

**BYLAWS**  
**DISCIPLES CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
**(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**  
**BARTLESVILLE, OKLAHOMA**

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Approved 12/8/24

## ARTICLE I

### CHURCH YEAR

The church year shall be twelve months beginning January 1 and ending December 31 of the same year.

## ARTICLE II

### CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS

#### SECTION A

1. The officers of the congregation shall be as designated in the Constitution.

#### SECTION B: RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **The President** shall fulfill the fiduciary responsibilities of the office; call and preside at all regular and special meetings of the congregation and serve as Chair of the General Board. The President is an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee. The President shall direct an annual financial review-a process that provides reasonable assurance that good stewardship is being used in handling and accounting for the funds and other assets of the church.
2. **The Vice President** shall serve to support the President and preside in the absence of the President. The Vice President shall serve as Chair of the Personnel Committee and Chair of the Nominating Committee.
3. **The Secretary** shall keep a record and minutes of all regular and special business meetings of the congregation, serve as Secretary of the General Board, keep a record and minutes of all its regular and called meetings, and perform such other duties as assigned by the General Board.
4. **The Treasurer** shall disburse all funds of the congregation according to the authority given by the General Board, serve as a member of the Stewardship Commission, and make reports at each regular meeting of the Stewardship Commission and the General Board.
5. **The Executive Committee** shall act on matters of policy and procedures as established by the congregation, and act responsibly on matters that may arise and need immediate attention.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **THE GENERAL BOARD**

#### **SECTION A: MEMBERS**

The members of the General Board shall be as designated in the Constitution.

#### **SECTION B: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MEMBERS**

1. The elected officers are expected to attend all meetings of the General Board. They shall make reports of their activities when such information is required by the General Board.
2. The Chair of the Elders shall serve as a liaison between the General Board and the Board of Elders.
3. The Chair of the Deacons shall serve as a liaison between the General Board and the Deacons.
4. Elected Trustees shall act as legal agents of the congregation in all business matters as directed by the General Board and subject to approval by the congregation. The Trustees will manage the use and maintenance of the church vehicles. The Trustees will oversee all insurance policies.
5. Commission Chairs are responsible to the General Board for the programs and functional activities under their direction.

#### **SECTION C: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GENERAL BOARD**

1. The General Board is responsible and accountable to the congregation. The General Board shall perform its duties according to the authority granted in the Constitution and Bylaws.
2. The General Board transacts business and considers and enacts policy changes or additions on behalf of the congregation.
3. To guard against conflicts of interest and ensure confidentiality, members of the General Board shall not be related to, by marriage or family of origin, ordained or non-ordained program staff members.
4. The Minister shall advise the General Board concerning their work and that of the staff.
5. To ensure transparency, the General Board will provide congregation access to Board documents.
6. The General Board shall meet at least ten times a year in a regularly scheduled meeting. Non-regularly scheduled meetings may be called by the President or by petition of at least three General Board members. Notice of special General Board meetings shall be given as follows:
  - a. Announced at regular Sunday Services at least one Sunday in advance of the meeting, and
  - b. Notice sent to members of the Church at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting via one or more of the following methods:
    - i. email
    - ii. A letter mailed through the US Postal Service

7. The presence of a minimum of one-half of the Board Members shall constitute a quorum. In the event some members hold multiple offices, they will be counted only once in determining a quorum.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **TERM OF OFFICE**

Those elected to serve the congregation shall have terms as indicated or specified in the constitution.

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Chair of Elders: for a term of one year not to exceed three consecutive years.
6. Chair of Deacons: for a term of one year not to exceed three consecutive years.
7. Trustees: A Trustee serving a term of three full successive years shall not be eligible for reelection to the same office until the lapse of one year.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **COMMISSIONS**

The work of the church shall be carried out by the following commissions in cooperation with the General Board. The commissions shall meet regularly. The commissions shall submit their budget to the Stewardship/Finance Commission. They will make reports to the General Board concerning the progress of their activities. It is recommended that each commission will consist of a minimum of three individuals. Adding, subtracting, and /or combining of commissions will be with the approval of the General Board and congregation.

Commission Chairs are selected by the Nominating Committee and approved by the General Board.

The Commission Chairs will serve one year and not exceed three consecutive years.

## SECTION A: RESPONSIBILITIES

The commissions shall be as follows:

