

**First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
Rome, GA**

**Church Constitution and By-Laws**

**Church Constitution**

**Preamble**

We, the members of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Rome, Georgia, a congregational governed body, in order to promote the mission of the church in the teachings and spirit of Christ and thus advance the work of God, do hereby adopt this constitution.

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## **Church Constitution**

### **First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Rome, Georgia**

#### **Article I. NAME AND PURPOSE**

##### **A. Name**

The name of this organization shall be *First Christian Church of Rome, Georgia*, affiliated with the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, and committed to the historic principles of this body whose local congregations are variously known as Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ).

##### **B. Mission and Purpose**

The mission of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Rome is to be a community modeled after Christ's ministry of compassion, caring, and concern, welcoming a diversity of gifts, beliefs, and methods of service. We are an accepting church for those needing a community that combines various traditions of the Christian faith. We seek unity in diversity, respect for variety, and acceptance in disagreement and give an open invitation to all.

#### **Article II. MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the church shall consist of those who are now identified as members of the congregation and those who shall unite with it by baptism or transfer of membership. Voting privileges shall be accorded to all members.

#### **Article III. OFFICERS**

##### **A. Officers**

The following officers shall be elected by this church at its annual business meeting for a term as designated for each, or until such time as a successor is elected and assumes office (see process of nominating team for these officers below in section III, D. 1):

1. Elders: Not to exceed twelve (12) in number, one third (1/3) of whom shall be elected each year for a term of three years.

2. Deacons: Not to exceed twelve (12) in number, one third (1/3) of whom shall be elected each year for a term of three years.
3. Trustees: Not to exceed three (3) in number, one third (1/3) of whom shall be elected each year for a term of three years.
4. Honorary Officers: Those who, because of infirmities or advanced age and whose service and consecration to the church merits this honor, may be retired from active responsibility, these respectively to be known as Elder Emeritus and Deacon Emeritus.

B. The General Leadership Team

1. The General Leadership Team shall consist of:
  - a. The elected officers of the Church
  - b. The President, or a representative, of each of the following organizations:
    - Christian Women's Fellowship
    - Christian Men's Fellowship
    - Christian Youth Fellowship
    - Christian Education Team
    - Choir Director (Non-voting)
    - Minister(s) (Non-voting)
2. It shall be the duty of the Leadership Team:
  - a. To consider and recommend general policies to the congregation
  - b. To transact business
  - c. To direct the administration of the program of the church through the designated functional teams.
3. The Executive Officers, nominated by a special team within the Leadership Team (This nominating team is appointed by the chairperson and should consist of 3-5 members from the Leadership Team.) and elected by the members of the Leadership Team, shall be the following:

- a. Chairperson—for a term of one year, not to serve longer than two (2) consecutive terms
  - b. Vice-Chairperson—for a term of one year, not to serve longer than two (2) consecutive terms
  - c. Treasurer—for a term of one year (can be re-elected for additional years)
  - d. Financial Secretary—for a term of one year (can be re-elected for additional years)
  - e. Leadership Team Secretary—for a term of one year (can be re-elected for additional years)
  - f. Church Historian—for a term of one year (can be re-elected for additional years)
4. The Leadership Team shall perform its duties according to the authority granted in this constitution or designated to it by the church, and shall make a report annually to the church at the Annual Business Meeting or a special called Business meeting. The annual report will include a presentation of the church budget to be approved each year, first by the Leadership Team and then at the Annual Church Business Meeting.

### C. Duties of Officers

1. The Chairperson of the Leadership Team shall fulfill the usual duties of such an officer, call and preside at all regular or special business meetings of the official Leadership Team or the congregation.
2. The Vice-Chairperson of the Leadership Team shall fulfill the usual duties of such an officer, call and preside at all regular business meetings of the Leadership Team or the church in the absence of the Chairperson.
3. The Secretary to the Leadership Team shall keep minutes and records of all regular and called meetings of the Leadership Team, keep minutes of all regular or special business meetings of the congregation, maintain the Leadership Team's

copy of the Church Constitution and By-Laws and post all changes approved by the Leadership Team and congregation, republishing and distributing copies to the congregation when major changes are made and perform other duties as may be assigned.

