

1 **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) In Nebraska**
2 **By-Laws**
3

4 **Article I - Office and Place of Business**
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6 The Regional Church Office shall be a virtual office with primary residence linked to/tied to the Regional
7 Minister’s home, and the homes of any and all other staff persons. The Regional Church Office will
8 maintain a P.O. Box with the United States Postal Service (USPS) for any/all mail. The physical residence
9 of the Regional Minister shall be the residence of the Christian Church In Nebraska, which is 2523
10 Winding Way, Lincoln NE 68506.
11

12 **Article II - Biennial Regional Assembly**
13

- 14 A. The Regional Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska shall be held
15 biennially at a time and place recommended by the Regional Church Board and approved at the
16 Regional Assembly.
17
- 18 B. The Purpose of the Assembly shall be to experience interconnectedness among churches/
19 congregations of the Region, to develop deeper relationships, and to conduct the business of the
20 Regional Church.
21
- 22 C. The Center on the Regional Church¹ shall recommend, and the Regional Church Board shall
23 approve members of the Regional Assembly Planning Committee.
24 1. The Regional Assembly Planning Committee shall select its chair;
25 2. The Committee chair shall report to the Center on a regular basis.
26
- 27 D. Representative Assembly
28 1. Each congregation shall select two (2) Delegates;
29
30 2. Other Delegates include all ordained and commissioned ministers of the Region in good
31 standing, and all members of the Regional Church Board;
32
33 3. Members may participate in meetings telephonically or other audio/video conferencing
34 equipment by which all participants are able to hear the business as conducted;
35
36 4. Regional Assembly Registration shall include information identifying registrant as a
37 Delegate, an Alternate, or a Visitor;
38
39 5. Delegates shall register at least 30 days prior to the Assembly to enable their names to be
40 recorded and certified by the Center on the Regional Church or its appointee;
41
42 6. All members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska are urged to attend
43 the Regional Assembly;
44

¹ Please see Article V for a detailing of the proposed new Regional Church structure that will utilize 4 Centers (in place of existing Committees, Commissions, and Work Groups).

45 7. All persons who register for the Regional Assembly shall have all the privileges of the
46 Regional Assembly except those granted to Delegates (see D1 and D2);
47

48 E. Resolutions of The Regional Assembly

49 1. The Resolutions Committee shall be composed of three (3) members of the Center on the
50 Regional Church or its appointees.

51 2. All proposed resolutions presented to the Resolution Committee must come:
52 1) By written resolution from the Official Board of a congregation listed in the most
53 recent Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); or
54 2) By written resolution from any recognized board or group-recognized as having an
55 official relationship with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska; or
56 3) The Resolutions Committee may on its own initiative, prepare and submit such
57 resolutions as it deems proper or necessary for the fulfillment of business before the
58 Regional Assembly.
59

60 b. All resolutions must be signed by the members submitting the resolution (electronic
61 signatures are acceptable forms of signature).
62

63 c. Proposals of new business of any emergency nature may be considered by the Committee
64 on Resolutions at least twelve (12) hours before the last business session of the Regional
65 Assembly is scheduled to begin. The Moderator and the Chairperson of the Resolutions
66 Committee shall rule whether the proposal for recommendation is of an emergency nature.
67

68 d. Following the final date for receiving resolutions (30 days prior to the beginning of the
69 Regional Assembly), the Committee shall meet to receive and study all resolutions, and
70
71 1) Recommend approval by the Regional Assembly, or
72 2) Recommend disapproval by the Regional Assembly, or
73 3) Recommend to the Regional Assembly that the resolution be referred to the
74 Board for study and action.

75 e. The Regional Assembly shall:
76 1) Approve said resolution, or
77 2) Disapprove said resolution, or
78 3) Revise resolution, and then Approve/Disapprove said resolution, or
79 4) Refer resolution to the Board for further action.
80
81
82

83 **Article III - Elections**
84

85 A. NOMINATIONS:

86 1. The Center on the Regional Church¹ shall be responsible for soliciting nominees for various
87 positions identified later in this Article;
88

89 2. The Center may appoint a group of people (e.g., Nominating Committee) who will solicit and
90 recommend nominees to the Center;
91

92 3. The slate of nominees shall be recommended by the Center to the Regional Church Board;
93

