

CONSTITUTION

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana

PREAMBLE

[Adapted from Preamble of the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)]

1. *As members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana, we join with other expressions of the Church in confessing Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and proclaim Him Lord and Savior of the world. In Christ's name and by His grace we accept our mission of witness and service to all people. We rejoice in God, maker of heaven and earth, and in God's covenant of love which binds us to God and one another. Through baptism into Christ we enter into newness of life and are made one with the whole people of God. In the communion of the Holy Spirit we are joined together in discipleship and in obedience to Christ. At the table of the Lord we celebrate with thanksgiving the saving acts and presence of Christ. Within the universal Church we receive the gift of ministry and the light of scripture. In the bonds of Christian faith, we yield ourselves to God, that we may serve the One whose kingdom has no end. Blessing, glory and honor be to God forever. Amen.*
2. *Within the whole family of God on earth, the Church appears wherever believers in Jesus Christ are gathered in His name. Transcending all barriers within the human family such as race and culture, the Church manifests itself in ordered communities of disciples bound together for worship, for fellowship, and for service, and in varied structures for mission, witness and mutual discipline, and for the nurture and renewal of its members. The nature of the Church, given by Christ, remains constant through the generations; yet in faithfulness to its mission it continues to adapt its structures to the needs and patterns of a changing world. All dominion in the Church belongs to Jesus Christ, its Lord and head, and any exercise of authority in the Church on earth stands under His judgment.*

In order that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana may faithfully express the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ made known through scripture, may provide comprehensiveness, may furnish means by which congregations may fulfill their ministries with faithfulness, may assure both unity and diversity, and may advance responsible ecumenical relationships, as a response to God's covenant, we commit ourselves to one another in adopting this Constitution.

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of the organization shall be THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) IN INDIANA, hereinafter referred to as the *Region*. The Region is an integral part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. The Region is incorporated under the laws of the State of Indiana, and is the legal successor to the Association of the Christian Church in Indiana, the Indiana Christian Missionary Association and the Indiana Christian Women's Fellowship.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

A. The purposes of the Region are:

1. To extend the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ by witness and service.
2. To establish, receive, and nurture congregations in the Region, providing help, counsel, and pastoral care to members, ministers, and congregations.
3. To help the three expressions (Congregational, Regional, and General) of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) relate to each other in the mission and ministry of the whole Church.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

- A. The Region shall be composed of the congregations within Indiana listed in the current Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and members of such congregations.
- B. The Region shall determine procedures of recognition whereby other persons and groups who support the purposes of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) but do not have access to membership in a congregation listed in the current Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may participate in Regional work.

ARTICLE IV

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONGREGATIONS WITHIN THE REGION

- A. Congregations constitute the primary expression of the community of faith within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Through congregations, individuals are brought to the saving grace of Christ, baptized into the Body of Christ, nurtured in

their faith, and gather at the Lord's Table. Joined in discipleship, congregations partner with their regions and the general ministries of the church to share the good news from their doorsteps to the ends of the earth.

- B. Each congregation shall manage its affairs under the Lordship of Jesus Christ: determine its faithfulness to the Gospel with respect to the basis of membership; own, control and encumber its property; organize and carry out the mission of the congregations; establish its budgets and financial policies; call its minister(s) and other staff; and participate, through voting representatives, in Regional and General Assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in forming the corporate judgments of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
- C. Each congregation shall demonstrate voluntarily its mutual concern for the mission of the whole church, and, among other responsibilities, it shall: proclaim the gospel; administer baptism and the Lord's Supper; provide for the spiritual nurture of its members; grow in understanding that the church is a universal fellowship; transcend all barriers within the human family; be faithful in Christian stewardship, striving to share proportionately in providing resources for the total life, work and witness of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); choose voting representatives to the General and Regional Assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); and seek to realize the oneness of the Church of Jesus Christ through cooperation with other churches of the community and with present and emerging ecumenical structures.
- D. Each congregation shall sustain its minister(s) in faithfulness and honor, and in matters pertaining to relationships with the minister(s), seek counsel from the Regional Minister and Associate Regional Ministers.
- E. Each congregation shall exercise and enjoy all other rights, privileges and responsibilities requisite or appropriate to carrying out its purpose.

