

1 **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) In Nebraska**
2 **By-Laws**
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4 **Article I - Office and Place of Business**
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6 The Regional Office of the Christian Church in Nebraska shall be registered continuously with the State
7 of Nebraska. It shall be a virtual office linked to the physical address of the Regional Minister. The
8 Regional Church Office will maintain a P. O. Box with the United States Postal Service for all mail.
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10 **Article II - Biennial Regional Assembly**
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- 12 A. The Regional Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska shall be held
13 biennially at a time and place recommended by the Regional Church Board and approved at the
14 Regional Assembly.
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- 16 B. The Purpose of the Assembly shall be to experience interconnectedness among churches/
17 congregations of the Region, to develop deeper relationships, and to conduct the business of the
18 Regional Church.
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- 20 C. The Center on the Regional Church¹ shall recommend, and the Regional Church Board shall
21 approve members of the Regional Assembly Planning Committee.
22 1. The Regional Assembly Planning Committee shall select its chair;
23 2. The Committee chair shall report to the Center on a regular basis.
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- 25 D. Representative Assembly
26 1. Each congregation shall select two (2) Delegates;
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28 2. Other Delegates include all ordained and commissioned ministers of the Region in good
29 standing, and all members of the Regional Church Board;
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31 3. Members may participate in meetings telephonically or other audio/video conferencing
32 equipment by which all participants are able to hear the business as conducted;
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34 4. Regional Assembly Registration shall include information identifying registrant as a
35 Delegate, an Alternate, or a Visitor;
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37 5. Delegates shall register at least 30 days prior to the Assembly to enable their names to be
38 recorded and certified by the Center on the Regional Church or its appointee;
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40 6. All members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska are urged to attend
41 the Regional Assembly;
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43 7. All persons who register for the Regional Assembly shall have all the privileges of the
44 Regional Assembly except those granted to Delegates (see D1 and D2);
45
- 46 E. Resolutions of The Regional Assembly

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).

- 47 1. The Resolutions Committee shall be composed of three (3) members of the Center on the
48 Regional Church or its appointees.
- 49 2. All proposed resolutions presented to the Resolution Committee must come:
50 1) By written resolution from the Official Board of a congregation listed in the most
51 recent Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); or
52 2) By written resolution from any recognized board or group-recognized as having an
53 official relationship with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska; or
54 3) The Resolutions Committee may on its own initiative, prepare and submit such
55 resolutions as it deems proper or necessary for the fulfillment of business before the
56 Regional Assembly.
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- 58 b. All resolutions must be signed by the members submitting the resolution (electronic
59 signatures are acceptable forms of signature).
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- 61 c. Proposals of new business of any emergency nature may be considered by the Committee
62 on Resolutions at least twelve (12) hours before the last business session of the Regional
63 Assembly is scheduled to begin. The Moderator and the Chairperson of the Resolutions
64 Committee shall rule whether the proposal for recommendation is of an emergency nature.
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- 66 d. Following the final date for receiving resolutions (30 days prior to the beginning of the
67 Regional Assembly), the Committee shall meet to receive and study all resolutions, and
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69 1) Recommend approval by the Regional Assembly, or
70 2) Recommend disapproval by the Regional Assembly, or
71 3) Recommend to the Regional Assembly that the resolution be referred to the
72 Board for study and action.
- 73 e. The Regional Assembly shall:
74 1) Approve said resolution, or
75 2) Disapprove said resolution, or
76 3) Revise resolution, and then Approve/Disapprove said resolution, or
77 4) Refer resolution to the Board for further action.
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81 **Article III - Elections**
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83 **A. NOMINATIONS:**

- 84 1. The Center on the Regional Church¹ shall be responsible for soliciting nominees for various
85 positions identified later in this Article;
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- 87 2. The Center may appoint a group of people (e.g., Nominating Committee) who will solicit and
88 recommend nominees to the Center;
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- 90 3. The slate of nominees shall be recommended by the Center to the Regional Church Board;
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- 92 4. The slate recommended by the Center shall be reviewed, and if approved shall be
93 recommended by the Regional Church Board, and if the slate is approved shall be
94 recommended to the Regional Assembly for action; and
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- 96 5. The Regional Assembly shall review, accept additional nominees who have consented to be
 97 considered, and approve the slate of nominees;
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 99 6. In the event of a vacancy, the Regional Church Board shall fill such vacancies based upon
 100 nominations that come from the Center on the Regional Church;
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 102 7. The Center on Regional Church, and/or its Nominating Committee, will conduct its work in
 103 consultation with the Regional Minister; and
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 105 8. Nominees shall be selected from persons who meet on of the categories below:
 106 i. Active member of a Disciples congregation in Nebraska and actively support the
 107 Regional and General Churches; and/or
 108 ii. Ministers in Good Standing with the Regional Church and are active members of
 109 a Disciples congregation.
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 111 B. At least twenty days prior to each Regional Assembly the Center, through the Regional Church
 112 Office/Staff, shall submit to congregations, to registered representatives, and to alternates a slate of
 113 nominees to fill the offices set forth below in paragraph “C” of this section.
 114 C. Nominations for the following offices shall be presented to each Regional Assembly for its action.
 115 1. Executive Officers of Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary, and Treasurer
 116 2. Chairs of the:
 117 a. Center on Church Development
 118 b. Center on Church Leadership
 119 c. Center on Church Mission
 120 d. Center on the Regional Church
 121 3. Two At-Large Board Members; and
 122 4. General Church Board Representative;
 123 D. These persons shall take office on January 1, following the Regional Assembly in which they are
 124 elected.

