

**FAITH
UNITED**



Community Church

CHURCH BY-LAWS

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Faith United Church, Inc. By-Laws
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ARTICLE I
Incorporation

Section I. Name:

This church shall be known as Faith United Church, Inc. (assumed name as Faith United Community Church)

Section 2. Purpose:

The purpose of the church shall be to carry out the Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28:18-20, to provide fellowship and source of spiritual strength to the body of believers and followers of Jesus Christ, and to support that body in its various ministries for witness to the love and grace of God eternal.

Section 3. Articles of Incorporation:

On file in the office of the Fayette County Clerk, Lexington, Kentucky.

ARTICLE II
Articles of Faith

Section 1. The Bible:

We believe the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, to be divinely inspired, inerrant in the originals, and the final authority and guide for faith, practice, and truth.

Section 2. The Godhead:

We believe the Bible teaches there is one God, who is eternally existent in the Holy Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three distinct persons yet of one substance, and that this God is the Creator of everything, heaven and earth, visible and invisible.

Section 3. The Father:

We believe the Bible teaches God is sovereign, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, holy, good, just, righteous, truth and love.

Section 4. The Son:

We believe the Bible teaches Jesus, the Son, was eternally coexistent with the Father prior to his birth on earth, that he was manifested in the flesh after being conceived by the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, died on the cross for the redemption of the human race, rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven, sits at the right hand of God the Father, and will return to earth to establish a visible rule in the universe after judging each individual and deciding their eternal destiny.

Section 5. The Holy Spirit:

We believe the Bible teaches the Holy Spirit is a Person. He administers redemption by convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and by comforting, sustaining, and empowering the born-again believers. He is the Promise from the Father, and the Giver of fruit and gifts.

Section 6. The Human Race:

We believe the Bible teaches the human race is the crown of all creation, was created in God's own image, chose sin and enslavement through disobedience, suffers death, and is destined to eternal damnation because of sin, and must come to the only Savior, Jesus Christ, to find eternal life. By the free gift of righteousness, mankind's will has been freed giving every human being the ability to choose their own destiny which will be either living forever in Heaven or living forever in hell. New life in Christ renews the image of God in the believer, and the believer's body becomes the temple of God.

Section 7. Salvation:

We believe the Bible teaches salvation and eternal life can only be found through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Only faith in Jesus, resulting in the new birth, can bring forgiveness and freedom from the practice of sin which is a willful violation of a known command of God. The scope of salvation is all encompassing including not only the new birth, but a subsequent work of God by faith, known as sanctification. This is usually a process that leads to a further crisis by which the heart is cleansed from self-centeredness and made perfect in love towards God and our fellow man. This is accomplished by our faith in the promises of God pertaining to such work and the agency of the Holy Spirit who cleanses our hearts and fills us with love.

Section 8. The Church:

We believe the Bible teaches all believers are adopted into a mystical body and family known as the "Body of Christ" or the "Church". This church is so heterogeneous that it is not defined by any race, or gender, or one local body, or certain denominational affiliations. Faith in Christ and total dependence upon His redemptive work alone provide participation in the Body of Christ. Christ will return for His Church at His second coming.

Section 9. The Sacraments:

We believe the Bible teaches Christ used two primary symbols to signify the redemptive work of God; (1) communion, and (2) baptism. These sacraments are an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible work of God's redemptive grace.

Section 10. Assurance of Salvation:

We believe that a work as important as salvation which cost God so greatly and by which every soul will live or die eternally is one in which each individual needs a firm confidence as to whether they are a participant of salvation or not. This confidence we believe is meant to be established by a direct witness of God's Spirit to our

spirit that we are his child. Since God himself establishes the criteria by which we will be saved and he alone knows the hearts of each person only he can verify when a person meets his conditions. We discourage any person to place their confidence of their salvation on anything less than this witness along with the fruit of the Spirit which come with this witness.

