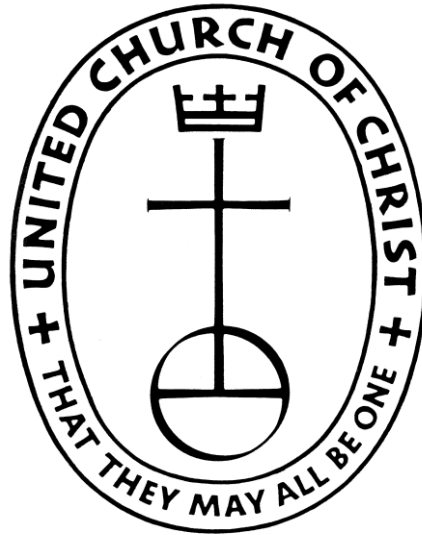


The Constitution
and
The Bylaws

United Church of Chapel Hill,
United Church of Christ



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CONSTITUTION

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Supporting Documents

Supporting documents for reference are not part of the Constitution or Bylaws and instead are simply helpful learning tools for the staff, leadership and the congregation. Supporting Documents as of 10/25/2015 include: Glossary for UCCH Constitution and Bylaws, Operating Responsibilities for each board, the Personnel Policy, and the Safe Conduct Policy.

CONSTITUTION
of the
UNITED CHURCH OF CHAPEL HILL
Chapel Hill, N.C.

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this church (incorporated as United Church of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, {Christian-Congregational}, Incorporated) shall be the UNITED CHURCH OF CHAPEL HILL. It is a congregation of the UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

This church seeks to unite followers of Jesus Christ for the purpose of worshiping God and of making God's will manifest in the lives of people, especially as that will is set forth in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Worship is central to the common life of the church.

ARTICLE III

Statement of Faith

Members of this church shall have the undisturbed right to follow the will of God according to the dictates of each member's own conscience enlightened by the Holy Spirit. The Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ, appended to this Constitution, is not a test of faith, but an expression of the spirit in which the church interprets the will of God.

ARTICLE IV

Polity

The governance of this church is vested in its active members, who have the right to vote and exercise control in all its affairs, subject in legal matters to the laws of the State of North Carolina. All elective officers and board members must be active members of the church. While this church is not under the authority of an ecclesiastical body, it accepts the obligations of mutual counsel, comity, and cooperation involved in being a congregation of the United Church of Christ and pledges to share in its common aims and work.

ARTICLE V

Membership

The members of this church shall be baptized Christians who publicly enter into covenant with the congregation of this church and present themselves through (a) Confirmation of baptismal vows, (b) confession of faith through baptism, (c) reaffirmation of faith, or (d) transfer of church membership letter.

ARTICLE VI

Organization

Section 1. Officers

The officers of this church shall be the Moderator, the Assistant Moderator, the Past Moderator, the Treasurer, and the Clerk.

Section 2. Church Council

The Congregation entrusts the oversight of the church to the Church Council. The Church Council represents the Congregation when the Congregation is not in session (see Article VII, "Congregational

Meeting”). All matters of major policy shall be subject to the Church Council’s approval, but the actions of that body are accountable to the Congregational Meeting.

Section 3. Boards

The Boards of this church shall be such as the Church Council may recommend and the congregation shall approve.

Section 4. Committees

The Moderator, Church Council and the Boards may each, in carrying out their responsibilities, appoint committees for specific purposes. These committees may include members and friends of the congregation who are not members of the appointing body. A majority of each committee responsible for decisions materially affecting church personnel or that commit the congregation to legal or financial obligations shall be active members. Appointment of such a committee does not relieve the appointing body of its responsibilities.

Section 5. Staff

The church staff shall consist of such persons as the Church Council deems necessary to carry on the ministry and programs of the church.

ARTICLE VII

Congregational Meetings

A quorum for the Congregational Meeting shall be 10% of the number of active members, according to the most recent census certified by the Board of Deacons. Congregational Meetings will be conducted in accordance with parliamentary procedure, and a parliamentarian may be appointed by the Church Council.

