

THE SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

THE BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization shall be The Society of Christian Ethics.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

The purpose of the Society shall be to promote scholarly work in the field of Christian ethics and in the relation of Christian ethics to other traditions of ethics and to social, economic, political, and cultural problems; to encourage and improve the teaching of these fields in colleges, universities and theological schools; and to provide a community of discourse and debate for those engaged professionally within these general fields.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Section 1. Eligibility

Persons eligible for membership shall include (1) college, university, or seminary teachers of Christian ethics or social ethics; (2) persons teaching in similar institutions in other fields who are concerned with the relation of Christian ethics to their subject matter; and (3) persons whose full-time professional work in church, government, social agency or elsewhere is related to the purposes of the Society. A prerequisite for membership is at least one of the following: a Ph.D. or equivalent degree, scholarly publications in the above-named fields, or a full-time teaching position in ethics and/or related fields in an accredited institution of higher education.

Doctoral students in ethics or related fields may become members of the Society upon matriculation into a doctoral program. This status ordinarily may be retained for not more than ten years.

Section 2. Election to Membership

Membership in the Society shall be granted by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Applications for membership shall be made in writing to the Executive Director, who shall present the same to the Board of Directors for its action.

Section 3. Conduct of Members in the Internal Scholarly and Organizational Activities of the Society

The Society will conduct all its business in a manner appropriate to its purposes (see Article II), and expects members to conduct themselves within the Society in a manner appropriate to the purposes of the Society. Achievement of those purposes--the formation of a community of discourse, debate, and research which engages in scholarly work in and teaching of Christian ethics in relation to social, economic, political, and cultural problems--requires members to respect both the basic human dignity of all persons and the recognized social and political rights of individuals which proceed from that dignity. Society members, agents, or employees acting within the Society will therefore refrain from any form of harassment or unjust discrimination, in deed or word, based in race, sex, age, nationality, ethnicity, religious community, sexual orientation, or physical condition. Respect for the work and property of others will exclude plagiarism, copyright infringement, and unacknowledged use of the research of others.

Nothing in this Article shall be interpreted to prohibit members of the Society from articulating the positions of their respective belief systems, religious traditions or ecclesial communions, nor shall this Article be interpreted to prohibit open and vigorous discussion of controversial issues by members of the Society, both within its meetings and elsewhere.

Section 4. Life Membership

Upon recommendation by the Executive Director, Life Membership without payment of dues will be granted by the Board of Directors to those who have retired and who have been members in good standing of the Society for at least 25 years. In exceptional circumstances, on recommendation of the Executive Director, a member having retired, but having less than 25 years of membership in good standing in the Society, may be granted life membership by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Section 5. Maintenance of Membership

Membership in the Society shall be maintained by payment of the annual dues. Membership shall be terminated by resignation or by failure to pay annual dues. Reinstatement of membership will automatically accompany the payment of annual dues.

Section 6. Dues

The Board of Directors shall set membership dues, which shall run for the calendar year.

Section 6. Termination of Membership for Cause

Membership in the Society may be terminated, suspended, or restricted for cause by vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Board of Directors. The Board shall provide the members in question with no less than fifteen (15) days' prior written notice of the proposed expulsion, suspension, termination, or restriction and the reasons therefore. The Board shall also provide an opportunity for the members to be heard by the Board, orally or in writing, not less than five (5)

days before the effective date of the expulsion, suspension, termination, or restriction. It shall be the responsibility of the President of the Society, working together with the Executive Director, to formulate and implement further details of a procedure that are fair and reasonable given the circumstances of the case, including but not limited to its timing relative to the regularly scheduled meetings of the Board, and the geographic proximity of the member in question and the members of the Board. Nothing in this provision shall be construed to limit the right of the Society to terminate, suspend, or restrict membership for non-payment of dues.

ARTICLE IV

Meetings

The Society shall hold an Annual Meeting at a time and place to be determined by the Board of Directors or its Executive Committee, for the reading and discussing of scholarly papers, election of officers, and the conduct of the Society's official business. A quorum for conducting business at the Annual Meeting shall consist of a number of members equal to ten percent (10%) of the membership in the Society at the time of the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE V

Officers

The Officers of the Society are the President, the Vice President, The Executive Director, and the Treasurer.

Section 1. President

The President shall serve for a term of one year commencing with the adjournment of the Annual Meeting, and shall be selected in accordance with the procedure described in Article V, Section 2. The President shall preside at the Annual Meeting and at the meetings of the Board of Directors, and shall receive, together with the Board, reports from the Executive Director and shall have and exercise such other powers and duties as may be prescribed by the Board. The President shall customarily deliver a "Presidential Address" to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

Section 2. Vice President

The Vice President shall serve for a term of one year commencing with the adjournment of the Annual Meeting. The Vice President shall be elected by a majority vote of members present and voting at the Annual Meeting of the Society. The Vice President shall be President-Designate, and shall automatically succeed to the office of President after the completion of a one-year term. In the event of the resignation, death, or incapacity of the President, the Vice President shall serve as acting President of the Society, and shall perform such presidential duties as the Board of Directors deems appropriate. In the event of the resignation, death, or incapacity of the Vice President, the Board of Directors, in consultation with the Nominating Committee, shall arrange for a replacement in a timely fashion.

