

Bylaws

of the

Northwest Regional Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)



As Approved October 21, 2006

BY-LAWS – NORTHWEST REGIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ)

ARTICLE I - WHO WE ARE

The Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples Christ) is a sacred entity created by the spirit and desire of the congregations in Alaska, North Idaho, and Washington states to join together in covenant as one body shaped by a unique geography.

Each person connected to a congregation of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is also a member of the Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), commonly understood as “the Regional Church”, and of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, commonly understood as “the General Church”. The Design of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) describes the relationship between congregations, regions and the general church.

The Regional Church and congregational church share some similarities in terms of *form* (Regional Minister with a congregation of congregations) however the *function* of the Regional Church differs greatly from that of a congregation. God calls us and we gather, or convene, as the Regional Church to do together that which we can do more effectively together or cannot do alone

ARTICLE II – OUR VISION AND PURPOSE

The current focus of the Regional Church lies in three areas:

- supporting the transformation of the congregations;
 - committed to becoming an inclusive, welcoming, celebrating community of Christ which seeks to heal brokenness by being agents of reconciliation and hope and by
 - offering itself up to the work of transformation on its own behalf.
1. The primary work of the Regional Church is to function as shepherd for congregations and pastors. Within the role of oversight, the core work of the Regional Church is to:
 - support effective administration of Regional work in areas of leadership, communication, finance, and the working relationships of staff and volunteers;
 - offer leadership development opportunities and support for persons “in-care” and in discernment for ordained ministry, as well as equipping of pastors and congregations for their work as intentional communities for ministry and mission;
 - facilitate the process of search and call for congregations and pastors;
 - support congregations and pastors in times of conflict and ministerial transition;
 - be a pastor to pastors;
 - interpret the work of the General Church to congregations and pastors;
 - serve as a prophetic voice inspiring deepening faith, loving compassion, acts of justice; and
 - represent the church-at-large in the ecumenical and inter-faith contexts.
 2. Secondly, work of the Regional Church is to nurture lives of faith through specific regional programs focused on (for example): camping experiences, youth work, young adults, women’s gatherings, men’s gatherings, hands-on mission work and witness and advocacy. These life-giving programs are not the Regions reason for existence. Any of these programs could be, and at times already are, offered by clusters of congregations or by dedicated leaders who have a passion and sense of mission for that area of work.

ARTICLE III – REGIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The purpose of the Board of Directors is to govern and focus the work of the Region, establish policy and provide effective and faithful financial oversight. The Board shall receive regular reports from the staff, ministry teams, commissions and committees. The Board will confirm all appointments of the Moderator. It is responsible to the Regional Assembly.

The Regional Board shall consist of 19 persons:

Position	Term	Nominated by:
Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Secretary, Treasurer	2 years, not more than 2 consecutive terms	Nominating Committee
12 Area Representatives (3 from each Area)	4 years, with 1/2 elected at each Regional Assembly	Nominating Committee
2 representatives of the Regional Youth Commission	1 year	Regional Youth Commission
1 ecumenical representative	2 years	Nominating Committee

Officers and Area Representatives shall be nominated with an awareness of gender, ethnic and lay/clergy balance. The Board shall be elected at the Regional Assembly. Each Area Representative serves a four-year term, with one-half being elected each biennium to provide continuity and institutional memory. Officers serve no more than two (2) consecutive two (2) year terms. The Regional Minister-President will be a non-voting member.

Regular meetings of the Board of Directors will be held at least three times a year, at times and places determined by the Moderator. The Moderator, Executive Committee or eight (8) Board members may call special meetings. Written notice and purpose of the special meeting must be communicated to members at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the meeting. A simple majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum for all meetings.

Individuals on the Board will act in various ways to support the work of the Regional Church through: promotion and interpretation of the goals and work of the Region in congregations and other settings, personal financial support, regular prayer, service in ministry areas and attendance at Regional Church events.

The Northwest Regional Christian Church shall purchase a minimum of \$1,000,000 insurance as the sole indemnification of its officers and directors against all liability, damage or expense resulting from the fact that such person is or was an officer or director of the Region to the maximum extent and under all circumstances permitted by law.

ARTICLE IV - THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board shall be the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Secretary, Treasurer and two members at large from the Regional Board, elected by the Board. Four (4) members will constitute a quorum. The Regional Minister-President will be a non-voting member.

Between meetings of the Board of Directors, the Executive Board has the authority to take interim action within established policies, subject to confirmation action of the Board at its next regular meeting.

