

1 **BYLAWS**
2 **OF**
3 **THE GREAT RIVER REGION**
4 **OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**

5 **Adopted January 6, 2002 by the Incorporating Board**
6 **Updated November 4, 2006 by the Regional Assembly**
7 **Updated November 8, 2008 by the Regional Assembly**
8 **Updated October 27, 2012 by the Regional Assembly**
9 **Updated November 8, 2014 by the Regional Assembly**

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11 **SECTION I**

12 **Name**

13 The name of this body shall be The Great River Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of
14 Christ) and is hereinafter referred to as the Region. It is the successor to the Christian Church
15 (Disciples of Christ) in Arkansas, the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in Louisiana, and
16 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Mississippi.

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18 **SECTION II**

19 **Incorporation**

20 The Region shall conduct its financial affairs in accordance with the laws of the State of
21 Arkansas and the terms of the Articles of Incorporation of its corporate entity "The Great River
22 Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)" a non-profit corporation governed by the
23 Arkansas Non-profit Act of 1993. The purposes for which The Great River Region of the
24 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is organized are exclusively religious within the meaning
25 of Section 501©(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any
26 future United States Internal Revenue law). Notwithstanding any other provisions of these, this
27 organization shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization
28 exempt from federal income tax under Section 501©(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986
29 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law).

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31 **SECTION III**

32 **Purpose**

33 The purpose of the Region is:

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35 A. Drawn from the Acts of the Apostles in Paul's desire to nurture, support, and engage
36 congregations as unique entities and as gatherings of congregations related to one another in their
37 mission. Regions should embody the character of the ministry to which Christ calls His people in
38 their mutual commitment to Him and to one another.(The Design, 19)

39 B.. To extend the ministry of Christ in mission, witness and service among the people and
40 social structures of the Region, including the promotion of responsible Christian stewardship
41 (The Design, 20)

42 C. To establish, receive and nurture congregations in the Region; to provide help, counsel and
43 pastoral care to members, ministers and congregations in their mutual relationships; and to relate
44 them to the worldwide mission of the whole church (The Design, 20)

45 D. To strengthen the vision, witness and mission of the congregations through networking,
46 providing resources and assisting congregational leaders and clergy. Priorities include
47 implementing the Mission Imperatives of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), leadership
48 education, new congregation development, opportunities for fellowship and inspiration, and
49 deepening the bonds that unite congregations in a shared ministry that moves “from their
50 doorsteps to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8)

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SECTION IV

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Relationships

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54 A. Type of Affiliation and Manifestation. Within the universal body of Christ, the Christian
55 Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada exists organizationally in free and
56 voluntary relationships at the congregational, regional and general manifestations. Each has
57 functions for which it is uniquely responsible, and each is characterized by its integrity, self-
58 government, authority, rights, and responsibilities. The Great River Region of the Christian
59 Church (Disciples of Christ) accepts its responsibilities and claims its rights as a regional
60 manifestation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada,
61 hereinafter referred to as the “Christian Church.” (The Design, 4)

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63 B. Inter-relatedness. As part of the Christian Church, congregations share creatively in its total
64 mission of witness and service. Equally, the Christian Church in its general and regional
65 manifestations sustains its congregations through its commitment to their welfare and
66 needs. Thus, concern for the integrity of each manifestation is shared; and witness is given to the
67 inter-relatedness of the whole church. (The Design, 10)

68

69 C. Congregational Relationships. All recognized congregations of the Christian Church, which
70 are located in the States of Louisiana, Arkansas and Mississippi (except DeSoto County), shall
71 be recognized congregations in the Region. As a Region of the Christian Church, the Region
72 affirms that “congregations in their freedom in Christ have both rights and
73 responsibilities.” (The Design, 10)

74

75 D. Congregational Rights. Among the rights recognized and safeguarded to congregations are
76 the rights: to manage their affairs under the Lordship of Jesus Christ; to adopt or retain their
77 names and charters or Constitutions or Bylaws; to determine in faithfulness to the gospel their
78 practice with respect to the basis of membership; to own, control and encumber their property; to
79 organize for carrying out the mission and witness of the church; to establish their budgets and
80 financial policies; to call their ministers; and to participate through voting representatives in
81 forming the corporate judgment of the Great River Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of
82 Christ) and the Christian Church. (The Design, 11)

