

# OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

ELKHART CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
(Disciples of Christ)

Elkhart, Iowa

Revised – January 2007

## INTRODUCTION

The Operational Guidelines (OP) for Elkhart Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are given as recommendations for consistent and effective local church management. The revised OP (2005) are intended to be beneficial extensions of the official restated Articles of Incorporation (AoI) which were notarized April 16, 1995, and are meant to provide complementing detail for the church's regular operations.

This revision's intent was shaped to better coordinate Board and Committee functions and responsibilities. It is hoped that future committees and church groups will be encouraged to preserve written records of their activities and plans to foster open lines of communication and improved continuity of development and growth year by year.

The OP are produced to answer the most common questions asked of committees or about the church's organizational structure. It is hoped that the OP will be able to explain, "What do the Committees do?" and "What will be expected of me if I'm asked to serve on a Committee or the Church Board?" Therefore, the OP provides general and specific detail about the various Board Offices, Committee Chair and member duties, Church Group operations (CWF, CMF, CYF, CHI RHO, etc.), special offices (Historian, Flowers, Librarian, etc.), and minister(s)' responsibilities. It is hoped that the OP booklet will provide enlightenment and oversight to the mechanics of our church's functioning.

Please note that the OP are not intended to detail "tribal knowledge" pertaining to this local church community (ex. - starting the phone tree, accessing the prayer chain members, etc.). Those can be found with the Pastor or church leadership.

We pray that you will find this booklet helpful in understanding our process and useful in becoming an active participant in the faith and ministry of the Elkhart Christian Church. Together we can live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ in this community and the world.

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## THE OFFICIAL BOARD

The Official Board meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise announced. Special "called" Board Meetings may be convened by the Board Chair with a week's prior notification.

Voting privileges for Church Board Meetings are given to elders, diaconate, trustees, functional and standing committee chairs, and board officers, each of whom must be at least eighteen years of age, with the exception of anyone who serves as a committee chair or co-chair. The AoI do not specify that a quorum be present to conduct church business at the Board Meetings. It is vital, however, that voting board members be present at the monthly meetings to receive the reports from the various groups and committees in order to vote and conduct the church business. **Please note that neither the Board Meetings nor the Annual (or Congregational) meetings allow voting by proxy or absentee ballot.** Members of the church are welcome and encouraged to attend Board Meetings, but like the Minister(s) are ex-officio (non-voting). Please note that Minister(s) who have joined the church are eligible to vote at the annual (or Congregational) meeting.

As a courtesy, the Board Chair should be notified two days prior to the Board Meeting of any new business items being put forward. Business items typically handled at Board Meetings are generally dealt with in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. The Board typically approves items needing congregational approval first, the exception being the Nominating Committee's slate of new church officers (not to be confused with the Board Officers - see Nominating Committee's description).

For specific Board procedures, please see Article 8 of the AoI.

## OFFICERS OF THE OFFICIAL BOARD

1. At the annual meetings there shall be elected from the membership: elders, deacons, deaconesses and trustees, for such terms and in such numbers as the membership determines or as are fixed by the by-laws. The elders, diaconate, trustees, and functional committee chairs shall constitute the Elders, Diaconate, and Trustees, which shall conduct the affairs of this corporation subject to the will of the membership. The Official Board shall elect a chair, vice-chair, financial secretary, assistant financial secretary, treasurer, and church clerk, who shall serve until after the next annual meeting or until their successors have been elected and have qualified.

2. The elders, diaconate, and trustees may organize as boards, and the Official Board may create such other boards, official departments, or committees as it deems necessary, with such powers, duties and functions as it may determine; and it may name the personnel therefor. All officers, chairs of functioning committees, and clerk shall have voting privileges on the Official Board.

3. All officers of the corporation and the members and officers of all boards, departments, and committees, shall hold their offices subject to the will of the membership.

## OTHER OFFICES OF THE CHURCH

(Which are not members of the Official Board are):

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Accompanist (s) | 3. Flower Chair |
| 2. Historian       | 4. Librarian    |

## TERMS OF OFFICE

The elders, diaconate, and trustees shall be elected for a three year term, with one-third (1/3) of the elders, diaconate, and trustees being elected each year. Elders and diaconate may choose to serve a second consecutive three-year term. After that, they must take a year off before being asked to serve again in that capacity. A year off is not required if they are asked to serve in another capacity, i.e., - a deacon becomes an elder, or an elder a deacon. Trustees are not limited to a specific number of terms, so long as they are asked to serve and are approved by the congregation.

Should a congregationally elected position become vacant during the year, that vacancy will be filled at the next annual meeting. The exception is if two or more Elder or Trustee positions become open,

the nominating committee will be reconvened to fill those positions with the approval of the official board.

