BY-LAWS

OF

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST

CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

(a Branch of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Mass.)

2021-07 Edition

ARTICLE I

PASTOR

Section 1. PASTOR. The Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, shall be the Pastor of this Church.

ARTICLE II

OFFICERS

Section 1. OFFICERS. The following officers are elected by the membership: a five-member Executive Board, whose terms begin immediately upon election; and a President, First Reader, and Second Reader, whose terms begin February 1.

The Board shall annually appoint the following officers: Clerk, Treasurer, Reading Room Librarian, and Sunday School Superintendent.

All officers shall be members of this Church and The Mother Church.

Section 2. INSTRUCTIONS. Officers, when elected or appointed, shall be given a set of instructions. These instructions shall be reviewed and revised by the officers with Board approval as the need arises.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. ELIGIBILITY. An applicant shall be a student of Christian Science, a member of no other denomination, and have attended this Church regularly for at least two months prior to making application. An applicant presenting a letter of withdrawal from another branch church or society may apply at any time.

Section 2. PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATION. Any person desiring to become a member of this Church shall request a copy of these By-Laws and an application from any member. Completed applications shall be returned to an officer. The Board shall meet with non-transferring applicants and if desired, with transferring applicants.

Section 3. ELECTION TO MEMBERSHIP. If the Board approves the applicant, the Clerk shall send a letter to all members informing them of the application. Any member objecting to the applicant shall reply to the Clerk in writing within ten days. The member with the objection shall appear before the Board and state the reason for such objection. A unanimous vote of the Board

shall be necessary to elect an applicant over objection.

Section 4. NOTIFICATION. The Clerk shall send written notification of the results of the election to the applicant.

Section 5. ENROLLMENT. All applicants who have been elected shall become members upon signing the church Register.

Section 6. WITHDRAWALS. Any member shall be entitled to a letter of withdrawal upon written application to the Board. The name of any member who has withdrawn shall be announced at the next regular business meeting.

Section 7. EXPECTATIONS. Members shall contribute to the Church metaphysically, financially, and through service.

Section 8. DISCIPLINE. Any member of this Church who violates any of these By-Laws, who departs from the Tenets of Christian Science, or who practices or teaches contrary to the *Manual of The Mother Church* and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy may be subject to discipline in accordance with the *Manual*.

Section 9. REINSTATEMENT. Any member whose name has been removed from membership under this article may apply for reinstatement. Such application shall be in accordance with the By-Law governing the application of new members.

ARTICLE IV

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. GENERAL POWERS. The Executive Board shall have general supervision over the affairs of this Church in accordance with these By-Laws. The final authority of this Church shall be vested in its membership and any action of the Board shall be subject to direction or revision by the membership, provided this action is taken at the next regular business meeting. A two-thirds vote of the membership present and voting is required to alter an action of the Board.

Section 2. DUTIES. The Board is vested with power to control all church property, both real and personal; to make contracts and purchases, but not to acquire or dispose of any real property except with the consent of the membership. It shall have no power to incur debts beyond what is necessary for the care of the property and the operation of the activities of the Church. It shall not have the power to execute a deed, or place a mortgage upon church property without consent of the membership. All contracts and deeds shall be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk after approval of the Board. The Board may collect and disburse money; shall examine and approve all bills before they are paid except regularly recurring charges; and shall annually appoint an auditor. The Board shall approve hiring and termination of employees, set salaries, and approve officer and committee instructions. The Board shall have general supervision of the religious services of the Church and Sunday School, provide for the government and maintenance of the Reading Room, prepare a written report for regular business meetings, and oversee all other

interests of the Church.

Section 3. BOARD MEETINGS. The Board shall meet within ten days following the Annual Meeting to organize, and shall elect, by ballot, from their members, a Chairman and Vice Chairman who shall assume office immediately. At this meeting, the Board shall appoint for one-year terms, a Clerk and a Treasurer, and committee Chairmen.

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held monthly; the time and place shall be determined by the Board. Three Board members shall constitute a quorum, and a majority of three votes shall be necessary to carry any motion.

A special meeting of the Board may be called by the Chairman, or at the request of three Board members.

Section 4. TERM. Board members shall be elected for a three year term unless filling a vacancy.

Section 5. ABSENCE. In case of the absence of any Board member for a period of three consecutive months, for any cause whatsoever, the vacancy shall be considered permanent.

Section 6. VACANCY. In the case of a vacancy on the Board, the same shall be filled within sixty days from the date of such vacancy by vote of the members at a regular business meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose. The elected member shall assume office immediately.

Section 7. RE-ELECTION. Board members who have served more than two years shall not be eligible for re-election until Annual Meeting following the expiration of their term of office.

ARTICLE V

PRESIDENT

Section 1. DUTIES. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at church meetings**,** using a written agenda to be provided by the Board, and to perform other duties in keeping with their office as requested by the Board.