ARTICLE VIII

Bylaws and Amendments

Bylaws shall be established to govern the day-to-day operations of the Church. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of active members present at any Congregational Meeting called for that purpose, provided that the exact text of the amendment is made available and notice of the meeting shall have been mailed and/or electronically communicated to active members of the church at least three weeks prior to the meeting.

United Church of Christ Statement of Faith—adapted by Robert V. Moss

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our brother,
and to whose deeds we testify:

God calls the worlds into being,
creates humankind in the divine image,
and sets before us the ways of life and death.

God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

God judges all humanity and all nations
by that will of righteousness declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord,
God has come to us and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

God calls us into the church
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be servants in the service of the whole human family,
to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil,
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
to join him in his passion and victory.

God promises to all who trust in the gospel
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God.

Amen.

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BYLAWS

ARTICLE I Membership

Section 1. Classification of Membership

- a. **Active (Voting) Member:** a Member who, when able, regularly attends the weekly service of worship, regularly contributes to the budgets of the church, or participates in the life and work of the congregation. Active Members are eligible to serve as elective officers and board members and to vote in Congregational Meetings.
- b. **Inactive (Non-voting) Member:** a Member who, for the previous 12 months, has not met any of the requirements for active membership described in Article 1, Section 1.a. An Inactive Member may request a letter of transfer, but may not vote in Congregational Meetings, serve as an elective officer or board member, or otherwise exercise control in the affairs of the church.

Section 2. Reception of New Members

New members shall be received at a worship service, at which time they shall be presented to the congregation by the Senior Pastor(s) and the Board of Deacons, and shall enter into covenant with other members of the church.

Section 3. Termination or Reclassification of Membership

- a. A member may be granted a Letter of Transfer to a church which he or she wishes to join, upon his or her request or upon the request of that church. The Letter of Transfer must include the name of the receiving church.
- b. A member may ask to be released from membership. The membership shall then terminate and the member's name shall be removed from the register of the church.
- c. An inactive member may seek reclassification as an active member under the process described in Article 1, Section 4.

Section 4. Process for Maintaining a Census of Active Members

By February 1 of each calendar year, the Deacons shall complete a census of the membership of the church in which they identify members who, for the previous 12 months, have not participated in the life and work of the church (whether through regular attendance of worship services, contribution to the budgets of the church, or participation in other educational, service, or other programs of the church) and therefore may be moved to inactive member status. The Deacons shall send (or direct the appropriate church staff member to send) a physical or electronic letter to the inactive members notifying them of their inactive status and describing how to request active status.

By April 1 of each calendar year, the Deacons shall deliver this census of active members to Church Council and church office staff. This census shall serve as the certified list of Active Members who are eligible to vote and to serve as elective officers and board members and shall be updated throughout the year. If the Deacons are unable to deliver a new certified list by April 1, then the most recently certified census will be effective until the new list is delivered to Church Council. Church Council may request an updated certified census that reflects joining of new members or the letter of transfer or death of previous members prior to any Congregational Meeting or nominations process.

Inactive Members may request renewal of their active member status by sending a written (physical or electronic) request to the Deacons, who shall decide whether to grant active status at their sole discretion within 45 days of receiving the request and shall notify the requestor of the result of the request within 7 days of the decision. Deacons shall refer to the requirements of Active Members (described in Article I, Section 1.a. above) in deciding these cases.

ARTICLE II Officers

Section 1. Moderator

The Moderator shall chair all Congregational Meetings and shall chair the Church Council. The Moderator may appoint committees and shall be responsible for dismissing such committees at the termination of their assignments. To be eligible to be nominated and to serve as Moderator, a person shall have been an active member of the Church for at least the two years immediately preceding the starting date of the term for which the election is to be held. The Moderator's term of office shall be one year, and a Moderator may not serve successive terms. However, a Moderator may serve any number of non-successive terms. The Moderator or the Moderator's designee shall chair the Personnel Policy Committee.

