



The  
By-Laws

of

The First Congregational  
United Church of Christ,  
of Ocala, Florida  
February 9, 2022

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United Church of Christ,  
Of Ocala, Florida

**Date Approved by the Congregation:**

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# The By-Laws

## ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this church shall be **FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, OF OCALA, FLORIDA**, located at 6140 Southwest 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue Road, Ocala, Florida 34474.

## ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The avowed purpose of this church shall be:  
*To develop passionate followers of Jesus Christ through  
The Celebration of Worship;  
The Excitement of God's Word;  
The Rewards of Service; and  
The Joy of Fellowship  
where all are welcome at His Table.*

## ARTICLE III. POLITY

### Section A. Relationship with the Church Universal

This church is a member of Christ's Church Universal: the Body of Christ.

### Section B. Relationship with Other Communities of Faith

This church is called to honor and respect the work and ministry of other communities of faith, working in concert toward religious freedom, care for earth and its environment, cultural diversity, interfaith and ecumenical cooperation, nonviolence, and economic and social justice.

### Section C. Covenant with The United Church of Christ

This church shall be a part of the United Church of Christ, and it shall sustain its covenant with the United Church of Christ described in those portions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ adopted July 4, 1961, relating to local churches.

This church will seek God's will and be faithful to God's mission in consultation and collaboration with the Florida Conference and General Synod of the United Church of Christ. This church listens to, hears, and carefully considers the advice, counsel, and requests of others. In covenant, this church joins the various expressions of the United Church of Christ to seek to walk together in all God's ways.

This church has, in fellowship, a God-given responsibility for the United Church of Christ, its labors and its extension, even as the United Church of Christ has, in fellowship, a God-given responsibility for the well-being and needs and aspirations of its Local Churches.

Actions by, or decisions or advice emanating from, the Florida Conference and the General Synod of the United Church of Christ will be held in the highest regard by this church.

### Section D. Autonomy

The First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala, Florida, affirms the principle of local autonomy as set forth in its Charter and By-Laws. However, the church recognizes its responsibility to the larger fellowship of which it is a member: the United Church of Christ. It acknowledges the obligations of mutual counsel, comity, and cooperation resting upon churches in which freedom in fellowship is cherished and in this spirit pledges itself to share in their common life and purpose.

41 Section E. Government  
42 The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control  
43 in all its affairs, subject to the Laws of the State of Florida relating to not-for-profit  
44 corporations. A vote by a majority of members present at a meeting shall be the action of  
45 the church. A quorum for any congregational business meeting, regular or special, shall  
46 consist of twenty-five percent (25%) of the church membership.

#### 47 ARTICLE IV. DOCTRINE

48 Section A. Faith as Christian Love

- 49 1. **Christian Love of God Includes:**
- 50 a. Walking fully in the Path of Jesus without denying the legitimacy of other paths
  - 51 that God may provide for humanity.
  - 52 b. Listening for God’s Word, which comes through daily prayer and meditation,
  - 53 studying testimonies to God’s presence and will through testaments that we call
  - 54 “Scriptures,” through documents expressing the collective wisdom through the
  - 55 ages, and attending to God’s present activity in the world.
  - 56 c. Celebrating God, whose Spirit pervades and whose glory is reflected in all
  - 57 Creation, including the earth and its ecosystems, the sacred and secular, the
  - 58 Christian and non-Christian, the human and non-human.
  - 59 d. Expressing our love in worship that is as sincere, vibrant, and artful as it is
  - 60 scriptural.
- 61 2. **Christian Love of Neighbor Includes:**
- 62 a. Engaging people authentically, as Jesus did, treating all as creations made in God’s
  - 63 image, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental
  - 64 ability, nationality, or economic class.
  - 65 b. Standing, as Jesus does, with the outcast and oppressed, the denigrated and
  - 66 afflicted, seeking peace and justice with or without the support of others.
  - 67 c. Preserving religious freedom and the church’s ability to speak prophetically to
  - 68 government by resisting the commingling of church and state.
  - 69 d. Walking humbly with God, acknowledging our own shortcomings while honestly
  - 70 seeking to understand and call forth the best in others, including those who
  - 71 consider us their enemies.
- 72 3. **Christian Love of Self Includes:**
- 73 a. Basing our lives on faith/trust that in Christ all things are made new and that we,
  - 74 and all people, are loved beyond our wildest imaginations—for eternity.
  - 75 b. Claiming the sacredness of both our minds and our hearts, and recognizing that
  - 76 faith and science, doubt and belief serve the pursuit of truth.
  - 77 c. Caring for our bodies and insisting on taking time to enjoy the benefits of prayer,
  - 78 reflection, worship, and recreation in addition to work.
  - 79 d. Acting on the faith that we are born with a meaning and purpose, a vocation and
  - 80 ministry that serve to strengthen and extend God’s realm of love.<sup>1</sup>

81 Section B. Sacraments

- 82 1. We acknowledge two sacraments:
- 83 a. *Baptism* is the sacrament within which our church, on behalf of Christ’s Church
  - 84 Universal, welcomes people to become Christians. Baptism is the church’s way of

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<sup>1</sup>These three points of faith are adapted from *The Phoenix Affirmations...*, published by Jossey-Bass (2006).

85 celebrating and naming the grace of God living in all of God’s people—men,  
86 women, and children. It initiates and marks the entry point into the life-time  
87 pilgrimage of following in the Way of Jesus Christ.

88 b. *Eucharist* (also known as “Communion”) is the sacrament within which Christians  
89 as a faith community periodically reaffirm their baptism. Because Eucharist is (1)  
90 a common meal of liberation, (2) because it is an egalitarian meal, (3) because it  
91 is meal through which we celebrate community both as Christians and as members  
92 of the world around us, (4) because it is both the experience and foretaste of God’s  
93 love for all creation, and (5) because it is a sign that people can transform  
94 themselves and each other to engage the world on behalf of love, justice,  
95 compassion, regard for the integrity of all people, and the sacredness of creation.

96 Section C. Covenant

97 We covenant with Jesus Christ and one with another and bind ourselves to walk together  
98 with God as revealed through the scriptures and other non-canonical sources of religious  
99 wisdom and experience, our traditions, our experience, and our reason.

100 Section D. Affirmation of Diversity

101 We seek to be an inclusive church for all people, open to God’s gifts of diversity by  
102 affirming those gifts, learning from them, and being transformed by them through worship,  
103 fellowship, striving for peace and justice, the sacraments, and care for our world.

104 Section E. Statement of Faith

105 Because our church is a member of and in covenant with The United Church of Christ, we  
106 affirm two “Statements of Faith”—one authored by Robert V. Moss and the other in the  
107 form of a Doxology as adapted by June 2017 Synod of The United Church of Christ.  
108 These Statements of Faith are neither legally required tests of faith nor are intended  
109 theologically, metaphorically, or symbolically to limit other statements of faith. These  
110 Statements of Faith are intended to both convey and foster our church’s and our members’  
111 interpreting God’s presence through Christ and through both our church and Christ’s  
112 Church Universal. (see Appendix A: Statements of Faith, page 25)

113 Section F. Peace and Justice Church

114 The church is a “Peace and Justice Church,” striving for peace with justice.

115 Section G. Human Rights Church

116 This church shares a universal commitment to the inherent worth of every human being  
117 and affirms that it is essential to our identity as a member of the Body of Christ to work  
118 together cooperatively toward this end. This church is united against any expression or  
119 action of violence, war, intimidation, prejudice, and/or discrimination that attempts to  
120 injure individuals, families, or groups of people.

121 Section H. Open and Affirming Church

122 We declare that we are an “Open and Affirming Church,” welcoming into our life,  
123 leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, rites, sacraments, responsibilities, and blessings,  
124 people of all races, genders, ages, marital standings, family structures, sexual orientations,  
125 gender identities and expressions, socio-economic statuses, professions, faith backgrounds,  
126 nationalities, and mental and physical challenges.

127 Section I. Mission Statement

128 We are an active, inclusive and caring church that witnesses to God’s love within the Good  
129 News of Jesus Christ. Our *Extravagant Welcome* as an *Open and Affirming Church* where  
130 “God is still speaking...” leads us to invite all people to participate fully in our community  
131 and worship life as loved and accepted people of God.

132 We ground our worship, learning, reflection, and action in Holy Scripture, tradition,

133 reason, and experience<sup>2</sup> that inspire and challenge us to discover God’s unfolding vision  
134 and grace, more in faithful searching than in certainty.

135 We seek creative worship and education that engage varieties of experiences to awaken,  
136 inspire, and challenge our spirit and senses through traditional and emerging theologies,  
137 music, art, the spoken word and contemplation. As a community of faith we provide a  
138 context through worship, covenantal relationship and education that enables ongoing  
139 development in faith.

140 Convinced that God’s plan is “That they may all be one,”<sup>3</sup> we respect the faithfulness of  
141 those whose approach differs from ours. We accept our part in God’s work to mend the  
142 world, and we partner with other communities of faith and civic organizations in  
143 promoting learning, understanding, and bridging differences in achieving fullness of life  
144 for all.

145 We believe that God calls us to strive for peace and justice, to protect and restore God’s  
146 creation, to bring hope to others, and to live our lives with compassion and holy courage.

147 Section J. The Bible and Non-Canonical Writings

148 We consider the Bible, with its three “Testaments”—Hebrew, Christian, and Apocryphal—,  
149 in league with our *traditions*, our personal and corporate *experience*, and *reason*—to be  
150 a primary source of religious wisdom, including history, the experience and beliefs of its  
151 authors and their faith communities, the cultures and societies within which it was written,  
152 the customs and order of its two primary faith traditions (Judaism and Christianity),  
153 theology, developmental morals and ethics, language, politics, transcendence, and mystery.  
154 We consider the Bible to be both a product and a record of the relationship between God  
155 and humanity.

156 In accord with our trust that God has continued to “speak” across the centuries since the  
157 Bible was authored and that God continues to “speak” in our day and time, our church will  
158 assemble a collection of Non-Canonical Writings that we consider to reflect the highest  
159 ideals and witness of our faith. These Writings may be essays, speeches, extracts from  
160 larger works, poetry, librettos, sermons, and so forth.

161 In order for a Non-Canonical Writing to be officially endorsed by our church, any member  
162 may offer the Writing for consideration at any Congregational Meeting in the same manner  
163 as any other proposal for action by vote by the congregation. Upon acceptance according  
164 to the action of the congregation, the writing will be appended to previous Non-canonical  
165 Writings. The entire set of Writings will be printed and placed in pew racks alongside the  
166 Bible and hymnal. They will also be posted online and made available to anyone viewing  
167 our church’s website, provided proper copyrights are met. In case a work is a larger  
168 work—or an entire book—, the Writing will not be printed on placed on our church’s  
169 website, but a full reference and description of the work (authored the church member  
170 proposing the Writing) will be placed in the printed collection and posted on our church’s  
171 website.

172 **ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP**

173 Section A. Types of Membership

- 174 1. Regular: Regular Membership in this church shall be open to any person who has  
175 been baptized and has been (I) confirmed or (ii) has made public confession  
176 or reaffirmation of faith in Jesus Christ or (iii) who has presented to the  
177 church or its Senior Pastor, letters of transfer from another church. A class  
178 of instruction shall be offered under the direction of the Senior Pastor and

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<sup>2</sup>“Wesleyan Quadrilateral,” *A Dictionary for United Methodists*, Alan K. Waltz (Abingdon Press, 1991).

<sup>3</sup>“That they may all be one” is the motto of The United Church of Christ.



- 179 applicable committee chairpersons acting on behalf of the church.  
180 2. Associate: Associate Membership shall be open to those people desiring to retain  
181 membership in out-of-town churches and wish to share in the  
182 responsibilities and privileges of this church. An Associate Member shall  
183 have the same rights of church membership as other members.  
184 3. Membership shall become effective with the approval of the Board of Church Growth.  
185 A Certificate of Membership signed by the Senior Pastor will be issued to new  
186 members.

187 Section B. Reception  
188 The Reception of New Members shall ordinarily be at a regular service of worship where  
189 the Right Hand of Fellowship shall be extended. In cases of disability, a new member may  
190 accept the covenant of this church at a convenient location in the presence of the Senior  
191 Pastor and one church member, acting on behalf of the church.

192 Section C. Commitment Responsibilities  
193 Members shall pledge themselves to attend the regular worship of the church and the  
194 celebration of Communion, to live the Christian life, to share in the life and participate in  
195 the work, ministry, and meetings of the church, to contribute to its financial support and  
196 benevolences, and to seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and the  
197 community. A church member is obligated to keep the church informed of any changes in  
198 address or status and to keep in touch with the church when absent from the congregation  
199 for an extended period of time.

200 Section D. Transfer of Membership  
201 Any member may make a request for a letter of transfer. When a church member requests,  
202 in writing, to be relieved of membership obligations because of change of faith or for other  
203 reasons that do not involve un-Christian conduct, the church shall make every effort to  
204 continue the membership. Failing in that, the Board of Church Growth shall grant the  
205 request and ask the Church Clerk to issue the appropriate letter of transfer.

206 Section E. Termination of Membership  
207 1. A member, who for a period of one year, has not communicated with the church, whose  
208 address is unknown or who has not contributed to the church including per capita  
209 dues, will have their name placed on a list for review by the Board of Church Growth.  
210 No one's name will be included who has health issues or has moved into a nursing  
211 home or assisted living.  
212 2. The names will be forwarded to the Church Church Council/Trustees where each  
213 member's status will be acknowledged. A letter will be sent by the Senior Pastor to the  
214 last known address requesting acknowledgement of receipt of the letter including the  
215 stipulation that retaining membership requires payment of per capita dues. A record  
216 will be maintained indicating a letter sent and any response to the letter.  
217 3. Any member whose name remains on the list for two years will have their name  
218 presented to the Church Church Council/Trustees and Senior Pastor. Each member  
219 will have their name voted upon separately. If the Church Church Council/Trustees  
220 agrees, the name will be given to the office for removal from the membership rolls.  
221 4. A member in good standing may resign from church membership by sending a letter  
222 to the church.

223 Section F. Restoration of Membership  
224 Any person whose membership has been terminated may have membership restored by a  
225 vote of the Board of Church Growth.

## 226 ARTICLE VI. SERVICES

227 Section A. Worship  
228 1. Sunday worship services shall be held in the church at hours specified by the Worship  
229 Team and the Senior Pastor and approved by the Church Church Council/Trustees.  
230 Other services of worship, prayer, and study shall be held as determined by the  
231 Worship Team in cooperation with the Senior Pastor.  
232 2. Worship shall embrace liturgical practices of our faith and denomination in a spirit of

- 233 ecumenism and deep respect for the Church’s Apostolic traditions.  
 234 Section B. Sacraments  
 235 1. Eucharist (a.k.a., *Holy Communion*) shall be celebrated at such regular dates as  
 236 determined by the Senior Pastor and the Worship Team. Because Jesus Christ, our  
 237 Sovereign, invited all men, women, and children into his love and blessing and to feast  
 238 at his table, we welcome everyone to partake in the Eucharist (*Holy Communion*).  
 239 2. The *Sacrament of Baptism* will be conducted in a public order of worship:  
 240 a. for individuals personally making a profession of faith in Jesus Christ;  
 241 b. for individuals whose parents/sponsors—  
 242 (1) are active members of a local church;  
 243 (2) have responsibility for the individual’s religious upbringing; and  
 244 (3) agree to nurture the individual toward personally confirming the covenant  
 245 of baptism.  
 246 c. A non-sacramental “Ritual of Blessing” (a.k.a., “Christening”) may be conducted  
 247 for any individual in either a private ceremony or a public order of worship.  
 248 d. In cases of a dire pastoral emergency, the Pastor(s) has the responsibility to  
 249 baptize individuals with exception to items “a” and “b” above.

- 250 Section C. Religious Education  
 251 1. One central task of our Church is “Christian Formation,” which must be developed  
 252 within the broader context of “Religious Formation.” Given that all of us have been  
 253 socialized into a culture different from the times of Jesus and the times of the early  
 254 formation of the Church, “Christian Formation” must assume the discipline of “re-  
 255 formation” and “re-socialization.”<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, Religious Education will include but  
 256 is not limited to addressing:  
 257 a. Religious beliefs, doctrines, customs, rites, practices, language, and traditions and  
 258 their influence on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;  
 259 b. Bible Study;  
 260 c. The interconnected dialogue and congruent influence among moral, ethical,  
 261 theological, cultural, philosophical, societal, and political practices, issues, and  
 262 trends;  
 263 d. The world’s religions and how they are internally diverse, and how they evolve and  
 264 change as living traditions that impact, and are impacted by, the cultural,  
 265 historical, and political contexts of adherents, including but not limited to  
 266 interpretation through themes such as gender and sexuality, the arts, violence and  
 267 peace, science, and power and authority.  
 268 2. Religious Education will be provided for adults, youth, and children.

## ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS

- 269 Section A. Church Year (also, “Fiscal Year”)  
 270 The Church Year (also, “Fiscal Year”) shall be from January 1 to December 31.  
 271 Section B. Annual Meetings  
 272 1. The Annual Meeting of the church shall be held the last Sunday of January after the  
 273 morning worship service. The Moderator or the Vice-Moderator shall preside. The  
 274 printed Annual Report containing reports of officers, boards, committees, and  
 275 organizations shall be presented at this meeting. Projected plans and goals for the  
 276 coming year, the budget, and proposed amendments to the By-Laws shall be presented  
 277 for adoption.  
 278 2. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate on which one person’s name is listed  
 279 for each position to be filled. Nominations from the floor will be accepted if that person  
 280 being nominated has consented to run for said office.  
 281 3. Officers (Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Church Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer,  
 282 and Collections Clerk) and members of the following boards shall be elected: Deacons,  
 283

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<sup>4</sup>Marcus Borg, in an interview with Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi, at [http://www.ucc.org/education\\_dialogue-1](http://www.ucc.org/education_dialogue-1), [no date].

284 Church Growth, Religious Education, Church Life, Community Outreach, and three  
 285 Members-at-Large to the Church Council/Trustees, and three members shall serve as  
 286 Directors of the Board of Directors of Ocala Tree of Life Sanctuary. Members of other  
 287 boards and committees shall be elected or appointed according to the By-Laws.  
 288 4. A Parliamentarian, when needed, shall be appointed by the Moderator with the  
 289 approval of the Church Council/Trustees.  
 290 5. The Annual Report to the congregation and any proposed amendments to the By-Laws  
 291 must be available to the membership three weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. A  
 292 printed copy of the Annual Report will be mailed to members who are unable to receive  
 293 a copy of the Annual Report at a Sunday Service.  
 294 6. Officers, boards, committees, and organizations must submit their yearly reports to the  
 295 church office no later than December 1. The Board of Church Growth shall report  
 296 membership data available through October 31.

297 Section C. Special Congregational Meetings  
 298 Other congregational meetings may be called as needed by the Moderator or the Senior  
 299 Pastor. The Church Clerk shall call a meeting within three weeks of receiving a written  
 300 petition signed by at least twenty-five (25) members of this church. In case of an emergency  
 301 (e.g., storm damage), the church officers and/or the pastor shall act on behalf of the church  
 302 pending further action as required by the Church Council/Trustees.

303 Section D. Notice of Meetings  
 304 The call to meetings shall briefly describe the principle business to be considered and other  
 305 appropriate matters germane to the meeting. The time and place of the meeting, and nature  
 306 of the business to be transacted shall be announced at a regular Sunday service at least  
 307 twenty-one days prior to the date of the meeting, and also timely notification in *News and*  
 308 *Views*, e-mail notification by the church secretary, and a physical mailing to members  
 309 unable to receive the material during a Sunday morning service at least two weeks prior to  
 310 the meeting.

311 Section E. Rules and Regulations  
 312 1. Voting Rights: Each qualified member is entitled to one vote, without proxy.  
 313 2. Quorum: A quorum for any business meeting, regular or special, shall consist of  
 314 twenty-five percent (25%) of the church membership.  
 315 3. Voting Rules: A majority vote is decisive except as otherwise required by these By-  
 316 Laws. All qualified members of the church, who are present, are entitled to one vote  
 317 without proxy. Written ballots shall be available.  
 318 4. Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of this church shall be January 1 through the last day of  
 319 December.

320 Section F. Parliamentary Authority  
 321 The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, Newly Revised, shall  
 322 govern the conducting of business meetings in all cases to which they apply. When there  
 323 is a conflict, these By-Laws shall have precedence over the above described *Rules of Order*.  
 324 The Moderator may appoint a qualified Parliamentarian at each business meeting.

325 **ARTICLE VIII. ORDAINED STAFF, CLERGY**

326 Section A. Senior Pastor  
 327 1. The Call: The Call to the Senior Pastor goes into effect when two-thirds (2/3) of the  
 328 membership, present and voting by ballot at a congregational meeting called for this  
 329 purpose, vote in the affirmative.  
 330 2. Duties and Responsibilities of the Senior Pastor:  
 331 a. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible to the Worship Team, the Board of  
 332 Deacons, and Parish Visitation Committee (PVC) for the guidance and direction  
 333 of the spiritual welfare of the church.  
 334 b. The Senior Pastor shall seek to enlist followers of Christ, provide adequate  
 335 opportunity for confirmation, support a program of Religious education, preach  
 336 the Gospel, administer the sacraments, visit church members, minister to the sick  
 337 and shut-ins, lead services of public worship, and perform allotted functions in

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- cooperation with the Church Council/Trustees, boards, and committees.
  - c. The Senior Pastor shall advise boards and committees in an *ex-officio* status. It is not, however, necessary that the Senior Pastor attend all meetings.
  - d. The Senior Pastor shall implement the day-to-day policies as established by the Church Council/Trustees.
  - e. All members of the church staff are under the supervision of the Senior Pastor.
  - f. The Senior Pastor shall establish regular hours in the office.
  - g. Division of pastoral responsibilities shall be addressed and determined through periodical reviews with the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee when requested by the Church Council/Trustees and/or the Senior Pastor.
  - h. The Senior Pastor shall submit to the church office a written annual report for the Annual Meeting no later than two weeks before the Annual Meeting.
  - i. The Senior Pastor shall be bonded with the church bearing the cost.
3. Compensation and Benefits:  
This church shall be guided by the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ Guidelines in all such matters. There shall be a detailed, written agreement between a new pastor and the congregation. (see also "Appendix B: Personnel Policies," page 25)
4. Termination of Senior Pastor's Position:
- a. The Senior Pastor's resignation shall be in a letter to the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. The terms of separation must conform to provisions of the original call. The terms of separation must include advance notice as outlined therein and may include termination pay and allowances. The chairperson of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall immediately inform the congregation, in writing, that said resignation has been received and handled according to procedures.
  - b. Separation or Dismissal of the Senior Pastor:
    - (1) In the event that forty percent (40%) of the membership feel that the Senior Pastor is not fulfilling the terms of his/her contract, has lost ministerial standing, or is accused of an illegal, immoral, or improper action, they may present said complaints to the chairperson of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee in writing, signed by the petitioners.
    - (2) The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee will conduct an investigation into the charges. The Senior Pastor shall have an opportunity to present his/her case. If the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee finds sufficient evidence to support the charges, it shall present its findings to the Church Council/Trustees.
    - (3) The Church Council/Trustees shall decide whether the evidence presented warrants: (1) dismissal of the charges, (2) review with the Senior Pastor, or (3) dismissal of the Senior Pastor. If, in the judgment of the Church Council/Trustees, the dismissal of the Senior Pastor is indicated as best for the welfare of the church, the Moderator may request the assistance and advice from the Conference Minister before action is taken.
    - (4) After deliberation, if the Church Council/Trustees decides that the Senior Pastor should resign, the Church Council/Trustees shall work to bring about a voluntary resignation. Conditions of the termination shall be as set forth in the original call.
    - (5) If the Senior Pastor refuses to resign as requested, the Moderator, with the approval of the Church Council/Trustees, shall call a meeting of the church membership to act and vote on the question of dismissal. Notice of this meeting shall be announced from the pulpit and printed in the Order of Worship on two successive Sundays. It may also be announced in the monthly publication. A quorum shall consist of twenty-five percent (25%) of the membership. Dismissal shall be immediate upon a 2/3 majority vote of church members present and voting by written ballot.

Section B. Interim Pastor

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1. When a vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor occurs, the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall follow the procedures as outlined in Article XIII, Section A (Search Committee). The Interim Pastor need not necessarily be a member of the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ, but it is suggested that the executives of the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ be consulted.
  2. An Interim Pastor shall receive compensation and benefits according to a “Contract of Employment” drawn up by the Church Council/Trustees and signed by the Moderator and the Interim Pastor. (see Appendix B Personnel Policies, page 25)
  3. The Interim Pastor shall serve until such time as a Senior Pastor is called.
  4. The Interim Pastor may not be considered as a candidate for the position of Senior Pastor.
- 404 Section C. Ancillary Ordained or Not-ordained Staff
- 405 1. Additional ordained or Not-ordained staff might include the following: Associate or
  - 406 Assistant Pastor, Minister of Visitation, Minister of Religious Education, Minister of
  - 407 Music, etc.
  - 408 2. The need for such staff shall be determined by the Church Council/Trustees with
  - 409 recommendation from appropriate boards, committees or the Senior Pastor.
  - 410 3. The Search Committee, following the Search and Call Procedures of the United Church
  - 411 of Christ, shall present a candidate for the position to the Church Council/Trustees. On
  - 412 approval of the Church Council/Trustees, the proposed pastor shall be called by a two-
  - 413 thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership present and voting at a congregational
  - 414 meeting for that purpose.
  - 415 4. All Ordained or Not-ordained Staff shall be under the direction of the Senior Pastor.
  - 416 5. Compensation and benefits shall follow the guidelines in Article VIII, Section A-3.
  - 417 6. Termination shall follow the procedure outlined in Article VIII, Section A-4.

418 **ARTICLE IX. CHURCH EMPLOYEES**

- 419 Section A. Determination of Need
- 420 1. The need for church employees shall be determined by the Church Council/Trustees
  - 421 with recommendation from the appropriate boards, committees, or the Senior Pastor.
  - 422 2. An “employee” includes anyone paid for his/her services such as: certified associates
  - 423 in Religious education, music director(s), organists, soloists, administrators, clerical
  - 424 personnel, custodians, and other employees of the church.
- 425 Section B. Selection
- 426 1. Each staff person, full or part-time, shall have a written contract drawn up by the
  - 427 Church Council/Trustees.
  - 428 2. Candidates for a position shall be interviewed by the Senior Pastor, the Moderator, and
  - 429 the appropriate boards or committees.
- 430 Section C. Duties and Responsibilities
- 431 1. All employees are under the day-to-day supervision and guidance of the Senior Pastor
  - 432 in performing their duties as specified in their job descriptions. Certain personnel,
  - 433 however, may also report to other ordained staff, a board or committee, as outlined in
  - 434 the job description.
  - 435 2. Specific duties and responsibilities shall be outlined in the job descriptions.
  - 436 Arrangements shall be made on an individual basis for special assignments requiring
  - 437 extra hours.
- 438 Section D. Compensation and Benefits
- 439 1. Non-ordained employees are part of the ministry of this church. They shall be
  - 440 compensated at the same level as other non-profit organizations in the community.
  - 441 Each employee, full or part time, shall have a contract that clearly states the allowed
  - 442 sick leave and vacation time, with or without pay.
  - 443 2. A “Full-time employee” is defined as an employee who works more than thirty regular
  - 444 hours a week. Full-time employees shall be covered by health insurance and Social
  - 445 Security and shall be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, if required by the job
  - 446 contract.

- 447 3. Full-time employees may be given the privilege of joining the Retirement Fund for Lay  
 448 Workers of the United Church of Christ or some comparable retirement fund.  
 449 4. Church employees shall be evaluated annually on their performance by their  
 450 supervisors. Recommendations for changes in compensation, based on this evaluation  
 451 shall be made to the Church Council/Trustees (see Appendix B: Personnel Policies,  
 452 page 25).

453 **ARTICLE X. OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

454 Section A. Leadership  
 455 The leadership of this church shall be vested in the officers, boards, and the Church  
 456 Council/Trustees. Those elected at the Annual Meeting shall assume office at the beginning  
 457 of the new church year.

- 458 Section B. Duties, Responsibilities, and Elections
- 459 1. All officers and board members shall be church members in good standing.
  - 460 2. Each board and committee, unless otherwise designated, shall elect its own  
 461 chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary.
  - 462 3. A person may serve on a committee while on a board, but may not serve on more than  
 463 two boards at the same time, except as indicated elsewhere in these By-Laws.
  - 464 4. In the absence of a chairperson of a board, a vice-chairperson or a board-appointed  
 465 designee shall represent the board on the Church Council/Trustees with the power to  
 466 vote.
  - 467 5. No board member shall be eligible to serve concurrently as Moderator.
  - 468 6. A term consists of three (3) years for the boards, with one-third (1/3) of the members  
 469 being elected at each Annual Meeting unless otherwise designated.
  - 470 7. A person named to a board or committee as an ex-officio member has voice but no  
 471 vote.
  - 472 8. When a vacancy occurs on a board, the board shall seek the help of the Nominating  
 473 Committee and the approval of the Church Council/Trustees to serve the unexpired  
 474 term.
  - 475 9. Each board shall meet regularly at times of its own choosing or at the call of the  
 476 chairperson. All boards shall meet at least eight (8) times a year. A quorum shall  
 477 consist of a majority of the members. A special board meeting may be held at the  
 478 request of one-third (1/3) or more of its voting members. The purpose of the meeting  
 479 shall be stated, and all board members shall be notified.
  - 480 10. A copy of minutes of every board meeting shall be filed in the church office by  
 481 Thursday preceding the next meeting of that board.
  - 482 11. The chairperson of boards and committees shall submit a proposed annual budget to  
 483 the Church Council/Trustees by August 1.
  - 484 12. The chairperson of boards shall submit a written Annual Report to the church office.  
 485 The report shall include activities of subordinate committees three weeks prior to the  
 486 Annual Meeting.
  - 487 13. A summary of actions taken by the Church Council/Trustees shall be available to  
 488 church members.
  - 489 14. Church officers (see Article XII) and the Senior Pastor shall act on behalf of the Church  
 490 Council/Trustees in case of an emergency.

491 Section C. Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

- 492 1. Purpose  
 493 The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee is a standing committee that supports open  
 494 and healthy relationships between the pastor and members of the congregation, and  
 495 among members of the congregation. This committee is the congregation's  
 496 fundamental support for the pastor. The committee serves in the following ways:  
 497 a. as an advisory group to the pastor and as support for the pastor's leadership,  
 498 sharing of ideas, dreams, hopes, expectations, and concerns of the congregation;  
 499 b. as an advisory group to the congregation, interpreting the office of the pastor, as  
 500 it pertains to (1) the First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala,

- 501 Florida; (2) the United Church of Christ; and (3) the Church Universal;
- 502 c. as a forum whereby the congregation and pastor, the pastoral staff, and/or church
- 503 members can speak concerning matters that cannot be addressed through other
- 504 structures or committees of the church, or addressed otherwise, due to
- 505 confidentiality;
- 506 d. as a means to promote professional growth, the well-being of the pastor, and
- 507 mutual ministries among the pastor and the congregation;
- 508 e. as a forum to promote constructive and caring communication in an atmosphere
- 509 of confidentiality and trust;
- 510 f. as a forum for helpful and honest exchange in times of conflict or discord from
- 511 which new and creative understandings may arise and new commitments to
- 512 ministry may be forged. It is important to emphasize that the Pastor-Parish
- 513 Relations Committee serves not only as a forum between the pastor and the
- 514 members of the congregation but also, when necessary, between/among members
- 515 of the congregation;
- 516 g. as a model for effective, healthy, and productive relationships among the pastor
- 517 and the congregation.
- 518 2. Membership
- 519 a. The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall consist of the following members:
- 520 the Senior Pastor, three appointees of the pastor, and a list of candidates supplied
- 521 by the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. From this list, six members shall be
- 522 appointed by the Church Council/Trustees and the pastor for a total of nine
- 523 members.
- 524 b. The nine committee members shall serve three-year terms with three members
- 525 going off and three members going on each year. Members rotating off of the
- 526 committee will overlap with the newest members for either (i) a period of one
- 527 month or (ii) the first quarterly meeting.
- 528 c. The Regional Minister of the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ
- 529 shall be an *ex-officio* member of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee.
- 530 3. Duties and Responsibilities
- 531 a. The committee shall—
- 532 (1) select its own chairperson at its first meeting;
- 533 (2) interpret to the congregation the nature and function of the Pastor-Parish
- 534 Relations Committee and the work of the Senior Pastor and staff;
- 535 (3) counsel the pastor concerning his/her ministry by sharing ideas about—
- 536 (a) work expectations and priorities;
- 537 (b) professional growth and nurture;
- 538 (c) personal needs of the pastor and his/her family;
- 539 (4) address the pastor's compensation, insurance, and benefits package, and
- 540 shall make recommendations to the Church Council/Trustees;
- 541 (5) conduct a pastoral evaluation at the request of the Church Council/Trustees.
- 542 Input for the evaluation shall be gathered from the committee, the Church
- 543 Council/Trustees, church members, and the pastor;
- 544 (6) evaluate the professional abilities of the pastor with particular attention
- 545 given to—
- 546 (a) pastoral roles (pastoral care, parish care, counseling, stewardship,
- 547 etc.);
- 548 (b) priestly roles (preaching, sacraments, funerals, weddings, etc.);
- 549 (c) teaching roles (instruction concerning matters of faith, the purpose
- 550 of the church in society, etc.);
- 551 (d) prophetic roles (interpretation of the church's role in matters of
- 552 peace, justice, human relations, local, state, national, and
- 553 international concerns, etc.);
- 554 (e) administrative roles (staff relations and advocacy, inter-staff
- 555 management, etc.);

