

CONSTITUTION  
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)  
STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA, INC.

We, the members of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Stillwater, Oklahoma, Inc., a body governed by its congregation, 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, Affiliation and Mission

SECTION A. NAME

The name of this organization shall be First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Stillwater, Oklahoma, Inc., affiliated with the denomination known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and incorporated under the laws of the State of Oklahoma for non-profit organizations.

SECTION B. AFFILIATION

1. This congregation is affiliated with the region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Oklahoma and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada as those units are now constituted, and as they may be hereafter amended. This congregation's affiliation entitles it to voting delegates at the Regional Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Oklahoma and at the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. These delegates are nominated by the Senior Minister and approved by the Official Board Executive Committee.
2. The affiliation endorsed in this ARTICLE is a voluntary action adopted by this congregation by a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting and may not be amended except as provided in this ARTICLE.
3. To amend this ARTICLE, only members of the congregation who have been on the membership rolls for a period of two (2) years or longer shall be entitled to notice and to vote. The required two-thirds majority vote must be of all eligible voters, not merely those in attendance at any meeting called for the purpose of such a vote.

4. Notice establishing a date for a vote on the Amendment of this ARTICLE must:
  - a. Be approved by at least two-thirds of the members of the Official Board.
  - b. Set out the specific reasons for such an amendment.
  - c. Contain the disclosure that to adopt an amendment eliminating the affiliation with the Disciples of Christ will break the historic tie of the congregation with other Christian Churches cooperating in the support of Missions, Oklahoma Christian Home, other homes for the aged and children, camps, university ministries, and institutions of higher education such as Phillips Theological Seminary and Texas Christian University. Such missions and ministries will be adversely affected by the break in affiliation. This congregation's participation with other Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in District Assemblies, Regional Assemblies and the General Assembly would be terminated. The congregation's historic right to voting delegates at the Regional and General Assembly would cease.
  - d. Be post-marked no later than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the vote on the amendment.
  - e. Be limited to and advise the eligible voters that only those persons who have been a member of the congregation for a period of two (2) years or longer are entitled by this Church's Constitution to vote on this amendment.
  - f. Provide a printed ballot and a return envelope marked "Amendment Ballot." Ballots and return envelopes will be mailed to those eligible to vote and must be returned to the Church Office of The First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Stillwater, Oklahoma, Inc., no later than 5:00 P.M. on the date of the vote. All ballots shall remain sealed and be submitted to the inspectors for them to open, authenticate for eligibility and count. Ballots received by the inspectors that are not signed and not returned in a sealed envelope provided will be considered spoiled and not counted. The ballots will be counted by three (3) inspectors to be designated by the Official Board as a part of the call for this vote. The inspectors are required to be persons of highest reputation within the community, and not members of this congregation or any group having, directly or indirectly, an interest in the outcome of the vote. The inspectors shall certify the official results of the balloting in a notarized statement.

## SECTION C. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the congregation shall be as hereby defined: “We, the members of the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Stillwater, Oklahoma, Inc., respond to God’s call to ministry, as proclaimed in the Bible and through the life of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

WE STRIVE to follow the Holy Spirit in order to fulfill the will of God.

WE COMMIT ourselves to ministering to our community and world, in hope that others will seek God’s plan for living.

WE DEDICATE ourselves to continuing Christian education, that we may grow in faith and do that which is loving and honorable in His service.

## ARTICLE II. Membership

The membership of this congregation shall consist of those who are now identified as members and those who shall unite with it by confession of faith and baptism, or by statement and transfer of membership.

## ARTICLE III. The Official Board

### SECTION A. PURPOSE

It shall be the purpose of the Official Board of the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Stillwater, Oklahoma, Inc., to establish policy and to provide leadership for all activities of the congregation. This includes those programs that serve the congregation’s member families, those persons outside the congregation in Stillwater, including the University community, and those in the world beyond. Also, it includes those supporting services that make these ministries possible.

### SECTION B. MEMBERSHIP

The following VOTING MEMBERS of the Official Board shall be elected by the congregation for a term as designated for each or until such time as a successor is elected and assumes office.

1. Elders: nine (9) lay men and/or women, one-third of whom shall be elected each year for a term of three years.
2. Trustees: nine (9) lay men and/or women, one-third of whom shall be elected each year for a term of three years.

