

A Recommendation in Principle to Reduce the Size of the Governing Body of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Mid-America

The Executive Committee of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Mid-America (CCMA) meeting in Columbia, Missouri on July 26, 2014 recommends to the Council of Areas that, at its next meeting in August, 2014 it include in its deliberations time sufficient to consider changes to Article VIII (and concurrent references to same) in the by-laws of the CCMA:

To reduce the size of the governing body for the CCMA from the number currently serving on the Council of Areas to a fifteen member CCMA Regional Board.

To change the name of this governing body from the Council of Areas to The Regional Board of Directors

The board to consist of members nominated and duly elected primarily for demonstrated skill and competency in leadership of not-for-profit corporations and religious institutions:

Executive Officers (Moderator, 1st Vice Moderator, 2nd Vice Moderator, Secretary, Treasurer)

Representative from the Regional Ministry Team

Representative to the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada

Eight members at large

All members to be chosen with respect to fairly and justly representing the diversity of the people who make up the CCMA

This recommendation should not be misconstrued as a formal motion but a recommended item offered for deliberate consideration needing further clarification and eventual action in due time. Anticipated outcomes of such a discussion might include creation of a special task force to:

Review and report on similar developments in other Regions

Review the CCMA By-Laws and note any adverse consideration that may arise from the creation of a smaller governing body

Offer updates to the CCMA By-Laws that may become necessary as a result of this change

Bring a formal motion to the Executive Committee for consideration and possible recommendation to the next Council of Areas meeting and, possibly, the next Regional Assembly

Rationale:

Associate General Minister and Vice-President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Dr. Todd Adams, meeting with the CCMA Executive Committee and representatives of Area Executive Committees on June 5 at the Broadway Christian Church in Columbia, encouraged consideration of the difference between leadership for mission and ministry and governance as a function of infrastructure. This was the third meeting on this topic with Todd (the first with the CCMA Executive Committee last fall, and the second with the Council of Areas - also last fall).

Large organizations with small but highly effective governance boards are able to devote more time and resources to accomplishing the primary goals of the organization without sacrificing transparency or full compliance with legal requirements and covenants.

Organizations in decline focus on preserving what they have and invest more time and resources on governance than on accomplishing mission. Dynamic and effective organizations keep infrastructure strong but adaptive to better support the organization's mission, and, they keep governance activity to the minimum needed so as to free leaders to grow the organization and accomplish its mission with excellence.

As the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Mid-America seeks to function as one region rather than as a collaboration of Areas, changing the size and composition of the governing body that makes critical decisions between Regional Assemblies could be a helpful next step in that direction.