



February 16, 2021

Dear Christ Church Members,

I hope this letter finds you well and warm. I'm writing you today to share a proposed revision to our bylaws from the Parish Council (PC). The amendment itself is attached but let me give you the short version: *for future PC elections, we would like to move from the election of individuals to the election of a slate (a group of individuals)*. Let me explain the reasons for this proposal, the process the PC went through, and what it would mean for us in our life together.

### **REASONS FOR THE PROPOSED REVISION**

There are several reasons why we think this change is important. First, we've been doing PC elections based on a list of individuals since our beginning in 1959. Our Bylaws were written for a single church body who worshiped in the same location and at the same time. However, this way is not conducive for a larger, multi-congregational, multi-service church where it is much more challenging to actually know all of the candidates.

Second, it is not optimal for a church to have a system that inherently pits one person against another, thereby creating "winners" and "losers". While that system works in other arenas of life, it does not work well in a church community. Let me be clear on this point, after seeing the impact of this process on actual parishioners, over many years, I can say definitively that this "way of doing business" is detrimental to our church. In my opinion, these proposed bylaw changes allow for significant congregational participation and continued prayerful vetting by the Nominating Committee without people being hurt by the process.

Finally, similar to what I said above, the way we currently do our elections is not based on a biblical norm (leaders in the Bible are chosen by God, not elected by people), but instead it is based on a cultural norm from many years ago. Most large churches do not use this way of choosing leaders, and more specifically, not many new Anglican churches (ones that are writing new Bylaws) are adopting this method. Both Bishop Todd Hunter and Bishop TJ Johnston have counseled us to make this change, which is in line with what they have implemented in the churches they've pastored.

### **HOW THE PROPOSAL CAME ABOUT**

Following our 2020 Annual Meeting, the PC unanimously decided to research different ways to hold our annual elections. A committee was formed, headed by Wendy Buzzard, and consisting of our Chancellor, Ed Bullard, along with Mike Crabb, Emily Duensing, Jerry Sabin, and Trish Nelson. They researched options from numerous churches and had extensive conversations with Bishop TJ Johnston. The proposal was written by the committee and presented to the PC

at their April meeting. The PC considered and revised the amendment at two consecutive meetings in June and July. However, in light of the realities of COVID-19 at the time, the PC thought it best to wait to propose the amendment. Now months later, the PC is ready to move forward knowing we can successfully hold a special church meeting online (our Annual Meeting last month proved this to be true). On February 15, 2021, the PC unanimously voted to move forward to present this amendment to the parish.

### **WHAT IT MEANS FOR US IN OUR LIFE TOGETHER**

The parish will still have a significant role to play in our election process and we want vibrant participation all the way from nominations to approving the slate. Every year we give the parish four weeks to submit names to our Parish Council Nominating Committee (PCNC). Names may be submitted via email, through a form on our website, or directly by conversation with committee members.

Once nominations are received, the PCNC conducts a thorough and prayerful nominating process that takes into account representation of our congregation in all of its diversity. At the time of the Annual Meeting, instead of voting for individuals, members of Christ Church would simply vote, by secret written ballots, “yes” or “no” for the proposed slate. If a majority of members vote “no,” the process would revert back to the PC and the Nominating Committee who would then work to produce a new slate that could be presented to the parish.

The amendment itself has been drafted and reviewed by the PC in concert with our Chancellor, Ed Bullard, and is attached for your review. A special meeting will be held via Zoom on **Thursday, March 18** to discuss this proposal and answer any questions. All members will be mailed a voting packet to arrive in advance of this meeting. Voting will be open via mail-in-ballot for one week following the meeting. The result of the vote will be announced via email later that week. There are some additional administrative changes to the bylaws as you will see in the accompanying amendment.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Trish Nelson, [patricianelson1@gmail.com](mailto:patricianelson1@gmail.com) or 913-991-2001. She will help you get your questions answered.

As always, I love being your Senior Pastor.



Patrick Wildman  
Senior Pastor

# Proposed Changes to the Christ Church Bylaws

February 16, 2021

Please note that all changes are in **Red** with the exception of the deletions which are noted with a solid line through the text. Commentary is in **Blue**. If you have any questions, please call Trish Nelson at the Church office, 913-648-2271, extension 1001.

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**NOTE:** Changes to Sections 7 and 8 of our Bylaws address the method of voting at Church meetings. The method of voting has been amended to include electronic voting where secrecy of the voter can be maintained. Although electronic voting has not been used in any Christ Church meetings, this amendment is added should it become necessary (in the event the church cannot meet in person and voting electronically is deemed the most effective method in conducting the business of the church).

**Section 7.05 Quorum.** Ten percent (10%) of the Adult Church Members shall constitute a quorum at any Church Meeting. If there is no quorum, the meeting shall recess for at least seven (7) days, a new notice setting out the circumstances shall be given, and the reconvened meeting shall be empowered to transact all business properly before it, whether or not there is a quorum.