- 94 4. The slate recommended by the Center shall be reviewed, and if approved shall be
95 recommended by the Regional Church Board, and if the slate is approved shall be
96 recommended to the Regional Assembly for action; and
97
98 5. The Regional Assembly shall review, accept additional nominees who have consented to be
99 considered, and approve the slate of nominees;
100
101 6. In the event of a vacancy, the Regional Church Board shall fill such vacancies based upon
102 nominations that come from the Center on the Regional Church;
103
104 7. The Center on Regional Church, and/or its Nominating Committee, will conduct its work in
105 consultation with the Regional Minister; and
106
107 8. Nominees shall be selected from persons who meet on of the categories below:
108 i. Active member of a Disciples congregation in Nebraska and actively support the
109 Regional and General Churches; and/or
110 ii. Ministers in Good Standing with the Regional Church and are active members of
111 a Disciples congregation.
112
113 B. At least twenty days prior to each Regional Assembly the Center, through the Regional Church
114 Office/Staff, shall submit to congregations, to registered representatives, and to alternates a slate of
115 nominees to fill the offices set forth below in paragraph "C" of this section.
116 C. Nominations for the following offices shall be presented to each Regional Assembly for its action.
117 1. Executive Officers of Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary, and Treasurer
118 2. Chairs of the:
119 a. Center on Church Development
120 b. Center on Church Leadership
121 c. Center on Church Mission
122 d. Center on the Regional Church
123 3. Two At-Large Board Members; and
124 4. General Church Board Representative;
125 D. These persons shall take office on January 1, following the Regional Assembly in which they are
126 elected.

127
128

129 **Article IV – Regional Church Board of Directors**

130

- 131 A. Purpose – To design, develop, plan, implement, and evaluate the ministries of the Christian Church
132 In Nebraska.
133
134 B. Membership
135 1. Officers shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Regional Church Board
136 a. Moderator – To serve as Moderator of the Regional Church Assembly, the Regional
137 Church Board, and the Executive Committee. Shall be an ex-officio member without
138 vote on all Centers, committees, commissions, and task groups.

- 139 b. Vice Moderator – To serve as Moderator when the Moderator is not available, and to
 140 serve one term in preparation for Moderator of the Regional Church, including
 141 participating as an observer in all administrative functions of the Moderator.
 142 c. Treasurer – To develop the budget in accordance with Regional Church practices and
 143 priorities, and submit to the Regional Church Board for action.
 144 i. Provide oversight for financial management, in partnership with the Regional
 145 Minister, including submitting and reviewing financial statements to the Regional
 146 Church Board on a quarterly basis;
 147 ii. Partner with the Regional Church staff to collect gifts, contracts, correspondence
 148 and other documents related to budgeting and financial management;
 149 iii. Ensure that services provided by Treasury Services of the Office of General
 150 Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meet
 151 expectations for the Regional Church, including annual audit of the OGMP.
 152 d. Secretary – Record, maintain, and submit minutes of all Regional Church Assemblies,
 153 Board meetings, and Executive Committee meetings for approval by respective bodies.
 154 2. Regional Church Representative to the General Church Board, as prescribed by the General
 155 Church’s *The Design* or other governing documents.
 156 3. Chairs of the 4 Centers:
 157 a. Center on Church Development
 158 b. Center on Church Leadership
 159 c. Center on Church Mission
 160 d. Center on Regional Church
 161 4. 2 At-Large Board Members
 162 5. Chair of Each Fellowship Group:
 163 a. Disciples Women’s Ministry
 164 b. Disciples Men’s Ministry
 165 c. Youth and Outdoor Ministry
 166 C. Terms of Office
 167 1. Each Board position shall be for a period of 2 years commencing January 1 following the
 168 Regional Assembly where positions were elected, and for 24 months ending December 31st,
 169 2. The Regional Church Representative to the General Church Board will serve one 4-year term,
 170 or as prescribed by the General Church’s *The Design* or other governing documents.
 171 3. Terms shall be for calendar years following Regional Assemblies.
 172 4. Unexpired terms shall be filled by action of the Regional Church Board.
 173 5. Terms can be renewed for a second and third term, as requested by the Center for Regional
 174 Church and/or its Nominating Committee, and approved by the Regional Church Board and
 175 Regional Church Assembly.
 176 D. Responsibilities of the Board
 177 1. To prepare policy recommendations to the Regional Church Assembly, and establish policies
 178 as directed by the Regional Church Assembly, implement policies, interpret existing policies,
 179 and review and evaluate policies.
 180 2. To ratify Executive Committee decisions
 181 3. To establish Regional Church priorities.
 182 4. To adopt an annual budget.
 183 5. To ensure that there is adequate personnel to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the
 184 Regional Church, and to call, support, supervise and evaluate the Regional Minister.
 185

- 186 6. To foster leadership development throughout the Regional Church.
187 7. To provide program ministry oversight.
188
189 E. Meetings
190 1. The Regional Church Board shall meet at least quarterly.
191 2. Members may participate in-person, telephonically, or other audio or video conferencing
192 equipment by which all participants are able to hear the business as conducted.
193
194 F. Executive Committee
195 1. Will make decisions in between meetings of the Regional Church Board of Directors.
196 2. Decisions of the Executive Committee will be reported to the Regional Church Board at its
197 next/subsequent meeting.
198 3. Provide advice and counsel to the Regional Minister and the Regional Church Board.
199
200