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- (7) confer and consult with the pastor and Church Council/Trustees when staff changes are made;
  - (8) handle emergencies regarding the pastor and staff and the professional leadership of the church;
  - (9) provide for pastoral leadership in case of the pastor's personal emergency, illness, death, jury duty, vacation, etc.;
  - (10) serve as the reconciling agent between the pastor and the congregation or between/among members of the congregation should conflict arise;
  - (11) foster and support the covenants agreed upon at the hiring of the pastor which mutually benefit the pastor, the congregation, and the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ.
  - (12) initiate the search for a new pastor and interim pastor as outlined in Article XIII, Section C (Search Committee).
- b. Protocols:
- (1) The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee is a vital means by which Christian principles of love, compassion, justice, and mutual respect enhance the fabric of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala, Florida. It is recognized that the presence and the activities of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee do not absolve the pastor or the members of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala, Florida, of the responsibilities to address issues and concerns openly, honestly, personally, and directly. Therefore, before appealing to the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, individuals shall have addressed issues or concerns in a spirit reflecting the highest principles of our faith and life together and with an open mind and heart toward mutual resolution, respect and understanding.
  - (2) Because the pastor holds membership in The United Church of Christ and because the office of the pastor represents the connection among the First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala, Florida and the Church Universal, the pastor and/or the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee may call on ecclesial representatives of The Florida Conference of The United Church of Christ to assist in any of its considerations or decisions.
  - (3) Members of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee will agree to absolute confidentiality regarding committee considerations and actions before becoming a member of the committee. All notes taken at committee meetings will be held by the chairperson of the committee and shall be in the sole possession of the chairperson. Only one copy of the notes will be held by the chairperson of the committee, except in response to subpoena in accord with civil and criminal statutes, either state or federal, in which case the committee reserves the right of legal counsel before releasing said notes. Notes from six years prior to the current year shall be destroyed.
  - (4) If a member of the committee commits a gross breach of morals, ethics and/or confidentiality, said member shall be censured and removed from the committee. A simple majority vote of the committee constitutes such action.
- c. Meetings
- (1) The committee shall hold its first meeting within one month following each Annual Meeting. If the out-going chairperson is no longer a member of the committee, the out-going chairperson shall meet without vote at the first meeting.
  - (2) The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee meets quarterly or as needed by request of the pastor, the chairperson, and/or any three members of the committee. The pastor (or his/her designee) and the chairperson (or his/her designee) must attend all meetings of the committee.



609 **ARTICLE XI. CHURCH COUNCIL/TRUSTEES**

610 The Church Council/Trustees shall serve as the administrative agency of the church and shall have  
611 concern for and custody of all tangible assets of the church.

612 Section A. Officers and Members

- 613 1. The Church Council/Trustees shall consist of sixteen (17) members: Moderator,  
614 Vice-Moderator, Church Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Collections Clerk,  
615 Director of Public Relations, and the Chairpersons of the following boards: Deacons,  
616 Trustees, Stewardship, Religious Education, Board of Community Outreach, Church  
617 Life, Church Growth, Worship Team, and three (3) Members-at-Large elected at the  
618 Annual Meeting.
- 619 2. The Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Church Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer,  
620 Collections Clerk, and Director of Public Relations shall be officers of the church and  
621 the Church Council/Trustees.
- 622 3. Quorum: A quorum for a Church Council/Trustees meeting, regular or special, shall  
623 consist of at least fifty-one percent or more of the Church Council/Trustees'  
624 membership.

625 Section B. Duties and Responsibilities

- 626 1. The Church Council/Trustees shall conduct a continuing evaluation of the church's  
627 ministry and mission. The Church Council/Trustees shall initiate suitable action when  
628 needed to expedite the program.
- 629 2. The Church Council/Trustees shall act on official matters between meetings of the  
630 congregation.
- 631 3. When an issue of vital interest to the members of the congregation comes before the  
632 Church Council/Trustees, the Church Council/Trustees shall formulate a recom-  
633 mendation to be put before the membership for a final vote at a special meeting called  
634 for that purpose.
- 635 4. The Church Council/Trustees shall receive monthly reports of the Treasurer/Assistant  
636 Treasurer including a summary of income, disbursements, and cash on hand. The  
637 Church Council/Trustees shall receive the reports and recommendations of church  
638 officers, boards, committees, church-related organizations, and the Senior Pastor. The  
639 Church Council/Trustees shall act as the final authority on all matters of policy and  
640 differences that may arise among officers, boards, and committees.
- 641 5. The Church Council/Trustees shall ensure that membership on all boards are  
642 complete. The Nominating Committee shall submit recommendations for vacancies  
643 to the Church Council/Trustees for confirmation. The Vice-Moderator shall fill a  
644 vacancy in the office of the Moderator. The Church Council/Trustees shall appoint a  
645 person to fill a vacancy in offices of Vice-Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer Assistant  
646 Treasurer, and the Collections Clerk.
- 647 6. The Church Council/Trustees shall have the authority to end the term of any elected  
648 or appointed officer of a board or committee member for just cause.
- 649 7. The final Annual Budget, as submitted in consultation with the Treasurer and/or  
650 Assistant Treasurer, must be approved by the Church Council/Trustees prior to its  
651 presentation to the church membership at the Annual Meeting.
- 652 8. The final draft of the By-Laws and/or amendments, as submitted by the By-Laws  
653 Committee, must be approved by the Church Council/Trustees before presentation to  
654 the congregation.
- 655 9. The Church Council/Trustees shall approve and have jurisdiction over all church  
656 sponsored and/or affiliated organizations.
- 657 10. The Church Council/Trustees may appoint other committees as needed.
- 658 11. The Church Council/Trustees shall:
- 659 a. have power to buy, sell, mortgage, or transfer real property only with authorization  
660 given by the congregation;
- 661 b. have responsibility for leasing/lending policies;
- 662 c. have the power to borrow necessary emergency funds for operating expenses;
- 663 d. prepare the Annual Budget. The Annual Budget shall—

- 664 (1) include all expenses, fixed charges, and debt reduction. The Church
- 665 Council/Trustees shall take into account the per capita contributions of the
- 666 church to the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ, monies for
- 667 payroll including pastors' annuities, assessment from the Ocala Tree of Life
- 668 Board of Directors, and recommendations from boards and committees;
- 669 e. be advised of all major fund raising in consultation with the Church
- 670 Council/Trustees;
- 671 f. ensure that the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Collections Clerk maintain
- 672 proper church financial records and also that a blanket bond covers all officers and
- 673 employees who handle church funds;
- 674 g. execute any necessary contracts with salaried, hourly, and contractual personnel;
- 675 h. address matters pertaining to legal and insurance issues. The Church
- 676 Council/Trustees shall consult with insurance agencies and companies to compare
- 677 insurance rates and shall have the authority to make changes to insurance policies
- 678 according to sound fiscal policies and existing insurance needs;
- 679 i. annually authorize each of the following to sign checks, make withdrawals from
- 680 savings accounts or redeem Certificates of Deposit: the Treasurer, the Assistant
- 681 Treasurer, and the Chairperson of the Endowment Advisory Committee;
- 682 j. have approval of conditional devices, legacies, or gifts to the church;
- 683 k. have approval to cause securities, other than Endowment Fund properties, to be
- 684 registered (1) in the name of the church or (2) in the name of the *Church*
- 685 *Council/Trustees of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala,*
- 686 *Florida* or (3) in the name of a nominee;
- 687 l. employ a bank or trust company as agent to have custody of securities that are
- 688 under its control and discretion;
- 689 m. when necessary, sell any or all such securities and use the proceeds of sale for
- 690 reinvestment;
- 691 n. use proceeds of sales for other purposes, provided that the proceeds of any security
- 692 constituting a part of a conditional devise, legacy, or gift shall be applied in a
- 693 manner consistent with the attached conditions; and
- 694 o. insure annual review of church financial records.

695 Section C. Church Historian

- 696 1. Selection: The Church Council/Trustees shall appoint a Church Historian for a period
- 697 of one year. The Church Historian may serve consecutive years.
- 698 2. Duties: The Church Historian shall keep a record of important events in the life of the
- 699 church such as photographs taken at ordinations, installations, anniversary
- 700 celebrations, new member inductions, and any occasion that depicts the life and
- 701 activities of the church. The Church Historian shall keep a written account of the
- 702 ongoing history and events of the church and shall maintain a scrapbook of newspaper
- 703 clippings and a file of photographs.

704 **ARTICLE XII. OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL/TRUSTEES**

705 Section A. Moderator

- 706 1. Election and Tenure: The Moderator shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term
- 707 of one year and may be reelected for two additional consecutive years.
- 708 2. The Moderator shall be chairperson of the Church Council/Trustees, shall chair all
- 709 official meetings of the congregation, and shall set the agenda for all Church
- 710 Council/Trustees meetings and the Annual Meeting.
- 711 3. The Moderator, as chief lay officer of the church, shall sign all legal documents and
- 712 shall represent the church at all ceremonial and formal occasions.
- 713 4. The Moderator shall act for the Senior Pastor in the secular areas of church
- 714 administration when so requested by the Senior Pastor and/or the Church
- 715 Council/Trustees.
- 716 5. The Moderator shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees, except the
- 717 Pastor-Parish Relations Committee.

- 718 Section B. Vice-Moderator
- 719 1. Election and Tenure: The Vice-Moderator shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for
- 720 a term of one year and may be reelected.
- 721 2. The Vice-Moderator shall perform the duties of the Moderator in the event the
- 722 Moderator is absent or unable to perform the duties of the office.
- 723 3. The Vice-Moderator shall be Vice-Chairperson of the Church Council/Trustees.
- 724 Section C. Church Clerk
- 725 1. Election and Tenure: The Church Clerk shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a
- 726 term of one year and may be reelected. An Assistant Clerk may be appointed by the
- 727 Church Clerk to a term of one year and assume assigned duties.
- 728 2. The Church Clerk shall be the secretary of the Church Council/Trustees and the
- 729 meetings of the congregation. The Church Clerk shall keep a record of the proceedings
- 730 of all such meetings. A copy of the minutes shall be on file in the church office within
- 731 two weeks after the meeting.
- 732 3. The Church Clerk shall be responsible for seeing that the calls for business meetings
- 733 are properly worded and announced.
- 734 Section D. Treasurer
- 735 1. Election and Tenure: The Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term
- 736 of one year and may be reelected.
- 737 2. The Treasurer shall be a voting member of the Church Council/Trustees.
- 738 3. Duties: The Treasurer shall—
- 739 a. determine the nomenclature of accounts acceptable to the Church
- 740 Council/Trustees;
- 741 b. receive from the Board of Stewardship a summary of money receipts and record
- 742 by account numbers;
- 743 c. have access to all legal documents relating to the church property;
- 744 d. be responsible for seeing that checks are written for the payroll and all bills of the
- 745 church;
- 746 e. keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements;
- 747 f. be bonded;
- 748 g. be empowered to place money in properly insured banking institutions approved
- 749 by the Church Council/Trustees;
- 750 h. handle gifts of securities and debentures, other than those designated for the
- 751 Endowment Fund. The Moderator shall be notified promptly and give the
- 752 Treasurer an appraisal of the value to be used for the donor's giving record;
- 753 i. prepare the monthly statement for the Church Council/Trustees;
- 754 j. know church-management software and other computer software as necessary;
- 755 k. train the Assistant Treasurer to assume the duties of the Treasurer when the
- 756 Treasurer is absent for any reason;
- 757 l. know the computer software and financial operations of the church.
- 758 Section E. Assistant Treasurer
- 759 1. Election and Tenure: The Assistant Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual Meeting
- 760 for a period of one year and may be reelected.
- 761 2. Duties: The Assistant Treasurer shall assume all duties of the Treasurer when the
- 762 Treasurer is absent for any reason.
- 763 Section F. Collections Clerk
- 764 1. Election and Tenure: the Collections Clerk shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for
- 765 a term of one year and may be reelected.
- 766 2. Duties: The Collections Clerk shall—
- 767 a. be a voting member of the Church Council/Trustees and an ex-officio member of
- 768 the Board of Stewardship;
- 769 b. be responsible for recording, accounting for, and depositing receipts in bank
- 770 accounts at the beginning of each business week. A record of all receipts shall be
- 771 given to the Treasurer;
- 772 c. keep a record of monies and contributions secured, pledged or paid, crediting each

- 773 subscriber when payments are made;
- 774 d. send semiannual statements to donors;
- 775 e. inform the Church Council/Trustees as to the progress of pledge payments to the
- 776 church;
- 777 f. know the computer church-management software and the financial operations of
- 778 the church;
- 779 g. be bonded;
- 780 h. train one member of the Board of Stewardship to assume the duties of the
- 781 Collections Clerk when he/she is absent for any reason. He/she shall know the
- 782 computer software and financial operations of the church.

783 Section G. Director of Public Relations

- 784 1. Membership: The Director of Public Relations shall be elected at the Annual Meeting
- 785 for a term of one year and may be reelected.
- 786 2. Duties: The Director of Public Relations shall—
- 787 a. be responsible for all advertising of church worship services, as well as all other
- 788 church-sponsored, church-related, and church ministry events;
- 789 b. place all the advertising with the media. However, the copy, layout, and design
- 790 must be approved by the Senior Pastor before it is released;
- 791 c. release publicity to any appropriate media, including newspapers and other
- 792 publications (magazines, newsletters, etc.), radio and television, yellow pages of
- 793 the telephone book, posters, club agendas, etc.;
- 794 d. submit annually a budget for advertising to the Church Council/Trustees;
- 795 e. submit all invoices for publicity to the Treasurer staying within the advertising
- 796 budget;
- 797 f. appoint a person/people to aid with church public relations.

798 **ARTICLE XIII. STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL/TRUSTEES**

799 Section A. Nominating Committee

- 800 1. Membership: The committee shall consist of at least five members who shall be elected
- 801 annually. Members may serve consecutive terms.
- 802 2. Duties: The Nominating Committee may receive suggestions from boards, committees,
- 803 and members of the church for nominees to any office. All nominees must consent to
- 804 serve before being nominated. This committee shall prepare a slate of candidates to be
- 805 presented for election two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting of the Congregation. It
- 806 shall nominate one person for each position. At the Annual Meeting of the
- 807 Congregation, nominations from the floor will be accepted if the person being
- 808 nominated has consented to run for said office. This committee shall assist the Church
- 809 Council/Trustees and boards in filling vacancies that occur.

810 Section B. Search Committee

- 811 1. Task: When a vacancy occurs in the position of the Senior Pastor or other ordained
- 812 clergy, the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, with the approval of the Church
- 813 Council/Trustees, shall initiate the Search Committee.
- 814 2. Membership: An initial representative list of eighteen (18) nominees for the Search
- 815 Committee shall include diversity of age, length of membership in the church, race and
- 816 ethnic background, gender, past participation on a Search Committee, and ability to
- 817 foster a consensus.
- 818 Those who serve on church boards and committees and others who are not serving in
- 819 an elected position shall be considered. From the group of eighteen nominees selected
- 820 by the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, the Church Council/Trustees shall select
- 821 nine to eleven members for approval by the congregation. Two alternates, from the
- 822 balance of the eighteen, shall be appointed by the Church Council/Trustees to serve in
- 823 case an elected member cannot fulfill his/her responsibilities as a member of the
- 824 Search Committee. Only one person living in the same household may serve on this
- 825 committee.
- 826 The chairperson of the Search Committee shall be elected by consensus of the

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committee. The regional minister of the Florida Conference may be an ex-officio member of the Search Committee.