The Executive Board will serve as reference and counsel for resolutions and referred actions to the Regional Assembly.

The Executive Board, within established policies of the Board, will handle matters of appeal and grievance.

Vacancies in the office of Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Secretary, Treasurer, the Board of Directors, ministry team leaders, commission/committee chairs will be filled by the Executive Board with confirmation by the Board of Directors until the next election at the Regional Assembly.

The Region's voting representatives to the General Assembly of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will be designated by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE V - ARENAS OF REGIONAL MINISTRY

To fulfill the vision and purpose of the Region, work shall be planned and organized around arenas of regional ministry. The Regional Board will set priorities of ministry, select persons to lead in the areas, and help coordinate the work. Individuals or task forces working in ministry areas will be made up of those who share an interest and passion in that particular area of ministry. Coordination, collaboration and accountability will be to the Regional Board.

CONGREGATIONAL TRANSFORMATION AND LEADER DEVELOPMENT - support the work of transformation in congregations; broker the congregational transformation program with other judicatories, develop initiatives that strengthen lay leadership, spiritual and theological formation and Disciple identity. These can be done through outdoor

ministries, new church establishment, Regional Youth Commission, Women's Ministry Commission and other methods.

JUSTICE AND ECUMENICAL CONCERNS – assist the entire region to be faithful to God's call to "do justice" both within congregations, in regional life and its public witness at points of critical need in the world. This entails being connected with those who represent the Region in ecumenical programs and projects, promoting Global Ministries partners; hands-on mission work, and supporting the Regional Minister-President in public witness. This ministry is enhanced through anti-racism/pro-reconciliation activities.

NURTURE AND SUPPORT OF CLERGY – to be aware of and support the clergy. Some of the activities include supporting the search and call process administered by the Regional Minister-President, developing networks among clergy for personal support and care of partners and families, enabling a mentoring process for new clergy to the region, providing administrative support for the Turner Lectures, promoting continuing education and sabbatical opportunities and the like. The work of the Commission on Ministry complements this area.

ADMINISTRATION – to oversee the support functions for the Region. These include preparation of the annual budget for approval by the Board of Directors, inventory and maintenance of all Regional property, supervision of Trust Agreements and the like. This area ministry also includes:

- Finance Ministry – to lift up healthy stewardship to all members of the region. Duties include oversight of the Regional budget, review of all investment portfolios and endowment funds. Planning and execution of an Annual Fund campaign and other financial issues as they arise.
- Communications Ministry – to develop a comprehensive communication network with the congregations of the region. This will include using electronic media and other communication tools. The group will work with the regional office to prepare a region-wide calendar maintained in the Regional Office and work closely with the Finance Ministry to maintain a strong financial foundation for the region.
- Personnel Committee to serve as liaison between paid staff and the Regional Board. This group shall be composed of one member from the Board, one from the Executive Board and three (3) persons appointed by the Moderator with interest or experience in personnel and human relations. This group will work with the Regional Minister-President in the supervision and evaluation of office staff in light of the Position Descriptions approved by the Board of Directors. This committee reports to the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI - REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

Regional Commissions are created for oversight of particular work in the region or mandated by The Design of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY - The purpose of the Commission is to create and maintain processes for the ordination, licensing and then safeguarding and care of the ministers serving in the NWRCC. This Commission maintains contact with undergraduate and seminary students desiring to be under the care of the region as they consider ordination, evaluates credentials of clergy who request standing with the Northwest region, develops In-Care Groups for those in the ordination process, cosponsors with congregations the Ordination to the Christian Ministry of qualified candidates, and considers matters of alleged misconduct. The Policies for the Order of Ministry in the NWRCC along with the Policies for the Order of Ministry of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall be the regional standards. The Commission receives requests and allocates scholarship funds for continuing education or emergency needs of pastors and/or their families.

The Commission shall be composed of nine (9) members, two from each of the four Areas, plus the chair. The Chair is nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Assembly. It is desirable that the chair has previous experience on the Commission. Each member serves a six (6) year term, three to be appointed each biennium. Positions will alternate between laity and clergy with a balance between women and men.

