

1 OPERATING GUIDELINES
2 OF
3 THE GREAT RIVER REGION
4 OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
5 As approved by the Initial Board of the Great River Region, January 6, 2002
6 Amendments adopted by the Regional Board February 17, 2007
7 Amendments adopted by the Regional Board October 15, 2008
8 Amendments adopted by the Regional Board March 14, 2013
9 Amendments adopted by the Regional Board September 6, 2014

10 SECTION I
11 Principles Regarding Diversity and Continuity

- 12
13
14 A. All aspects of leadership within the region will seek to be diverse, reflecting the gender,
15 geographic and ethnic makeup of the region.
16 B. Regionally elected board members will be limited to serving two 2-year terms on the board,
17 except for officers who may serve up to four terms. After being off the board for two years,
18 a person can be considered for another term of service.
19 C. Terms will be staggered whenever possible to provide continuity in membership and
20 leadership.
21 D. Terms will begin immediately upon the adjournment of the regular meeting of the Regional
22 Assembly at which regional leaders were elected.
23

24 SECTION II
25 Governance

- 26 A. Officers and Duties. The Region shall have two kinds of officers: elected (non-salaried)
27 officers and administrative (salaried) officers as described in Section X of its Bylaws.
28 1. Leadership elected by the Assembly includes the Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Treasurer,
29 Recording Secretary, the region's General Board representative, chair of the Regional
30 Committee on Ministry and members at large.
31 a) The Moderator shall preside over all business sessions of the Region, counsel
32 regularly with the Executive Regional Minister, and serve ex-officio on all
33 committees/work of the Region Board.
34 b) The Moderator-Elect shall, in the absence of the Moderator, perform the duties of the
35 Moderator; assist the Moderator in presiding at sessions of the Regional Assembly
36 and assume such other duties as may be assigned by the Moderator. The
37 Moderator-Elect shall give leadership with Long Range Planning and Personnel
38 Evaluations of the Regional Minister.
39 c) The Treasurer shall be responsible for oversight of the finances, be available to the
40 CPA and bookkeeper as needed, and will serve as a member of the Finance and
41 Investment Committee, and shall review all financial statements and transactions of
42 the Region at each board meeting.
43 d) The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for keeping a record of all business
44 meetings of the Region and insure their distribution to all appropriate persons and
45 congregations.

46 e) The Chair of the Regional Committee on Ministry (RCOM) oversees the work of the
47 Committee and provides advice and counsel to the Executive Regional Minister
48 regarding issues related to ministry in the Region.
49

50 2. Administrative Officer. The Executive Regional Minister shall be responsible for the
51 pastoral and administrative leadership of the Region as it fulfills its purpose. The
52 Executive Regional Minister serves as the Corporate Secretary and Corporate Executive
53 Officer. The Executive Regional Minister is accountable to the Board. All other
54 administrative and pastoral staff of the Region are accountable to the Executive
55 Regional Minister.

56 a) Pastoral Relationships and Duties of the Executive Regional Minister. As the chief
57 executive officer of the Board, the Executive Regional Minister shall:
58 1) preside over meetings of the Regional staff, direct and evaluate the work of the
59 professional staff and other paid employees;
60 2) represent the Region in ways appropriate to the office at the Regional level in
61 inter-church relations and in ecumenical circles or appoint a representative;
62 3) serve as a member of the General Board of the Christian Church in accordance
63 with the Design of the Christian Church;
64 4) relate to the general manifestation of the Christian Church in all other ways
65 appropriate to the office;
66 5) be a member ex-officio of all functional bodies of the Region; and have such
67 other duties as may be assigned by the Board or the Executive Committee; and
68 6) assure that appropriate staffing for the Great River Region of the Christian
69 Church (Disciples of Christ) shall be maintained to implement the goals,
70 purposes, and directions of the Board.

71 b) Administrative Duties of the Executive Regional Minister.

- 72 1) The Executive Regional Minister shall be the principal executive officer of the
73 Region.
74 2) The Executive Regional Minister may sign, with any other proper officer of the
75 Region authorized by the Board, any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or
76 other instruments that the Board has authorized to be executed, except in cases
77 where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the
78 Board or by the Operating Guidelines to some other officer or agent of the
79 Region; or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed; and in
80 general shall perform all duties incident to the office of Executive Regional
81 Minister and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board from time to
82 time.
83 3) The Executive Regional Minister serves as Corporate Secretary for the purpose
84 of signing legal documents required by law.

