

CONSTITUTION

**FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**

Puyallup, Washington

**C O N S T I T U T I O N**

**Approved 12/2002;  
Revised & approved 12/2007**

# CONSTITUTION

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For further explanation of Constitution articles, refer to the Bylaws.

# CONSTITUTION

## **FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) OF PUYALLUP, WASHINGTON**

### Preamble

The First Christian Church of Puyallup, Washington is a congregationally governed body, founded in 1905 and legally incorporated on June 15, 1905 in the State of Washington (reference number 832183 with the Pierce County Auditor).

This congregation is affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and works cooperatively with them and other communions in making a united witness for Jesus Christ.

### Article I

#### First Christian Church of Puyallup

##### Section A Name

The name of this organization shall be the First Christian Church of Puyallup affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and committed to the historic principles of this body.

##### Section B Purpose

This church and its purpose are founded on doing God's work. The purpose of the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Puyallup is to encourage people to pursue a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The church will provide the needed encouragement for people to make a commitment to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, to know and to do God's will, to work for Christian unity, and to engage in the task of building the Kingdom of God.

### Article II

#### Membership

Membership in this congregation shall be open to all persons and shall consist of those who are now members of this congregation; those who shall unite with it by confession of faith through baptism by immersion; and those who shall unite by transfer of membership, having been baptized according to their understanding, reaffirming their faith in and commitment to Jesus Christ.

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## Article III Officers of the Congregation

### Section A Qualifications of Officers

All selected candidates for office should be willing to accept full responsibility for the office to which they are selected. All candidates should take a course in church administration, to be taught by the Pastor or other qualified church leader. The curriculum and length of the course will be at the discretion of the Pastor or other qualified church leader.

It is expected that all outgoing officers will serve as a mentor to newly selected officers.

### Section B Selection of Officers

A standing Nominating Committee will select a slate of officers to be ratified by the membership at the annual business meeting. The committee shall consist of one representative selected by and sent from the Elders, one from the Diaconate, and three from the congregation at large appointed by the Chairperson of the Board.

### Section C Elected Officers

The following officers shall be ratified by the church membership at its annual business meeting for a term as designated for each:

1. **Elders:**  
Sufficient number of men or women to carry out the duties prescribed in the Bylaws in Article III, Section C, Paragraph 1, approximately one third of whom shall be selected each year for a term of three years.
2. **Diaconate:**  
Composed of a sufficient number of men and women to carry out the duties prescribed in the Bylaws in Article III, Section C, Paragraph 2, approximately one third of whom shall be selected each year for a term of three years.
3. **Trustees:**  
There will be three Trustees to carry out the duties as prescribed in the Bylaws in Article III, Section C, Paragraph 3, one of whom shall be selected each year for a term of three years.
4. **Chairperson of the Congregation:**  
Shall be selected for a term of one year.
5. **Vice Chairperson of the Congregation:**  
Shall be selected for a term of one year.
6. **Clerk:**  
Shall be selected for a term of one year.

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7. **Treasurer:**  
Shall be selected for a term of three years.
8. **Financial Recording Secretary:**  
Shall be selected for a term of three years.
9. **Financial Manager:**  
Shall be selected for a term of three years.

### Section D Appointed Officers:

The following officers shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the General Board:

- A. **Secretary to the General Board**
- B. **Assembly Delegates**

### Article IV The General Board

All meetings of the General Board shall be open to all of the congregation members.

1. The General Board shall consist of: the elected officers of the church, the superintendent or designated head of the church school, a representative from all regular church organizations and the Pastor.
2. The power to vote shall be given to every board member, with the exception of the Pastor.
3. It shall be the duty of the General Board to consider and recommend to the congregation general policies for the church and to administer the programs of the church through the designated committees in accordance with the Bylaws. See Bylaws, Article VIII, Section A, 1 through 9. Reports shall be made annually to the congregation.

### Article V The Pastor

#### Section A Role of the Pastor

In keeping with the historical teachings of the Christian Church, all members of the Church, the Body of Christ, are charged with the task of ministry. The role of the Pastor of the congregation is to assist the members in their ministry. The Pastor is called to give the best possible leadership in directing the church towards its stated purpose.

#### Section B Selection

A Pastoral Search Committee, working with the regional minister, will interview prospective Pastors and make their recommendations to the General Board. Upon board approval, the prospective Pastor will be recommended to the congregation. A four-fifths

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(4/5) majority (80%) of the congregation members, voting in a regular or special meeting, is required before a "call" for a new Pastor may be extended by the General Board.