3. Duties: The primary duty of this committee is to select the best qualified candidate for the position of Senior Pastor (or other pastor) and present the candidate to the congregation.
  - a. The Search Committee shall develop a “Church Profile” from the *United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership*.
  - b. The “Personal Profiles,” from the *United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership* of pastors seeking the new positions shall be received and reviewed.
  - c. The church and all candidates shall agree to the protocols regarding pastoral searches as defined by the United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership.
  - d. The profiles of candidates should be thorough and should include information on age, family background, education, work experience (pastoral and other), and any regular practices (including a criminal background check) as deemed appropriate by the U.S. Department of Labor. The Search Committee may request the Conference Minister to secure relevant information about any candidate whom it wishes to consider.
  - e. Limitation: no Interim Pastor serving this church may be considered as a candidate.
  - f. Delegates from the Search Committee shall screen, audit, and hear as many qualified candidates as they deem necessary.
  - g. The final candidates selected may be asked to preach in a “neutral pulpit” with the Search Committee present.
  - h. When the Search Committee has selected the finalist, it shall draft, in consultation with the Church Council/Trustees, a proposed agreement with the terms of the call including: duties and responsibilities, compensation, benefits, and termination as outlined in Article VIII, Section A, page 7.
  - i. The candidate shall be invited to attend the meetings of the Church Council/Trustees and the Worship Team.
  - j. The Call in final form shall be given to the Church Council/Trustees for approval. The Senior Pastor, the Church Clerk, and the Florida Conference Executive shall each receive a copy of the Call.
  - k. The Church Clerk shall prepare the Call to meeting, which will be announced from the pulpit on two successive Sundays. The Call shall be printed in a church publication at least ten days, but not more than twenty days, before the meeting date.
  - l. The selected candidate shall deliver a sermon before the congregation on a Sunday morning. The Search Committee shall nominate the candidate to the congregation in order to approve the Senior Pastor’s candidacy. The Senior Pastor shall be called by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the church members present and voting.

Section C. By-Laws Committee

1. Membership: The By-Laws Committee shall consist of at least four (4) members appointed by the Church Council/Trustees. The committee members listed in Article XXI of the most current By-Laws document shall remain as active members of the By-Laws Committee until it reconvenes for another review of the By-Laws according to “3a” below.
2. Duties and Procedures
  - a. All committee members listed in Section XXI of the most current By-Laws document may receive written suggestions/recommendations for changes/revisions from any active member of the church.
  - b. Minor changes (e.g., spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) will be provided to the Moderator, who will inform the Church Clerk, who will maintain the By-Laws document. Minor changes will be appended to the By-Laws on separate sheets of

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- paper and will be available to church members.
- c. Major changes will be brought to the attention of the Moderator, who will decide whether the committee should convene to review the changes/revisions. If convened, the By-Laws Committee will first review the requested change/revision, and then make a submission to the Church Council/Trustees for consideration. On the recommendation of the Church Council/Trustees, the changes/revisions will be brought to the congregation for approval. Major changes that are approved and appended to the By-Laws document will be designated with the following annotation: “approved by vote of the congregation on (date).”  
If the committee doesn’t need to review the changes/revisions, the Moderator will provide the Church Clerk with the changes to keep the document current and appended as indicated in “b” above.
- d. The Church Clerk will keep a record of all changes submitted and made.
- 3. Other
  - a. The By-Laws Committee shall meet every five years, beginning in 2009. At that time, the Moderator will determine the membership of the committee. The committee will be responsible to review the entire document along with any changes that were appended over the past five years. The By-Laws Committee will make all necessary revisions and submit the revised By-Laws document for vote of the congregation prior to the next Annual Meeting.

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**ARTICLE XIV. BOARDS**

There are two major divisions of boards: **Program** and **Resource**. At their first meeting, each board may elect a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a secretary and, if needed, a treasurer.

Section A. Board of Ministry (Program). The Board of Ministry shall consist of three arms of responsibility and service: the Board of Deacons, the Worship Team and the Parish Visitation Care Team. The Board of Ministry shall report any net income to the church treasurer.

- 1. The **Board of Deacons** (collectively, “Deacons” or “Diaconate”) shall consist of at least twelve (12) members, who shall be elected at the Annual Meeting. The Board of Deacons shall—
  - a. assist the Senior Pastor in the Sacraments of Baptism and Communion, including home communion offered monthly to the sick, the bereaved and shut-ins. The Board of Deacons shall be responsible for the Baptismal font, linens, antependia, accouterments, the Communion table, and the Communion elements;
  - b. appoint a head usher;
  - c. schedule and supply liturgists, acolytes, ushers, welcomers, greeters and attendance book for each church service. No later than Tuesday morning of each week, the person in charge shall deliver to the church office a written list of those chosen to serve, so that their names can be included in the weekly church service bulletin;
  - d. cooperate with any church board or committee whose responsibilities may overlap with specific duties;
  - e. see Article VI, Section B regarding serving communion.
  - f. The chairperson of the Board of Deacons shall represent the Board of Ministry as a member of the Church Council/Trustees.
- 2. The **Worship Team** shall consist of at least six members, who shall be elected at the Annual Meeting. The Worship Team shall—
  - a. assist the Senior Pastor in planning Sunday Worship and other worship services throughout the year by planning music and programs of enrichment and the message of Christ to the life of the congregation;
  - b. cooperate with any church board or committee whose responsibilities may overlap with specific duties.
  - c. work with the Senior Pastor in planning music for worship in order to provide a well-balanced worship service.

- 936 d. work with the Senior Pastor, the organist, and other music/arts personnel in  
 937 developing and fostering:  
 938 (1) music and liturgical ministries;  
 939 (2) arts ministries, including drama, two and three-dimensional art, literature,  
 940 poetry, dance, etc.
- 941 e. As required, (1) work with the Senior Pastor in searching for, hiring, and  
 942 dismissing the organist and (2) make its recommendations to the Church  
 943 Council/Trustees for approval.
- 944 f. work with the Church Council/Trustees in developing contracts for all music/arts  
 945 personnel.
- 946 g. be responsible for the care and maintenance of all church musical instruments,  
 947 artifacts, choir robes, and the music library.
- 948 h. with the Director of Music, prepare an annual budget to be presented to the  
 949 Church Council/Trustees. The Worship Team and Music Director shall work  
 950 within the bounds of this budget. An exception to this would be special fund-  
 951 raising projects with profits earmarked for the music program, with approval of  
 952 the Church Council/Trustees; and
- 953 i. with the Senior Pastor and the Church Council/Trustees and on approval from the  
 954 Church Council/Trustees, select/hire the Director of Music.
- 955 j. The Music Director is an ex-officio member of the Church Council/Trustees. The  
 956 Chairperson of the Worship Team is a voting member of the Church  
 957 Council/Trustees.
- 958 3. **The Parish Visitation Care Team (PVC)** shall consist of those who are appointed  
 959 by the Senior Pastor. The PVC Team shall—
- 960 a. be responsible, with the Senior Pastor, for the spiritual care of the sick, the  
 961 bereaved and shut-ins;
- 962 b. assist the Senior Pastor with keeping contact with members and maintaining a  
 963 spiritual and friendly fellowship;
- 964 c. assist the Board of Deacons, on a voluntary basis, in providing home communion  
 965 to the sick, the bereaved, and shut-ins.
- 966 Section B. Board of Church Growth (Program)
- 967 The Board of Church Growth shall maintain worship attendance records, help receive new  
 968 members, and, in league with the Boards of Deacons and Church Life and with the Director  
 969 of Public Relations, publicize the various ministries of the church and welcome new  
 970 members into the church's fellowship.
- 971 1. Membership: The Board of Church Growth shall consist of six members, each serving  
 972 a three-year term, with two to be elected each year at the Annual Meeting. Members  
 973 of the Board of Church Growth (see below) are members of the Board of Church  
 974 Growth, and the number of members of the Board of Church Growth may comprise the  
 975 number of members of the Board of Church Growth.
- 976 2. Duties: The Board of Church Growth shall—
- 977 a. with the assistance of the Senior Pastor, Board of Church Growth (see below), and  
 978 the Church Secretary, maintain the membership records of the church including:  
 979 (1) names and contact information;  
 980 (2) dates and modes of reception/removal;  
 981 (3) baptisms, marriages, confirmations, and deaths;  
 982 (4) records of letters of transfer, termination of membership, etc.
- 983 b. assist the Senior Pastor in calling on and receiving new members;
- 984 c. keep account of members who are regularly absent from church services and  
 985 follow-up with those members to inquire as to any illnesses or events that prevent  
 986 those individuals from attending worship services;
- 987 d. send cards for such occasions as birthdays, illness, and death on behalf of the  
 988 church;
- 989 e. with the Senior Pastor, develop a plan to foster member participation to enable  
 990 church growth, and outreach. This shall include proclaiming the Good News of

- 991 Jesus Christ to church members, to our community, and to the world;
- 992 f. confer with the Senior Pastor when there is a question concerning the termination
- 993 of a membership (see Article V, Section E);
- 994 g. provide worship attendance pads and other means of collecting information;
- 995 h. assist the Senior Pastor in conducting membership classes for new members;
- 996 i. assist the Senior Pastor in receiving new people into membership of the church.
- 997 3. The Board of Church Growth provides week-to-week support to the Board of Church
- 998 Growth, the Board of Deacons, the pastor(s), and the Church Secretary.

Section C.

Board of Religious Education (Program)  
 The Board of Religious Education shall supervise and direct all religious education of the church.

- 1000 1. Membership: The Board of Religious Education shall consist of at least six members,
- 1001 each serving a three-year term, with two being elected each year at the Annual Meeting.
- 1002 2. Duties: The Board of Religious Education shall—
- 1003 a. cooperate with other committees to provide lectures, retreats, and seminars;
- 1004 b. provide literature consistent with and supportive of the Covenant of our Church;
- 1005 c. prepare an annual budget to be presented to the Church Council/Trustees.
- 1006 d. oversee the administration of programs for children/youth including:
- 1007 (1) organizing and maintaining a Sunday School for children and a nursery;
- 1008 (2) when needed, organize and maintain a Vacation Bible School;
- 1009 (3) organize and maintain a Youth Group;
- 1010 (4) under the leadership of the Senior Pastor, provide for confirmation classes
- 1011 as needed.
- 1012 e. oversee the administration of programs for adults including:
- 1013 (1) organize regularly scheduled religious education study group(s);
- 1014 (2) organize special religious education events to address particular, current
- 1015 issues pertaining to the church’s ministry and engagement with culture and
- 1016 society;
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Section D.

Board of Community Outreach (Program)  
 The Board of Community Outreach shall supervise and correlate the missions program, community action, and benevolence plans of the church.

- 1019 1. Membership: The Board of Community Outreach shall consist of six (6) members, each
- 1020 serving a three-year term, two to be elected each year at the Annual Meeting.
- 1021 2. Duties: The Board of Community Outreach shall—
- 1022 a. inform church members of the work and needs of benevolent agencies and
- 1023 publicize the use of funds given for such purposes;
- 1024 b. inform church members about social issues and formulate and promote programs
- 1025 of action and concern;
- 1026 c. consider monetary and service requests from the United Church of Christ, other
- 1027 denominational agencies, and other service agencies. Formulate an amount for
- 1028 consideration to be put in the Annual Budget;
- 1029 d. prepare an annual budget of all other expenses to be presented to the Church
- 1030 Council/Trustees.
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Section E.

Board of Church Life (Program)

- 1034 1. Membership: The Board of Church Life shall consist of at least ten to fifteen (10-15)
- 1035 members, each serving a three-year term, two to be elected each year at the Annual
- 1036 Meeting. One member from the Board of Church Life shall be elected at the Annual
- 1037 Meeting to serve as the chairperson of the Board of Church Life and shall be a member
- 1038 of the Church Council/Trustees.
- 1039 2. Duties: The Board of Church Life is responsible for enhancing church fellowship
- 1040 including:
- 1041 a. organizing church meals, periodic fund-raisers, outings, excursions, and other
- 1042 events that enhance the communal life and fellowship of the Church;
- 1043 b. cooperating with other boards in preparing organized social occasions as deemed
- 1044 necessary to enhance the ministries of those boards;
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- 1046 c. maintaining and making recommendations for improvements to the kitchen;  
 1047 d. maintaining responsibility for an inventory of kitchen items;  
 1048 e. reporting net income from fellowship events to the Church Treasurer;  
 1049 f. working with the Board of Church Growth, Director of Public Relations, and the  
 1050 Board of Deacons to publicize the various ministries of the church and to welcome  
 1051 new members into the church's fellowship;  
 1052 g. maintaining a budget, prepared and submitted by the chairperson each year to be  
 1053 presented to the Church Council/Trustees for approval.
- 1054 Section F. Board of Stewardship (Resource and Program)  
 1055 The Board of Stewardship shall have responsibility for enhancing and enabling Christian  
 1056 Stewardship with respect to time, talent, and money.
- 1057 1. Membership  
 1058 The Board of Stewardship shall consist of no less than six active members elected at  
 1059 the Annual Meeting. The Collections Clerk shall be an ex-officio member of the Board  
 1060 of Stewardship.
- 1061 2. Duties: The Board of Stewardship shall—
- 1062 a. emphasize the larger dimensions of stewardship as (1) God's blessing and privilege  
 1063 to participate in God's work through the Church and (2) an integral dimension of  
 1064 every member's Christian discipleship and faith journey, which shall include  
 1065 pledging, worship, tithing, and participating in and contributing to church  
 1066 ministries, programs, and committees;
- 1067 b. secure pledges as the foundation for the operating budget of the church and Our  
 1068 Churches Wider Mission (OCWM), organize and lead the church-wide canvas, and  
 1069 have charge of other fund raising projects assigned by the Church  
 1070 Council/Trustees.
- 1071 c. contact new members to secure pledges and gifts;
- 1072 d. follow these general accounting procedures:
- 1073 (1) count and record in a timely manner all contributions;
- 1074 (2) keep a full and correct account between the church and each person;
- 1075 (3) receive all contributions to the church, whether by mail or in the regular  
 1076 church offerings;
- 1077 (4) record and deposit the contributions in the proper financial institution as  
 1078 promptly as possible;
- 1079 (5) immediately notify the Treasurer of the amounts and dates of the deposits;
- 1080 (6) provide semiannual statements of account to all people who have pledged  
 1081 and/or provided identifiable gifts to the support of the church.
- 1082 e. create and maintain a year-round program of stewardship education, keeping the  
 1083 members of the church informed of the financial needs of all aspects of the  
 1084 Church's work and of progress toward meeting financial and human resource  
 1085 needs and goals;
- 1086 f. conduct a "Time and Talent Survey" to gather information regarding members'  
 1087 interests and skills;
- 1088 g. avail information provided by United Church of Christ conference and  
 1089 denominational resources on the ethics of Christian stewardship in order to inform  
 1090 and encourage church members and friends to contribute through proportional  
 1091 giving, tithing, and time and talent giving;
- 1092 h. Oversee the Endowment Fund. The Board of Stewardship shall—
- 1093 (1) promote the giving of tangible assets to the church by members and friends;
- 1094 (2) invest, manage, and otherwise deal with unconditional donations made to  
 1095 the First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala, Florida to the  
 1096 Endowment Fund;
- 1097 (3) advise the Church Council/Trustees and, when necessary, the church at  
 1098 large, with regard to its investment fund management and other tangible  
 1099 assets given to the church;
- 1100 (4) ensure Endowment Fund gifts are held in accordance with the Endowment

1101 Fund Policies. (see Appendix C);  
1102 (5) address matters pertaining to the Endowment Fund on at least a quarterly  
1103 basis or more often if deemed necessary by the chairperson of the Board of  
1104 Stewardship or on the written request of any two committee members five  
1105 days in advance of said meeting.

#### 1106 **ARTICLE XV. AUXILIARY COMMITTEE(S)**

1107 Section A. Auxiliary Committees may be created as follows:  
1108 1. Temporary Committees (a.k.a., *Pro-tem* or *Pro-tempore* Committees) for specific,  
1109 time-limited tasks may be created by the Church, the Church Council/Trustees, a  
1110 Church Board, the Senior Pastor, the Director of Music, or an officer. Representatives  
1111 of Temporary Committees will have no vote in the Church, the Church  
1112 Council/Trustees, or Church Boards.  
1113 2. Permanent Committees may be constituted by action of the Church at an Annual or  
1114 called meeting.

#### 1115 **ARTICLE XVI. AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS**

1116 Section A. Formation, Approval, and Jurisdiction  
1117 The Church Council/Trustees must approve the formation of all church-related or church-  
1118 sponsored organizations. All organizations connected with the church are regarded as  
1119 integral parts of the church and are under jurisdiction of the Church Council/Trustees.  
1120 Section B. Government  
1121 These organizations shall elect their officers and set their own policies.  
1122 Section C. Reports and Audits  
1123 Each organization shall give a written report on the year's activities and financial condition  
1124 to the Church Office one month prior to the Annual Meeting to be included in the Annual  
1125 Report. Accounts of these organizations may be audited if necessary.  
1126 Section D. The Women's Fellowship is recognized as an Auxiliary Organization. Its President (or one  
1127 of its members elected by the Women's Fellowship) is a member of the Church  
1128 Council/Trustees.

