

**PROPOSED DRAFT**  
**REGIONAL CONSTITUTION**

**MAY 15, 2023**

**PREAMBLE**

We who are members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Michigan Region know ourselves to be part of the universal church of Jesus Christ and also to be ~~part of in~~ covenantal relationship with the denomination known as the **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada**. The members of the Region seek to serve the world in light of the Gospel call to servant leadership that radiates love and radical welcome as we have been welcomed by Christ. We honor the presence of God in each and every person, celebrating all of our differences. We are committed to promoting unity in diversity through the work of Anti-Racism and Reconciliation in our ministry. We order and structure our life-together by strengthening our connections with each other, discerning priorities, allocating resources and implementing plans strengthening our servant leadership. We affirm the theological understandings contained in the *Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* as an appropriate basis for the purpose and work of our regional church, and we reaffirm our commitment to the covenantal relationships outlined in that document. We pledge to be anti-racist in our ministry. It is our earnest desire to structure ourselves in such a way that those theological understandings and covenantal relationships shall be the fundamental basis of our life and work together.

~~The purpose of the Region is (1) to extend the ministry of Christ in mission, witness and service among the people and societal structures of the Region, and (2) to establish, receive and nurture congregations in the Region, providing help, counsel and pastoral care to members, ministers and congregations in their mutual relationships, and relating them to the world-wide mission and witness of the whole Church.~~

~~To that end we commit ourselves to one another in adopting this constitution. The vision of this constitution is one in which the people of the Region consider the needs of the world in light of the Gospel (mission), decide which part of that mission needs to be addressed by the Region (priorities), determine what events and budgets are needed to achieve those (policies), and then plan and conduct those programs throughout the Region (programming).~~

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of this body, ~~which in this document shall be referred to as the Region,~~ shall be Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Michigan Region (the “Region”), which is the legal successor to the Michigan Association of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) and its predecessor and constituent organizations.

**ARTICLE II. AFFILIATIONS**

The Region shall continue its historic affiliation with the **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada**, relating to that body in accordance with the *Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*. The Region shall maintain cooperative relationships with state, national and world-wide councils of churches and other ecumenical

bodies.

### ARTICLE III: PURPOSE

We affirm the theological understandings contained in the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as an appropriate basis for the purpose and work of our regional church, and we reaffirm our commitment to fulfill the purpose of the Region:

- To extend the ministry of Christ in mission, witness and service among the people and societal structures of the Region.
- To establish, receive and nurture congregations in the Region, providing help, counsel and pastoral care to members, ministers, and relating them to the worldwide mission and witness of the whole Church.
- To offer leadership in matters of mutual concern such as standing, credentialing of ministers, ministerial search and call, ordination, commissioning and establishment and dissolution of pastoral relationships and installations of ministers.

### ARTICLE ~~III~~IV. MEMBERSHIP

The members of the Region shall consist of every person who is a member of a recognized congregation of the Region and every minister ~~in~~with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ~~residing-who lives and/or works~~ within the Region and is not a member of any other region.

### ARTICLE ~~IV~~IV. REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

1. Definition. The Regional Assembly is a biennial gathering of members that will build up the church manifested in the region as we gather for worship, spiritual enrichment, inspiration, and education. The Regional Assembly will also consider business items proposed by the Board, a congregation, or a constituency group.

#### ~~1.~~ Authority and Purpose

- ~~2. Authority and Purpose. Ultimate responsibility for the Region shall be vested in the Regional Assembly. The primary purpose of the Regional Assembly shall be to determine priorities for the Region and its structures in the light of its perceived mission.~~
- ~~3.~~
- ~~4. Duties and Powers. A two-thirds vote of the Regional Assembly, or a higher threshold set in the Bylaws, shall be required to: In addition, the Regional Assembly shall:~~

2.

- (a) plan and conduct Assembly programs,
- (b) receive and act upon items of business referred to it as provided in the bylaws,
- (c)(a) elect officers of the Region and members at large of the Regional Board,
- (d)(b) call ~~the~~ a permanent Regional Minister,
- (e) affirm Regional Elders.

The Regional Assembly shall reserve to itself the following powers:

- (f) to sell, lease or mortgage any property belonging to the Region
- (g)(c) to effect the union of the Region with another region of the Christian ~~C~~Church (Disciples of Christ) or with another Christian denomination, ~~and~~

(d) to effect the dissolution of the Region as an entity.

(e) Elect regional officers, members at large of the Regional Board, and the regional representative to the General Board

(h)(f) Sell or encumber any part of the property known as the Crystal Conference Center/Camp Crystal

(i) Any action taken pursuant to Article IV(2)(g) and (h) shall require a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a business session of the Regional Assembly.

1. Voting Privileges. All persons who register for the Regional Assembly shall have all privileges of the Assembly, except that voting privileges shall be limited to

(a) voting representatives from each recognized congregation, consisting of one woman, one man and one young adult under the age of twenty six,

(b) one additional voting representative from each recognized congregation for each one hundred participating members over the first hundred members (51 or greater will be recognized as the next 100 members)

(c) ministers in standing in the Region;

(d) members of the Regional Board, and

(e) one representative from each recognized Christian body as designated in the bylaws.