4. The Elders, in cooperation with the functional teams, shall promote the growth and welfare of the church, give spiritual oversight and pastoral care to the members, give thoughtful consideration to policies of the church that will enable it to fulfill its complete mission, encourage by example, uphold the responsibilities of church membership, serve at the Lord's Table, and perform other duties as may be assigned.

5. The Deacons, in cooperation with the functional teams shall cooperate with the elders in promoting the growth and welfare of the church, assist in the greeting and ushering of the worshippers, distribute the Lord's Supper, receive the offering, assist in financial promotions of the church, visitation projects, and preparation of candidates for baptism, give counsel and service in the business affairs and program activities of the church, cooperate in ministering to the needy, take responsibility for the preparation and care of the communion service, assist elders in ministry to families in times of bereavement, and perform such other duties as may be assigned.

6. The Trustees shall act as the legal agents of the church in all business matters, under the direction of the Leadership Team and subject to the approval of the church, hold legal title to all church property and handle all business transactions related thereto, have supervision over all endowment and trust funds, and perform such duties as are required by the laws of the state of Georgia.

7. The Financial Secretary, in conjunction with the church treasurer, shall maintain a record of all membership funds received, keep an individual account record of each member's contributions and send semi-annual statements to the contributors.

8. The Church Treasurer shall receive all church funds and deposit them in the proper church accounts, disburse all funds of the church according to the authority designated to him by the Leadership Team, and make regular monthly reports to the Leadership Team. The Treasurer, in cooperation with the Executive Officers of the Leadership Team, Financial Secretary and the Church Staff, will submit an annual budget for approval by the Leadership Team and congregation.

9. The Church Historian shall maintain the records of the history of the church such as special newsworthy items and events, any changes in the location of the church, and the list of those who have served as ministers at the church and their dates of service.

10. The Leadership Team Secretary will access pertinent discussions and note any major discussions or decisions voted at each Leadership Team or Business meeting of the church and keep such on record and bring copies of the minutes of such to be approved by the Leadership Team at their next meeting.

#### D. Election of Officers

1. A nominating team composed of an elder, two deacons, and one member of the congregation who is not a member of the Leadership Team, shall be appointed by the chairperson of the General Leadership Team and announced to the congregation at least 2 months prior (normally in March or early April) to the annual business meeting which normally occurs in June. This team shall nominate candidates for officers of the church (Elders, Deacons, Trustees, and Honorary Officers). The ministers can be consulted for guidance regarding these offices. Church Members must have held membership at this church for a minimum of 3 months in order to be considered for nomination. (Note: This Nominating Team does not select the Executive Officers of the General Leadership Team such as Leadership Team Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Leadership Team Secretary.)
2. All suggestions from the congregation for nominees shall be in the hands of the nominating team at least one month prior to the annual meeting of the congregation. The team shall then consider qualifications, secure consent from nominees and prepare a slate of nominees for each vacancy. This slate of officers will be approved by the Leadership Team before it is brought to the Annual Business Meeting.
3. The nominating team shall report its nominations to the congregation at the annual business meeting after the slate of team nominated officers has been approved by the Leadership Team.
4. There shall also be the right of nomination from the floor *if the name suggested from the floor was among those presented to the nominating team at*

*least one month prior to the annual meeting and provided the person now nominated has agreed to serve if elected.*

5. All nominees who receive a majority of the votes cast in a voice vote (or by secret ballot if there are additional nominations from the floor) of those present and voting, shall be declared elected.
6. Vacancies in any office of the church shall be filled for the unexpired term by nomination of the chairperson of the Leadership Team in consultation with the minister and election by the General Leadership Team.

