

**CONSTITUTION
OF
WEBSTER GROVES CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ)**
Effective July 1, 2009

PREAMBLE

As members of Webster Groves Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), we confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and proclaim Him Lord and Savior of the World. In Christ's name and by His grace we accept our mission of witness and service to all people. We rejoice in God, maker of heaven and earth, and in God's covenant of love that binds us to God and to one another. Through baptism into Christ, we enter into newness of life and are made one with the whole people of God. In the communion of the Holy Spirit we are joined together in discipleship and in obedience to Christ. At the table of the Lord, we celebrate with thanksgiving the saving acts and presence of Christ. Within the universal church we receive the gift of ministry and the light of scripture. In the bonds of Christian faith we yield ourselves to God in service that we may serve the one whose kingdom has no end. Blessing, glory and honor be to God forever. AMEN. *Preamble to the Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).*

ARTICLE 1. NAME AND AUTHORITY

The name of this congregation shall be Webster Groves Christian Church. This congregation is affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Christian Church in Mid-America, Inc.

ARTICLE 2. PURPOSES

Webster Groves Christian Church is a worshipping, learning and serving congregation that confesses Christ as Lord. The purposes of the congregation are to:

- A. Call and nourish persons in their discipleship to Jesus Christ and His cause, both within the fellowship of the church and in their life in the world.
- B. Provide worship experiences that are spiritually stimulating and challenging, morally demanding, and aesthetically appealing, and which encourage emotional health and social responsibility.
- C. Educate persons of all ages in the Judeo-Christian tradition as found in the Scriptures.
- D. Uphold a basic principle of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that there is liberty of thought and openness regarding theology and issues of public and social concern.
- E. Nurture spiritual growth in order to help persons reach their full potential as caring, loving and serving people.
- F. Encourage persons in acts of service toward those in need in our community and around the world.
- G. Sponsor and support auxiliary organizations of women, men and youth in their programs of education, fellowship and service.
- H. Utilize our facilities for our own worship and educational needs and as a center of community service activities.

- I. Maintain facilities, organizational structures, staff and financial resources to sustain the work and witness of Jesus Christ and as contained in these purposes.

ARTICLE 3. MEMBERSHIP

The members of this congregation consist of those united either by confession of faith and baptism or by transfer of membership.

- A. Voting privilege shall be the right of all who are members.
- B. For the purpose of reporting, program planning, organization and carrying out the functions for which this congregation exists, two categories of membership shall be recognized: participating and non-participating.
 1. A participating member attends, supports, or manifests concern for the congregation.
 2. A non-participating member exercises no continuing interest in the congregation.
 3. Members who have not participated for more than three years shall be removed from reports and lists of participating members.

ARTICLE 4. ELECTED LAY LEADERS

To be eligible for election as an at-large Board member, Board officer, Elder or Deacon a candidate must financially support the church, support the purposes of the congregation and regularly attend worship services.

- A. The term of office for all elected lay leaders shall be two years, commencing with the beginning of the Congregational year following election.
- B. Elected lay leaders may serve an unlimited number of terms in a particular position of leadership. No more than two (2) terms may be served consecutively.
- C. Lay leaders filling unexpired terms of more than one year are deemed to have served one full term.

ARTICLE 5. THE CHURCH BOARD, BOARD OFFICERS

A. Duties of the Church Board (Hereinafter referred to as the “Board”)

1. The Board shall act in the best interest of the congregation.
2. The Board shall transact the general business for and in the name of the congregation.
3. The Board shall establish and implement its organization, and conduct, manage and control the activities and affairs of the church consistent with the Scriptures.
4. The Board shall establish policies, practices, and operating procedures for the church consistent with the purposes of the church and guide the congregation in achieving its purposes stated in Article 2.
5. The Board shall establish Ministry Teams to guide the congregation in the areas deemed appropriate to fulfill the purposes of the Congregation.
6. Ministry Team Leaders shall be selected by the Senior Minister and the incoming Board Chair from the existing and newly-elected Board Members. Ministry Team Leaders’ appointments are for one (1) year, eligible for re-appointment for a second year.