85 3. Method of Election and Term of Office. The Executive Regional Minister shall be
86 nominated by the Search Committee to the Regional Board for approval of call and
87 terms and conditions of employment.

88 4. Search Committee. The Executive Regional Minister Search Committee will be
89 appointed by the Regional Board according to the distribution principles spelled out in
90 the Operating Guidelines. This committee shall work in Consultation with the General

91 Minister and President and the appropriate committee of the College of Regional
92 Ministers.

93
94 B. Regional Board. The Regional Board shall hereinafter be called the Regional Board. The
95 Regional Assembly shall establish this smaller deliberative body which is accountable to
96 the Regional Assembly.

97 1. Description and responsibilities. This deliberative body serves as the Regional Board as
98 specified by the Arkansas Non-profit Corporation Act of 1993 and is referred to as the
99 Regional Board. The number of directors of the Corporation shall be a number fixed in
100 the Bylaws, but no less than the number provided by the Arkansas Non-profit
101 Corporation Act of 1993. The term of office of the elected members of the Regional
102 Board shall be not less than one (1) year nor more than eight (8) years. Regional Board
103 members may be re-elected to office as now or hereafter provided in the Bylaws of the
104 Corporation. All corporate powers shall be exercised by and under the authority of the
105 Regional Board. All affairs of the Corporation shall be managed under the direction of
106 the Regional Board.

107 2. Time and Place of Meetings: Regular Meetings of the Regional Board shall be held at
108 least twice annually. The meetings may be face to face, telephone conference, email
109 discussions with electronic voting or electronic conferencing. The time, method and
110 place will be determined by the Executive Regional Minister and the Moderator. One
111 Board Meeting shall be held not more than 60 days or less than 21 days prior to the
112 regular meeting of the Regional Assembly and whenever possible will be face to face.
113 The location of face to face meetings will be rotated through the Region to the extent
114 possible. Special meetings of the Regional Board may be called under extraordinary
115 circumstances by the Executive Committee.

116 3. Membership. The Regional Board shall be composed of members of the
117 Region. Membership shall be of two types: those elected by the Regional Assembly
118 and those who serve ex-officio.

119 a) Members of the Regional Board elected at a Regional Assembly shall begin their
120 terms of office at the conclusion of the Assembly in which they are elected, and
121 serve until the end of the next Regional Assembly. Elected members who have
122 served two full consecutive terms, except officers, shall not be eligible for re-
123 election until one biennium has elapsed.

124 b) Elected members of the Regional Board have right of vote and shall be as follows:

125 1) The Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and chair of
126 RCOM all of whom could serve up to four consecutive terms;

127 2) Members at Large,

128 3) Moderators or Presidents of constituency fellowships as set forth in Section III
129 of these Guidelines; and

130 4) The regionally-elected representative to the General Board shall represent the
131 Region on the General Board of the Christian Church and shall be responsible
132 for reporting to the Board the actions of the General Board.

133 c) Ex-officio members of the Regional Board shall begin their terms of service at the
134 time they assume the responsibilities of their offices, and they shall remain
135 members only as long as they continue such service:

136 1) The Chairpersons of task groups during the lives of such task groups (with vote);