ARTICLE V

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

- A. **Membership**
All members of the Region who register for the Regional Assembly shall have all the privileges of the Assembly, except that voting privileges shall be limited to the following:
 - 1. Voting representatives from the congregations.
 - a. Each congregation may select two voting representatives.

- b. Each congregation will be eligible to have a third voting representative provided that this voting representative be under 30 years of age.
 - c. In addition to the above, congregations may select one additional voting representative for each 100 participating members or major fraction thereof over 100 participating members as reported in the current Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Each third additional voting representative in sequence shall be under 30 years of age.
 - 2. Members of the Regional Board not otherwise voting representatives.
 - 3. Ministers in Indiana who have ministerial standing through the Region.
 - 4. All previous Moderators and Vice Moderators of the Region.
- B. Meetings

The Regional Assembly shall normally be held every two years, alternating with the biennial General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at a time and place to be determined by the Regional Board. Special meetings may be convened on call of the Regional Board.
- C. Authority of the Regional Assembly
 - 1. To establish the policies and priorities of the Region.
 - 2. To provide Assembly programs for worship, education, fellowship, and for the transaction of business for the Region.
 - a. To elect the voting members of the Regional Board, nominations to be received from the Regional Nominating Committee, Officers of the Region: Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary, and Treasurer, who shall also serve as officers of the Regional Board.
 - b. Seven members-at-large to the Regional Board.
 - c. The Chair on each Commission.
 - 3. To receive reports from the Regional Board, the Regional Minister, and the Regional Nominating Committee.
- D. Voting Procedures at Assembly

Except as provided in Article XI "Amendments" hereof, a simple majority vote of those in attendance with voting privileges and voting at any meeting shall be sufficient to adopt a properly presented motion or resolution.

ARTICLE VI

REGIONAL BOARD

- A. Membership
 1. Seven members-at-large nominated by the Regional Nominating Committee and elected by the Regional Assembly, each of whom are assigned to serve on a Regional Commission.
 2. The Chair of each commission
 3. The elected officers of the Region as defined under Article V.
 4. Board members serving ex-officio without vote would include: The Regional Minister and Associate Regional Minister(s) and the immediate past Moderator

- B. Term of Office and Requirements of Membership
 1. The term of office for members of the Regional Board shall begin on January 1 following the Regional Assembly. Terms shall be for two years and board members may serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same position. At least 1/3 of the Board shall be drawn from African-American, Latino/Latinas, and Asian-American constituencies of the members of the congregations of our church, with at least one representative from each of those groups.
 2. At least one-half of the voting board members shall be lay persons, and there shall be a responsible balance of representation from various age groups and geographic areas of the Region.
 3. Ex-officio members serve while in the office that provides their position on the Board.

- C. Meetings
 1. The Regional Board shall hold an annual meeting at the call of the Moderator. At least one additional regular meeting each year will be held. Special meetings may be held upon call by the Moderator or upon the written request of one-fourth of the board members of the Regional Board.
 2. A quorum at any given meeting shall be one-half the voting members of the Regional Board. A simple majority vote of board members present and voting at any meeting of the Regional Board shall be sufficient to adopt a properly presented motion or resolution.

- D. Duties of the Regional Board
 1. Set organizational direction establishing mission and purpose of the Region.
 2. Ensure that the organization has the adequate resources (financial, personnel, materials) to remain viable to its mission as determined by the Regional Assembly.
 3. Provide oversight, monitoring and evaluating ways in which the organization is achieving its goals.
 4. Adopt and amend Bylaws consistent with this Constitution.