7. The Board shall present a slate of Board members, Board officers, Elders and Deacons to the Congregation at its annual meeting.
8. The Board shall fill all vacant elected lay leader positions with 12 or more months remaining in the term, and may fill vacant lay leader positions with less than 12 months remaining in the term.

B. Church Board Membership

1. The Church Board shall consist of sixteen (16) at-large members, three (3) Board Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary), one (1) representative from the Elders, one (1) representative from the Diaconate, the Senior Minister and all associate ministers. These are the voting members of the Board.
2. Eight (8) of the 16 at-large members shall be elected annually in alternating years.

C. Board Meetings

1. The Board shall hold regular meetings at a time, day, and place selected by the Board unless otherwise determined by the Board or due to extenuating circumstances. Under no circumstances shall the Board meet fewer than four (4) times each congregational year.
2. Special meetings of the Board shall be held upon call by the Chair or written request of five Board members.
3. A majority of the voting members of the Board shall constitute a quorum. All Board meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order and shall be open to any participating member of the congregation.

D. Duties of the Board Officers

1. The Chair shall preside over regular and special meetings of the Board and congregation and shall perform all other usual duties of such office.
2. The Vice-Chair shall perform such duties as may be assigned and, in the absence of the Chair, fulfill the duties of the Chair.
3. The Secretary shall record and keep minutes of all regular and special meetings of the Board and congregation, and perform such other duties as may be assigned.

ARTICLE 6. ELDERS

A board of Elders shall be elected to serve as the spiritual leaders of the congregation.

A. Board of Elders

1. The number of Elders shall be evaluated annually by the Chair of the Elders, the Board Chair and the Ministers based on the number of participating members and the needs of the congregation.
2. One-half of the members of the Board of Elders shall be elected annually in alternating years.

B. Duties of Elders

The Elders shall:

1. Meet regularly to guide the spiritual growth and care of the congregation and carry out its duties.
2. Serve at the Lord's Table.
3. Encourage by example and word the outreach, evangelistic, educational and stewardship responsibilities of the congregation.
4. Minister to families in times of sickness and bereavement.
5. In cooperation with the ministers, take communion to shut-ins.
6. Be available to the congregation and ministers for consultation concerning pastoral relationships and the spiritual welfare of the congregation.
7. Elect a Chair of Elders to serve for a term of one (1) year and to supervise and coordinate the services of the Elders.
8. Elect a representative at the first meeting of each congregational year to serve on the Board for a term of one (1) year.

C. Elder Emeritus

Election to the office of Elder Emeritus shall constitute the highest honor our congregation can bestow upon one of its members. Only those who have given long and meritorious service to Webster Groves Christian Church shall be eligible for such office honor.

1. The Board of Elders shall bring recommendations to the Board for those to be honored as Elder Emeritus. Upon approval of the Board, those so chosen shall be submitted to the congregation for election.
2. An Elder Emeritus is exempt from the duties of Elders.

D. Minister Elder

An ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), upon becoming a member of the congregation, may serve as a Minister Elder. A Minister Elder is exempt from the duties of Elders.

ARTICLE 7. THE DIACONATE

A board of Deacons shall be elected to serve the congregation.

A. Diaconate

1. The number of Deacons needed shall be evaluated annually by the Chair of the Deacons, the Board Chair and Ministers based on the number of participating members and the needs of the congregation.
2. One-half of the members of the Board of Diaconate shall be elected annually in alternating years.

B. Duties of Deacons

The Diaconate shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Meet as required to carry out its duties.
2. Preparation and service of communion as scheduled.
3. Encourage by example and word the outreach, evangelistic, educational and stewardship responsibilities of the congregation.
4. Assist with the ushering, receiving of offerings and baptismal services.
5. Cooperate in ministering to the needy.
6. Elect a Chair to serve for a term of one (1) year and to supervise and coordinate the activities of the Deacons.
7. Elect a representative at the first meeting of each congregational year to serve on the Board for a term of one (1) year.