#### Article IV. THE MINISTER

##### A. Duties

The Minister of the Church shall perform the duties which usually pertain to that office. As spiritual administrator of the church, he or she shall be an ex-officio member of all organized groups, auxiliaries and teams except the special team which nominates the executive officers of the Leadership Team.

##### B. Selection

The minister shall be chosen by the Church as hereinafter provided:

1. A representative team of six (6) , nominated by the chairperson and elected by the Leadership Team, shall serve as the pulpit team and be responsible for recommending a prospective minister to the Leadership Team. This team will work with the Regional Minister of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Georgia to receive the search and call materials and guidelines of the church at large.
2. The Leadership Team shall consider the recommendation of the pulpit team and if approved, recommend the prospective minister to the church. It shall be the policy of the church to consider only one prospective minister at a time.
3. The recommendation of the Leadership Team must be accepted by at least two thirds (2/3) majority of members present and voting in a regular or special business meeting of the church before a call may be extended.

4. The term of the minister shall be for an indefinite period of time and may be terminated by either party upon appropriate notice as defined in the employment statement. A written statement setting forth the salary to be paid and other conditions of employment, including but not limited to, proper notice, benefits paid, and paid vacation, shall be made in duplicate, one copy for the minister, and one copy for the church.
5. Upon the minister's acceptance of the call, the correspondence, records, and information of the team concerning this and any other ministers who may have been considered shall be destroyed, or returned to the appropriate parties or agencies, and the team shall be dissolved

#### Article V. MEETINGS

##### A. Meetings to be Held

The church shall hold its regular meetings:

1. An annual business meeting normally within the month of June (which is the last month of the church fiscal year).
2. Special meetings as required with such meetings to be called by the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson or upon request of the Leadership Team or on written petition of seven (7) or more members of the church.

##### B. Notice

Notice of all regular or special business meetings of the congregation shall be given at a regular Sunday service of the church at least one (1) week in advance of the meeting.

##### C. Rules of Order

All business meetings of the Church and the General Leadership Team shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order, or as otherwise modified by this constitution or By-Laws. Church members present and voting, at a regular or special congregational business meeting, shall constitute a quorum.

Article VI. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any business meeting of the church by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting on the amendment, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment has been read at a regular Sunday service at least two weeks before the vote is taken.

## **By-Laws of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Rome, Georgia**

I. The church fiscal year shall begin on July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. However, church officers and the new Leadership Team are installed and begin service in September the Sunday following Labor Day. The church officers and executive officers are elected at the Annual Business Meeting (normally in June), therefore, there is time to have church teams in place by the time the officers are installed in September. Church officers serve from the Sunday after Labor Day in September to the following year at that time.

### II. The Leadership Team

- A. Shall hold its regular meetings once each month at a regular time or on a date set by the chairperson with proper notification of the Leadership Team.
- B. Shall hold special meetings as required on call of the chairperson or upon request of three (3) or more members of the General Church.
- C. Shall consider seven (7) members of the Leadership Team as constituting a quorum to transact any and all business at regularly scheduled meetings or when regularly assembled upon call.
- D. Shall observe the following order of business:
  - 1. Meetings called to order by the presiding officer
  - 2. Prayer
  - 3. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting
  - 4. Report of treasurer and approval of treasurer's report
  - 5. Regular and special team reports
  - 6. Action on recommendations growing out of reports
  - 7. Consideration of unfinished business carried over from previous meetings

8. New business and program suggestions for future activities
9. Minister's Report
10. Adjournment

III. The procedure for administering the church program shall be as follows:

- A. The task of administering the program of the church shall be delegated to the following functional teams:
  1. Worship Team
  2. Christian Education Team
  3. Outreach Team
  4. Social Activities Team
  5. Property Team
  6. Personnel Team
  7. Phone/Communication Tree Team
  8. Elder Team (Shepherding Team)
  9. Deacon Team
  10. Stewardship Team
  11. Trustee Team
- B. Special teams may be appointed when needed.
- C. The membership of each team shall be selected in the following manner subject to the confirmation of the Leadership Team (Note: Except the personnel team; see below in section IV A, regarding members of personnel team, also the auxiliary organizations such as CWF have their

own By-Laws or plan of operation, and, lastly, the stewardship, trustee, elder, and deacon teams whose members are elected by the church.):