Section 2. Assistant Moderator

The Assistant Moderator shall perform the duties of the Moderator when the Moderator is absent or otherwise unable to discharge those duties. The Assistant Moderator shall have the same term of office as the Moderator.

Section 3. Past Moderator

The Past Moderator shall assist the Moderator and Assistant Moderator in their duties and shall perform their duties when both are absent or unable to discharge their duties.

Section 4. Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer shall be elected for a term of one year and may hold any number of successive terms.
- b. The Treasurer shall be a voting member of the Board of Trustees.
- c. The Treasurer shall be responsible to:
 - (1) Pay all bills of the church on standing or special instructions from the Board of Trustees.
 - (2) Report the financial operations and conditions of the church at least once per year and whenever requested by the Board of Trustees.
 - (3) Serve as custodian of all securities and other valuable papers and records relating to properties of the church.
- d. One or more Assistant Treasurer(s) may be appointed by the Church Council to assist the Treasurer and act in the Treasurer's stead when the Treasurer is absent or otherwise unable to perform the duties of the Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer(s) shall be responsible to do or oversee:
 - (1) The recording of all church funds and deposits in such manner as the Board of Trustees shall direct.
 - (2) Notification to contributors as to the status of their pledge payments at regular intervals.
- e. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer(s) shall be bonded.
- f. The Trustees shall make provision for an annual review or audit of the congregation's accounts and investments.

Section 5. Clerk

- a. The Clerk shall be elected for a term of one year, and may serve any number of successive terms.
- b. The Clerk shall keep an accurate record of all the proceedings of the Congregational Meetings of the church, keep the minutes of the meetings of the Church Council, and submit these records to the appropriate staff member. The Clerk shall certify official votes of the Congregational Meetings.
- c. The Clerk shall, with the assistance of the Senior Pastor(s), ensure that the Board of Deacons and office staff maintain a register of all members of the church and issue on request letters of transfer of membership.

ARTICLE III Church Council

Section 1. General Attributes

- a. The Church Council shall, in consultation with the appropriate Boards, be responsible for the entire program and functioning of the church and shall coordinate its activities and calendar. All matters of major policy shall be subject to its approval, but the actions of the Church Council shall be subject to the approval of the church membership, which has the final authority.
- b. The Church Council shall be composed of all the church officers, Chairs of the Boards or a designated representative (one vote per board), four members-at-large, and the Senior Pastor(s) (ex-officio with vote).
- c. The members-at-large shall consist of four members, two members to be elected each year. Members shall be elected for a term of two years and shall not be eligible to succeed themselves.
- d. The Moderator shall serve as Chair of the Church Council.
- e. A member-at-large of the Church Council who is unable to attend its meetings regularly should resign so that a replacement may be appointed. In order to assist in securing full attendance and participation, absence without cause from three consecutive meetings shall result in automatic termination of Church Council membership.
- f. The Church Council shall meet at least nine times a year. Special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor(s) or the Moderator or by any five members of the Church Council.

Section 2. General Provisions

- a. The fiscal year shall run from January 1 to December 31. The annual financial report of the preceding fiscal year shall be available to members of the congregation on request.
- b. The program year for all boards, committees and organizations shall run from July 1 to June 30.
- c. Congregational Meetings
 - (1) The Annual Meeting shall be held in May or June of each year at a time to be designated by the Church Council. The purpose of this meeting shall be (1) to receive reports of the previous year's operations from officers, boards and organizations of the church; (2) to act upon the report of the Nominating Committee, and elect officers and Church Council and Board members; and (3) to consider such other matters that may come before the meeting by recommendation of the Church Council.
 - (2) The Budget Meeting shall be held not later than the second Sunday in December, at a time designated by the Church Council.
 - (3) Special Congregational Meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor(s), the Moderator, Church Council, or by the Clerk upon the written request of any eleven active members of the church specifying the reasons for which the meeting is to be called. Such meetings must be preceded by a notice published in the bulletin, a notice mailed or electronically communicated to each active member, and announced from the pulpit on each of the three Sundays prior to the meeting.
 - (4) Active members of the congregation may request that an issue be included on the agenda of a Congregational Meeting by submitting to the Moderator a written (physical or electronic) request at least one (1) month prior to the announced date of the Congregational Meeting. The Moderator shall bring the issue before the Church Council to determine via majority vote (in person or electronically) whether to include the issue on the published agenda for the Congregational Meeting.