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

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 129 A. Purpose – To design, develop, plan, implement, and evaluate the ministries of the Christian Church In
 130 Nebraska.
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 132 B. Membership
 133 1. Officers shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Regional Church Board
 134 a. Moderator – To serve as Moderator of the Regional Church Assembly, the Regional
 135 Church Board, and the Executive Committee. Shall be an ex-officio member without
 136 vote on all Centers, committees, commissions, and task groups.
 137 b. Vice Moderator – To serve as Moderator when the Moderator is not available, and to
 138 serve one term in preparation for Moderator of the Regional Church, including
 139 participating as an observer in all administrative functions of the Moderator.
 140 c. Treasurer – To develop the budget in accordance with Regional Church practices and
 141 priorities, and submit to the Regional Church Board for action.
 142 i. Provide oversight for financial management, in partnership with the Regional
 143 Minister, including submitting and reviewing financial statements to the Regional
 144 Church Board on a quarterly basis;

- 145 ii. Partner with the Regional Church staff to collect gifts, contracts, correspondence
146 and other documents related to budgeting and financial management;
147 iii. Ensure that services provided by Treasury Services of the Office of General
148 Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meet
149 expectations for the Regional Church, including annual audit of the OGMP.
150 d. Secretary – Record, maintain, and submit minutes of all Regional Church Assemblies,
151 Board meetings, and Executive Committee meetings for approval by respective bodies.
- 152 2. Regional Church Representative to the General Church Board, as prescribed by the General
153 Church’s *The Design* or other governing documents.
- 154 3. Chairs of the 4 Centers:
155 a. Center on Church Development
156 b. Center on Church Leadership
157 c. Center on Church Mission
158 d. Center on Regional Church
- 159 4. 2 At-Large Board Members
- 160 5. Chair of Each Fellowship Group:
161 a. Disciples Women’s Ministry
162 b. Disciples Men’s Ministry
163 c. Youth and Outdoor Ministry

164 C. Terms of Office

- 165 1. Each Board position shall be for a period of 2 years commencing January 1 following the
166 Regional Assembly where positions were elected, and for 24 months ending December 31st,
167 2. The Regional Church Representative to the General Church Board will serve one 4-year term,
168 or as prescribed by the General Church’s *The Design* or other governing documents.
169 3. Terms shall be for calendar years following Regional Assemblies.
170 4. Unexpired terms shall be filled by action of the Regional Church Board.
171 5. Terms can be renewed for a second and third term, as requested by the Center for Regional
172 Church and/or its Nominating Committee, and approved by the Regional Church Board and
173 Regional Church Assembly.
174

175 D. Responsibilities of the Board

- 176 1. To prepare policy recommendations to the Regional Church Assembly, and establish policies as
177 directed by the Regional Church Assembly, implement policies, interpret existing policies, and
178 review and evaluate policies.
179 2. To ratify Executive Committee decisions
180 3. To establish Regional Church priorities.
181 4. To adopt an annual budget.
182 5. To ensure that there is adequate personnel to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the
183 Regional Church, and to call, support, supervise and evaluate the Regional Minister.
184 6. To foster leadership development throughout the Regional Church.
185 7. To provide program ministry oversight.
186

187 E. Meetings

- 188 1. The Regional Church Board shall meet at least quarterly.
189 2. Members may participate in-person, telephonically, or other audio or video conferencing
190 equipment by which all participants are able to hear the business as conducted.
191

192 F. Executive Committee

- 193 1. Will make decisions in between meetings of the Regional Church Board of Directors.

- 194 2. Decisions of the Executive Committee will be reported to the Regional Church Board at its
195 next/subsequent meeting.
196 3. Provide advice and counsel to the Regional Minister and the Regional Church Board.
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199 **Article V – Regional Church Structure - Centers**
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201 *The Christian Church In Nebraska is governed by the Regional Church Board.*
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203 **Purpose of CCN:** *To engage in spiritual practices as we accompany one another and our neighbors so*
204 *that we can instill, support, and sustain the vitality of the Local Churches in our Region.*
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206 The stated purpose as of November 2022 Regional Assembly is In-line with the Christian Church
207 (Disciples of Christ) *The Design*’s statement that the Regional Church has a two-fold purpose of mission
208 and nurture: *take the initiative in developing new forms of ministries in mission, witness, and service; and*
209 *be concerned for the continuing renewal of the life of congregations, members, and ministers, and offer*
210 *leadership in matters of mutual concern, providing help and counsel to ministers and congregated in such*
211 *matters as standing and credentialing of ministers, ministerial search and call, and installations of*
212 *ministers. The Regional Churches are called, further, to witness to the unity of the Christian Church*
213 *(Disciples of Christ) to call Local Churches beyond local concerns, as well as to work for reconciliation*
214 *across racial and ethnic lines.*
215

