries
 - iv. Financial support of local mission partners
2. Mission Chairs
 - a. Annually, a chair for each of the four Missions shall be elected by the Congregation from its membership for a term of one (1) year. Mission Chairs serve on the Board.
 - b. Each Mission Chair may be re-elected for up to two (2) additional consecutive years of service as chair. He/she will not be eligible for re-election as the chair for the Program Year immediately following his/her third consecutive year of service as chair.
3. Ministries beyond those listed in Section D.1 and Ministry Teams may form or disband at will under each Mission as is warranted by the Mission Statement. Participation on Ministry Teams is open to all participants of the Church.
4. Each Mission Chair, in consultation with the Board Chair and the Senior Minister, shall appoint coordinators for his/her respective Mission.
 - a. BECOMING
 - i. Chair
 - ii. Property Coordinator
 - iii. Information Technology Coordinator
 - iv. Personnel Chair
 - v. Minister(s) and Board Chair shall be *ex officio* members
 - b. BELONG
 - i. Chair
 - ii. Fellowship Coordinator
 - iii. Evangelism/Hospitality Coordinator
 - iv. Elder Representative (appointed by Elders)
 - v. PRC Chair
 - vi. Minister(s) and Music Staff shall be *ex officio* members
 - c. BELIEVE
 - i. Chair
 - ii. Education/Spiritual Formation Coordinator
 - iii. Stewardship and Finance Representatives

- iv. Disciple Women Coordinator
 - v. Disciple Men Coordinator
 - vi. Minister(s) shall be *ex officio* member
- d. BEFRIEND
- i. Chair
 - ii. Outreach Ministries Coordinator
 - iii. Fifth Sunday Mission Coordinator
 - iv. Deacon Representative (appointed by Deacons)
 - v. Minister(s) shall be *ex-officio* member
5. The responsibilities of each Mission shall be:
- a. To identify and explore new opportunities for ministries in the area of the Mission's focus that reflect the Mission Statement of the Church;
 - b. To develop an annual plan of programmatic priorities and projected costs as part of the annual Congregation-wide planning and budgeting process;
 - c. To identify key measures of success for each program provided and collect data to guide annual review and evaluation of programs;
 - d. To develop and implement communication and invitation strategies for engaging Church members and other people in the programs offered;
 - e. To provide ongoing support and assistance to members who are leading and volunteering in program ministries, and
 - f. To perform other tasks as requested by the Board.

SECTION E. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

1. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Senior Minister, the Chair of Elders, the Chair of Deacons, and two at-large members who shall be appointed by the Board Chair and approved by the Board. The committee shall appoint its own chair.
2. The Nominating Committee, acting in accordance with the Nominating Policy, shall be responsible for presenting nominations to the Board for Elders, Deacons, Officers, and Mission Chairs.
3. The Nominating Committee shall provide means to receive from the Congregation recommendations for elected positions.
4. The Nominating Committee shall secure the consent of each nominee and present nominations to the Board for approval no later than thirty (30) days before the annual Congregational Meeting. The Board shall present nominations to the Congregation for election at the fall annual Congregational Meeting.
5. Vacancies in any elective office shall be filled for the unexpired term by the Board upon the recommendation of the Board Chair and in consultation with the Senior Minister.
6. With the exception of nominating the Chair-Elect as Chair, the Assistant Treasurer as Treasurer, and the Assistant Financial Secretary as Financial Secretary, the Nominating Committee shall function independently each year and will not be bound by actions of previous Nominating Committees.

SECTION F. DISMISSAL OF CHURCH LEADERS

Any elected leader may be removed, for good cause, by a majority vote of the Board.

1. The individual in question shall meet with the Elders who will recommend action to the Board.
2. If removal is recommended, the proposal will be submitted to the Board in writing at least one (1) week before the Board meeting.
3. The individual in question shall be given an opportunity to appear, speak, and ask and answer any relevant questions in the meeting before that vote is taken.
4. The individual in question shall be considered removed from leadership position upon a majority vote of the Board.