### Article VI Meetings

#### Section A Meetings

1. The church shall hold an annual business meeting within the last 60 days of the fiscal year (January 1 through December 31) to transact such business as is required.
2. Special meetings shall be held as required; such meetings to be called by the Chairperson or upon request of the General Board, or upon written petition of ten or more members of the church.

#### Section B Notice of Meetings

Notice of all regular or special business meetings of the congregation shall be given at a regular Sunday service of the church, at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. In an extreme emergency, the congregation may be called to a special meeting by an official church letter, setting forth the nature of the emergency and the time and place of the meeting.

#### Section C Rules of Order

All business meetings of the General Board shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition), as long as the Rules do not conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws as written herein.

### Article VII Review & Amendments

The Constitution or Bylaws may be amended at any business meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting on the amendment. Written notice of the proposed amendment must be sent through the mail to members of the congregation at least ten (10) days prior to the time the vote is to be taken and the proposed amendment must be read at two (2) regular Sunday morning worship services.

### Article VIII Administrative Programs

Refer to Bylaws, Article VIII.

### Article IX Auxiliary Organizations

Refer to Bylaws, Article IX.

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## Article X Employment Procedures

Refer to Bylaws, Article X.

November 2002;  
Revised December 2007 (Constitution)

BYLAWS

**FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
**(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**

Puyallup, Washington

**BYLAWS**

**Approved 12/2002**

# BYLAWS

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BYLAWS

**FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)  
OF  
PUYALLUP, WASHINGTON**

Article I

First Christian Church of Puyallup

Section A Fiscal Year

The Fiscal Year shall run from January 1 through December 31.

Section B Church Year

The Church Year shall run from July 1 through June 30.

Article II

Membership

Article II requires no elaboration on Constitutional provisions.

Article III

Officers of the Congregation

Section A Qualifications of Officers

1. A member may be an eligible candidate for church office after being a member of the congregation for one year.
2. It is recommended that officers selected for a three-year term of office should not hold the same office for more than two (2) successive regular terms, provided that qualified replacements are available.
3. All selected candidates for office should be willing to accept full responsibility for the office to which they are selected. All candidates should take a course in church administration, to be taught by the Pastor or other qualified church leader. The curriculum and length of the course will be at the discretion of the Pastor or other qualified church leader. It is expected that all outgoing officers will serve as a mentor to newly selected officers.

Section B Selection of Officers

1. Purpose:

The standing Nominating Committee, configured as described in the Constitution in Article III, Section B, will meet at the earliest reasonable time in the church year (July through June) and prepare the agenda for selecting replacement personnel for offices being vacated at church year end. They may also be called

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upon to recommend qualified replacements for vacancies which occur throughout the year.

### 2. Responsibilities:

#### A. Selection of prospective candidates should be approached as follows:

1. Make a list of the positions to be filled.
2. Use this list to discuss the merits and qualifications of possible candidates as described in the Constitution in Article III, Section B, focusing on individual strengths, gifts, and talents.
3. Use any and all assistance as they see fit to determine the replacement persons.
4. Meet and interview candidates they feel could contribute to a position.
5. Advise each prospective candidate of:
  - a) The position and office description.
  - b) The requirements in time and effort.
  - c) The rewards.
  - d) The need to be a positive force.
  - e) The need to be a *team* player.

B. When candidates have been selected, names will be submitted for ratification by written ballot in the chosen position at the annual congregational meeting. A simple majority is required for ratification.

C. Candidates will be presented to the congregational members after the Nominating Committee has provided the candidate's qualifications.

D. Written ballots will be available for all members to vote. Balloting will be accomplished at the annual congregational meeting to ratify each candidate for the designated position. Members who are unable to attend the annual business meeting may apply for an absentee ballot from the church office. Absentee ballots must arrive at the church prior to the opening of the annual meeting.

E. Upon ratification, all candidates should take a course in church administration, to be taught by the Pastor or other qualified church leader. The curriculum and length of the course will be at the discretion of the Pastor or other qualified church leader.

## Section C Elected Officers

### 1. **Elders:**

The Elders shall provide spiritual leadership and direction to the congregation. Areas of service include teaching, shepherding, worship, and spiritual oversight.

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The Elders shall choose their own chairperson. They shall set their own time for meetings and shall meet a minimum of once each quarter.

