

Revised 01/06/2007

**CONSTITUTION OF  
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)  
Denton, Texas**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the members of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Denton, Texas, a congregationally governed body, in order to promote the work of the Church in the spirit of Christ and thus advance His Kingdom, do hereby adopt this constitution.

**ARTICLE I. NAME AND PURPOSE**

The name of this organization shall be First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Denton, Texas, and it shall be affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In keeping with the traditions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the ultimate authority of the local church shall rest with the congregation.

The purpose of this Church shall be to:

- proclaim the Gospel and lead people to Christ
- nurture spiritual growth and commitment in our members
- provide supportive, caring Christian fellowship
- minister to those in need
- be stewards of God's gifts and creation

**ARTICLE II.**

**MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of this Congregation shall consist of those who are now identified as members and those who shall unite with this Congregation by baptism or by transfer of membership. Voting privileges shall be accorded to all members.

The membership shall be defined as follows:

- A. **Active Members:** Those who have a continuing interest in the life and work of the church as demonstrated by regular attendance, stewardship, and by their support of and participation in its program and ministry.
- B. **Participating Members:** Those who, because of physical limitations (health or out-of-town residence), are unable to attend church but who support and welcome its ministry.
- C. **Student Members:** Students at nearby colleges and universities who wish to affiliate with this Congregation during their time here, but who shall retain membership at their home churches.
- D. **Non-participating Members:** Those who have no interest in the fellowship of the Congregation regardless of the place of residence.

### **ARTICLE III. NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

#### ***Section A. Duties and Composition***

The elective members of the Official Board and the officers of the Congregation and the Official Board shall be nominated by a Nominating Committee in accordance with the timetable established in Article VIII, Section A and shall consist of one representative from the Board of Elders, two representatives from the Diaconate, and four representatives elected from the Congregation at-large, one of whom may be a youth

of high-school or college age. All members of the Nominating Committee shall be active members of the Congregation.

When all members of the Nominating Committee have been chosen, the Chair-Elect of the Official Board shall convene the Nominating Committee for the purpose of presenting and explaining the written charge to the committee. These instructions shall include eligibility of current Official Board members for service in the coming year. The committee will choose its permanent chair from its members at this meeting.

***Section B. Procedure***

All suggestions for nominees shall be in the hands of the Nominating Committee at least three weeks prior to the date the Committee presents its slate of candidates for election. After considering the qualifications of those eligible to serve and securing their consent, the Nominating Committee shall present the names of the candidates to the Congregation.

***Section C. Interim Vacancies***

Interim vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the Chair of the Official Board with the advice and consent of the Official Board.

**ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS  
AND ELECTED  
REPRESENTATIVES OF  
THE CONGREGATION**

***Section A. Officers***

The officers of the congregation shall be the Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Official Board.

***Section B. Elected  
Representatives***

A. **Elders** -- No person shall be elected to the office of Elder who has not been a member of this congregation for at least one year. All persons holding the office of Elder by action of this Congregation shall retain the title of Elder so long as they shall be active participating members of this Congregation.

The Board of Elders shall consist of all Elders of the Church, shall elect its own officers, shall hold meetings, and shall make recommendations to the Official Board as deemed necessary.

It shall be the duty of the Board of Elders, in cooperation with the Minister(s) and Chairs of functional ministries, to promote the growth and welfare of the Church; to give spiritual guidance to the members with respect to regular attendance at worship

services and at the Lord's Supper; to visit the sick; to give thoughtful consideration to policies of the Church that will enable it to fulfill its complete mission; to encourage by example the work of the missionary, evangelistic, educational and stewardship responsibilities of the Church; to serve at the Lord's Table; and to perform such other duties as may be assigned to them.

**B. Diaconate** -- The Diaconate shall consist of a minimum of thirty members. Members of the Diaconate shall be elected to terms of three years, with one-third being elected each year, and shall be eligible to succeed themselves in office upon re-election by the Congregation. Any person who has been a member of this Congregation for at least one year is eligible for election to the Diaconate.

The Diaconate shall elect its own officers, hold meetings, and make recommendations to the Official Board as deemed necessary

It shall be the duty of the Diaconate, in cooperation with the Minister(s), the Chairs of the functional ministries, and the Board of Elders, to promote the growth and welfare of the church; to assist in greeting and ushering the worshipers; to prepare and serve the Lord's

Supper; to receive the offerings; to direct and advise the Junior Diaconate; and to perform such other duties as may be assigned to them.

