

Modified January 2003

CONSTITUTION

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ) STOW, OHIO

A "DISCIPLES OF CHRIST" CHURCH

This Church was organized in 1831, and was incorporated under the laws of Ohio in 1920. It was known as "The Church of Christ at Stow" until its name was changed to "First Christian Church", in conformance with the international movement of all "Disciples of Christ" Churches, by approval of the Governing Board on December 3, 1956, and adopted by the Church Congregation on January 27, 1957.

This Constitution was revised by the Ministry Task Force and approved by the Governing Board on November 2001 and adopted by the Church Congregation. The previous revision was in 2000. The modification on January 2003 reflects the fiscal year change.

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CONSTITUTION
of the
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)
STOW, OHIO

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Stow, Ohio, a congregational governed body in order to promote the work of the church in the Spirit of Christ and thus seeking to fulfill our commission, do hereby adopt this constitution.

ARTICLE I; NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION A - Name

This organization, a part of the Brotherhood of the "Disciples of Christ", is to be known as the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Stow, Ohio.

SECTION B: - Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be as revealed in the New Testament to win people to faith in Christ Jesus and commit them actively to the Church and to help them grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ that increasingly they may do His Will. This will fulfill the common task, in Unity with all Christians, of carrying out the mission of the Church which is building the Kingdom of God on earth.

SECTION C - Affiliation

This Church shall cooperate in the life of the Brotherhood through agencies reporting to the General Assembly of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ), and The Christian Church in Ohio. It shall actively support various church associations, provided these organizations are not in opposition to the policies of this Church.

ARTICLE II; MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Church shall consist of those who are now identified as members and those who shall unite with it by confession of faith in Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior, giving expression to their faith through baptism by immersion and personal commitment to Him, or by transfer of membership, thereby making a reaffirmation of their faith and commitment to Christ.

ARTICLE III; OBLIGATION

All officers, appointees and employees shall address criticism or complaints about the church or its members in a constructive way. If information is needed it should be secured and shared or the concern should be directed to the appropriate board, team or individual.

ARTICLE IV; OFFICERS AND APPOINTEES

SECTION A - Elected Officers.

The following slate of officers shall be approved by the members of this church. The officers will be announced in the Mid-Week Reminder.

1. Chairman of the Governing Board to be elected biennially for a term of two (2) years.
2. Vice-Chairman of the Governing Board to be elected biennially for a term of two (2) years.
3. Secretary to be elected biennially for a term of two (2) years.
4. Treasurer to be elected biennially for a term of two (2) years.
5. Elders: Not fewer than 12, one-third to be elected annually for a term of three (3) years.
6. Diaconate: Not fewer than 44, one-half to be elected annually for a term of two (2) years.
7. Trustees: Not fewer than 6, One-half to be elected annually for a term of two (2) years.
8. Emeritus: Those who because of infirmities or advanced age, and those whose service and consecration to the Church merits this honor, may be retired from active responsibility, these to be known respectively as Elder Emeritus, Diaconate Emeritus . Confirmation by the Governing Board and affirmation by the Congregation is required.

The Board of Elders, Diaconate and Trustees will nominate and elect their own Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary for a term of one year.

Former Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses and Diaconate may be asked by the current chairman, preferably, or a member of the board or team to serve as a substitute in an emergency. An emergency occurs when one scheduled for an official duty cannot assume that assignment within an hour of the service.

SECTION B - Limit of Continuous Service

1. Elected officers with the exception of the treasurer shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office. One year must elapse before an officer is eligible for re-election to the same office.
2. Officers having served two (2) consecutive terms in the same office shall be eligible for election to a different office.
3. A portion of an unexpired term is not to be included in the two (2) terms.
4. Exceptions to the two (2) terms limitation may apply to Trustees when continuing legal obligations prevail.

SECTION C - Appointments.

The following appointments are to be made by the Chairman of the Governing Board:

1. Financial Secretary
2. Ministry Team Leaders
3. Church Historian
4. Parliamentarian

Term of office shall be for one (1) year with no limitation on reappointments.

ARTICLE V; GOVERNING BOARD

There shall be a Governing Board comprised of the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, treasurer, parliamentarian, all elders, all trustees, minister team leaders, the pastors and personnel listed in the bylaws.

ARTICLE VI: CHURCH STAFF

SECTION A - Personnel and Selection

The Church Staff shall include:

1. Minister

- a. The Board of Elders shall serve as or establish a pulpit committee and shall be responsible for recommending the prospective Minister to the Governing Board.
- b. The pulpit team shall utilize the services of the Executive Secretary of the Christian Church in Ohio for information on prospective candidates.
- c. It shall be the policy of the congregation to consider only one prospective minister at a time. However, information may be secured on several in a given period.
- d. The pulpit committee will recommend a prospective Minister to the Governing Board. The recommendation must be accepted by at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting in a regular or special meeting of the Board.
- e. The Governing Board will recommend the prospective Minister to the Congregation.
- f. The recommendations of the Governing Board must be accepted by at least two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting in a regular or special meeting of the congregation before a call may be extended. A written statement setting forth the salary to be paid and other conditions of the call shall be made in duplicate, one copy for the Minister and one for the Church records.
- g. The term of his/her Ministry shall be an indefinite period and may be terminated by the Board of Elders or the Minister upon sixty (60) days written notice. Either party shall then have recourse through an appeal to the Governing Board if it is so desired, for further and final action upon the proposed termination.
- h. No Minister will be required to preach a trial sermon.

2. Associate Minister

The selection of the Associate Minister and the termination of his services shall be the same as the Minister.

3. Director of Christian Education

Selection is to be made by the Christian Education Ministry Team with the approval of the Board of Elders and the Governing Board.

4. Office Secretary

The Office Secretary shall be selected by the Minister and approved by the Board of Elders and the Governing Board.

5. Director of Music

The Director of Music shall be selected by the Worship Ministry Team with the approval of the Elders and the Governing Board.

6. Church Organist

The Church Organist shall be selected by the Worship Ministry Team and the Director of Music with the approval of the Elders and the Governing Board.

7. Custodian

The Custodian and assistants shall be selected by the Trustees and approved by the Governing Board.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

SECTION A - Meetings To Be Held:

1. The Congregation shall hold a business meeting each year for the consideration of the proposed church budget, projected programs , or special items of business.
2. Special business meetings of the congregation may be called by The Chairman of the Governing Board with the approval of the Governing Board or upon written request of fifty (50) or more members.

SECTION B - Notice.

Written notice to the membership of all regular or special business meetings of the congregations shall be given at least one week in advance of the meeting.

SECTION C - Rules of Order

"Robert's Rules of Order, newly Revised" shall be the parliamentary authority in all matters not specified in the Constitution or Bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII; FISCAL YEAR

The Fiscal Year of the Church will be from January 1st through the following December 31st.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended or revised as follows:

A resolution to amend or revise must be read before the Governing Board at least one regular meeting before a vote is taken and be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the Governing Board present and voting. The amendment(s) or revision must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the Governing Board present and voting before it is presented to the congregation. The proposed amendment(s) or revision shall then be presented by mail or at the regular Church services at least twice before the vote is taken by the members of the Church. Voting shall be by secret ballot. The ballots shall be counted by the Diaconates. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members voting shall be necessary for acceptance.