

1 **A Clarification on Amendments to the Proposed Revisions to the Constitution and**
2 **Bylaws as Adopted by the Executive Council of the General Synod**

3
4 **Adopted March 18, 2011**
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6 Proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ must be
7 circulated to the delegates well in advance¹ of the General Synod. Therefore, proposed
8 amendments from the floor will be in order only if they do not increase the modification
9 of the provision to be amended.

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11 Amendments from the floor which seek to correct typographical, spelling or grammar
12 errors and other proposals directed solely to the form of the amendment are likely to be
13 deemed as not increasing the proposed modification and may therefore be considered.

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15 Amendments from the floor which seek to make a material change to the amendment are
16 likely to be considered as increasing the proposed modification and may therefore be
17 ruled out of order.
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¹ From the Constitution of the United Church of Christ-2010 Ed.

ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS

The Constitution

74 Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by a Conference, the General Synod or the Executive Council. Such proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ at least three months prior to a meeting of the General Synod to which they are to be presented. At least two months prior to the meeting of the General Synod, the General Minister and President shall transmit such proposed amendments to the delegates, to the Conferences and to the Local Churches. Adoption of an amendment to the Constitution shall require a two-thirds affirmative vote of those present and voting in the General Synod and, before the next regular meeting of the General Synod, an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Conferences. If so approved the General Synod, if in session, or the Executive Council, shall declare the amendment adopted and in force.¹

The Bylaws

75 Amendments to the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ may be proposed by an Association, a Conference, the General Synod, or the Executive Council. Such proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ at least three months prior to the meeting of the General Synod to which they are to be presented. At least two months prior to the meeting of the General Synod, the General Minister and President shall transmit such proposed amendments to the delegates, to the Conferences and to the Local Churches. Any Bylaw that is contingent upon a Constitutional provision shall not be effective until after the Constitutional provision is ratified and declared in force. Adoption of an amendment to the Bylaws shall require a two-thirds affirmative vote of those present and voting in the General Synod, and shall be effective upon adoption unless otherwise set forth in the vote.

19 Changes to the Constitution require action by the Conferences as well as by General
20 Synod.

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23 **THE CONSTITUTION**
24 **OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

25 **PREAMBLE**

26 1 The United Church of Christ, formed June 25, 1957, by the union of the Evangelical and
27 Reformed Church and The General Council of the Congregational Christian
28 Churches of the United States in order to express more fully the oneness in Christ of the churches
29 composing it, to make more effective their common witness in
30 Him, and to serve His kingdom in the world, hereby adopts this Constitution.

31 2 The United Church of Christ acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, Son of God and
32 Savior. It acknowledges as kindred in Christ all who share in this confession.
33 It looks to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to
34 prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world.

35 It claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed
36 in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in
37 each generation to make this faith its own in reality of worship, in honesty of thought and
38 expression, and in purity of heart before God. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the
39 practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, it recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and the
40 Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.

41 3 The provisions herein define and regulate the General Synod, [the United Church of Christ](#)
42 [Board](#) and those Covenanted Ministries, Affiliated Ministries, and Associated Ministries, as
43 hereinafter set forth, of the United Church of Christ which are related to the General
44 Synod and describe the free and voluntary relationships which the Local Churches,
45 Associations, Conferences and ministers sustain with the General Synod and with each other. The
46 pattern of relationships and procedures so described is recommended to Local Churches,
47 Associations, Conferences and [authorized](#) ministers, to enable them more effectively to
48 accomplish their tasks and the work of the United Church of Christ.

49 **ARTICLE I. NAME**

50 4 The name of this Church shall be UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST.

51 **ARTICLE II. STRUCTURE**

52 5 The United Church of Christ is composed of Local Churches, Associations, Conferences and
53 the General Synod.

54 **ARTICLE III. COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIPS**

55 6 Within the United Church of Christ, the various expressions of the church relate to each other in
56 a covenantal manner. Each expression of the church has responsibilities and rights in relation to
57 the others, to the end that the whole church will seek God's will and be faithful to God's mission.
58 Decisions are made in consultation and collaboration among the various parts of the structure. As
59 members of the Body of Christ, each expression of the church is called to honor and respect the
60 work and ministry of each other part. Each expression of the church listens, hears, and carefully
61 considers the advice, counsel, and requests of others. In this covenant, the various expressions of
62 the United Church of Christ seek to walk together in all God's ways.

63 **ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS**

64 7 The Officers of the United Church of Christ shall be a General Minister and
65 President, ~~an Associate General Minister~~, an Executive Minister for Local Church
66 Ministries, an Executive Minister for Wider Church Ministries, an Executive
67 Minister for Justice and Witness Ministries, and such other officers as the General
68 Synod may from time to time determine. They shall be responsible to and called by election of
69 the General Synod as officers of the United Church of Christ.