Should the Board Chair and Vice-Chair positions become vacant simultaneously, the Board Clerk/Secretary will assume the Board Chair duties, and find a replacement to be acting Clerk. The Nominating committee will be activated to select replacements for the vacated positions. The new candidates will then need to be approved by the elders, diaconate, and trustees.

The chair, vice-chair, financial secretary, treasurer, church clerk, accompanists(s), historian, librarian, and flower chair shall be elected for a one-year term.

#### NUMBER OF OFFICERS

The Official Board shall consist of not more than nine (9) elders, thirty-two (32) members of the diaconate [sixteen (16) deacons, sixteen (16) deaconesses], and three (3) trustees.

In addition: Upon vote of the Official Board, the title "elder emeritus/emerita" may be bestowed on those individuals who have served with distinction. The elder emeritus/emerita shall have all the privileges of an elder, including the right to vote and make motions at meetings of the Official Board.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD CHAIR

1. Appoint functional committee chairs, and ad hoc committee chairs as necessary.
2. Appoint nominating committee and chair.
3. Convene and direct the monthly Board meetings and be responsible for convening and directing any specially called board meetings.
4. Convene and lead the Annual meeting until relieved by the new Board chair.
5. Regularly attend worship services.
6. Attend Pastor's Cabinet meetings.
7. Serve on the Memorial and Special Gifts, Pastoral Relations, Stewardship and Finance, and Permanent Fund committees.
8. Attend other functional committee meetings as desired.
9. Appoint replacements for vacated Board offices, subject to Board approval.
10. Be the registered agent of the church corporation.
11. Be one of three signees on church purchase order forms for expenditures over \$500.00.

#### VICE-CHAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Fill in for Board chair as needed.
2. Move up to Board chair if the Board chair office becomes vacant unexpectedly during the term.
3. Welcome to attend functional committee meetings.
4. Regularly attend Board meetings and worship services.
5. Preferably the Vice-chair will assume the role of Board chair for the following term unless the Board chair agrees to a second term.

#### CLERK/SECRETARY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Take minutes at the Board meetings and Annual meetings to be saved for church records, and have available to read at the next meeting.
2. Keep track of membership changes for church records.
3. Assume Board chair responsibilities if Board chair and Vice-chair are unavailable, and/or during the interim time, should both positions become vacant. Then as acting Board chair, find a volunteer to take Board minutes.
4. Research Board questions in past Board minute records.
5. If unable to attend Board meeting or Annual meeting, find a substitute.

## FINANCIAL SECRETARY (AND ASSISTANT) RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Pick up offering each Sunday. Record giving by individuals/families and note designated offering splits for Treasurer's bookkeeping.
2. Keep record of special offerings and gifts received.
3. Make deposits, except for groups with separate accounts.
4. Give receipts/statements for those requesting a report of their giving.
5. Maintain confidentiality of member giving.
6. Keep the church safety deposit box key.
7. Assistant Financial Secretary helps with the above items – 1,2,3,5.

## TREASURER

1. Keep church accounting program accurately on church office computer.
2. Prepare and present written monthly treasurer's reports to the Board containing ongoing budget accounts and expenditures.
3. Oversee the processing of checks to pay church expenses.
4. Meet with the Stewardship and Finance committee and Permanent Fund committee to provide current budget information.
5. Maintain church financial records (i.e. – reconcile bank statements, fund transfers as needed, calculate payroll withholdings, fill out Federal and State tax reports, etc.).
6. Prepare and present yearly Treasurer's report at the Annual meeting.
7. Work with Stewardship and Finance Committee in preparing next year's proposed budget.

## DUTIES OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet is in no sense an executive body; it exists for the purpose of understanding and clearance. Here the top leadership of the church comes together under the informal chairmanship of the minister, to secure complete understanding concerning all aspects of the program, to schedule projects and events, to balance and correlate the total program. The cabinet seeks to promote efficiency of operation, prevent duplication, eliminate tensions, and otherwise make the church's organization a smoothly operating machine. It is the top leadership council of the church. The members of the Cabinet shall be: chair of the board, vice-chair, chairs of the functional committees, president of the C.W.F., chairs of the elders, diaconate, trustees and chairs of other standing and special committees which are functioning during the course of the church program year.

The Cabinet shall meet two times a year (June and January). The purpose of these meetings shall be:

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 1. June    | To evaluate the previous program year<br>To invite incoming committee chairs to be present and brought up to speed<br>To brainstorm and develop program; set up calendar; |
| 2. January | To review and evaluate first six months program and coordinate program for next six months.   |

## THE MINISTRY OF ELDERSHIP

### Purpose:

The elders are commissioned to oversee the general spiritual welfare of the congregation. As mature leaders in the church, they are to be concerned and involved with the total program of the church, including teaching, shepherding, and leading. Their presiding at the Communion Table each Lord's Day, serving the emblems of our Lord Jesus Christ, is symbolic of their task. They work with the pastor in developing the mutual ministry of all Christians in the congregation.

