

(This revised copy of "The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest" is printed in this program and docket book for your information. It was presented to the Regional Council at its August 2002 meeting. Action was taken to live into the revised "Design," with the anticipation that a final revised "Design" will be brought to the 2004 Regional Assembly for approval. Bold print denotes revisions, except for titles, which were bold already.)

**DESIGN
FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
IN THE SOUTHWEST**

(as recommended for amendment 2002)

PREAMBLE

1. As members of the 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 the covenant of love
which 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 are made one with the whole people of God.
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
that we may serve the One
whose kingdom has no end.
Blessing, glory and honor
be to God forever. Amen¹

2. Transcending all barriers within the human family such as race and culture, the church manifests itself in ordered communities of disciples bound together for worship, for fellowship, and for service, and in varied structures for mission, witness, and mutual discipline, and for the nurture and renewal of its members.

3. In order that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest may faithfully express the ministry of Christ made known through scripture, may provide comprehensiveness in witness, mission and service, may assist congregations in fulfilling their ministries with faithfulness in Christian stewardship, may assure both unity and diversity, and may advance responsible ecumenical relationships, as a response to God's covenant, we commit ourselves to one another in adopting this Design.

NAME

4. The name shall be the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest, hereinafter referred to as the CCSW. The Articles of Incorporation shall reflect the name as a not-for-profit religious corporation chartered under the laws of the state of Texas.

PURPOSE

5. The CCSW subscribes to the principles and purposes of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) **in the United States and Canada** and is a region² of that church. **The CCSW is made up of areas, which function as a part of the Regional Church and subscribe to the mission statement of the CCSW.**

6. **CCSW Mission and Priorities:**

- a. **Our Mission**

- (1) **In response to God's call in Jesus Christ "to become the Gospel, to share the Gospel and to serve in mission from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth," the mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest is to be a source of vision, nurture, wholeness and mutual accountability in order to serve and to strengthen congregations.**

- b. **Our Priorities**

- (1) **Provide vision and spiritual leadership.**
- (2) **Provide support to congregations and clergy.**
- (3) **Structure the work of the region so that primary decision-making arises out of congregations and through the areas.**
- (4) **Assist areas and congregations in establishing new congregations.**
- (5) **Challenge and equip congregations to reach out and to minister to children, youth and young adults.**

- (6) **Intentionally seek ethnic participation and representation in decision-making processes.**
 - (7) **Provide assistance and consultative help to congregations for their program needs.**
 - (8) **Facilitate inter-congregational activities.**
 - (9) **Provide systems for effective communication that will strengthen our connection.**
7. Further, the CCSW will provide flexible channels through which the congregations can make decisions which will affect their own deeper inner life by exercising their responsibility to the church as it seeks
- a. to extend the ministry of Christ in mission, witness and service among people and social structures;
 - b. to establish, receive and nurture congregations by providing help, counsel, and pastoral care to members, ministers, and congregations in their mutual relationship, and by relating them to the world-wide mission and witness of the whole church; and
 - c. to relate the three manifestations of the church--congregational, regional (including area) and general--to each other in the functioning of the whole church.

MEMBERSHIP

- 8. Congregations listed in the Southwest region section of statistical pages of the current Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are members of the CCSW. **The region may establish or recognize area organizations within its boundaries, each of which shall subscribe to the mission of the CCSW.** Each congregation is entitled to send voting delegates to the Regional Assembly of the church and is encouraged to join with and participate in the region, area and other cooperative structures of the church.
- 9. Congregations not listed in the current Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), may become members of the CCSW by Regional Council approval of the request for such listing.³
- 10. As a member of the whole body of Christ, every person who is a member of a recognized congregation of the CCSW thereby holds membership in the CCSW and in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
- 11. Other units and institutions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) located within or related to the Southwest region holding membership in the CCSW are: **Brite Divinity School**, Texas Christian University, Jarvis Christian College, Juliette Fowler Homes,

Inman Christian Center, **NBA** Patriot Heights, and **Southwest** Good Samaritan Ministries. Each of these units or institutions retains its identity and corporate style and no part of the assets of any one shall be vested in or liabilities assumed by the CCSW by reason of such membership.