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84 E. Congregational Responsibilities. Among the responsibilities by which congregations
85 voluntarily demonstrate their mutual concern for the mission and witness of the whole church are
86 the responsibilities: to proclaim the gospel and administer baptism and the Lord’s Supper; to
87 provide for the spiritual nurture of their members and families; to grow in understanding that the
88 church is a universal fellowship, transcending all barriers within the human family such as race
89 and culture; to sustain their ministers in faithfulness and honor, and, in matters pertaining to

90 relationships with them, to seek counsel from the Executive Regional Minister; to be faithful in
91 Christian stewardship, striving to share proportionately in providing the resources for the total
92 life, work and witness of the Christian Church; to choose voting representatives to the General
93 and Regional Assemblies; to seek to realize the oneness of the church of Jesus Christ through
94 cooperation with other churches of the community and with present and emerging ecumenical
95 structures. (The Design, 13)

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97 F. Voluntary Financial Support. While congregations are responsive to the needs of general
98 and regional programs established with the participation of the congregations' representatives in
99 the General and Regional Assemblies, all financial support of the general and regional programs
100 of the Christian Church by congregations and individuals is voluntary. (The Design, 13)

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102 SECTION V

103 Membership

104 A. As a member of the whole body of Christ, every person who is a member of a recognized
105 congregation of the Region thereby holds membership in the Region. (The Design, 6)
106 Members shall be divided into two classes, i.e., voting members and non-voting members.

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108 B. Voting members or representatives shall be determined by individual recognized
109 congregations in accordance with these Bylaws and/or the Operating Guidelines of the Region;
110 also, all voting members of the Regional Board, and such other voting members as designated by
111 these Bylaws and/or Operating Guidelines, shall be voting members. All other members of the
112 Region shall be non-voting members.

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114 SECTION VI

115 Meetings

116 A. There will be an Annual Meeting of the Region in accordance with the 1993 Non-profit
117 Corporation statute of the state of Arkansas. The Annual Meeting will include a State of the
118 Region address by the Executive Regional Minister, annual reports of the budget, finances, and
119 activities of the Region.

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121 B. In Assembly years, the Annual Meeting will be part of the Assembly. In non-Assembly years,
122 the Annual Meeting will be held in the fourth quarter of the year by its Regional Board.

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124 SECTION VII

125 Nominating Committee

126 The Nominating Committee (see the Operating Guidelines) shall nominate to the Regional Board
127 or the Regional Assembly all persons required by these Bylaws and/or the Operating Guidelines
128 to be elected by the Regional Board or Regional Assembly, respectively, and such other persons
129 as directed by the Regional Board or Regional Assembly.

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131 SECTION VIII

132 Organization of Work

133 The work of the Region shall be organized as determined by the Regional Board and Operating
134 Guidelines. Reports of the Region's activities will be submitted to the Annual Meeting and all
135 regular Regional Board meetings.

SECTION IX
Governance

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A. Regional Assembly

1. Description. The Regional Assembly is a gathering of the members of the Great River Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) convened in the fall of even numbered years, usually the first weekend of November. No less than 30 days notification of the members of the Christian Church is required. The program and business of the Regional Assembly shall include: worship, education of its members, and the transaction of business. In organizing for business the Regional Assembly shall receive and act upon proposed program and policy, reports, resolutions, other items duly referred to it and elect leadership of the Region. In the event of an extraordinary meeting of the Regional Assembly, the same notice shall apply. Said Assembly would be called by the Regional Board.
2. Voting Privileges. All members of the Region who register for the Regional Assembly shall have all the privileges of the Assembly except that voting privileges shall be limited to the following:
 - a. Ministers. Ministers with standing in the Region.
 - b. Regional Board. Voting members of the Regional Board not otherwise voting members.
 - c. Congregations. Each congregation of the Region shall be entitled to have three voting representatives, plus one additional voting representative for each 100 participating members, or major fraction thereof, over the first one hundred. These voting representatives shall be in addition to the ministers with standing in the Region and members of the Regional Board who hold membership in the congregation. Care should be taken, by each congregation, to be sure that to the best of its ability laymen, laywomen and young people are a part of its voting representation.
 - d. Term of Office. Voting members of the Regional Assembly shall serve from the beginning of one Regional Assembly to the beginning of the next regular Regional Assembly.
 - e. Limitation. No person shall have more than one vote in the Regional Assembly, and no person shall vote in absentia or by proxy.