201 Article V – Regional Church Structure - Centers

202

203 *The Christian Church In Nebraska is governed by the Regional Church Board.*
204

205 **Purpose of CCN:** *To engage in spiritual practices as we accompany one another and our neighbors so*
206 *that we can instill, support, and sustain the vitality of the Local Churches in our Region.*
207

208 The stated purpose as of November 2022 Regional Assembly is In-line with the Christian Church
209 (Disciples of Christ) *The Design's* statement that the Regional Church has a two-fold purpose of mission
210 and nurture: *take the initiative in developing new forms of ministries in mission, witness, and service;*
211 *and be concerned for the continuing renewal of the life of congregations, members, and ministers, and*
212 *offer leadership in matters of mutual concern, providing help and counsel to ministers and congregated*
213 *in such matters as standing and credentialing of ministers, ministerial search and call, and installations*
214 *of ministers. The Regional Churches are called, further, to witness to the unity of the Christian Church*
215 *(Disciples of Christ) to call Local Churches beyond local concerns, as well as to work for reconciliation*
216 *across racial and ethnic lines.*
217

218 The Regional Church Purpose (i.e., function) will be fulfilled through a new “form” provided for by four
219 (4) Centers. The Centers will be structured to have no fewer than 5, and up to 7 members each who will
220 engage their specific purposes, with an eye on how each Center is part of the whole Regional Church.
221 The Centers are empowered to establish short-term work groups and teams to complete specific tasks
222 and responsibilities, and commissions for on-going responsibilities.
223

224 A. Center on Church Development

225 **Purpose:** *To establish, receive, and strengthen local churches by providing pastoral care and*
226 *counsel to ministers and members of local churches.*
227

228 **Chair:** *To draft a job description of the chair of the Center to be approved by the Regional*
229 *Church Board at its first quarterly meeting of the biennium and select 4-6 members to serve on*
230 *the Center.*
231

232 **Charter:**

233 A. *To ensure that the Regional Church has in place and/or is open to the most up-to-date best*
234 *practices for establishing new Local Churches.*

235
236 B. *To sustain Local Churches as vital congregations:*

237 1. To determine what the Christian Church In Nebraska means by “church vitality” for
238 the coming biennium;

239 2. To encourage clergy and lay leaders to connect directly with one another;

240 3. To create clergy learning and retreat opportunities on Church Vitality;

241 4. To maintain an on-line presence of resources on Church Vitality;

242 5. To share information on Church Vitality from various resources.

243
244 C. *To partner with Local Churches in discerning their future legacy, including foster the legacy*
245 *of any congregation that discerns that their physical presence is no longer possible.*

246
247 1. To work closely with the Christian Church Foundation’s resources (e.g., Sacred
248 Stories);

249 2. To ensure that the Christian Church In Nebraska has updated guidance on
250 Congregational Legacy;

251
252

253 **B. Center on Church Leadership**

254 **Purpose:** *To teach and witness to spiritual practices that enable leaders and emerging leaders to*
255 *serve the people and the structures of the Local, Regional, and General Church.*

256
257 **Chair:** *To draft a job description of the chair of the Center to be approved by the Regional*
258 *Church Board at its first quarterly meeting of the biennium, and select 4-6 members to serve on*
259 *the Center.*

260
261 **Charter:**

262 A. *To ensure that the Christian Church In Nebraska fulfills its responsibilities to commission and*
263 *ordain ministers, as well as support their nurture and care and ministerial standing.*

264 B. *To ensure that the Christian Church In Nebraska provides ongoing programs of growth and*
265 *education for clergy and lay leaders;*

266 C. *To develop, support, and sustain ministries focused on youth;*

267
268 **C. Center on Church Mission**
269 **Purpose:** *To relate the local church, its members, and ministers, to the mission of the church and*
270 *the wider community locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.*

271
272 **Chair:** *To draft a job description of the chair of the Center to be approved by the Regional*
273 *Church Board at its first quarterly meeting of the biennium and select 4-6 members to serve on*
274 *the Center.*

275
276 **Charter:** *To identify ministries in which the Regional Church can incubate, foster, sustain, and/or*
277 *partner with Local Churches in no more than five areas of mission during the current biennium,*
278 *and connect such ministries to related General Church Ministries. Ministries may be hands-on*

279 initiatives (e.g., refugee resettlement, disaster recovery), trainings (e.g., anti-racism), and/or
280 mission trips.

