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2
3 BYLAWS
4 OF
5 THE GREAT RIVER REGION
6 OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
7 Adopted by the Initial Board January 6, 2002
8 Updated by the Regional Assembly November 4, 2006
9 Updated by the Regional Assembly, November 8, 2008
10

11 SECTION I

12 Name

13 The name of this body shall be The Great River Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of
14 Christ) and is hereinafter referred to as the Region. It is the successor to the Christian Church
15 (Disciples of Christ) in Arkansas, the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in Louisiana, and
16 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Mississippi.
17

18 SECTION II

19 Incorporation

20 The Region shall conduct its financial affairs in accordance with the laws of the State of
21 Arkansas and the terms of the Articles of Incorporation of its corporate entity "The Great River
22 Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)" a non-profit corporation governed by the
23 Arkansas Non-profit Act of 1993. The purposes for which The Great River Region of the
24 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is organized are exclusively religious within the meaning
25 of Section 501©(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any
26 future United States Internal Revenue law). Notwithstanding any other provisions of these, this
27 organization shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization
28 exempt from federal income tax under Section 501©(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986
29 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law).
30
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32

33 SECTION III

34 Purpose

35 The purpose of the Region is to:

- 36 A. Extend the ministry of Christ in mission, witness and service among the people and social
37 structures of the Region, including the promotion of responsible Christian stewardship (The
38 Design, 20)
- 39 B. Establish, receive and nurture congregations in the Region; to provide help, counsel and
40 pastoral care to members, ministers and congregations in their mutual relationships; and to relate
41 them to the worldwide mission of the whole church (The Design, 20)
- 42 C. Strengthen the vision, witness and mission of the congregations through networking,
43 providing resources and assisting congregational leaders and clergy. Priorities include
44 implementing the Mission Imperatives of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), leadership
45 education, new congregation development, opportunities for fellowship and inspiration, and

46 deepening the bonds that unite congregations in a shared ministry that moves “from their
47 doorsteps to the ends of the earth”.

49 SECTION IV

50 Relationships

51 A. Type of Affiliation and Manifestation. Within the universal body of Christ, the Christian
52 Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada exists organizationally in free and
53 voluntary relationships at the congregational, regional and general manifestations. Each has
54 functions for which it is uniquely responsible, and each is characterized by its integrity, self-
55 government, authority, rights, and responsibilities. The Great River Region of the Christian
56 Church (Disciples of Christ) accepts its responsibilities and claims its rights as a regional
57 manifestation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada,
58 hereinafter referred to as the “Christian Church.” (The Design, 4)

59
60 B. Inter-relatedness. As part of the Christian Church, congregations share creatively in its total
61 mission of witness and service. Equally, the Christian Church in its general and regional
62 manifestations sustains its congregations through its commitment to their welfare and needs.
63 Thus, concern for the integrity of each manifestation is shared; and witness is given to the inter-
64 relatedness of the whole church. (The Design, 10)

65
66 C. Congregational Relationships. All recognized congregations of the Christian Church, which
67 are located in the States of Louisiana, Arkansas and Mississippi (except DeSoto County), shall
68 be recognized congregations in the Region. As a Region of the Christian Church, the Region
69 affirms that “congregations in their freedom in Christ have both rights and responsibilities.”
70 (The Design, 10)

71
72 D. Congregational Rights. Among the rights recognized and safeguarded to congregations are
73 the rights: to manage their affairs under the Lordship of Jesus Christ; to adopt or retain their
74 names and charters or Constitutions or Bylaws; to determine in faithfulness to the gospel their
75 practice with respect to the basis of membership; to own, control and encumber their property; to
76 organize for carrying out the mission and witness of the church; to establish their budgets and
77 financial policies; to call their ministers; and to participate through voting representatives in
78 forming the corporate judgment of the Great River Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of
79 Christ) and the Christian Church. (The Design, 11)

80
81 E. Congregational Responsibilities. Among the responsibilities by which congregations
82 voluntarily demonstrate their mutual concern for the mission and witness of the whole church are
83 the responsibilities: to proclaim the gospel and administer baptism and the Lord’s Supper; to
84 provide for the spiritual nurture of their members and families; to grow in understanding that the
85 church is a universal fellowship, transcending all barriers within the human family such as race
86 and culture; to sustain their ministers in faithfulness and honor, and, in matters pertaining to
87 relationships with them, to seek counsel from the Executive Regional Minister; to be faithful in
88 Christian stewardship, striving to share proportionately in providing the resources for the total
89 life, work and witness of the Christian Church; to choose voting representatives to the General
90 and Regional Assemblies; to seek to realize the oneness of the church of Jesus Christ through