Section 3. Executive Director/Secretary

The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall serve as Secretary of the Society. The Executive Director shall have responsibility for preparing the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Members. He or she shall give or cause to be given notices of all such meetings, shall authenticate records of the Society, and shall see that records and reports are properly kept and filed by the Society. The Executive Director, with the assistance of the Treasurer, shall prepare or oversee the preparation of all reports and filings required by the State of Tennessee, the Internal Revenue Service, and other government agencies.

The Executive Director, in consultation and cooperation with the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, and the Program Committee, shall coordinate the planning and execution of the Annual Meeting and all activities associated with it, including but not limited to the selection and of meeting sites, the production of the Annual Meeting Program, and the provision of materials and facilities needed at the Annual Meeting. The Executive Director shall have the authority to execute on behalf of the Society any contracts and other legal documents that he or she reasonably deems necessary to further the successful occurrence of the Annual Meeting and any other regular or special meetings of the Society or its Committees. The Executive Director shall serve ex officio as a member of the Executive Committee. The Executive Director shall have other such duties and powers as designated by the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Treasurer.

The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall be in charge of the Society's financial affairs, books of account, accounting records or procedures, funds, securities and valuable papers, and shall keep full and accurate records thereof. The Treasurer shall render to the Executive Director and to the Board of Directors at their request an account of all transactions by the treasurer and of the financial condition of the Society. The treasurer shall assist the Executive Director in preparation of all reports and filings required by the State of Tennessee, the Internal Revenue Service, and other government agencies. The treasurer shall have such other duties and powers as designated by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of the following members: the President, the Vice President, the immediate Past-President, the Executive Director, the Editor or Co-editors of the Journal, twelve (12) other members elected by majority vote of the members present and voting at the Annual Meeting in classes of three for terms of four years. A Director elected at the Annual Meeting may be elected to another term, but only after an interval of at least one year. The Board of Directors shall meet during the twenty-four hours prior to the Annual Meeting of the Society, and at such other times as the President shall convene them. The Board of Directors shall have power to act on all matters concerning the activities and business of the Society, shall authorize

the expenditure of the Society's funds and provide for the proper auditing of its accounts, and shall have the power to act for the Society in all matters of policy and program between Annual Meetings. It shall present to the Annual Meeting a report of its actions, which report shall be subject to approval of the members present. Seven of the members shall constitute a quorum for the Board of Directors.

There shall be an Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, consisting of the President, Vice President, and at least two members of the Board of Directors appointed by the President. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for planning the program for the Annual Meeting, shall prepare and present to the Board of Directors an agenda for each of its meetings, and shall otherwise advise the Board in the discharge of its responsibilities. The Executive Committee shall have power to act, if necessary, for the Board of Directors between its meetings. The Executive Director shall be an ex officio member of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VII

Archivist

The Archivist shall be appointed for a term of four years by the Board of Directors and confirmed by a majority vote of the membership present and voting at the earliest Annual Meeting. The Archivist may be reappointed. The Archivist shall see that materials are collected for the Society's archives; shall encourage members to contribute materials that may not be included in the files of the Society's officers; shall, working with the Executive Director, the President, the Editor or Co-editors of the Journal, and any other appropriate persons, make regular deposits to the archives accompanied by directories of file titles in each shipment; and shall be a liaison between the Society and the library that is the official repository of the archives.

ARTICLE VIII

Committees

Section 1. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall be chaired by a member of the Board of Directors and consist of four other members of the Society (not members of the Board of Directors) appointed by the President from among those present at the Annual Meeting. The Nominating Committee shall present at the Annual Meeting nominations to fill expiring terms and vacancies. Nominations for any office may also be made from the floor, subject to the movers having the person's consent to be nominated.

Section 2. Other Committees

The President may appoint such other committees as are necessary.

ARTICLE IX

Publications

Section 1. Authorization

The Society shall publish at least once each year a volume containing selected papers presented at the Annual Meeting, normally including the presidential address, and such professional materials as may be determined and arranged by the Editor or Co-editors and the Editorial Board charged with its planning and production.

Section 2. Name

This publication shall be called the Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics, hereafter referred to as the Journal.

Section 3. Editor/Co-editors

An Editor or Co-editors shall be appointed by the Board of Directors, following a search, and confirmed for a term of five years by majority vote of the membership present and voting at the earliest Annual Meeting. The Editor or Co-editors, in consultation with the Editorial Board, shall be responsible for soliciting and selecting materials to be included in the Journal, for overseeing the publication process, for supervising and assisting with promotion of sales, and for delivering papers presented at the Annual Meeting and submitted to the Journal to the Society Archivist. The Editor or Co-editors shall report on the work of the Journal to the membership through the Board of Directors and shall present to the Board of Directors an annual budget for publishing and publicizing the Journal.