2. Congregational Representatives. Terms of congregational representatives to the Regional Assembly shall be for one year, commencing at the beginning of each Regional Assembly.

3. Meetings. Regular meetings of the Regional Assembly shall be held annually at a time and place to be fixed by the Regional Assembly or the Regional Board. Special meetings of the Regional Assembly may be called by the Regional Board, provided that the meeting notice is mailed to all recognized congregations at least thirty days prior to the date of the special meeting.

4. Quorum. A quorum for the transaction of business by the Regional Assembly shall be at least 40% of the persons with voting privileges who are registered and certified as present by the Regional Assembly Credentials Committee, provided that at least 25% of the recognized congregations are present.

## **ARTICLE VI. REGIONAL BOARD**

1. Purpose. The Regional Board shall monitor and oversee the work of the Region in order to carry out the mission of the Region. It shall have all necessary authoritypowers to fulfill these responsibilities and the authoritypowers set forth in the Bylaws.

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Authority and Purpose. The Regional Assembly shall establish a smaller deliberative body responsible to the Regional Assembly, which shall be called the Regional Board. The Regional Board shall establish policies, program goals and budgets for the Region, and shall manage the affairs of the Region in accordance with the priorities and guidelines of the Assembly and with the bylaws.

2. Membership. The officers of the Region, ~~chairpersons one member of from each standing board commissions, one member from the Ministry Leadership Team,~~ one representative from the United Church of Christ, and ~~six-three~~ members at large shall be the voting members of the Regional Board. ~~Members at Large shall be chosen to help assure balance in geographical areas, age, gender, clergy vs. laity, and ethnicity.~~ The Regional Ministers and the past moderator shall serve as ex officio, non-voting members the Regional Board.

a.3. Terms and Vacancies. ~~shall have a Ministry Commission, Stewardship Commission, and a Regional Assembly Commission.~~ The term of office for the regional representative to the General Board shall be four years. ~~All~~ The Regional Board may create other commissions as defined in the Bylaws.

3. Delegation. The Regional Board may establish other bodies responsible to it. The Regional Board may delegate authority to other bodies as defined in the Bylaws.

4. Elections and Terms. The Regional Assembly shall elect Officers of the region, the regional representative to the General Board, and members at large. Each board commission will choose a member of their commission as a board member. The regional officers shall be the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Secretary, and Treasurer.

a. Officers of the region and members at large shall serve for two years.

b. The Regional Representative to the General Board shall serve for four years.

c. The moderator and vice-moderator may be re-elected only once. Other members may be re-elected for any number of terms.

d. Terms of members elected by the Regional Assembly shall commence at the conclusion of the Regional Assembly at which the voting members were elected.

e. Terms of members chosen by a commission or team shall commence at the conclusion of the meeting at which the voting member is chosen.

~~regional elective officers of the Regional Board shall serve terms of two years with the privilege of re-election, except that the moderator, and vice moderator may be so re-elected only once. All such terms shall commence at the conclusion of the Regional Assembly at which the voting members were elected. Vacancies in all regional elective officers, commission chairpersons and members at large may be filled by the Regional Board.~~

5. Meetings. The Regional Board shall meet at least twice a year.

## ARTICLE VII. VISION TEAM

1. Purpose. The Vision Team shall establish, review, and amend the purpose and vision of the region, within the bounds defined in the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of

Christ). It will guide and keep accountable the Regional Board, Regional Assembly, and all members of the region.

2. Membership. The members of the Vision Team will include an officer of the Region and four members at large selected by the Regional Board. The Regional Minister shall serve as an ex officio, non-voting member of the Vision Team.

3. Terms and Vacancies. Each member of the Vision Team shall serve a term of two years with the privilege of re-election for a maximum of three consecutive terms. Vacancies shall be filled by the Regional Board.

4. Meetings. Regular meetings of the Vision Team shall be held at least six times a year, at times set by the Vision Team. Vision Team meetings may be held in person or virtually.

Meetings. Regular meetings of the Regional Board shall be held at least twice a year at a time and place to be fixed by the Regional Board. Other meetings shall be held on call of the moderator, or on call of the moderator upon written request to the office of the Regional Minister by five or more Regional Board members. Written notice of all meetings shall be sent to all members of the Regional Board at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

Quorum. A quorum for the transaction of business by the Regional Board shall be 51% of the voting members.

## **ARTICLE VI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

1. Authority and Purpose. The Executive Committee shall be responsible to the Regional Board. This committee shall monitor and oversee the work of the Region; propose an agenda for all meetings of the Regional Board; and in cases of need, act on behalf of the Regional Board between meetings of the Regional Board.

2. Membership. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the officers of the region: moderator, vice moderator, secretary, treasurer, and Representative to the General Board. Regional Minister(s) shall serve as ex officio non-voting members of the Executive Committee.