- 137 4. Responsibilities. Under broad policies determined by the Regional Assembly, the
 138 Regional Board shall:
- 139 a) Manage the affairs of the Region; including the responsibilities of all committees
 140 when the Region is not operating with a committee structure.
 - 141 b) Elect the Regional representatives to the General Board and General Assembly;
 - 142 c) Receive the report of the Nominating Committee;
 - 143 d) Develop and propose to the Regional Assembly long and short range goals for
 144 fulfilling the purposes of the Great River Region of the Christian Church (Disciples
 145 of Christ);
 - 146 e) Review the work of the Executive Committee;
 - 147 f) Determine the location and supervise the management of the Regional Office;
 - 148 g) Approve the Regional budget;
 - 149 h) Employ the Executive Regional Minister and staff; fix compensation and approve the
 150 conditions and duration of service for the Executive Regional Minister;
 - 151 i) Insure that the Executive Regional Minister maintains appropriate staffing patterns to
 152 implement the goals, purposes, and directions of the Regional Board;
 - 153 j) Serve as the Committee on Reference and Counsel for the Regional Assembly; and
 - 154 k) Carry out other responsibilities as are inherent in such governing bodies or which are
 155 assigned by the Regional Assembly.
 - 156 l) In fulfilling the responsibilities assigned to it, the Regional Board may delegate to
 157 individuals or committees such duties as it may see fit.
 - 158 m) Non-participating members, as determined by the Executive Committee, will be
 159 reviewed on an as need basis. The Executive Committee shall appoint
 160 replacements for non-participating members subject to board approval.
- 161 5. Voting Restrictions. Each member shall have one vote on matters coming before the
 162 Regional Board. In the case of an alternate form of meeting, such as a meeting held by
 163 teleconference or online, the same principle applies. In the event that two or more
 164 persons share an elected position (by special arrangement) only one vote shall apply.
- 165 6. Quorum. One-half of the voting membership of the Regional Board shall constitute a
 166 quorum.
- 167
- 168 C. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is comprised of the elected officers of the
 169 Region (Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, RCOM chair) and
 170 the Executive Regional Minister, who is a voting member of the committee.
- 171 1. Responsibilities. The Executive Committee shall serve as Trustees of the Region, with
 172 any two signatures of the officers which may include the Executive Regional Minister
 173 to be required on any legal document of the Region.
 - 174 2. The Executive committee serves as the personnel committee
 - 175 3. The Executive Committee may act on regional matters between Board meetings.
 - 176 4. Any actions taken shall be subject to review and ratification by the Regional Board
 177 Meetings at each meeting following Executive Committee actions.
 - 178 5. Regular meetings of the Executive Committee may be held via phone conference, email,
 179 or face-to-face and will be held at least once a quarter. Special meetings of the
 180 Executive Committee may be called by the Moderator in consultation with the
 181 Executive Regional Minister.

- 182 6. A report of meetings and actions will be presented to the Regional Board at the meeting
183 following each Executive Committee Meeting
184 7. Filling of Vacancies. The Regional Board shall fill vacancies occurring on the Executive
185 Committee.

187 SECTION III

188 Organization of Regional Work

- 189
190 A. General Organization. The work of the Region shall be carried out by authority of the
191 Regional Assembly and under the direction of the Regional Board. The work of the
192 Region shall be organized as determined by the Regional Board. The organization of the
193 Region is governed by its Operating Guidelines. Reports of the Region's activities will
194 be submitted to the Annual Meeting and all regular Regional Board meetings. This work
195 shall be organized in accord with best practices of nonprofit governance.
196
- 197 B. Regional Board Ministries.
- 198 1. Finance and Investment. The Finance and Investment ministry of the region will meet
199 quarterly. The committee shall be responsible for planning the annual budget; oversight
200 of the staff in the management of the Region's fiscal affairs; development and
201 recommendation of fiscal policies; liaison with denominational entities with regard to
202 financial planning and management; planning and implementing stewardship education
203 and development programs to assist individuals, congregations, and the Region to grow
204 in the faithful stewardship of the gifts God gives. They also act under the direction of
205 the Regional Board, as fiduciaries and are responsible for directing and monitoring the
206 investment management of Fund assets of the Region. The Regional Board is
207 responsible for establishing and approving investment policies and objectives for the
208 Region. The Investment Committee is directed to act on these policies and
209 objectives. As such, the Investment Committee is authorized to delegate certain
210 responsibilities to professional experts in various fields. These include, but are not
211 limited to
- 212 a) Investment Management Consultant. The consultant may assist the Investment
213 Committee in: establishing investment policy, objectives, and guidelines; selecting
214 investment managers; reviewing such managers over time; measuring and
215 evaluating investment performance; and other tasks as deemed appropriate.
- 216 b) Investment Manager. The investment manager has discretion to purchase, sell or
217 hold the specific securities that will be used to meet the Fund's objectives.
- 218 c) Custodian. The custodian will physically (or through agreement with a sub-
219 custodian) maintain possession of securities owned by the Fund, collect dividend
220 and interest payments, redeem maturing securities, and effect receipt and delivery
221 following purchases and sales. The custodian may also perform regular accounting
222 of all assets owned, purchased, or sold, as well as movement of assets into and out
223 of the Fund accounts.
- 224 d) Additional specialists such as attorneys, auditors, and others may be employed by the
225 Investment Committee to assist in meeting its responsibilities and obligations to
226 administer Fund assets prudently.