## SUGGESTED DUTIES OF ELDERS

1. Attend monthly meetings of the Official Board.
2. Preside at the Lord's Supper according to schedule.
3. Attend regular meetings of the elders.
4. Share in the program planning activities of the congregation.
5. Regularly attend morning worship.
6. Support the church in its total program with time, talent and possessions.
7. Be willing to meet with the minister on matters that relate to the spiritual life of the congregation.
8. Serve communion to the sick and the shut-ins, and participate in the "Elder on Call" rotation.
9. Make church calls when and where they are needed.
10. The term of office of elders shall be three (3) years, unless the term is designated by the nominating committee or a special appointment is made.

## THE MINISTRY OF THE DIACONATE

### Purpose:

The deacons, deaconesses, and junior deacons are commissioned as their name designates "to serve" the congregation in the name of the Chief Servant, Jesus Christ.

## SUGGESTED DUTIES OF THE DEACONS AND DEACONESSES

1. Serve communion emblems according to schedule.
2. Collect the offerings according to schedule.
3. Regularly attend morning worship.
4. Attend monthly meetings of the Official Board.
5. Assist the elders in serving communion to the sick and shut-ins.
6. Assist the membership committee with baptism services.
7. Share in the program planning activities of the congregation.
8. Support the church in its total program with time, talent, and possessions.
9. Assist in making church calls.
10. The term of office of the diaconate shall be three (3) years, unless the term is designated by the nominating committee or a special appointment is made.

Junior deacons may begin as High School Freshmen. They serve one-year terms that may run consecutively through High School.

## TRUSTEES

### Purpose:

The trustees are commissioned, as their name designates, for the trusteeship and supervision of the congregation's property and equipment. They are responsible for the maintenance, appearance, and effective use of the church building and the parsonage. They are responsible for informing the congregation concerning needed repairs, insurance coverage, and financial factors and progress relating to the building department. The trustees shall be in charge of projects relating to the church properties, in cooperation with the decision of the Official Board.

## SUGGESTED DUTIES OF THE TRUSTEES

1. Oversee the upkeep and repairs of the church building, parsonage, and church personal property. This includes lawn care and snow removal, as well as routine maintenance.
2. Attend monthly meetings of the Official Board.
3. Regularly attend morning worship.
4. Meet regularly to ascertain the needs as they relate to the church building and parsonage.
5. Be willing to give study to the best use of existing facilities.
6. Enlist the assistance of the membership when necessary to carry out special work projects.
7. Keep an inventory of all church property.

8. Study and educate congregation about safety rules and hazards.
9. Become acquainted with the insurance needs of the church.
10. Apply annually for tax exemption, if we elect to pursue it.
11. Sign the legal documents of the church as representatives of the corporation as designated in AoI.
12. Submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following regular committee meetings, plus an Annual report due June 30th.
13. Maintain open lines of communication between trustees and the congregation.

## **BUILDING USE POLICY**

Use of the sanctuary and fellowship hall may be scheduled through the church office. The Building Use Policy adopted by the Official Board will govern use of the building. The building use policy can be found in the annual program booklet.

### **Procedures for Property Maintenance and Improvement**

It is the intent of the trustees to maintain, repair and improve the church property, based on decisions made by the Church Board. All changes, repairs, and improvements must have the approval of at least one trustee before any purchases have been made, equipment and supplies ordered, estimates requested, or services acquired.

All projects in excess of \$500.00 must be reviewed and approved by the Church Board. The board meeting provides an opportunity for concerns about projects to be raised and discussed. Projects costing less than \$500.00 must be approved by the trustees and do not require board action.

When subcontractors are hired to complete work on the church property, they will work at the direction of the trustee in charge of the project. Subcontractors will be informed that their progress will not be impeded or redirected by anyone else. Members of the congregation with concerns about specific projects should contact a trustee to discuss their concerns.

If a problem arises, such as plumbing or electrical malfunctions, members of the congregation are encouraged to take appropriate action by interrupting the services to avoid further damage, and to advise a trustee immediately.

## **FLOWER CHAIR**

It shall be the duty of the flower chair to be responsible for the following activities:

1. Easter - to order and arrange the care of the Easter flowers (the flowers are donated by members of the congregation).
2. Dedication of Children - purchase roses.
3. Christmas - order and arrange the care of poinsettias during the Christmas season.
4. Seasonal bouquets - arrange and purchase these bouquets for use by the church.
5. Plants - care for all plants left for church use, except those in the church office.
6. Coordinate the sign-up sheet and collection of money for Easter and Christmas flowers.
7. Maintain an ongoing written record of activities and submit annual report due June 30<sup>th</sup>.