#### 1129 **ARTICLE XVII. DELEGATES**

1130 Section A. Election  
1131 Delegates and Alternates to the Florida Conference Annual Meeting shall be elected each  
1132 year at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation.  
1133 Section B. Term  
1134 Delegates may serve multiple terms if elected.  
1135 Section C. Reports  
1136 A written report shall be submitted to the congregation to be printed in the monthly  
1137 publication of the church. One delegate shall also make an oral report to the congregation  
1138 within one month following the conference.

#### 1139 **ARTICLE XVIII. FINANCE: PROTOCOLS**

1140 Section A. Pledges  
1141 Year round stewardship shall include an annual financial stewardship campaign to receive  
1142 pledges. A proposed budget, including a year-to-date financial statement, shall be provided.  
1143 Section B. Endowment Funds  
1144 (See "Appendix C: Endowment Fund Policy")  
1145 Section C. Scholarships  
1146 Longtime, active church members or individuals who have been members of the First  
1147 Congregational United Church of Christ, Ocala Florida, may apply for scholarships if funds  
1148 are available.  
1149 Section D. End of Fiscal Year Balances  
1150 At the end of each "Fiscal Year" (see "Fiscal Year", page 5), the balance of all Board and

1151 Committee accounts will be set at zero dollars (\$0.00), and the use of the balance of any  
1152 remaining monies becomes the purview of the Church Council/Trustees. For particular  
1153 cause, a Board or Committee may request of the Church Council/Trustees that a portion  
1154 or all of its previous year's balance carry over into the new fiscal year. The Church  
1155 Council/Trustees's decision on the request is final.

1156 Section E. Fiduciary Accounts  
1157 The Church will have one (1) set of fiduciary accounts (e.g., checking, savings, investment  
1158 accounts, credit cards, etc.) that are overseen by the Treasurer and the Church  
1159 Council/Trustees. No Board, Committee, or individual(s) may privately or without  
1160 oversight hold any sort of fiduciary account on behalf of the Church.

1161 Section F. Document Retention Policy  
1162 The purpose of the Document Retention Policy is for the Church to promote proper  
1163 treatment of its corporate records.

- 1164 1. General Guidelines. Records should not be kept if they are no longer needed for the  
1165 operation of the church or required by law. Unnecessary records should be eliminated  
1166 from the files. Too many records also makes it more difficult to find pertinent records.
- 1167 2. Exception for Litigation Relevant Documents. The Organization expects all officers,  
1168 directors and employees to comply fully with any records retention schedules, provided  
1169 that all officers, directors, and employees should note the following general exception  
1170 to any destruction schedule: If you believe or the Organization informs you, that  
1171 Organization records are relevant to litigation or potential litigation, then you must  
1172 preserve those records until it is determined that the records are no longer needed.
- 1173 3. Minimum Retention Periods for Specific Categories
  - 1174 a. Organizational documents include the Organizations articles of incorporation,  
1175 by-laws, and IRS Form 1023, Application for Exemption. Organizational records  
1176 should be retained permanently.
  - 1177 b. Tax records include, but may not be limited to, documents concerning payroll,  
1178 expenses, proof of contributions made by donors, accounting procedures, and  
1179 other documents concerning the Organization's revenues. Tax records should be  
1180 retained for seven years.
  - 1181 c. Employment Records/Personnel Records. State and federal statutes require the  
1182 Organization to keep certain recruitment, employment and personnel information.  
1183 The Organization should keep in the employee's personnel files all final  
1184 memoranda and correspondence reflecting reviews and action taken by or against  
1185 personnel. Employment applications should be retained for three years, if not  
1186 hired. Employment applications for employees should be kept for six years after  
1187 termination date. Retirement and pension records should be kept permanently.  
1188 Other employment and personnel records such as W-2's should be retained for  
1189 seven years.
  - 1190 d. Board and Committee Materials. Meeting minutes should be retained permanently  
1191 in scanned, electronic form (e.g., PDF files, etc.). A clean copy of all other Board  
1192 and Committee materials should be kept for no less than three years.
  - 1193 e. Photo albums, newspaper articles kept in scrapbooks, church directories, etc.  
1194 should be kept permanently in scanned, electronic form [sic.].
  - 1195 f. Contracts. Sales invoices, contracts, leases, licenses, and other legal  
1196 documentation should be kept for three years beyond the life of the agreement.
  - 1197 g. Correspondence. Unless correspondence falls under another category listed  
1198 elsewhere in this policy, correspondence should generally be retained for two  
1199 years.
  - 1200 h. Banking and Accounting. Accounts payable ledgers (QuickBooks) and schedules  
1201 should be kept for seven years. Bank reconciliation, bank statements, deposit slips  
1202 and checks should be kept for three years.
  - 1203 i. Insurance. Expired insurance policies, insurance records, accident reports, claims,  
1204 etc. should be kept permanently.
  - 1205 j. Audit Reports. External audit reports should be kept permanently. Internal audit

- 1206 reports should be kept for three years.  
1207 4. Electronic Mail. E-Mail that needs to be saved should be either:  
1208 a. Printed in hard copy and kept in the appropriate file: or  
1209 b. Downloaded to a computer file and kept electronically or on a disk as a separate  
1210 file.  
1211 The retention period depends on the subject matter of the e-mail, as covered elsewhere  
1212 in this policy.

1213 **ARTICLE XIX. BY-LAWS ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS**

- 1214 Section A. Current Revisions  
1215 These By-Laws replace the By-Laws of the First Congregational United Church of Christ,  
1216 adopted on April 28, 2003. They shall become effective immediately when approved by a  
1217 two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a meeting. The meeting shall be  
1218 called for that purpose by written notification and announced from the pulpit two weeks  
1219 in advance of the meeting.  
1220 Section B. Current Terms of Office  
1221 Those people elected to office under the previous By-Laws shall complete the terms to  
1222 which they were elected.  
1223 Section C. Future Amendments  
1224 These By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting  
1225 (1) at any Annual Meeting of the church or (2) at a special meeting. Members shall be  
1226 notified in writing, not less than two weeks before the time proposed for action. Also see  
1227 Article XIII, Section C, #2b.

1228 **ARTICLE XX. DISSOLUTION**

1229 No officer, member, or employee of this church shall receive any pecuniary profit from the church except  
1230 reasonable compensation for services in affecting one or more of its purposes. In the event of the  
1231 dissolution of the church, its property and assets shall become vested and administered by the Florida  
1232 Conference of the United Church of Christ or its successor, or other organization organized and operated  
1233 exclusively for religious and church purposes. Such decision shall be made by church members at a  
1234 meeting called for this purpose. If such a decision is impossible, final determination shall be made by  
1235 the Superior Court of Marion County, Florida.

1236 **ARTICLE XXI. THANKS**

- 1237 Section A. Names  
1238 The names of members of the By-Laws Committee shall be included in the format below.  
1239 Sections D and greater of this Article shall include the dates and names of future By-Laws  
1240 Committees that perform major edits to the By-Laws.  
1241 Section B. Thanks  
1242 The First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala, Florida offers its thanks to the  
1243 members of the 2008-2009 By-Laws Committee, with particular thanks to its scribe, Mary  
1244 Ann Werst.  
1245 Section C. 2008-2009 By-Laws Committee  
1246 Mary Ann Werst (scribe), Larry Kratz (chair), Patricia Keith (vice-chair), Carol Thompson,  
1247 Lesley Casey, John Metzger, John Fernandez, Don Dannecker, Nancy Schneider, Valerie  
1248 Raisch, Elaine Staley, Hal McSwain (pastor)  
1249 Section D. 2018-2019 By-Laws Committee  
1250 Dana Knapp (moderator), Diane Donohue (scribe), Hal McSwain (pastor)  
1251

1252

## APPENDIX A: STATEMENT OF FAITH

1253 We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:  
 1254 You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the way of life and death.  
 1255 You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.  
 1256 You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.  
 1257 In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin  
 1258 and death and reconciling the world to yourself.  
 1259 You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages,  
 1260 tongues, and races.  
 1261 You call us into your Church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel  
 1262 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.  
 1263 You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence  
 1264 in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.  
 1265 Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

1266 *The "Statement of Faith" of the United Church of Christ was written in 1959 to express the common faith of the newly founded United Church of Christ, formed in 1957*  
 1267 *by the union of the Evangelical and Reformed Church with the Congregational Christian Churches. Since the original version was adopted in 1959, two further revisions*  
 1268 *of the statement have been written in order to make the statement's language more gender-inclusive. The 1976 version drafted by then-United Church of Christ president,*  
 1269 *Robert Moss, retains the original statement's confession-of-faith language form, while the 1981 version transformed the language of the statement into a doxological*  
 1270 *prayer form.*

1271

## APPENDIX B: PERSONNEL POLICIES

- 1272 **1. For the Clergy**  
 1273 The agreement between a new pastor and the church shall include all compensation and benefits. The Pastor/Parish Relations  
 1274 Committee shall conduct quarterly reviews of performance and make recommendations to the Church Council/Trustees regarding  
 1275 adjustments to the package.  
 1276 A. Basic compensation shall include salary, housing/utilities allowance, annuity, and professional allowances.  
 1277 B. Additional paid benefits may include an auto allowance, health/dental insurance, and life/disability insurance.  
 1278 C. Vacation time of up to four calendar weeks (Sunday through Saturday) begins after one year of service at times agreed upon with  
 1279 the Pastor/Parish Relations Committee. All time off shall be specified in the Call to the Senior Pastor.  
 1280 D. Sick leave may be accumulated at the rate of one day per month up to 30 days. A person may not be compensated for unused  
 1281 sick leave. In case of prolonged illness or disability, basic compensation, and additional benefits in the package shall be paid  
 1282 as stated in the Call to the Senior Pastor. In the case of clergy death, the base salary, housing, and insurance benefits shall be  
 1283 paid to the immediate family as stated in the Call to the Senior Pastor.  
 1284 E. Paternity Leave shall be granted on an individual basis.  
 1285 F. Arrangements for a Sabbatical Leave can be made after five years of service.  
 1286 **2. For the Church Staff**  
 1287 A. Salaries and supplementary compensation will be offered to attract, retain, and motivate the church staff.  
 1288 B. Health, hospitalization, and dental coverages will be offered for full-time employees.  
 1289 C. Jury duty will be allowed for all full or part-time employees with full compensation.  
 1290 D. Full-time employees will be granted paid holidays that are considered official holidays observed by the church.  
 1291 E. All employees shall be eligible for annual vacations based on the beginning date of their employment. The scheduling of all  
 1292 vacation time is to be done in consultation with the approval of the Senior Pastor.  
 1293 **3. Special Employment Policies**  
 1294 A. The First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala shall be an equal opportunity employer and shall not discriminate  
 1295 against any applicant or employee on the basis of: age, color, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex or  
 1296 sexual orientation, including those individuals with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) or ARC (AIDS Related  
 1297 Complex). The Church affirms the personnel policy adopted by the Executive Church Council/Trustees of the United Church  
 1298 of Christ that states that an employee or job applicant who is HIV antibody positive or is diagnosed as having AIDS or ARC who  
 1299 is otherwise capable of doing the job, shall not be dismissed or discriminated against.  
 1300 B. The First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala prohibits sexual harassment in any form by church employees. It  
 1301 shall be the responsibility of each employee to maintain an environment which is free from sexual harassment.  
 1302 C. The First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala actively supports affirmative action programs.

1303

## APPENDIX C: ENDOWMENT FUND POLICY

- 1304 Section A. Purpose  
 1305 The purpose of the "Endowment Fund Policy" is to govern the use of the Endowment Fund of The First Congregational United  
 1306 Church of Christ, of Ocala.  
 1307 Section B. Principles  
 1308 Faithful Christian Stewardship mandates that the church establish, maintain, invest, and distribute endowment funds in order  
 1309 to provide resources for current and future missions and ministries. The church will follow the policies below regarding receipt,  
 1310 investment, and distribution of financial gifts, bequests, and contributions to the church in order—  
 1311 1. to provide an instrument through which members, friends, and associates of the church may practice generous Christian  
 1312 Stewardship and discipleship;  
 1313

- 1314 2. to provide resources to further the mission of the Church; and  
1315 3. to ensure responsible fiscal practices in order to handle gifts and contributions with care and prudence.
- 1316 Section C. Procedures
- 1317 1. The church will manage the Endowment Fund to preserve the principle of the fund in perpetuity or until the occurrence  
1318 of other special conditions, as described below.
- 1319 2. The church will manage the Endowment Fund in a manner that maintains flexibility for both donors and custodians of  
1320 the fund regarding spending policies and usage of the fund.
- 1321 3. The Endowment Fund will include a “multiple fund strategy” whereby donors and custodians may make donations and  
1322 establish funds—
- 1323 a. with clear restrictions on spending (“Special Endowment Fund”);  
1324 b. with no restrictions on spending (“General Endowment Fund”); and  
1325 c. with flexible spending policies, for example, funds with no spending for a period of years, funds that may be spent  
1326 immediately until exhaustion, or funds that may be spent until exhaustion upon the occurrence of a specific event  
1327 (which may be categorized as “Special Endowment Fund” and/or “General Endowment Fund”).
- 1328 Section D. Custodianship
- 1329 Members of the Endowment Advisory Committee (“EAC”) are custodians of the Endowment Fund.
- 1330 1. The EAC shall consist of five members of the church.
- 1331 2. Except as herein limited, the term of each member shall be three (3) years.
- 1332 3. With the establishment of the Endowment Fund Policy, the congregation shall elect members of the Committee as follows:  
1333 two (2) for a term of three (3) years; two (2) for a term of two (2) years; and one (1) for a term of one (1) year.
- 1334 4. Thereafter, at each Annual Meeting, the congregation shall elect the necessary number for a term of three (3) years.
- 1335 5. No member shall serve more than two consecutive three (3) year terms.
- 1336 6. After a lapse of one (1) year, the church may reelect former Committee members.
- 1337 7. In the event of a vacancy on the Committee, the Church Council/Trustees shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy until  
1338 the next Annual Meeting of the congregation, at which time the congregation shall elect a member to fulfill the term of  
1339 the vacancy.
- 1340 8. The EAC shall make regular reports to the Church Council/Trustees and shall render a full and complete accounting of  
1341 the administration of the Endowment Fund during the preceding year to the Congregation the Annual Meeting.
- 1342 9. The Committee shall meet at least quarterly or more frequently as deemed in the best interest of the custodianship of the  
1343 Endowment Fund.
- 1344 10. A quorum shall consist of three members.
- 1345 11. The Committee may request other members of the congregation to serve as advisory members and, at the expense of  
1346 Endowment Fund income, may provide for such professional counseling on investments or legal matters as deemed in  
1347 the best interest of the Endowment Fund.
- 1348 12. Members of the Committee shall not be liable for any losses that may occur on the investments of the assets of the “Fund”  
1349 except to the extent that such losses shall have been caused by bad faith or gross negligence. Members shall be liable only  
1350 for his/her own willful misconduct or omissions and shall not be liable for the acts of omissions of other members.
- 1351 13. No member shall engage in self-dealing or transactions with the Endowment Fund in which the member has direct or  
1352 indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict  
1353 with the interest of the Endowment Fund.
- 1354 Section E. Operations
- 1355 1. All assets are held in the name of the “First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala Endowment Fund.”
- 1356 2. The EAC shall make recommendations to the Church Council/Trustees regarding holding, selling, exchanging, renting,  
1357 leasing, transferring, converting, investing, reinvesting, and in all other respects managing and controlling assets of the  
1358 Endowment Fund, including stocks, bonds, debentures, mortgages, notes, or other securities, as the judgment and  
1359 discretion of the EAC deems wise and prudent. The Church Council/Trustees retains final authority with respect to  
1360 subsequent execution of decisions by the EAC.
- 1361 3. Distribution of earnings of the Endowment Fund to one or more of the categories below is as follows:
- 1362 a. Percentages of Distribution of Earnings:
- 1363 (1) 10%, Missions: providing for ministry and missions of the United Church of Christ in such areas as new church  
1364 development, professional leadership, educational ministries, church growth, hunger relief, etc;
- 1365 (2) 10%, Capital Improvements: providing for major capital improvements of facilities, building programs, and debt  
1366 reduction not achieved by annual giving and capital campaign efforts;
- 1367 (3) 20%, Current Ministry: providing for enhanced and additional ministries of the church not currently supported  
1368 by the annual budget;
- 1369 (4) 20%, Reinvestment to the principle of The Endowment Fund; and  
1370 (5) 40%, Other. The Committee shall consider all proposals for distribution of income under “Other” toward  
1371 missions and ministries not underwritten by annual giving and at each Annual Meeting make its  
1372 recommendations for distribution to the congregation, which shall have final authority regarding distribution  
1373 of monies under “Other.”
- 1374 b. Percentages of distribution of earnings of the Endowment Fund shall be reviewed every three years and may be  
1375 altered on approval by the congregation.
- 1376 c. The EAC and the Church Treasurer shall distribute earnings of the Endowment Fund at such times as deemed  
1377 necessary and/or feasible.
- 1378 4. On request of the Church Council/Trustees, The EAC may spend up to 5% of the total value of the principle of the  
1379 Endowment Fund for church emergencies requiring immediate response and shall report such expenditures to the  
1380 congregation at a duly called meeting or the next Annual Meeting, as determined by the Church Council/Trustees.
- 1381 Section F. Endowments, Bequests, and other Enduring Gifts

