

## BYLAWS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

### PREAMBLE

100 These Bylaws, consistent with the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, further define and/or regulate the General Synod and its relationships with the Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries and Other Bodies which are related to the General Synod, and the Executive Council, and describe the free and voluntary relationships which the Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and ordained, commissioned and licensed Ministers sustain with the General Synod and with one another. The pattern of relationships and procedures so described is recommended to Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and ministers to enable them more effectively to accomplish their tasks and the work of the United Church of Christ.

### ARTICLE I. THE MINISTRY

#### ~~Students for the Ministry~~ **Members in Discernment**

101 ~~A person desiring to prepare for the ordained ministry applies to be received as a Student in Care of an Association. Application is made to the Association through the student's pastor and the Local Church of which the student is a member.~~ A member of a United Church of Christ wishing to explore God's call to ministry, and the potential of that call leading to authorized ministry (ordained, commissioned or licensed), requests, along with the member's local church, to enter a Covenant of Discernment with the Association.

102 ~~The Committees on the Ministry of the student's Conference and Association cooperate in examining the applicant with respect to fitness, aptitudes, Christian experience, and commitment. If found to be qualified, the applicant is received into the care of his or her Association. A student is expected to be in care for at least one year prior to ordination.~~ The Committee on the Ministry of the member's Association interviews the member to decide whether to join with the member and the local church in a covenant of discernment. The goal of discernment is to determine whether the member is called to authorized ministry, what the specific character of that ministry might be, and, if authorization is appropriate, what steps are to be taken toward authorization. Normally a covenant of discernment leading to authorization is expected to be for not less than two years.

103 ~~The Association extends fellowship, counsel, and assistance to the student during the time of the student's academic preparation for the ministry. The student is responsible to the Association.~~ The Association and the local church are in a mutual covenant with the Member in Discernment to offer support, counsel, and direction during this time of decision making and preparation.

104 ~~A student preparing for the ordained ministry is expected to pursue a course of study leading to a bachelor's degree, or its equivalent, and a Master of Divinity degree, or its equivalent, from a theological seminary approved by Local Church Ministries.~~ A Member in Discernment who is called to authorized ministry will follow a plan of preparation for that ministry which has been prepared with the Association Committee on the Ministry. With respect to ordained ministry, a bachelor's degree and Master of Divinity may be included in the plan.

#### **Ordained Ministry**

105 ~~Not more than six months prior to the completion of theological training, a student preparing for the ordained ministry applies through his or her Local Church to its Association for approval as a candidate for ordination. If the service of ordination is to be performed within an Association other than that of the student, the procedure, including that described in the following paragraph, is initiated by that Association and its Conference after consultation with the Association which holds the student in care.~~ Not more than six months prior to the completion of theological preparation for authorization, a Member in Discernment preparing for the ordained ministry applies with his or her Local Church to its Association for approval as a candidate for ordination. If the service of ordination is to be performed within an Association other than that of the Member, the procedure, including that described in the following paragraph, is initiated by that

Association after consultation with the Association which is in covenant with the Member in Discernment.

~~106 The Committees on the Ministry of the Conference and Association cooperate in examining the candidate to determine ability; reasons for seeking the office of the ordained Christian ministry; educational and theological attainments; knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ; and growth in Christian faith and experience; and make their recommendation of fitness to the Association. If upon acceptance of the recommendation or upon further examination and decision by the Association itself, the candidate is found to be qualified, ordination thereby is authorized, subject to a call recognized by the Association.~~ The Committee on the Ministry of the Association examines the Member in Discernment with respect to Christian Faith faith; character; ability to do the work expected; ~~to determine ability; reasons for seeking the office of the ordained Christian ministry;~~ preparation to meet the responsibilities of the office; educational and theological attainments; and knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ; ~~and growth in Christian faith and experience; and makes their recommendation of fitness to the Association. If upon acceptance of the recommendation or upon further examination and decision by the Association itself, the Member in Discernment is found to be qualified, ordination thereby is authorized~~ If, following this examination, the committee is satisfied with the fitness of the Member in Discernment, it makes an affirmative recommendation to the Association. In turn, upon the receipt of this recommendation, the Association may opt for further examination or proceed immediately to authorize the ordination, subject to a call recognized by the Association.

107 Ordination by an Association of the United Church of Christ, in cooperation with the Local Church, confers ordained ministerial standing as an Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ and status as an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

108 After the ordination or in anticipation of it, a certificate is issued bearing the signatures of the proper officers of the Association and the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

### **Ordained Ministerial Standing**

109 An Ordained Minister moving from the bounds of one Association to another applies for a transfer of ordained ministerial standing to the new Association.

110 An Ordained Minister engaged in **parish local church** ministry has standing in the Association in which the Local Church served has standing. An Ordained Minister engaged in other than ~~the parish local church~~ ministry has standing in the Association where his or her Local Church membership is held.

111 An Ordained Minister engaged in a ministry requiring prolonged absence from the United States, or one that does not permit a fixed residence, is entitled to have ordained ministerial standing in the Association of his or her choice.

112 An Ordained Minister who withdraws from active service in the ordained ministry prior to retirement applies to his or her Association for leave of absence. The Association may grant such leave of absence for one year at a time. Except in special cases such leave of absence is not granted for more than five years in succession.

113 An Ordained Minister retiring from active service by reason of age or disability retains ordained ministerial standing in the Association of his or her choice.

114 An Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ serving a Local Church not affiliated with the United Church of Christ or the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or serving a local church of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) without ordained ministerial partner standing retains ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ so long as his or her Association approves.

115 A pastor's church membership is in the Local Church which he or she serves, but such membership shall not affect his or her standing in the United Church of

Christ or disqualify that pastor from serving as a delegate to the General Synod or holding elective office in that body.

**Ordained Ministers from Other Denominations**

116 A person has ordained ministerial partner standing in the United Church of Christ only when serving a United Church of Christ calling body.

117 Upon demonstrating knowledge of, and appreciation for, the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ to the Association in which the person resides, an Ordained Ministerial Partner may seek a call in the United Church of Christ.

118 An Ordained Ministerial Partner who accepts a call in the United Church of Christ applies for ordained ministerial partner standing to the Association in which Local Church membership is held.

119 When an Ordained Ministerial Partner accepts a call to a Local Church, the Partner and the Local Church join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of installation.

120 A person who holds ordained ministerial partner standing in an Association shall hold membership in a Local Church of the United Church of Christ.

121 A person who holds ordained ministerial partner standing in an Association shall maintain ordained ministerial standing within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Region in which the United Church of Christ calling body is located.

122 A person who has ordained ministerial partner standing in the United Church of Christ, and who accepts a call in another Association, shall apply for a transfer of ordained ministerial partner standing to the new Association.

123 When a disciplinary review is instituted in relation to a person holding ordained ministerial partner standing in the United Church of Christ, the Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in which the person's ordained ministerial standing is maintained shall be informed and invited to participate in the procedures.

124 A person who holds ordained ministerial partner standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall maintain ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ. Ordained ministerial standing shall be held in the Association in which local church membership is held.

125 A person who holds ordained ministerial partner standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall hold local church membership in a local church of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

126 A person who holds ordained ministerial partner standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall relate to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for his or her primary support and accountability in ordained ministry.

127 A person who holds ordained ministerial partner standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is subject to periodic review by the Association in which ordained ministerial standing is maintained.

128 When a disciplinary procedure is instituted by a Region in relation to a person holding ordained ministerial partner standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the United Church of Christ Association in which standing is held shall be informed and invited to participate. The Association may accept the procedures and outcome of the Region or utilize its own procedures to determine the person's ongoing standing in the United Church of Christ.

129 When a person no longer has ordained ministerial standing in either the United Church of Christ or Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), that person is no longer an Ordained Ministerial Partner and ordained ministerial partner standing is nullified.

130 An ordained minister of another denomination who desires to enter the ordained ministry of the United Church of Christ applies for Privilege of Call to the Association within whose bounds he or she resides.

131 ~~The Committees on the Ministry of the Conference and Association cooperate in examining~~ The Committee on the Ministry of the Association examines the applicant as to his or her abilities, reasons for desiring to enter the ordained ministry of the United Church of Christ, educational and theological attainments, knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ, and Christian faith and experience. If the applicant is found to be qualified, the Association grants Privilege of Call, thereby commending said applicant for placement in the United Church of Christ. Privilege of Call shall be granted for a period of one year and may be renewed. After accepting a call, the Ordained Minister applies for ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ to the Association of which the Local Church extending the call is a part.

132 A certificate granting Privilege of Call is issued bearing the signatures of the proper officer of the Association and the General Minister and President.

133 An ordained minister of another denomination other than the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who wishes to retain ordained ministerial standing in that denomination and who has become pastor of a Local Church of the United Church of Christ, or serves in a Covenanted, Affiliated or Associated Ministry of the United Church of Christ, or has become pastor of a yoked charge or a federated church one part of which is affiliated with the United Church of Christ, or has been called to an ecumenical ministry one constituent of which is the United Church of Christ, may apply to the Association for dual ordained ministerial standing which is limited to duration of that pastorate or that responsibility, and during that period may have all the rights and privileges of such membership.

#### **Commissioned Ministers**

134 ~~A person seeking initial recognition and authorization as a Commissioned Minister applies through his or her Local Church to the Association of which that church is a member.~~ A Member in Discernment seeking initial recognition and authorization as a Commissioned Minister applies with his or her Local Church to the Association of which that church is a member.

135 ~~The Committees on the Ministry of the Conference and Association cooperate in examining the applicant with respect to Christian faith, character, ability to do the work expected, and as to education and training to meet the responsibilities of the office to be filled.~~ The Committee on the Ministry of the Association examines the Member in Discernment with respect to Christian faith, character, ability to do the work expected and preparation to meet the responsibilities of the office to be filled, and make their recommendation of fitness to the Association. If upon acceptance of the recommendation or upon further examination and decision by the Association itself, the applicant is found to be qualified, commissioning thereby is authorized.

136 A certificate designating the applicant as Commissioned Minister is issued bearing the signatures of proper officers of the Association and the General Minister and President.

137 A Commissioned Minister is listed separately from Ordained Ministers and from Licensed Ministers on the rolls of the Association which has commissioned him or her. A Commissioned Minister is eligible for service only in ~~the category of laymen or laywomen~~ lay categories for all positions referred to in the Bylaws.

138 A Commissioned Minister moving from the bounds of one Association to another and who continues in the specific church-related ministry, applies for a transfer of the commission to the new Association.

139 A Commissioned Minister seeking to be commissioned for a new or different church-related ministry applies to the Association for commissioning for the new ministry.