The flower chair shall work with the Worship Committee when it is necessary to coordinate activities and services with the use of floral arrangements and the purchase of flowers for any special occasion.

## **HISTORIAN**

It shall be the duty of the church historian to keep a historical record of significant events which occur in the life of the Elkhart Christian Church. The historian shall keep and display the scrapbook of the Elkhart Christian Church.

## **LIBRARIAN**

The church librarian shall have the responsibility of receiving, cataloging, and organizing books for the church library. It shall also be the responsibility of the librarian to promote Christian Literature Week in September, which can include book consignments and promote subscriptions to the "Disciple World."

The Librarian should also update and review the library book checkout process either monthly or at least quarterly. The librarian also has responsibility to oversee the purchase of books for the library, in memory of members who have died in the past year. The CWF provides the funds for these memorial book purchases.

### ACCOMPANIST (S)

The accompanists(s) shall assist the Worship Committee and the pastor in the appropriate patterns of worship and praise that are followed in the Elkhart Christian Church. The accompanist(s) shall be available to play at the regular and special services.

### THE FUNCTIONAL COMMITTEES

The Functional Committees of the membership serve (a) as a conscience for the membership in the particular phase of the church's mission to which they are assigned. (b) as a catalyst of Christian concern and action. (c) as task groups involving the membership in Christian nurture, service, and witnessing, and (d) as explorers leading the membership into a more effective mission on behalf of Jesus Christ.

Every Functional Committee shall have adequate representation of the membership, consisting of at least six (6) members. In the selection of the committee membership, the chair of the committees shall make an effort to rotate membership participation every two or three years in order to maintain continuity and variety in leadership. The chair of the Official board and the minister will serve as ex officio members of all Functional Committees.

The chair of the Official Board will call for a report from the various committees at the monthly meetings. They will then be incorporated into the minutes of the Official Board.

The Functional Committees of the Elkhart Christian Church shall be:

1. Christian Education
2. Youth
3. Membership/Evangelism
4. Outreach
5. Stewardship-Finance
6. Worship

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

#### **Purpose:**

The Education Committee is responsible for providing faith-building opportunities for children, youth, and adults to learn about the Bible and the Church. Faith traditions, Biblical understanding, and Discipleship are foundational components needed to understand God's continuing plan of salvation for us through Christ Jesus. Christian Education is necessary to bridge the gap between the Biblical story and our practice of living faithfully in contemporary times.

#### **Responsibilities:**

1. Seek opportunities to coordinate activities with other Committees.
2. Recruit and train teachers in the curriculum specific to their student's age levels.
3. Select current curriculum for the current year.
4. Train teachers regarding appropriate discipline procedures and child abuse awareness.
5. Recruit and encourage music leaders for the Sunday school opening.
6. Maintain classroom and extra activity supplies, i.e. - carnival, Vacation Bible School, Sunday school kick off.
7. Select and coordinate special children's seasonal programs with the Worship Committee.
8. Schedule and recruit Vacation Bible School director and teachers, select curriculum, and oversee its completion in the summer months.
9. Meet on a quarterly basis or more frequently as needed.
10. Maintain on-going record of committee activities and activities in progress.
11. Plan and follow through any special children's or youth activities at the discretion of the Committee.

12. Submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following regular committee meetings, plus an Annual report due June 30th.
13. Maintain open lines of communication between your committee and the congregation.

## YOUTH

### **Purpose:**

The Youth Leadership is responsible for the oversight of their age youth group within the Church (Post High, CYF, Chi Rho, Junior, and Pee Wee ages). Their goal is to provide a positive environment for the youth to learn and experience the importance of Christian fellowship and service beyond Sunday school and worship, centered upon Biblical growth and faith development. Youth should discover in this informal setting how to live out their beliefs and be constructively challenged to wrestle with many of life's complex issues, in addition to having fun.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. Seek opportunities to coordinate with other committees.
2. Youth Leaders coordinate and plan meeting agenda and activity schedules; promote youth involvement in the local and regional church; and maintain consistent and open communication with Board, parents, and trustees.
3. Submit yearly, or as needed, a list of drivers to be approved by the board for all youth overnight trips and outings. (Insurance purposes require driver to be between 25 - 65 years old.)
4. Get Board and parental/guardian approval for any planned overnight trips.
5. Get parental/guardian approval for all other outings.
6. Meet on a regular basis, to be determined by the leaders.
7. Plan for a variety of age-appropriate activities to promote unity and tolerance within the group.
8. Receive training from pastor or Regional staff regarding appropriate discipline procedures and child abuse awareness.
9. Help promote at least one Youth Sunday per year.
10. Plan, promote and follow through with any fund-raising activities they choose.
11. Maintain on-going record of Committee activities and activities in progress.
12. Submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following regular committee meetings plus an Annual report, due June 30th.
13. Maintain open lines of communication between your committee and the congregation.