- 1382 1. The church shall receive gifts of an enduring nature directly or as bequests in such forms as wills, charitable remainder trusts, life income agreements, assignments of life insurance, transfers of property (cash, stocks, bonds, real estate, 1383 personal property), memorial gifts, or through other governing documents.
- 1384 2. The church will receive (i) "Restricted Gifts" (placed in the "General Endowment Fund") and (ii) "Unrestricted Gifts" 1385 (placed in the "Special Endowment Fund"). The church will publicly recognize donors unless the donor(s) request 1386 anonymity.
- 1387 3. The EAC, in consultation with the Church Council/Trustees, shall have the responsibility for accepting or rejecting all 1388 gifts. The EAC and the Church Council/Trustees will carefully review all gifts and may decline gifts that are unwieldy to 1389 manage or that are not in keeping with the Christian mission of the Church.
- 1390 4. The church may promptly sell at fair market value real estate and properties transferred to the church. The church may 1391 place the proceeds placed in the Endowment Fund or Special Endowment Fund if specified by the donor as either a 1392 "Restricted Gift" or an "Unrestricted Gift."
- 1393 5. Unless distribution of a gift is imminent, the church may transfer a gift immediately to the General Endowment Fund 1394 ("Unrestricted Gifts") or the Special Endowment Fund ("Restricted Gifts"). 1395

1396 Section G. Investments

- 1397 1. Goals and Objectives
  - 1398 a. To provide a level of support for Church programs as determined by the policies summarized above.
  - 1399 b. To maintain and increase the value of the fund.
  - 1400 c. To provide a satisfactory return on investment for the support of the church's ministry and mission.
- 1401 2. Guidelines
  - 1402 a. Investment decisions will consider the distribution of earnings policies described above.
  - 1403 b. The EAC may pool funds in the portfolio for investment purposes. However, the EAC shall follow a donor(s) 1404 expressed, written instructions to invest in particular instruments, whether a Restricted Gift or an Unrestricted Gift. 1405 The church shall consider such funds as a part of the Endowment Fund, and the EAC and Church Treasurer shall 1406 identify and account for such funds according to the name of the donor (anonymity notwithstanding) and the 1407 designated purposes of such separate funds.
  - 1408 3. Diversification and Limitations
    - 1409 a. The EAC shall diversify the portfolio by asset class (equities, bonds, cash equivalent) and within asset classes (e.g., 1410 within equities by economic sector, industry, quality and size) to have reasonable assurance that no single security 1411 or class of securities will have a disproportionate impact on the total Endowment Funds.
    - 1412 b. The EAC shall limit investments to professionally-managed funds and will authorize transactional authority only to 1413 secured professional investment managers.
    - 1414 c. The EAC shall limit investments in any single stock at the time of purchase to 10% of the market value of the 1415 Endowment Fund's equities.
    - 1416 d. The EAC shall annually measure and compare the investment performance of the various equities of the Endowment 1417 Fund and shall make an annual report to the Church Council/Trustees regarding the total return of the Endowment 1418 Funds to major indices and the Consumer Price Index.
    - 1419 e. The EAC shall not invest in companies that realize profit from the sale of armaments, that contribute to 1420 environmental harm, and that exploit human beings or demean human dignity.
    - 1421 f. The EAC shall conduct custodianship of the Endowment Fund according to law and in accord with the following. The 1422 EAC shall not:
      - 1423 (1) Purchase securities on margin;
      - 1424 (2) Sell securities "short";
      - 1425 (3) Buy or sell options;
      - 1426 (4) Invest in commodity contracts;
      - 1427 (5) Purchase securities restricted to public resale under the Securities Act of 1933;
      - 1428 (6) Purchase or retain income securities or fixed income securities (including mutual funds) with an average quality 1429 less than "A" and a minimum quality for any issue less than "BBB"; and
      - 1430 (7) Pledge Endowment Funds as collateral or security for loans made to the Church without the approval of two- 1431 thirds of the congregation.

1432 Section H. Disposition or Transfer of the Endowment Fund

1433 In the event that the church ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the "Fund" shall be at the 1434 discretion of the governing body in conformity with the approved congregational By-Laws and in consultation with the Florida 1435 Conference of the United Church of Christ.

1436 **APPENDIX D1: SAFE CHURCH POLICY CONCERNING ABUSE PREVENTION**

1437 Section A. Policy Prohibiting Abuse, Exploitation, and Harassment

1438 First Congregational United Church of Christ of Ocala, Florida, (hereafter known as The Church) is committed to creating and 1439 maintaining programs, facilities, and a community in which its members, friends, staff, and volunteers can worship, learn, and work 1440 together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. All people associated with 1441 The Church should be aware that The Church is strongly opposed to sexual exploitation and sexual harassment and that such behavior 1442 is prohibited by church policy. The Church will take the necessary action, as outlined in this document, to prevent and correct behavior 1443 that is contrary to church policy and, if necessary, to discipline those people who violate the policy.

1444 Section B. Ministerial Conduct

- 1445 1. All ordained ministers/clergy, employees, elected and appointed lay leaders, and authorized volunteers are "Ministers" to the 1446 congregation.
- 1447 2. The Ministers shall nurture safety with all their relationships within The Church, and they shall be attentive to self-care, 1448 education, appropriate boundaries, and discretion. The "Ministers" shall be adequately prepared and educated for their

- 1449 ministry and shall understand the ways in which their use or misuse of authority may impact others.
- 1450 3. Sexual exploitation or sexual harassment of parishioners or others by anyone engaged in ministry, on behalf of The Church,
- 1451 is unethical behavior and will not be tolerated within this congregation.
- 1452 Section C. Requirements for Commencing and Continuing Ministry
- 1453 1. "Ministers" may be interviewed by the appropriate board/committee/person to assess the suitability of their character and
- 1454 qualifications for the position they hold/seek. They also will be required to submit a disclosure form.<sup>5</sup> Exceptions include any
- 1455 Ordained Staff/Clergy whose background checks are part of the Search Committee process (see Article XIII, Section B, #2d).
- 1456 2. A designated member of the appropriate board/committee/person shall conduct a registered sex offender review for each
- 1457 "Minister" by searching his/her name on the Department of Justice website at www.nsopr.gov. This registered sex offender
- 1458 review will be repeated on an annual basis for all "Ministers."
- 1459 3. Ordained Staff/Clergy of The Church will attend all boundary workshops required by The Florida Conference of the United
- 1460 Church of Christ, or will attend at least one workshop on this topic every three years, whichever is more frequent.
- 1461 Section D. Additional Requirements for Child and Youth Ministry
- 1462 1. The Church is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience
- 1463 God's love. The following requirements are in addition to those stated above.
- 1464 2. Volunteers who work with minors must be members of The Church for at least six months, or, if they are not Members of The
- 1465 Church, they must have regularly attended or have been associated with The Church for at least one year.
- 1466 3. Volunteers who regularly work with children and youth will complete and submit the disclosure document.<sup>6</sup>
- 1467 4. Prior to their employment, all prospective employees will undergo a background check, including but not necessarily limited
- 1468 to inquiries of references and a criminal history verification by a third party vendor.
- 1469 5. All volunteers and employees who regularly work with children and youth will receive orientation regarding safe church policy
- 1470 and procedures.
- 1471 6. It is the policy of The Church to provide adequate supervision and safeguards for youth activities. In situations where
- 1472 participants are not readily visible to each other, there will be no fewer than two unrelated adults present with children. Youth
- 1473 over the age of fifteen may assist an unrelated adult in supervising children and youth activities; however, such assistance does
- 1474 not alter the requirement that at least two unrelated adults be present.
- 1475 7. Written consent of one parent or guardian of a minor will be required for all activities off the church property, and any overnight
- 1476 activities.
- 1477 Section E. Definitions
- 1478 1. **Minister:** a person authorized by The Church to carry out its ministry. Ministers include elected or appointed leaders of the
- 1479 church, employees, and volunteers, as well as ordained ministers/clergy.
- 1480 2. **Ministerial Relationship:** the relationship between one who carries out the ministry of The Church and the one being served
- 1481 by that ministry.
- 1482 3. **Sexual Exploitation:** sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a Minister engaged in a ministerial
- 1483 relationship with another takes advantage of the vulnerability of the person being served by causing or allowing that person
- 1484 to engage in sexual behavior with the Minister.
- 1485 4. **Sexual Harassment:** repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes
- 1486 behavior directed at another person with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting
- 1487 the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical
- 1488 conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:
- 1489 a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition or circumstance of instruction,
- 1490 employment, or participation in any church activity;
- 1491 b. submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or church-
- 1492 related decisions affecting an individual; or
- 1493 c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in
- 1494 church activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or church environment.
- 1495 5. **Prohibited Sexual Harassment** includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:
- 1496 a. written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, e-mails, or invitations;
- 1497 b. verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits,
- 1498 sexual propositions;
- 1499 c. physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement,
- 1500 assault, coercing sexual intercourse; and
- 1501 d. visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures,
- 1502 cartoons, posters, or magazines.
- 1503 e. Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is
- 1504 unwelcome and using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning, or worship
- 1505 environment of another. It is impermissible to suggest, threaten, or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or
- 1506 sexual intimacy will affect a person's job prospects, church leadership, or comfortable participation in the life of the church.
- 1507 It is forbidden either to imply or actually withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, to
- 1508 suggest that a poor performance report will be given because a person has declined a personal proposition; or to hint that
- 1509 benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or
- 1510 reclassifications, will be forthcoming in exchange for sexual favors.

<sup>5</sup> "Exhibit A: Authorized Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form." This form is on file in the Church office.

<sup>6</sup> "Exhibit B: Employment/Authorized Children and Youth Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form." This form is on file in the Church office.



- 1511 6. Notes  
 1512 a. Procedures for handling complaints of sexual exploitation or harassment are on file in the Church office.  
 1513 b. Forms “Exhibit A: Authorized Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form” and “Exhibit B: Employment/Authorized  
 1514 Children and Youth Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form” are on file in the Church office.

## APPENDIX D2: SAFE CHURCH POLICY CONCERNING EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- 1515 Section A. Safety Supplies  
 1516 1. Emergency safety kits will be prepared which contain—  
 1517 a. a first-aid kit  
 1518 b. church directory  
 1519 c. two flashlights with batteries  
 1520 d. instructions about what to do next (i.e., direct people to safe areas)  
 1522 2. Three (3) emergency safety kits will be prepared for use during an emergency. The safety kits will be located in the following  
 1523 areas:  
 1524 a. Blair Stewart Enrichment Center  
 1525 b. Church office  
 1526 c. Sanctuary  
 1527 3. Three (3) fire extinguishers will be kept in the following locations:  
 1528 a. Blair Stewart Enrichment Center  
 1529 b. Church office  
 1530 c. Sanctuary  
 1531 4. The emergency safety kits and fire extinguishers will be checked every six months and kept up to date. All church employees,  
 1532 Deacons, ushers, and volunteers will familiarize themselves with the location and contents of the emergency safety kits and fire  
 1533 extinguishers.  
 1534 5. The Church Council/Trustees is responsible for the biannual safety checks of the kits and extinguishers.  
 1535 Section B. Fire/Emergency Safety Plan  
 1536 1. The following areas are designated as gathering spots in case of an emergency:  
 1537 a. The parking lot outside the church;  
 1538 b. The parking lot outside the office; and  
 1539 c. The parking lot outside the enrichment center.  
 1540 2. Emergency exit signs and procedures have been posted in all rooms of each of the above-mentioned buildings. The procedures  
 1541 direct people to the designated outside gathering areas.  
 1542 3. Once outside, all families/friends should seek each other out and remain together. If someone is missing, it should be reported  
 1543 to the designated deacon/usher/employee.  
 1544 4. Deacons/ushers/employees will be trained in emergency procedures and responsibilities, which include:  
 1545 a. Attendance Taker(s): If a family member or friend is missing, it will be reported the attendance taker(s).  
 1546 b. Emergency Coordinator: Person responsible to receive and distribute instructions from professional emergency personnel.  
 1547 c. Handicap Assistants: People responsible for seeing to those who require assistance to exit a building.  
 1548 d. Emergency Assistants: People responsible for picking up emergency safety kits as they exit the building.  
 1549 Section C. Fire Drill Procedure  
 1550 1. Fire drills will be held once a year.  
 1551 2. In alternating years, a fire drill will be conducted during a church service and during a Sunday School class.  
 1552 3. It may be determined that the children will practice more frequently.

## APPENDIX E: DIAGRAM OF CHURCH ORGANIZATION

1553 See the last page of the By-Laws for a Diagram of Church Organization.

## APPENDIX F: AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

1554 *(Editor’s note, Appendix F is not a part of the By-Laws: When the Amendments listed below are incorporated in the opus of By-Laws above  
 1555 for a major printing, the decision should be made whether or not to purge Appendix F, Amendments to the By-Laws. It is recommended that  
 1556 Appendix F not be purged in order to have a record of the changes and, in some cases, the rationale for the changes. It is also recommended  
 1557 that when a revised printed is made that at the end of each Amendment below that the date of the printing be attached in order to make the  
 1558 printing task easier and to avoid duplicating revisions in the body of the By-Laws.)*

- 1559 **1. Approved by the Congregation at a called meeting of the Congregation on May 3, 2009:**  
 1560 A. Article 4 (Doctrine) Section F (Human Rights Church), 1., Open and Affirming Church:  
 1561 We declare that we are an “Open and Affirming Church,” welcoming into our life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, rites, sacra-  
 1562 ments, responsibilities, and blessings, people of all races, genders, ages, marital standings, family structures, sexual orientations, gender  
 1563 identities and expressions, socio-economic statuses, professions, faith backgrounds, nationalities, and mental and physical challenges.  
 1564 **2. Approved by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on December 6, 2009:**  
 1565 A. Article 11 (Church Council/Trustees) Section A, #1  
 1566 The Church Council/Trustees shall consist of sixteen (16) members: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Church Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant  
 1567 Treasurer, Collections Clerk, Director of Public Relations, and the Chairpersons of the following boards: Deacons, Trustees, Stewardship,  
 1568 Religious Education, Missions, Church Life, and Church Growth, the Music and Arts Committee, and a representative of the Women’s  
 1569 Fellowship.  
 1570 **3. Approved by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on December 6, 2009:**  
 1571 A. Article 15 (Committees) Section H  
 1572  
 1573

1574 The Music Director is an ex-officio member of the Church Council/Trustees. The Chairperson of the Music and Arts Committee is a  
1575 voting member of the Church Council/Trustees.

1576 **4. Approved by Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on December 4, 2011:**

1577 A. Article XVIII. Finance Protocols

1578 Section D. End of Year

1579 At the end of each "Fiscal Year" (see "Fiscal Year", page 5), the balance of all Board and Committee accounts will be set at zero dollars  
1580 (\$0.00), and the use of the balance of any remaining monies becomes the purview of the Church Council/Trustees. For particular cause,  
1581 a Board or Committee may request of the Church Council/Trustees that a portion or all of its previous year's balance carry over into  
1582 the new fiscal year. The Church Council/Trustees's decision on the request is final.

1583 **5. Approved by Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on December 4, 2011:**

1584 A. Article XVIII. Finance Protocols

1585 Section E. Fiduciary Accounts

1586 The Church will have one (1) set of fiduciary accounts (e.g., checking, savings, investment accounts, credit cards, etc.) that are overseen  
1587 by the Treasurer and the Church Council/Trustees. No Board, Committee, or individual(s) may privately or without oversight hold any  
1588 sort of fiduciary account on behalf of the Church.

1589 **6. Approved by Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on December 4, 2011:**

1590 A. History; see the revision of this bylaw issue below in bold-italics:

1591 The purpose of this amendment is to correct a discrepancy between "Article IX, Church Employees" Section D and "Appendix B:  
1592 Personnel Policies," "2. For the Church Staff."