70 **Collegium of Officers**
71 8 Composed of the Officers of the United Church of Christ meeting as peers, the Collegium of
72 Officers is responsible for providing leadership for the mission programming of the United
73 Church of Christ and for the implementation of General Synod actions. **The General Minister and**
74 **President is the presiding officer of the Collegium.** The Collegium shall attend to the quality of
75 relationships among **the United Church of Christ Board and** the Covenanted Ministries and foster
76 a climate of respect, collaboration, and collegiality among various expressions of the church. The
77 Collegium provides a setting for mutual accountability, for mutual reporting, and for assessing
78 the ongoing programs of the United Church of Christ. It shall reflect the commitment of the
79 United Church of Christ to be an inclusive church.

80 **ARTICLE V. LOCAL CHURCHES**

81 9 The basic unit of the life and organization of the United Church of Christ is the Local Church.

82 10 A Local Church is composed of persons who, believing in **the triune God as heavenly Father,**
83 **and** accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and depending on the guidance of the Holy Spirit,
84 are organized for Christian worship, for the furtherance of Christian fellowship, and for the
85 ongoing work of Christian witness.

86 11 In accordance with the custom and usage of a Local Church, persons become members by (a)
87 baptism and either confirmation or profession of faith in Jesus
88 Christ as Lord and Savior; (b) reaffirmation or reprofession of faith; or (c) letter of transfer or
89 certification from other Christian churches.

90 12 All persons who are or shall become members of a Local Church of the
91 United Church of Christ are thereby members of the United Church of Christ.

92 13 Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed
93 Church unite in the United Church of Christ without break in their respective historic continuities
94 and traditions.

95 14 The following Local Churches compose the United Church of Christ:

- 96 a) The Local Churches of the Evangelical and Reformed Church;
97 b) The Local Churches of the Congregational Christian fellowship which vote to become a part of
98 the United Church of Christ, or which vote to approve this Constitution;
99 c) Any Congregational Christian Local Church which, although it has not voted to become a part
100 of the United Church of Christ, or to approve this Constitution, votes to join the United Church of
101 Christ after this Constitution is declared in force;
102 d) Any Local Church which, after this Constitution is declared in force, is accepted, on any basis
103 other than that described in paragraph 16, into an
104 Association, or Conference, of the United Church of Christ;
105 e) The Local Churches of any denomination which, after this Constitution is declared in force,
106 unites with the United Church of Christ; and
107 f) Any Local Church in a category not otherwise defined in this article, received upon its request,
108 subject to such provisions as in consultation with the Conference may be specified by the
109 Association within whose bounds it is located, and which are not inconsistent with this
110 Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

111 15 Local Churches of the United Church of Christ are represented in the General Synod by the
112 delegates from the Conferences to which they belong.

113 16 An Association or a Conference of the United Church of Christ may, under such provisions as
114 it deems wise, admit, or continue to fellowship with, any Congregational Christian Local Church
115 which is not part of the United Church of Christ. The names and statistics of such churches shall
116 be kept separately; their members shall not be counted in determining the number of delegates
117 which the Conference is entitled to send to the General Synod or hold elective office in that body,
118 except that no ordained minister who has full standing or ordained ministerial partner standing in
119 the United Church of Christ shall be ineligible to be a delegate to the General Synod or to hold
120 elective office in that body. No direct or indirect participation by any such Local Church in, or

121 support of, the work of the United Church of Christ, or of any of its Covenanted Ministries, The
122 Pension Boards—United Church of Christ, United Church ~~Foundation~~ Funds, or of any
123 Conference or Association, shall be construed as making it a church of the United Church of
124 Christ.

125 17 The Local Churches of the United Church of Christ have, in fellowship, a God-given
126 responsibility for that Church, its labors and its extension, even as the United Church of Christ
127 has, in fellowship, a God-given responsibility for the wellbeing and needs and aspirations of its
128 Local Churches. In mutual Christian concern and in dedication to Jesus Christ, the Head of the
129 Church, the one and the many share in common Christian experience and responsibility.

130 18 The autonomy of the Local Church is inherent and modifiable only by its own action. Nothing
131 in this Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ shall destroy or limit the right
132 of each Local Church to continue to operate in the way customary to it; nor shall be construed as
133 giving to the General Synod, or to any Conference or Association now, or at any future time, the
134 power to abridge or impair the autonomy of any Local Church in the management of its own
135 affairs, which affairs include, but are not limited to, the right to retain or adopt its own methods of
136 organization, worship and education; to retain or secure its own charter and name; to adopt its
137 own constitution and bylaws; to formulate its own covenants and confessions of faith; to admit
138 members in its own way and to provide for their discipline or dismissal; to call or dismiss its
139 pastor or pastors by such procedure as it shall determine; to acquire, own, manage and dispose of
140 property and funds; to control its own benevolences; and to withdraw by its own decision from
141 the United Church of Christ at any time without forfeiture of ownership or control of any real or
142 personal property owned by it.