140 A Commissioned Minister who ceases to function in the specific church-related ministry to which he or she was commissioned resigns the commission or applies to the Association for leave of absence. Leave of absence is granted for one year at a time, but not more than three consecutive years.

141 A Commissioned Minister who retires from service as a Commissioned Minister may be recognized by the Association as a Retired Commissioned Minister of the United Church of Christ. Voting membership in that Association is thereby granted. Such recognition is regularly reviewed.

### **Licensed Ministers**

142 ~~A person seeking recognition and authorization as a Licensed Minister applies through his or her Local Church to the Association in which that church is a member.~~ A Member in Discernment seeking recognition and authorization as a Licensed Minister applies with his or her Local Church to the Association of which that church is a member.

143 ~~The Committee on the Ministry of the Association examines the applicant with respect to Christian faith, character, ability to do the work expected, and knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ. If the applicant is found to be qualified, a license is granted by the Association for not more than one year at a time to serve in a designated Local Church or within that Association. Following a review by the Committee on the Ministry, the license may be renewed.~~ The Committee on the Ministry of the Association examines the Member in Discernment with respect to Christian faith; character; ability to do the work expected; preparation to meet the responsibilities of the office; educational and theological attainments; and knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ. If the applicant is found to be qualified, a license is granted by the Association for not more than one year to serve in a designated Local Church or within that Association. Following a review by the Committee on the Ministry, the license may be renewed annually for two more years after which the Association may grant the license for a time determined to be appropriate.

144 ~~In special cases and at the request of the Local Church which the person serves, the Association may grant the Licensed Minister the right to administer the sacraments and rites of the Church for this Local Church.~~ At the request of the Local Church which the person serves, the Association may grant the Licensed Minister the right to administer the sacraments and rites of the Church for this Local Church.

145 A Licensed Minister is listed separately from Ordained Ministers and from Commissioned Ministers on the rolls of the Association which has licensed him or her. A Licensed Minister is eligible for service only in ~~the category of laymen or laywomen~~ lay categories for all positions referred to in the Bylaws.

146 A Licensed Minister who retires from service as a Licensed Minister may be recognized by the Association as a Retired Licensed Minister of the United Church of Christ. Voting membership in that Association is thereby granted. Such recognition is regularly reviewed.

### **Calling, Installing and Terminating a Pastor**

147 It is the responsibility of a committee of the Local Church to seek a candidate for a vacancy in the office of pastor.

148 In filling a vacancy or in securing pastoral services during the period of a vacancy, the committee of the Local Church, ~~through its Conference Minister, seeks the counsel of the placement committee. This placement committee consists of the~~ through its Conference Minister, obtains counsel and access to the services of the "Search and Call" process of the United Church of Christ, and other officers elected or appointed by the Conference.

149 The committee of a Local Church requests the Conference Minister to secure relevant information about any ~~Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner whom it wishes to consider for the vacancy~~ Ordained Minister, Ordained Ministerial Partner, or Licensed Minister whom it wishes to consider or who requests to be considered for the vacancy.

150 ~~Any Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner~~ Any Ordained Minister, Ordained Ministerial Partner, or Licensed Minister may confer with the Conference Minister concerning a pastoral vacancy. At the Ordained Minister's request or at the request of the Ordained Ministerial Partner, his or her name shall be submitted by the Conference Minister for consideration by the committee of any Local Church where there is a pastoral vacancy.

151 All vacancies within the Conference shall be reported promptly to the Office of General Ministries by the Conference Minister.

152 The Committee of the Local Church presents to the church the name of a candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy. The Local Church determines whether or not it wishes to call the person recommended.

153 In the call the terms of the pastoral relationship are stated, including the agreement of the Local Church to participate in the pension fund on the pastor's behalf. The pastor, the Local Church, [Association Committee on Ministry](#), and the Conference Minister should each receive a copy of the call. The Conference Minister shall inform the Office of General Ministries when the call has been accepted.

154 When an Ordained Minister [or Licensed Minister](#) accepts a call to a Local Church, the ~~Ordained~~ Minister and the church join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of installation or recognition.

155 Report of the service of installation or recognition is signed by the proper officer of the Association and by the Conference Minister, and is forwarded to the Office of General Ministries.

156 When a pastor or a Local Church decides to terminate the pastoral relationship, notice of the decision is sent to the Conference Minister and the Association. The Association takes action appropriate to the dissolution of the pastoral relationship. The Conference Minister promptly informs the Office of General Ministries of these actions.

~~Ordained Ministers from Other Denominations~~ [\[See paragraphs 116-133.\]](#)

~~Commissioned Ministers~~ [\[See paragraphs 134-141.\]](#)

~~Licensed Ministers~~ [\[See paragraphs 142-146.\]](#)

~~Discipline of Ministers~~ [Ministerial Accountability](#)

157 All authorized ministers of the United Church of Christ are active partners in a covenant of mutual accountability with their Association of standing, their Local Church, and, in the case of those serving in settings other than a local church, with their calling body. Such a covenant includes, but is not limited to, mutual support and care, continued discernment of call, and lifelong learning.

~~The discipline of Ordained Ministers, persons with ordained ministerial partner standing, Commissioned Ministers, and Licensed Ministers is the responsibility of the Association in which their current ecclesiastical authorization is held.~~

158 All authorizations for ordained ministerial standing, for ordained ministerial partner standing, and for commissioned and licensed ministry granted by an Association are subject to ~~periodic review~~ [oversight](#) by that Association, [including periodic consultation and review](#).

159 The discipline of Ordained Ministers, persons with ordained ministerial partner standing, Commissioned Ministers, and Licensed Ministers is the responsibility of the Association in which their current ecclesiastical authorization is held.

## ARTICLE II. ASSOCIATIONS AND CONFERENCES

### Associations

160 An Association elects officers and elects or appoints such committees as it deems necessary for the transaction of its business and the correlation of its work with that of the Conference and the General Synod.

161 An Association determines its own method for securing financial support.

162 An Association is concerned with the welfare of all Local Churches within its boundaries.

163 An Association seeks ways and means to assist Local Churches when they are undergoing unusual difficulties requiring help beyond their own resources.

164 An Association offers encouragement, guidance, and assistance in the organization of new Local Churches.

165 An Association, with the counsel of the Conference, receives Local Churches into the United Church of Christ.

166 An Association receives under its care students for the ordained ministry and extends to them fellowship, counsel, assistance, and supervision during their academic preparation.

167 An Association ordains, commissions, and licenses qualified candidates; grants, certifies to, transfers, and terminates ordained ministerial standing and ordained ministerial partner standing; installs Ordained Ministers and persons with ordained ministerial partner standing; grants privilege of call and leaves of absence; reviews and disciplines Ordained, Commissioned, and Licensed Ministers and persons with ordained ministerial partner standing; and verifies that an Ordained Ministerial Partner has demonstrated knowledge of, and appreciation for, the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ.

168 An Association receives and acts upon business referred to it by its Local Churches, its Conference, the General Synod, and other bodies.

169 An Association may petition and overture its Conference or the General Synod.

### **Conferences**

170 A Conference elects officers and elects or appoints such committees as it deems necessary for the transaction of its business and the correlation of its work with that of the General Synod.

171 A Conference employs such salaried personnel as its program may require.

172 A Conference receives and acts upon business, requests, counsel, and references from Local Churches, Associations, the General Synod, and other bodies.

173 A Conference provides names to the General Synod Nominating Committee as requested.

174 A Conference may petition and overture the General Synod.

175 A Conference chooses delegates and alternate delegates to the General Synod in accordance with the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and these Bylaws.

176 A Conference receives from the Local Churches contributions for Our Church's Wider Mission and keeps detailed record of the same.

177 A Conference consults on a regular basis with the Office of General Ministries, acting on behalf of the General Synod, to reach mutual agreement upon the percentage, or the dollar amount, of the undesignated gifts for Our Church's Wider Mission to be retained for its own support.

178 Upon the basis of the agreed upon percentage, or dollar amount, the Conference each month retains the amount necessary for its own support and forwards the balance to the Treasury.

179 A Conference, in the interest of the Local Churches, discharges those duties and provides those services which will strengthen the witness of the United Church of Christ, such as:

- a) Coordinating the work and witness of the Local Churches and Associations;
- b) Rendering counsel to Local Churches and ministers in situations calling for help beyond their own resources;
- c) Rendering an advisory service to Local Churches and to ministers with reference to pastoral placement;
- d) Establishing and maintaining Conference offices, Conference centers, institutions, and other agencies needful to its growth and welfare;
- e) Sponsoring in-service training for ministers; and
- f) Conducting conferences, retreats, clinics, and workshops.

180 A Conference maintains relations with other Christian fellowships within its boundaries to the end that mutual understanding and cooperation may be advanced.

## **ARTICLE III. GENERAL SYNOD**

### **Meetings of the General Synod**

181 Regular meetings of the General Synod shall be held biennially.

182 Special meetings of the General Synod may be called by resolution of the General Synod, by the Executive Council, or upon receipt of a petition from at least seven Conferences. A special meeting so petitioned shall be convened not earlier than sixty days nor later than one hundred and twenty days after the petition is received by the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. The petition and the call for a special meeting shall contain a statement of the

purpose of the meeting. In any special meeting only such business may be transacted as is specified in the call.

183 The time and place of all meetings of the General Synod shall be determined by the Executive Council unless otherwise directed by the General Synod.

184 The call for any meeting of the General Synod shall be signed by the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. Such call shall be issued at least six months prior to a regular meeting and at least forty-five days prior to a special meeting of the General Synod. All calls shall be sent to the Conferences and the Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries, and notice of these calls shall be transmitted to the Local Churches and published in a United Church of Christ publication of general circulation.

185 All proceedings of the General Synod shall, unless otherwise provided for, be governed by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, as amended.

186 Expenses of meetings of the General Synod including the travel expense of Conference voting delegates as negotiated with the Conferences shall be borne by the General Synod. Other expenses of Conference delegates are the responsibility of the Conferences. Expenses of Covenanted Ministry voting delegates shall be borne by the Ministry they represent, excepting Conference Ministers whose expenses shall be the responsibility of their Conference. Expenses of Executive Council members named in paragraph ~~221a-d~~ 224a-d and ~~222b-e~~ 225b-c shall be borne by the Executive Council. Expenses of members named in paragraph ~~221e-f~~ 224e-f and paragraph ~~222d-f~~ 225d-f will be borne by the entity from which they were nominated to the Executive Council. Expenses of associate delegates shall be borne by the Conference or Covenanted Ministry they represent.