- 227 e) The Investment Committee will not reserve any control over investment decisions,
 228 with the exception of specific limitations described in the investment policy of the
 229 Region. Managers will be held responsible and accountable to achieve the
 230 objectives stated in the Region's Investment Policy. While it is not believed that
 231 the limitations will hamper investment managers, each manager should request
 232 modifications that they deem appropriate. If such experts employed are also
 233 deemed to be fiduciaries, they must acknowledge such in writing. All expenses for
 234 such experts must be customary and reasonable, and will be borne by the Fund as
 235 deemed appropriate and necessary.
- 236 f) The Investment Committee will determine the appropriate formula for distributions
 237 from the invested funds and estimate the amounts that will be made available to the
 238 Region for use each year. Those amounts will be forwarded to the Finance
 239 Committee for their consideration in building the budget for the Region.
- 240 g) Members of the Investment Committee shall include the Treasurer, the Executive
 241 Regional Minister, and three (3) members of the Regional Board. All serve as
 242 members with vote.
- 243 2. Long-Range Planning. This committee will meet at least once yearly and more frequently
 244 as the work demands. Key issues such as determining the need for capital campaigns,
 245 location or relocation of regional property, changes in the ministry or structure of the
 246 region shall first be addressed by this committee. The Moderator-Elect serves as
 247 chair.
- 248 3. Regional Committee on the Ministry. The chair of this committee is elected at the
 249 Assembly and serves as an officer of the region. The committee meets separately from
 250 the Board and is guided by the board approved Regional Committee on Ministry
 251 Policies and Guidelines.
- 252 a) Members of this committee are selected by the chairperson of RCOM and the
 253 Executive Regional Minister
- 254 b) RCOM shall be responsible for church vocational guidance and recruitment; policies
 255 and programs in the placement, ethics, counseling, discipline, ordination and in-
 256 service development for ministry; relations with seminaries concerning ministerial
 257 preparation; preparation and supervision of Commissioned ministers; and other
 258 matters relating to church vocations and the ministry of the church.
- 259 c) RCOM will meet at least twice yearly.
- 260 d) Matters of policy and practice as well as the approval of candidates for ordination
 261 will be addressed by this committee.
- 262 4. Mission. This committee is intended to engage individuals, small groups, and ministry
 263 teams of various natures from across the region in mission. This committee will meet at
 264 least yearly to involve the Region as well as inform and empower local congregations to
 265 extend ministry beyond the Region and congregation. The committee will network
 266 opportunities for mission such as: social and legislative activities; mission trips; training
 267 mission workshops; interfaith activities; and general church priorities and programs
 268 (Reconciliation, Week of Compassion, Volunteers in Mission, Global Ministries,
 269 Miracle Days, etc). This committee will solicit grant requests and disburse Regional
 270 Reconciliation funds according to its policies and guidelines.
- 271 5. New Congregation. This committee will consist of six (6) people and will meet at least
 272 once yearly, but more frequently as their work demands. Responsibilities include

273 demographic studies of the region with an eye to church planting, guiding the region
 274 and congregations in the establishment and nurture of new congregations, and
 275 encouraging congregations to consider various methods of initiating or participating in
 276 new church starts. The Moderator-Elect serves as chair

- 277 6. Nominating. The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for submitting a slate of
 278 Regional officers and elected Regional board members to the Regional Assembly.
 279 a) The committee will abide by the Principles stated in Section I of these Operating
 280 Guidelines.
 281 b) Members-at-large of the Regional Board will serve on this committee and it will
 282 meet as needed.
 283 c) Written consent will be secured from each nominee before his/her name is presented
 284 as a candidate for election.
 285 d) All constituency fellowship groups shall report their elected officers to the
 286 Nominating Committee. These officers will be included in the Nominating
 287 Committee's report to the Regional Assembly as information only.
 288 e) The report of the Nominating Committee shall be submitted in writing to the
 289 Moderator prior to the opening date of the Assembly.
 290 f) The report of the Nominating Committee shall be published and distributed in the
 291 official publication of the Great River Region of the Christian Church.
 292 g) Write-in candidates/nominees at the Regional Assembly will be handled in the same
 293 manner as emergency resolutions.