143 19 Actions by, or decisions or advice emanating from, the General Synod, a
144 Conference or an Association, should be held in the highest regard by every Local Church.

145 **ARTICLE VI. THE MINISTRY**

146 20 The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls the whole Church and every member to
147 participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the Gospel in church and
148 society. The United Church of Christ seeks to undergird the ministry of its members by nurturing
149 faith, calling forth gifts, and equipping members for Christian service.

150 21 The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls certain of its members to various forms
151 of ministry in and on behalf of the church for which ecclesiastical authorization is required.
152 Recognizing God's call, the ecclesiastical authorization is granted by an Association through the
153 rite of ordination, through commissioning, licensing, granting either ordained ministerial standing
154 or ordained ministerial partner standing and other acts of authorization.

155 22 Ordination is the rite whereby the United Church of Christ through an
156 Association, in cooperation with the person and a Local Church of the United
157 Church of Christ, recognizes and authorizes that member whom God has called to ordained
158 ministry, and sets that person apart by prayer and the laying on of hands.
159 By this rite ordained ministerial standing and status as an Ordained Ministerial
160 Partner is conferred and authorization given to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of
161 ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ.

162 23 An Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ is one of its members who has been
163 called by God and ordained to preach and teach the gospel, to administer the sacraments and rites
164 of the Church, and to exercise pastoral care and leadership.

165 24 Ordained ministerial standing is an ongoing covenant of mutual accountability, as described in
166 Paragraph 25, which recognizes and continues the authorization of that person to perform the
167 duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry. Ordained ministerial standing in the
168 United Church of Christ is granted by and held in an Association in cooperation with a local
169 church and confers voting membership in the Association.

170 25 The Call of an Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner ([see Article VII](#)) to a Local
171 Church establishes a covenantal relationship among the Ordained Minister or Ordained

172 Ministerial Partner, the Local Church, and the United Church of Christ as represented by an
173 Association. The Call of an Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner to other forms of
174 ministry recognized by an Association of the United Church of Christ establishes a covenantal
175 relationship among the Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner, the calling body, the
176 United Church of Christ as represented by an Association and the Local Church where the
177 Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner is a member.

178 26 Commissioning is the act whereby the United Church of Christ through an
179 Association, in cooperation with a person and a Local Church of the United Church of Christ,
180 recognizes and authorizes that member whom God has called to a specific church-related ministry
181 which is recognized by that Association, but not requiring ordination or licensing. By this act the
182 status of Commissioned Minister is conferred and authorization granted to perform duties
183 necessary to and for the specific ministry, and voting membership in that Association is granted.

184 27 A Commissioned Minister in the United Church of Christ is one of its members who has been
185 called by God and commissioned for a specific church-related ministry.

186 28 Licensing is the act whereby the United Church of Christ through an Association, in
187 cooperation with a person and a Local Church of the United Church of Christ, recognizes and
188 authorizes that member whom God has called to perform specified duties in a designated Local
189 Church or within that Association, mainly preaching and conducting services of worship, for a
190 designated time within a covenant of mutual accountability that includes appropriate supervision
191 and guidance of that Association. The license may be renewed. Voting membership in that
192 Association is granted.

193 29 A Licensed Minister of the United Church of Christ is one of its members whom God has
194 called and who has been recognized and authorized by an Association to perform specified duties
195 in a designated Local Church or within that Association, mainly preaching and conducting
196 services of worship, for a designated time within a covenant of mutual accountability that
197 includes appropriate supervision and guidance of that Association. The license may be renewed.

198 30 A Member in Discernment is a member of the United Church of Christ who has been called by
199 God and who is, in covenant with that member's Local Church and Association, engaging in a
200 time of discernment of that call and preparation for [authorized](#) ministry in response to that call.

201 **ARTICLE VII. RECOGNITION AND RECONCILIATION OF THE**
202 **ORDAINED MINISTRIES OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
203 **AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**

204 31 The United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) recognize the
205 ordained ministries of the other church to be efficacious ministries of grace within that church
206 and these ministries to be valid and full ministries of the one Church of Jesus Christ.

207 32 The ordained ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Christian
208 Church (Disciples of Christ) are reconciled. An Ordained Minister with ordained ministerial
209 standing in one church may function, whenever invited, and as established procedures permit, as
210 an ordained minister to the other.

211 33 The designations "Ordained Ministerial Partner" and "ordained ministerial partner standing"
212 manifest the corporate and individual nature of the recognition and reconciliation of the ordained
213 ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

214 34 Each member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who holds ordained ministerial
215 standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the
216 United Church of Christ.

217 35 Each member of the United Church of Christ who holds ordained ministerial standing in the
218 United Church of Christ is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the Christian Church (Disciples of
219 Christ).