Section 11. Marriage:

We believe, that the Scriptures teach on the issue of marriage:

1. That it is the union of one naturally born woman to one naturally born man. Adam and Eve were created by God and therefore had no birth, but became the pattern of God's will, prior to the fall, for the human race regarding marriage.
2. God created the male and female as complementary sexes. Each has gifts and graces that form the marital bond of oneness as God intended whenever marriage is pursued as a covenantal relationship between the husband and the wife before God. It was into this type of relationship that children were to be born and raised whenever possible.
3. While the Scriptures acknowledge that there were deviations from this original pattern we understand all of these to be the result of sin and human willfulness or ignorance of His will and do not consider them to be sanctioned or blessed of God.
4. 4. The gift of sex or human intercourse was designed by God and to be reserved to the confines of a biblical marriage. Sexual relationships outside of these boundaries constitute acts of sin and need the atonement of Christ as well as the repentance and forsaking of them by those involved to have God's acceptance.
5. We forbid our Ministers and staff to approve, teach, support, counsel towards or perform marriage ceremonies that endorse in any fashion or method those relationships or behavior which is contrary to this biblical teaching.
6. Our properties and facilities shall not be used in any ceremony that contradicts our Statement of Faith. We believe ourselves to be stewards of those things which God has entrusted to us. As such we must use all we have and all we own to promote his honor and his kingdom. We must not use them to promote any behavior of which he clearly disapproves.

Section 12. Spiritual Gifts:

We believe the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit gives gifts in order to spread the Good News of the Son. These gifts, which are listed in the New Testament, are given as the Holy Spirit determines to each believer. Therefore, no gift can be held as a requirement which would be used to signify the level of an individual's Christian experience. When used in love as the Spirit directs, these gifts will cause the Body of Christ to grow. When they are misused, the result will be confusion and division in the Body. We do not presume to make a statement about the maturity or immaturity of any believer who disagrees with our views on this subject. We understand that others may interpret the gifts differently than we and may believe that one gift such as speaking in tongues

or angelic languages are part of essential Christianity. We maintain that Faith United Community Church does not practice or promote speaking in tongues in any services. If an individual chooses to practice this gift as a part of their private walk with God they may do so. But in the congregation the Apostle Paul says that he would rather speak only five words with understanding than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. All gifts apart from the fruit of the Spirit in a person's life are useless. Character is the greatest test of a person, not their gifts.

Section 13. Changes to the Articles of Faith:

Articles of Faith can only be changed by a seventy five percent or three quarters support of qualified voting members.

Section 14. Controlling Authority of Properties and Moneys:

In the event of doctrinal differences such that there is a division in the body of Faith United Community Church, all church properties and moneys shall remain with the group who holds to the original Articles of Faith as stated in Article II of the By-Laws of Faith United Church, Inc.

ARTICLE III

Authority Structure

Authority Structure

Faith United Church, Inc. is an independent church and is self-governed, i.e. autonomous ruled. The members of the church shall establish and conduct the business and affairs of the church by a democratic vote system. The members are the executive authority to which church officers, board members, committees and other organizations are accountable.

ARTICLE IV

Membership

Section 1. Member Requirements

Those who become members of Faith United Community Church are those who willingly meet the following requirements:

1. They are at least sixteen years of age.
2. They have attended the services of Faith United regularly for a minimum of six months.
3. They profess a right relationship with Jesus Christ and live to honor him and His words.
4. They are willing to worship under the beliefs as established in the Articles of Faith as outlined in Article II of these bylaws.
5. They support the church financially with their tithes and offerings.
6. These requirements must be faithfully maintained as long as one is a member of Faith United.

Members must regularly attend services, support financially and pray for this body of believers in accordance with the Scriptures.

Section 2. Procedures for Joining:

Those desiring to join the church as members can do so in the following way:

- A. They express a desire to join the church.
- B. They meet with the Pastor or other church representative approved by the Board who covers the requirements of members and asks if they are willing to comply.
- C. They are recommended to the Board who vote to receive them into membership.
- D. They are welcomed into membership in a public service.

Section 3. Loss of Membership

If over the course of time a member ceases to fulfill the obligations of membership, the Pastor or church representative approved by the Board shall contact that person or family to discover if they still desire to be members. If they express no such desire or if there is an absence in regular attendance exceeding two months, or lack of financial support for two months, which are not explained and accepted by the Pastor or Board, or if they are living in clear violation of Scriptural descriptions of a Christian and unwilling to repent they shall be removed from Membership in the following way:

- A. A letter shall be sent from the Secretary of the Board expressing concern and reminding them of the requirements of membership. This letter shall state that the recipient has up to thirty days to indicate their choice to retain or renounce membership.
- B. If no response is given in thirty days the assumption will be made that the person or family no longer desires to be a member.
- C. If the person responds that they wish to retain their membership but does not begin meeting membership requirements, another contact should be made to determine their ability or inability to meet the requirements. If they are able to meet them (as to their health, etc.) then the next step shall be started.
- D. A vote shall be taken by the Board to drop the person from the list of members.
- E. A majority vote of the Board will be sufficient to drop the member from membership.