1593 At present, Article IX, Section D reads as follows:

1594 Section D: Compensation and Benefits

1595 a. Non-ordained employees are part of the ministry of this church. They shall be compensated at the same level as other non-profit  
1596 organizations in the community. Each employee, full or part time, shall have a contract that clearly states the allowed sick leave  
1597 and vacation time, with or without pay.

1598 b. A "Full-time employee" is defined as an employee who works more than thirty regular hours a week. Full-time employees shall  
1599 be covered by health insurance and Social Security and shall be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, if required by the job  
1600 contract.

1601 c. Full-time employees may be given the privilege of joining the Retirement Fund for Lay Workers of the United Church of Christ  
1602 or some comparable retirement fund.

1603 d. Church employees shall be evaluated annually on their performance by their supervisors. Recommendations for changes in  
1604 compensatory package, based on this evaluation shall be made to the Church Council/Trustees...

1605 At present, Appendix B, Section 2: For the Church Staff" reads:

1606 a. Salaries and supplementary compensation will be offered to attract, retain, and motivate the church staff.

1607 b. Health, hospitalization, and dental coverages will be offered for full-time employees.

1608 c. Staff members will be allowed thirty (30) days sick leave annually based on the anniversary date of their employment.

1609 d. Jury duty will be allowed for all full or part-time employees with full compensation.

1610 e. Full-time employees will be granted paid holidays that are considered official holidays observed by the church.

1611 f. All employees shall be eligible for annual vacations based on the beginning date of their employment. The scheduling of all  
1612 vacation time is to be done in consultation with the approval of the Senior Pastor.

1613 Comparing "Article IX" and "Amendment B" above reveals the discrepancy: "Article IX" states that employee terms of employment and  
1614 changes in compensation and benefits will be determined based on the evaluations and reviews with each employee in consultation with  
1615 the Trustees; "Amendment B", however, mandates preexisting compensation/benefits in specific terms. **To correct this**  
1616 **discrepancy, this amendment eliminates "item c" from "Appendix B."** The terms of "Article IX" will prevail.

1617 **7. Approved by Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on December 4, 2011:**

1618 A. All references in the by-laws to "Board of Church Growth" will be changed to "Board of Church Growth."

1619 **8. Approved by Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on December 9, 2013:**

1620 A. Rationale: Currently, the *By-Laws* dictate that the Board of Ministry has responsibility for working with the pastor with respect to the  
1621 church's ministries of worship, communion, home communion, parish care, recruitment and assignment of liturgists, acolytes, ushers,  
1622 etc., care of the sick, bereaved, dying, and attending to the spiritual welfare of the church. Such a broad span of responsibilities has  
1623 proven untenable for the Board of Ministry to handle by itself, and for the past two years, the responsibilities have been divided into  
1624 three *ad hoc* arms: The Deacons, the Parish Visitation Team, and the Worship Team. This bylaw proposes to create a **Board of**  
1625 **Ministry** that establishes those three groups as permanent elements of the church's ministry. We should add that during the interim  
1626 period that these three groups have served our church, the results have been favorable and have provided excellent leadership and  
1627 service to our congregation. The changes are made to "Article XIV" under, "Boards." The existing "Section A: Board of Ministry" will  
1628 be deleted. Hereinafter, all references to the "Board of Ministry" will be changed to "The Board of Ministry" as described below  
1629 (references to the "Board of Ministry" will be changed to "Board of Ministry" at Article VI; Article VII, Section B, line 3; Article VIII,  
1630 Section A, line 2; Article IX, Section A, line 1; Article XIII, Section B, line I; Article XIV, Section A; Article XIV, Section B; Article XV,  
1631 Section A; and other references to "Board of Ministry" in the Amendments and possibly elsewhere. When the amendments are  
1632 incorporated into the body of the By-Laws, appropriate changes will need to be made to the Table of Contents and the Index). Note that  
1633 the "Board of Deacons," per se, remain as an arm of the broader reach of the Board of Ministry, as described below. Changes to Article  
1634 XIV, Section A... begin here:

1635 B. Article XIV, Section A. Board of Ministry (Program)

1636 The Board of Ministry shall consist of three arms of responsibility and service: the Board of Deacons, the Worship Team and the Parish  
1637 Visitation Care Team. The Board of Ministry shall report any net income to the church treasurer.

1638 1. The **Board of Deacons** shall consist of at least twelve (12) members, who shall be elected at the Annual Meeting.

1639 The Board of Deacons shall—

1640 a. assist the Senior Pastor in the Sacraments of Baptism and Communion, including the home communion to be given monthly  
1641 to the sick, the bereaved and shut-ins. The Board of Deacons shall be responsible for the Baptismal font, linens, antependia,

- 1642 accouterments, the Communion table, and the Communion elements;
- 1643 b. appoint a head usher;
- 1644 c. schedule and supply liturgists, acolytes, ushers, welcomers, greeters and attendance book for each church service. No later
- 1645 than Tuesday morning of each week, the person in charge shall deliver to the church office a written list of those chosen to
- 1646 serve, so that their names can be included in the weekly church service bulletin;
- 1647 d. cooperate with any church board or committee whose responsibilities may overlap with specific duties;
- 1648 e. see Article VI, Section B regarding serving communion.
- 1649 f. The chairperson of the Board of Deacons shall represent the Board of Ministry as a member of the Church Council/Trustees.
- 1650 2. The **Worship Team** shall consist of at least six members, who shall be elected at the Annual Meeting.
- 1651 The Worship Team shall—
- 1652 a. assist the Senior Pastor in planning Sunday Worship and other worship services throughout the year by planning music and
- 1653 programs of enrichment and the message of Christ to the life of the congregation;
- 1654 b. cooperate with any church board or committee whose responsibilities may overlap with specific duties.
- 1655 3. **The Parish Visitation Care Team (PVC)** shall consist of those who are appointed by the Moderator and the Senior Pastor.
- 1656 The PVC Team shall—
- 1657 a. be responsible, with the Senior Pastor, for the spiritual care of the sick, the bereaved and shut-ins;
- 1658 b. assist the Senior Pastor with keeping contact with members and maintaining a spiritual and friendly fellowship;
- 1659 c. assist the Board of Deacons, on a voluntary basis, in providing home communion to the sick, the bereaved and shut-ins.
- 1660 **9. Approved by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on December 7, 2014:**
- 1661 A. Approval of the “Mission Statement of the Church.”
- 1662 **10. Approved by Congregation at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on January 29, 2017:**
- 1663 A. Article VII, Section B, “Annual Meetings,” #1 is changed to “...shall be held the last Sunday of January.”
- 1664 B. Article VII, Section B, “Annual Meetings,” #5 is changed from “...two weeks...” to “...three weeks...”
- 1665 C. Article VII, Section B, “Annual Meetings,” #6 is changed as follows: “Officers, boards, committees, and organizations must submit their
- 1666 yearly reports to the church office no later than December 1.”
- 1667 D. Article VII, Section B, #5. After the first sentence, the following was added to #5: “A printed copy of the Annual Report will be mailed
- 1668 to members who are unable to receive a copy of the Annual Report at a Sunday Service.” The remainder of #5 was renumbered to be
- 1669 #6.
- 1670 E. Article VII, Section D was changed to the following: “The call to meetings shall briefly describe the principle business to be considered
- 1671 and other appropriate matters germane to the meeting. The time and place of the meeting, and nature of the business to be transacted
- 1672 shall be announced at a regular Sunday service at least twenty-one days prior to the date of the meeting, and also timely notification
- 1673 in *News and Views*, e-mail notification by the church secretary, and a physical mailing to members unable to receive the material during
- 1674 a Sunday morning service at least two weeks prior to the meeting.”
- 1675 F. Article VII, Section E, #3 was changed to the following:
- 1676 “Voting Rules: A majority vote is decisive except as otherwise required by these By-Laws. All qualified members of the church, who are
- 1677 present, are entitled to one vote. The Congregation will accept ‘Power of Attorney Votes’ in the absence of a member being able to vote
- 1678 at Annual Meetings and Congregational Meetings. Written ballots shall be available.”
- 1679 Note: the exact wording of this Bylaw change was left to the By-Laws Committee for exact wording, to be reported at the next
- 1680 Congregational Meeting. The By-Laws Committee was charged with the responsibility to present the exact wording of the Bylaw change
- 1681 at the next meeting of the congregation.
- 1682 **11. Approved by Congregation at a Special Meeting of the Congregation on May 21, 2017:**
- 1683 A. Article 10, Section C, number 2, items a. and b. Changes to this section read as following:
- 1684 a. The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall consist of the following members: the Senior Pastor, three appointees of the pastor,
- 1685 and a list of candidates supplied by the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. From this list, six members shall be appointed by the
- 1686 Church Council/Trustees and the pastor for a total of nine members.
- 1687 b. The nine committee members shall serve three-year terms with three members going off and three members going on each year.
- 1688 Members rotating off of the committee will overlap with the newest members for either (i) a period of one month or (ii) the first
- 1689 quarterly meeting.
- 1690 B. Article XI, Section A was changed to include #3 as follows:
- 1691 Quorum: A quorum for a Church Council/Trustees meeting, regular or special, shall consist of fifty-one percent or more of the
- 1692 Church Council/Trustees membership.
- 1693 C. Article VII, Section E, #3 was changed to rescind the “Power of Attorney” Bylaw revision made on January 29, 2017. The Bylaw reverts
- 1694 to its original wording.
- 1695 **12. Approved by Congregation at a Special Meeting of the Congregation on January 27, 2019**
- 1696 **13. ARTICLE IV. DOCTRINE**
- 1697 A. Section A. Faith as Christian Love
- 1698 a. **Christian Love of God Includes:**
- 1699 (1) Walking fully in the Path of Jesus and affirming the legitimacy of other paths that God provides for humanity;
- 1700 (2) Listening for God’s Word, which comes through daily prayer and meditation, studying testimonies to God’s presence and
- 1701 will through testaments that we call “Scriptures,” through documents expressing the collective wisdom through the ages, and
- 1702 attending to God’s present activity in the world;
- 1703 (3) Celebrating God, whose Spirit pervades and whose glory is reflected in all Creation, including the earth and its ecosystems,
- 1704 the sacred and secular, the Christian and non-Christian, the human and non-human; and
- 1705 (4) Expressing our love in worship that is as sincere, vibrant, and artful as it is scriptural.
- 1706 b. **Christian Love of Neighbor Includes:**
- 1707 (1) Engaging people authentically, as Jesus did, treating all as creation in God’s image, regardless of race, gender, sexual
- 1708 orientation, age, physical or mental ability, nationality, or economic class;
- 1709 (2) Standing, as Jesus does, with the outcast and oppressed, the denigrated and afflicted, seeking peace and justice with or

- 1710 without the support of others;
- 1711 (3) Preserving religious freedom and the church’s ability to speak prophetically to government by resisting the commingling of
- 1712 church and state; and
- 1713 (4) Walking both humbly and bravely with God, acknowledging our own shortcomings while honestly seeking to understand
- 1714 and call forth the best in others, including those who consider us their enemies.
- 1715 c. **Christian Love of Self Includes:**
- 1716 (1) Basing our lives on faith/trust that in Christ all things are made new and that we and all people are loved beyond our wildest
- 1717 imaginations—for eternity;
- 1718 (2) Claiming the sacredness of both our minds and our hearts, and recognizing that faith and science, doubt and belief serve the
- 1719 pursuit of truth;
- 1720 (3) Caring for our bodies and insisting on taking time to enjoy the benefits of prayer, reflection, worship, and recreation;
- 1721 (4) Acting on the faith that we are born with meaning and purpose, a vocation and ministry that serve to strengthen and extend
- 1722 God’s realm of love.<sup>7</sup>
- 1723 B. Section B. Sacraments
- 1724 a. We acknowledge two sacraments:
- 1725 (1) *Baptism* is the sacrament within which our church, on behalf of Christ’s Church Universal, welcomes people to become
- 1726 Christians. Baptism is the church’s way of celebrating and naming the grace of God living in all of God’s people—men,
- 1727 women, and children. It initiates and marks the covenantal entry point into the life-time pilgrimage of following in the Way
- 1728 of Jesus Christ.
- 1729 (2) *Eucharist* (also known as “Communion”) is the sacrament within which Christians as a faith community periodically reaffirm
- 1730 their baptism. Eucharist is (1) a common meal of liberation, (2) an egalitarian meal, (3) a meal through which we celebrate
- 1731 community both as Christians and as members of the world around us, (4) both the experience and foretaste of God’s love
- 1732 for all creation, and (5) a sign that people can transform themselves and each other to engage the world on behalf of love,
- 1733 justice, compassion, regard for the integrity of all people, and the sacredness of creation.
- 1734 C. Section C. Covenant
- 1735 a. We covenant with Jesus Christ and one with another, binding ourselves to walk together with God as revealed through the
- 1736 scriptures and other non-canonical sources of religious wisdom and experience, our traditions, our experience, and our reason.
- 1737 D. Section D. Affirmation of Diversity
- 1738 a. As an inclusive church for all people, we are open to God’s gifts of diversity by affirming those gifts, learning from them, and being
- 1739 transformed by them through worship, fellowship, education striving for peace and justice, the sacraments, and care for our world.
- 1740 E. Section E. Statement of Faith
- 1741 a. Because our church is a member of and in covenant with The United Church of Christ, we affirm two “Statements of Faith”—one
- 1742 authored by Robert V. Moss and the other in the form of a Doxology as adapted by June 2017 Synod of The United Church of
- 1743 Christ. These Statements of Faith are neither legally required tests of faith nor are intended theologically, metaphorically, or
- 1744 symbolically to limit other statements of faith. These Statements of Faith are intended to both convey and foster our church’s and
- 1745 our members’ interpreting God’s presence through Christ and through both our church and Christ’s Church Universal. (see
- 1746 Appendix A: Statements of Faith, page “25”)
- 1747 F. Section F. Peace and Justice Church
- 1748 a. The church is a “Peace and Justice Church,” striving for peace with justice.
- 1749 G. Section G. Human Rights Church
- 1750 a. This church shares a universal commitment to the inherent worth of every human being and affirms that it is essential to our
- 1751 identity as a member of the Body of Christ to work together cooperatively toward this end. This church is united against any
- 1752 expression or action of violence, war, intimidation, prejudice, and/or discrimination that attempts to injure individuals, families,
- 1753 or groups of people.
- 1754 H. Section H. Open and Affirming Church
- 1755 a. We declare that we are an “Open and Affirming Church,” welcoming into our life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, rites,
- 1756 sacraments, responsibilities, and blessings, people of all races, genders, ages, marital standings, family structures, sexual
- 1757 orientations, gender identities and expressions, socio-economic statuses, professions, faith backgrounds, nationalities, and mental
- 1758 and physical challenges.
- 1759 I. Section I. Mission Statement
- 1760 a. We are an active, inclusive and caring church that witnesses to God’s love within the Good News of Jesus Christ. Our *Extravagant*
- 1761 *Welcome* as an *Open and Affirming Church* where “God is still speaking...” leads us to invite all people to participate fully in our
- 1762 community and worship life as loved and accepted people of God.
- 1763 b. We ground our worship, learning, reflection, and action in Holy Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience<sup>8</sup> that inspire and
- 1764 challenge us to discover God’s unfolding vision and grace, more in faithful searching than in certainty.
- 1765 c. We seek creative worship and education that engage varieties of experiences to awaken, inspire, and challenge our spirit and senses
- 1766 through traditional and emerging theologies, music, art, the spoken word and contemplation. As a community of faith we provide
- 1767 a context through worship, covenantal relationship and education that enables ongoing development in faith.
- 1768 d. Convinced that God’s plan is “That they may all be one,”<sup>9</sup> we respect the faithfulness of those whose approach differs from ours.

<sup>7</sup>These three points of faith are adapted from *The Phoenix Affirmations: A New Vision for the Future of Christianity*, published by Jossey-Bass (2006).

<sup>8</sup>“Wesleyan Quadrilateral,” *A Dictionary for United Methodists*, Alan K. Waltz (Abingdon Press, 1991).

<sup>9</sup>“That they may all be one” is the motto of The United Church of Christ.