3. Worship and Welcome Department: a maximum of eleven (11) men and/or women (laity and/or staff) in ministry leadership positions. The laity shall be elected for a term of one year.
4. Disciple Development Department: a maximum of eleven (11) men and/or women (laity and/or staff) in ministry leadership positions. The laity shall be elected for a term of one year.
5. Administration Department: a maximum of eleven (11) men and/or women (laity and/or staff) in ministry leadership positions. The laity shall be elected for a term of one year.

Church membership is a requirement for all laity on the Official Board. Church membership is recommended for staff and is required to have a vote on the Official Board. Laity and staff may hold more than one Official Board position, but are allowed only one vote (per person) on the Official Board.

#### SECTION C. OFFICIAL BOARD OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The officers of the Official Board are the:
  - a. Chair: Administration Department Chair as elected each year by the congregation. (May not serve succeeding terms in office.)
  - b. Vice-Chair: Trustees Chair as elected each January by the Board of Trustees.
  - c. Secretary: Elected each year by the congregation.
  - d. Treasurer: Elected by the congregation for a term of one year. (May serve succeeding terms in office.)
2. The Executive Committee of the Official Board shall be comprised of:
  - a. the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary of the Official Board.
  - b. the Worship and Welcome Department Representative: elected each January by the Worship and Welcome Department from their laity membership for a term of one year.
  - c. the Disciple Development Department Representative: elected each January by the Disciple Development Department from their laity membership for a term of one year.
  - d. ex-officio (non-voting) members: Administration Department Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Ministers.

## SECTION D. DUTIES OF THE OFFICIAL BOARD

1. The Chair shall fulfill the usual duties of such an officer; call and preside at all business meetings of the congregation, the Official Board and the Official Board Executive Committee.
2. The Vice-Chair shall fulfill the usual duties of such an officer; call and preside at all meetings of the Church in the absence of the Chair.
3. The Secretary shall record minutes of all business meetings of the congregation; serve as Secretary of the Official Board and the Official Board Executive Committee; maintain minutes of all regular and/or special meetings (including a record of those in attendance) and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Chair of the Official Board.
4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the following:
  - a. Keeping a correct and complete record of account showing accurately at all times the financial condition of the Church.
  - b. Having charge and custody of, and being responsible for, all funds, notes, securities and other valuables which may from time to time come into the possession of the Church; depositing all funds of the Church with such depositories as the Trustees and/or the Congregation shall designate, and being responsible for the disbursement of all funds.
  - c. Furnishing a statement of the financial condition of the Church at meetings of the Trustees, the Official Board, the Congregation or whenever requested by those groups; and in general performing all duties pertaining to the office of treasurer and such other duties as this Constitution and By-Laws of the Church may prescribe.
5. The Elders shall be responsible for the following:
  - a. Promoting the growth and welfare of the Church; giving spiritual oversight to the members with respect to regular attendance at the Lord's Supper and concern for the spiritually indifferent.
  - b. Giving thoughtful consideration to policies of the Church that will enable it to fulfill its complete mission.
  - c. Encouraging by example and word the mission, evangelistic, educational and stewardship responsibilities of the Church.
  - d. Serving at the Lord's Table and performing such other duties as may be assigned. An Elder is the spiritual leader in the home, community and Church; is concerned with the overall welfare of the Church and ministers to the Church in all areas of services.

- e. Attending regularly scheduled Elders meetings and Official Board Meetings.
- f. Working to resolve conflicts within the congregation.
- g. Electing their own Chair and Vice-Chair by and from their members (voting Elders).

There are two types of Elders status, voting and non-voting. Voting Elders are presently on the Official Board. The non-voting Elders are those who have previously served as Elders and who continue their support by participating in Elder duties as may be assigned.