281

282 **D. Center on the Regional Church**

283 **Purpose:** To ensure that there is a framework in which the other three Centers are able to fulfill
284 their purposes (e.g., Church Leadership to identify new leaders).

285

286 **Chair:** To draft a job description of the chair of the Center to be approved by the Regional
287 Church Board at its first quarterly meeting of the biennium, and select 4-6 members to serve on
288 the Center.

289

290 **Charter:** To ensure that the Christian Church In Nebraska attends to the necessary infrastructure
291 to fulfill its broader Purpose, including an annual budget and financial management, a process
292 for nominating future leadership, adequate planning for assemblies and gatherings, continuing
293 to review the Regional Church's By Laws, and sustaining fellowship groups for Men, Women, and
294 Youth.

295

296 **Article VI – Covenantal Relationships**

297

298 A. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska shall be directly related to and
299 cooperate with the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of the
300 United States of America and Canada, and its administrative units, commissions and
301 committees, and any other cooperating organizations reporting to the General Assembly.

302

303 B. Mutual agreement regarding staff and promotional procedures may be entered into
304 between the Regional Church Board and the General Church and its administrative units.

305

306 C. Agencies and organizations wishing to be in covenant relationship with the Christian
307 Church (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska shall be reviewed by the Center on Regional
308 Church and, if so desired, recommended to the Regional Church Board. The Regional
309 Church Board will recommend action (i.e., approval, disapproval) by the Regional
310 Assembly.

311

312

313 **Article VII – Regional Minister and Other Employees**

314

315 The Regional Church Board shall employ such staff as deemed necessary to fulfill the purpose of the
316 Christian Church In Nebraska.

317

318 **A. Personnel Policies**

319 1. The Regional Church Board, through its Center on the Regional Church, shall maintain clear,
320 concise, and up-to-date Personnel Policies.

321 2. Terms of employment shall be determined by the Personnel Policies, and further detailed in
322 a Letter of Call, or Letter of Employment.

323 3. The Personnel Policies will be the primary document for employment, work environment,
324 compensation, all types of leave, and employee concerns and shall be the basis of any
325 discrepancies between the Personnel Policies and one or more of the terms of the Letter of
326 Call/Employment.

- 327 B. Regional Minister
328 1. Shall be the pastor to the pastors serving in local churches of the Christian Church (Disciples
329 of Christ) in Nebraska, as well as the members of those local churches.
330 2. Shall serve as an ex-officio member without vote of all board, committees, commissions,
331 and task groups of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) In Nebraska.
332 C. Other Staff and Employees
333 1. The Regional Minister shall employ, supervise, evaluate, and terminate all other staff
334 personnel.
335 2. The Regional Minister shall contract with people to perform specific duties and functions
336 who have expertise in areas where guidance and support is needed.
337
338

339 **Article VIII – Ecumenical Relationships**
340

341 The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) In Nebraska shall partner with other Communion when
342 possible in common ministries to support leadership development, clergy training and education, youth
343 ministries, and social ministries. The Regional Minister, or their designee, shall represent the Christian
344 Church In Nebraska in all ecumenical relations.
345

346 **Article IX – Rules of Order**
347

348 **Quorum** shall be defined as fifty percent of those who are delegates present or members present of the
349 respective bodies. For the Regional Assembly, quorum shall be 50% of delegates. For the Regional
350 Church Board, quorum shall be 50% of members.
351

352 **Practices and Procedures:**
353

354 The Moderator will ask if someone can make a Motion, and someone else can Second the Motion. Once
355 a Motion is on the floor, the Moderator will facilitate the conversation on the Motion until such a time
356 that the Moderator determines everyone’s voice has been expressed. The Moderator can request and
357 consider alternative language to facilitate Consensus. The Moderator will then ask for consensus
358 around one decision about the Motion. If a Delegate finds a decision to be against their conscience,
359 they can choose to “step aside” and allow the Regional Church to move forward.
360

361 If the Moderator determines that there is no Consensus on the Motion, the Moderator will then open
362 the conversation again to explore alternative approaches to the topic captured in the Motion.
363
364

365 **Article X – Amendment of By Laws**
366

367 Amendments to the By Laws are the responsibility of the Regional Church Board. The Center on the
368 Regional Church will review and propose any amendments to the By Laws to the Regional Church Board.
369 The Board will consider any proposed Amendments to the By Laws. If approved by the Regional Church
370 Board, the approved changes will take effect until the next Regional Assembly.
371

372 Approved amendments to the By Laws by the Regional Church Board will be reviewed and either
373 approved or rejected by the Regional Assembly at the next gathering of the Regional Assembly. If a By

374 Law amendment is rejected by the Assembly, the Regional Church Board will either revert to previous
375 version of the By Laws or propose another amendment to the By Laws.
376
377
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