- 1769 We accept our part in God's work to mend the world, and we partner with other communities of faith and civic organizations in  
 1770 promoting learning, understanding, and bridging differences in achieving fullness of life for all.  
 1771 e. We believe that God calls us to strive for peace and justice, to protect and restore God's creation, to bring hope to others, and to  
 1772 live our lives with compassion and holy courage.  
 1773 J. Section J. The Bible and Non-Canonical Writings  
 1774 a. We consider the Bible, with its three "Testaments"—Hebrew, Christian, and Apocryphal—, in league with our *traditions*, our  
 1775 personal and corporate *experience*, and *reason*—to be a primary source of religious wisdom, including history, the experience and  
 1776 beliefs of its authors and their faith communities, the cultures and societies within which it was written, the customs and order  
 1777 of its two primary faith traditions (Judaism and Christianity), theology, developmental morals and ethics, language, politics,  
 1778 transcendence, and mystery. We consider the Bible to be both a product and a record of the relationship between God and  
 1779 humanity.  
 1780 b. In accord with our trust that God has continued to "speak" across the centuries since the Bible was authored and that God  
 1781 continues to "speak" in our day and time, our church will assemble a collection of Non-Canonical Writings that we consider to  
 1782 reflect the highest ideals and witness of our faith. These Writings may be essays, speeches, extracts from larger works, poetry,  
 1783 librettos, sermons, and so forth.  
 1784 c. In order for a Non-Canonical Writing to be officially endorsed by our church, any member may offer the Writing for consideration  
 1785 at any Congregational Meeting in the same manner as any other proposal for action by vote by the congregation. Upon acceptance  
 1786 according to the action of the congregation, the writing will be appended to previous Non-canonical Writings. The entire set of  
 1787 Writings will be printed and placed in pew racks alongside the Bible and hymnal. They will also be posted online and made  
 1788 available to anyone viewing our church's website, provided proper copyrights are met. In case a work is a larger work—or an entire  
 1789 book—, the Writing will not be printed on placed on our church's website, but a full reference and description of the work  
 1790 (authored the church member proposing the Writing) will be placed in the printed collection and posted on our church's website.

#### 14. ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

- 1792 1. (Under Section A, Regular Membership) Delete the phrase, "...as Sovereign and Savior..."  
 1793 2. (Under Section A, Regular Membership) Change the sentence,  
 1794 "A class of instruction shall be offered under the direction of the Senior Pastor and applicable committee chairpersons acting on behalf  
 1795 of the church"  
 1796 **TO**  
 1797 "A class of instruction shall be offered under the direction of the Senior Pastor and the Board of Church Growth."  
 1798 3. Section E, Termination of Membership, major changes as follows:  
 1799 1. A member, who for a period of one year, has not communicated with the church, whose address is unknown or who has not  
 1800 contributed to the church including per capita dues, will have their name placed on a list for review by the Board of Church Growth  
 1801 Church Growth. No one's name will be included who has health issues or has moved into a nursing home or assisted living.  
 1802 2. The names will be forwarded to the Church Council/Trustees where each member's status will be acknowledged. A letter will be  
 1803 sent by the Senior Pastor to the last known address requesting acknowledgement of receipt of the letter including the stipulation  
 1804 that retaining membership requires payment of per capita dues. A record will be maintained indicating a letter sent and any  
 1805 response to the letter.  
 1806 3. Any member whose name remains on the list for two years will have their name presented to the Church Council/Trustees and  
 1807 Senior Pastor. Each member will have their name voted upon separately. If the Church Council/Trustees agrees, the name will  
 1808 be given to the office for removal from the membership rolls.  
 1809 4. A member in good standing may resign from church membership by sending a letter to the church.  
 1810 4. All references in the By-Laws regarding "Church Growth Office" will be changed to "Board of Church Growth." See the longer section just  
 1811 below:

#### MAJOR BY-LAW CHANGE WITH RESPECT TO CHANGING THE "BOARD OF EVANGELISM AND CHURCH GROWTH" TO "BOARD OF CHURCH GROWTH"

- 1814 **Rationale** (the "Rationale" will not be included in the By-Laws; only the change will be made in the By-Laws. The "Rationale," however, will be included as an addendum  
 1815 to the Appendices.)  
 1816 Whereas many Christian churches self-defined as, "Evangelical," have moved away from the teachings of Jesus and do not live up to the  
 1817 highest ideals of the faith, including—  
 1818 • defending the human rights of people most vulnerable to oppression and greed of wealthy nations, companies, and individuals;  
 1819 • advocating for the poor;  
 1820 • supporting public education; politicizing Christianity to maintain a status quo that is sexist, homophobic, and classist; and  
 1821 • advocating nationalistic oppression; and  
 1822 Whereas "Christian Evangelicals" so often claim that Christians alone are "God's Elect" and that God rejects from God's love and grace all  
 1823 who are not Christian;  
 1824 Whereas "Christian Evangelicals" so often believe and proclaim that all people who are not Christian are damned by God and eternally  
 1825 rejected from God's love and grace;  
 1826 Whereas many people, presuming that Evangelicals speak for all Christendom and for all Christian denominations and churches, have  
 1827 abandoned their Christian faith because they cannot abide such xenophobic postures, religious arrogance, and moral/ethical hypocrisy;  
 1828 Whereas The United Church of Christ and First Congregational United Church of Christ of Ocala, Florida, historically have rejected the  
 1829 xenophobic postures, religious arrogance, and moral/ethical hypocrisy of said "Christian Evangelicals";  
 1830 Whereas such positions of "Evangelical Christians" do great harm to relations between and among other Christians as well as those who  
 1831 are not Christian—and whether or not they are members of any religious tradition;  
 1832 Whereas the terms, "Evangelical" and "Evangelism" have become a millstone to our church's ministry, our reputation as a church keenly  
 1833 concerned with human rights, religious tolerance, and proponents of an "Extravagant Welcome" to our love and fellowship;

1834 Whereas, however, our church will continue to work with Evangelicals to the degree that they abandon their xenophobic postures, religious  
1835 arrogance, and moral/ethical hypocrisy, and will continue to minister to them through our commitment to Christ's teachings and ideals  
1836 of the Christian faith;

1837 Whereas the terms, "evangelical" and "evangelism" in their best light have reflected the highest tenets of our faith, regretfully, "Evangelical  
1838 Christians" have coopted the terms, "evangelism" and "evangelical" and have rendered the terms harmful to our ministries; and

1839 Whereas our church will publically articulate why we reject the xenophobic postures, religious arrogance, and the moral/ethical hypocrisy  
1840 of "Evangelical Christians:"

1841 Therefore the following motion is made:

1842 The name of "The Board of Church Growth and Evangelism" is hereby changed to, "The Board of Church Growth."

1843 *submitted by: Dr. Harold W. McSwain, pastor, and Dr. Dana Knapp, moderator*

#### 1844 **ARTICLE VI. SERVICES**

1845 All references in these By-Laws to "Board of Ministry" will be changed to "Worship Team."

1846 Section B.

1847 The following sentence will be changed from:

1848 "The First Congregational United Church of Christ, of Ocala, Florida, will conduct the Sacrament of Baptism in a public order of  
1849 worship..."

1850 **TO**

1851 "The *Sacrament of Baptism* will be conducted in a public order of worship..."

1852 This sentence is changed: A non-sacramental "Ritual of Blessing" (a.k.a., "Christening") may be conducted for any individual in either a  
1853 private ceremony or a public order of worship."

1854 Section C.

1855 All references in these By-Laws regarding "Church School" will be changed to "Religious Education." The following material is **added**:

1856 One central task of our Church is "Christian Formation," which must be developed within the broader context of "Religious Formation."

1857 Given that all of us have been socialized into a culture different from the times of Jesus and the times of the early formation of the Church,  
1858 "Christian Formation" must assume the discipline of "re-formation" and "re-socialization."<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, Religious Education will include  
1859 but is not limited to addressing:

1860 Religious beliefs, doctrines, customs, rites, practices, language, and traditions and their influence on individuals, communities, societies  
1861 and cultures;

1862 Bible Study;

1863 The interconnected dialogue and congruent influence among moral, ethical, theological, cultural, philosophical, societal, and  
1864 political practices, issues, and trends;

1865 The world's religions and how they are internally diverse, and how they evolve and change as living traditions that impact, and  
1866 are impacted by, the cultural, historical, and political contexts of adherents, including but not limited to interpretation through  
1867 themes such as gender and sexuality, the arts, violence and peace, science, and power and authority.

1868 Religious Education will be provided for adults, youth, and children.

#### 1869 **ARTICLE VIII. ORDAINED STAFF AND CLERGY**

1870 Section A.

1871 The following sentence shall be changed from:

1872 "The Senior Pastor shall be responsible to the Board of Ministry for the guidance and direction of the spiritual welfare of the church"...

1873 **TO**

1874 "The Senior Pastor shall be responsible to the Worship Team, Board of Deacons, and Parish Visitation Committee (PVC) for the  
1875 guidance and direction of the spiritual welfare of the church."

1876 The following sentence shall be changed from

1877 "The division of pastoral responsibilities shall be resolved through annual reviews with the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee."

1878 **TO**

1879 "Division of pastoral responsibilities shall be addressed and determined through periodical reviews with the Pastor-Parish Relations  
1880 Committee when requested by the Church Council/Trustees and/or the Senior Pastor."

1881 Section C.

1882 The following sentence will be changed from:

1883 "Additional ordained or non-ordained staff might include the following: Associate or Assistant Pastors, Pastor of Visitation, Pastor of  
1884 Christian Education, Pastor of Music, etc."

1885 **TO**

1886 "Additional ordained or Not-ordained staff might include the following: Associate or Assistant Pastors, Minister of Visitation, Minister  
1887 of Religious Education, Minister of Music, etc."

#### 1888 **ARTICLE X. OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

1889 The following items will be removed:

- 1890 1. "No board member shall be eligible to serve as Moderator."
- 1891 2. "An individual who has completed two terms of office, as limited by these By-Laws, or completed one full term plus more than two years  
1892 of another person's term, shall not be eligible to hold the same elective office without remaining off said board for at least one year."
- 1893 3. "Three consecutive un-excused absences from a regular board meeting by a member shall constitute termination of his/her membership

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<sup>10</sup>Marcus Borg, in an interview with Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi, at [http://www.ucc.org/education\\_dialogue-1](http://www.ucc.org/education_dialogue-1), [no date].

1894 on that board.”  
 1895 The following sentence will be changed from:  
 1896 “A copy of minutes of every board meeting shall be filed in the church office no later than one week before the next meeting of that  
 1897 board.”  
 1898 **TO**  
 1899 “A copy of minutes of every board meeting shall be filed in the church office by Thursday preceding the next meeting of that board.”  
 1900 The following sentence will be changed from:  
 1901 “A summary of actions taken by the Church Council/Trustees shall be reported in the monthly publication of the church.”  
 1902 **TO**  
 1903 “The Church Secretary shall provide to church members a summary of actions taken by the Church Council/Trustees, made available  
 1904 in the narthex of the sanctuary.”  
 1905 Section 3.  
 1906 Duties and Responsibilities of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee.  
 1907 The following sentence is changed from:  
 1908 “The committee shall...conduct a pastoral evaluation every year.”  
 1909 **TO**  
 1910 “The committee shall...conduct a pastoral evaluation at the request of the Church Council/Trustees or the Senior Pastor.”

1911 **ARTICLE XII. OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL/TRUSTEES**

1912 The following sentence will be removed:  
 1913 “The Moderator, with the approval of the Church Council/Trustees, shall appoint the Director of Public Relations.”  
 1914 Section G.  
 1915 The following shall be change from:  
 1916 “The Director of Public Relations shall be appointed by the Moderator with the approval of the Church Council/Trustees for a period  
 1917 of one year and may be reappointed. The Director of Public Relations shall be a voting member of the Church Council/Trustees.”  
 1918 **TO**  
 1919 “The Director of Public Relations shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year and may be reelected.”

1920 **ARTICLE XIV. BOARDS**

1921 Section C. Board of Religious Education  
 1922 This section has major changes from:  
 1923 The Board of Christian Education shall supervise and direct all religious instruction of the church.  
 1924 Membership: The Board of Christian Education shall consist of at least six members, each serving a three-year term, with two being elected  
 1925 each year at the Annual Meeting.  
 1926 Duties: The Board of Christian Education shall—  
 1927 cooperate with other committees to provide lectures, retreats, and seminars;  
 1928 provide literature consistent with and supportive of the Covenant of our Church;  
 1929 prepare an annual budget to be presented to the Church Council/Trustees.  
 1930 oversee the administration of programs for children/youth including:  
 1931 organizing and maintaining a Sunday School for children and a nursery;  
 1932 when needed, organize and maintain a Vacation Bible School;  
 1933 organize and maintain a Youth Group;  
 1934 under the leadership of the Senior Pastor, provide for confirmation classes as needed.  
 1935 oversee the administration of programs for adults including:  
 1936 organize and maintain an Adult Bible study group;  
 1937 organize and maintain the church library;  
 1938 appoint a librarian who is responsible for the selection and purchase literature to be maintained in the library.  
 1939 **TO**  
 1940 The Board of Religious Education shall supervise and direct all religious education of the church.  
 1941 Membership: The Board of Religious Education shall consist of at least six members, each serving a three-year term, with two being  
 1942 elected each year at the Annual Meeting.  
 1943 Duties: The Board of Religious Education shall—  
 1944 cooperate with other committees to provide lectures, retreats, and seminars;  
 1945 provide literature consistent with and supportive of the Covenant of our Church;  
 1946 prepare an annual budget to be presented to the Church Council/Trustees.  
 1947 oversee the administration of programs for children/youth including:  
 1948 organizing and maintaining a Sunday School for children and a nursery;  
 1949 when needed, organize and maintain a Vacation Bible School;  
 1950 organize and maintain a Youth Group;  
 1951 under the leadership of the Senior Pastor, provide for confirmation classes as needed.  
 1952 oversee the administration of programs for adults including:  
 1953 regularly scheduled religious education study group(s);  
 1954 organize special religious education events to address particular, current issues pertaining to the church’s ministry and  
 1955 engagement with culture and society.

1956 **ARTICLE XV. COMMITTEES**

1957 Section A.  
 1958 All duties and responsibilities of the Worship and Arts Committee will be absorbed by the Worship Team. All By-Law adjustments to

1959 that effect will be made throughout the By-Laws.

1960 **ARTICLE XVIII. FINANCE PROTOCOLS**

1961 Add the following to become Section F:

1962 Document Retention Policy

1963 The purpose of the Document Retention Policy is for the Church to promote proper treatment of its corporate records.

1964 General Guidelines. Records should not be kept if they are no longer needed for the operation of the church or required by law.

1965 Unnecessary records should be eliminated from the files. Too many records also makes it more difficult to find pertinent records.

1966 Exception for Litigation Relevant Documents. The Organization expects all officers, directors and employees to comply fully with any  
1967 records retention schedules, provided that all officers, directors, and employees should note the following general exception to any  
1968 destruction schedule: If you believe or the Organization informs you, that Organization records are relevant to litigation or potential  
1969 litigation, then you must preserve those records until it is determined that the records are no longer needed.

1970 Minimum Retention Periods for Specific Categories

1971 Organizational documents include the Organizations articles of incorporation, by-laws, and IRS Form 1023, Application for  
1972 Exemption. Organizational records should be retained permanently.

1973 Tax records include, but may not be limited to, documents concerning payroll, expenses, proof of contributions made by donors,  
1974 accounting procedures, and other documents concerning the Organization's revenues. Tax records should be retained for seven  
1975 years.

1976 Employment Records/Personnel Records. State and federal statutes require the Organization to keep certain recruitment,  
1977 employment and personnel information. The Organization should keep in the employee's personnel files all final memoranda and  
1978 correspondence reflecting reviews and action taken by or against personnel. Employment applications should be retained for three  
1979 years, if not hired. Employment applications for employees should be kept for six years after termination date. Retirement and  
1980 pension records should be kept permanently. Other employment and personnel records such as W-2's should be retained for seven  
1981 years.

1982 Board and Committee Materials. Meeting minutes should be retained permanently in scanned, electronic form (e.g., PDF files,  
1983 etc.). A clean copy of all other Board and Committee materials should be kept for no less than three years.

1984 Photo albums, newspaper articles kept in scrapbooks, church directories, etc. should be kept permanently in scanned, electronic  
1985 form [sic].

1986 Contracts. Sales invoices, contracts, leases, licenses, and other legal documentation should be kept for three years beyond the life  
1987 of the agreement.

1988 Correspondence. Unless correspondence falls under another category listed elsewhere in this policy, correspondence should  
1989 generally be retained for two years.

1990 Banking and Accounting. Accounts payable ledgers (QuickBooks) and schedules should be kept for seven years. Bank  
1991 reconciliation, bank statements, deposit slips and checks should be kept for three years.

1992 Insurance. Expired insurance policies, insurance records, accident reports, claims, etc. should be kept permanently.

1993 Audit Reports. External audit reports should be kept permanently. Internal audit reports should be kept for three years.

1994 Electronic Mail. E-Mail that needs to be saved should be either:

1995 Printed in hard copy and kept in the appropriate file: or

1996 Downloaded to a computer file and kept electronically or on a disk as a separate file.

1997 The retention period depends on the subject matter of the e-mail, as covered elsewhere in this policy.



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