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES COMMISSION – enables and supports events and services for women of the NWRCC, enabling opportunities for study, fellowship, worship and service within congregations and in regional settings, maintains relationships with the Office of Disciple Women in the Division of Homeland Ministries of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

REGIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION – is made up of high school youth and adult advisers from across the region. They meet regularly, plan and lead Chi-Rho and CYF events and encourage attendance at summer church camps. The RYC appoints two from the Commission to serve one one-year (1) term on the Board of Directors,

ARTICLE VII - REGIONAL STAFF

REGIONAL MINISTER-PRESIDENT

Responding to God's call the Regional Minister is the spiritual leader-theologian – (pastor, preacher, teacher and administrator) enabling the Region in the work of transformation, becoming an inclusive, anti-racist community, and living out the witness of justice and compassion within the world. Personal qualifications and administrative tasks will be outlined in a Position Description approved by the Board of Directors. The Call will be for a term of six (6) years with the possibility of a second term extension. The annual review and evaluation of the work of the Regional Minister-President shall rest with the Executive Board. The Regional Minister-President is responsible to the Board of Directors.

A Pastoral Relations Committee composed of six (6) persons, three (3) selected by the Regional Minister-President, three selected by the Moderator will serve for three (3) years on a rotating basis. The purpose and functioning of the Committee will be described in a Committee Description approved by the Board of Directors.

OFFICE MANAGER

This administrative position will support the ministry of the Regional Minister-President, facilitate the work of the Ministry Teams and Commissions and maintain the regional office. The Board of Directors shall approve a position description. Employment and supervision will be by the Regional Minister-President under the oversight of the Personnel Committee.

BOOKKEEPER

All bookkeeping and accounting procedures will be the responsibility of the Bookkeeper. Financial reports will be regularly available to the Board of Directors. Biennial reports will be presented to the Regional Assembly. The Bookkeeper will facilitate the annual audit. Employment and supervision will be by the Regional Minister-President under the oversight of the Personnel Committee. Financial recording and presentation shall be consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

CONTRACT STAFF

The Personnel Committee, Executive Board or Regional Board may hire persons for designated tasks on a short-term basis.

ARTICLE VIII - REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

There will be a biennial gathering of clergy and laypersons for worship, fellowship and to conduct the business of the Region. The Assembly has the authority to initiate, receive, revise and act upon reports, resolutions. It shall receive an accounting of the finances of the Region; elect officers and members of the Board of Directors; and elects the Region's representative(s) to the General Board of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The Assembly elects the Regional Minister-President upon recommendation of the Search Committee and the Board of Directors.

The Assembly will meet biennially in even numbered years at a time and place fixed by the Board of Directors. All members of Disciple churches in the region are invited to attend. The Board of Directors may call special Assemblies as deemed necessary, provided written notices has been sent to every congregation at least thirty (30) days prior to the Assembly.

Business sessions of the Assembly will be conducted according to the rules and procedures adopted by the Board of Directors and made available at the beginning of the Assembly. All business items, other than resolutions, must be received by the Regional Office at least sixty (60) days prior to the Assembly. Resolutions must be received seventy-five (75) days prior to the Assembly. Any business item received later than these dates requires authorization by the Executive Board to go before the Assembly. Congregations must be notified of non-emergency business items at least thirty (30) days prior to the assembly.

Assembly business items include: 1) nominations for elected leaders, 2) resolutions, 3) reports and policy, 4) study documents. The Board of Directors, a congregation or other institutions officially related to the Region may file resolutions. In addition any ten or more members of congregations may submit resolutions, which, when accepted by the Resolutions Committee, shall be included in the agenda.

A quorum is fifty (50) percent of voting representatives in attendance. Should a quorum not be present or agenda items remain when the Assembly adjourns, those matters shall be referred to the Board of Directors.

Voting representatives:

From Congregations

- Each congregation is entitled to designate three (3) voting representatives and may designate alternates if desired. Congregations are entitled to one (1) additional voting delegate for each one hundred (100) members or fraction thereof of over 200 participating members.
- Each congregation is entitled to designate one (1) additional representative and alternate under the age of twenty (20) years
- Participating membership of congregations will be determined using the most recent Year Book and Directory of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Each congregation will be notified of the Regional Assembly at least ninety (90) days in advance. Notice will include the number of voting representatives to which each congregation is entitled.
- Certification of the names of congregational voting representatives and alternates must be sent to the office of the NWRCC prior to the Assembly. Under extenuating circumstances late certification may be processed at the Assembly.

Members of the Board of Directors shall be voting representatives

Ordained and Licensed clergy with standing in the NWRCC shall be voting representatives

The Moderator in consultation with the Executive Board shall appoint the Regional Assembly Planning Committee.