5. Call and dismiss the Regional Minister and Associate Regional Ministers, according to the *Statement on Policy and Procedures Relating to Personnel of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana*.
 - a. The call of a person to the position of Regional Minister or Associate Regional Minister shall be by two-thirds affirmative vote of board members present and voting.
 - b. The dismissal of a person from the position of Regional Minister or Associate Regional Minister shall be by simple majority vote of board members present and voting.
 - c. Any meeting held for the purpose of a call or dismissal of a person in Regional Ministry shall be held after 14 days' notice to the members of the Regional Board.
 6. To determine regular meetings and call special meetings of the Regional Assembly.
 7. To act on the recommendations of the Regional Nominating Committee, except for those offices elected by the Regional Assembly.
 8. To elect persons to complete unexpired terms upon nomination by the Regional Nominating Committee.
 9. To elect a voting representative of the Regional Board to the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
 10. To select the Regional Nominating Committee.
 11. To collect and disburse funds, hold permanent funds, and receive, hold, buy, sell, or convey property for the best interest of the Region and its congregations. The Regional Board shall be empowered to borrow funds only upon recommendation of the Finance Committee and two-thirds affirmative vote of the Regional Board members present.
 12. To approve the annual budget.
- E. Board Members' Duties to the Region:
1. Duty of Care—using best judgment, actively participating, paying attention, asking pertinent questions.
 2. Duty of Loyalty—avoiding conflicts of interest, putting aside personal and professional interests.
 3. Duty of Obedience—staying true to the board's mission, obeying the board's governance documents and public law.
 4. A responsibility to be an ambassador for the Region, so that the Region maintains a Christ-centered image and the public trust.

ARTICLE VII

REGIONAL OFFICERS

- A. Membership
 - 1. Moderator
 - 2. Vice Moderator
 - 3. Secretary
 - 4. Treasurer

- B. Election
 - 1. The officers shall be elected by the Regional Assembly.
 - 2. The officers shall serve a two-year term beginning on January 1 following the Regional Assembly. An officer may serve no more than two successive terms in the same office.

- C. Duties
 - 1. The Moderator of the Region shall preside over all meetings of the Regional Assembly and the Regional Board, and the Executive Committee.
 - 2. The Vice Moderator shall serve in the Moderator's absence, and shall serve as Chair of the Regional Nominating Committee.
 - 3. The Secretary shall perform the duties usually pertaining to such office.
 - 4. The Treasurer shall perform the duties usually pertaining to such office and shall be bonded at the expense of the Region. The Treasurer shall serve as Chair of the Finance Committee.
 - 5. The above officers shall serve together with the Regional Minister as an Executive Committee with the following duties:
 - a. To serve as an advisory body on administration and programs to the Regional Minister and staff.
 - b. To recommend to the Board the creation or dissolution of standing committees and/or task forces.
 - c. To suggest to the Nominating Committee names for regional leadership positions.

ARTICLE VIII

REGIONAL COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

- A. Regional Nominating Committee
 - 1. Membership
 - a. The Vice Moderator shall serve as Chair of the Regional Nominating Committee.
 - b. Two members of the Regional Board.

- c. One member of each Regional Commission, not serving on the Regional Board.

2. Nomination and Election

- a. The members of this committee shall be selected by the Regional Board. Nominations shall be received from the Executive Committee.
- b. Members shall not serve more than two consecutive two year terms.

3. Charge to the Nominating Committee—The Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ) seeks to be a pro-reconciling and anti-racist church, and the Regional Nominating Committee is tasked with identifying and calling church leadership that reflects this important statement that has been made.

4. Duties

- a. To submit to the Regional Board nominees for these positions:
 - 1. Commission members. Commission members may serve no more than three consecutive terms and shall not be eligible for re-election to this position until two years have elapsed, unless elected chair, in which case they are limited to two terms.
 - 2. Regional Assembly Committee Chair.
 - 3. Regional Personnel/Pastoral Relations Committee members.
 - 4. The Regional Nominating Committee members.
 - 5. Unexpired terms of vacant positions for which the Nominating Committee made a nomination. An unexpired term shall be considered a full term when it is one-half or more of the regular term.
 - 6. Others as may be requested.
- b. To submit to the Regional Assembly nominees for these positions:
 - 1. Regional Officers.
 - 2. Commission Chairs.
 - 3. Member-at-large nominees for the Regional Board.