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

222 **A. Center on Church Development**

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

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

230 **Charter:**

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

234 B. *To sustain Local Churches as vital congregations:*

- 235 1. To determine what the Christian Church In Nebraska means by “church vitality” for
236 the coming biennium;
237 2. To encourage clergy and lay leaders to connect directly with one another;
238 3. To create clergy learning and retreat opportunities on Church Vitality;
239 4. To maintain an on-line presence of resources on Church Vitality;
240 5. To share information on Church Vitality from various resources.
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242 C. *To partner with Local Churches in discerning their future legacy, including foster the legacy*
243 *of any congregation that discerns that their physical presence is no longer possible.*

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1. To work closely with the Christian Church Foundation’s resources (e.g., Sacred Stories);
 2. To ensure that the Christian Church In Nebraska has updated guidance on Congregational Legacy;

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251 **B. Center on Church Leadership**

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

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

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259 **Charter:**

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

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

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

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266 **C. Center on Church Mission**

267 **Purpose:** *To relate the local church, its members, and ministers, to the mission of the church and the wider community locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.*

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

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274 **Charter:** *To identify ministries in which the Regional Church can incubate, foster, sustain, and/or partner with Local Churches in no more than five areas of mission during the current biennium, and connect such ministries to related General Church Ministries. Ministries may be hands-on initiatives (e.g., refugee resettlement, disaster recovery), trainings (e.g., anti-racism), and/or mission trips.*

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

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

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

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

294 **Article VI – Covenantal Relationships**

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- 296 A. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska shall be directly related to and cooperate with
- 297 the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of the United States of America
- 298 and Canada, and its administrative units, commissions and committees, and any other cooperating
- 299 organizations reporting to the General Assembly.
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- 301 B. Mutual agreement regarding staff and promotional procedures may be entered into between the
- 302 Regional Church Board and the General Church and its administrative units.
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- 304 C. Agencies and organizations wishing to be in covenant relationship with the Christian Church
- 305 (Disciples of Christ) in Nebraska shall be reviewed by the Center on Regional Church and, if so
- 306 desired, recommended to the Regional Church Board. The Regional Church Board will recommend
- 307 action (i.e., approval, disapproval) by the Regional Assembly.

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

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312 The Regional Church Board shall employ such staff as deemed necessary to fulfill the purpose of the

313 Christian Church In Nebraska.

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- 315 A. Personnel Policies
- 316 1. The Regional Church Board, through its Center on the Regional Church, shall maintain clear,
- 317 concise, and up-to-date Personnel Policies.
- 318 2. Terms of employment shall be determined by the Personnel Policies, and further detailed in a
- 319 Letter of Call, or Letter of Employment.
- 320 3. The Personnel Policies will be the primary document for employment, work environment,
- 321 compensation, all types of leave, and employee concerns and shall be the basis of any
- 322 discrepancies between the Personnel Policies and one or more of the terms of the Letter of
- 323 Call/Employment.
- 324 B. Regional Minister
- 325 1. The Regional Minister is called by and accountable to the Regional Board.
- 326 2. Shall be the pastor to the pastors serving in local churches of the Christian Church (Disciples
- 327 of Christ) in Nebraska, as well as the members of those local churches.
- 328 3. Shall serve as an ex-officio member without vote of all board, committees, commissions, and
- 329 task groups of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) In Nebraska.
- 330 C. Other Staff and Employees
- 331 1. The Regional Minister shall employ, supervise, evaluate, and terminate all other staff
- 332 personnel.
- 333 2. The Regional Minister shall contract with people to perform specific duties and functions
- 334 who have expertise in areas where guidance and support is needed.
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337 **Article VIII – Ecumenical Relationships**

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339 The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) In Nebraska shall partner with other Communion when

340 possible in common ministries to support leadership development, clergy training and education, youth

341 ministries, and social ministries. The Regional Minister, or their designee, shall represent the Christian

342 Church In Nebraska in all ecumenical relations.

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Article IX – Rules of Order

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

Practices and Procedures:

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

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

Article X – Amendment of By Laws

Proposed amendments to the By Laws will be sent to the Center on the Regional Church. The Center will review proposed amendments and forward to the Regional Church Board for action. Amendments to the By Laws approved by the Regional Church Board between Regional Assemblies will immediately take effect. At its next Regional Assembly, these amendments will be reviewed and either approved by two-thirds majority or rejected. If a By Law is rejected by the Assembly, the Regional Church Board will either revert to the previous version of the By Law or propose a new By Law. Notice of By Law amendments shall be distributed to the delegates at least 30 days prior to the Regional Assembly.