6. The Trustees shall be responsible to the congregation for the following:

- a. Holding property in the name of the congregation.
- b. Borrowing money and executing mortgages as authorized by the congregation.
- c. Transacting the financial business of the congregation on a monthly basis, referring to the congregation those items reserved for congregational action.
- d. Informing the Official Board on a timely basis of the current status with regard to budget and other fiscal matters.
- e. Receiving reports from and acting as counsel to the Senior Minister in the administration of the Church on a day-to-day basis.
- f. Providing a written account of the Trustees' stewardship of the Church's holdings to the congregation at the end of each fiscal quarter.
- g. Meeting at a regularly scheduled time each month of the year to conduct the business of the Church.
- h. Attending Official Board meetings.
- i. Maintaining a Personnel Committee:
  - i. Comprised of the Chair of the Trustees; the Chair of the Official Board; three other members who should be nominated each year by the nominating committee, elected by the congregation, and serve rotating 3-year terms; and two ex-officio members to include the Chair of the Trustees and the Chair of the Official Board from the previous year. All committee members must be members of the church, and no two members can be from the same immediate family, i.e., parent, child, spouse, or sibling. The committee should be

chaired by the member elected by the congregation who has the longest consecutive service on the committee, which will normally be the individual serving the third year of his/her term.

- ii. In consultation with the Senior Minister, will consider matters relating to the employment and termination of Non-Ministerial staff.
- iii. Establish Policies and Procedures for the evaluation of both Ministerial and Non-Ministerial staff.
- iv. Annually prepare salary and compensation recommendations for Ministerial and Non-Ministerial staff, forwarding these recommendations to the Board of Trustees for consideration.
- j. Electing a Chair and Vice-Chair at the January meeting each year from their membership. The Trustees Chair shall serve as the Vice-Chair of both the Official Board and the Official Board Executive Committee.
- k. Electing a Secretary at the January meeting each year.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Administration Department, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Ministers will serve ex-officio (all without vote) on the Board of Trustees.

7. The Worship and Welcome Department shall be responsible to the congregation for the following:

- a. Overseeing and participating in the ministries of the Church that include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - i. Deacon Ministries (Traditional and Contemporary)

The Diaconate shall be responsible for the following:

- (a) Cooperating with the Elders in promoting the growth and welfare of the Church.
- (b) Serving the Lord's Supper and receiving offerings; taking responsibility for the preparation and care of the communion service.
- (c) Participating in the programs and activities of the Church.
- (d) Calling on nursing home residents and shut-ins and providing other such volunteer services.

Elected Deacon Coordinators shall schedule and train volunteers for service in the Diaconate.

- ii. Worship Support Ministries
  - iii. Music, Drama and Technical Ministries
  - iv. Evangelism Ministries
  - v. Leisure Ministries
  - vi. Kitchen Ministries
- b. Meeting at a regularly scheduled time each month of the year to oversee the ministries of the Worship and Welcome Department.
  - c. Attending Official Board meetings.
  - d. Electing at the January meeting from their lay membership a Worship and Welcome Department Representative to serve on the Official Board Executive Committee.

The Chair of the Worship and Welcome Department shall be the Senior Minister.

8. The Disciple Development Department shall be responsible to the congregation for the following:

- a. Overseeing and participating in the ministries of the Church that include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - i. Christian Education Ministries
    - (a) Adult
    - (b) Youth
    - (c) Children
  - ii. Shepherding Ministries
  - iii. Outreach Ministries
  - iv. Wednesday Night Fellowship Ministries
  - v. Disciple Women (CWF) Ministries

The women of the congregation shall be organized into the Christian Women's Fellowship and shall cooperate with the Official Board in all congregational activity. The President of the Christian Women's Fellowship shall be a voting member of the Official Board.

vi. Disciple Men (CMF) Ministries

The men of the congregation shall be organized into the Christian Men's Fellowship and shall cooperate with the Official Board in all congregational activity. The President of the Christian Men's Fellowship shall be a voting member of the Official Board.

b. Meeting at a regularly scheduled time each month of the year to oversee the ministries of the Disciple Development Department.

c. Attending Official Board meetings.

d. Electing at the January meeting from their lay membership a

Disciple Development Department Representative to serve on the Official Board Executive Committee.

The Chair of the Disciple Development Department shall be the Associate Minister/Director of Christian Education.

9. The Administration Department shall be responsible to the congregation for the following:

a. Overseeing and participating in the ministries of the Church that include, but are not limited to, the following:

i. Data & History Processing Ministries

ii. Property Ministries

iii. Public Relations & Communications Ministries

iv. Stewardship Ministries

v. Treasurer

vi. Assistant Treasurer

b. Meeting at a regularly scheduled time each month of the year to oversee the ministries of the Administration Department.

c. Attending Official Board meetings.