2. **Diaconate:**

The Diaconate shall work with the Elders in promoting the growth and welfare of the church; supervise regular preparation of the communion, assist in financial canvasses, visitation projects, and preparation of candidates for baptism; cooperate in ministering to the needy, and perform such other duties as may be requested. They shall set their own time for meetings and shall meet a minimum of once per quarter.

3. **Trustees:**

The Trustees shall act as legal agents for the church in all business matters, and shall perform such other duties as are required by the laws of the State of Washington. The Trustees shall keep an inventory record of papers (such as investments, notes, deeds, etc.) in a safe deposit box, holding one key and placing a duplicate with the other keys in the church office. They shall keep a duplicate inventory record in the church office. They shall set their own time for meetings and shall meet a minimum of once each quarter.

4. **Chairperson of the Congregation:**

The Chairperson of the Congregation shall preside at the meetings of the General Board and the congregation. The Chairperson shall appoint a secretary and, as required, delegates to church assemblies. The Chairperson shall serve as a voting member of the General Board and as an ex officio member of all other church committees.

5. **Vice Chairperson of the Congregation:**

The Vice Chairperson of the Congregation shall perform duties including the initiation and/or coordination of the overall planning and implementation of the programs/calendar/activities/tasks of the church, consistent with the measurable goals of the congregation. The Vice Chairperson will head the Program Council and will also assume the authority of the Chairperson in his or her absence.

6. **Church Clerk:**

The Church Clerk shall, with assistance from the church office, keep a complete record of the church membership, to include attendance, vital statistics such as deaths, baptisms, and weddings, and receive and issue all letters of transfer, under authority delegated by the General Board. The Church Clerk shall submit a written report at each regular board meeting.

7. **Treasurer:**

The Treasurer shall disburse all funds of the church according to the authority designated by the General Board; serve as a member of the Finance Committee; and make a report at each regular meeting of the General Board and the annual meeting of the congregation.

8. **Financial Recording Secretary:**

The Financial Recording Secretary shall receive and make a record of all funds and deposit them in the proper church account; keep an individual account

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record of each contributor; send out statements as directed by the General Board; serve as a member of the Finance Committee; and prepare a report for each regular meeting of the General Board and at the annual meeting of the congregation.

### 9. **Financial Manager:**

The Financial Manager shall invest the monetary assets of the church as directed by the Finance Committee; serve as a member of the Finance Committee and prepare a quarterly report for the General Board and at the annual meeting of the congregation.

## Article IV The General Board

### 1. Purpose:

The General Board serves to manage the business of the church, recommend policy to the congregation and lend support to all church committees and task groups.

### 2. Responsibilities:

- A. Shall hold regular meetings as determined by the board with a minimum of one each quarter.
- B. Shall hold special board meetings, as required, on call of the Chairperson or upon request of five (5) or more members of the General Board.
- C. Shall consider twelve (12) members of the General Board as constituting a quorum.
- D. Shall observe the following suggested order of business:
  1. Meeting called to order by presiding officer
  2. Prayer and/or devotions
  3. Reading, discussion and approval of minutes of previous meeting
  4. Report of the Pastor
  5. Report of the Church Clerk
  6. Report of the Treasurer
  7. Report of the Financial Recording Secretary
  8. Report of the Financial Manager
  9. Report of the Program Council
  10. Reports of regular and special committees
  11. Action on reports
  12. Correspondence
  13. Unfinished business

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14. New business and suggestions for future program activities
  15. Adjournment
  16. Closing prayer
- E. Shall expect board members to attend board meetings.
  - F. Shall set the number of Elders and Diaconate members at the recommendation of these groups.
  - G. Shall oversee, conduct or transact business necessary for the upkeep of church property and functioning of church programs.
  - H. Shall collaborate with the Nominating Committee to fill all elective vacancies, if necessary, until the next regular election.
  - I. Shall consider the recommendation of the Pastoral Search Committee and, if approved, recommend the prospective Pastor to the congregation. It shall be the policy of the church to consider only one (1) prospect at a time.
  - J. Shall extend a "call" to a prospective Pastor only after a favorable recommendation of the board has been accepted by a four-fifths (4/5) majority (80%) of members present and voting in a regular or special congregational meeting.
  - K. Candidates for Officer Emeritus may be presented to the General Board by any active board member. Those candidates who, because of infirmities or advanced age, and whose service and consecration to the church merit this honor may, by a vote of the board, be given reduced responsibilities and awarded this honorary designation.