Section 3. General Responsibilities

- a. Not later than March 15, the Church Council shall serve as, or form, the Nominating Committee which shall:
 - (1) canvass those officers and Board members whose terms do not expire and who have been absent from one-third or more of the meetings to ensure that they are willing and able to continue to serve;
 - (2) make the Congregation aware of the nomination process and opportunities to participate; and
 - (3) publish the report of the Committee one week before the Annual Meeting.
- b. The Church Council shall fill any vacancies that may occur among Board members or officers of the church. The person appointed shall serve out the unexpired term; if this is more than half the term, it shall, for purposes of eligibility for re-election, be considered a full term.
- c. The Church Council shall, as the need arises, appoint delegates or representatives to those boards and organizations to which the church has a responsibility, including: official delegates, and alternates when

necessary, to the Annual Meeting of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ and to the Eastern North Carolina Association of the Southern Conference.

- d. The Church Council shall be responsible for:
 - (1) Calling the Budget Meeting of the congregation and the Annual Meeting of the congregation.
 - (2) Appointing a Pastoral Search Committee when a vacancy occurs in the position of Senior Pastor(s).
 - (3) Performing an annual review and making recommendations annually on the compensation packages of the Senior Pastor(s) and periodically reviewing the Letter(s) of Agreement.
 - (4) Securing pulpit supply when necessary.
 - (5) Establishing a Pastoral Relations Committee to support and advise the Senior Pastor(s).
 - (6) Approving Position Descriptions for all ministerial and program staff and forming a Personnel Policy Committee to advise the Senior Pastor on issues regarding staff hiring and termination, staff organization, staff compensation, and Letters of Agreement. The Personnel Policy Committee will make recommendations to Council regarding Personnel Policies.
 - (7) Approving all special offerings and special requests for support and coordinating such requests with the Trustees and other Boards.
 - (8) Establishing a policy governing use of memorial gifts.
 - (9) Publicizing the church's activities.
 - (10) Performing any other functions deemed advisable by the Church Council and not otherwise delegated by these By-Laws.
- e. The Church Council shall recommend budgetary provision for all the areas of its responsibility, and shall forward its recommendations to the Board of Trustees not later than the third week of September of each year. The Church Council shall receive back from the Board of Trustees the entire proposed budget not later than mid-October of each year for final deliberation and subsequent presentation by the Church Council at the Budget Meeting of the Congregation no later than the second week of December each year.

ARTICLE IV

Church Boards

Section 1. General Attributes

- a. The Boards of the church are:
 - (1) Justice, Outreach and Service
 - (2) Deacons
 - (3) Fellowship
 - (4) Children's Ministries
 - (5) Youth and Young Adult Ministries
 - (6) Adult Education
 - (7) Trustees
 - (8) Member Engagement and Stewardship
 - (9) Multicultural Ministries
- b. Each board shall consist of a minimum of six members, with the number of members to be determined by the respective Board. Board members shall be elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting or appointed by the Church Council to serve out unexpired terms.
- c. Board members shall be elected for terms of three years with 1/3 of the members elected each year.
- d. When a new board is formed, one-third of its members shall be elected for one-year terms, one-third for two-year terms, and one-third for three-year terms.
- e. No Board member may serve on two Boards at the same time except as an ex-officio member, and no person may be elected to another full term on the same Board until a year has elapsed.
- f. Each board shall elect a chair or co-chair(s) from its membership at the first meeting of the year. The chair or co-chair may be re-elected. The chair, a co-chair, or a designated representative shall serve on the Church Council.
- g. Board members may resign by submitting written notice to the Chair of that Board or to the Moderator. In order to assist in securing full attendance and participation, absence without cause from three consecutive meetings shall result in automatic termination of Board membership.