The Chair of the Administration Department shall be a member of the laity, serve as the Chair of both the Official Board and the Official Board Executive Committee and serve ex-officio (without vote) on the Board of Trustees.

The Vice-Chair of the Administration Department shall be a member of the laity, be a voting member of the Official Board, serve ex-officio (without vote) on the Official Board Executive Committee and Board of Trustees and succeed the Chair of the Administration Department.

The Assistant Treasurer of the Administration Department shall be a member of the laity, be a voting member of the Official Board, serve ex-officio (without vote) on the Official Board Executive Committee and Board of Trustees and in the absence of the Treasurer, fulfill all the duties set forth in Article III, Section D, Item 4 of this Constitution.

#### SECTION E. ELECTION OF OFFICIAL BOARD LAY MEMBERS

1. In August the Chair of the Official Board shall appoint a nominating committee of seven persons from the membership of the congregation to fill positions of those lay members of the Official Board whose terms expire on December 31. The majority of those committee members will not be currently serving on the Official Board. The chair of the committee shall be a past Chair of the Official Board, Elders or Trustees. The Official Board Executive Committee must confirm this committee's appointment.
2. In September the nominating committee shall solicit suggestions from the congregation and church staff as to persons who should be considered for the respective offices, making sure responsibilities of the various offices are known.
3. In October the nominating committee shall:
  - a. create a list of persons to be nominated, using the suggestions of the congregation, as well as their own judgment.
  - b. consult with those individuals to establish their willingness to serve.
  - c. affirm their understanding of the obligations, duties and rewards of the respective offices.
4. In November the final slate of nominees shall be presented to the Official Board with a recommendation that they be approved. Following approval of the Official Board, nominees will be recommended to the congregation for election.
5. In December a notification of the date and time for the congregational vote, along with a list of nominees, will be published in the Sunday Bulletin and Church Newsletter at least two weeks prior to the date of that vote. The election of Official Board members will be by secret ballot. The nominating committee will conduct the election, count the ballots, announce the results and submit a copy of the results to the Chair of the Official Board.

6. Petition candidates supported by signatures of seven church members will be added to the ballot if they are eligible and are willing to fulfill the responsibilities of the position. Such candidates' names must be presented to the Chair of the Official Board and the nominating committee at least one week prior to the date of the congregational vote.  
VACANCIES: When a lay vacancy occurs among the Trustees, Elders,
7. Worship & Welcome Department, Disciple Development Department, Administration Department, or elected members of the Personnel Committee, the respective board or department shall recommend, and the Official Board shall appoint, a person to fill the unexpired term. The individual that is recommended should come from the list of prospective candidates which was used to arrive at the latest slate of elected Official Board members unless that list has been exhausted. This action does not require congregational approval. Those recommended for appointment should first be interviewed by a member of the respective board or department. Following appointment by the Official Board, the individual shall be notified accordingly.
8. ELIGIBILITY: Elders, Trustees, members of the Personnel Committee, and the Administration Department Chair who have served a full term cannot succeed themselves in the same position, e.g., Trustee, Elder. This limitation does not apply to the lay membership on the Worship & Welcome, Disciple Development and Administration Departments.
9. Any Official Board member may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Official Board at a meeting of the Official Board.

#### ARTICLE IV. Meetings and Authority

##### SECTION A. THE CONGREGATION

1. Special meetings as required may be called by the Chair, or upon request of the Official Board, or by written petition to the Chair by twenty-five (25) members of the congregation.
2. The following items of authority are reserved to the congregation alone, such action taking place in accordance with requirements of the Constitution.
  - a. Selecting and employing any minister.
  - b. Approving the annual budget.
  - c. Electing Official Board Members of the Church.

- d. Purchasing or selling real property.
  - e. Constructing new buildings or major additions to existing buildings.
  - f. Borrowing money or incurring indebtedness of any kind.
  - g. Amending this constitution.
3. Any other major issue may be referred by the Chair of the Official Board, or by a vote of fifty (50) percent of those present at any Official Board meeting, or by fifty (50) percent of the Board of Trustees.