### Article V The Pastor

#### Section A Duties

1. Serve as spiritual leader of our church.
2. Be responsible for the Sunday services and special services.
3. Serve as an ex officio member of all committees.
4. Serve as an elder of the congregation.
5. Serve as an ex officio member of the board.
6. Counsel members and visit the sick.
7. Provide liaison with the regional church.
8. Officiate at weddings, funerals and baptisms.
9. Represent our church to the community.

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### Section B Term of Ministry

Upon agreement, a written contract signed by the Pastor, a church Trustee, and the chairperson of the Pastoral Search Committee, setting forth the salary to be paid and other considerations of the "call" shall be kept in the Pastor's employee file in the church office. Two photocopies will be made, one to be given to the Pastor and one to be appended to the minutes of the General Board.

The term of the ministry may be terminated by either party on sixty (60) days' written notice.

### Article VI Meetings

Article VI requires no elaboration on Constitutional provisions.

### Article VII Review and Amendments

The Constitution or Bylaws may be amended at any business meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting on the amendment. Written notice of the proposed amendment must be sent through the mail to members of the congregation at least ten (10) days prior to the time the vote is to be taken and the proposed amendment must be read at two (2) regular Sunday morning worship services.

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the members of the General Board present and voting in a regular or special meeting. Any proposed amendment must be submitted in writing to the membership of the General Board at least fourteen (14) days prior to a vote thereon.

### Article VIII Administrative Programs

#### Section A Programs

The job of administering the ongoing programs of the church shall be the responsibility of the following administrative programs:

1. Program Council
2. Pastoral Relations
3. Employee Relations
4. Finance
5. Nominating
6. Worship

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7. Christian Education
8. Property
9. Special Committees (appointed as needed)

If not specified in the bylaws of a specific committee, the Board Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Chairperson of the Elders (hereafter called the Executive Committee), in cooperation with the Pastor, shall select the chairperson of each administrative program at the beginning of the church year (July through June) or at such time as a vacancy occurs.

### Section B Purpose and Duties

The purpose and duties of the administrative programs shall be as follows:

#### 1. **Program Council**

##### A. Purpose:

To actively participate in the overall planning of church programs or tasks.

##### B. Responsibilities:

To initiate and/or coordinate the overall planning and implementation of the programs/calendar/activities/tasks of the church, consistent with the measurable goals of the congregation.

##### C. Membership:

Members of the Program Council will include, but are not limited to:

1. Congregation Vice Chairperson (Chairperson)
2. Congregation Chairperson
3. Chairperson of the Elders
4. Worship Committee Chairperson
5. Christian Education Director
6. Youth Leader
7. Pastor
8. Two members of the congregation at large, to be appointed by the Chairperson of the General Board at the beginning of the church year (July through June).

Each member of the Program Council will be responsible for coordinating a set number of events and making progress reports on a timely basis to the rest of the Council.

- ##### D. Meetings should be scheduled a minimum of four times per year, but may meet more frequently if needed.

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### 2. Pastoral Relations

#### A. Purpose:

The Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) exists to provide a focused, relational support group for the Pastor and maintain a regular channel of communication between the Pastor and the congregation. The PRC functions to augment and enhance the variety of informal and formal means of support and communication in the congregation.

#### B. Responsibilities:

Provide feedback, counsel, and support for the Pastor.

Facilitate open, constructive communication between the Pastor and congregation.

Because of its relational character and the necessity for trust, acceptance, and confidentiality, the committee shall not be expected or required to make substantive reports to the Church Board or the Congregation; neither shall it be required to keep minutes of its meetings.

The committee shall cease to exist whenever a minister terminates from the church and shall be reformed when a new minister is called.

#### C. Membership:

The committee will consist of the Pastor and five church members who are a mix of both men and women and who represent a cross-section of the congregation.

The committee will select their own chairperson and new members as the terms of existing members expire. Members will be selected as needed each year for a term of three years. When selecting new committee members, the following strengths should be priorities and taken into consideration: support of the Pastor; a sensitivity to the feelings and needs of both the congregation and Pastor; good listening skills; skills in human relations and communication; and integrity with regard to maintaining confidentiality.

#### D. Meetings shall be held a minimum of bi-monthly, unless requested by the Pastor.

### 3. Employee Relations

#### A. Purpose:

Act as liaison between supervisors and all paid church employees other than the Pastor.