12. An organization of a general administrative unit of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), located within or related to the Southwest region, may become a member of the CCSW by submitting an application in writing **stating the desire of the organization to subscribe to the purpose of the CCSW, first to the Executive Committee and if approved by the Executive Committee, they will forward it** to the Regional Council **for approval by a** vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those members of the Regional Council present.
13. The **Executive Committee will first approve any organization's application and then forward it to the** Regional Council **who then** shall determine procedures of recognition whereby other persons and groups who support the purposes of the CCSW, but who do not have access to membership in a recognized congregation, may participate in general and regional work of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
14. Recognized constituency groups and minority fellowships (**Brite Divinity School**, Texas Christian Missionary Fellowship, Hispanic Convention of the Southwest, **Disciples Men**, Department of Church Women and Southwest Christian Youth Fellowship) retain their identity for the development of their specific and unique programs. Their members already are members of the CCSW according to paragraphs 8 and 10.

OFFICERS

15. There shall be two categories of officers:
 - a. The elected officers of the CCSW shall be a **Moderator**, a **Moderator-Elect**, a **Secretary** and a **Treasurer**. These officers shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee, with due regard to distribution between ministers, laymen, and laywomen **with ethnic diversity and gender balance taken into consideration**, and elected by the Regional Assembly for two (2) years. The term of each officer shall commence upon adjournment of the assembly at which elected and shall continue until the adjournment of the assembly following.
 - b. Corporate officers of the CCSW shall be the **Regional Minister** and **President**, elected as specified in paragraph 35, **the Moderator, Moderator-Elect**, the **Secretary** and **Treasurer** of CCSW.
 - (1) The **Moderator** shall preside at the sessions of the Regional Assembly, the Regional Council and the Executive Committee and assume such other responsibilities as may be assigned by these bodies. The **Moderator** is a member ex-officio of all commissions, committees, task forces or groups of the church. Where appropriate, the **Moderator** will be

involved in the work of **the** Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and interdenominational and ecumenical bodies. The **Moderator** shall appoint a **Parliamentarian** who shall serve during the business sessions of the Regional Assembly and the Regional Council, advising on **Parliamentary** questions which may arise.

- (2) The **Moderator-Elect** shall assist the **Moderator** in presiding at sessions of the Regional Assembly, the Regional Council and the Executive Committee, and assume such other responsibilities as may be assigned by these bodies. The **Moderator-Elect** shall be the principal aide to the **Moderator** and shall become **Moderator** upon the completion of the **Moderator's** term.
- (3) The **Secretary** shall properly record the minutes of all regular and called meetings of the Regional Council and of the Executive Committee, as well as the proceedings of the Regional Assembly and any other meetings of the membership. Such minutes shall be prepared and delivered to the **Regional Minister and President** to be reproduced and distributed to the officers and members of the Regional Council **no later than fifteen (15) days after each such meetings**. The permanent file of all minutes shall be kept in the CCSW office.
- (4) The **Treasurer**, in cooperation with the CCSW business office, shall oversee the receipts and disbursements of CCSW funds in keeping with the authorization of the Regional Assembly, the Regional Council or the Executive Committee when each is acting within the scope of its authority.
- (5) The duties of the **Secretary** and **Treasurer** may, with the permission of the Regional Council, be delegated, but the responsibility for the discharge of these duties resides in the respective officers.
- (6) All officers of the CCSW shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the discharge of their various responsibilities. Such reimbursement for travel **by** automobile shall be set by the Regional Council.