1. The chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and minister shall constitute a team to select the respective team chairpersons.
  2. Chairpersons of the functional teams listed in this section shall be selected from the membership of the Leadership Team.
  3. Members of each team shall be selected (or in some cases can volunteer) on the basis of qualification for the task, regardless of membership on the General Leadership Team (with exceptions of Elders, Deacons, Stewardship, Trustee, and Personnel Teams which are elected).
- D. Each team shall organize itself to conduct the business for which it is responsible, meet to attend to its business, and plan its general program which shall be presented to the Leadership Team. Upon approval by the Leadership Team, the team shall proceed to administer its program in cooperation with other functional teams. Regular reports shall be made to the Leadership Team. (Please note the supplement attached to this document which reveals the structure of the teams and duties more specifically differentiated. This attachment is not to be a part of the official constitution and By-Laws, but supportive of them. The attachment is meant to be a working document under the general directions of the Constitution and By-Laws that can be adjusted and adapted according to the current and evolving needs of the congregation by the Leadership Team).
- E. The purpose and duties of the functional teams shall be as follows:
1. The Worship Team will work with the minister in planning services, arrange supply preaching in ministers' absence, decorate the sanctuary for special events, appoint overseers of recording and sound equipment.
  2. The Christian Education Team will design and implement a viable educational program, including setting up classes, selecting and training teachers, providing necessary materials and equipment, and making routine purchases. This team will also appoint library overseers as needed. This team will also supervise and staff the nursery.

3. The Outreach Team will plan and implement an energetic program of local outreach, prepare materials for distribution as needed, welcome and follow up on newcomers and visitors, encourage the church to participate in world missions, and plan special activities related to outreach.
4. The Social Activities Team will plan and oversee church dinners and various other activities on a regular basis, both within and outside the church building.
5. The Property Team will maintain the church building and grounds in good condition, keep track of church-owned equipment, maintain adequate insurance, oversee custodial work, dispose of obsolete items as needed, keep the baptistery in good repair, and make routine expenditures as necessary.
6. The Personnel Team, consisting of the executive officers of the General Leadership Team, will directly supervise the affairs of employees of the church. This team will be responsible for recommending hiring, releasing, or any change in the employment status of church personnel to the Leadership Team.
7. Phone/Communication Tree Team will systematically inform the church members of significant events that occur when the need to communicate arises such as deaths, major accidents, and other events impacting members.
8. Elder or Shepherding Team (See above description under Church Officers, Section III, C. 4, page 7)
9. Deacon Team (See above description under Church Officers, Section III, C. 5, page 7)
10. Stewardship Team (Also see above descriptions under Church Officers, Section III, C .7 and 8, pages 7 and 8) for Treasurer and Financial Secretary) will consist of the elected church treasurer and financial secretary and be responsible for receiving and depositing church funds as well as disbursing in accordance to the wishes of the leadership team,

maintain the financial records of the church, and propose a budget each year.

11. Trustee Team (See above description under Church Officers, Section III, C. 6, page 7)

12. Special Teams. When needed to administer the work of the church, the Chairperson of the Leadership Team shall appoint, with the approval of the Leadership Team, such teams as may be needed. These teams shall perform duties assigned and shall continue for such time as designated.

13. Auxiliary Organizations (such as CWF)

A. The purpose and responsibility of each of these groups shall be outlined in their own By-Laws or plan of procedure.

B. These organizations shall cooperate with the functional teams of the church, not only in planning and administering the total program of the church, but also in developing their individual programs in the best interest of the total program.