#### SECTION B. THE OFFICIAL BOARD

- 1. The Official Board shall hold meetings as needed to conduct the business of the Board. Official Board meetings are called by the Chair or by written petition of fifteen or more Official Board members to the Chair.
- 2. It shall be the duty of the Official Board to:
  - a. Receive and take action as necessary on regular reports of committees, constituency groups and the ministerial staff.
  - b. Review program plans for all religious activities and provide counsel for those who are responsible for their implementation.
  - c. Plan and prioritize programs annually for the life of the congregation.
  - d. Plan for long-term growth of this congregation's ministry to people, both inside and outside of the Church membership.
  - e. Consider and recommend to the congregation action on matters requiring membership approval.

#### SECTION C. THE OFFICIAL BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 1. The Official Board Executive Committee shall meet at a regularly scheduled time each month.
- 2. The purpose of the Official Board Executive Committee shall be to interpret and correlate the entire Church program as planned by the various departments and serve in an advisory capacity to the ministers, the Official Board, the various departments and organizations of the Church. The Official Board Executive Committee shall be responsible for but not limited to:
  - a. Studying the needs of the Church, evaluating its present activities and discussing proposed programs and referring specific items to the

- appropriate departments or to the Official Board for study and implementation.
- b. Correlating plans and activities of the departments and groups for the purpose of achieving an effective program for the entire Church.
- c. Coordinating the calendar of activities as presented by various departments and organizations identified by the By-Laws.
- d. Encouraging the fulfillment of objectives set by various departments and fellowship groups.

#### SECTION D. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Notice of all business meetings of the Congregation or Official Board shall be given at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Notice and purpose of these meetings is to be by written and/or verbal announcement during Sunday worship and by mail or church newsletter.

The Board of Trustees, the Board of Elders, all Departments of the Official Board and the Official Board Executive Committee shall meet at a regularly scheduled time each month. Special meetings of an emergency nature may be called by the Chair of each group with prior notice to each member of at least one day, specifying the nature of the business to be considered.

#### SECTION E. RULES OF ORDER

All business meetings of the Congregation and Official Board shall be governed by the latest edition of Roberts' Rules of Order. A quorum for a congregational meeting is those present. A quorum for an Official Board meeting is fifty (50) percent of the current Official Board membership. A quorum for a Trustees meeting is five (5).

### ARTICLE V. The Ministers

#### SECTION A. DUTIES

The ministers of the Church shall perform those duties which pertain to that office as specified in their call and, as spiritual administrators of the Church, they shall be members of the Official Board and ex-officio (non-voting) members of the Elders, Trustees, Administration Department and the Official Board Executive Committee. The Senior Minister shall serve as Chair of the Worship and Welcome Department. The Associate Minister/Director of Christian Education shall serve as the Chair of the Disciple Development Department.

## SELECTION OF MINISTERIAL STAFF MEMBERS

1. DEFINITION: Ministerial staff members are Senior Minister, Associate Minister(s) and other Ministerial staff members as called by the congregation.

### PROCEDURE:

2.
  - a. The Chair of the Official Board shall appoint a committee of no fewer than seven (7) persons charged with the responsibility of securing the ministerial staff member needed.
  - b. The committee will make due investigation and when it has a recommendation to present, based on approval of at least seventy-five (75) percent of the committee membership, it shall bring this recommendation to the Official Board.
  - c. The Official Board, based on approval of at least seventy-five (75) percent of those present and voting, shall have the recommendation presented to the congregation.
  - d. The congregation, based on approval of at least seventy-five (75) percent of those present and voting, shall extend the call to the ministerial staff member recommended by the committee and by the Official Board. The congregation as used in this section shall be defined as members of the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Stillwater, Oklahoma, Inc. Voting will be by written ballot.
  - e. A written statement setting forth the salary to be paid and other conditions of the call shall be made in duplicate, one copy for the minister called and one for the Church.

### SECTION B. TERMINATION

1. The term of any minister is for an indefinite period.
2. The tenure of any minister may be terminated by either party upon sixty (60) days written notice.
3. A majority vote at a regular or special meeting of the congregation is required to terminate the tenure of any minister. Voting will be by written ballot.

## ARTICLE VI. Amendments

This Constitution may be amended at any business meeting of the Congregation by a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting on the amendments, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment has been approved by the Official Board and presented to the congregation at least two weeks before the vote is taken.