220 36 Ordained ministerial partner standing is authorization granted to an Ordained
221 Minister with ordained ministerial standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of

222 Christ) who has a call to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in
223 the United Church of Christ. This authorization assumes knowledge of, and appreciation for, the
224 history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ. Ordained ministerial partner
225 standing provides ongoing ecclesiastical authorization to perform the duties and exercise the
226 prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ.

227 **ARTICLE VIII. ASSOCIATIONS AND CONFERENCES**

228 37 Associations and Conferences are bodies organized on a territorial basis to perform functions
229 in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of
230 Christ.

231 **Associations**

232 38 An Association is that body within a Conference of the United Church of
233 Christ which is composed of all Local Churches in a geographical area, all
234 Ordained Ministers holding standing or ordained ministerial partner standing therein, all
235 Commissioned Ministers and Licensed Ministers in that Association.

236 39 Subsequent to the initial organization of Associations in the United Church of Christ, the
237 boundaries of any new Association, or any adjustment of boundaries between Associations, shall
238 be determined by the Associations concerned with the approval of the Conference or Conferences
239 involved. The standing of an Association as a body of the United Church of Christ is determined
240 by the Conference in which it is located.

241 40 An Association is that body which determines, confers, and certifies to the standing of the
242 Local Churches of the United Church of Christ within its area.

243 41 An Association is that body which grants; authorization that is required for various forms of
244 ministry in and on behalf of the Church. Such authorization is granted through the rite of
245 ordination, through commissioning, licensing, granting either ordained ministerial standing or
246 ordained ministerial partner standing and other acts of authorization ~~certifies to, transfers and~~
247 ~~terminates ordained ministerial standing or ordained ministerial partner standing in the United~~
248 ~~Church of Christ.~~ Such authorization may be terminated by the Association.

249 42 An Association may retain or secure its own charter, and adopt its own constitution, bylaws
250 and other rules which it deems essential to its own welfare and not inconsistent with this
251 Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

252 43 An Association is related to the General Synod through its Conference.

253 44 When an Association meets, its voting membership includes the lay delegates selected by and
254 representing the Local Churches of that Association, all Ordained
255 Ministers holding standing or ordained ministerial partner standing therein, all Commissioned
256 Ministers and Licensed Ministers of that Association.

257 45 Meetings of the Association are held annually and at such other times as may be necessary for
258 the discharge of its responsibilities.

259 **Conferences**

260 46 A Conference is that body of the United Church of Christ which is composed of all Local
261 Churches in a geographical area, all Ordained Ministers holding standing or ordained ministerial
262 partner standing in its Associations or in the Conference itself when acting as an Association, all
263 Commissioned Ministers and Licensed Ministers in its Associations.

264 47 Subsequent to the initial organization of Conferences in the United Church of Christ, the
265 boundaries of any new Conference, or any adjustment of boundaries between Conferences, shall
266 be determined by the Conferences concerned with the approval of the General Synod. The
267 standing of a Conference as a body of the United Church of Christ is determined by the General
268 Synod.

269 48 A Conference may retain or secure its own charter, and adopt its own constitution, bylaws and
270 other rules which it deems essential to its own welfare and not inconsistent with this Constitution
271 and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

272 49 A Conference is related to the General Synod as described in the Bylaws of the United Church
273 of Christ.

274 50 When a Conference meets, its voting membership includes lay delegates selected by and
275 representing the Local Churches of that Conference, all Ordained Ministers holding standing or
276 ordained ministerial partner standing in its Associations or in the Conference itself when acting as
277 an Association, all Commissioned Ministers and Licensed Ministers in its Associations.

278 51 Meetings of the Conference are held annually and at such other times as may be necessary for
279 the discharge of its responsibilities.

280 **Conferences Acting as Associations**

281 52 A Conference may exercise the functions of an Association when they are delegated to it by an
282 Association or where no Association exists.

283 **ARTICLE IX. THE GENERAL SYNOD**

284 53 The General Synod is the gathering of a faith community representative of the wider church to
285 listen for and discern the call of God to the United Church of Christ. The General Synod
286 deliberates, discerns, and identifies the mission of the wider church of the United Church of
287 Christ in God's world and receives and offers suggestions, invitations, challenges, and assistance
288 in covenant with Local Churches, Conferences, and other settings as they engage in mission
289 together. The General Synod is the representative body of the United Church of Christ and is
290 composed of voting delegates ~~chosen by the Conferences, voting members of Boards of Directors~~
291 ~~of Covenanted Ministries who have been elected by General Synod,~~ as described in the Bylaws of
292 the United Church of Christ, ~~and of ex officio delegates; these shall constitute the voting~~
293 ~~delegates. There shall not be fewer than three delegates allocated to each Conference.~~ A quorum
294 for the conduct of business shall consist of one-third of the voting delegates, provided that in this
295 number at least two-thirds of the Conferences are represented by at least one delegate each. There
296 shall also be associate delegates and ecumenical delegates, without vote, as determined by the
297 Bylaws of the United Church of Christ or action of the General Synod.