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

16. The CCSW shall have a biennial assembly in each even-numbered year, alternating with the biennial General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at a time and place to be determined by the Regional Assembly. At each Regional Assembly the CCSW and its member units and institutions shall submit reports of their activities and finances in such form as may be appropriate.
17. All members of the CCSW 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. Each member congregation shall be entitled to two (2) voting **delegates**. Each congregation of more than one hundred (100) participating members shall be entitled to one (1) additional voting **delegate** for each additional one hundred (100) participating members, or major fraction thereof. These voting **delegates** shall be in addition to persons holding the office of ordained or licensed minister. Ordained and licensed ministers residing in the region who have ministerial standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), shall be voting **delegates**.
 - b. Each member unit or institution listed in paragraph 11 shall be entitled to three voting **delegates**.
 - c. Each member of the Regional Council of the CCSW shall be a voting **delegate** to the assembly with full privileges.
 - d. No person shall have more than one (1) vote in the Regional Assembly, and no person shall vote in absentia or by proxy.
 - e. Congregations, units and institutions may name alternates to replace voting **delegates** provided for in paragraphs above who are unable to attend. **Name of the person that is replacing voting delegate should be submitted in writing, signed by the board chair and pastor, to the credentials chair (member institutions or other member units will have a legally authorized person sign) no later than ten (10) days prior to the Regional Assembly.**
18. The Regional Assembly shall, **in consultation with the Moderator, Moderator-Elect, and Regional Minister and President of the CCSW,**
- a. plan and conduct assembly programs for worship, for the education of its members, for fellowship and for the transaction of business;
 - b. receive and act upon proposed policy and program, reports and resolutions, and other items of business duly referred to it as hereinafter provided;
 - c. elect officers of the CCSW;
 - d. elect persons to positions for which it is responsible on boards, committees and ecumenical units;
 - e. approve the CCSW share of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ financial goals, approve the general budget for the CCSW **for the next odd-numbered year only** and make other financial determinations for which it is responsible. **(The Regional Council approves the budget for even-numbered years.)**
 - f. conduct all business for which it is responsible. Except as provided for in this Design, a majority of the voting representatives, present and voting, in any business shall be sufficient to adopt any motion, or take any action, except that resolutions will require a two-thirds (2/3) **vote** for approval;

- g. provide for such committees as it may deem necessary, including but not limited to the following:
- (1) the Credentials Committee, composed of not less than five (5) nor more than seven (7) members. This committee, including the chairperson, shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. The committee shall receive from the **Regional Minister and President** a list of the voting representatives and alternates accredited by the member congregations, and other institutions and units holding membership in the CCSW, and shall examine the credentials of such voting representatives. The committee shall determine through the registration process the total number of such voting representatives and alternates present, and shall certify this number to the **Moderator** prior to the first scheduled business session.
 - (2) the Assembly Program Committee, composed of not less than ten (10) nor more than twelve (12) members. This committee shall plan and be responsible for the presentation of the program of the assembly. The chairperson and members of the committee shall be appointed by the **Moderator** in consultation with the Executive Committee.
 - (3) the assembly Local Arrangements Committee, chaired by a person resident in the city where the Regional Assembly is to be held. The committee shall be responsible for all physical arrangements relative to the assembly and shall work with the staff person designated director of the assembly. The chairperson and members of this committee shall be appointed by the **Moderator** in consultation with the Executive Committee, the host area minister and ministers of congregations in the host city and the area **Moderator/President**.
 - (4) the Time and Place Committee, composed of not less than three (3) nor more than five (5) members. The chairperson of this committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. Invitations shall be solicited from prospective host cities, and the committee shall determine the adequacy of meeting and housing facilities in such cities, shall examine and weigh all factors relating to the selection of the site for the assembly, and shall submit its recommendation **through the office of the Regional Minister and President at least 90 days in advance of the meeting of the Regional Assembly to allow sufficient time for the Regional Council to review and refer it with appropriate recommendation to the Regional Assembly** for approval. Members of this committee shall be appointed by the **Moderator** in consultation with the chairperson.
 - (5) The Nominating Committee, including the chairperson, shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and shall consist of twelve (12) persons, including three (3) members of the Regional Council. The committee shall be broadly representative of the region, including ministers, laymen, laywomen and youth **with gender balance and ethnic diversity taken into account**.