- The Committee will select a theme, develop a schedule, plan worship and obtain speakers for the Assembly. Sufficient time will be allowed for business sessions and activities for fellowship groups related to the Region.
- The Committee will work with regional staff to coordinate aspects of the Assembly in which they have responsibility.
- The Committee will work with a local planning group for facilities and services necessary.

The Executive Board will review all resolutions submitted seventy-five (75) days prior to the Assembly to determine that form and content are appropriate, according to the rules of procedure governing the Assembly. Resolutions so approved will be forwarded to the Regional Office at least sixty (60) days prior to the assembly for distribution to all congregations. Resolutions that fail to meet Assembly standards will be returned to the sponsoring body, noting the deficiencies and offering suggestions that will enable the resolution to come before the Assembly.

The Nominating Committee shall present to the Assembly a list consisting of one nominee for each elected office (see Article III). The chair of the Nominating Committee will be elected by the most recent Assembly. The Moderator, with approval of the Regional Board, will appoint Four (4) other members, one from each Area of the region, at least twelve (12) months prior to the Assembly. The Committee shall recommend to the Assembly the regional representative/s to the General Board of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Search Committee will be appointed when there is a vacancy in the office of the Regional Minister-President. The chair and members of the committee will be appointed by the Moderator and confirmed by the Board of Directors. The current Moderator will be a member of the Committee along with one person from the Personnel Committee, and a layperson and clergyperson from each Area of the Region. The Committee will seek the counsel of the General Minister and President of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Advisory Committee of the Conference of

Regional Ministers and Moderators. In light of the vision, purpose and current needs of the region a "Ministry and Position Description" will be established by the Board of Directors and will be one criterion to evaluate potential candidates. The Committee will select one candidate and negotiate a call (compensation, continuing education, sabbatical, professional expenses and recommend that selected candidate to the Board of Directors. Upon a two-thirds vote of approval the Board will recommend the candidate to the Assembly. Upon a two-thirds affirmative vote, the Assembly confirms the candidate's call.

ARTICLE IX - FELLOWSHIP AREAS

For representation, relationships and programmatic interests the NWRCC is divided into geographical units called Areas. Those congregations and pastors in an Area are encouraged to network for support, encouragement and programs. The Regional Board designates areas.

NORTHWEST AREA: congregations in Alaska; Island, King (except Kent), San Juan Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties in Washington State.

SOUTHWEST AREA: Kent and congregations in Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Kickitat, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston and Wahkiakum counties in Washington.

CENTRAL AREA: congregations in Adams, Benton, Chelan, Columbia, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Grant, Kittitas, Okanagan, Walla Walla and Yakima counties.

EASTERN AREA: congregations in Asotin, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens and Whitman counties in Washington; Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Clearwater, Kootenai, Latah, Lewis, Nezperce and Shoshone counties in Idaho.

ARTICLE X - FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the NWRCC will begin on January 1 and end on December 31 each year. Budgeting, recording and presentation of financial matters shall be consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and overseen by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XI - ASSETS

The authority for purchase or sale of real property shall be vested in the Board of Directors.

No part of the assets of the NWRCC shall inure to the benefit of any director or officer of the church or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the church affecting one or more of its purposes). No director, officer or the church, private individual or for profit organization shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets or dissolution of the Region.

In the event of the dissolution of the Region, its assets shall be applied and distributed as follows:

- A. All liabilities and obligations of the Region shall be paid, satisfied and discharged
- B. Any assets held by the Region, upon condition requiring their return, transfer or conveyance which condition occurs by reason of dissolution or liquidation, shall be returned, transferred or conveyed in accordance with such requirements.
- C. Any assets remaining shall be transferred or conveyed to The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) 130 E. Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204, or its successor(s), or successor addresses.
- D. Should the above named international denominational body be dissolved, any assets remaining shall be transferred or conveyed to one or more domestic or foreign churches, societies or organizations engaged in activities substantially similar to those of the Region, pursuant to such plan of distribution as may be adopted by resolution of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XIII - AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended, as stated in the Articles of Incorporation, by the Board of Directors at any regularly called meeting of that board. Any proposed amendments shall be sent to the Board of Directors at least ten (10) days prior to action. The Moderator shall appoint a Bylaws Review Task Force every fourth year. The current Bylaws and an explanation of any changes since the previous assembly will be included in the materials provided to congregations for the Regional Assembly.

Regional Board approved October 21, 2006