298 **Powers and Responsibilities of General Synod**

299 54 The General Synod has the following powers and responsibilities, provided, however, that no
300 power vested in the General Synod shall invade the autonomy of Conferences, Associations, and
301 Local Churches, or impair their right to acquire, own, manage, and dispose of property and funds:

- 302 a) To carry on, directly and through ~~its Executive Council~~ the United Church of Christ Board, as
303 well as through the Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries and other bodies, the work
304 of the United Church of Christ, and to provide for the financial support of this work;
- 305 b) To create such bodies, temporary or permanent, incorporated or unincorporated, suitable for
306 the discharge of its responsibilities;
- 307 c) To organize as required for the transaction of business;
- 308 d) To call and elect Officers of the United Church of Christ who shall be chosen from the
309 membership of the United Church of Christ and who ~~with the Moderators~~ shall serve as Officers
310 of the General Synod;
- 311 ~~e) To nominate and elect those members of Boards of Directors of the~~
312 ~~Covenanted Ministries whose election is vested in the General Synod;~~
- 313 ~~ef) To determine by appropriate Bylaws the composition of an Executive~~
314 ~~Council to act for the General Synod ad interim, and to nominate and elect at least~~
315 ~~a majority of its members~~ To elect all members of the United Church of Christ Board, which shall
316 act as the General Synod ad interim and carry out the United Church of Christ Board's other
317 responsibilities as described in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ;
- 318 ~~f) To establish and maintain national headquarters for the United Church of Christ;~~
- 319 ~~gh) To establish a Treasury, which shall receive funds contributed to the General Synod for the~~
320 support of the United Church of Christ and for its Covenanted Ministries;
- 321 ~~hi) To determine the relationships of the United Church of Christ with ecumenical organizations,~~
322 world confessional bodies, interfaith and other interdenominational agencies;

- 323 i) To encourage conversations with other communions and when appropriate to authorize and
324 guide negotiations with them, looking toward formal union;
325 j) To amend this Constitution as hereinafter provided; and
326 k) To adopt Bylaws for the United Church of Christ and, as hereinafter provided, to amend them.

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329 **Meetings of the General Synod**

330 55 The General Synod shall hold meetings at regular intervals as provided in the Bylaws of the
331 United Church of Christ. Special meetings may be called in the manner provided in those Bylaws.

332 **Correlation**

333 56 a) The General Synod and ~~its Executive Council~~ the United Church of Christ Board shall
334 consider the work of all Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries. It shall also correlate
335 their work, publicity and promotion, preventing duplication and effecting economies of
336 administration, so as to secure maximum effectiveness and efficiency through careful stewardship
337 of personnel and financial resources. ~~Due protection shall be given to all trust funds, including~~
338 ~~pension funds.~~

339 b) The General Synod and the United Church of Christ Board and each of the Board of Directors
340 of all Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries shall assure that due protection shall be
341 given to all assets, trust funds, including pension funds so that the legacy/historic restrictions on
342 the use of restricted funds and the intended use restrictions of the unrestricted funds of each of the
343 historic ministries are monitored, accounted for, maintained and reported to the United Church of
344 Christ Board to assure that the use of all such assets and funds will be allocated and used based
345 on donor intent, whenever that can be determined.

346 **ARTICLE X. UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD**

347 57 The United Church of Christ Board is the successor to and agent for the Executive Council
348 and the Office of General Ministries (including its predecessor offices and bodies: President,
349 Secretary, and Director of Finance and Treasurer of the United Church of Christ; Commission on
350 Development; Stewardship Council; Office of Communication; and ministries of research
351 formerly conducted by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries), and as such continues
352 the work, mandates and legacies of these predecessor bodies and offices. The members of the
353 United Church of Christ Board shall serve as the directors of each of the Covenanted Ministries.
354 The United Church of Christ Board shall be responsible for strategic planning and policymaking.
355 The United Church of Christ Board shall be responsible, with the General Minister and President,
356 for the ecumenical and interfaith relationships of the United Church of Christ in the national
357 setting. In all its work, the United Church of Christ Board shall be guided by the policies
358 established by the General Synod. The United Church of Christ Board shall be incorporated in
359 order to carry out its mandates and responsibilities, including without limitation, performing all
360 legal functions of the General Synod, as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United
361 Church of Christ. The members of the United Church of Christ Board shall be elected and shall
362 serve as provided in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

363 **ARTICLE XI. COVENANTED MINISTRIES**

364 ~~57~~58 The United Church of Christ recognizes the call to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ
365 in word and deed through the work of Local Churches; Associations; Conferences; national
366 expressions; and global, ecumenical, and interfaith relationships. The United Church of Christ is
367 and seeks to be an inclusive, multiracial, multicultural church, accessible to all, engaging in
368 ministries of justice, witness, healing, teaching, and preaching. There are ~~four~~ three Covenanted
369 Ministries as defined and set forth in the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of
370 Christ: ~~Office of General Ministries~~, Local Church Ministries, Wider Church Ministries, Justice
371 and Witness Ministries. A Covenanted Ministry may retain or secure its own charter and adopt its
372 own bylaws and other rules which it deems essential to its own welfare and not inconsistent with

373 this Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ and in accordance with advice
374 and counsel given from time to time by the General Synod.