Section 4. Absentee Voting

If a member is to be absent during a church vote, they may submit their vote in writing to the church Secretary as long as it is received prior to the actual vote. This may be done through regular mail or electronic media. The Secretary upon receiving such votes must keep them confidential and see that they are submitted 24 hours prior to the counting of votes. Since the voting member is absent, they must place their name and date on the ballot to confirm their vote. This may set aside the normal anonymity of the ballot which takes place in the congregation but has to be allowed to verify that the vote comes from an eligible absent member.

ARTICLE V

Services & Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services:

The church shall provide services as the membership shall deem appropriate.

Section 2. Church Business Meetings:

The church shall hold its business meetings as the membership shall deem appropriate, but shall not meet less often than once per calendar year. Unless urgent in nature, the date and time of such business meetings shall be announced at the Sunday morning service at least one week prior to the date of the meetings.

Section 3. Order of Business Meetings:

The order of all business meetings shall be as follows:

- (1) Prayer
- (2) Reading of the minutes from the last meeting
- (3) Reports of the officers
- (4) Reports of committees
- (5) Unfinished old business
- (6) Elections
- (7) New business
- (8) Adjournment

Section 4. Special Business Meetings:

In an emergency, the president may call a special business meeting from the pulpit at the Sunday morning worship service, to be held at the time announced.

Section 5. Leadership:

The president of the Board shall conduct all business meetings. In the absence of the president, the vice president shall conduct the business meeting.

Section 6. Approval of Business:

In order to bind the Board to any business, the matter must be first presented in the form of a motion or resolution and voted on by a majority of a quorum of the membership present at a properly called business meeting. A quorum shall be the membership attending such a properly called business meeting. The motion or resolution shall be read openly to the membership present and a vote taken.

ARTICLE VI

Officers

Section 1. Officers:

The general officers of the church shall be five in number, and their titles shall be president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and financial recorder. Whenever possible, officers should be appointed from members who have served a minimum of one year as a member of the Board .

Section 2. Election:

The board shall nominate at least five persons (one for each office) to appear on the ballot for the election of church officers. A minimum of two weeks prior to the election, an announcement shall be made that nominations will be accepted by members for candidates to the Board. These nominations must be given to the Pastor or a member of the Board at least one week prior to the election. Each nomination shall be considered as to their qualification to serve based on their fulfillment of membership requirements. Officers and members of the Board shall be elected by a majority vote cast by anonymous written ballot, except in the absentee vote. The officers shall serve a term of one year. Only one person per household may serve as an officer or board member whenever possible.

Section 3. Date of the Election:

The election for officers of the church shall take place in March and shall precede the election of the church board by at least one week.

ARTICLE VII

Church Board

Section 1. Duties:

The board members shall be elected from and by the membership to oversee and carry out the day-to-day operations and business of the church.

Section 2. Size:

The board shall not be fewer than ten in number, five church officers and five elected members.

Section 3. Term of Service:

All board members, not officers, shall be elected to a three-year term. After serving as a board member for a three-year term, that member must wait a period of one year before appearing on the ballot again. However, another eligible member of that family can appear on the ballot.

Section 4. Elections:

Because board members handle the business of the church and represent the church to the public, the nominee

should be a faithful example of all those things which will distinguish them to be a member in good standing. A ballot is to be composed from all nominees that meet the requirements. From that ballot, the congregation shall elect the board members. The number of board members to be elected in any given year is determined by those fulfilling their term of office as well as any who no longer desire to serve. If a member of the Board has completed their term those elected to replace them shall be elected to a three year term. If a Board member does not complete their term then their replacement shall be elected to fulfill their term. The board shall be elected by a majority vote cast by anonymous written ballot.

Section 5. Declaring a Seat Vacant:

A member who misses four board meetings in any calendar year shall have his/her seat declared vacant unless he/she is providentially hindered or has prior approval by the Board. Additionally, if a board member is absent from the worship services of Faith United Community Church for a period of two months without an approved absence, their seat shall be declared vacant unless they are providentially hindered. When such vacancies are declared or otherwise arise, the board shall call for a special election to fill the position for the remainder of the term provided that the special election is held four months before the general board election.

Section 6. Date of the Election:

The election of the board shall take place in March and shall follow the election of the church officers by at least one week.