#### B. Responsibility:

Insure that job descriptions are prepared for all paid employees, church officers and committee chairpersons. Annual performance evaluations should be conducted for all paid employees. Mediate differences between members of the congregation, supervisors, and/or employees to assure timely and equitable resolution.

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Personnel policies, job descriptions and work performance evaluations should be filed in the church office under Employee Relations.

Background checks are required before hiring any paid church employee.

### C. Membership:

The chairperson is to be chosen by the Executive Committee. Arbitration skills are recommended.

## 4. Finance

### A. Purpose:

To spend or invest the funds of the congregation in a manner which will support both the financial and spiritual enrichment of the congregation.

### B. Responsibilities:

Provide timely reports and accurate financial records. Supervise the preparation and implementation of the budget.

### C. Membership:

Membership will include, but is not limited to:

1. Financial Manager (Chairperson)
2. Treasurer
3. Financial Recording Secretary
4. Three (3) elected Trustees

## 5. Nominating

### A. Purpose:

The purpose of the Nominating Committee is fully described in Bylaws, Article III, Section B.

### B. Responsibilities:

The responsibilities of the Nominating Committee are fully described in Bylaws, Article III, Section B.

### C. Membership:

Membership of the Nominating Committee is fully described in the Constitution, Article III, Section B.

## 6. Worship

### A. Purpose:

Work with the Pastor to plan services of worship, and provide opportunities for spiritual enrichment.

### B. Responsibilities:

Schedule persons to fill positions necessary for worship services;

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Recommend to the General Board persons to fill the position of choir director and/or organist.

### C. Membership:

The chairperson to be chosen by the Executive Committee in cooperation with the Pastor.

## 7. **Christian Education**

### A. Purpose:

Develop an effective program of Christian Education suitable for the various age groups and consistent with the principles of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

### B. Responsibilities:

Plan and administer the educational programs of the church, including church school, vacation church school, small group development, leadership education, and selection and distribution of Christian literature.

When requested, they shall cooperate with the other committees of the church in planning their educational programs and make materials for spiritual growth available to the membership.

### C. Membership:

The chairperson shall be chosen by the Executive Committee in cooperation with the Pastor.

## 8. **Property**

### A. Purpose:

Oversee the maintenance for all properties of the church.

### B. Responsibilities:

Maintain all property, grounds and equipment in proper condition.

Provide adequate security to prevent loss or damage of church property.

Make recommendations for improvements.

Prepare church properties for parking during the Western Washington Fair.

### C. Membership:

The chairperson will be chosen by the committee.

## 9. **Special Committees**

### A. Purpose:

From time to time individuals are asked to perform special duties to carry out the work of the church. For example:

- A. **Membership and Evangelism:** Their purpose includes, but is not limited to, contacts with active and prospective members to help each

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function effectively in the life of the church so that they may all share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

B. **Outreach:** Their purpose is to foster the outward vision of the church, sponsor interdenominational activities, and plan and administer the local and global Outreach programs of the church.

C. **Stewardship:** Their purpose is to develop a stewardship program which provides financial and spiritual enrichment for participating members.

### B. Responsibilities:

All Special Committees will perform their accepted duties and continue in meetings only until their specific task is completed.

The General Board shall provide a statement of purpose and responsibility to each Special Committee at the time of appointment, with such information being noted in the minutes of the board meeting.

### C. Membership:

Keeping in mind the abilities of the person and the task required, the chairperson of each committee shall be chosen by the Chairman of the General Board in cooperation with the Pastor.

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### Auxiliary Organizations

#### 1. Purpose:

Shall be as outlined in their own constitution, bylaws or plan of procedure, consistent with the principles of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

#### 2. Responsibilities:

Cooperate with the Program Council and committees of the church in planning and administering the total programs of the church; develop their individual goals for the best interest of the total program. The chairperson or representative may attend board meetings and provide reports.

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### Employment Procedures

1. Employees, other than the Pastor, shall be hired upon recommendation of the respective functional committees concerned.

2. The General Board shall designate the proper committee to recommend back to the board the employment or release of such employees as shall be deemed ne-

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cessary from time to time. Final authority in all matters, except calling the Pastor, resides in the General Board.

3. Employment shall be by a two-thirds vote of board members present and voting. Each employee is responsible to the General Board through the proper committee.
4. A written statement covering terms of employment shall be provided by the proper committee and included in the minutes of the board meeting. Photocopies shall be given to the employee and to the appropriate committee chairperson for review and placement in the employee's file in the church office.

November 2002