## MEMBERSHIP AND EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the Membership and Evangelism Committee is to provide the planning and oversight for programs and events designed to promote and encourage fellowship, nurture spiritual growth, and support intra-congregational activities. The Committee also provides the leadership and encouragement for the congregational members as we seek to witness to others about the love of Christ and the importance of actively participating in the fellowship of believers.

The Committee oversees the organized efforts of the congregation to encourage the un-churched to come in and find a place of welcome fellowship through which they can become nurtured and strengthened in God's love.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. Seek opportunities to coordinate activities with other Committees.
2. Schedule hosts and maintain refreshment supplies for Sunday fellowship after worship service.
3. Organize Lenten prayer vigil, including worship center and sign-up sheets.
4. Assist pastor with New Member Class as needed.
5. Assist with new member Baptism and purchase Bibles for them.
6. Assist with high school graduate recognition and purchase gifts for them.
7. Develop and maintain a follow-up program for visitors.
8. Develop and maintain a program to contact prospective members.
9. Maintain an up-to-date membership list with the assistance of the church clerk.
10. Develop and maintain a follow-up program to contact regular attendees who have missed three or more

successive services.

11. Evaluate church informational material annually, and update as needed.
12. Organize efforts for new church directory every 5 years.
13. Maintain an on-going record of Committee activities and activities in progress.
14. Additional activities as determined by the Committee.
15. Submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following regular committee meetings, plus an Annual report due June 30th.
16. Maintain open lines of communication between your committee and the congregation.

## OUTREACH

### **Purpose:**

The World Outreach Committee is the visible hand of the Elkhart Christian Church at work in our community and our world in the name of Christ. This committee seeks to address the hurts and needs of others in our community and our world. We seek to stand beside or on behalf of those who struggle with violence, hunger, poverty, and oppression. We seek to represent Christ as we help those experiencing disaster, turmoil, and crisis.

Commitment to outreach ministries is an important step to fully embracing the Gospel as our faith matures. The World Outreach Committee encourages every member to be involved in some form of ongoing outreach effort.

### **Suggested Responsibilities:**

1. Seek opportunities to coordinate activities with other committees.
2. Inform the congregation of the achievements of domestic and worldwide missions and works being done by our representative missionaries, agencies and benevolent homes.
3. Promote the needs and projects of missions, agencies, and programs.
4. Coordinate the collection and distribution of the non-perishable food items for the local Food Pantries on the third Sunday of each month.
5. Maintain an emergency food supply at the church during winter months for stranded motorists.
6. Provide information for the congregation about church-related vocations and colleges and universities.
7. Keep a record of what is done and what is in progress.
8. Promote and collect the Basic Mission Finance offerings and other special offerings.
9. Be a liaison with the church for those people with special needs.
10. Submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following regular committee meetings, plus a written Annual report due June 30th.
11. Maintain open lines of communication between your committee and the congregation.

## STEWARDSHIP-FINANCE

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the Stewardship and Finance Committee is to encourage us to answer God's call to be stewards of our time, talents, resources, and world. The Committee is responsible to encourage the congregation's participation and growth in the faithful giving and support of the financial and human resources needed to fulfill our ministries.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. Seek opportunities to coordinate activities with other Committees.
2. Meet on a quarterly basis, or more frequently as needed.
3. Educate the congregation and new/prospective members about the important connection between our faith and stewardship in every aspect of Christian living.
4. Inform the congregation concerning the financial status of the church on a regular basis.
5. Encourage a sense of fiscal responsibility on the part of the other committees for a sound operation.
6. Begin development of a realistic budget in February of each year based on input from committee chairs. Present the proposed budget to the Official Board in May of each year. Present the Board-approved budget to the congregation at the June Annual meeting.
7. Organize and carry out the annual stewardship campaign.
8. Membership of the committee will include board chair and treasurer.

9. Maintain an on-going record of Committee activities and activities in progress.
10. Additional activities as determined by the Committee.
11. Submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following regular committee meetings, plus an Annual report due June 30th.
12. Maintain open lines of communication between your committee and the congregation.