Section 7. Board Meetings:

The board shall hold its business meetings as the board shall deem appropriate, but shall not meet less often than eleven times a year. Unless urgent in nature, the date and time of each board meeting shall be announced at the Sunday morning service at least one week prior to the date of the meeting. The order of board meetings, special board meetings, leadership, and approval of business shall conform to the similar section stated in Article V Services and Meetings.

ARTICLE VIII

Committees

From time to time the Board will feel the need to appoint others in the congregation who have expertise in a given area to study a proposed change or manage an ongoing circumstance. Whenever possible a member of the Board should serve as head of that committee. When that is not feasible a member in good standing may be chosen. That person may select others to serve alongside of them. These individuals selected by the Chairperson do not have to be members of the church necessarily. All committees are accountable to the Board and should be reviewed from time to time to determine their effectiveness.

ARTICLE IX

The Pastor

Section 1. Pastoral Terms:

At such times as the church membership deems appropriate, a pastor shall be called.

Section 2. Pastoral Search Committee:

A Pastoral Search Committee shall be chosen from the membership by ballot at a duly-called business meeting and shall consult with proper submission to the leadership of the Holy Spirit for proper guidance in its deliberations.

Section 3. Pastoral Vote:

The name of the individual chosen by the committee shall be presented to the church board for review and evaluation. The board must approve the individual by a 75 percent vote. After a successful election by the board, the president shall recommend the individual to the membership. An announcement of the vote for a pastor must be given from the pulpit on Sunday morning at least one week prior to the election. The pastor shall be elected by a 75 percent majority of the voting membership present. The vote shall be cast by anonymous written ballot. The candidate has seven days to respond to the call of the church. After the seven-day period, the offer shall be invalid.

Section 4. Length of Pastoral Call:

The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time subject to recall as outlined in Section 8 of Article IX and shall serve so long as the pastoral ministry serves the church or until resignation is tendered.

Section 5. Pastoral Duties:

The pastor shall perform as a coordinator, leader, shepherd, teacher, counselor, encourager, and shall administer such duties as the church and pastor shall deem appropriate and feasible. The duties shall include administering the sacraments, the teaching and preaching of the Word, conducting weddings, funerals, etc.

Section 6. Pastoral Report:

Pastor and board shall meet as part of the Board Meetings each time the regularly scheduled Board meets. At each meeting he is to report to the Board answering any questions that relate to his person or responsibilities as the Pastor they deem necessary.

Section 7. Special Pastoral Review:

If the pastor's conduct is unbecoming as a minister of the Gospel, or for any reason he/she has become unqualified to serve as the pastor any longer, the board may call for a pastoral recall at any time.

Section 8. Pastoral Recall Vote:

If the board deems that the minister does not serve the church adequately, the pastor's future in the church shall be submitted to the membership for a pastoral recall vote. In order to have a Pastoral Recall Vote before the congregation, the board must be in agreement by a vote of 51 percent majority. In the event of a majority vote of the Board, an announcement of the pastoral recall must be given from the pulpit on Sunday morning at least one week prior to the election. The pastor shall be recalled by a 60 percent majority of the voting membership present. The vote shall be cast by anonymous written ballot.

Section 9. Pastoral Compensation:

The pastor shall receive a salary as deemed appropriate by the board. The pastor shall be granted one week's vacation after each six months of service. The pastor shall not accrue more than a total of four weeks vacation. More than two weeks vacation at a time must be approved by the board.

Section 10. Pastoral and Family Voting Privileges:

The pastor and the pastor's family can be members of the church with voting privileges during church business meetings excluding those of pastoral recall. The pastor shall be invited to board meetings but shall not have a vote.

Section 11. Pastoral Staff:

In response to the church's growth and needs, additional staff may be required from time to time. At such times the Pastor and Board must be in agreement about the need of additional help. A job description and salary must be agreed upon together prior to calling a person to come and take the job. The pastor will be responsible to hire and hold all staff members accountable. He must answer to the Board on behalf of all his staff. In the event of a Pastoral change all staff members are expected to hand in their resignation at the time the Pastor leaves. If the Board decides to refuse the resignation they may remain until the next Pastor arrives and then all positions should be negotiated with the new Pastor and Board.

ARTICLE X

Amendments to By-Laws

These By-Laws may be amended, altered, or changed by a 75 percent majority vote of the membership present at any properly announced business meeting. A copy of the proposed amendment, alteration, or change shall be posted in a conspicuous place for study, and a notice of the time and place of the proposed change shall be given at least two weeks before the time when such a change is to be considered.



Faith United Church, Inc.
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