1. **Education Commission.** The function of this commission is to, under the direction of ordained staff, plan and implement opportunities for growth for children, youth, adults, and the church as a community.
2. **The Marketing Commission.** The function of this commission is to promote the ministry and programs of DCC.
3. **Fellowship Commission.** The function of this commission is to plan and host events that celebrate and encourage connection.
4. **House and Grounds Commission.** The function of this commission is to provide care and maintenance of all church property except church-owned vehicles. The property shall include the land and all buildings on that land.
5. **Stewardship-Finance Commission.** The function of this commission is to develop and educate members about stewardship and how good stewardship impacts the church's ministry. This commission directs the financial program, builds the annual budget, and works with the President to facilitate the annual financial review. The goals of the annual financial review are:
  - To build trust and confidence of the financial supporters of the church in the way their money is being accounted for.
  - Provide checks and balances for funds received and expended.
  - Provide assurance that gifts made to the church with restrictions attached are consistently administered in accordance with the donors' instructions.
  - Monitor fiscal responsibility to ensure that through turnover in personnel, there will be continuity in accountability and transparency.
6. They present the budget to the General Board for approval and presentation to the congregation. Full transparency of the financial health and habits of the church is expected. The Stewardship/Finance Commission shall consist of:
  - a. The Chair of Stewardship-Finance
  - b. The Treasurer
  - c. The President of the Congregation
  - d. The Chair of House and Grounds
  - e. Other individuals interested in the Stewardship-Financial Program of the Church.
7. **Outreach Commission.** The function of this commission is to build in the congregation a sense of compassion and concern for the community and for the world and to inspire members to serve the community.
8. **Worship Commission.** The function of this commission is to provide assistance and work with the Minister(s) to plan and carry out the worship experiences of the church.

## ARTICLE VI

### COMMITTEES

#### SECTION A: NOMINATING COMMITTEE

1. This committee shall be composed of five members, chaired by the Vice President. This committee shall consider the qualifications, secure the consent of, and prepare a slate of officers for the congregation. The committee will also select Commission Chairs and Trustees for General Board approval. In addition to the Vice President, the other members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Board and congregation. Committee members shall be selected for two-year terms and will not be eligible for a second term until the lapse of one year.
2. In selecting its slate of nominees, the Committee shall seek suggestions from the congregation.
3. The Nominating Committee shall submit to the General Board for its consideration, change, or approval a list of nominees for offices to be filled. The General Board approved list shall be voted on at the same meeting at which the Congregational Budget is presented. Additional nominations may be made from the floor by any member of the congregation, providing consent to serve has been secured from the nominee. The vote will be by secret ballot and will require a majority of votes cast by those members present and voting.
4. Vacancies in any office of the congregation shall be filled for the unexpired term by appointment by the President subject to the approval of the General Board.
5. In addition to nominating the officers named in Sections B and C of Article V in the Constitution, the Nominating Committee may also make nominations of Honorary Elders and Honorary Deacons as defined in Section E, Article V of the Constitution. These nominations are only made if members of the Nominating Committee deem such nominations appropriate.

#### SECTION B: PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

1. The Personnel Committee shall be chaired by the Vice-President of the congregation, and its members shall consist of at least 4 members appointed by the Nominating Committee. The members shall serve no more than 2 consecutive years with at least one year lapsing before serving again on this committee. The President of the congregation shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Personnel Committee.
2. Members of the Personnel Committee are not eligible to serve concurrently on the Pastoral Relations Committee.
3. The committee shall be responsible for the annual review of the Senior Minister.
4. The committee shall meet at least one time per year for the purpose of evaluating the Senior Minister. The committee may meet as often as needed to address personnel issues as they arise.
5. In conjunction with the Senior Minister, the committee shall review job descriptions of all employees of the church annually and submit changes to the General Board for approval. Each employee shall receive a copy of the applicable job description and a copy will also be placed in their employee file.
6. All staff will report to the Senior Minister or designee.
7. Staff may bring their concerns to the Senior Minister or directly to the Personnel Committee.

### **SECTION C: PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEES**

1. The Pastoral Relations Committee has as its purpose the creation of a climate of openness, caring and honesty whereby the ministry of the congregation can be more effective. The committee will provide an official channel through which the ministers and lay persons representing the congregation may be in constant communication concerning their personal relationships, goals, achievements, and disappointments. Each minister shall have his/her own Pastoral Relations Committee which shall be formed within six months of the minister's arrival and dissolved at her/his departure.
2. The committee shall meet as needed. The minister shall be present at all meetings of their committee. Any matters of a sensitive nature shall be kept in the strictest confidence.
3. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall be composed of at least four persons including at least one Elder.

### **SECTION D: THE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE**

1. The purpose of the Memorial Committee is to provide a way to accept and promote the utilization of memorial gifts to Disciples Christian Church.
2. The committee shall consist of the past President of the Congregation as Chair, the Senior Minister, and the Chairs of the Elders, Stewardship, and House & Grounds Commissions. If the immediate past President is unable to complete this responsibility as Chair, the current President shall assume the role of Chair.
3. The committee will record and keep a record of the names of those in whose name funds were placed in the D.C.C. Memorial Fund.

### **SECTION E: THE SAFETY COMMITTEE**

1. The Safety Committee will supervise the Safety Program of the entire Church with special emphasis on activities that involve the protection of children and youth.
2. The Safety Committee will consist of the Chair (appointed by the Nominating Committee), Education Chair (or Education designee), Personnel Committee Chair (or Personnel designee), and an Elder. This Committee is encouraged to add a Trustee (for insurance expertise). The Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries and the Senior Minister will serve as ex-officio members.
3. The Committee will plan and implement all awareness training and check to ensure that all those working with children and youth have completed the requirements as outlined in the Safety Policy.