**C. Junior Diaconate --** Affiliated with and under the direction of the Diaconate shall be the Junior Diaconate, whose members shall be nominated from among those young men and women, members of the Church, who shall be 13 through 18 years of age. They shall be elected to a term of one year, and shall be eligible to succeed themselves in office upon reelection by the congregation.

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It shall be the duty of the Junior Diaconate to assist the Diaconate in serving the communion, ushering, receiving the offering, and performing such other duties as may be assigned to them.

**D. Honorary Office--**The office of "emeritus" is an honorary one, to be conveyed at anytime in recognition of and appreciation for loyalty, dedication, and service to this Congregation. The requirements for the office are: must have been a member of this congregation for at least five years; must have performed outstanding and faithful service to this congregation; must be

recommended by a member of the Board of Elders or a member of the Diaconate to the respective body, with such body making its recommendation to the Official Board Election shall be by the congregation.

A person holding the title "emeritus" shall have the privilege of participating in any and all functions ascribed and shall be an ex-officio member of the Official Board.

**D. Trustees**----No person shall be elected as trustee who has not been a member of the congregation for at least one year. There shall be three trustees, and the congregation shall elect one annually to a three-year term. The trustees shall be ex-officio members of the Official Board. The trustees shall place all monies that the Treasurer and Trustees deem appropriate for investment; shall have custody of and shall provide a secure place for the securities, valuable papers and documents of the Church; shall be responsible for all insurance coverage and certify same to the Treasurer for payment; shall act as legal agents of the Church; and shall perform such other duties as are required by the laws of the State of Texas.

## **ARTICLE V. THE OFFICIAL BOARD**

### ***Section A. Duties***

The Official Board is charged by the Congregation with the conduct of the legal and business affairs of the Church, and with oversight of the planning and execution of the program of the Church.

### ***Section B. Membership***

The Official Board shall be composed of the officers and three Elders, three members of the Diaconate, and three members At-Large. The Officers of the Official Board shall be members of the Official Board by virtue of their election to office. Elders, members of the Diaconate, and members At-Large shall be elected to terms of three years with one-third of each group being elected each year.

### ***Section C. Selection of Members***

Elective members of the Official Board shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and recommended to the Congregation for approval at least two months prior to the beginning of the church year. The Nominating Committee shall secure the consent of each nominee to serve, if

elected,  
prior to its recommendation,  
and shall recommend no  
more than one nominee for  
each vacancy. Members of  
the Congregation may make  
nominations from the floor  
during the annual meeting,  
providing the nominee has  
consented to serve, if elected.

***Section D. Officers of the  
Official Board***

A. Officers of the  
Official Board shall be  
nominated from the Church  
membership by the  
Nominating Committee and  
shall be elected to office  
by the Congregation.  
Nominations from the floor  
shall be permissible,  
providing the nominee has  
consented to serve, if elected.  
The Official  
*Board shall have the  
following officers:*

1. Chair. The Chair shall call all meetings of the Official Board and the Congregation and shall preside at such meetings. With the advice of the other officers of the Official Board and the Minister, the Chair shall appoint the chair of each functional ministry and chairs and personnel of standing and ad-hoc committees and provide them with a written charge of their tasks. The Chair shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and functional ministries. The Chair shall serve one elected term of one year without right of immediate succession.
2. Chair-Elect. The Chair-Elect shall assist the Chair in the exercise of appropriate duties, and in the absence of the Chair shall perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chair. The Chair-Elect shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and functional ministries. The Chair-Elect shall convene the Nominating Committee for its first meeting and present it with its written charge. The Chair-Elect shall preside over this Committee until a permanent chair is chosen. The

Chair-Elect shall be elected for a term of one year and may be the nominee of the Nominating Committee for Chair of the Official Board after the Chair-Elect's current term has expired. The Chair-Elect shall serve as chair of the Personnel Committee.

3. Secretary. The Secretary shall serve as secretary to the Official Board and the Congregation and shall keep all minutes of meetings of the Official Board and of the Congregation. The Secretary shall be elected to office for a term of one year and shall be eligible for election to no more than three consecutive terms.

4. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the Official Board and of the Congregation and shall be an officer of both groups. The Treasurer shall be responsible for accounting, disbursing, and reporting of funds (except those specifically designated otherwise by the Constitution and/or By-Laws of the Church). The Treasurer shall be elected to office for a term of one year and shall be eligible for election to no more than three consecutive terms.

The Treasurer may appoint an Assistant Treasurer, with the advice and consent of the Official Board. The Treasurer may assign such clerical duties as deemed appropriate to the Assistant Treasurer, and may delegate authority as required to carry out those duties. Under no circumstances may the Treasurer delegate the duty of supervision and oversight over the financial affairs of the Church.

B. Should a vacancy occur in the office of the Chair, the Chair-Elect shall serve the remainder of the Church year as Chair. Should a vacancy occur in the offices of the Treasurer, the Secretary, or the Chair-Elect, the Chair shall recommend to the Official Board a nominee to fill the vacancy until the end of the church year. The nominee shall assume the designated office immediately upon being approved by the Official Board.

## **ARTICLE VI. THE CABINET**

The purpose of the Cabinet shall be to interpret and coordinate the entire church program as planned by the various functional ministries and to serve in an advisory capacity to the Minister (s), Official Board and various

ministries and organizations of the Church. The Cabinet shall consist of the minister, the officers of the Official Board, the chairs of the functional ministries, the chairs of the Elders and Diaconate, and the presidents/chairs of the Disciples Women and Disciples Men. The minister (s) shall chair the cabinet.

The Cabinet shall not become a legislative body to make final decisions on policy or to act on any phase of the church program. This function belongs to the Official Board and to the congregation.

## **ARTICLE VII. SALARIED PERSONNEL**

### ***Section A. Minister(s)***

#### **A. Role of Minister(s)**

1. Minister: It shall be the duty of the Minister to perform those duties, which usually pertain to the office. In general, the role shall be in accordance with those principles set forth in the New Testament. As spiritual leader and chief administrator of the Church, the Minister shall be an ex-officio member of all organized groups, auxiliaries, committees and functional ministries. The Minister shall, in cooperation with the Chair of the Congregation and the Official Board, encourage orderly procedures in the life and work of the Church through effective use of the constitution and by-laws.

2. Associate Minister: It shall be the duty of the Associate Minister, if any, under the general supervision of the Minister and the policies established by the Official Board, to perform those duties which usually pertain to the office, and such other duties as may be contractually agreed upon.

#### **B. Selection of Minister(s)**

The Minister(s) shall be chosen in the following manner: When the office of Minister or Associate Minister shall become vacant, it shall be the duty of the Chair of the Congregation and the Official Board immediately to appoint a Pulpit Committee of seven members, said committee to be representative of the composition of the entire Congregation. The purpose of the Pulpit Committee shall be to secure the

services of a Minister or Associate Minister for both interim (if necessary) and permanent positions. The Pulpit Committee shall immediately assume the responsibility of investigation and examination of candidates, and upon selection of one candidate, the Committee shall submit the name of the candidate to the Official Board. The Official Board shall consider the recommendation of the Pulpit Committee and upon approval by at least a two-thirds vote of the Official Board shall submit the name of the prospective Minister or Associate Minister to the Congregation at any regular or special meeting after due and proper notice has been given. This recommendation must be accepted by at least two-thirds of the members of the Congregation present and voting before a call may be extended.

A written agreement or contract setting forth the salary to be paid and other conditions of the call shall be prepared by the Pulpit Committee and submitted to the Official Board and the Congregation for approval. The church Treasurer shall retain one copy of this agreement, another placed in the church records, and a third given to the Minister or Associate Minister.

#### C. Term of Ministry

The term of ministry shall be for an indefinite period of time and may be terminated by the Minister or Associate Minister upon thirty days written notice, or by the Church upon a minimum of sixty days written notice. The resignation of the Minister or Associate Minister shall be submitted to the Official Board in writing. Following action on the resignation by the Official Board, the Chair shall announce the action to the Congregation.