- 294 7. Personnel. This committee will meet twice annually and shall be responsible for
 295 establishing the policies related to all paid personnel of the Region; evaluating
 296 personnel performance of the Executive Regional Minister; recommending
 297 compensation for personnel; assisting the Executive Regional Minister when counsel or
 298 assistance is requested in handling matters of personal and/or pastoral concern of
 299 staff. Confidentiality will be respected insofar as the Committee deems it
 300 necessary. The Executive Committee serves as the Personnel committee and is chaired
 301 by the Moderator-Elect.
 302

303 C. Constituency Fellowship Groups. Constituency fellowship group leaders shall be elected by
 304 their own members. The size of the cabinet of each group shall be determined by its
 305 function and budget, which is a part of the regional budget. Should new constituent
 306 fellowship groups desire regional recognition and desire a voting position on the regional
 307 board, they shall submit a letter of application to the regional board and include their
 308 purpose, organization, leadership and plans for work in the region. The Regional Board
 309 will be the body that determines such recognition and will adapt the Bylaws
 310 accordingly. Constituency Fellowship Groups currently recognized by the Region are:

- 311 1. Disciples Men
 312 2. Disciples Women
 313 3. Christian Youth Fellowship
 314 4. Mississippi Christian Missionary Convention – Mississippi congregations associated with
 315 the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
 316 5. Arkansas State Fellowship – Arkansas congregations associated with the National
 317 Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
 318 6. The Regional Elders

319
 320 E. Task Groups. Task Groups may be established by the Regional Board as needed to develop
 321 new emphases to fulfill the mission of the Region, to enhance congregational life, or for
 322 other purposes. In particular, suggestions made by the Executive Committee may be
 323 developed through such task groups. These groups will be appointed by the Regional
 324 Board and serve only as long as necessary to complete the assigned task.

325 SECTION IV

326 Regional Assembly

327
 328 A. Purpose. The Regional Assembly is a gathering of the members of the Great River Region of
 329 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) convened in the fall of even numbered years,
 330 usually the first weekend of November. The program and business of the Regional
 331 Assembly shall include worship, education of its members, and the transaction of
 332 business. In organizing for business the Regional Assembly shall receive and act upon
 333 proposed program and policy, reports, resolutions, other items duly referred to it, and
 334 elect leadership of the Region.

335
 336 B. Time and place. The specific time and place is determined by the Regional Board. There will
 337 be no less than 30 days notification to the membership. Under extraordinary
 338 circumstances, the Regional Board may call special meetings of the Regional
 339 Assembly. In the event of an extraordinary meeting of the Regional Assembly, the same
 340 notice shall apply. Said extraordinary meeting of the Assembly would be called by the
 341 Regional Board. The Executive Committee serves as the Time and Place Committee.

342
 343 C. Voting Privileges. All members of the Region who register for the Regional Assembly shall
 344 have all the privileges of the Assembly except that voting privileges shall be limited to
 345 the following:

- 346 1. Ministers. All ministers with standing in the Region.
- 347 2. Regional Board. Members of the Regional Board not otherwise voting members.
- 348 3. Congregations. Each congregation of the Region shall be entitled to have three voting
 349 representatives, plus one additional voting representative for each 100 participating
 350 members, or major fraction thereof, over the first one hundred.
 - 351 a) These voting representatives shall be in addition to the ministers with standing in the
 352 Region and Regional Board members who hold membership in the congregation.
 - 353 b) Care should be taken, by each congregation, to be sure that to the best of its ability
 354 laymen, laywomen and youths who are a part of its voting representation.
 - 355 c) Term of Office. Voting members of the Regional Assembly shall serve from the
 356 beginning of one Regional Assembly to the beginning of the next regular Regional
 357 Assembly.
- 358 4. Limitation. No person shall have more than one vote in the Regional Assembly, and no
 359 person shall vote in absentia or by proxy.