Section 2. TERM. The President shall be elected for a one-year term and may serve up to three consecutive terms.

Section 3. ABSENCE. In the absence of the President, the Board shall appoint an eligible member.

ARTICLE VI

READERS

Section 1. TERM. The Readers shall be elected for a term of three years.

Readers who have served more than two years shall not be eligible for re-election until one year from the expiration of their term of office.

Section 2. VACANCY. In the temporary absence of a Reader, the Board shall appoint an eligible member. If a vacancy occurs less than six months prior to the expiration of a regular three year term, the Board shall appoint a substitute to serve until the end of the term. Any vacancy of six months or more shall be filled by ballot of the members, with the term to begin the third Sunday following election.

Section 3. OTHER OFFICES. Readers shall not fill any other church office during their term of Readership. They shall not be eligible for election to any other office until Annual meeting following the expiration of their term of office.

ARTICLE VII

CLERK

Section 1. DUTIES. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to take minutes at membership and Board meetings, act as custodian of church records, keep a roll of church membership, attend to church correspondence, and perform other duties in keeping with their office as requested by the Board.

ARTICLE VIII

TREASURER

Section 1. DUTIES. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all church monies and deposit the same in a bank approved by the Board. After approval by the Board, the Treasurer shall pay all bills. All checks shall be countersigned by either the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, or the Clerk. The Treasurer shall keep account of all receipts and disbursements under the direction of the Board and shall keep an accurate account of the funds in the treasury. The Treasurer shall furnish a financial statement for Board meetings and regular business meetings of the Church. The Treasurer shall be responsible for collections being counted using checks and balances in place and approved by the Board, and perform other duties in keeping with their office as requested by the Board.

Special funds shall not be diverted from their original purpose, except by two-thirds vote of members present and voting.

ARTICLE IX

READING ROOM

Section 1. LOCATION. The Reading Room location shall be selected by the Board and approved by the members.

Section 2. STAFF. The staff shall be members of this Church and The Mother Church.

Section 3. DUTIES OF THE LIBRARIAN. The Librarian shall have charge of the Reading Room under the supervision of the Board. The Librarian shall keep a correct account of all merchandise; have charge of sales; receive all money from sales and keep an itemized account thereof. The Librarian shall be responsible for all funds of the Reading Room. Deposits shall be promptly turned over to the Treasurer. An accounting of all Reading Room funds shall be furnished to the Board monthly and to the members at regular business meetings. The Librarian shall hold regular meetings of attendants, prepare a written report for regular business meetings, and perform other duties in keeping with their office as requested by the Board.

ARTICLE X

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Section 1. TIME AND PLACE. Sunday School shall be held at such time as chosen by a vote of the members.

Section. 2. OFFICERS. The officers of the Sunday School shall consist of a Superintendent and an Assistant Superintendent. All officers and teachers shall be members of this Church and The Mother Church.

Section 3. DUTIES OF THE SUPERINTENDENT. The Superintendent shall have charge of the Sunday School under the supervision of the Board; shall recommend to the Board all teachers, officers and assistants; and shall appoint only those who are approved by the Board. The Superintendent shall ensure that any collection taken is included in the church collection. The Superintendent shall assign teachers and pupils to classes, hold regular meetings of teachers and staff, prepare a written report for regular business meetings, and perform other duties in keeping with their office as requested by the Board.

ARTICLE XI

COMMITTEES

Section 1. APPOINTMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS. The Board shall annually appoint the Chairmen and approve the members of all committees. Committee members shall be members of this Church.

Section 2. INSTRUCTIONS. Each Chairman, when appointed, shall be given a set of instructions. These instructions shall be reviewed and revised by the Committee with Board approval as the need arises.

ARTICLE XII

MEETINGS

Section 1. ORDER. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the *Manual of the Mother Church*, these By-Laws, and *Democratic Rules of Order***.**

Section 2. REGULAR MEETINGS. There shall be two regular business meetings of members each year: an Annual Meeting on the third Saturday in January, and a Semi-Annual Meeting on the third Saturday in July. All elected officers of the Church, except Readers, shall be elected at the Annual Meeting.

Section 3. ELECTION OF READERS. Readers are elected at a called meeting in November, where no other business is conducted.

Section 4. SPECIAL MEETINGS. Special meetings may be called at any time by authority of the Board, or upon written request of any five or more members. No business except that stated in the call shall be transacted. When called by written request of members, those members shall all be present at the meeting; otherwise no business shall be conducted.

Section 5. NOTICE OF MEETINGS. At least two weeks prior to regular business meetings and the election of Readers, and at least one week prior to special meetings, the Clerk shall provide each member a written notice of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting.

In case of elections the notice shall also state the office(s) to be filled.