375 **Powers and Responsibilities of Covenanted Ministries**

376 ~~5859~~ Each Covenanted Ministry shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

- 377 a) To carry out ~~it's~~ the Covenanted Ministry's programmatic work mandates, including the
378 historical mandates of its predecessor bodies, as set forth in its Charter and Bylaws, or referred
379 from the General Synod, or as set forth in the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church
380 of Christ;
- 381 b) To retain responsibility for all legacies and other property received, maintained or held by it,
382 and to approve any use, expenditure or disposal of its legacies or other property;
- 383 ~~bc)~~ To work in covenantal relationship with the General Synod, ~~Executive Council~~ the United
384 Church of Christ Board, and other Ministries to fulfill its mandates;
- 385 ~~ed)~~ To participate through its Executive Minister in the Collegium of Officers;
- 386 ~~de)~~ To participate in the Mission Planning Council;
- 387 ~~ef)~~ To nominate and elect its Executive Minister as set forth in paragraph ~~6061bc~~;
- 388 ~~fg)~~ To organize itself as it deems necessary to carry out its programmatic work, including the
389 fulfillment of historical mandates, which shall be carried out in accordance with this Constitution
390 and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, through the United Church of Christ Board ~~and~~
391 ~~fulfill its mandates~~;
- 392 ~~gh)~~ To determine its budget to be submitted to the United Church of Christ Board in accordance
393 with the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ;
- 394 ~~hi)~~ To adopt its own charter, bylaws, and rules of procedure which it deems essential to its own
395 welfare, not inconsistent with the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ;
- 396 ~~ij)~~ To hold in highest regard actions by, or decisions or advice emanating from, the General
397 Synod, the United Church of Christ Board, another Covenanted Ministry, a Conference, an
398 Association, or a Local Church.

399 ~~5960~~ Each Covenanted Ministry shall be incorporated in order to fulfill its mandates; fulfill all
400 normal, lawful purposes; and receive, hold, manage, and distribute real and personal property,
401 endowments, and restricted funds in compliance with the terms, conditions, and requirements of
402 said funds. The voting membership of each Covenanted Ministry shall be the members of that
403 corporation's Board of Directors. ~~who shall be elected as provided in the Bylaws of the United~~
404 ~~Church of Christ.~~

405 ~~6061~~ The corporation documents of Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, and
406 Wider Church Ministries shall reflect their covenantal relationship with the General Synod and
407 shall provide:

- 408 a) that ~~the Covenanted Ministry shall vest the General Synod with the~~
409 ~~power to elect not fewer than fifty five nor more than fifty eight members of the~~
410 ~~Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministry~~ the members of the United Church of Christ
411 Board comprise the Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministry;
- 412 ~~b) that the voting members of the Covenanted Ministry shall have the power to elect additional~~
413 ~~Board members, but only if the voting members authorize the exercise of such power by an~~
414 ~~affirmative vote of not less than two thirds of all voting members;~~
- 415 ~~eb)~~ that the Covenanted Ministry shall vest the General Synod with the power to call by election
416 the Executive Minister of the Covenanted Ministry;
- 417 ~~dc)~~ that any modification of the provisions or powers in a, or b, ~~e~~ above shall be authorized
418 only after consultation with the Collegium of Officers and the United Church of Christ Board
419 ~~Executive Council of the United Church of Christ~~ and after presentation to the General Synod ~~at~~
420 ~~two regular meetings of the General Synod~~, and shall require an affirmative vote of not
421 less than two-thirds of all voting members of the Covenanted Ministry;
- 422 ~~ed)~~ that the Covenanted Ministry must approve any use, expenditure or disposal of its legacies or
423 other property;

424 e) that dissolution of the Covenanted Ministry shall occur only with **an affirmative vote of not**
425 **less than two-thirds of all members of the Covenanted Ministry, ~~consent of its Board of Directors,~~**
426 after advice and consultation with the General Synod, and only with provision for the transfer of
427 the ownership, management, and control of its assets and funds to a successor corporation that is
428 legally obligated and empowered to own and carry out the obligations, terms, conditions, and
429 requirements of said assets and funds, as the Board of Directors shall determine. In keeping with
430 the covenantal basis of the United Church of Christ, such successor corporation shall be related to
431 the United Church of Christ whenever legally permissible and appropriate, all as determined by
432 the Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministry.

433 ~~6162~~ The General Synod, in covenant with a Covenanted Ministry, may, from time to time,
434 delegate or assign to a Covenanted Ministry such responsibilities as fall within that Covenanted
435 Ministry's purpose and mission as set forth in the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United
436 Church of Christ and in that Covenanted Ministry's corporate documents.