## WORSHIP

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the Worship Committee is to provide opportunities for dynamic worship experiences to strengthen the congregation's faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Worship is our outward and visible means of celebrating and giving thanks for the love and blessings we receive from God. This committee recruits leaders, trains worship participants, and creates new worship opportunities and settings to lead the congregation in our week-to-week and special worship times. The Lectionary, as a Biblical resource, and the Liturgical Seasons, are the framework on which the worship of this faith community is built.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. Seek opportunities to coordinate activities with other Committees.
2. Encourage congregational participation in public worship through communion, singing, praying, reading of scriptures, and offering.
3. Evaluate worship experiences and invite input from the congregation.
4. Work with the choir director and accompanist in maintaining the music ministry of the church.
5. Train and schedule the elders, Diaconate, greeters, ushers, acolytes, nursery attendants, worship leaders, and communion hostesses.
6. Arrange for worship leaders and pulpit supply when the pastor is on vacation.
7. Provide publicity articles to the local news media on items that would be of interest to the community.
8. Change the candles in the candelabra for use in morning worship and special services.
9. Plan for the special worship activities with the pastor as listed in the annual program book, and coordinate sanctuary decorations for these activities.
10. Help the Flower Chairperson in her/his duties.
11. Maintain current information and a message in the outdoor sign.
12. Assist the church office in an annual update of the telephone tree used for rapid contact with the congregation.
13. Cancel worship due to inclement weather following consultation among the pastor, Board Chair, Education Chair, and Worship Chair.
14. Maintain an on-going record of committee activities and activities in progress.
15. Additional activities as determined by the committee.
16. Submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following regular committee meetings, plus an Annual report due June 30th.
17. Maintain open lines of communication between your committee and the congregation.
18. Schedule diaconate/elders, acolytes, greeters and fellowship hosts to serve.

## MEMORIAL FUND AND SPECIAL GIFTS COMMITTEE

### **Purpose:**

The Memorial and Special Gifts Committee has the responsibility of receiving and administering all memorials and special gifts.

### SUGGESTED DUTIES

1. Establish a procedure to encourage the remembrance of the church in wills and memorial gifts.
2. Follow an organized method for receiving and handling memorial and special gifts.
3. Communicate by letters of acknowledgment and letters of thanks to contributors.
4. Refer to family members when the committee has determined use for a fund, to encourage family support.
5. Inform the board and congregation concerning memorial/special gifts projects and existing

- funds.
6. Present, review, and recommend a list of memorial projects (needs) to the church board for its approval; recommend items of priority.
  7. Keep a record of what is done and what is in progress.
  8. Oversee the retirement of well-used and appreciated memorial gifts.
  9. When there is a question as to whether funds are a memorial or a special gift, it will be the responsibility of the committee to contact the persons involved for clarification.
  10. The committee has the authority to request that the treasurer and finance committee expend money for memorial projects previously approved by the church board.
  11. When a project is completed and a small amount of money remains unused, the committee should request the church treasurer to include this in a general memorial fund.
  12. The committee shall consist of the chair of the board, a trustee, chair of the worship committee, president of the C.W.F., and a secretary appointed by the committee. The committee shall coordinate any purchase programs using designated and undesignated memorial funds. It shall be prepared to advise donors of memorial funds regarding special needs of the church. The committee shall report monthly to the board if there has been any activity (either donors or purchases) it shall make quarterly reports (July, September, December, and April) even if there is no activity, and submit an annual report due on June 30<sup>th</sup>.
  13. The committee shall coordinate with the Worship committee to prepare for Memorial Sunday.

#### PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

##### **Purpose:**

The Pastoral Relations Committee serves to enhance the communication and relationships between the pastor and the congregation, and to do so in a timely, candid and caring manner. The responsibilities of the committee also include reviewing the minister's compensation annually and making a recommendation to the Stewardship and Finance Committee for their annual budget; helping with the recruitment of persons in to the Christian ministry; and being a potential nucleus for the next Search Committee when one is needed.

##### **Committee Makeup:**

The committee shall be composed of three members and the pastor with the committee members selecting their own chairperson at the beginning of each church year. Each committee member shall serve a three year term. Terms of office will be staggered so that one-third of the members is elected annually.\* An individual who has completed a term of office on the committee cannot be re-elected until they have been off the committee for one year.

The Nominating Committee will secure a list of three to four persons from the pastor for each vacancy on the committee from which to select nominees. The pastor suggests persons he or she trusts, respects and admires well enough to listen to and heed their counsel and advice. The Nominating Committee then selects members from the pastor's pool of names whom they believe the congregation trusts, respects and admires enough to share their concerns, issues or questions. These names will be placed on the ballot for the annual congregational meeting.

Vacancies on the committee will be filled by reactivating the Nominating Committee using the same procedure outlined above. Their nomination will be presented to the Board and the Board will elect the person(s) to fill the vacancy by simple majority of the Board members present and voting at the Board meeting.

##### **Responsibilities:**

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall meet quarterly (July, October, January and April) on the third Wednesday of the month. The committee may call special meetings if two of the three members agree that a special meeting is needed between regular meetings.