- h. The Church Council shall fill any vacancies that may occur among Board members or officers of the church. The person appointed shall serve out the unexpired term; if this is more than half the term, it shall, for purposes of eligibility for re-election, be considered a full term.
- i. Boards shall meet at least nine times a year. Additional meetings may be requested by the chair. A quorum for a Board meeting shall be a majority of Board membership. Actions taken at their meetings should be documented and communicated to the Church Council and church office. All Board meetings shall be open to the congregation except for discussion of personnel matters.
- j. Boards will make yearly budget recommendations to the Board of Trustees for their areas of responsibilities no later than the date established by the Board of Trustees.
- k. Boards will develop plans and implement programs in conjunction with the pastor(s) or staff relevant to their areas of responsibility.
- l. Boards are responsible for providing feedback to the Senior Pastor or other supervising staff member during the annual evaluation process for staff (Associate/Assistant Pastors for a Program Area, Program Staff or Support Staff) who serve in their area of the church's life and ministry.
- m. Boards may develop Operating Responsibilities to guide them in their day-to-day operations. Except as they conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws, operating responsibility statements may be revised by the Boards yearly. Revisions shall be reviewed and approved by the Church Council prior to their implementation. Annual Reports prepared for the annual meeting shall contain any changes in operating responsibilities approved for the upcoming year.
- n. Boards may establish Committees. Membership on committees is not restricted to members of UCCH. The responsibilities of a committee and the terms of its members will be developed by the Boards to which the committee reports.

Section 2. General Responsibilities

- a. Board of Justice, Outreach and Service
Shall initiate, coordinate, and/or support programs to increase the congregation's awareness of social concerns, to strengthen the Christian pursuit of justice and service, and to deepen the understanding of Christian discipleship in the world.
- b. Board of Deacons
Shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the congregation and oversee activities related to visual arts, health, La Mesa, music, pastoral care and for the support of worship services.
- c. Board of Fellowship
Shall be responsible for creating community within United Church of Chapel Hill. It shall conceive, coordinate and implement fellowship events and ensure that functions are well publicized and inclusive.
- d. Board of Children's Ministries
Shall coordinate with Associate/Assistant Pastor and/or Director of Children's Ministries the educational ministry of the church to nurture and develop the Christian faith of children. In addition, the Board shall oversee the United Church Preschool (UCP). The Director of the UCP (or the most senior staff person of the UCP) shall report directly to the Associate/Assistant Pastor or Director of Children's Ministries, who shall also serve on the governing board of the UCP. In the event of a conflict between the governing documents of the UCP and the Constitution, Bylaws, and other policies of United Church, then the Constitution, Bylaws, and other policies of United Church shall prevail.
- e. Board of Youth and Young Adult Ministries
Shall, in conjunction with the Associate/Assistant Pastor for Youth and Young Adults or other designated staff person, be responsible for the fellowship, education and spiritual growth of our middle school, high school, college-aged youth, and young adults of the church.
- f. Board of Adult Education
Shall envision, plan, and publicize programs for adult education that will enable adults to explore the breadth and depth of our Christian experience and shall oversee the library.
- g. Board of Trustees
Shall have responsibility for the church's finances and physical property, including the church's historical records. The Trustees shall have general supervision of all financial business of the church

and, in consultation with the Church Council, the final approval of all contracts and agreements obligating the church financially. The Board of Trustees shall arrange for the general upkeep and maintenance of all church buildings and grounds.

h. Board of Member Engagement and Stewardship

Shall develop, plan, organize, and implement strategies to strengthen our congregation's ministries by recruiting new members, nurturing our members' UCC identity, and communicating opportunities that will engage their time, talents and financial resources for Christian mission.

i. Board of Multicultural Ministries

Shall promote and oversee activities of the church to increase the congregation's understanding of and support of diverse cultural/ethnic/racial/linguistic groups in our community and to increase our multicultural and multilingual membership and expand our outreach.