**Section 7.06 Method of Voting.** Decisions shall be made by **secret, written ballot, voting** and the majority of the valid votes cast by Adult Church Members shall determine the issue at hand, unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws. Abstentions and where votes are by hand-written ballot, blank ballots, altered ballots, or, in the case of any vote due to a tie, absentee ballots, shall not be counted as valid votes. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted; however, absentee ballots shall be permitted as follows: at any time following the first notice provided pursuant to Section 7.06 hereof, any Adult Church Member eligible to vote at the Annual Church or Special Church Meeting for which such notice is provided, may, upon written request to the Clerk of Christ Church, receive an absentee ballot for such meeting. Any such absentee ballot shall constitute a vote by written ballot as if the Adult Church Member casting such absentee ballot was present in person at such meeting, so long as such absentee ballot is received by the Clerk no later than **4:00 p.m.** on the date which is three (3) **business** days prior to the meeting for which such absentee ballot is provided. Only absentee ballots provided to the Clerk of Christ Church by the Adult Church Member in a sealed envelope which does not identify the Adult Church Member submitting the absentee ballot, shall be accepted by the Clerk. **Voting by electronic means may be used so long as an electronic ballot can be validated as made by an Adult Church Member whose ballot does not identify the Adult Church Member submitting the ballot by electronic means.**

**Section 8.03 Method of Election.** ~~Elections of Parish Council Members shall take place at the Annual Church Meeting and be made in this order: Parish Council Members, three year terms; and then Parish Council Members, unexpired terms, if any, the longest unexpired term first. Voting shall be by secret, written ballot, each Adult Church Member being entitled to as many votes in each category of candidates as vacancies are to be filled in that category. There shall be no cumulative voting, and any cumulative ballots shall be void.~~ **The Parish Council shall present at the Annual Church Meeting a slate**

consisting of one nominee for each vacant seat. Adult Church Members shall ratify the slate as a whole by majority secret, written or electronic ballot at the Annual Church Meeting. Nominees for Parish Council vacancies are elected upon receiving a majority of votes approving the slate as a whole. Should the slate of nominees fail to receive a majority of votes approving the slate, then the Parish Council shall meet and provide another slate (which may include some of the nominees from the prior slate) for approval at a continuation of the Annual Church Meeting.

Remove section When Elected and change Numbering of Removal of Parish Council Member to 8.04 and Vacancy of a Parish Council Member to 8.05

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NOTE: Historically, the Parish Council held a retreat in February to kick off the new Parish Council year, coinciding with the election of the new PC. The Retreat was moved to August to coincide with our budgeting process and strategic planning. The correction to Section 9.02 addresses this change in process.

**Section 9.02 General Provisions Regarding Officers.** The following shall apply to all officers other than the Chair:

- (a) The term of office for each officer shall be one (1) year to commence at the ~~Parish Council Retreat~~ **first Parish Council Meeting** following the Annual Church Meeting.
- ~~(d)~~ Vacancies in offices by death, resignation, removal, or otherwise shall be filled by the Parish Council **at a future Parish Council meeting as directed by the Senior Pastor.** ~~until the next Parish Council Retreat.~~

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NOTE: The corrections to Section 9.04 bring clarity to the definition of Nominating Committee members.

**Section 9.04 Nominating Committee.**

- (a) Each year the Parish Council shall establish a Nominating Committee to consist of ~~two~~ **three** Parish Council Members and **at least** three other individuals, who must be Adult Church Members. A member of the Parish Council, whose **2nd** term is expiring **or a member whose 1st term is expiring and who does not wish to be considered for reelection** ~~but who does not wish to be considered for nomination~~, shall be selected by the Parish Council to serve as chair of the Nominating Committee. The Parish Council shall appoint the remaining members of the Nominating Committee.
- (b) The Nominating Committee shall commence meeting not later than September 1 next preceding the Annual Church Meeting and complete its work not later than December 1, unless for good cause prevented. ~~It shall nominate at the Annual Church Meeting a candidate or candidates for each vacancy of an Elected Member on the Parish Council.~~ The total number of nominees **presented to the Parish Council** shall be ~~at least two greater than~~ **equal to** the total number of vacancies. **The Parish Council shall vote on the nominees presented by the Nominating Committee. The vote of a majority of the Parish Council Members present at a Parish Council Meeting shall be required to present a slate of nominees at an Annual Church Meeting to the congregation for ratification.**

(c) The Nominating Committee shall **complete its work under written policies and procedures approved annually by the Parish Council and shall** be responsible to undertake such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Parish Council.

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NOTE: As above, the correction to section 11.01 reflects the change in calendar date for the Parish Council retreat whereby the date of the Parish Council Retreat has been moved from February to August to coincide with our strategic planning and budgeting process.

**Section 11.01 Meetings of the Parish Council.** Following the Annual Church Meeting, the Parish Council ~~shall gather for a Parish Council Retreat and, thereafter,~~ shall meet at least monthly through the year **and have one Parish Council Retreat a year.** If available, the Senior Pastor shall preside at Parish Council Meetings. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Vice Chair and Second Vice Chair, in succession, shall preside. Should neither the Senior Pastor nor the Vice Chair or Second Vice Chair be present, the Parish Council Members present shall elect one of their number to preside at that meeting. A majority of the Parish Council Members then in office shall constitute a quorum empowered to transact business. Unless otherwise provided in these By-Laws, decisions shall be reached by majority vote of those present.

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NOTE: This correction to Section 16.03 addresses the method of providing notice to Christ Church members of church meetings. Since our Mission congregation meets at rental facilities, we cannot post notice at the entrances to our buildings. While we will still provide written and verbal notice of meetings per our bylaws, we will not post signs with such notices in our facilities.

**Section 16.03 Notice Requirements.** Reasonable efforts shall be exercised to provide to all Adult Church Members at least thirty (30) days written notice and a copy of a valid proposed amendment and of the time, date, and place of the Church Meeting at which a vote will be taken on the proposed amendment. The date and time of the Annual Church Meeting or Church Meeting at which a vote will be taken on the proposed Amendment shall be duly announced at the time of public worship, on the two Sundays immediately preceding such Meeting. ~~A printed or written notice thereof shall be posted at the entrance of the Church at least two weeks before such Meeting.~~ If the Meeting is the Annual Church Meeting, the proposed amendment shall be the first item of business. The Clerk shall certify amendments to the Church Meeting at which the proposed amendment shall be considered.