All church meetings shall be announced at the preceding Sunday and Wednesday service.

Section 6. ATTENDANCE. Only members of this Church shall be present at any church meeting.

Section 7. QUORUM. Twenty-five percent of the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any church meeting.

Section 8. VOTING PROCEDURE. Only the motion to adjourn shall be voted upon by

acclamation. All other motions shall be voted upon by ballot, by standing, or by raising the hand. Ballots may be collected in-person, telephonically, or electronically.

Section 9. ELECTION PROCEDURE. A membership list designating members eligible for the positions to be filled shall be made available to each member at or prior to the meeting.

Elections shall be by written ballot. Ballots may be collected in-person, telephonically, or electronically. After each ballot the President shall inquire whether all have voted who wish to vote. If there is no response, the polls shall be declared closed and the tellers will proceed to count the ballots. Only properly filled out ballots shall be counted. A majority of members present and voting is necessary to elect.

On the first ballot the names, in alphabetical order, of all persons receiving one or more votes shall be announced, but not the number of votes they have received. On the second ballot only the names, alphabetically, of those receiving two (2) or more votes shall be announced, but not the number of votes received. On the third ballot the names, alphabetically, of everyone receiving five or more votes shall be announced with the number of votes received. This procedure shall continue until there is an election.

Section 10. POWER TO RESCIND. Members have the power to rescind any action of the Board, or other church officers, provided such action is taken not later than the next regular business meeting.

ARTICLE XIII

AMENDMENT TO BY-LAWS

Sect. 1. PROCEDURE. By-Laws may be amended, repealed, or adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any regular business meeting, or special meeting called for that purpose, provided that members are notified of all proposed changes at least two weeks before said meeting.

ARTICLE XIV

STANDING RULES

Sect. 1. DOCUMENTATION. The Clerk shall keep a list of standing rules.

Sect. 2. CHANGES. Standing rules may be suspended, modified, or rescinded at any regular business meeting, or special meeting called for that purpose, by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

APPENDIX

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ANNUAL AND SEMI-ANNUAL MEETINGS

1. Singing of hymn by Mary Baker Eddy.

2. Reading of selections from the Bible and from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy (of approximately three minutes).

3. Silent Prayer, followed by the audible repetition of the Lord's Prayer.

4. Reading from the *Manual*, Article VIII, Sect. 1, "*A Rule for Motives and Acts*".

5. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting(s).

6. Report of the Executive Board.

7. Report of the Treasurer.

8. Report of the Reading Room Librarian.

9. Report of the Sunday School Superintendent.

10. Reports of committees in the order called for by the President.

    Committee reports should not exceed three minutes. All reports are to be presented in writing and filed with the Clerk.

11. Unfinished Business.

12. New Business.

    a. Election of Executive Board members. (Annual Meeting)
    b. Election of President. (Annual Meeting)
    c. Vote on donation to The Mother Church. (Annual Meeting)
    d. Vote on number of lectures. (Semi-Annual Meeting)
    e. Any other business.

13. Motion to adjourn.

14. Reading from the writings of Mary Baker Eddy by a member selected by the Executive Board.

15. Audible repetition of the Daily Prayer (*Manual*, Article VIII, Sect. 4).

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ELECTION OF READERS

1. Singing of hymn by Mary Baker Eddy.

2. Reading of selections from the Bible and from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy (of approximately three minutes).

3. Silent Prayer followed by the audible repetition of the Lord's Prayer.

4. Reading from the *Manual*:

    a. Article VIII, Sect. 1, "*A Rule for Motives and Acts,*"

    b. Article III, Sect. 1, "*Moral Obligations*,"

    c. Article III, Sect. 6, "*Readers in Branch Churches*,"

    d. Article III, Sect. 7, "*Enforcement of By-Laws*," and

    e. Article III, Sect. 8, "*A Reader not a Leader*."

5. Reading from *Miscellany*, page 249, "*Readers in Churches*."

6. Election of Readers.

7. Motion to adjourn.

8. Reading from *Miscellany*, page 210, "What Our Leader Says," by a member selected by the Executive Board.

8. Audible repetition of the Sixth Tenet (*Science and Health*, page 497).

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR SPECIAL MEETINGS

1. Singing of hymn by Mary Baker Eddy.

2. Reading of selections from the Bible and from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy (of approximately three minutes).

3. Silent prayer followed by the audible repetition of the Lord's Prayer.

4. Reading from the *Manual*, Article VIII, Section 1, "*A Rule for Motives and Acts*".

5. Reading of the call for the meeting by the Clerk.

6. Transaction of the business for which the meeting was called.

7. Motion to adjourn.

8. Reading from the writings of Mary Baker Eddy by a member to be selected by the Executive Board.

9. Audible repetition of the Daily Prayer (*Manual*, Article VIII, Sect. 4).

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