### **SECTION F: ADDITIONAL COMMITTEES**

Additional committees may be appointed by the President with the approval of the General Board. Such committees may be for such purposes as long-range planning, church policies, use of building and grounds, etc.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **MINISTERS**

#### **SECTION A: TITLES**

In addition to the Senior Minister, this congregation may employ from time to time and as circumstances require, any minister necessary to meet the needs and mission of this congregation, including an associate minister, intern minister, youth minister, minister of music, or an interim minister.

#### **SECTION B: RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The Senior Minister of the church shall perform the responsibilities which usually pertain to that office.
  - a. Lead worship services.
  - b. All paid ordained or commissioned ministers shall serve as ex-officio members without voting privileges on the General Board. The General Board and Personnel Committee may elect to go into private session if it deems necessary to do so.
  - c. Foster the spiritual growth of the congregation and lead the congregation in ministry not only in the local community but in the Area, Region, General, and Global Church.
2. The Senior Minister shall be considered the administrator of the staff. All staff (including other ministers) shall be responsible to the Senior Minister or designee. The Senior Minister will conduct yearly staff performance evaluations for all paid staff. Evaluations will be submitted by the Senior Minister and presented to each staff member individually. The Senior Minister is expected to provide staff members with a safe place to share job-related concerns. It is the responsibility of the Senior Minister to communicate concerns to the Personnel Committee. Staff are permitted to speak with the Personnel Committee on their own.
3. Specific responsibilities of any other minister employed by the congregation shall be defined in an individual, written job description and/or employment agreement as developed by the special committee in Section C of this Article.

### **SECTION C: SELECTION**

The Senior Minister or Associate Minister shall be chosen by the congregation as follows:

1. A representative committee of not less than five and not to exceed nine members, nominated by the President and approved by the General Board shall serve as the Search Committee and be responsible for recommending a prospective minister to the General Board.
2. The Search Committee shall begin its task by consulting with the Regional Minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Oklahoma to obtain resumes of qualified candidates.
3. The General Board shall consider the recommendation of the Search Committee and if the recommendation is approved by 75% of the General Board members present and voting by secret ballot, they shall recommend the prospective minister to the congregation.
4. It shall be the policy of the congregation to consider only one prospective minister at a time.
5. The recommendation of the General Board to the congregation must be approved by at least 75% of the members present and voting by secret ballot in a regular or special business meeting of the congregation before a call may be extended.
6. Upon approval of any ministerial candidate and the signing of all appropriate contracts and/or agreements, the search or special committee shall be dissolved.

### **SECTION D: TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

1. An employment offer setting forth the salary to be paid to any minister along with any special conditions shall be provided to the minister by the Search Committee and should be included in the minutes of the next General Board meeting.
2. The term of ministry for the Senior or Associate Minister shall be for an indefinite period. Termination of the Senior Minister or Associate Minister shall be as set forth in Section E.

## **SECTION E: RESIGNATION AND TERMINATION**

The term of ministry for any member of the ministerial staff may be terminated by either party upon sixty (60) days written notice to the President of the congregation. Should the General Board deem it advisable, sixty (60) days' pay (which includes unused vacation) may be given in lieu of notice.

1. Voluntary resignation of any member of the ministerial staff shall be submitted to the President of the congregation in writing. The congregation shall be notified as soon as possible of the resignation.
2. Involuntary separation (involuntary resignation or termination) of any member of the ministerial staff shall be handled in a two-step process:
  - a. **Step 1.** Confidential consultation will take place with the member of the ministerial staff, the President of the Congregation, the Chair of the Pastoral Relations Committee, the Chair of the Elders, and a Regional Minister. After the consultation process, if the member of the ministerial staff prefers, they may voluntarily resign rather than proceed to Step 2.
  - b. **Step 2.** The General Board shall meet to decide on the involuntary separation of the member of the ministerial staff. Every effort shall be made to ensure that all members of the General Board are present unless physically unable to attend. The Regional Minister shall be asked to attend. A recommendation of involuntary separation will require a majority vote of the members of the General Board present and voting. If approved, a congregational meeting will be called to vote on the termination. The recommendation of the General Board to the congregation must be approved by at least 75% of the members present and voting by secret ballot.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **APPOINTMENTS**

#### **SECTION A**

The President shall make appointments in consultation with the Nominating Committee, subject to approval of the General Board, for the following:

1. To fill vacancies on the General Board for unexpired terms only.

#### **SECTION B**

The President will appoint a committee to review the Constitution and the Bylaws every five years.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **AMENDMENTS**

#### **SECTION A**

The Bylaws may be provisionally amended by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the General Board, provided the changes proposed have been submitted in writing prior to a regular Board meeting. The congregation will be notified of provisional changes in the following month's newsletter and must vote on provisional changes at the next Congregational Meeting.

#### **SECTION B**

Amended Bylaws will be dated at the time they are provisionally changed and again when the provisional changes are made permanent.