

Addition of Congregations to the Year Book and Directory (Year Book)

Regional ministers will find a form linked from the private regional minister website to submit materials electronically. Electronic submission via the form is preferred.

To become a congregation-in-formation

Congregations in formation or seeking affiliation are listed in the Year Book only if the regional minister notifies the Year Book staff. Regions may vary in the requirements to achieve this status.

Steps

1. New Church Ministries of Hope Partnership will work with the regional minister to engage congregations seeking affiliation and foster new congregations.
2. In accordance with regional processes and upon the written recommendation of the regional minister via web form, the faith community will be added to the database as a “congregation in formation” until such time as the congregation requests recognition. The registrar of the Year Book, the Vice President for Finance (VPF), will assign the congregation a PIN number and instruct staff to enter the congregation’s information into the Year Book database.
3. “In formation” congregations will be entitled to use the Chalice logo according to the [published guidelines](#) after they are entered into the Year Book & Directory database.

To become a recognized congregation

A congregation seeking recognition takes congregational action expressing its desire and intention to be a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and be listed in the Year Book and Directory.

The congregation then provides its regional office with a copy of a document containing the declaration of its desire and intention to be a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The document may be the congregation’s charter, constitution, bylaws, or a notarized statement of the congregation’s action.

Regional endorsement of the congregation’s request for recognition and listing, attested by the regional minister, is sent to the Office of General Minister and President for filing with the Year Book and Directory. (The Design, 9, a)

Steps to inclusion in the Year Book

1. The record of the congregational action requesting recognition (charter, constitution, bylaws or notarized statement) will be received by the regional minister.

2. The regional minister will forward a copy of the congregational action (electronic and/or paper) along with the regional minister's endorsement to the Year Book registrar, Vice President of Finance (VPF) in the Office of General Minister and President.
3. The VPF will direct office staff to change the status of the congregation from its previous status to recognized status in the database or make the initial entry if appropriate. If a PIN number has not been assigned, it will be assigned at this time.
4. A letter of welcome from the General Minister and President will be sent by OGMP staff outlining the duties and responsibilities of being a recognized congregation, including information about participation in assemblies and offerings and the use of the Chalice logo.

The Design

RECOGNIZED CONGREGATIONS

9. All congregations listed in the latest *Year Book and Directory* of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall be recognized congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Other congregations desiring recognition and congregations desiring to withdraw from recognition in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall follow established procedures for *Year Book and Directory* listing. Congregations that follow the procedures for listing after the publication of the latest *Year Book and Directory* and that are recorded in the *Year Book and Directory* office shall also be recognized congregations.

a. A congregation seeking recognition takes congregational action expressing its desire and intention to be a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and be listed in the *Year Book and Directory*.

The congregation then provides its regional office with a copy of a document containing the declaration of its desire and intention to be a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The document may be the congregation's charter, constitution, bylaws, or a notarized statement of the congregation's action.

Regional endorsement of the congregation's request for recognition and listing, attested by the regional minister, is sent to the Office of General Minister and President for filing with the *Year Book and Directory*.

b. Once a congregation has been listed, it can be omitted from the *Year Book and Directory* if:

i. The congregation has taken action to withdraw as a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Office of General Minister and President has received a notarized statement from the congregation of its action, which the regional minister has certified; or

ii. There has been no congregational activity reported in the *Year Book and Directory* of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for a period of five (5) consecutive years and the regional minister certifies that the congregation does not participate in or contribute to area, regional or general church program(s), including participation in Disciples Mission Fund.

iii. A congregation may also be omitted from the *Year Book and Directory* by action of a region if the region can demonstrate actions or statements on the part of the congregation that are deemed detrimental to the covenantal relationship with all expressions of the church. When a region takes action to omit a congregation for either of the above stated reasons, the region will send notification of the intent to remove the congregation's listing to the congregation via certified letter. If within thirty (30) days of the notification, the congregation makes no objection to its removal from the listing, then the removal will be final.

iv. Regardless of which entity initiates the action, reasonable attempts will be made to renew the relationship between the congregation and the region before removal is finalized. Once the removal is final, the region will notify the congregation that it has been removed from the *Year Book and Directory*. A congregation may appeal the region's action in accordance with paragraphs 17 and 66 of this *Design*.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

10. In adopting this Design, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) affirms that congregations in their freedom in Christ have both rights and responsibilities. As part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), congregations share creatively in the church's total mission of witness and service. Equally, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in its general and regional ministries sustains congregations through commitment to their welfare and needs. Thus, concern for the integrity of each expression is shared and witness is given to the interrelatedness of the whole church.

11. Among the rights recognized and safeguarded to congregations are the rights to manage their affairs under the Lordship of Jesus Christ; to adopt or retain their names, corporate documents, and organization of ministry; to determine, in faithfulness to the gospel, their practices; to own, control, and encumber their property; to organize for carrying out the mission and witness of the church; to establish their budgets and financial policies; to call their ministers; and to participate through voting representatives in forming the corporate judgment of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

12. Among the responsibilities by which congregations demonstrate their mutual concern for the mission and witness of the whole church are the responsibilities to proclaim the gospel and administer baptism and the Lord's Supper; to provide for the spiritual nurture of their members and families; to grow in understanding that the church

is a universal fellowship, transcending all barriers within the human family, working for reconciliation across racial and ethnic lines; to engage in evangelism; to sustain their ministers in faithfulness and honor and, in matters pertaining to relationships with them, to seek counsel from the regional minister; to be faithful in Christian stewardship, striving to share proportionately in providing the resources for the total life, work, and witness of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); to choose voting representatives to the General and Regional Assemblies; to share with other ministries of the church in the establishment and nurture of new congregations; and to seek to realize the oneness of the church of Jesus Christ through cooperation with other congregations and with present and emerging ecumenical structures.

13. While congregations are responsive to the needs of general and regional ministries, as established through the participation of the congregations' representatives in the General and Regional Assemblies, all financial support of the general and regional programs of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) by congregations and individuals is voluntary.

17. Congregations and individuals exercise their rights and responsibilities by participating through their voting representatives in the General and Regional Assemblies, of which they are a part. In the fulfillment of their ministries, congregations are encouraged to hold in high regard the actions, decisions, and recommendations of these Assemblies, expressing in love any dissent from such actions or positions. Where other procedures have not been provided by the General Assembly or General Board, matters of grievance and appeal may be referred by congregations and individual members through the Office of General Minister and President to the Administrative Committee, as provided in paragraph 66.

66. The Administrative Committee shall prepare the business agenda for the meetings of the General Assembly and the General Board, and appoint committees not otherwise provided for. Where other procedures have not been provided by the General Assembly or General Board, matters of grievance and appeal may be referred by individual members, ministers, congregations, regions, or general ministries to the Administrative Committee for final decision.