

Questions you might have about the New Constitution proposed for First Christian Church of Eugene

Q: Why was it necessary to rewrite our Constitution?

A: Our current Constitution was first written 40 years ago and has not been amended since 2010. Over the years there have been changes of legal requirements in Constitutions. These changes created risks that exist from which we did not have protection in our current Constitution. In addition, we have made changes in church function which rendered some portions obsolete.

In conversation with the Regional Church staff, it became evident that changes were necessary in order to create a document that reflects who we have become, and a document that will also protect our congregation in the future. Because so many changes needed to be made, we opted to create a brand new document which will hopefully last long into the future.

Q: What is the purpose of the Constitution?

A: The purpose of the Constitution is two fold: First and foremost it is a legal document filed with the state of Oregon that defines what our purpose is and who our members are. This function not only defines First Christian Church legally, but also allows us to better protect our assets in the future.

Secondly, this document states the role of the Board and the role of the Congregation. It does not go into the details of day-to-day management of the church.

Q: Why is the new Constitution so brief? Where did all that important language go?

A: Through the years, language was added that referred to and directed the management of the day to day work of our church. That important language will be moved to two other documents: the Bylaws and the Policies and Practices Handbook.

Q: Many areas of the Draft Constitution point to the Bylaws. Will new Bylaws be written?

A: Yes, new Bylaws will be written to support this new Constitution. The Committee is beginning to write the Bylaws in January 2021, and we hope to have a draft ready for the Board to review during the April Board meeting.

Q: What is the process of adopting a new Constitution?

A: The proposed Constitution has been made available two weeks prior to the Board meeting on January 17, 2021. At that meeting, the Board will vote to recommend for approval by the Congregation the current document or an amended document. At the Congregational Meeting on January 31, 2021, the Congregation will vote to adopt the new Constitution. Adoption will require a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote of those present.

Q: What is a Board Moderator? Why won't we have a President?

A: The Committee wishes to use language which is less hierarchical in nature to allow for more equity of access to church leadership. This serves to further our goal of welcoming more diversity into church leadership.

Q: What does Article X regarding Dissolution mean? Why can't it be changed?

A: Article X protects the assets of our church--our finances and physical assets--in the unfortunate situation that the Congregation chooses to dissolve itself. It states that in that situation, all assets, after paying our liabilities, would become the property of the Regional Church (Disciples of Christ) in Oregon and Southwest Idaho.

We are not anticipating this will happen, but there have unfortunately been many cases of outside groups taking over churches and gaining control of the assets for their own use. Article X protects First Christian Church from becoming a victim of this scheme.

The language in Article X has been carefully worded with the help of our Regional Ministers to assure the security of our assets.

Q: Will this FAQ be updated?

A: Absolutely. This FAQ is a living document. As we hear from you about other questions, we will add information to this document for clarity.