360
 361 D. Regional Assembly Planning. The Regional Board shall appoint a Regional Assembly
 362 Planning Committee once the time and place for the next Assembly has been
 363 determined. The chair will serve on the board and the host pastor (or designee) shall
 364 serve on the Regional Assembly Planning Committee. The committee will plan the

365 following aspects of the regional assembly: program, worship, appropriate installations
 366 or recognitions, and fellowship. They will provide the host church with the framework
 367 within which the host church works on the local arrangements such as meals, hospitality,
 368 decorations, etc. The costs of the Committee's work shall be covered by the Regional
 369 budget, specifically the budget for the Regional Assembly. The chair shall make reports
 370 to the Regional Board throughout the planning process.

371
 372 E. Credentials Committee. The Executive Committee serves as the Credentials Committee and
 373 may enlist the assistance of staff and volunteers in obtaining the information needed to do
 374 their work. The Credentials Committee shall inform congregations 4 to 6 months prior to
 375 the date of the Regional Assembly of the number of representatives they may send and of
 376 the process for registering their representatives. The Credentials committee will certify
 377 that voting representatives have been properly accredited, and that each church has
 378 registered the correct number of representatives.

379
 380 F. Committee on Reference and Counsel. The Regional Board serves as the Committee on
 381 Reference and Counsel and shall be responsible for proper handling of emergency
 382 resolutions and write-in nominations. The Committee will refer to "Rules of Procedure"
 383 from Section B of the Organization and Function of the Committee on Reference and
 384 Counsel from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for guidance in their work.

385
 386 G. Business Items. Business to be conducted at each Regional Assembly includes the election of
 387 officers, and annual reports from all committees, fellowship constituency groups, task
 388 groups, staff and partners in ministry (units/agencies with which the GRRCC (DOC) has
 389 covenantal relationships.) The Assembly will consider other business as forwarded by the
 390 Regional Board in accordance with these Operating Guidelines.

- 391 1. The Governing board of recognized congregations (or their representative governing
 392 boards), and the Regional Board may submit business items for consideration by the
 393 Regional Assembly
- 394 2. Business items originating beyond the work of the Regional Board must be submitted to
 395 the office of the Executive Regional Minister no less than 60 days prior to the opening
 396 of the Regional Assembly.
- 397 3. Emergency Resolutions and Procedures. An item of business may be considered an
 398 emergency if its content is of such nature that it could not have been regularly filed 60
 399 days prior to the Assembly. Such items of business may be filed when submitted by
 400 five or more voting representatives from not less than three recognized congregations to
 401 the Board. The Committee on Reference and Counsel shall decide whether such items
 402 are emergencies and, if so, make appropriate recommendations to the Regional
 403 Assembly as to their disposition.

404 H. Quorum. A quorum for the transaction of business by the Regional Assembly shall be 40
 405 percent of the voting members certified by the Credentials Committee as registered and
 406 present at the Assembly. If a quorum is not present at any business session, matters to be
 407 considered will be referred to the next business session. If quorum is not present in the
 408 final business session, matters that were to be considered shall be referred to the Regional
 409 Board. The Regional Board may take interim action within established policy of the
 410 Regional Assembly, subject in all matters to the review of its actions at the next Regional

411 Assembly meeting. Except where otherwise defined in the Bylaws or these Operating
412 Guidelines, the parliamentary procedure of the Assembly shall be governed by the most
413 current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

414

415 I. Parliamentarian. The Moderator shall name a qualified individual to act as Parliamentarian
416 for the Regional Assembly.

417

418 THIS DOCUMENT IS THE CURRENT DOCUMENT REPRESENTING CHANGES MADE
419 THROUGH THE REGIONAL BOARD MEETING SEPTEMBER 6, 2014.

420

421 Barbara E. Jones
422 Corporate Secretary
423 Executive Regional Minister

Jennie Gregory
Moderator
2012-2014