IV. The procedure governing the employment of staff shall be as follows:

A. The executive officers (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary) acting as the Personnel Team shall recommend to the Leadership Team the employment or release of such employees as shall be deemed necessary. Final authority in all such matters, except calling the minister, resides in the Leadership Team.

B. Employment shall be by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of Leadership Team members present and voting. Each employee is responsible to the Leadership Team through the proper functional team and Personnel Committee.

C. A written statement governing terms of employment shall be included in the minutes, a copy of which shall be given to the employee.

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- V. These By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the Leadership Team present and voting in a regular or special meeting, provided the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the membership of the Leadership Team at least seven (7) days prior to the vote thereon.

Constitution and By-Laws Approved at Annual Church Business Meeting June 16, 2010

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**Timeline of Church Leadership**  
**First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Rome, GA**

**March /April ⇨ June ⇨ July ⇨ August ⇨ September**

<p>In March or April the Leadership Team Chairperson appoints a nominating team (Consisting of an elder, two deacons, and one member from the congregation who is not on the leadership team.) to nominate church officers (elders, deacons, trustees and honorary officers). A member must have held church membership for a minimum of 3 months to be considered for nomination. See Section III, D. 1., page 8 ⇨</p>	<p>In June (normally) there will be an Annual Church Business Meeting where officers are officially elected. Prior to this meeting the Leadership Team approves those nominated by the nominating team (there can be persons nominated from the floor at the annual church business mtg. if given to the nominating team within a month prior to that meeting and if person has agreed to serve). (It is a good idea to circulate a sign-up sheet for those who may want to serve on church various teams. At the Annual Church Business Mtg.) ⇨</p>	<p>After the election of the officers for the next year, the current chairperson who is residing until the installation of new officers in September selects a nominating team for the <u>Executive Officers</u> who will be serving the following year (The Executive Officers of the Church are the Leadership Team Chairperson, Vice Chair, Church Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Secretary of the Leadership Team, and Church Historian). This needs to be done in July of each year. ⇨</p>	<p>After the Executive Officers of the church have been nominated and approved by the Leadership Team (This approval needs to occur in July or August), the Leadership Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Minister(s) work to select the chairpersons for the various teams. The Team Chairpersons must be on the Leadership Team for the next church officer year that begins in September and the leaders are to immediately seek to get their team members in place and organized. ⇨</p>	<p>Church Leaders are installed the Sunday after Labor Day and hit the ground running. All teams are to be in place by this time and ready to serve for the new church officer year.</p>
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Example of Structure Team Organizational Structure and Duties Supplement that is not a part of the Constitution and By-Laws, but helps define and differentiate the Teams according to the current needs of the church. It will follow the general directions of the Constitution and By-Laws, but will be more specific as adjusted by the Leadership Team for current needs.

*Note: Do not worry about the specifics of this for the vote on the Constitution and By-Laws for this attachment is not a part of those documents.*

Revision by chairpersons 7/2/08

## **First Christian Church (DOC) - Rome, Georgia Church Team Organizational Structure Team Sign-up**

If you are willing to serve on one or more of the teams below for this church year, please sign your name under the team(s) and place in basket in the Gallery. We need you. Thank you!!

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### **Education Team**

The **Christian Education Team** designs and implements a program of Christian education.

**Specific Ministries:**

- Oversees Sunday school classes
- Selects, trains, and support teachers
- Provides necessary materials for Christian Education
- Responsible for church nursery
- Responsible for church library
- Coordinates Children's Church

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### **Worship Team**

The **Worship Team** will work with the ministers in planning worship services and events.

**Specific Ministries:**

- Coordinates lay readers for worship
- Arranges for guest preacher when ministers are absent
- Decides upon aspects of worship service such as children's sermons, music, etc.
- Coordinates communion serving and ushering schedule
- Coordinates communion preparation
- Coordinates the PA system and tape ministry
- Responsible in coordination with CWF for Decorating Sanctuary for Christmas and for other special services such as Palm Sunday

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### Property Mgt. Team

The **Property Team** is responsible for maintaining our church facilities.

