

**Constitution for the
GREATER ROCHESTER COMMUNITY OF CHURCHES**

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be *Greater Rochester Community of Churches*; (hereinafter referred to as GRCC or the Community of Churches).

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The Community of Churches shall fulfill its covenant to witness and work as members to:

1. Enhance Christian unity and collaboration among churches and church-related organizations;
2. Engage in prayer and reflection on those issues and events which affect the common welfare of our communities, and witness by words and deeds to the historical realities of love, mercy, and justice God intends for the human community;
3. Share in worship, celebrating God's presence and activity in our community;
4. Promote dialogue and community among member bodies and their constituents, to foster discipleship and eliminate discrimination in every form, including race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation and social economic class.
5. Promote dialogue, neighborly relations, and cooperation on projects of mutual concern between Christians and people of other living faiths;
6. Enable and empower churches and people of faith to act as responsible stewards of God's creation and of all resources at their disposal.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

I. The Community of Churches is a membership organization. Members shall be:

1. Christian congregations organized as a church;
2. Denominations, i.e. a unit of legally-constituted, ecclesiastically recognized entity (such as a diocese, district, or presbytery,) or a delegated sub-unit of such an entity whose jurisdiction includes congregations in Monroe County.
3. Ecumenical clusters of churches, i.e., an association of three or more congregations serving a specific neighborhood, town, or community area in Monroe County;
4. Church-related organizations, i.e., faith-based bodies with purposes and objectives informed by the Christian faith of their members.

II. There are two classes of members:

Active and Associate -- Members may move from one status to the other upon request.

1. **Active members will:**

- A. Affirm and support the mission, vision and purposes of the Community of Churches, and advocate for issues of justice;
- B. Contribute financial support as is reasonable for the member;
- C. Be open to serve on the board, committees, and task forces; participate in programs, worship and/or annual meetings; keep abreast of the work of the Community of Churches through its newsletters and mailing and promote its ministry in the community;
- D. Assist in recruiting individuals to serve on the board, in encouraging participation in programs, and promote participation in the ministries of GRCC where appropriate;
- E. Name two persons to serve as representatives to GRCC for the Annual Assembly and to serve functions that might be defined by the Board of Directors.

2. **Associate members will:** contribute financial support and promote participation in GRCC ministries where appropriate.

3. Specific questions or concerns about membership in the agency will be resolved by the Executive Team and reported to the Board.

ARTICLE IV: ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

- 1. The Board will designate one yearly event as the Annual Assembly of active members. Two representatives of each active member body will be eligible and expected to attend.
- 2. The purpose of the Annual Assembly will be to elect board members and to approve changes to the Constitution. The Assembly may also include special programs.
- 3. Members will be notified one month in advance of the meeting.
- 4. The Annual Assembly may include a formal report from the Board of Directors. The report might also be presented to members through a written annual report.
- 5. The Board may call the members for needed consultation.
- 6. The Community of Churches will also hold special events for the purpose of worship and celebration, mission and community building. Special events are open to all members and interested people from the community at large.

ARTICLE V: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The governance of the Community of Churches is vested in the Board of Directors.

1. The Board consists of:
 - A. 12-24 persons nominated and elected by the Annual Assembly who hold (2) two year terms of alternating classes;
 - B. 2 persons designated by each member denomination;
2. The Board shall:
 - A. Serve as the corporate body of the Community of Churches;
 - B. Establish policy parameters for the total life of the organization;
 - C. Provide oversight (development, implementation, coordination and evaluation) of the various committees and program activities of the Community of Churches to ensure the mission and purpose of the organization is fulfilled;
 - D. Approve the annual budget for the Community of Churches including all program ministries; assist in securing the financial resources required to meet the budget;
 - E. Elect the officers of the organization, and appoint chairpersons of committees and/or task forces;
 - F. Elect the at-large members to the Executive Committee;
 - G. Plan and implement agendas for the annual meeting;
 - H. Select, support, direct, and evaluate the performance of all staff;
 - I. Approve contract staff for programmatic purposes as needed.
3. A quorum for Board meetings shall consist of those members present at a duly called meeting.
4. Each board member will be encouraged to serve, support, and/or add guidance to programs, committees, task forces, special sponsored events.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

1. Officers of the Board will consist of a President, Vice President for Organization, Vice President for Program, Vice President for Social Justice Issues, Secretary and Treasurer;
2. Officers are elected by the board; ordinarily nominations and elections take place at the end of the calendar year.
3. The term for President and Vice Presidents is 2 years, and may be elected for a second term. They may not serve a third term in the same position.
4. Secretary and Treasurer may serve consecutive terms.

ARTICLE VII: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Executive Committee will consist of the President, three Vice Presidents, Secretary, and two at-large members elected by the board. The at-large term is 2 years.
2. The Executive Committee will:
 - A. Provide oversight of administrative functions to ensure the effective operation of the organization and the development of community among member bodies;
 - B. Propose agenda for Board and Annual Meeting;
 - C. Provide oversight in the implementation of actions taken by the Board;
 - D. Receive reports and recommendations from committees, programs, and task forces of the Board and forward such reports with comments and recommendations for Board action;
 - F. Supervise and assist in the work of the staff and oversee an annual performance review.
 - G. Recommend hiring and termination of contract staff.

ARTICLE VIII: COMMITTEES

1. The Board establishes standing committees to perform needed functions in relation to organization such as finance, development, nominations, policy, personnel and in relation to program as appropriate.
2. The Board may establish ad hoc committees or task forces for specific purposes and for a period of time.
3. The Board may establish other means of fulfilling organizational and program functions to fulfill the mission, vision and purposes.

ARTICLE IX: PARTNERSHIPS

The Community of Churches welcomes individual and organizational partners who enter into on-going dialogue and consultation, share involvement in specific ministries, help deepen mutual understanding and appreciation among persons whose faith is rooted in the Christian tradition, and/or who otherwise support the mission and programs of GRCC.

1. Partners in Service shall include faith-based congregations and groups which are unable to seek full membership due to theological considerations, but wish to collaborate with GRCC and its members in ministries of common justice-based service;
2. Partners in Mission shall be those individuals who support the mission and programs of the Community of Churches through personal participation and/or by making financial contributions.
3. 501C3 Status Partnerships will be those organizations who lack their own 501c3 status and express a desire to utilize the tax status of the Community of Churches for a purpose sanctioned by GRCC's corporate charter. A formal application will be given to the Executive Committee for review and deliberation. If positive, it is presented to the Board for final approval of the

partnership. Reports and/or financial information will be submitted to the board on a regular basis.

4. All partners will receive newsletters, announcements, and mailings.

ARTICLE X: STAFF

The Board of Directors will hire staff as needed to carry out the mission of the agency.

ARTICLE XI: FINANCES

1. Financial support to fulfill the mission of the Community of Churches shall be sought from denominations, congregations, clusters, individuals, foundations, and other public and private sources.
2. The Board of Directors shall devise a method for establishing equitable contributions for members.
3. The Board of Directors will elect a Treasurer to oversee bookkeeping, and financial administration.

ARTICLE XII: BY-LAWS

The Board of Directors shall adopt by-laws deemed necessary and proper for the conduct of the business and program affairs of the organization provided they shall not conflict with this constitution.

ARTICLE XIII: AMENDMENTS

The Constitution may be amended at any annual Assembly by representatives of member organizations. Proposed changes will be sent 30 days in advance of the meeting.

Revised at Annual Meeting(2/26/2004)