#### **Membership of the General Synod**

187 The membership of the General Synod shall consist of voting delegates and associate delegates. Visitors shall be welcome.

188 **Voting Delegates** Voting delegates consist of Conference delegates, the Members of the Boards of Directors of the Covenanted Ministries elected by the General Synod as specified in paragraph ~~188~~ 191, and other delegates as these are hereinafter defined. Each voting delegate to General Synod shall be entitled to a single vote at the General Synod.

189 **Conference Delegates** The number of Conference delegates shall be allocated to each Conference by the Executive Council on the basis of the number of persons who have membership in the Local Churches of the Conference. There shall not, however, be fewer than three delegates allocated to any Conference. The total number of Conference delegates in any biennium shall not be fewer than 675 nor more than 725. Delegates and alternate delegates shall be chosen by each Conference from among its ordained ministers in full standing or ordained ministerial partner standing and the members of its Local Churches. Conferences may initiate and consider nominations from the Associations. From each Conference, except in Conferences having three delegates, (a) lay persons shall constitute at least fifty percent of the delegates and (b) the delegation shall reflect the United Church of Christ's commitment to affirmative action; it shall be representative of racial and ethnic persons (Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders), women and youth and young adults (at least twenty percent of each delegation shall be under 30 years of age at the time of the commencing of their terms, and where possible, be represented equally by (1) youth, persons of high school age; and (2) young adults, persons graduated from high school or over 19 years of age. In Conferences with three delegates the above requirements for representation are recommended but shall not be mandatory. Despite any lack of exact compliance with these requirements, actions of a General Synod which is constituted in substantial compliance with these representation requirements, as determined by the Executive Council, shall be valid.

190 The term of Conference delegates, other than any elected to fill unexpired terms, shall begin at the opening of the next regular meeting of the General Synod following their election and shall continue for a period of four years, terminating at the opening of the third regular meeting of the

General Synod following such election; provided, however, that each Conference delegation shall be divided into two classes with terms expiring in alternate bienniums. When the number in one class from a given Conference exceeds the number in the other class by more than one, the Conference shall at the earliest possible opportunity make use of a two- year term for one delegate or fill any delegate vacancy that may occur in such a way as to equalize the two classes. No delegate who has served a second consecutive four-year term shall again be elected until after at least two years have elapsed. Delegates shall be members of all regular and special meetings of the General Synod which are held during their term of office unless they have become separated from the Conference which elected them.

**191 Covenanted Ministry Delegates** Thirty (30) voting members of each of the Boards of Directors of Justice and Witness Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Office of General Ministries and Wider Church Ministries elected by the General Synod, and not currently serving as members of the Executive Council, shall be voting delegates at the General Synod.

**192 Ex-officio Delegates** Members of the Executive Council, shall be ex-officio delegates with vote.

**193 Associate Delegates** Unless otherwise serving as a voting delegate to General Synod, the chairperson of the governing body and the principal minister(s) or executive(s) of each Conference; the chairperson of each Task Force created by the General Synod not otherwise represented on the Executive Council or on a Board of a Covenanted Ministry; the chairperson of each General Synod standing committee; a representative of the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ); and one representative of each of the seminaries of the United Church of Christ not otherwise represented, chosen by the seminary, shall be Associate Delegates, with voice but without vote.

**194 Ecumenical Delegates** In each biennium the Executive Council may invite a representative from each of its U.S. full communion partners as an associate delegate to the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. In addition, the Executive Council may invite a representative from up to three (3) other partner churches in the United States. These representatives shall be accorded the same privileges as Associate Delegates. Board and lodging for the Ecumenical Delegates shall be borne by the General Synod or through other appropriate financial means.

#### **Moderators of the General Synod**

**195** The Moderator shall be elected by the General Synod. The office of Moderator shall be filled alternately by lay persons and Ordained Ministers or persons with ordained ministerial partner standing. The Moderator shall take office upon the adjournment of the regular meeting at which he or she is elected and shall hold office through the next regular meeting or until a successor has been qualified and installed.

**196** The Moderator shall preside at the sessions of the General Synod. As a representative of the fellowship of the United Church of Christ, the Moderator may visit and address such groups as Local Churches, Associations, and Conferences.

**197** There shall be elected two Assistant Moderators of the General Synod to assist the Moderator in presiding at sessions of the General Synod. The Assistant Moderators shall take office upon adjournment of the regular meeting at which they are elected and shall hold office through the next regular meeting or until their successors have been qualified and installed.

**198** The Moderator and Assistant Moderators shall include an Ordained Minister or a person with ordained ministerial partner standing, a layman, and a laywoman.

#### **Committees of the General Synod**

**199** The General Synod shall have such Committees as it may deem necessary, including but not limited to those named hereafter.

**200 Nominating Committee** The Nominating Committee shall consist of 27 members elected as follows:

a) Eighteen members will be nominated from a pool provided by the Conferences, as follows: At least nine months before each regular meeting of the General Synod, the Executive Council shall

invite each Conference not currently represented on the Nominating Committee to submit the name of an Ordained Minister or a person with ordained ministerial partner standing and the name of a layperson for possible membership on the Nominating Committee as an at-large member. The Executive Council shall submit 12 of these names, (six Ordained Ministers or persons with ordained ministerial partner standing and six laypersons) to the General Synod. From these the General Synod shall elect three Ordained Ministers or persons with ordained ministerial partner standing and three laypersons to serve on the Nominating Committee for terms of six years. Not more than one of the at-large members of the Nominating Committee shall be from any one Conference. Notwithstanding this requirement, if a member of the Nominating Committee moves to a Conference from which there is another member of the Committee currently serving, the member moving to the Conference currently served by another member shall continue to serve as a member of the Nominating Committee until the end of the biennium. The position on the Nominating Committee held by the member who moved becomes vacant at the end of the biennium during which the above change in Conference occurs. Nominations for these positions will be accepted from the floor provided they fully comply with the criteria for the contested positions.

b) Nine members will be nominated from a pool provided by the following groups: the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries; the Council for American Indian Ministry; the Council for Hispanic Ministries; Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice; Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries; United Black Christians; the United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns; UCC Disabilities Ministries; and the Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries. At least nine months before each regular meeting of the General Synod, the Executive Council shall invite each of the nine groups whose representative's term on the Nominating Committee is about to expire, to submit the names of an Ordained Minister or a person with ordained ministerial partner standing and a layperson for possible membership on the Nominating Committee. The Executive Council shall submit three of these names to the General Synod for election to the Nominating Committee so that, in each biennium, the nine representatives from these groups shall include five lay persons and four Ordained Ministers. Their Conference affiliations will not affect the determination of the Conference affiliation of the at-large members elected in accordance with paragraph ~~197 (a)~~ 200 (a).

c) A member of the Nominating Committee who has served a full term shall not be eligible for re-election until a biennium has elapsed. Terms of members shall begin at the close of the General Synod at which the members have been elected and continue to the close of the third regular General Synod after their election. The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall be named by the Executive Council from the members of the Nominating Committee within six months after each regular meeting of the General Synod.

201 The Nominating Committee of General Synod, prior to the call for nominations, reviews the make-up of the continuing membership of each Board of Directors of a Covenanted Ministry and of the Executive Council and determines the needed nominations to each Board. In its call for suggestions of names, the Nominating Committee will indicate the criteria consistent with the provisions of these Bylaws which will be used for filling positions on the Boards of Directors and the Executive Council. Each Conference or group to be represented shall provide at least three names for each of the positions, except for positions on the Executive Council, for which one name is provided.

202 The Nominating Committee shall make all nominations for election by the General Synod for which the Constitution and Bylaws do not otherwise provide. The Nominating Committee shall maintain records of suggested nominees and their qualifications.

203 The Nominating Committee is responsible for ensuring that the membership of each Board of Directors and of the Executive Council embodies the commitment of the United Church of Christ to diversity and balance, both in its overall composition and in its internal segments. In order to achieve this end, the Nominating Committee may, if necessary, approach any group submitting

and/or recommending names with the request that they assist in that task by presenting additional names.

204 For the position on each Board or the Executive Council identified for a particular Conference or group, the Nominating Committee may consider only names submitted by that Conference or group. Notwithstanding, all names submitted to the Nominating Committee for positions identified for Conferences and groups, as well as any other nominations submitted, may be considered by the Nominating Committee for at-large positions.

205 When selecting candidates for offices, the Nominating Committee shall consider all names submitted.

206 The Nominating Committee shall submit its report to the General Synod at least twenty-four hours before the elections are scheduled to take place, unless the General Synod, by a three-fourths vote, consents to an earlier election.

207 **Credentials Committee** The Credentials Committee shall consist of ten delegates to the General Synod, five of whom shall come from each of the two classes of General Synod delegates. At least three months before each regular meeting of the General Synod the Executive Council shall appoint five members from the latest class of delegates and shall designate one of the ten members of the Committee as chairperson. Terms of members shall be for four years, beginning with their appointment and terminating with the appointment of their successors.

208 **Budget Committee, Business Committee, and Committee of Reference**

The Budget Committee, the Business Committee, and the Committee of Reference at each regular and special meeting of the General Synod shall be the Executive Council or persons designated by the Executive Council from its own membership.

**Officers of the Church and of the General Synod**

209 The General Synod shall call by election, from among the members of the United Church of Christ, the following Officers of the United Church of Christ who shall also be members of the Collegium of Officers, the Mission Planning Council, the Executive Council, and General Synod: General Minister and President, Associate General Minister, Executive Minister for Local Church Ministries, Executive Minister for Justice and Witness Ministries, and Executive Minister for Wider Church Ministries.

210 Every Officer of the United Church of Christ serves at the will of the General Synod, and may be terminated as an Officer of the United Church of Christ by the Executive Council acting as the General Synod ad interim in accordance with the Executive Council's procedures. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if an Officer of the United Church of Christ is also the Executive Minister of a Covenanted Ministry (other than the Office of General Ministries), the Executive Council acting as the General Synod ad interim may terminate such Executive Minister as an Officer of the Church, only after consultation with the Board of Directors of such Covenanted Ministry. Responsibility for the termination of an Executive Minister as executive officer of a Covenanted Ministry rests with the Board of Directors of that Covenanted Ministry.