ARTICLE V – PASTORAL LEADERSHIP & CHURCH STAFF

SECTION A. SENIOR MINISTER

1. The Church shall have an ordained Senior Minister, who shall be the Church's leader, preacher, and pastor.
2. The Senior Minister shall be in good standing with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
3. The Senior Minister is accountable to the Congregation through the Board and the Personnel Committee.
4. Specific responsibilities of the Senior Minister include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Fulfill the primary role in planning and leading worship;
 - b. Serve as the head of staff with all staff performing their responsibilities under the direction and supervision of the Senior Minister or supervisors designated by the Senior Minister;
 - c. Work collaboratively with lay leaders and members, either directly or through assigned staff or volunteers, to plan, implement, and evaluate the ministries and administration of the Church;
 - d. Equip and support lay members in leadership and ministry roles;
 - e. Ensure the implementation of ministry priorities and Church policies and the operating budget adopted by the Congregation and/or the Board;
 - f. Serve as an ex-officio member without vote on the Board, all Missions, the Nominating Committee, the Personnel Committee, and other leadership bodies of the Church.
 - g. Participate in conferences and organizations beneficial to the life of the Church; and perform other tasks as requested by the Board.
5. The Senior Minister shall be chosen by the Church hereinafter provided:
 - a. A representative committee of at least five (5) persons, nominated by the Board Chair and elected by the Board, shall serve as a Search Committee and be responsible for recommending a prospective Senior Minister to the Board in accordance with the Search and Call Policy.
 - b. The Search Committee will conduct its work in consultation with the Regional Minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Alabama-Northwest Florida.
 - c. After considering and approving the recommendations of the Search Committee, the Board will recommend one prospective minister to the Congregation. Only one prospective minister at a time will be brought before the Congregation for consideration.
 - d. The recommendation of the Board requires approval by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting in a regular or special meeting of the Congregation before a call to a minister may be extended.
 - e. The term of ministry shall be for an indefinite period which may be terminated by either party upon sixty (60) days' written notice. 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 files.
6. Termination of the Senior Minister may be considered as follows:
 - a. If issues arise between the Congregation or its elected leaders and the Senior Minister that cannot be resolved with the help of the Regional Minister, the parties shall seek an amicable separation following the procedures of the Termination Policy.
 - b. Otherwise, the Board may recommend to the Congregation that the Senior Minister's call to serve the Church be rescinded.
 - b. By rules of the Constitution and Bylaws, a meeting of the Congregation may be called. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the active members present and voting shall be required to rescind such a call.

SECTION B. OTHER CHURCH STAFF

1. Upon approval of the Board, additional ministers may be called into ministry at Madison Christian Church.
2. All additional ministers shall be in good standing with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or able to achieve such standing.
3. Other staff may be hired to carry on the work of the Church according to the Church's Personnel Policies.
4. All staff shall work under the general supervision of the Senior Minister.

SECTION C. PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEES

1. A Pastoral Relations Committee shall be appointed for each ordained or commissioned minister on staff.
2. The Board Chair and the minister together shall determine and appoint the members of each Pastoral Relations Committee, subject to the approval of the Board.
3. The Pastoral Relations Committee(s) shall provide support for the minister and his/her relationship with the Church and shall facilitate communication and understanding between the pastor and the Church.
4. The Pastoral Relations Committee(s) shall conduct its work in accordance with the Pastoral Relations Committee Policy.