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following regular committee meetings, plus an Annual report due June 30th.

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall maintain confidentiality. The regular meeting agenda will address a variety of issues including but not limited to the following:

1. Current events and ministries that are going well
2. Clarifying the changing/evolving expectations between the minister and the congregation
3. Program areas and pastoral ministry issues that might benefit from change
4. Personal needs of the pastor and his/her family
5. Upcoming program areas, events and ministerial focuses
6. Continuing education plans and opportunities for spiritual growth and renewal

\*In starting up, one person will be selected to serve a one year term; one person to serve a two year term, and one person to serve a three year term.

#### **BUILDING FUND-FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE (if activated)**

The Building Fund and Fund Raising Committee is established to help raise money and other gifts toward the building, and completion of the debt retirement on new construction. This committee shall function with the Stewardship-Finance Committee so long as, and at times when, it is needed to promote and guide the financing of property development.

#### **CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP (INTERNATIONAL DISCIPLES WOMEN'S MINISTRIES)**

**Purpose:**

It shall be the purpose of the Christian Women's Fellowship (IDWM) to provide opportunities for spiritual growth, enrichment, education, and creative ministries to enable women to develop a sense of personal responsibility for the whole mission of the church of Jesus Christ.

General and group meetings of the Christian Women's Fellowship may include worship, study, service, action, fellowship, and leadership opportunities.

The women of the Elkhart Christian Church have traditionally sponsored and supported the following programs:

1. The Questers meet the first Thursday afternoon of every month at 2 p.m. for worship, study, and fellowship.
2. An annual bazaar is held each year in October as a fund-raiser.
3. The CWF hosts a reception for all High School graduating members.
4. The CWF also coordinates receptions, funeral dinners and lunches, and open houses held during the year.
5. A church women's Christmas Party is held in December.
6. An annual business meeting and election of officers (A church women's salad supper may be held in conjunction with this meeting) is held once a year. At that time the CWF decides on dinner committees, reception committee, community service committee, and bazaar chair.
7. Decorates the Christmas tree in the fellowship hall, and remembers those currently serving in the military.
8. The President should attend monthly board meetings and submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following regular committee meetings, plus an Annual report due June 30th.

#### **CHRISTIAN MEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the Christian Men's Fellowship is to provide an opportunity for men to gather monthly, September through June, to share our faith via fellowship and educational programs.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Seek opportunities to coordinate activities with other Committees, e.g., Halloween gathering, table at the bazaar, etc.
2. Serve Easter sunrise breakfast in coordination with Worship Committee's scheduling of the event.

3. Set up and take down the outdoor nativity scene at the beginning and end of Advent.
4. Keep a record of what is done and what is in progress.
5. Additional activities as determined by the group members.
6. Submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following a regular committee meeting, plus an Annual Report due on June 30th.
7. Maintain open lines of communication between the committee and the congregation.

#### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the Nominating Committee is to contact and receive permission from the persons contacted, to nominate them for offices. Officers of the Official Board nominated by this committee are the chair, vice-chair, church clerk, financial secretary, assistant financial secretary, and treasurer. Other positions of the church nominated by this committee shall be the elders, diaconate, junior deacons, trustees, Pastoral Relations committee members, flower chair, historian, librarian, and accompanist(s).

These members shall be appointed at the April board meeting and be prepared to make nominations for board officers at the May board meeting, at which time an election will be held. This committee shall also be prepared to make nominations for church positions at the congregational meeting, which shall occur the last Sunday in June. The positions are the elders, diaconate, junior deacons, trustees, the Pastoral Relations Committee, flower chair, historian, librarian, and accompanist(s).

If a person has not fulfilled his/her duties during his/her last term of office, it shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to visit with that person before nominating him/her, to determine if he/she will fulfill the duties of office if re-nominated.

This committee shall become reactivated should there be a simultaneous vacancy in two Elder or trustee positions during the year, or the Board chair and vice-chair positions both become vacant. A congregational meeting will need to be called to select the elder and trustee replacements. The Board will vote and approve the Board chair, vice-chair, church clerk, financial secretary, assistant financial secretary, and treasurer.

**Composition of the Committee:**

The Nominating Committee shall consist of one (1) elder, one (1) deacon, one (1) deaconess, and one (1) member at large from the congregation.

#### EDUCATIONAL TRUST FUND COMMITTEE

**Purpose:**

It shall be the purpose of the Educational Trust Fund Committee to make educational loans to persons wishing to further their education. In doing so, the Educational Trust Fund Committee shall follow the rules and guidelines set up in its Articles of Corporation, and make an annual report to the congregation regarding its funds.

