

CONSTITUTION

First Christian Church
2320 Country Club Road
Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27104

PREAMBLE

We, the members of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, a congregationally governed body, in order to promote the work of the church in the spirit of Christ and thus advance his kingdom, do hereby adopt this constitution.

ARTICLE I: NAME AND AFFILIATION

The name of this congregation shall be First Christian Church of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, affiliated with and an integral part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

ARTICLE II: MISSION

We are a congregation of believers in God as seen through Jesus Christ, of diverse backgrounds and opinions, dedicated to nurturing each other in our faith, helping each other grow spiritually, and welcoming all who would join us. We are committed to proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed and to sharing the spirit of Christ in our own church family, in our community, and in the world.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Membership of this congregation, as a part of the whole family of God on earth, shall consist of 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.

ARTICLE IV: RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONGREGATION

The congregation shall have final authority in all matters, including but not limited to election of officers; approval of budgets; acquisition, encumbrance, and conveyance of church property; approval of large unbudgeted expenditures; and calling of the senior minister. All members of this congregation shall be accorded voting privileges.

The congregation shall participate, through voting representatives, in regional and general assemblies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS, LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, ELDERS, DIACONATE,
MINISTRIES, COMMITTEES

Section A. Officers

The congregation shall elect from its members a moderator-elect, secretary, and treasurer. These officers shall be elected at the annual meeting of the congregation and shall serve as officers of the congregation and the Leadership Council as set forth in the by-laws. The moderator-elect from the previous year will become the moderator and the moderator from the previous year will become the immediate past moderator. Both the moderator and immediate past moderator will serve as officers of the congregation and the Leadership Council.

Section B. Leadership Council

The congregation shall have a Leadership Council which 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 Leadership Council shall be composed of members as set forth in the by-laws and for terms of office stated therein.

The Leadership Council shall receive reports from the minister(s), officers, and the various organizations within the congregation. It shall establish the program and budget of the congregation, subject to action by the congregation at its annual meeting. It shall conduct all legal business matters of the congregation and shall carry out other such responsibilities as may be defined in the by-laws.

Meetings of the Leadership Council will be held monthly. The Moderator may call special meetings of the Leadership Council as he or she deems necessary or by request of the minister(s). Leadership Council members shall receive adequate notice of special meetings specifying purpose, date, time, and place of the meeting.

The Leadership Council shall function as the personnel committee, as defined in the by-laws. Any decisions made by the Leadership Council shall be subject to review and approval by the congregation.

Section C. Board of Elders and Diaconate

The congregation shall elect from its members a board of elders and a diaconate. Their election, qualifications, and responsibilities shall be as set forth in the by-laws.

Section D. Ministries and Committees

The congregation, through the Leadership Council, shall establish standing operating committees, ministries, and other organizations necessary for the conduct of the work of the congregation. Their duties and responsibilities shall be as set forth in the by-laws.

ARTICLE VI: SENIOR MINISTER

Section A. Ministerial Staff

First Christian Church shall have a senior minister. Other ministers may be authorized by the congregation.

Section B. Selection of Senior Minister

A representative committee of members, nominated by the Leadership Council and approved by the congregation, shall serve as a search committee and shall recommend to the Leadership Council a prospective minister and proposed terms of the call.

If the Leadership Council approves the recommendation of the search committee, the Leadership Council shall then submit its recommendation to the congregation. The candidate will preach at least one sermon at a regular Sunday service for the congregation. In order for a call to be extended, the recommendation of the Leadership Council must be accepted by at least a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present and voting in a regular or special business meeting of the congregation.

Section C. Resignation, Voluntary and Involuntary

Voluntary resignation of the senior minister shall be submitted to the Leadership Council in writing, in accordance with the by-laws, after consultation with the moderator and the elders.

Action for dismissal of the senior minister may originate with either the elders or by written petition to the Leadership Council by no fewer than twenty-five per cent (25%) of the active members of the congregation.

Action by the elders shall be taken to the Leadership Council if two-thirds (2/3) of them vote for dismissal.

In order for a recommendation for dismissal of the senior minister to go to the congregation, it must be supported by at least a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members of the Leadership Council present in a regular or special business meeting, provided a quorum is present.

A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by members of the congregation present and voting by secret ballot in a specially-called meeting shall be sufficient for dismissal of the senior minister.

ARTICLE VII: CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section A. Meetings

The congregation shall hold an annual business meeting prior to the end of the church year, the date to be set by the Leadership Council. The purpose of this meeting shall be to consider and approve the budget and elect officers for the following year, and to transact any other church business that may be required.

The congregation shall hold special meetings as required. Such meetings shall be called by the moderator of the congregation, the Leadership Council, or written petition of twenty-five per cent (25%) of the active members of the church.

Section B. Notice of Meetings

Notice of all business meetings stating the purpose, time, place, and agenda of said meeting shall be given at regular Sunday worship services for at least two weeks in advance of a meeting and by written notice mailed or e-mailed to all resident members at least one week in advance of a meeting.

Section C. Procedure

All business meetings of the congregation shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

Section D. Voting

The congregation may act with a simple majority vote, except as provided for in Articles VI and VIII. Proxy voting or absentee ballots may only be permitted at the sole discretion of the Leadership Council.

ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any congregational meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting on the amendment, provided written notice of the proposed amendment, specifying the exact wording of both the current provision and the proposed amendment, has been sent through the mail or by e-mail to members of the congregation at least one week prior to the time the vote is to be taken.