C. Deacon Emeritus

Members of the Diaconate who have given long and meritorious service to Webster Groves Christian Church shall be eligible for the ~~office~~ honorary title of Deacon Emeritus.

1. The Diaconate shall bring recommendations to the Board for those to be honored as Deacon Emeritus. Upon approval of the Board, those so chosen shall then be submitted to the congregation for election.
2. A Deacon Emeritus shall be exempt from the duties of Deacons.

ARTICLE 8. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- A. The Board Chair shall appoint a seven member Nominating Committee that serves for one year, at least four of whom are not members of the board, which serves for one year.
- B. The committee shall submit to the Board an election slate to fill expiring and vacant positions for at-large Board members, Board officers, Elders and the Diaconate.
- C. All nominees shall be presented to the Congregation for election at the annual Congregational meeting.
- D. Nominations may be made from the floor of the Congregational Meeting for Board officers, Board members, Elders and Deacons, so long as the nominee has agreed to be nominated.
- E. Vacancies arising in the elected membership of the Board shall be filled by the Board. The Nominating Committee shall, at the Board's direction, nominate candidates to fill Board, Elder, and Deacon positions vacated during the Congregational year.

ARTICLE 9. MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

- A. An annual meeting of the congregation shall be held in May, at a time, day and place selected by the Chair of the Board for the purpose of the annual election of the membership of the Board, Elders and Diaconate and approval of the operating budget. This meeting shall take place at a time when the congregation meets as one.

- B. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Chair of the Board, by vote of the Board, or upon written petition of ten per cent (10%) of the participating membership of the congregation, provided that notice of such meeting states the nature of the business to be transacted.
- C. Written notice of all regular or special meetings of the congregation shall be given by publication in the Sunday bulletin for two successive Sundays immediately preceding the date of the proposed meeting and by congregational newsletter or congregational-wide e-mail notification at least two (2) weeks in advance of the proposed meeting.
- D. A quorum of the congregation for the conduct of business shall consist of twenty-five per cent (25%) of the participating membership of the congregation.
- E. Business meetings of the congregation shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE 10. CONGREGATIONAL YEAR

The fiscal and congregational year shall commence each July 1 and end the following June 30.

ARTICLE 11. THE MINISTER AND ASSOCIATE MINISTER

A. Duties

The Ministers of the congregation shall perform the duties pertaining to that office and shall be spiritual leaders of the congregation. All ministers shall be ex-officio members of all groups, committees and divisions of the Board and the congregation.

B. Selection of Minister and Associate Ministers

1. To receive a call to the ministerial staff of Webster Groves Christian Church a candidate must be a Disciples of Christ minister "with standing" or a minister from another denomination who qualifies for ministerial authorization from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Mid-America.
2. A committee of five (5) members, nominated by the President of the Board and approved by the Board, shall be responsible for recommending a prospective Minister or Associate Minister to the Board.
3. The Board shall consider the recommendation of the committee and, if approved, recommend the prospective minister or associate minister to the congregation. It shall be the policy of the congregation to consider only one prospective minister at a time.
4. The recommendation of the Board must be accepted by at least two thirds (2/3) of the congregation present and voting in a regular or special business meeting of the congregation before a call can be extended.
5. The term of a ministry shall be for an indefinite period and may be terminated by either party upon sixty (60) days' notice. The minutes of the Board shall set forth the salary to be paid and other terms and conditions of the call.

ⁱARTICLE 12. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any annual or special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting on the amendment, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment has been given to the membership in the manner set forth in Article 9, at least two (2) weeks in advance of the date of the meeting at which the vote is to be taken.

ⁱ Effective July 1, 2009. Approved by the Webster Groves Christian Church Congregation on May 17, 2009.