#### THE PERMANENT FUND COMMITTEE

**Purpose:**

The primary purpose of the Permanent Fund of Elkhart Christian Church is to expand the witness and mission of Jesus Christ in the world, serving human needs in our community and around the world. It is not intended to compete with the regular annual giving of members, or to diminish the opportunities for responsible stewardship by present or future members.

All assets received by the Permanent Fund shall be considered permanent. Each year an amount will be spent from the Permanent Fund for ministry. For purposes of this document, the amount to be spent annually shall be:

The fund's income: (State law defines Income.) In some states and in cases where the Permanent Fund is held by a Trust, the Trust may have the power to define "income."

**Responsibilities:**

1. Educate the congregation with regard to the availability of the fund and its purpose.
  - a. 30% will be spent at the discretion of the Stewardship and Finance Committee with board approval, for special programs, creative ministries, and/or Christian Education.
  - b. 30% will be spent at the discretion of the Outreach Committee with accountability to the board.
  - c. 30% will be available to retire outstanding debt, or directed to items a or b, or future capital needs.
  - d. 10% will be given to the regional programs and causes, including a direct donation to the regional office.
2. The Permanent Fund handles gifts to the church for the wide-ranging mission of the church, not to include memorial, reserve, or building funds.
3. Meet on a quarterly basis (or more frequently, if needed), during the months of February, May, August, and November.
4. Submit timely reports (preferably written) at the next board meeting following regular committee meetings, plus an Annual Report due on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Composition of the Committee:**

The Permanent Fund Committee shall consist of Stewardship Committee Chair, Treasurer, and three (3) at large members. The at-large committee members will be selected by the board chair and approved by the church board. They will serve two-year terms, but may only be re-elected for one (1) additional term. An at-large member cannot be re-elected for a third consecutive term, but may be elected after a one (1) year break in service. The Board Chair and Minister are non-voting, ex-officio members of the committee.

**MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES**

The members of the Elkhart Christian Church have the responsibility to support and participate in the programming, worship, and mission of the congregation as they are outlined and implemented by the various committees and board of the church and consequently approved by the Official Board. The members of the congregation shall seek to establish their participation in the church by comparing their faith response to the Lord Jesus and their contribution of time, talent and possessions. Since the church is a voluntary organization, the members shall decide the level of involvement which they shall attain in the worship, program, and in mission of the church.

The following classification of members, which is found in the "Year Book and Directory" of the Christian Church, shall be used to classify members in our annual report to the denomination:

1. A "participating" member is one who exercises a continuing interest in one or more of the following ways: attendance, giving, activity, spiritual concern for the fellowship of the congregation, regardless of the place of residence.
2. A "non-participating" member is one who exercises no interest in the fellowship of the congregation, regardless of place of residence.

**SUGGESTED DUTIES OF THE MEMBERSHIP**

1. Regular attendance at worship services.
2. Support of the church in its total program with time, talent, and possessions.
3. Share in the program planning activities of the congregation.
4. Regular participation in the Stewardship program of the church.
5. Regular periods of personal prayer and meditation.
6. Regular periods of study and reading of the Bible.
7. Watch and care for the welfare of the members of the church.
8. Maintain a list of willing fellowship hosts and furnish it to the church secretary via the worship Committee.

The Elkhart Christian Church recognizes and accepts dual memberships.

## **MINISTER**

Ministers serving the church shall be affiliated with the denomination known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Before the employment of any permanent minister, his/her relocation papers shall be obtained from the Upper Midwest Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The minister (pastor) of the Elkhart Christian Church, being called by God as a minister of Christ Jesus and called to this local congregation by vote of the congregation, shall perform his/her duties as a minister of the Gospel responsibly, diligently and reverently on behalf of the Elkhart Christian Church and in humility before our Lord. The minister of the Elkhart Christian Church must have standing within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

### **SUGGESTED DUTIES OF THE MINISTER**

1. Preaching and leading of worship services.
2. Reading, study, sermon preparation.
3. Pastoral visitation.
4. Teaching and educational work with groups.
5. Personal counseling.
6. Administration of the program of the church.
7. Denominational and ecumenical activities.
8. Conducting a pastor's class for new members. (Traditionally this has been held during Lent.)
9. The minister shall be an ex officio member of all committees of the Elkhart Christian Church.
10. Publish and maintain regular office hours.

**It shall be the purpose of the pastor as he/she practices ministry to:**

1. Proclaim the gospel with effectiveness and vitality.
2. To lead and equip the congregation for its ministry to the larger society.
3. To meet the spiritual and religious needs of the local congregation.
4. To be a living example of moral and spiritual excellence.
5. To maintain and direct the various activities of the local congregation's program.
6. To be an active member of the congregation, supporting its total program with time, talent, and finances.

The minister has voting rights at the annual meeting, as a church member, but is ex officio at Board meetings and does not have a vote.