91 cooperation with other churches of the community and with present and emerging ecumenical
92 structures. (The Design, 13)

93
94 F. Voluntary Financial Support. While congregations are responsive to the needs of general
95 and regional programs established with the participation of the congregations' representatives in
96 the General and Regional Assemblies, all financial support of the general and regional programs
97 of the Christian Church by congregations and individuals is voluntary. (The Design, 13)

98 99 SECTION V

100 Membership

101 A. As a member of the whole body of Christ, every person who is a member of a recognized
102 congregation of the Region thereby holds membership in the Region. (The Design, 6)
103 Members shall be divided into two classes, i.e., voting members and non-voting members.

104
105 B. Voting members or representatives shall be determined by individual recognized
106 congregations in accordance with these Bylaws and/or the Operating Guidelines of the Region;
107 also, all voting members of the Regional Board, and such other voting members as designated by
108 these Bylaws and/or Operating Guidelines, shall be voting members. All other members of the
109 Region shall be non-voting members.

110 111 SECTION VI

112 Meetings

113 A. There will be an Annual Meeting of the Region in accordance with the 1993 Non-profit
114 Corporation statute of the state of Arkansas. The Annual Meeting will include a State of the
115 Region address by the Executive Regional Minister, annual reports of the budget, finances, and
116 activities of the Region.

117
118 B. In Assembly years, the Annual Meeting will be part of the Assembly. In non-Assembly years,
119 the Annual Meeting will be held in the fourth quarter of the year.

120 121 SECTION VII

122 Nominating Committee

123 The Nominating Committee (see the Operating Guidelines) shall nominate to the Regional Board
124 or the Regional Assembly all persons required by these Bylaws and/or the Operating Guidelines
125 to be elected by the Regional Board or Regional Assembly, respectively, and such other persons
126 as directed by the Regional Board or Regional Assembly.

127 128 SECTION VIII

129 Organization of Work

130 The work of the Region shall be organized as determined by the Regional Board and Operating
131 Guidelines. Reports of the Region's activities will be submitted to the Annual Meeting and all
132 regular Regional Board meetings.

133 134 SECTION IX

135 Governance

136

- 137 A. Regional Assembly
- 138 1. Description. The Regional Assembly is a gathering of the members of the Great River
- 139 Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) convened in the fall of even
- 140 numbered years, usually the first weekend of November. No less than 30 days
- 141 notification of the members of the Christian Church is required. The program and
- 142 business of the Regional Assembly shall include: worship, education of its members, and
- 143 the transaction of business. In organizing for business the Regional Assembly shall
- 144 receive and act upon proposed program and policy, reports, resolutions, other items duly
- 145 referred to it and elect leadership of the Region. In the event of an extraordinary meeting
- 146 of the Regional Assembly, the same notice shall apply. Said Assembly would be called
- 147 by the Regional Board.
- 148 2. Voting Privileges. All members of the Region who register for the Regional Assembly
- 149 shall have all the privileges of the Assembly except that voting privileges shall be limited
- 150 to the following:
- 151 a. Ministers. Ordained and licensed ministers with standing in the Region.
- 152 b. Regional Board. Voting members of the Regional Board not otherwise voting
- 153 members.
- 154 c. Congregations. Each congregation of the Region shall be entitled to have three
- 155 voting representatives, plus one additional voting representative for each 100
- 156 participating members, or major fraction thereof, over the first one hundred. These
- 157 voting representatives shall be in addition to the ministers with standing in the
- 158 Region and members of the Regional Board who hold membership in the
- 159 congregation. Care should be taken, by each congregation, to be sure that to the
- 160 best of its ability laymen, laywomen and young people are a part of its voting
- 161 representation.
- 162 d. Term of Office. Voting members of the Regional Assembly shall serve from the
- 163 beginning of one Regional Assembly to the beginning of the next regular Regional
- 164 Assembly.
- 165 e. Limitation. No person shall have more than one vote in the Regional Assembly,
- 166 and no person shall vote in absentia or by proxy.
- 167 B. Regional Board
- 168 1. Description and Responsibilities. The Regional Assembly shall establish a smaller
- 169 deliberative body responsible to the Regional Assembly. This deliberative body serves
- 170 as the Regional Board as specified by the Arkansas Non-profit Corporation Act of
- 171 1993. Membership, Terms and Conditions of election are set forth in the Bylaws and/or
- 172 Operating Guidelines.
- 173 2. Time and Place of Meetings. Regular meetings of the Regional Board shall be held at
- 174 least twice annually, at times and places to be fixed by the Executive Regional Minister
- 175 and the Moderator of the Board, except that one meeting shall be held not more than 60
- 176 days nor less than 40 21 days prior to the beginning of the regular meeting of the
- 177 Regional Assembly. Special meetings of the Regional Board may be called under
- 178 extraordinary circumstances by the Executive Committee.
- 179 3. Quorum of Regional Board. One-half of the voting membership of the Regional Board
- 180 shall constitute a quorum.
- 181
- 182 C. Executive Committee