B. Regional Board

1. Description and Responsibilities. The Regional Assembly shall establish a smaller deliberative body responsible to the Regional Assembly. This deliberative body serves as the Board of Directors as specified by the Arkansas Non-profit Corporation Act of 1993. Membership, Terms and Conditions of election are set forth in the Bylaws and/or Operating Guidelines.
2. Time and Place of Meetings. Regular meetings of the Regional Board shall be held at least twice annually, at times and places to be fixed by the Executive Regional Minister and the Moderator of the Board, except that one meeting shall be held not more than 60 days nor less than 21 days prior to the beginning of the regular meeting of the Regional Assembly. Special meetings of the Regional Board may be called under extraordinary circumstances by the Executive Committee.

- 182 3. Quorum of Regional Board. One-half of the voting membership of the Regional Board
183 shall constitute a quorum. Attendance may include electronic means such as audio or
184 video conference or other verifiable means of participation appropriate to the meeting.
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186 C. Executive Committee

- 187 1. Description. The Executive Committee is comprised of the officers of the Region.
188 2. Responsibilities. The Executive Committee shall serve as Trustees of the Region, with
189 any two signatures of the officers required on any legal document of the Region. The
190 Executive Committee may act on regional matters between Board meetings. Any
191 actions taken shall be subject to review and ratification by the Regional Board.
192 3. Meetings. Regular meetings of the Executive Committee will be held at least
193 quarterly. Additional meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the
194 Moderator in consultation with the Executive Regional Minister. Attendance may
195 include electronic means such as audio or video conference or other verifiable means of
196 participation appropriate to the meeting. Minutes and actions will be presented to and
197 approved at the Regional Board meeting following each Executive Committee meeting.
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199 SECTION X

200 Officers

201 The Region shall have two kinds of officers: elected (non-salaried) officers and administrative
202 (salaried) officers.
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204 A. Elected Officers (non-salaried)

- 205 1. Moderator. The Moderator shall preside over all business sessions of the Region,
206 counsel regularly with the Executive Regional Minister, and serve ex officio on all
207 committees of the Region.
208 2. Moderator-Elect. The Moderator-Elect is elected for a four year period of time: the
209 first two as Moderator-Elect and the second two as Moderator. The Moderator-Elect
210 shall, in the absence of the Moderator, perform the duties of the Moderator; assist the
211 Moderator in presiding at sessions of the Regional Assembly and assume such other
212 duties as may be assigned by the Moderator. The Moderator-Elect shall serve as chair
213 of the Long Range Planning and Personnel Committees
214 3. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be responsible for oversight of the finances and will
215 serve as a member of the Finance Committee, and shall review all financial statements
216 and transactions of the Region at least bi-monthly.
217 4. Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for keeping a record
218 of all business meetings of the Region and insure their distribution to all appropriate
219 persons and congregations.
220 5. Chair of the Regional Committee on Ministry. The RCOM chair brings a breadth of
221 knowledge of what's happening in the life of the region to the work of the Executive
222 Committee.
223 6. Method of Election. The elected officers shall be nominated by the Regional
224 Nominating Committee and elected by the Regional Assembly.
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226 B. Administrative Officers (salaried). The Executive Regional Minister shall be responsible
227 for the pastoral and administrative leadership of the Region as it fulfills its purpose. The

228 Executive Regional Minister serves as the Corporate Secretary and Corporate Executive
229 Officer, thus serves as a voting member of the Executive Committee and Regional
230 Board.

- 231 1. Accountability. The Executive Regional Minister is accountable to the Board. All
232 other staff of the Region are accountable to the Executive Regional Minister.
- 233 2. Search Committee. The Search Committee will be appointed by the Regional Board
234 according to the distribution principles spelled out in the Operating Guidelines. This
235 committee shall work in consultation with the General Minister and President and the
236 appropriate committee of the College of Regional Ministers.

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238 SECTION XI

239 Amendment

240 Method of Amending Bylaws. A resolution to amend these Bylaws must meet all the regular
241 requirements for business items to be considered by the Regional Assembly; and, in addition,
242 must be recommended by a two-thirds vote of the Regional Board and adopted by a two-thirds
243 vote of the voting representative present and voting at the Regional Assembly. Each amendment
244 so adopted shall take effect at the conclusion of the Regional Assembly at which it is adopted
245 unless a different effective date is specified in the resolution.

246
247 Revisions incorporated and approved 12/20/2014:

248 Barbara E. Jones	Jennie Gregory
249 Executive Regional Minister	2012-2014
250 Corporate Secretary	Moderator