437 ~~6263~~ Each Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ shall report its **program and**
438 finances annually to the **Executive Council United Church of Christ Board** and to each regular
439 meeting of the General Synod. Each Covenanted Ministry shall submit to the **Executive Council**
440 **United Church of Christ Board**, acting as the Budget Committee of the General Synod, a detailed
441 request for support of its work through funds allocated from the **biennial income goal budget** to
442 be recommended to the General Synod.

443 **Incorporation of Existing and Prior Agencies**

444 ~~6364~~ The Covenanted Ministries listed in paragraph ~~5758~~ above, acting as successors to and
445 agents for all predecessor bodies related to the United Church of Christ, continue the work,
446 mandates, and legacies previously carried on by the ~~Secretary, Director of Finance and Treasurer,~~
447 American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the Board of International Missions, the
448 Commission on World Service, the Congregational Christian Service Committee, the United
449 Church Board for World Ministries, Board of National Missions, Board of Christian Education
450 and Publication, Board of Business Management, Board of Home Missions of the Reformed
451 Church in the U. S., the American Missionary Association, Congregational Church Building
452 Society, Congregational Education Society, Congregational Home Missionary Society,
453 Congregational Publishing Society, The Congregational Sunday School Extension Society, the
454 Congregational Women's Home Missionary Federation, the United Church Board for Homeland
455 Ministries, Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, Commission for Racial
456 Justice, Office for Church Life and Leadership, Office for Church in Society, Stewardship
457 Council, ~~Commission on Development~~, and Office of Communication.

458 **Office of General Ministries**

459 ~~64 The purpose and mission of the Office of General Ministries shall be to care~~
460 ~~for the spiritual life, unity, and well-being of the church; to nurture its covenantal~~
461 ~~life, and its ecumenical and interfaith relationships; and to facilitate the visioning,~~
462 ~~planning, coordination, and implementation of the total mission of the United~~
463 ~~Church of Christ. The Office of General Ministries continues the work of, and acts~~
464 ~~as the agent for, the following predecessor offices or bodies: The President, the~~
465 ~~Secretary, and the Director of Finance and Treasurer of the United Church of~~
466 ~~Christ; the Commission on Development; the Stewardship Council; and the Office~~
467 ~~of Communication. It also continues the following ministries: ministries of research~~
468 ~~formerly conducted by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries.~~

469 **Local Church Ministries**

470 65 The purpose and mission of Local Church Ministries, **to be carried out in accordance with the**
471 **Bylaws of the United Church of Christ**, shall be to encourage and support the Local Churches of
472 the United Church of Christ in the fulfillment of God's mission. Specifically, Local Church
473 Ministries continues the work of, and acts as agent for, the following predecessor bodies: the
474 Office for Church Life and Leadership, the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and

475 Society, the Stewardship Council, the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, and its
476 predecessor bodies: The Board of National Missions, Board of Christian Education and
477 Publication, Board of Business Management, Board of Home Missions of the Reformed Church
478 in the U.S., the American Missionary Association, Congregational Church Building Society,
479 Congregational Education Society, Congregational Home Mission Society, Congregational
480 Publishing Society, The Congregational Sunday School Extension Society, the Congregational
481 Women's Home Missionary Federation.

482 **Justice and Witness Ministries**

483 66 The purpose and mission of Justice and Witness Ministries, [to be carried out in accordance](#)
484 [with the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ](#), shall be to enable and encourage Local
485 Churches, Associations, Conferences, and the national expressions of the United Church of Christ
486 to engage in God's mission globally by direct action for the integrity of creation, justice, and
487 peace. Justice and Witness Ministries continues the work of, and acts as agent for, the following
488 predecessor bodies: the Office for Church in Society, the Commission for Racial Justice, the
489 Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society. It also continues the following
490 **ministries**: ministries of public policy advocacy in the area of communications formerly
491 conducted by the Office of Communication, ministries of prophetic service and action formerly
492 conducted by the Division of the American Missionary Association of the United Church Board
493 for Homeland Ministries, ministries of global advocacy in the U.S.A. formerly conducted by the
494 United Church Board for World Ministries.

495 **Wider Church Ministries**

496 67 The purpose and mission of Wider Church Ministries, [to be carried out in accordance with the](#)
497 [Bylaws of the United Church of Christ](#), shall be to encourage and support Local Churches,
498 Associations, Conferences, and the national expressions of the United Church of Christ to
499 participate in the global, multiracial, multicultural church, and to support United Church of Christ
500 ministries around the world and the nation. Wider Church Ministries continues the work of, and
501 acts as agent for, the following predecessor bodies: the United Church Board for World
502 Ministries, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the Board of
503 International Missions, the Commission on World Service, and the Congregational Christian
504 Service Committee. It also continues the following **ministries**: ministries of volunteer services
505 formerly conducted by the Division of the American Missionary Association of the United
506 Church Board for Homeland Ministries; ministries of the Health and Welfare Coordinating
507 Council formerly related to the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries.

