

First Christian Church Constitution

(amended July 1, 2018)

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the First Christian Church of Fort Smith, Arkansas, in faithful response to the will and purposes of God as revealed through Jesus Christ and God's continuing revelation in the world, do hereby adopt this constitution on this 19th day of the month of February in the year 1995.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this congregation shall be First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Fort Smith, Arkansas, affiliated with an integral part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this congregation is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ in faithful response to God's will and purposes as revealed through Jesus Christ and to the world; to seek in all persons a faith and commitment to Jesus Christ; to serve the community of which it is a part; to bring the gospel message to bear upon society; to sustain and be sustained by the general and regional manifestations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); to work cooperatively with Christians in other communions; to seek the oneness of the body of Christ; and in all ways to seek to make known the love of God.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of this congregation, as a part of the whole family of God on earth, shall consist of the following: those who are now members of the congregation; those who shall unite with it by confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, giving expression of their faith through baptism and commitment to Him; and those who unite by transfer of membership, thereby reaffirming their faith and commitment to Christ. Voting privileges shall be accorded to all members.

First Christian Church is committed to being a people of grace and welcome to all God's children though differing in race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, physical or mental ability, political stance or theological perspective. We affirm the gifts of all Christians celebrating that all people are part of God's good creation.

ARTICLE IV. GENERAL BOARD, OFFICERS, ELDERS, DEACONS, TRUSTEES, EMERITUS MEMBERS, CABINET, ADMINISTRATIVE MINISTRIES

Section A. General Board

The congregation shall have a general board elected by the membership of the church. The general board shall be responsible to the congregation and have authority to act on behalf of the congregation when it is not in a congregational meeting.

The general board shall be composed of members as set forth in the bylaws and for terms of office therein stated.

The general board shall be responsible for receiving reports from its minister(s), officers, cabinet members, administrative ministries, committees and constituency groups within the congregation. It shall establish by its action the program and budget of the congregation. It shall be responsible also for conducting all legal business matters of the congregation and carrying out such other responsibilities as may be defined in the bylaws.

Stated meetings of the general board shall be held at least four times each year. Special meetings of the general board shall be called by the chairperson of the board upon request of the minister(s) or ten or more members of the congregation. Notice of special meetings shall be made by telephone, announcement at a Sunday morning worship service or by mail at least seven days prior to the meeting. The purpose, date, time and place of the meeting shall be indicated in each notice.

Section B. Officers

The chairperson of the general board shall appoint a nominating committee to present to the general board a suggested slate of officers including chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer and historian. These officers shall be elected in June by the general board members and shall serve as officers of the congregation, the general board and the cabinet as set forth in the bylaws.

Section C. Elders, Deacons

The congregation shall have elders and deacons composed of men and women. Their election, qualifications and responsibilities shall be as set forth in the bylaws.

Section D. Trustees

The congregation shall have trustees. Their election, qualifications and responsibilities shall be as set forth in the bylaws.

Section E. Emeritus Members

The congregation may have emeritus members. Their election, qualifications and responsibilities shall be set forth in the bylaws.

Section F. Cabinet

The congregation shall have a cabinet which shall be responsible for coordination of the ministries of the congregation and generally assisting the minister(s) in administering the same. The cabinet shall be composed of members as set forth in the bylaws.

Section G. Administrative Ministries, Committees

The congregation through its general board, shall establish administrative ministries, committees and other constituency groups necessary for the work of the congregation as set forth in the bylaws.

ARTICLE V. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Congregational meetings shall be held at least annually in the month of June. Notice of all stated or special congregational meetings shall be announced at a regular Sunday morning worship service of the congregation at least two weeks in advance of the meeting and by means of the church newsletter or a written notice sent through the mail and postmarked at least ten days before the meeting. Purpose, date, time and place of meeting shall be indicated in each notice.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any congregational meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting on the amendment, provided written notice of the proposed amendment has been sent through the mail to members of the congregation at least ten days prior to the date the vote is to be taken, or the proposed amendment has been read at or following two successive Sunday morning worship services immediately prior to the date the vote is taken.