211 The term of each Officer of the United Church of Christ shall be four years, not to exceed three terms, and shall commence ninety days following call by election by the General Synod. Officers shall hold office until their successors have been elected and qualified and have assumed the duties of their office. Officers may be reelected, but not more than twice, in accordance with the rules and procedures of their respective Covenanted Ministries, subject to the call by election of the General Synod. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the initial election by the Twenty-second General Synod, in order to achieve staggered terms among the Officers, the terms of the three individuals who are elected at the Twenty-second General Synod to serve as the General Minister and President, Executive Minister of Local Church Ministries, and Executive Minister of Justice and Witness Ministries shall be, and shall be limited, as follows: an initial term of two years, and two additional terms of four years each (if elected) for the General Minister and President; an initial term of two years, and two additional terms of four years each (if elected) for the Executive Minister of Local Church Ministries; and an initial term of six years and one additional term of

four years (if elected) for the Executive Minister of Justice and Witness Ministries. All successors to such individuals in these Offices shall serve four-year terms, not to exceed three terms each.

#### **General Minister and President**

212 The General Minister and President, who shall be an Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ or a person with ordained ministerial partner standing, is called to ministry in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ upon election by the General Synod. The General Minister and President is the spiritual leader and pastor, the Minister of the United Church of Christ; the chief executive officer of the General Synod, the principal executive of the Office of General Ministries, the President of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ, the presiding officer of the Collegium of Officers and a member of the Mission Planning Council. The General Minister and President shall be charged with the care and nurture of the spiritual life of the Church, and is responsible for guiding the development of envisioning and planning that will enable the United Church of Christ to be more effective in God's mission. The General Minister and President is the principal spokesperson for the General Synod. The General Minister and President serves as an ex-officio member, with voice but not vote, in the meetings of all Covenanted Ministries of the United Church of Christ and in all meetings of the Affiliated Ministry. The General Minister and President shall serve as an ex-officio member, with vote, in all meetings of the Associated Ministry, and shall have voice, but not vote, in the meetings of all Commissions, Councils, and Committees of the United Church of Christ, except as otherwise provided in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ and as may be otherwise provided in the Bylaws of the Covenanted Ministries; except that he or she shall not participate in the work of the Search Committee for the General Minister and President. The General Minister and President shall be the official representative of the Church in ecumenical, interdenominational, and interfaith relations. The General Minister and President may appoint a representative for such occasions as he or she deems advisable.

213 As the principal executive of the Office of General Ministries, the General Minister and President works closely with the Associate General Minister in exercising responsibility for the broad life and work of the Office of General Ministries, but is not responsible for the day-to-day operation. The General Minister and President is accountable to the General Synod and its Executive Council, acting as General Synod ad interim, and to the Board of Directors of the Office of General Ministries.

214 The candidate for the position of General Minister and President is nominated for an initial term by a search committee of the United Church of Christ, broadly representative of the Church, and appointed by the Executive Council. The search committee includes one Executive Minister of a Covenanted Ministry selected by the Collegium of Officers; at least one Conference Minister named by the Council of Conference Ministers; one representative of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries to be selected from the COREM members on the Executive Council each with voice and vote. At least one member shall be a youth or young adult. The affirmative action commitment of the Church is to be fully respected in the search process and diversity maintained in the membership of the Collegium of Officers. The candidate chosen by the search committee is confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Council before his or her name is placed before the General Synod. Only one nominee may be presented for election, and nominations may not be made from the floor. An affirmative vote of at least sixty percent of the General Synod is necessary for election and call. The General Minister and President does not participate in the work of the search committee choosing a successor. She or he is evaluated regularly through a process approved by the Executive Council. The evaluation process includes an Executive Minister of a Covenanted Ministry on a rotating basis. In the event that the General Minister and President is unable to discharge the responsibilities of that Office, or if there is a vacancy in that Office, the Executive Council shall name the Associate General Minister or one of the

Executive Ministers to serve as Acting General Minister and President until the General Minister and President returns to service or is replaced by a successor elected by the General Synod after a search process.

#### **Associate General Minister**

215 The Associate General Minister, who may be a lay person, an Ordained Minister, or a person with ordained ministerial partner standing, is called to ministry in and on behalf of the Church upon election by the General Synod. The Associate General Minister serves as the operational executive of the Office of General Ministries. In that role she or he will have day-to-day responsibility for the overall work of the Office of General Ministries. He or she will work with the Board of Directors of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ and the Executive Council to implement policies and operational procedures. Through the General Minister and President, the Associate General Minister will be accountable to the General Synod and its Executive Council.

216 As an Officer of the Church, the Associate General Minister is a member of the Collegium of Officers and Mission Planning Council.

217 The Associate General Minister is nominated for an initial term by a search committee of the United Church of Christ broadly representative of the Church and appointed by the Executive Council. The search committee shall include the General Minister and President, an Executive Minister of a Covenanted Ministry selected by the Collegium, one Conference Minister named by the Council of Conference Ministers, and one representative of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries to be selected from the COREM members on the Executive Council, at least one member of the Board of Directors of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ, and at least one additional member of the Executive Council, each with voice and vote. At least one member shall be a youth or young adult. The affirmative action commitment of the Church is to be fully respected in the search process and diversity maintained in the membership of the Collegium of Officers. The candidate chosen by the search committee is to be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Council before his or her name is placed in nomination before the General Synod. Only one nominee may be presented for election, and nominations may not be made from the floor. An affirmative vote of at least sixty percent of the General Synod is necessary for call by election. The Associate General Minister does not participate in the work of the search committee choosing a successor. The Associate General Minister is evaluated regularly by a process approved by the Executive Council. The evaluation process includes the General Minister and President. In the event that the Associate General Minister is unable to discharge the responsibilities of that position, or if there is a vacancy in the position, the Executive Council, in consultation with the General Minister and President, names a person as Acting Associate General Minister and as an Acting Officer of the Church until the Associate General Minister returns to service or is replaced by a successor elected by the General Synod after a search process.

#### **Executive Ministers of Justice and Witness Ministries, Local Church Ministries, and Wider Church Ministries**

218 Each Executive Minister is the principal minister and executive officer of one of the Covenanted Ministries and is responsible for guiding and leading that Ministry's activities under the direction of its Board of Directors and as may be prescribed in the articles of incorporation, rules, and bylaws of that Covenanted Ministry. The Executive Minister may be a lay person, an Ordained Minister, or a person with ordained ministerial partner standing. An Executive Minister serves as ex-officio member, with vote, in all meetings of the respective Board of Directors and committees except as otherwise provided in the rules and bylaws of the respective Covenanted Ministry.

219 Each Executive Minister serves at the will of the Board of Directors of the

Covenanted Ministry to which she or he is accountable and may be terminated as an Executive Minister by that body in accordance with its procedures after consultation with the Executive Council acting as General Synod ad interim.

220 As an Officer of the Church, each Executive Minister is a member of the Collegium of Officers and the Mission Planning Council.

221 Each Executive Minister is to be nominated for an initial term by a search committee of the United Church of Christ broadly representative of the Church, appointed by and from the Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministry to which she or he is accountable. The search committee shall include the General Minister and President; one Conference Minister, named by the Council of Conference Ministers; and one representative of the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries to be selected from the COREM members on the Board of Directors, each with voice and vote. At least one member shall be a youth or young adult. The affirmative action commitment of the Church is to be fully respected in the search process and diversity maintained in the membership of the Collegium of Officers. The candidate chosen by the search committee is to be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the appropriate Board of Directors before his or her name is placed in nomination before the General Synod. Only one nominee may be presented for election, and nominations may not be made from the floor. An affirmative vote of at least sixty percent of the General Synod is necessary for the call by election. An Executive Minister does not participate in the work of the search committee choosing a successor. The Executive Minister is evaluated regularly by a process approved by the appropriate Board of Directors. The evaluation process shall include the General Minister and President, with voice and vote. Terms of office shall begin ninety days following their election. An Executive Minister shall hold office until her or his successor has been elected and qualified and has assumed the duties of the Office.

222 In the event that an Executive Minister is unable to discharge the responsibilities of that position, or if there is a vacancy in the office, the Board of Directors of that Covenanted Ministry, in consultation with the General Minister and President, shall appoint an Acting Executive Minister according to the rules and procedures of each Covenanted Ministry. Said Board of Directors shall recommend its Acting Executive Minister to the Executive Council acting as General Synod ad interim for appointment as an Acting Officer of the Church. An Acting Executive Minister shall serve until the Executive Minister returns to service, or is replaced by a successor called by election by the General Synod.

#### **The Executive Council of the General Synod**

223 The Executive Council shall consist of no fewer than eighty-nine and no more than ninety-one members, consisting of members nominated by the General Synod Nominating Committee and elected by General Synod, and of ex-officio members affirmed by General Synod. The composition of the Executive Council shall embody the commitment of the United Church of Christ to be a multicultural and multiracial Church, reflecting the racial and ethnic diversity of society with a balance of leadership between women and men, open and accessible to all. All members of the Executive Council shall be voting members.

224 Members, nominated by the General Synod Nominating Committee, and elected by the General Synod as members of the Executive Council, shall include:

a) Thirty-nine members, one from each Conference, elected by the General Synod for a term of six years, terms beginning at the end of the General Synod. Each Conference provides a name according to criteria determined by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee confirms each name before nominating that person to the General Synod. The expectation is that those elected have or are to have a relationship with the governing board of their respective Conferences. A person elected to the Executive Council from a Conference shall resign when moving to another Conference.

b) One member from the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries elected by the General Synod for one term of six years, beginning at the next meeting of the Executive Council after election. The General Synod Nominating Committee nominates this person after submission of the name

by the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries according to the criteria determined by the Nominating Committee.

c) Eight members, one from each of the historically under-represented groups:

- Council for American Indian Ministry
- Council for Hispanic Ministries
- Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice
- Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries
- United Black Christians
- United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns
- UCC Disabilities Ministries
- Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries;

d) One high school age youth, elected at large to serve a two-year term, eligible for re-election to a two-year term.

e) Sixteen members, four from the Board of Directors of each Covenanted Ministry, nominated by the respective Board of Directors, for a term of two years and not to exceed three terms.

f) One representative of the Council of Theological Education, nominated by the Presidents of the Seminaries of the United Church of Christ for a term of two years and not to exceed two consecutive terms.

g) One representative of the Council for Higher Education, nominated by that Council for a term of two years and not to exceed two consecutive terms.

h) One representative from the Historical Council, nominated by that Council for a term of two years and not to exceed two consecutive terms.

i) One representative from the Council for Ecumenism, nominated by that Council for a term of two years and not to exceed two consecutive terms.

j) One member of the Board of Directors of the United Church Foundation, Inc., nominated by the Board of Directors, for a term of two years and not to exceed three terms.

k) One member of the Board of Trustees of The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ, nominated by the respective Board of Trustees, for a term of two years and not to exceed three terms.

l) Of the members elected to the Executive Council, one-third shall be ordained ministers, who may include persons with ordained ministerial partner standing, one-third laymen, and one-third laywomen. Not fewer than twenty percent of the members are to be youth or young adults; where possible representation shall be equally divided between (a) youth, persons of high school age, and (b) young adults, persons graduated from high school, or over 19 years of age, but under the age of 30.

m) The General Synod Nominating Committee nominates these persons after submission of names by the respective group, according to the procedures established in ¶~~198-203~~201-206 of these Bylaws, and criteria determined by the Nominating Committee. In order to fulfill its responsibilities to ensure that the membership of the Executive Council reflects the diversity to which the United Church is committed, the Nominating Committee may ask for another name to be submitted by any group.

n) Terms of office, unless otherwise designated in these Bylaws, shall be for six years and shall commence at the close of the General Synod at which the person is elected and qualified and shall terminate at the close of the General Synod in which a successor is elected and qualified.