508 **ARTICLE XII. AFFILIATED AND ASSOCIATED MINISTRIES**

509 68 An Affiliated Ministry of the United Church of Christ is a non-profit corporation which
510 provides services to or for the United Church of Christ, and whose
511 Board of Trustees is elected by its corporate membership, and which was recognized previously
512 as an Instrumentality by the General Synod.

513 69 An Associated Ministry of the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#) of the
514 General Synod of the United Church of Christ is a nonprofit corporation which provides services
515 to or for the United Church of Christ, and whose corporate membership is nominated and elected
516 by the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#), and which was recognized previously
517 as an instrumentality by the General Synod.

518 **Pension and Relief Activities**

519 70 The pension activities of the United Church of Christ are administered by a non-profit
520 membership corporation(s) known as The Pension Boards—United
521 Church of Christ and designated as an Affiliated Ministry of the United Church of
522 Christ. The control of each such corporation lies in its members through a board of trustees
523 chosen by the members from a list of persons whose names have been presented to and approved
524 by the General Synod or by the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#). Persons for
525 this list may be proposed by any member of the corporation(s) or by the Trustees thereof. Such

526 corporation(s) shall report its program and finance annually to its members and to the ~~Executive~~
527 ~~Council~~ United Church of Christ Board and to each regular meeting of the General Synod. The
528 General Synod shall from time to time make examination of the practices and developments of
529 such corporation(s).

530 71 The ministerial relief activities of the United Church of Christ, by whatever corporate bodies
531 administered, are coordinated with the pension activities of the Church through corporation(s)
532 above described. The pension and the relief corporation(s) shall submit to the United Church of
533 Christ Board, acting as the Budget Committee of the General Synod, a request for allocation of
534 sufficient funds, from the budget to be approved by the United Church of Christ Board
535 ~~recommended to the General Synod~~, for the payment of ministerial relief benefits and such other
536 benefits as the United Church of Christ Board General Synod may provide. Payment of such
537 benefits shall be limited to the funds received for that purpose.

538 **United Church Foundation Funds**

539 72 The United Church Foundation Funds, Inc., is designated as an Associated Ministry of the
540 ~~Executive Council~~ United Church of Christ Board of the United Church of Christ to receive gifts
541 from individuals and organizations, to hold such funds and property as may be entrusted or
542 conveyed to it by the General Synod and other organizations, and administer, invest, and reinvest
543 the same and other funds in trust or otherwise, as set forth in the Bylaws.

544 73 The United Church Foundation Funds shall report its program and finances annually to the
545 ~~Executive Council~~ United Church of Christ Board and to each regular meeting of the General
546 Synod, and shall submit to the United Church of Christ Board, acting as the Budget Committee of
547 the General Synod, a detailed request for support of its work through funds allocated from the
548 biennial income goal budget to be recommended to the General Synod.

549 **ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS**

550 **The Constitution**

551 74 Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by a Conference, the
552 General Synod or the ~~Executive Council~~ United Church of Christ Board. Such proposed
553 amendments shall be submitted in writing to the General Minister and President of the United
554 Church of Christ at least three months prior to a meeting of the General Synod to which they are
555 to be presented. At least two months prior to the meeting of the General Synod, the General
556 Minister and President shall transmit such proposed amendments to the delegates, to the
557 Conferences and to the Local Churches. Adoption of an amendment to the Constitution shall
558 require a two-thirds affirmative vote of those present and voting in the General Synod and, before
559 the next regular meeting of the General Synod, an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the
560 Conferences. If so approved the General Synod, if in session, or the ~~Executive Council~~ United
561 Church of Christ Board, shall declare the amendment adopted and in force.¹

562 **The Bylaws**

563 75 Amendments to the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ may be proposed by an
564 Association, a Conference, the General Synod, or the ~~Executive Council~~ United Church of Christ
565 Board. Such proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the General Minister and
566 President of the United Church of Christ at least three months prior to the meeting of the General
567 Synod to which they are to be presented. At least two months prior to the meeting of the General
568 Synod, the General Minister and President shall transmit such proposed amendments to the
569 delegates, to the Conferences and to the Local Churches. Any Bylaw that is contingent upon a
570 Constitutional provision shall not be effective until after the Constitutional provision is ratified
571 and declared in force. Adoption of an amendment to the Bylaws shall require a two-thirds
572 affirmative vote of those present and voting in the General Synod, and shall be effective upon
573 adoption unless otherwise set forth in the vote.

574 ¹The General Synod declared the original Constitution of the United Church of Christ in force June, 1961, upon
575 ratification of 2/3 of the Synods of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and by 2/3 of the Congregational Christian
576 churches voting.