Section 4. Editorial Board

An Editorial Board of no fewer than six (6) members shall advise and assist the Editor or Co-editors in the preparation and publication of the Journal. Members of this Board shall serve three-year staggered terms. They shall be appointed by the President of the Society in consultation with the Editor or Co-editors and the Board of Directors.

Section 5. Paper Selection

At the discretion of the authors, papers presented at the Annual Meeting shall be considered for inclusion in the Journal. The Editor or Co-editors and the Editorial Board shall determine procedures and criteria for paper selection. They shall appoint additional persons to assist in the review and assessment of these papers. Final decisions on publication shall reside with the Editor or Co-editors, guided by the advice of the Editorial Board.

ARTICLE X

Sections

Section 1. Authorization of Sections

The Board of Directors may authorize the formation of, and establish the boundaries of, regional sections of the Society. It may also revoke such authorization or redefine such boundaries.

Section 2. Membership and Section Officers

The membership of a section shall be drawn from members in good standing with the Society and who are resident within the boundaries of the regional section. Sections may elect whatever officers they deem appropriate. One officer shall be designated to provide an annual report to the Society's Board of Directors.

Section 3. Finances

The Board of Directors may allot funds to support the activities of sections when it is desirable to do so. No section shall levy additional membership dues.

Section 4. Meetings

Sections may arrange meetings at appropriate times, provided they do not conflict with the Annual Meeting of the Society.

ARTICLE XI

Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended by vote of the majority of the members present and voting at the Annual Meeting, the Call to Meeting shall contain notice of any proposed amendment, and shall include a copy or summary of the amendment and state the general nature of the amendment. The Board of Directors shall discuss the proposed amendment at a meeting of the Board prior to the Annual Meeting, and shall take a consultative vote regarding whether it should be adopted, the results of which vote shall be presented by the President or the Executive Director to the membership at the Annual Meeting prior to the vote of the members regarding the proposed amendment.

These By-Laws may also be amended by vote of the majority of the Board of Directors, which shall exercise this power between Annual Meetings only to make clerical or minor ministerial changes to the By-Laws, or to make changes necessary to conform to applicable law or to protect fundamental legal or financial interests of the Society. In the event that the Board of Directors exercises this power to amend the By-Laws, it shall provide notice of the amendment and its rationale to the membership in the Call to Meeting.

Coda to the By-Laws

Society of Christian Ethics Declaration of Professional Commitments

The purpose of the Society of Christian Ethics is to promote scholarly work in the field of Christian ethics and in the relation of Christian ethics to other traditions of ethics and to social, economic, political, and cultural problems; to encourage and improve the teaching of these fields in colleges, universities and theological schools; and to provide a community of discourse and debate for those engaged professionally within these general fields. (By-laws, Art. II) In pursuit of this purpose members of the Society have particular professional commitments and responsibilities.

As scholars in the field of ethics we hold ourselves to a standard of free, rigorous, and intellectually honest inquiry aiming to advance moral understanding, especially in regard to theologically informed perspectives. Our examination of moral issues shall respect the dignity of persons whose practices and positions we study. Likewise, our engagement with other disciplines and ethical and religious traditions shall be conducted with the aim of mutual learning and understanding. We seek to promote critical and constructive understandings of justice, the well being of society and the good of the wider creation.

As participants in institutions we will foster just relationships with their members and constituencies -- especially students, graduate assistants, colleagues, staff, clients, and patients -- as well as with the communities these institutions affect.

As educators we will strive to improve the methods and intellectual depth of our teaching. We will exercise our authority justly with concern for the development of our students, respecting their dignity and the boundaries appropriate to professional interaction.

As members of the Society we will conduct inquiry, debate and other interactions with colleagues openly, fairly, and respectfully. We will execute our duties competently and justly without prejudice toward those with different values and viewpoints. We will welcome and take action to ensure the full participation of new and junior members and those who bring new voices to our conversations.

In recent years we have become keenly aware that certain conduct so clearly affronts the dignity of persons that it contravenes the minimal conditions for participation in our profession. Accordingly, in activities that occur under the auspices of the Society we will neither practice nor tolerate any form of harassment or unjust discrimination, in deed or word, based on race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, religious community, sexual orientation, age, or physical condition. Neither will we practice nor tolerate plagiarism, copyright infringement, and unacknowledged use of the research of others. (Cf. By-laws, Art. III, Sec. 3.) Persons who engage in such conduct within the Society's activities shall be subject to whatever grievance procedures the Society may adopt.

We will publicize these commitments and renew them by regular examination and revision.

N.B. The text of the By-Laws and Coda is based on the document as amended at the 2006 Society of Christian Ethics annual meeting.