

Sample Articles of Incorporation

A starting point for a nonprofit religious corporation

Sample Resource Disclaimer: This document is provided for educational and illustrative purposes only. It is not legal advice, tax advice, financial advice, or a substitute for professional counsel. Every church is unique, and state law, denominational expectations, insurance requirements, and local ministry needs vary. Before adopting, modifying, or implementing this document, the church should review it with qualified legal, financial, insurance, and ministry advisors as appropriate. Use of this sample does not create an attorney-client, consulting, or professional advisory relationship.

Corporation Name	[Legal Name of Church, Inc.]
State	[State]
Principal Address	[Street Address, City, State, ZIP]
Filing Note	This sample must be adapted to the filing requirements of your state.

Important Filing Note

Articles of Incorporation are filed with the state and must satisfy the requirements of the applicable nonprofit corporation statute. State forms and required language vary. This sample is only a framework and should be reviewed by an attorney before filing.

Article I. Name

The name of the corporation is [Legal Name of Church, Inc.] (the “Corporation”).

Article II. Nonprofit and Religious Character

The Corporation is organized as a nonprofit religious corporation. It is not organized for the private gain of any person. The Corporation shall be operated exclusively for religious, charitable, educational, and related purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax law.

Article III. Purpose

The purposes of the Corporation are to establish and operate a Christian church, conduct worship services, teach and preach the Bible, make disciples of Jesus Christ, administer religious ordinances, conduct missions and ministry activities, provide religious education, own and manage property, receive and steward contributions, and engage in any lawful activity consistent with its religious and charitable purposes.

Article IV. Statement of Faith and Religious Authority

The Corporation shall operate in a manner consistent with its statement of faith, constitution, bylaws, and religious convictions. The Corporation reserves the right to make decisions regarding doctrine, membership, employment, facility use, ministry partnerships, and religious practice in a manner consistent with its sincerely held religious beliefs.

Article V. Principal Office and Registered Agent

The principal office of the Corporation shall be located at [Street Address, City, State, ZIP], or such other place as may be determined by the Corporation.

The name and address of the registered agent are:

Name: [Registered Agent Name]

Address: [Registered Agent Street Address, City, State, ZIP]

Article VI. Members

The Corporation shall have members. The qualifications, rights, responsibilities, admission, discipline, removal, and voting privileges of members shall be set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Corporation.

Article VII. Governance

The Corporation shall be governed according to its Constitution and Bylaws. The congregation shall retain final authority as provided in those governing documents. The Corporation may have pastors, officers, trustees, directors, committees, or other leaders as described in the Constitution and Bylaws.

Article VIII. Initial Directors or Trustees

The initial directors, trustees, or incorporators, if required by state law, are:

1. [Name], [Role], [Address]

2. [Name], [Role], [Address]

3. [Name], [Role], [Address]

Article IX. Limitations

No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, pastors, officers, trustees, directors, employees, or other private persons, except that the Corporation may pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and may make reasonable payments and distributions in furtherance of its purposes.

No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, except to the extent permitted for organizations exempt under Section 501(c)(3). The Corporation shall not participate in or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Article X. Property

The Corporation may acquire, own, use, manage, lease, sell, convey, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of real and personal property as authorized by its Constitution, Bylaws, policies, and applicable law. All property shall be used in furtherance of the Corporation's religious and charitable purposes.

Article XI. Indemnification

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Corporation may indemnify its pastors, officers, trustees, directors, employees, committee members, and agents for actions taken in good faith within the scope of their authorized responsibilities, subject to the limitations and procedures established by the Bylaws, policy, and applicable law.

Article XII. Dissolution

Upon dissolution of the Corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax law, and in a manner consistent with the Corporation's religious convictions. Any remaining assets shall be distributed to one or more religious or charitable organizations selected according to the Constitution and Bylaws. No assets shall be distributed to any private individual.

Article XIII. Amendments

These Articles may be amended as provided by applicable state law and the Corporation's Constitution and Bylaws. Any amendment shall be consistent with the Corporation's nonprofit, religious, and charitable purposes.

Article XIV. Incorporator

The name and address of the incorporator are:

Name: [Incorporator Name]

Address: [Incorporator Street Address, City, State, ZIP]

Execution

The undersigned incorporator signs these Articles of Incorporation on [Month Day, Year].

Incorporator Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Registered Agent Acceptance

I accept appointment as registered agent for the Corporation and agree to act in this capacity according to applicable law.

Registered Agent Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____