

CONSTITUTION
OF
THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
RICHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA

THE PREAMBLE

We, the members of the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Richlands, North Carolina, in faithful response to the will and purposes of God as revealed through His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the belief that God continues to reveal Himself throughout the earth, and in His Spirit calls all humankind to serve Him, do hereby adopt this constitution in the month of December.

ARTICLE I
NAME

The name of this congregation shall be First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 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 the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in faithful response to the will and purposes of God, to seek in all persons a faith and commitment to Jesus Christ, to speak relevantly to the day and world in which we live, to sustain and be sustained by the district, general and regional manifestations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), to work cooperatively with Christians in other communions, to pursue the oneness of the body of Christ, and in all things make known the love of God for all mankind.

ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP DEFINED

A member of this church shall consist of those persons who are identified now as members of this congregation and those persons who shall unite with this church by confession of faith and baptism and those who unite by transfer of membership upon a statement of faith. Voting privileges shall be accorded to all members expressing an interest in attendance, service, or financial support.

- a. A resident participating member is one who is active in several phases of church life insofar as health and circumstances and interest will permit.
- b. Non-participating members are those who live in the local area and are inactive in any phase of church life.
- c. A non-resident member is one who has moved from the local area and is no longer participating actively in the affairs and ministry of First Christian Church of Richlands, North Carolina.
- d. Names on the roll will remain recorded until removed by letter, statement, or death.

- e. In such event that the whereabouts or the livelihood of recorded member (s) cannot be substantiated by the church officers and minister, the names will be published and after a thirty-day waiting period, if there is no further information, the name(s) will not be counted in the annual yearbook statistics.

ARTICLE IV
RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE CONGREGATION

The congregation shall conduct its ministry and affairs under the Lordship of Jesus Christ; express its faithfulness to the Gospel with respect to the perceived needs and hopes of its membership; own, control, and encumber its own properties; organize and carry out the mission and witness of the congregation; establish its budgets and financial policies; call its ministers and employ persons as deemed necessary to the well-being of the Church; and participate in the district, regional, and general assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in forming the corporate judgments/missions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

The congregation shall demonstrate a concern for both the mission, witness and well-being of the whole Church Universal and its own local mission, witness, and well-being. The congregation shall: proclaim the Gospel; administer baptism and the Lord's Supper; provide for the spiritual development of its members; grow in the understanding of the oneness of the Church Universal in Christ Jesus through co-operation with and an understanding of other churches of differing practices; be faithful in Christian stewardship; thereby providing resources for both the Gospel's demands at home and abroad; choose voting delegates to the Regional and General Assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); and to attend and to support the fellowship of the Southeastern District.

The congregation shall call for an indefinite term and support its minister(s) in faithfulness and honor, and in matters pertaining to unduly strained relationships with its ministers seek counsel from the Regional Minister. New ministers shall be sought with consultation with the Regional Minister or appropriate regional staff person.

The congregation shall exercise and enjoy all other rights, privileges, and responsibilities appropriate to carrying out its purpose.

ARTICLE V
OFFICERS, GENERAL BOARD, ELDERS, DEACONS, DEACONESSES,
TRUSTEES, CABINET, COMMITTEES

Section A. Officers:

The congregation shall elect from its membership a chairperson, vice-chairperson, clerk, treasurer, and financial secretary. These officers shall be elected at the annual meeting and shall serve as officers of the congregation, general board, and cabinet as set forth in the bylaws.

Section B. General Board

The congregation shall elect a general board which shall be responsible to the congregation and empowered to act on the congregation's behalf when the congregation is not meeting.

The general board's membership shall be set forth in the bylaws with terms of office and duties therein stated.

The general board shall be responsible for receiving reports from its ministers, shall establish the program and budget of the congregation subject to the congregation's approval in its annual meeting. It shall be responsible for conducting all legal business matters of the congregation. It shall oversee and approve the program of the congregation as determined by the cabinet and carry out any other responsibilities defined by the bylaws.

Meetings of the general board will be held on the second Monday of each month; the church year for consideration of terms of office, budget, and program shall run from January 1 through December 31. Special meetings of the general board shall be called by mutual agreement among the chairperson, clerk, and minister or a request of three (3) members of the general board; such meetings are limited to stated purpose(s) deemed necessary before the date of the next scheduled board meeting. Notice of special meetings not pre-arranged by an agreement of the general board shall be made by telephone, or by announcement in a morning worship or by mail which name the time, place, and day, and may be held immediately provided a quorum is reached.

Section C. Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses:

The congregation shall elect elders, deacons, and deaconesses as needed for the proper administration and service of this congregation whose terms and responsibilities are set forth in the bylaws.

Section D. Trustees:

The congregation shall elect a minimum of three (3) trustees who shall hold title to all properties of the congregation and administer all trust funds belonging to the congregation and shall manage the same under the direction of the general board of the congregation and in accordance with the laws of the state of North Carolina and Onslow County. They shall be members of the general board and shall make reports to the general board as needed. Their terms of office and responsibilities shall be set forth in the bylaws of this congregation.

Section E. Cabinet:

The congregation shall have a cabinet, its membership and duties defined by the bylaws. The cabinet shall be responsible for coordinating the programs and ministry of the congregation and shall generally assist the minister in administering the same. It shall initiate programs, oversee the implementation and evaluation of the same, and plan for future years. This committee shall make regular reports to the general board as set forth in the bylaws.

Section F. Committees:

The congregation shall establish standing committees and/or ad hoc committees necessary for the conduct of the work of the congregation as defined in the bylaws. Committees shall be chosen in accordance with the bylaws and approved by the general board. All standing committee chairpersons shall be members of and responsible to the cabinet.

ARTICLE VI

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Congregational meetings shall be held annually in the last month of the church year. Notice of all annual or special congregational meetings shall be announced at a regular Sunday morning service of worship and/or bulletin one week prior to the meeting. Mailed announcements by newsletter or written notice must be postmarked ten (10) days before the meeting. Purpose, date, time, and place of meeting shall be indicated in each notice or announcement.

ARTICLE VII AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any congregational meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, provided that the congregation has been given written copies in advance and the proposed amendments has been explained with a question and answer time at a regular Sunday service of worship at least two weeks before the vote is taken.

This constitution may be declared null and void upon the approval of a rewritten or new constitution by a two-thirds vote of the congregation in an annual or called meeting provided all conditions for amending the constitution are met.

Revised: November, 1995
Reviewed: February, 2006