- (a) This committee shall meet at such a time as to complete its report not less than ninety (90) days prior to the opening of the regional assembly. The report shall be submitted in writing to the assembly through the Regional Council.
 - (b) The committee shall prepare a slate of candidates for every office whose election is assigned to the assembly. **These would include the Moderator-elect, Secretary, Treasurer, representatives to General Board, and others as required.** Written consent must be secured from each nominee before the name is presented for election.
 - (c) All other groups which elect officers whose confirmation is subject to the assembly shall present their slates through the Nominating Committee.
 - (d) Other nominations may be offered from the floor by any qualified voting representative, except that the written consent of each such person nominated from the floor shall be obtained prior to submitting the name for nomination **and that twenty-five (25) legal voting members endorse this person's nomination.**
19. All items of business to be considered by the **Regional Assembly**, except in cases of emergency, shall be received by or originate with the Regional Council. Items of business may be filed by any congregation, unit or institution of the CCSW (or by the governing board of such a body). Such items of business must be filed through the office of the **Regional Minister and President** at least ninety (90) days in advance of the meeting of the Regional Assembly in order to allow sufficient time for the Regional Council to review and refer them with appropriate recommendations to the Regional Assembly. All items of business shall be distributed to the congregations and to the Regional Council by the office of the **Regional Minister and President** at least thirty (30) days in advance of the Regional Assembly meeting.
20. An item of business may be considered an emergency if its content is of such nature that it could not have been regularly filed ninety (90) days prior to the assembly. Such items of business may be filed when submitted by ten (10) or more voting members of the assembly from not fewer than five (5) congregations to the Regional Council which shall decide whether such items are emergencies and, if so, make appropriate recommendations to the Regional Assembly as to their disposition.
21. A quorum for the transaction of business by the Regional Assembly shall be three hundred (300) accredited voting **delegates** from at least one hundred (**100**) member congregations, appearing at the time and place designated for the meeting of the Regional Assembly.
22. Special meetings of the Regional Assembly may be called by the Regional Council with not less than ninety (90) days notice. In this event a quorum would be four hundred fifty (450) accredited voting **delegates** from at least one hundred fifty (150) member

congregations, appearing at the time and place set forth in the notice and call of such special meeting.

REGIONAL COUNCIL

23. There shall be a smaller deliberative body responsible to the Regional Assembly which shall be called the Regional Council of the CCSW. The Regional Council shall be both legislative and programmatic. Under board policies determined by the Regional Assembly, the Regional Council shall
- a. receive, review and refer to the Regional Assembly with appropriate recommendations all items of business presented as provided in paragraphs 19 and 20;
 - b. establish priorities of the Region;
 - c. establish task forces with specific time and budget limitations;
 - d. adopt and/or amend the procedures by which the CCSW may engage in planning its total program of work and witness;
 - e. develop a framework within which CCSW can reach its goals, carry out programs, build relationships and perform other functions;
 - f. receive, review and approve the financial objectives of CCSW;
 - g. appoint the following committees:
 - (1) Personnel Committee – The Regional Council shall appoint the Personnel Committee made up of four (4) elected officers plus two (2) additional members of the Regional Council. This committee shall deal with staff relationships, evaluation and salary recommendations. This committee shall also offer to the Regional Council the nomination of the **Regional Minister and President**. At such time that the Personnel Committee becomes the search committee for **a Regional Minister and President**, it shall be expanded to include a representative of each area, appointed by the governing body of the area. **The search committee will have a mix of laymen, laywomen, clergy, with ethnic diversity and gender balance taken into consideration.**
 - (2) Budget Committee -- The Regional Council shall appoint a Budget Committee **at its first scheduled meeting after the Regional Assembly. The Committee will be** made up of the **Regional Minister and President** and three (3) members of the Regional Council. The Budget Committee shall prepare the regional budget **for the following year** to be presented to the Regional Council **no later than the last Regional Council meeting of the year. The Regional Assembly will approve the budget only during the year that there is a Regional Assembly. The approved**

budgets will be sent to the Commission on Finance of the general church for evaluation and funding recommendations.

- (3) Committee on Ministry -- The Regional Council shall establish a Committee on Ministry. This committee shall be composed of one representative from each area/**district**, selected by his/her own area/**district**; six **(6)** members-at-large appointed by the Regional Council; and no more than seven **(7)** others who by their office in ministerial education and/or the church are deemed necessary.
- (4) **Committee** for Stewardship Development -- The Regional Council shall establish a **Committee** for Stewardship Development. Members shall serve a term of five **(5)** years, for no more than two **(2)** consecutive terms. Membership on the **committee** shall be **ten (10)** to **fifteen (15)** in number and shall meet twice **(2)** annually. The **committee** shall interpret and focus the development of stewardship and accumulated resource programs; abide by the permanent fund policy of the CCSW; and report **at least annually** to the Regional Council.
- (5) Standing Commission on Structure and Design (approved 08/05/00) – The Regional Council shall appoint a Standing Commission on Structure and Design, which shall respond to issues, inconsistencies and questions about the structure and design of CCSW referred by the Moderator, executive committee or unit of the region. It would be responsible to develop recommended solution(s), to refine the design or to provide a clarifying statement. Recommended solutions will be brought to the Regional Council for consideration and further action.