### ***Section B. Other Salaried Personnel***

#### A. Employees

Whenever the service of any employee other than the Minister(s) is needed, the functional ministry desiring to obtain the service of such employee shall make a recommendation to the Official Board. The responsibility for determining the desirability of such employee shall then rest with the Board, and if the Board feels that it is desirable to obtain the service of such employee, employment shall be by a vote of two-thirds of the Board members present and voting. The Chair of the appropriate functional ministry (Stewardship - Administrative Assistant; Education - Nursery personnel; Worship - Music personnel; Property - Custodian) may, with the approval of the Official Board, replace an employee in an existing position on a temporary basis at a rate of pay not to exceed the existing rate of pay. Official Board approval must be obtained to make the replacement of a permanent employee and to determine pay for the position.

B. Termination of Employment

Termination of employment of specific employees or termination of a particular position or consolidation of positions shall be carried out in the same manner as followed in the selection of employees.

7 C. Supervision of Employees

All employees shall be under the general supervision of the Official Board and the specific supervision of the Minister and the appropriate functional ministry.

D. Reviews of employees will be performed by the personnel committee.

**ARTICLE VIII.  
MEETINGS OF THE**

## CONGREGATION

### *Section A. Meetings to be held*

The Congregation shall hold:

A. A meeting at least four months prior to the beginning of the church year for the

purpose of nominating and electing four Representatives At-Large to the Nominating

Committee. Nominations shall be made from the floor, providing the nominee has consented to serve, if elected.

B. A meeting at least two months prior to the beginning of the church year for the purpose of electing the Officers of the Congregation and Official Board (Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer); for the purpose of electing the elective members of the Official Board; for the purpose of electing members of the Board of Elders, the Diaconate, and the Junior Diaconate; and for the purpose of conducting other business as may be necessary.

C. An annual business meeting preferably not less than one month prior to the end of the church fiscal year to consider the budget for the coming church fiscal year.

Special meetings, as required, which shall be called by the Chair of the Congregation and the Official Board, or upon written petition of not less than ten percent of the participating members of the Congregation.

### *Section B. Items of Business*

All matters relating to amending this constitution, the sale, purchase, and encumbrance of church property, calling Minister(s), elections as referred to in Section A of this Article, approval of an auditor's report, the adoption of the annual budget, and such other matters as shall be related to the life of the Church shall be

submitted to and voted upon by the Congregation in a regular or special meeting.

***Section C. Notice***

Notice of all regular or special meetings, as required, shall be announced at a regular Sunday morning worship service of the Church at least one week in advance of the date of said meeting, and by means of the church newsletter published and distributed before the date of said meeting. The purpose(s) of the meeting shall be indicated in each notice.

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***Section D. Rules of Order***

All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with principles set forth in the New Testament and shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order, Revised.

***Section E. Quorum***

If due and proper notice of said meeting has first been given, a quorum shall consist of the members of this Congregation in attendance.

***Section F. Voting***

Voting in meetings of the Congregation shall be by voice, raised hand, or by written secret ballot of those present and voting, the method to be directed by the Chair presiding. A plurality vote shall be required to elect members of the Congregation to office; a two-thirds majority shall be required for the calling of Minister(s) and amending this constitution. All other questions before the Congregation shall require a majority vote.

**ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS AND BY-LAWS**

***Section A. Amendments***

Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by a two-thirds vote of the

members of the Official Board present and voting in regular or special meeting, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the Official Board at least seven days prior to the vote thereon. Proposed amendments to this constitution may be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Congregation present and voting at any regular or special meeting, provided the proposed amendment has been read at each of two Sunday morning worship services immediately preceding the vote on the amendment and has been published in the church newsletter at least seven days before the date of said meeting.

***Section B. By-laws***

The Official Board may cause to be prepared and adopt by-laws to implement the provisions of this constitution.

**ARTICLE X. RATIFICATION**

This constitution shall replace the Constitution of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Denton, Texas, adopted in 1988, as amended in 1996, and shall be effective upon approval by the Official Board and ratification by the Congregation.

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**ARTICLE XI. DISSOLUTION**

Upon the dissolution of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Denton, Texas, the Board of Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Church, dispose of all of the assets of the Church by giving them to one or more incorporated organizations (charitable, education, missionary) then directly

affiliated with the Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest.

The Constitution was approved by  
the Official Board on \_\_\_\_\_ and  
was ratified by the Congregation on  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Constitution and By-Laws committee for  
2006-2007

Linda Morrow

Hugh Ayer

Marianne Burns

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