Members shall be divided into three classes of approximately equal numbers to be elected at each General Synod. No elected member who has served a full term shall be elected again until at least two years have elapsed. Terms for Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries members, and high school youth, shall be two years, with eligibility for re-election.

225 Ex-Officio members of the Executive Council with vote, affirmed by vote of the General Synod, include:

a) The Officers of the United Church of Christ.

- b) The Moderator and the two Assistant Moderators of the General Synod.
- c) One member designated by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to serve a term of two years. Any such member shall be eligible to serve up to two additional terms and not to exceed three terms.
- d) Six principal ministers of Conferences, one to be elected from each Region by the Council of Conference Ministers for a term of two years, not to exceed two consecutive terms. If any such member ceases during his or her term of office on the Executive Council to be the principal minister of a Conference within the Region from which said member was elected, a vacancy shall be thereby created to be filled by election by the Council of Conference Ministers.
- e) The Executive of the United Church Foundation, Inc.
- f) The Executive of The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ.
- g) The Executive of the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries.

226 Although members of the Executive Council may be nominated or selected by particular groups, each member serves on behalf of, and bears responsibility for, the well-being of the whole Church.

227 Immediately after the General Synod, and whenever membership in the Executive Council changes in the course of a biennium, the composition of membership shall be reviewed. If the Executive Council determines that its composition does not adequately reflect a balance of racial, ethnic, age, sexual orientation, and persons with disabilities, up to two additional members at large may be elected without regard to Conference residence, either by the Executive Council at its next meeting, or by its administrative body, acting as the Executive Council ad interim. Such members shall be elected for the remainder of the biennium and may be reelected by the General Synod.

228 The Executive Council shall elect, from its members who are elected by General Synod, a chairperson and a vice-chairperson according to its own Standing Rules.

#### **Responsibilities of the Executive Council**

229 The Executive Council shall act for the General Synod ad interim, and, in cooperation with the Collegium of Officers, shall provide coordination and evaluation of the work of the Church and shall carry out such other responsibilities as may be from time to time delegated to it by the General Synod, provided that such responsibilities are not otherwise delegated to a Covenanted Ministry in these Bylaws or provided for in the Constitution. It is responsible for policies relating to the mission of the United Church of Christ in its national setting. It shall support the on-going work of the General Synod through its various ministries, planning for and encouraging cooperation among those ministries, with Local Churches, Associations, and Conferences, and with other expressions of the Church which contribute to and embody God's mission in Jesus Christ. It shall support the spiritual and financial health of the Church, and shall ensure the presence and implementation of policies which contribute to the health of the Covenanted Ministries in relationship with one another and their accountability to General Synod. It shall receive reports from the Collegium of Officers and provide oversight and support for the work of that body. It shall facilitate the business of General Synod and assume such other tasks as may be assigned to it by the General Synod. It shall be a focal point for decision-making, overall planning and evaluation, and budgeting in the national setting. It shall receive and report upon divergent points of view and maintain an open channel for the consideration of minority or dissenting opinion. It shall serve as the Business Committee and Committee of Reference of the General Synod during its sessions, and as such shall prepare the agenda and schedule for all meetings of the General Synod, recommend changes therein during sessions, and appoint committees not otherwise provided. It shall submit a report of its work to the General Synod at each regular meeting. In cooperation with the Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries it shall make an annual informational report to the Local Churches and the Conferences about the total program of the Church in the national setting.

230 Vacancies occurring in offices, commissions, committees, and Boards of Directors of Covenanted Ministries of the United Church of Christ, or of the General Synod, or in the membership of the Executive Council, shall, unless otherwise provided, be filled by the Executive Council acting as the General Synod ad interim, such actions to be reported to the next General Synod.

231 The Executive Council shall make such elections, nominations or appointments as the Bylaws or action of the General Synod may require.

232 Acting as the Budget Committee for the General Synod, the Executive Council shall receive and review the report and recommendations regarding the budget of any council or committee organized by Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries and Conferences for the purpose of recommending mission priorities and budget allocations. The Executive Council shall prepare and submit to the General Synod the biennial United Church of Christ budget for the support of Our Church's Wider Mission. It shall determine annual allocations for the biennium which, on the basis of funds anticipated to be available, implement the actions of the General Synod and the program authorized in the biennial budget adopted by the General Synod. In preparation of the budget it shall make recommendations for appropriate support of organizations not directly related to one of the Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries of the United Church of Christ but approved by the General Synod.

233 The Executive Council shall be an incorporated body in order to ensure that it may effectively and expeditiously perform all legal functions of the General Synod. The membership of the Corporation shall consist of those persons described in Section ~~221-222~~224-225 of the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, who shall be elected or affirmed in the manner therein provided and who shall have the right to vote only to the extent granted by such sections. Those members shall also be the Directors of the Corporation. The Corporation shall have such officers as required by law and as otherwise elected by the Directors. The Corporation may adopt for its government and the management of its affairs bylaws and rules not inconsistent with its Articles of Incorporation nor with the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and regulations of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

234 **Regions.** The Executive Council shall make an appropriate assignment of the several Conferences into six Regions. The Regions as thus determined shall form the basis for Conference representation on national bodies wherever required by the Bylaws.

#### **Organization of the Executive Council**

235 The Executive Council shall organize itself as it deems necessary to carry out its responsibilities and fulfill its mandates.

#### **Advisory Commissions**

236 The Executive Council may provide for special advisory commissions on subjects of pervasive interest to the entire Church on which the Executive Council and/or the General Minister and President need policy or substantive advice. Members of such commissions shall be appointed by the Executive Council and shall include at least one member of the Executive Council. The chairperson shall be designated by the chairperson of the Executive Council.

#### **ARTICLE IV. ORGANIZATION**

237 The work of the United Church of Christ and its General Synod shall be carried out by the Executive Council, the Covenanted, Affiliated, Associated Ministries, Councils, and other such bodies as may from time to time be created by, or related to, the General Synod or its Executive Council.

#### **COVENANTED MINISTRIES**

238 The Covenanted Ministries are the Office of General Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, and Wider Church Ministries.

#### **Office of General Ministries**

239 **Purpose and Mission** The purpose and mission of the Office of General Ministries shall be to care for the spiritual life, unity, and well-being of the Church; to nurture its covenantal life, and

its ecumenical and interfaith relationships; to provide regular processes which focus on theological reflection throughout the church; and to facilitate the visioning, planning, coordination, and implementation of the total mission of the United Church of Christ.

240 The Office of General Ministries shall provide pastoral, administrative, and collegial leadership for the Church's internal life and ecumenical vocation. It shall encourage mutual accountability, mutual responsibility, and careful stewardship of resources among the national expressions of the Church. The Office of General Ministries shall guide financial planning and development which invites and secures annual, deferred, and special gifts. It shall work in collaboration with Conferences and other expressions of the Church in determining and meeting goals for the financial support of Our Church's Wider Mission. It shall oversee the internal and public communication of the Church and encourage a free flow of communication and dialogue about the church. It shall foster theological reflection and participation in ecumenical and interfaith partnership and dialogue in all expressions of the Church. The Office of General Ministries shall provide affirmative action leadership and guide the church's work toward becoming a multiracial, multicultural church, reflecting the racial and ethnic diversity of society with a balance of leadership between women and men, open and accessible to all.

241 The customary responsibilities and functions of a corporate secretary and treasurer of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ shall be assigned to the Office of General Ministries.

242 The Office of General Ministries shall have responsibility for relationships with the member groups of COREM: Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM); Council for Hispanic Ministries (CHM); Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice (MRSEJ); Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM); United Black Christians (UBC); or their successors.

243 The Office of General Ministries shall work in interactive partnership with Local Churches, Associations, Conferences and other national expressions.

244 **Governance and Leadership** Pursuant to paragraphs 57–62 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, the Office of General Ministries shall be incorporated and governed by a Board of Directors. Its executive officers shall be the General Minister and President and the Associate General Minister, who are also Officers of the Church, called by election of the General Synod. It shall act pursuant to the provisions as defined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, its own articles of incorporation and bylaws, and by the rules of its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of the Office of General Ministries performs the functions normally associated with boards of directors, and such additional tasks necessary to carry out its purposes and mandates, including the formation of associated auxiliary corporations. Pursuant to paragraph 59 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, it has legal corporate status for the purpose of holding, receiving, and managing unrestricted, restricted, and designated allocated funds, and funds donated to it from all sources. It is responsible for its articles of incorporation and required corporate documents, and establishes its own rules and bylaws. It has responsibility for organizing its ministries in order to carry out its mandates, for providing necessary staffing, and for determining the manner and site(s) of its office(s). The Board of Directors may grant authority to sub-units, ministry teams, or other appropriate entities, to speak and act on its behalf within its own broad policy statements and those of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. The Board of Directors may form task groups representing a variety of groups of the Church necessary for implementing its mission. The Board of Directors shall consult regularly and collaborate with the Boards of Directors of the other Covenanted Ministries.

245 The composition of the Board of Directors of the Office of General Ministries will have not fewer than forty-six nor more than forty-seven members elected by the General Synod, consisting of:

1. Twenty-nine local church members representing a majority of the Conferences during any one biennium;
2. One member from the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries.

3. Eight members, one from each of the historically under-represented groups:
  - Council for American Indian Ministry
  - Council for Hispanic Ministries
  - Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice
  - Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries
  - United Black Christians
  - the United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns
  - UCC Disabilities Ministries
  - the Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries
4. Two members at large, one of whom shall be a high school age youth to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms.
5. One member of the Board of Directors of the United Church Foundation, Inc., nominated by the respective Board of Directors for a term of two years and not to exceed two terms.
6. One member of the Board of Trustees of The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ, nominated by the respective Board of Trustees for a term of two years and not to exceed two terms.
7. One member designated by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms.
8. Two members from the Council of Conference Ministers, selected by that Council, to serve a term of two years and not to exceed two terms.
9. General Minister and President.
10. Associate General Minister.