**Specific Ministries:**

- Building upkeep, repair, and maintenance
- Oversees building cleanup company relationship
- Upkeep of church grounds

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### Dream Team

The **Dream Team** is a team with no agenda but to discuss issues within the church, brainstorm about possible church ministries and activities, and provide a sounding board for open discussion by the ministers. No specific ministries.

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### Christian Women's Fellowship (CWF)

Open to all women of the church and visitors

The Christian Women's Fellowship has two functioning groups who meet for worship and fellowship and who provide significant ministry to our church.

**Specific Ministries:**

- In coordination with the worship team decorates the church for Christmas and coordinates storage of the decorations after the Christmas season.
- Orders flowers for church members who are hospitalized
- Coordinates receptions such as new member receptions
- Orders Kitchen supplies
- Coordinates Fellowship Dinners

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### Phone Calling Team

The **Phone Ministry Team** facilitates getting important news out to members as needed.

**Specific Ministry:** Uses a phone tree to inform members of such news as births, deaths, etc.

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**Social Activities Team**

The Social Activities Team will plan and oversee various church social and recreational activities on a regular basis, both within and outside the church building.

**Specific Ministries:**

- Plans church wide social activities
- Plans specific group social activities
- Organizes outings such as ballgames for church

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***The Teams below that are made up of elected officers of the church and are already in place at this time:***

**Leadership Team**

The **Leadership Team** is the governing body of the church between annual church business meetings. The Leadership Team hears reports each month from the secretary, church treasurer and from various team coordinators. For major actions, teams must receive support of the leadership team, however, the leadership team generally respects the decisions that are made within the various other teams.

**Specific Ministries:**

- Conducts business of church during the year
- Votes on major financial expenditures
- Provides guidance to teams
- Hears reports of ministers
- Provides overall leadership and direction for the church

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**Stewardship Team**

The **Stewardship Team** is responsible for the oversight of the finances of the church.

**Specific Ministries:**

- Proposes yearly church budget
- Manages bank accounts of church
- Pays church bills from funds
- Keep records of giving to church
- Provides offering envelopes for members and statements of giving
- Provides overall guidance to the church in financial matters
- Keeps congregation aware of financial needs of the church

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### **Shepherding Team**

The **Shepherding Team** consists of the **Elders** of the church who are to be spiritual leaders of the congregation. The Elders are encouraged to attend worship regularly and be examples of spiritual seekers.

#### **Specific Ministries:**

- Attends leadership team meetings
- Assists ministers with visitation
- Serves communion at worship services and also in the home for those who cannot attend church services
- Participates in leading of aspects of worship service
- Teaches as needed
- Sends notes of encouragement to members
- Coordinates sending bulletins to members who are not in attendance
- Encourages those who are struggling with various hardships

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### **Deacon Team**

The members of **The Deacon Team** function as workers who provide many important areas of service within the church as needed. They are encouraged to have regular worship attendance and to be examples of faithful service to the church. This team is made up of elected deacons.

#### **Specific Ministries:**

- Attends Leadership Team Meetings
- Assists at Holy Week Services and other special services of the church particularly in areas of set-up, ushering, etc.
- Communion preparation: Linens, utensils, polish brass and offering plates.
- Responsible for monitoring and purchasing communion supplies such as bread and juice, replacing taper in lighter, and replacement of communion table candles.
- Baptistry preparation: prepare water the night before, towels, assist persons, etc.
- Changes vestments at each season of the Christian Year
- Assists with set up and clean up at fellowship meals
- Acting as greeters as needed
- Opening and closing building (which is also scheduled by this team)
- Serves Communion
- Collection of offerings at services
- Keep visitor cards and brochures about church out and neat
- Facilitation of use of elevator each Sunday