A Parliamentarian would be appointed by the Moderator to serve on this commission and also to serve as Parliamentarian for the Council. The commission should consist of three to five persons with at least one person (in addition to the Parliamentarian) a current member of the Regional Council. Members could serve no more than two two-year terms consecutively. The Regional Minister and President and the Moderator would serve as ex-officio; others might be asked to serve as advisors.

- h. provide for salaried ministerial staff to lead in accomplishing the CCSW objectives **in consultation with the Personnel Committee;**
- i. review personnel needs and the qualifications of persons recommended for professional staff positions in the **CCSW** office, determining the remuneration of and calling such persons, **with the** recommendation of the **Regional Minister and President and the approval of the Personnel Committee;**
- j. determine the number of areas and their boundaries;
- k. serve as a channel of communication regarding total CCSW work and witness, and participate in the work and witness of the whole church;

- l. fill vacancies in positions to which persons regularly are elected by the Regional Assembly; and
 - m. assume and discharge such other responsibilities as may be assigned to it by the Regional Assembly.
24. The Regional Council shall manage the business of the CCSW and shall be vested with all necessary powers to do and perform, in behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest, Incorporated, all acts or things which Texas not-for-profit corporations can or may do, including, but not limited to the following:
- a. own property, both real and personal;
 - b. hold, use, improve, sell, lease, pledge, mortgage, convey or otherwise dispose of the same;
 - c. accept devises, bequests and gifts;
 - d. solicit subscriptions for money;
 - e. borrow and lend money and give and receive security therefore;
 - f. invest and reinvest monies and properties which may come into its hands; and
 - g. perform such duties as may be delegated by action of the Regional Assembly.
25. The Regional Council shall be composed of the following persons:
- a. The officers of the CCSW who shall also be the officers of the Regional Council;
 - b. One (1) member from each **area/district** of CCSW elected or appointed from that **area/district** for a term of two (2) years beginning on July 1. Representatives of areas shall be eligible to serve no more than two (2) consecutive full terms.
 - (1) The following areas shall elect or appoint members to terms beginning in even-numbered years: Bluebonnet Area, Central Area, Hi-Plains Area, and Trinity-Brazos Area. The following areas shall elect **or** appoint members to terms beginning in odd-numbered years: Coastal Plains Area, **North Texas** Area, Northeast Area and Tres Rios Area. The Rio Grande Valley District shall name its representative in an odd-numbered year.
 - (2) In selecting its member of the Regional Council an **area/district** shall consider selecting its **Moderator/President** or another member of its principal governing body and shall strive to maintain a rotation of laywomen, laymen and ministers with ethnic diversity and gender balance taken into consideration in the interest of broad representation.

- c. One (1) representative member from each of the constituency groups: Department of Church Women, **Disciples Men**, Texas Christian Missionary Fellowship, Hispanic Convention of the Southwest and Southwest Christian Youth Fellowship. Constituency groups shall elect or appoint representatives to terms of **one (1) year or two (2) years with vote, the length of service to be determined by the constituency group.**
 - d. One (1) representative member from each of the member institutions: **Brite Divinity School**, Texas Christian University, Jarvis Christian College, Juliette Fowler Homes, Inman Christian Center, NBA Patriot Heights and Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries, but without vote. Institutions shall select their own representatives **without vote.**
 - e. Two (2) members elected by the Regional Assembly from the regional members of the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) **with vote.**
 - f. Regional **Minister** and **President** ex-officio with vote.
 - g. Other members of the regional ministerial staff (central and area) ex-officio, but without vote.
 - h. One (1) representative of the Board of Directors of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ with vote.
 - i. The chairperson of the Committee on Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest with vote.
26. A vacancy occurring within the Regional Council shall be filled immediately by the appropriate selecting body for the remainder of the unexpired term; except that vacancies occurring among the officers of the Regional Council shall be filled by appointment of the Regional Council upon recommendation of the Executive Committee, and persons thus appointed shall serve until adjournment of the Regional Assembly following their appointment.
27. Except for terms specified in paragraphs 24(b) and (c), terms of members of the Regional Council shall generally coincide with the terms of office to which they have been elected or appointed.
28. Regular meetings of the Regional Council shall be held at least annually at a time and place to be fixed by the Executive Committee, except that one meeting in the year in which the Regional Assembly convenes shall be held not more than ninety (90) days nor less than sixty (60) days prior to the beginning of the regular meeting of the Regional Assembly. One-half (1/2) of the voting membership of the Regional Council shall constitute a quorum. Special meetings of the Regional Council may be called by the Executive Committee.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