246 Members of the Board of Directors of the Office of General Ministries serve on behalf of the whole church.

247 **Common Services** In covenant with the other Covenanted Ministries, the Office of General Ministries, through and by the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ, shall provide for common services, including, but not limited to, common treasury services, accounting services, personnel services, logistical services, information services and office support services. It shall also provide for a common salary program and shall provide common personnel policies.

248 Each Covenanted Ministry shall use the aforementioned common services, program and policies whenever legally permissible and otherwise appropriate, all as determined by its own Board of Directors.

249 A nonprofit corporation shall be formed for the purpose of providing the above-described common services. The corporation, to be named the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ, shall be governed by its articles of incorporation, rules, and bylaws, and the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. The General Minister and President shall be the principal executive and the Associate General Minister shall be the operational executive of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ. The number of directors of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ shall be eleven, consisting of.

- i. Two representatives of, and selected by, the Office of General Ministries;
- ii. Two representatives of, and selected by, Local Church Ministries;
- iii. Two representatives of, and selected by, Justice and Witness Ministries.
- iv. Two representatives of, and selected by, Wider Church Ministries;
- v. One representative of, and selected by, the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries;
- vi. One representative of, and selected by, The Pension Boards - -United Church of Christ; and

vii. One representative of, and selected by, United Church Foundation, Inc.

The directors of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ shall be the members of the corporation. The Board of Directors shall appoint such committees, with such responsibilities, as it deems necessary to carry out its work. The membership of the Board of Directors shall reflect the commitment of the United Church of Christ to be a multiracial and multicultural church, reflecting the racial and ethnic diversity of society with a balance of leadership between women and men, open and accessible to all. The corporate officers of the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ shall be the following:

(i) General Minister and President, who as President shall be accountable to the Board of Directors;

(ii) Associate General Minister, who as Vice-President shall report to the General Minister and President;

(iii) Treasurer, who shall be elected by, and accountable to, the Board of Directors;

(iv) Secretary, who shall be elected by, and accountable to, the Board of Directors.

250 Policy decisions related to the Common Services Corporation of the United Church of Christ shall be the responsibility of the Board of Directors.

### **Local Church Ministries**

251 **Purpose and Mission** The purpose and mission of Local Church Ministries shall be to encourage and support the Local Churches of the United Church of Christ in the fulfillment of God's mission. It continues the work of, and acts as agent for, predecessor bodies, and continues other ministries, as specified in paragraph 65 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and as described in its articles of incorporation.

252 Local Church Ministries shall encourage local churches to shape their life and mission in partnership with one another, with other expressions of the Church, and with ecumenical and interfaith communities. Local Church Ministries will work to promote the vocation of all members, leadership of laity and clergy, and facilitate a system of placement. Local Church Ministries will nurture stewards, and will coordinate and promote denomination-wide mission funding. Local Church Ministries will work with local churches in striving for the vitality of local churches as inclusive and accessible communities of mission, evangelism, church development, education, unity, worship, nurture, and justice so that the good news of Jesus Christ will be proclaimed in word and deed.

253 Local Church Ministries shall work in interactive partnership with Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and national expressions of the Church.

254 **Governance and Leadership** Pursuant to paragraphs 57–62 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, Local Church Ministries shall be incorporated and governed by a Board of Directors, of which not fewer than fifty-five nor more than fifty-eight of said Directors are elected by the General Synod. Its executive officer shall be an Executive Minister, who is also an Officer of the Church, called by election of the General Synod. It shall act pursuant to the provisions as defined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, its own articles of incorporation and bylaws, and by the rules of its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of Local Church Ministries performs the functions normally associated with boards of directors, and such additional tasks necessary to carry out its purposes and mandates, including the formation of associated auxiliary corporations. Pursuant to paragraph 59 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, it has legal corporate status for the purpose of holding, receiving, and managing unrestricted, restricted, and designated allocated funds, and funds donated to it from all sources. It is responsible for its articles of incorporation and required corporate documents, and establishes its own rules and bylaws. It has responsibility for organizing its ministries in order to carry out its mandates, for providing necessary staffing, and for determining the manner and site(s) of its office(s). The Board of Directors may grant authority to sub-units, ministry teams, or other appropriate entities, to speak and act on its behalf within its own broad policy statements and those of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. The Board of

Directors may form task groups representing a variety of groups of the Church necessary for implementing its mission. The Board of Directors shall consult regularly and collaborate with the Boards of Directors of the other Covenanted Ministries.

255 The composition of the Board of Directors of Local Church Ministries will have not fewer than fifty-five nor more than fifty-eight members elected by the General Synod, consisting of:

- a) 39 local church members representing Conferences, one from each Conference;
- b) 1 member from the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries;
- c) 1 member from each of the historically under-represented groups:
  - Council for American Indian Ministry
  - Council for Hispanic Ministries
  - Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice
  - Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries
  - United Black Christians
  - United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns
  - UCC Disabilities Ministries
  - Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries;
- d) 2 members at large, one of whom shall be a high school youth, to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms.
- e) 2 members from the Council of Conference Ministers, selected by that Council, to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms. Each Region shall be represented within the group of six Conference Ministers named to the Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministries.
- f) its Executive Minister
- g) the General Minister and President
- h) 1 representative chosen by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms.
- i) 1 representative from The Pension Boards–United Church of Christ (voice, without vote), chosen by the Board of Trustees of The Pension Boards, to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms;
- j) 1 representative from the Seminaries of the United Church of Christ, chosen by the Presidents of those seminaries, to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms;
- k) 1 representative from the Council for Higher Education, chosen by that Council, to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms.

256 The composition of the Board of Directors of Local Church Ministries shall embody the commitment of the United Church of Christ to be a multiracial and multicultural church, reflecting the racial and ethnic diversity of society with a balance of leadership between women and men, open and accessible to all.

257 One-third of the members elected to the Board of Directors will be Ordained Ministers or persons with ordained ministerial partner standing, one-third laywomen, and one-third laymen. Twenty percent of the members are to be under 30 years of age at the time elected. Where possible, representation shall be equally divided between (a) youth, persons of high school age; (b) young adults, persons graduated from high school or over 19 years of age.

258 Terms of office, unless otherwise designated in these Bylaws, shall be for six years and shall commence at the close of the General Synod at which members are elected and qualified and shall terminate at the close of the General Synod in which a successor is elected and qualified. Members shall be divided into three classes of approximately equal numbers to be elected at each General Synod. No elected member who has served a full term shall be elected again until at least two years have elapsed. Terms for Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries members, and high school youth members, shall be two years, with eligibility for reelection. A person elected from a Conference shall resign when moving to another Conference.

259 Members of the Board of Directors of Local Church Ministries serve on behalf of the whole Church.

## **Justice and Witness Ministries**

260 **Purpose and Mission** The purpose and mission of Justice and Witness Ministries shall be to enable and encourage Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and national expressions of the United Church of Christ to engage in God's mission globally by direct action for the integrity of creation, justice, and peace. It continues the work of, and acts as agent for, predecessor bodies, and continues other ministries, as specified in paragraph 66 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and as described in its articles of incorporation.

261 Justice and Witness Ministries shall encourage the Church in all of its expressions to speak prophetically on matters of justice, power, and public policy. Justice and Witness Ministries shall assist the Church in all of its expressions to confront racism, sexism, ageism, classism, and other expressions of injustice and alienation in the Church and in the society. Justice and Witness Ministries shall provide support for the Church's ministry of service on behalf of those who are poor, the forgotten and the oppressed, and for those marginalized by stigma and discrimination because of their sexual orientation or their disabilities, including mental illness. Justice and Witness Ministries may provide public witness on behalf of the justice and witness policies of the General Synod.

262 Justice and Witness Ministries shall work in interactive partnership with Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, national expressions of the Church, and with ecumenical and interfaith groups, and community organizations.

263 **Governance and Leadership** Pursuant to paragraphs 57–62 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries shall be incorporated and governed by a Board of Directors, of which not fewer than fifty-five nor more than fifty-eight of said Directors are elected by the General Synod. Its executive officer shall be an Executive Minister, who is also an Officer of the Church, called by election of the General Synod. It shall act pursuant to the provisions as defined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, its own articles of incorporation and bylaws, and by the rules of its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of Justice and Witness Ministries performs the functions normally associated with boards of directors, and such additional tasks necessary to carry out its purposes and mandates, including the formation of associated auxiliary corporations. Pursuant to paragraph 59 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, it has legal corporate status for the purpose of holding, receiving, and managing unrestricted, restricted, and designated allocated funds, and funds donated to it from all sources. It is responsible for its articles of incorporation and required corporate documents, and establishes its own rules and bylaws. It has responsibility for organizing its ministries in order to carry out its mandates, for providing necessary staffing, and for determining the manner and site(s) of its office(s). The Board of Directors may grant authority to sub-units, ministry teams, or other appropriate entities, to speak and act on its behalf within its own broad policy statements and those of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. The Board of Directors may form task groups representing a variety of groups of the Church necessary for implementing its mission. The Board of Directors shall consult regularly and collaborate with the Boards of Directors of the other Covenanted Ministries.

264 The composition of the Board of Directors of Justice and Witness Ministries will have not fewer than fifty-five nor more than fifty-eight members elected by the General Synod, consisting of:

- a) 39 local church members representing Conferences, one from each Conference;
- b) 1 member from the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries;
- c) 1 member from each of the historically under-represented groups:
  - Council for American Indian Ministry
  - Council for Hispanic Ministries
  - Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice
  - Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries

- United Black Christians
  - United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns
  - UCC Disabilities Ministries
  - Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries;
- d) 2 members at large, one of whom shall be a high school youth to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms.
- e) 2 members from the Council of Conference Ministers, selected by that Council, to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms. Each Region shall be represented within the group of six Conference Ministers named to the Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministries.
- f) its Executive Minister;
- g) the General Minister and President;
- h) 1 representative chosen by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), to serve a term of two years not to exceed two terms;
- i) 1 representative from The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ (voice, without vote), chosen by the Board of Trustees of The Pension Boards, to serve a term of two years and not to exceed two terms;
- j) 1 representative from the Seminaries of the United Church of Christ, chosen by the Presidents of those seminaries, to serve a term of two years and not to exceed two terms;

265 More than half of the members of the Board of Directors of Justice and Witness Ministries shall be persons of color and more than half shall be women.