SECTION D. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

1. The Personnel Committee shall consist of at least three (3) Church members, one-third (1/3) of whom shall be appointed each year to serve a three (3) year term by the Board Chair with the approval of the Board at its first meeting of each Program Year. The Personnel Committee shall appoint its own chair.
2. Paid staff are accountable to the Board through the Personnel Committee.
3. The Personnel Committee shall recommend to the Board the hiring and/or termination of all personnel employed by the Church with the exception of the Senior Minister.
4. Family members of all church staff are ineligible to serve on the Personnel Committee.
5. Family members of potential or current paid staff members who are serving on the Board shall excuse themselves from Board deliberations and votes concerning paid staff.
6. The Personnel Committee shall define the duties, responsibilities, and terms of employment for each employee. These shall be placed on record according to the Church's Personnel Policy.
7. The Personnel Committee and Senior Minister shall conduct an annual performance review for each employee and make salary recommendations to the Finance Sub-Committee.
8. The Personnel Committee shall regularly review the Church's Personnel Policy and recommend policy changes to the Board as needed.

ARTICLE VI – GOVERNANCE

SECTION A. PROGRAM AND FISCAL YEAR

1. The Fiscal Year shall begin on January 1 of each year.
2. The Program Year shall begin on January 1 of each year.

SECTION B. MEETINGS

1. The Board shall:
 - a. hold regular meetings;
 - b. hold special meetings as required on call of the Board Chair or upon request of four or more members of the Board.
 - c. A simple majority of the Board members present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum.
 - d. A majority vote of Board members present at a meeting of the Board shall constitute an act of the Board unless otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws.
 - i. No proxy vote or absentee ballots shall be permitted.
 - ii. Each Board member shall have only one vote regardless of how many roles they fill on the Board.
 - iii. Board Chair shall abstain from voting unless there is a need to break a tie vote.
2. The Congregation shall:
 - a. Hold an annual meeting not later than one month prior to the end of the Church Program Year for the purpose of electing leaders and approving an annual operating budget.
 - b. hold special meetings as required, such meetings to be called by the Board Chair or upon request of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board, or by written petition of ten percent (10%) percent or more active members of the Congregation.
3. Notice of all meetings of the Congregation shall be both announced at Sunday worship service(s) at least one week in advance of the meeting and included in the Church's newsletter, either mailed or sent electronically, at

least one week in advance of the meeting. The purpose, date, time, and place of the meeting shall be included in both of those notices.

4. A majority vote of active members present and voting at a duly called and noticed meeting of the Congregation shall constitute an act of the Congregation unless otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws. No proxy vote or absentee ballots shall be permitted.

SECTION C. OTHER COMMITTEES, TEAMS, AND TASK FORCES

1. When needed to administer the work of the Church, the Board Chair shall appoint, with the approval of the Board, such task forces, teams, and special committees as may be needed. These groups shall perform duties assigned and shall continue for such time as designated.
2. Such committees, teams, and task groups include but are not limited to:
 - a. Search and Call Committee
 - b. Constitution and Bylaws Review Committee

ARTICLE VIII – PROPERTY RIGHTS

SECTION A. CHURCH PROPERTY AND ASSETS

1. If the Congregation votes to dissolve as a non-profit corporation;
 - a. the Board shall discharge payment of all liabilities and obligations.
 - b. All remaining assets, including real property and benefits connected therewith, shall become the property of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Alabama-Northwest Florida, or its legal successor.
 - c. In the event that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Alabama-Northwest Florida does not exist, or chooses not to accept the property and assets, then the property and assets of the Congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall become the property of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, or its legal successor.
2. If the Congregation elects to disassociate from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada;
 - a. All liabilities and obligations shall be paid and discharged.
 - b. All remaining assets, including real property and benefits connected therewith, shall immediately become the property of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Alabama-Northwest Florida, or its legal successor.
 - c. In the event that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Alabama-Northwest Florida does not exist, or chooses not to accept the property and assets, then the property and assets of the Congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall become the property of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, or its legal successor.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Congregation by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active members present and voting on the amendment, provided that written notice has been provided to Congregation members at least one month before the vote is taken.

ARTICLE X – CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS EFFECTIVE

This Constitution and Bylaws shall be effective September 23, 2019, upon the adoption thereof by the Congregation.