29. There shall be an Executive Committee of the Regional Council composed of the elected officers of the CCSW. The **Regional Minister** and **President** shall also be a member of the Executive Committee **with vote**.
30. The officers of the Executive Committee shall be the same as the officers of the Regional Assembly and the Regional Council.
31. The Executive Committee shall meet as deemed necessary, at the call of the **Moderator**, at times and places to be determined **by the Moderator**. The committee shall execute the resolutions and directives of the Regional Council when that body is not in session, and shall be vested with full powers to act when performing such duties and shall report its actions to the Regional Council **at its next scheduled meeting**.
32. The Executive Committee shall make appointments as specified in the Design.
33. The **Regional Minister** and **President** shall
 - a. be concerned for the pastoral care and nurture of the CCSW;
 - b. as the **Chief Executive Officer** of the CCSW preside over meetings of the Regional Staff;
 - c. be a member ex-officio of all other commissions, committees, task forces or groups of the church;
 - d. represent the CCSW in interests of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and in matters of interdenominational or ecumenical relations, or may delegate duties.
34. The office of the **Regional Minister** and **President** shall be **Executive** and **Pastoral**. However, the **Regional Minister** and **President** shall have no authority to ordain ministers, or to assign or to recall the same, or to proceed to any disciplinary or punitive action against any minister or lay person.
35. The **Regional Minister** and **President** shall be elected by the Regional Council upon nomination by the **Search** Committee for a term of six (6) years, and may be **re-elected**. Normal suggested retirement from this office **should** be at the close of the Regional Assembly following attainment of age 65. A **Regional Minister** and **President** may be removed from office by action of the Regional Council. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the **Regional Minister** and **President**, the Executive Committee shall name the person to act until the next meeting of the Regional Council.
36. **Parliamentary Authority:**
 - a. **The business of the Regional Council and Regional Assembly will operate under the guidance of the Holy Spirit by seeking consensus in accordance with the spirit of the design. Where rules are necessary for governance,**

they shall be the rules contained in the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this design and any special rules of order the region may adopt.

AREA STRUCTURES

37. Identifiable geographic, cultural, sociological and political factors provide boundaries **which** the CCSW may use to establish its own **area/district** structures **which**
- a. provide "closer-by" pastoral care of congregations and ministers;
 - b. provide assistance to ministers in relocating and congregations in securing ministers;
 - c. provide opportunities for fellowship, worship, leader development, and camp and conference opportunities;
 - d. provide consideration of matters of mutual concern, such as establishment of new congregations and support system for clusters of ministers;
 - e. extend the ministry of Christ in mission, witness, service and nurture through participation in and implementation of the CCSW program.
 - f. **support the principles and purpose of the CCSW.**
 - g. **interpret the mission of the whole church, including general units, higher education institutions, and regional ministry to congregations and encourage faithful financial support for these missions.**
38. Each area shall have an appropriate organizational structure through which to accomplish its own purpose and program. In its organization, objectives, duties, functions and procedures, the area shall follow the design of the CCSW insofar as it is applicable, and the area minister shall be **a liaison staff person** of the region. The area board or cabinet shall act in an advisory capacity to the Regional Council in matters pertaining to the work of the area, and insofar as is possible, shall carry out the program of the CCSW.
- a. Insofar as is possible, each area shall organize itself in such a way as to have comparable program committees, or task groups, with the CCSW, and the chairperson of each committee, or task group, will be involved in program planning in the regional process.
 - b. Areas may apply for membership in the Texas Conference of Churches, or the New Mexico Conference of Churches.

AMENDMENTS

39. This Design may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) **vote** of those voting **delegates** present and voting at the Regional Assembly.
40. Amendments to this Design may be proposed by any member congregation, or by any institution or unit, or by any group of not less than ten (10) persons who are members of congregations of the CCSW, or by the Regional Council.
41. Proposals for amending this Design shall be submitted in writing to the **Regional Minister and President by not** less than ninety (90) days prior to the opening date of the Regional Assembly, and the **Regional Minister and President** shall cause the full text of each proposed amendment to be distributed **each church and every ordained and licensed minister in the region**, not less than thirty (30) days prior to the opening date of the Regional Assembly.