266 One-third of the members elected to the Board of Directors will be ordained ministers or persons with ordained ministerial partner standing, one-third laywomen, and one-third laymen.

Twenty percent of the members are to be under 30 years of age at the time elected. Where possible, under-30 representation shall be equally divided between (a) youth, persons of high school age; (b) young adults, persons graduated from high school or over 19 years of age.

267 Terms of office, unless otherwise designated in these Bylaws, shall be for six years and shall commence at the close of the General Synod at which members are elected and qualified and shall terminate at the close of the General Synod in which a successor is elected and qualified. Members shall be divided into three classes of approximately equal numbers to be elected at each General Synod. No elected member who has served a full term shall be elected again until at least two years have elapsed. Terms for Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries members, and high school youth members, shall be two years, with eligibility for re-election. A person elected from a Conference shall resign when moving to another Conference.

268 Members of the Board of Directors of Justice and Witness Ministries serve on behalf of the whole church.

### **Wider Church Ministries**

269 **Purpose and Mission** The purpose and mission of Wider Church Ministries shall be to encourage and support Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and national expressions of the United Church of Christ to participate in the global, multiracial, multicultural church, accessible to all, and to support United Church of Christ ministries around the world and the nation. It continues the work of, and acts as agent for, predecessor bodies and continues other ministries, as specified in paragraph 67 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and as described in its articles of incorporation.

270 Wider Church Ministries shall strengthen relationships with partner churches and oversee participation in the Common Global Ministries Board in joint venture with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Wider Church Ministries shall provide support for institutional ministries in health care, education, disaster relief, and social services in the United States and internationally. It shall also coordinate volunteer ministries in all expressions of the Church. In cooperation with partner churches it shall promote interfaith dialogue and global education and advocacy issues. Through the Common Global Ministries Board, Wider Church Ministries shall oversee the sending and receiving of missionaries.

271 Wider Church Ministries shall work in interactive partnership with Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and national expressions of the Church and of the ecumenical and interfaith bodies.

**272 Governance and Leadership** Pursuant to paragraphs 57–62 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, Wider Church Ministries shall be incorporated and governed by a Board of Directors, of which not fewer than fifty-five nor more than fifty-eight of said Directors are elected by the General Synod. Its executive officer shall be an Executive Minister, who is also an Officer of the Church, called by election of the General Synod. It shall act pursuant to the provisions as defined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, its own articles of incorporation and bylaws, and by the rules of its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of Wider Church Ministries performs the functions normally associated with boards of directors, and such additional tasks necessary to carry out its purposes and mandates, including the formation of associated auxiliary corporations. Pursuant to paragraph 59 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, it has legal corporate status for the purpose of holding, receiving, and managing unrestricted, restricted, and designated allocated funds, and funds donated to it from all sources. It is responsible for its articles of incorporation and required corporate documents, and establishes its own rules and bylaws. It has responsibility for organizing its ministries in order to carry out its mandates, for providing necessary staffing, and for determining the manner and site(s) of its office(s). The Board of Directors may grant authority to sub-units, ministry teams, or other appropriate entities, to speak and act on its behalf within its own broad policy statements and those of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. The Board of Directors may form task groups representing a variety of groups of the Church necessary for implementing its mission. The Board of Directors shall consult regularly and collaborate with the Boards of Directors of the other Covenanted Ministries.

273 The composition of the Board of Directors of Wider Church Ministries will have not fewer than fifty-five nor more than fifty-eight members elected by the General Synod, consisting of:

- a) 39 local church members representing Conferences, one from each Conference;
- b) 1 member from the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries;
- c) 1 member from each of the historically under-represented groups:
  - Council for American Indian Ministry
  - Council for Hispanic Ministries
  - Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice
  - Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries
  - United Black Christians
  - United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns
  - UCC Disabilities Ministries
  - Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries;
- d) 2 members at large, one of whom shall be a high school youth to serve a term of two years and not to exceed two terms;
- e) 2 members from the Council of Conference Ministers, selected by that Council, to serve a term of two years and not to exceed two terms. Each Region shall be represented within the group of six Conference Ministers named to the Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministries.
- f) its Executive Minister;
- g) the General Minister and President;
- h) 1 representative chosen by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), to serve a term of two years and not to exceed two terms;
- i) 1 representative from The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ (voice, without vote), chosen by the Board of Trustees of The Pension Boards, to serve a term of two years and not to exceed two terms;
- j) 1 representative from the Seminaries of the United Church of Christ, chosen by the Presidents of those seminaries, to serve a term of two years and not to exceed two terms;

k) 1 representative of the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, to serve a term of two years and not to exceed two terms.

274 The composition of the Board of Directors of Wider Church Ministries shall embody the commitment of the United Church of Christ to be a multiracial and multicultural church reflecting the racial and ethnic diversity of society with a balance of leadership between women and men, open and accessible to all.

275 One-third of the members elected to the Board of Directors will be Ordained Ministers or persons with ordained ministerial partner standing, one-third laywomen, and one-third laymen. Twenty percent of the members are to be under 30 years of age at the time elected. Where possible, representation shall be equally divided between (a) youth, persons of high school age; (b) young adults, persons graduated from high school or over 19 years of age.

276 Terms of office, unless otherwise designated in these Bylaws, shall be for six years and shall commence at the close of the General Synod at which members are elected and qualified and shall terminate at the close of the General Synod in which a successor is elected and qualified. Members shall be divided into three classes of approximately equal numbers to be elected at each General Synod. No elected member who has served a full term shall be elected again until at least two years have elapsed. Terms for Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries members, and high school youth members, shall be two years, with eligibility for re-election. A person elected from a Conference shall resign when moving to another Conference.

277 Members of the Board of Directors of Wider Church Ministries serve on behalf of the whole Church.

#### **COLLEGIUM OF OFFICERS**

278 The Collegium of Officers, defined in Article IV of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, supports the Covenanted Ministries in carrying out their work in a spirit of coordination and cooperation. It is responsible for providing leadership for mission programming in the United Church of Christ and for the proper implementation of General Synod actions. Composed of the Officers of the United Church of Christ meeting as peers, the Collegium of Officers provides a setting for mutual accountability, mutual reporting, and for assessing the on-going programs of the United Church of Christ. The Collegium of Officers coordinates research, long-range planning, and program evaluation. In consultation with the Boards of Directors of the Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries, it develops and submits to the Executive Council a proposal for the budget of the General Synod. It meets regularly with the Cabinet of the Council of Conference Ministers.

279 The Collegium of Officers is convened by the General Minister and President as the presiding officer and consults with the Boards of Directors of the Covenanted Ministries, the Executive Council, and the General Synod. It shall consult regularly with the leaders of the Affiliated and Associated Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

#### **MISSION PLANNING COUNCIL**

280 The Mission Planning Council provides a multi-missional setting which brings together the Officers of the United Church of Christ, and principal staff, leaders, or designated representatives of the Covenanted, Associated, and Affiliated Ministries of the United Church of Christ, for planning coordinated ministries and for visioning and exploring new perspectives over a wide range of mission, theological, ecumenical, spiritual, stewardship, financial, justice, communications, gender, disability, and racial issues and concerns. The Mission Planning Council is responsible for the coordination and correlation of mission and purpose and for maintaining mutual trust, mutual accountability, and the wise use of leadership and talents. It is designed to encourage cooperation and sharing of talents among the Ministries. The Mission Planning Council may invite others to participate, including representatives of Conferences and partner churches, as it deems appropriate. The Collegium of Officers coordinates the tasks, meetings, agendas, and follow-up actions of the Mission Planning Council.

#### **AFFILIATED MINISTRY**

281 Pursuant to paragraph 68, 70 and 71 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ is an Affiliated Ministry of the United Church of Christ and serves the church and its Covenanted Ministries as a separate corporation.

282 The purpose of The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ is to make available ministerial welfare activities and a system of employee benefit programs designed to assist authorized ministers and lay workers in achieving financial security during working and retirement years.

283 The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ continues as a nonprofit membership corporation which determines its own governance and leadership. The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ will have membership on the Executive Council and Office of General Ministries Board of Directors. It will have Ex-Officio, voice without vote, membership on the Boards of Directors of Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, and Wider Church Ministries.

#### **ASSOCIATED MINISTRY**

284 Pursuant to paragraph 69, 72 and 73 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, the United Church Foundation, Inc., is an Associated Ministry of the Executive Council of the United Church of Christ, and serves the church and the Covenanted Ministries as a separate corporation related to the Executive Council.

285 The purpose of the United Church Foundation, Inc., is to provide a means by which individuals and organizations of the Church may further exercise their stewardship of resources for the sake of strengthening the mission of the Church as set forth in paragraph 72 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ.

286 The United Church Foundation, Inc. will work cooperatively with the Office of General Ministries to facilitate comprehensive financial planning and development; and will continue its relationship with The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ. It shall have membership on the Office of General Ministries Board of Directors and Executive Council.

287 The corporate membership of the United Church Foundation, Inc., shall consist of fifteen persons nominated and elected by the Executive Council of the United Church of Christ for terms of six years, one-third to be elected each biennium and to serve until their respective successors are elected and qualified. The General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ and the Chairperson of the Executive Council of the United Church of Christ shall be ex-officio members with vote. At least two of the members elected each biennium shall not be members of The United Church Foundation, Inc. at the time of their election. The Executive Council of the United Church of Christ may remove a member of the Foundation for cause and shall fill vacancies for unexpired terms.

#### **Other Provisions**

288 No person shall serve in more than one General Synod elected position simultaneously. Further, no employee of a Covenanted, Associated, or Affiliated Ministry shall serve as a voting member of the Executive Council, or of a Board of Directors of any of the Covenanted Ministries, except in an ex-officio capacity, or as otherwise set forth in these Bylaws.

289 All members of the governing boards of the Covenanted Ministries elected and affirmed by the General Synod, with the exception of the representatives from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), shall be members of the United Church of Christ.

#### **ARTICLE V. INDEMNIFICATION**

290 Any Officer of the United Church of Christ, or any member, including officers and directors, of the General Synod, the Executive Council or the Councils, Commissions, and Committees of the General Synod may, to the full extent allowed by law, be indemnified by the Executive Council against all judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement of, and against all reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees, actually and necessarily, incurred in defense of any lawsuit, proceeding or prosecution (including appeal thereof) wherein such person is made a party by reason of being such officer or member to the extent such person is not otherwise indemnified by

another entity. This provision shall also extend to any lawsuit, proceeding, or prosecution in which such officer or member is made a party in such person's capacity as an officer or member of another organization in which the person serves at the request of any of the above entities or bodies.

