

CHURCH COVENANT

Part I - Congregational Covenantal Affirmations



The covenant that is shared between Region and Congregation exists in two parts: Church Covenant Part 1 - Congregational Covenantal Affirmations (this document); and [Church Covenant Part 2 - Regional Covenantal Affirmations: Congregational Rights and Regional Responsibilities](#). As with any covenantal relationship, one is incomplete without the other.

The elements are gathered together here come from both “The Design” of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and from the experience of lived out covenantal relationship here in Arizona. They serve as a summary of the relationship between the congregation and Region.

Congregational Vitality

Mission & Vision

(From “The Design” of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the U.S. & Canada)

Among the responsibilities by which congregations demonstrate their mutual concern for the mission and witness of the whole church are the responsibilities to:

- a. Proclaim the gospel & administer baptism & Lord’s Supper
- b. Provide spiritual nurture for members & families
- c. Grow in understanding of the universality of the church
- d. Transcend all barriers within the human family
- e. Work for reconciliation across racial and ethnic lines
- f. Engage in evangelism
- g. Sustain their ministers in faithfulness and honor
- h. Share in establishing new congregations as a part of our congregation’s commitment to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)
- i. Seek to realize Unity in Jesus Christ through cooperation with other congregations

Covenant and Commitment with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

We will demonstrate an understanding of, appreciation for, and relationship with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the following ways:

- a. Educating our parishioners about the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), its history, practices, and design
- b. Pray as a congregation for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in its various expressions (Congregational, Regional, General)
- c. Publicize and participate in Regional events (e.g. retreats, workshops, camps, Regional Assemblies)
- d. Publicize and, when possible, participate in events of the General Church (e.g. send voting delegates to General Assembly; Global Missions; educational opportunities; Special Day Offerings, etc.)
- e. Support the mission of the whole church through financial contributions to the Disciples Mission Fund and Special Day Offerings
- f. Encourage pastors and members to share in Regional leadership (e.g. serving on ministry teams, counseling at camp, participate in clergy events)
- g. Seek to practice Unity by staying at the table and in dialogue with others with whom we may disagree

Leadership and Ministry:

We will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation for Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as presented in the *“Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)”* in the following ways:

- a. Recognize “the priesthood of all believers” by providing opportunities for all congregational participants to engage fully in the ministry of the church according to their gifts and calling
- b. Require clergy to follow policies for ministerial standing with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- c. Study and commit to “Ethical Guidelines for Congregational Conduct” as set forth by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- d. Seek the counsel of the Regional Minister and President during pastoral transitions
- e. Seek the counsel of the Regional Minister and President with conflict resolution

Congregational Sustainability

Governance and Administration:

We will seek to be responsible in our governance and stewardship through faithful administration:

- a. As good stewards of the gifts we receive, we commit to healthy and transparent financial practices. We will utilize resources including the Treasurer's Handbook, the Regional Office, and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) when applicable. To this end, we will submit our annual budget and annual year-end financial reports to the Regional Office.
- b. Our governing documents name the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona Inc. as the recipient of assets should the church close or cease to be affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
- c. We have created or modified governing documents to reflect an affiliation with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and to comply with local, state, and federal requirements for religious organizations. We will continue to share updated copies of our governing documents with the Regional Office so it will be prepared to help in a time of crisis.
- d. We commit to filing annual reports for the Yearbook and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with the Regional office through ALEX.

On this ____ day of ____, 20__, we, _____, affirm this
(day) (month) (yr) (congregation name)

Church Covenant Part 1 - Congregational Covenantal Affirmations, as witnessed by:

Senior Pastor

Print Name _____ Signature _____

Congregational Leader

Print Name _____ Signature _____

Title _____

Regional Minister and President

Print Name _____ Signature _____

For Congregations receiving initial Charter:

New Church Ministry Team Member

Print Name _____ Signature _____