- 183 1. Description. The Executive Committee is comprised of the elected officers of the
184 Region (Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Vice Moderator, Recording Secretary, Treasurer)
185 and the Executive Regional Minister.
- 186 2. Responsibilities. The Executive Committee shall serve as Trustees of the Region, with
187 any two signatures of the officers (includes Executive Regional Minister) required on
188 any legal document of the Region. The Executive Committee may act on regional
189 matters between Board meetings. Any actions taken shall be subject to review and
190 ratification by the Regional Board.
- 191 3. Meetings. Regular meetings of the Executive Committee will be held at least quarterly.
192 Additional meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the Moderator in
193 consultation with the Executive Regional Minister. Minutes and actions will be
194 presented to and approved at the Regional Board meeting following each Executive
195 Committee meeting.

196
197 SECTION X
198 Officers

199 The Region shall have two kinds of officers: elected (non-salaried) officers and administrative
200 (salaried) officers.

201
202 A. Elected Officers (non-salaried)

- 203 1. Moderator. The Moderator shall preside over all business sessions of the Region,
204 counsel regularly with the Executive Regional Minister, and serve ex officio on all
205 committees of the Region.
- 206 2. Moderator-Elect. The Moderator-Elect is elected for a four year period of time:
207 the first two as Moderator-Elect and the second two as Moderator. The Moderator-
208 Elect shall, in the absence of the Moderator, perform the duties of the Moderator;
209 assist the Moderator in presiding at sessions of the Regional Assembly and assume
210 such other duties as may be assigned by the Moderator. The 1st Vice Moderator
211 shall serve as chair of the Long Range Planning Committee.
- 212 3. Vice Moderator. The Vice Moderator, in the absence of the Moderator and
213 Moderator-Elect, shall perform the duties of the Moderator. The Vice Moderator
214 shall chair the Personnel Committee.
- 215 4. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be responsible for oversight of the finances and will
216 serve as a member of the Finance Committee, and shall review all financial
217 statements and transactions of the Region at least bi-monthly.
- 218 5. Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for keeping a
219 record of all business meetings of the Region and insure their distribution to all
220 appropriate persons and congregations.
- 221 7. Method of Election. The elected officers shall be nominated by the Regional
222 Nominating Committee and elected by the Regional Assembly.

223
224 B. Administrative Officers (salaried). The Executive Regional Minister shall be responsible
225 for the pastoral and administrative leadership of the Region as it fulfills its purpose. The
226 Executive Regional Minister serves as the Corporate Secretary and Corporate Executive Officer,
227 thus serves as a voting member of the Executive Committee and Regional Board.

- 228 1. Accountability. The Executive Regional Minister is accountable to the Board. All
229 other administrative and pastoral staff of the Region are accountable to the Executive
230 Regional Minister.
- 231 2. Search Committee. The Search Committee will be appointed by the Regional Board
232 according to the distribution principles spelled out in the Operating Guidelines. This
233 committee shall work in consultation with the General Minister and President and the
234 appropriate committee of the College of Regional Ministers.

235
236 SECTION XI

237 Amendment

238 Method of Amending Bylaws. A resolution to amend these Bylaws must meet all the regular
239 requirements for business items to be considered by the Regional Assembly; and, in addition,
240 must be recommended by a two-thirds vote of the Regional Board and adopted by a two-thirds
241 vote of the voting representative present and voting at the Regional Assembly. Each amendment
242 so adopted shall take effect at the conclusion of the Regional Assembly at which it is adopted
243 unless a different effective date is specified in the resolution.
244