B. Regional Personnel/Pastoral Relations Committee

1. Purpose

- a. To provide a support group for the members of the Ministerial and Support Staff.
- b. To provide a regular channel of communication between the members of the Ministerial Staff and the Regional groups with which they work.

2. Membership

The members of this committee shall be seven in number, including the immediate past Moderator, as Chair, the Moderator, the Vice Moderator, and up to four other individuals.

3. Nomination and Election

- a. The members of this committee shall be nominated by the Regional Nominating Committee. The members of the ministerial staff may suggest nominees.
- b. Members of this committee shall be elected by the Regional Board. Terms of service shall be for two years and shall begin on January 1.

4. Meetings

The committee shall meet at least twice each year. Other meetings may be called by the chairperson of the committee or the Regional Minister.

5. Duties

The Duties of this committee shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- a. Conducting annual review of the performance of each member of the ministerial staff.
- b. Making recommendations related to the salaries, fringe benefits, and compensation packages for the members of the ministerial staff.
- c. Reporting as needed to the Board except when situations require reporting to Regional Officers in Executive Session.
- d. Oversee the Personnel Policy and Procedures Statement, and to conduct periodic review of same to make sure policies affecting all personnel are fair and equitable.

6. Resources

In carrying out its duties, this committee shall refer to and make use of the following written resources: *Statement of Policy and Procedures Relating to Personnel of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana*; *Newly Revised Guidelines for the Pastoral Relations Committee, Ministerial Code of Ethics and the Provisional Principles of Procedure Regarding Sexual Misconduct* published by the Commission on Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana; and any other resources which this committee may deem appropriate.

C. Finance

1. Members—Membership shall consist of up to seven persons, including the Treasurer who shall serve as chair. Term of office shall be two years. A member may serve no more than three consecutive terms.
2. Duties—to recommend to the Regional Board to engage an accounting firm to conduct an annual compilation, review or audit of regional financial statements; to prepare the

annual budget and submit it to the Executive Committee for review and the Regional Board for action; and to be responsible for the oversight of the finances, assets and properties of the region.

D. Constitution and Bylaws

1. Members—to be six persons. Term of office shall be two years. A member may serve no more than three consecutive terms. Chair is nominated by the Regional Nominating Committee and elected by the Regional Board.
2. Duties—to evaluate, resource and recommend additions and changes to the Region's Constitution and Bylaws in keeping with the mission of the Church, as is suggested by appropriate Regional entities. The Region's Board and Assembly will receive all recommendations of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee for their action.

E. REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

1. Four Regional Commissions are hereby created to lead the Region in the performance of the ministry of the church. Each Commission shall have groups assigned to it, and may with the approval of the Board create additional groups that are designed to lift the work of the church, and may dissolve groups that no longer adequately perform the tasks assigned to the groups.
2. The Regional Commissions report to the Board on issues for the consideration of the Region, and take such action on Commission matters as is appropriate. Each Commission shall be associated with a member of the Regional Ministry staff, who may be consulted for guidance and expertise.
3. The groups within each Regional Commission shall report to the Commission from time to time on all matters including budgetary issues.
4. Regional Commission Chairs shall serve as Regional Board members, and shall develop leadership and a plan for succession among members of the Commission and its groups.
5. Each Commission's groups shall be listed in the Regional Bylaws, and changes to each group or the group's duties shall be accomplished by an amendment to the Bylaws.
6. The four Regional Commissions, described below, may be added to or amended by amendment to the Constitution of the Region.

F. Commission on Ministry

1. The Commission on Ministry will work with Ordained, Commissioned and Student ministers, ministry candidates and others who are engaged in providing ministry to and through congregations for the church and for all those the church serves.
2. Supervision, education, support and counsel are among the duties that this Commission shall provide.
3. The Chair of the Commission on Ministry shall serve on the Regional Board, and shall be elected to the position by the Regional Assembly.
4. Commission members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Regional Board.