ENDNOTES

-
1. From the *Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*, and otherwise known as the Preamble.
 2. **Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in regions (from the *Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*, IV, particularly paragraphs 59 through 68).**

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) also manifests itself organizationally in geographic units called regions. The following principles shall guide the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the development of its regions.

A. Nature and purpose

- (1) The primary factor by which the church determines the development of its regional expressions is the character of the ministry to which Christ calls His people in their mutual commitment to him to one another.
- (2) The purpose of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in regions is twofold: (1) to extend the ministry of Christ in mission, witness and service among the people and social 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 relationships, and relating them to the worldwide mission and witness of the whole church.
- (3) Identifiable geographic, cultural, sociological and political factors provide boundaries which the church may use to establish its own regional structures (1) by which the church carries out regionally its ministry of mission and nature, (2) in which congregations and ministers find their primary relationships of mutual support and encouragement, (3) which provide opportunities for regional fellowship, worship and assembly for the consideration of matters of mutual concern, and (4) which help to relate the three manifestations of the church – congregational, regional, and general – to each other in the functioning of the whole church.

B. Membership and Participation

- (1) As a member of the whole body of Christ, every person who is or shall become a member of a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) thereby holds membership in the region in which that congregation is located.

-
- (2) Regions may develop procedures of recognition whereby other persons and groups who support the purposes of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may participate in regional and general work.

C. Functions

- (1) Regions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) perform within their established boundaries the function of the church related to their two-fold purpose of mission and nurture.
- a. **Mission.** In fulfilling the mission of the church, regions are sensitive to the needs of the world about them and lead their members in identifying and serving such human needs. Regions take initiative in developing new forms of ministries in mission, witness and service, and in dealing creatively with their role in the whole task of the church. Wherever ecumenical action is possible to fulfill their mission, regions should join with similar geographic units of other religious bodies and with present and emerging ecumenical structures.
 - b. **Nurture.** Regions are concerned for the continuing renewal of the life of congregations, members and minister, and offer leadership in matters of mutual concern. Within policies developed by the General Assembly, regions certify the standing of ministers and provide help, counsel and pastoral care to ministers and congregations in such matters as: ordination, licensing, ministerial relocation, establishment and dissolution of pastoral relationships and installations of ministers. Regions seek to supply a ministry for congregations without full-time pastoral services and offer counsel and assistance in cases of difficulties between ministers and congregations.

As an integral part of the whole church, regions witness to the unity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) by calling congregations to an awareness of their opportunities and responsibilities beyond local concerns. They also help to relate congregations to the total program of the whole church. By calling the general manifestation of the church to an awareness of the needs both of congregations and regions help to relate the general manifestation to the life and work of congregations.

3. Procedure for Gaining Year Book and Directory listing.

-
- A. Congregation seeking listing (recognition) takes congregational action expressing its desire and intention to be a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and to be listed in the church's Year Book and Directory.
- B. The request for listing is filed initially with the Area of CCSW to which the congregation is related. The congregation provides the Area two copies of a document containing the declaration of its desire and intention to be a recognized Disciples congregation. This document may be the congregation's charter, constitution, bylaws, or a notarized statement of the congregation's action.
- C. When the proper Area has endorsed the request for listing, the congregation's documents, along with the Area's letter of endorsement, are forwarded to the office of the Regional Minister and President for consideration of endorsement in the next meeting of the Regional Council.
- D. Regional endorsement of the congregation's request for recognition and listing, attested by the Regional Minister and President, is sent to the office of the General Minister and President for filing with the Year Book and Directory.
- E. Once a congregation has been listed, it can be omitted from the Year Book and Directory for two reasons.
- (1) If the congregation has taken action to withdraw as a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The congregation must submit a notarized statement of its action through the office of the Area to which it is related. That statement is forwarded to the Regional Minister and President for certification, then forwarded to the office of the General Minister and President.
 - (2) A congregation may be deleted from the Year Book and Directory if there has been no congregational activity reported in the Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for a period of 10 (ten) consecutive years and the Area Minister provides information which allows the Regional Minister to certify to the office of the General Minister and President that the congregation does not participate in, or contribute to, area, regional or general church program. Notification of intent to remove from the listing will be sent to the congregation. If within 30 days of the notification the congregation makes no objection to its removal from the listing, then the removal will be final.