ARTICLE V

Staff

Section 1. Senior Pastor(s)

The procedure for calling a new Senior Pastor shall be as follows:

a. Search

The Moderator will call a congregational meeting to determine the process for selection of new Senior Pastor(s) consistent with the recommended procedure of the United Church of Christ. {amended 10/25/15}

b. Call.

The quorum for this meeting shall be one-third of the total number of active members. At its sole discretion, the Church Council may provide a system for active members to participate in this meeting and be deemed "present" via live electronic (audio, video, and/or Internet) conferencing. A two-thirds vote of the members present at this meeting shall be required to call a candidate(s). The call shall be for an indefinite period. The newly elected Senior Pastor(s) shall be installed in accordance with the recommended procedure of the United Church of Christ. The newly elected Senior Pastor(s) shall then be received into membership of this church.

c. Dissolution

A special Congregational Meeting may be called for the purpose of requesting resignation of the Senior Pastor(s). The quorum for this meeting shall be one-third of the total number of active members. At its sole discretion, the Church Council may provide a system for active members to participate in this meeting and be deemed "present" via live electronic (audio, video, and/Internet) conferencing. If a two-thirds majority of this meeting requests the Senior Pastor's (or Senior Pastors') resignation(s), and the resignation is not presented within 60 days, the Church Council shall terminate the Senior Pastor's (or Senior Pastors') tenure. Should the Senior Pastor(s) decide(s) to resign, the Senior Pastor(s) shall present the resignation(s) to the Church Council 60 days prior to the date it is to become effective. The Church Council shall, in consultation with the Senior Pastor(s), determine when the resignation shall become effective and shall promptly notify the congregation that the Senior Pastor(s) has/have resigned.

d. Responsibilities

The duties of the Senior Pastor(s) of this church shall be to preach, to teach, to lead in the services of worship including the sacraments of baptism and communion, to oversee the church's work, and to give pastoral care to all members of the church as well as any others who may seek a Senior Pastor's counsel. The Senior Pastor(s) shall coordinate administrative activities of the church, serve as head(s) of staff, and be responsible to the Church Council. The Senior Pastor(s) shall be a member(s) (ex-officio with vote) of the Church Council and an advisory, non-voting member(s) of the Boards.

Section 2. Associate or Assistant Pastor(s)

An Associate or Assistant Pastor shall be any ordained minister not subject to call by the congregation and employed either full or part-time for specific responsibilities outlined in the Letters of Agreement in

consultation with the Personnel Policy Committee. Employment of an Associate or Assistant Pastor shall follow the procedures stipulated in Article III, Section 3, d, (6) of these Bylaws. These positions are hired by the Senior Pastor in consultation with a search committee that is approved by Council, but are not subject to call by the congregation. Dissolution of relations for an Associate or Assistant Pastor shall be governed by the agreements entered into by the Associate or Assistant Pastor and the Church at the time of employment.

Section 3. Other Staff

Other staff members who may be employed by the Church shall have those responsibilities contained in the terms of employment agreed upon by the staff member and the Church. Procedures for employment are stipulated in Article III, Section 3, d, (5) of these Bylaws. Dissolution of relations shall be governed by the agreements entered into by the staff and the Church at the time of employment.

Section 4. Staff of Related Entities

Persons employed by entities related to United Church (unless the entity is a separate 501(c)(3) organization) shall be considered employees of United Church and governed by United Church personnel policies. If not in conflict with these policies, either entity may choose to provide benefits limited to its employees.

ARTICLE VI

Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of active members present at any business meeting called for that purpose, provided that the exact text of the amendment is made available and notice of the meeting shall have been mailed and/or electronically communicated to active members of the church at least three weeks prior to the meeting.

Adopted September 29, 2002

Replaces completely the 1985 version and its amendments.

Amended by Congregation, June 6, 2010

Amended by the Congregation October 25, 2015

Amended by the Congregation on November 2, 2020

Amended by the Congregation on June 8, 2025

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