G. Commission on Faith Formation

1. The Commission on Faith Formation will work on issues surrounding the formation and development of the faithful exercise of the Christian faith, provide materials, curriculum and assistance to those who are engaged in providing ministry to and through congregations for the church and for all those the church serves.
2. Education, camps, retreats and assemblies, mission opportunities, support and counsel are among the duties that this Commission shall provide.
3. The Chair of the Commission on Faith Formation shall serve on the Regional Board, and shall be elected to the position by the Regional Assembly.
4. Commission members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Regional Board.

H. Commission on Unity and Witness

1. The Commission on Unity and Witness will connect congregations and members of the Region in issues of reconciliation, community and global ministries, ecumenical relations, justice and peace, and environmental concerns
2. Education, mission opportunities, support and counsel are among the duties that this Commission shall provide.
3. The Chair of the Commission on Unity and Witness shall serve on the Regional Board, and shall be elected to the position by the Regional Assembly.
4. Commission members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Regional Board.

I. Commission on Resources and Structure

1. The Commission on Resources and Structure will work with those who are engaged in providing resources for ministry and mission for the work of the church in congregations and the Region, assist members of financial teams in congregations and the Region, plan for the assembled life of the church, and create and update the governing policies and documents throughout the Region.
2. Education, support and counsel are among the duties that this Commission shall provide along with assisting the Region in using well its people, material, and financial resources.
3. The Chair of the Commission on Resources and Structure shall serve on the Regional Board, and shall be elected to the position by the Regional Assembly.
4. Commission members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Regional Board.

ARTICLE IX

REGIONAL STAFF

- A. The Regional Staff, clergy and lay, is critical to the mission of the Region, and as such shall be honored and respected in an ethical manner by the members of the Region, its officers and board.
- B. The Regional Minister shall serve as the spiritual and administrative officer of the Region as the chief executive, and shall exercise ministries of oversight, pastoral care and nurture, teaching, program resourcing, and the interpretation of mission with congregations and ministers within the Region, and shall fulfill General and ecumenical church responsibilities.
- C. Associate Regional Ministers are called to share in the spiritual, pastoral and administrative care of the church in the Region.
- D. Members of the Regional staff are called to perform their duties at the highest levels for the Region, and are expected to serve with a servant's heart in the proclamation of the Word of God through their work for the Region. The service of members of the Regional staff is valued for the way in which our mission is enhanced through gifts of administration and the care of facilities and persons. They are called to particular roles and responsibilities within the Region's life consistent with the Region's program and purpose
- E. A Personnel Policy shall be maintained for the proper and effective use by the Region and the staff members, and shall include policies on retirement and care of self and family, including but not limited to health care, vacation time, leaves of absence and such other matters as the Board approves.

ARTICLE X

RULES OF ORDER

In the conducting of all business of the Region, *Roberts' Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, shall be used to the extent they do not conflict with this Constitution, and except where modified by the Bylaws of the Region.

ARTICLE XI

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution may be made at any Regional Assembly by a two-thirds vote of those persons present who are privileged to vote, provided the proposed amendment has received a recommendation of the Regional Board, and, further, provided that the proposed amendment has been printed and distributed throughout the Region at least forty days in advance of the Regional Assembly at which it is to be considered.

Original Constitution approved October 18-20, 1974, Biennial Assembly, Indianapolis, IN

Amended September 30-October 1-2, 1976, Biennial Assembly, Indianapolis, IN

Amended October 20-22, 1978, Biennial Assembly, Bloomington, IN

Amended October 24-26, 1980, Biennial Assembly, Indianapolis, IN

Amended October 24-25, 1986, Biennial Assembly, Clarksville, IN

Amended August 19-20, 1988, Biennial Assembly, Muncie, IN

Amended August 6-8, 1992, Biennial Assembly, Bloomington, IN

Amended October 20-22, 1994, Biennial Assembly, Anderson, IN

Amended October 10-12, 1996, Biennial Assembly, Anderson, IN

Amended September 26-27, 2014 Biennial Assembly, Indianapolis, IN