3. Meetings. The Executive Committee shall meet as needed.

4. Quorum. A quorum for the transaction of business by the Executive Committee shall be 51% of the voting members of the Committee.

## **ARTICLE VII. REGIONAL ELECTIVE OFFICES**

1. Officers. The Regional officers, who shall be elected by the Regional Assembly, are: Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary, Treasurer, and Regional Representative to the General Board.

2. Chairpersons of Standing Commissions. Chairpersons of standing commissions established in accordance with the bylaws shall be elected by the Regional Assembly, except that

~~the chairperson of the standing commission responsible for finance shall be the elected treasurer.~~

~~3. Members at Large. Six (6) members at large shall be elected by the Regional Assembly to help assure balance as described in Article V Section 2.~~

## **ARTICLE VIII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

~~1. Nominating Committee. The moderator shall appoint, subject to ratification by the Regional Board, a regional nominating committee reflecting the diversity of the Region and composed of 3-5 persons. The Regional Minister(s) may serve as staff resource person(s) without vote. When available to serve, the immediate past moderator will serve as chair of the nominating committee.~~

~~2. Nominations and Elections. The nominating committee shall report to the Regional Board a slate of nominees to be elected by the Regional Assembly. Additional nominations may be made from the floor in accordance with the bylaws. Election of nominees shall be by simple majority.~~

## **ARTICLE IX. PROGRAMMING GROUPS**

~~1. Standing Commissions. The Regional Board shall establish up to seven standing commissions to plan and conduct programs and events designed to achieve the program goals established by the Regional Board. These commissions shall be established and governed by the bylaws, and shall be responsible to the Regional Board.~~

~~2. Other Committees and Groups. The Regional Board may establish other committees and groups as it deems fit to assist in the work of the Region. Such groups shall be for special or limited purposes, and shall be responsible to the Regional Board and the Regional Minister.~~

## **ARTICLE ~~XVIII~~. RECOGNIZED BODIES**

1. Recognized Congregations. Congregations listed in the current **Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)** or by some similar method of recognition of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are recognized congregations of the Region.

2. Recognition of Congregations. To become a recognized congregation, a congregation not recognized shall

a. Take all actions required by the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

b. Be recognized by a vote of the Regional Board

c. Take any other actions specified in ~~B~~ylaws or policies of the Region.

~~1. and congregations otherwise approved by the Regional Board for such listing in accordance with the bylaws shall be considered recognized congregations of the Region.~~

~~2. Recognized Constituency Groups. Regional districts and any other groups of regional members organized in accordance with the ~~B~~ylaws and approved by the Regional Board shall be considered recognized constituency groups of the Region.~~

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- 4.— Recognized Christian Bodies. Christian denominations, councils of churches, and other ecumenical bodies which work closely with the Region and which the Regional Board, in accordance with the Bylaws, deems appropriate to share more closely in that work, shall be considered recognized Christian bodies of the Region.

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## **ARTICLE XIX. STAFF**

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~~Regional Minister. The Regional Minister shall be the chief pastoral, administrative and executive officer of the Region, with responsibility for the entire program of the Region as provided in the bylaws. The Regional Minister shall be called to the position for an indefinite term by a two-thirds vote of the Regional Assembly upon recommendation of the Regional Board after an intensive search process conducted by a special search committee appointed by the moderator and ratified by the Regional Board.~~

~~Associate Regional Ministers. Associate Regional Ministers shall be responsible for specific portfolio areas as determined by the Regional Board and Regional Minister. Associate Regional Ministers shall be called to the position for an indefinite term by the Regional Board upon recommendation of a search committee appointed in accordance with the bylaws.~~

1. ~~Regional Minister. The Regional Minister shall exercise pastoral care and nurture for the people of the region and provide primary administrative oversight within the region.~~

~~— Associate Regional Ministers. Associate Regional Ministers who shall share in the spiritual and administrative care of the region may be called.~~

2. Regional Staff. ~~Other individuals may be contracted or employed to carry out the work of the Region.~~

~~The work and program of the Region shall be administered and coordinated by a regional staff, which shall include a Regional Minister and such additional staff as may be employed by or at the direction of the Regional Minister and authorized by the Regional Board. All staff members shall be responsible to the Regional Board under the general supervision of the Regional Minister. Hiring, terminations, compensation, job descriptions and working conditions shall be as directed by the Regional Board in accordance with the bylaws.~~

~~Regional Elders. Regional Elders serve in ministry as unpaid liaisons between Congregations & Pastors within the Region, providing communication between local, regional, and general levels of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). They are accountable to the Regional Minister and the Commission on Ministry.~~

## **ARTICLE XX. AMENDMENTS**

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a

business session of the Regional Assembly, or a higher threshold defined in the Bylaws,  
provided that ~~the proposed change has been approved by a two-thirds vote of those voting at a~~  
~~meeting of the Regional Board and~~ a copy of the approved proposed change has been sent to all  
recognized congregations at least ~~sixty~~ thirty-five days prior to the beginning of the Regional  
Assembly.