291 In all other lawsuits, proceedings, or prosecutions, indemnity shall not be made unless the officer or member acted in good faith and for a purpose which the person reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the Entity or body of which he or she is an officer or member and in criminal actions or proceedings only upon the additional requirement that the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the operative conduct or inaction was unlawful.

292 These indemnity provisions shall also operate for the benefit of anyone duly serving in a representative capacity for such member or officer.

293 The Executive Council is authorized to purchase insurance providing indemnification pursuant to the provisions of the preceding. Any such contract of insurance may afford coverage for matters as to which the Executive Council may not give indemnity.

#### **ARTICLE VI. OTHER BODIES**

The following groups are identified as related in covenant to the United Church of Christ, through a primary relationship with a Covenanted Ministry to be determined.

#### **GROUPS CREATED BY GENERAL SYNOD WITH A SEAT ON EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

294 **Council for American Indian Ministry** Created by the Eighth General Synod in 1971 (71-GS-77) and given its present mandate by the Sixteenth General Synod in 1987 (87-GS-58), the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM) is a national body with primary responsibility for providing Christian ministry and witness in American Indian settings, and is a resource to the whole United Church of Christ in understanding and supporting American Indian churches and communities. The Council for American Indian Ministry supports and gives general direction to the American Indian members and congregations of the United Church of Christ, advocating with them, through CAIM's Recognized Unit of Ministry, to embody their own cultures and values and to be vital parts of the United Church of Christ and the Conferences in which they are located. The Council for American Indian Ministry encourages and supports the identification, enlistment, and support of American Indian candidates for authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ. Working with American Indian people throughout the United Church of Christ, the Council seeks to develop broad bases of visibility, nurture and support for American Indian people, communities, and churches. The Sixteenth General Synod vote calls for CAIM to be accountable to the General Synod through the Executive Council and to be funded from one-third of the net income of the neighbors in need offering.

295 **Council for Ecumenism** The Council for Ecumenism (CE) shall be composed of twelve persons elected by the Executive Council for terms of six years, one-third to be elected each biennium to serve until their respective successors are elected and qualified. The Executive Council shall name from these members the Chairperson of the Council. The Council, subject to approval by the Executive Council, may add up to three co-opted members on the basis of demonstrated need. It shall act in an advisory capacity to the General Minister and President and shall assist the General Minister and President and the Executive Council in preparing ecumenical and inter-faith policies, in determining the level of contributions to ecumenical agencies and activities, and in keeping the commitment of the United Church of Christ as a united and uniting Church before its membership and its fellow denominations. The Council shall receive its financial support through the Executive Council and staff support as assigned by the General Minister and President.

296 **Council for Higher Education** The Council for Higher Education (CHE) shall be composed of the academies, colleges, and theological schools that indicate their desire to be recognized as related to the United Church of Christ and that are accepted by the Council as conforming to its standards; and of representative(s) from Local Church Ministries. For purposes of business and

policy making, member academies, colleges, and theological schools shall be represented by each institution's executive head or other key officer as designated by each institution's executive head. The Council shall organize with its own chairperson, secretary, and any other officers needed to carry on its work. All officers shall be executive heads of their institutions. The Council shall be administratively related to the General Synod through the Local Church Ministries; this provision not precluding the Council's right to direct access to the Executive Council and to the General Synod concerning any matters in which it may feel that its interests in program or budget require the exercise of such access. The Executive Minister of Local Church Ministries shall be an advisory member of the Council with voice but without vote. The Council shall be organized in two sub-sections: College and Academy Section, and Seminary Section. The Council for Higher Education shall advance and interpret higher education in the United Church of Christ, including the cultivation of closer relationships between the educational institutions and the church, the expression of the connection between faith and knowledge in those institutions, and, in cooperation with Local Church Ministries, the promotion of education as an integral part of the Church's mission.

**297 Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries** Created by the Fourteenth General Synod (83-GS-43) the Council for Racial and Ethnic Ministries (COREM) provides a place where racial and ethnic groups can develop their common agenda, collaborate with appropriate program and mission bodies of the United Church of Christ so that resources for racial and ethnic ministries will be effective and relevant, discern appropriate ways by which the many and varied gifts of racial and ethnic groups may be made available to the Church, and advocate for racial and ethnic concerns within the United Church of Christ. It is composed of two representatives each from the Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministry (PAAM), the Council for Hispanic Ministries (CHM), the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM), United Black Christians (UBC), and Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice (MRSEJ), who are accountable to the groups that send them. COREM is accountable to the Executive Council of the United Church of Christ.

**298 Council for Theological Education** The Council for Theological Education (CTE) shall be responsible for fostering mutual accountability between the United Church of Christ and the Seminaries of the United Church of Christ, for periodic reviews of the criteria for being designated as a Seminary of the United Church of Christ, and for the general well-being of the relationship between the seminaries and the United Church of Christ. The Council will exercise care for the Seminaries, explore ways by which theological education contributes to the leadership needs of the Church, foster cooperation among the Seminaries, and facilitate communication and appropriate engagement between the Seminaries of the United Church of Christ and Historically Related Seminaries and with other seminaries which provide theological education for persons preparing for authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ. Seminaries of the United Church of Christ retain full membership and responsibility in the Council for Higher Education and its seminary section. The Council will provide comment to Local Church Ministries whenever that Ministry prepares to recommend a seminary for recognition as a Seminary of the United Church of Christ. The Council shall be composed of the President and one additional representative from each of the Seminaries of the United Church of Christ, a representative from one of the Historically Related Seminaries, two representatives from the Council of Conference Ministers elected by that Council, two conference staff persons who relate to a Committee on the Ministry and/or work with the search and call process from a conference not otherwise represented on the Council, four persons who serve on a Committee on the Ministry, the General Minister and President, the Executive Minister and two staff persons from Local Church Ministries, one staff person from Justice and Witness Ministries and Wider Church Ministries. An intentional effort will be made to ensure that those who have been historically under-represented be present in the membership of the Council. The Council shall meet annually and shall elect its own officers each biennium.

**299 Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries** The Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries (CYYAM) shall serve to advocate and network for youth and young adult ministries throughout the United Church of Christ and shall report to the Executive Council and to the General Synod on issues, developments, and concerns in youth and young adult ministries in church and society. It shall monitor to ensure that the unique gifts and talents of youth and young adults are present in all aspects of the life of the Church. The Council shall organize itself as needed in order to carry out its work and shall have direct access to the Executive Council and the General Synod in areas of program and budget. The Council shall be composed of at least twenty-four but no more than twenty-eight voting members, elected at General Synod or appointed to a two-year term of office, such membership consisting of persons, who for the majority of their term are youth (persons of high school age or younger) or young adults (persons graduated from high school, or 19 years of age, through age thirty). Members may serve one additional term, subject to age criteria. Membership shall include a) Six persons, (three youth and three young adults), one person to be appointed respectively by the Council for American Indian Ministry, the Council for Hispanic Ministries, Pacific Islander and Asian and American Ministries, United Black Christians, UCC Disabilities Ministries, and the United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns. Each of these bodies shall appoint alternately a youth or young adult to be a member of the Council. b) Up to twelve persons (one youth and one young adult from each of the six regions), with each Conference nominating one youth and one adult, and said election conducted by the outgoing members of the Council; c) Up to four persons (two youth and two young adults) may be appointed by the outgoing members of the Council from among those persons nominated by the Conferences, but not elected, and d) Up to six persons, three youth and three young adults, may be appointed by the outgoing members of the Council as they in their judgment deem appropriate in order that the Council's membership reflect the United Church of Christ's commitment to affirmative action. The persons so appointed shall have been nominated by the Council for American Indian Ministry, the Council for Hispanic Ministries, Pacific and Asian American Ministries, the United Black Christians, UCC Disabilities Ministries, and the United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns, each of whom may nominate one youth and one young adult. e) One youth or one young adult appointed by the Board of Directors of Local Church Ministries from its Board of Directors, who will serve as a member, voice without vote, to provide liaison between the Council and Local Church Ministries; f) Up to three co-opted members, voice without vote, may be selected as resource to the Council. Vacancies shall be filled by the Council from among those persons previously nominated by the appropriate body corresponding to that vacancy.

**300 Council of Conference Ministers** The Council of Conference Ministers (CCM) shall be composed of the Conference Ministers of the several Conferences. The General Minister and President shall be a member ex-officio, without vote, of the Council and its Cabinet. It shall select a Chairperson and such other officers and committees as it shall deem necessary. It shall elect from its members those who are to serve on Boards of the Covenanted Ministries and in other representative positions, distributing those positions among the Regions. It shall maintain a close relationship with the Officers of the Church, the Executive Council, and national units the Covenanted Ministries, the Affiliated Ministry, and the Associated Ministry with respect to matters affecting the life of the Church.

**301 Historical Council** The Historical Council (HC) shall be composed of twelve members, three elected by each of the Historical Societies, Congregational Christian and Evangelical and Reformed, and six at large appointed by the Executive Council. One-third shall be named each biennium for a term of six years, to serve until their respective successors are named and qualified, and not to exceed two terms. The Executive Council will name from these twelve members the chairperson. The Council shall meet at the call of the General Minister and President or the chairperson. It shall act in an advisory capacity to the General Minister and President and the Executive Council in overseeing the archives of the United Church of Christ and of the two

Historical Societies, in expressing interest and concern for all archival collections related to the several heritages of the denomination, in recommending the amount to be allocated in the contributions budget for the Historical Societies, and in reminding the United Church of Christ of its traditions. The Council shall receive financial support through the Executive Council and staff support as assigned by the General Minister and President.

#### **SELF-CREATED GROUPS WITH A SEAT ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**302 Council for Health and Human Service Ministries** The Council for Health and Human Services Ministries (CHHSM) was recognized by the Fifteenth General Synod as an organization composed of institutions and programs in health and welfare related to the United Church of Christ and accepted by the CHHSM as conforming to its standards. The CHHSM is organized with its own Directorate and Officers. The purposes and functions of the CHHSM shall include: 1) The support and nurture for its member institutions and programs in fulfillment of their ministries as part of the mission of the United Church of Christ; 2) Representation of the ministries of its member institutions and programs to the General Synod and Executive Council; 3) Representation on the Directorate of Wider Church Ministries and collaboration with that Ministry and all of the Covenanted Ministries in the conduct of the mission of the United Church of Christ in health and welfare; 4) Cooperation with the Conferences and the Office of General Ministries in the process of Conference recognition of health and human service ministries, monitoring the authorization to seek funds within Conferences, and approval of requests to conduct capital campaigns; 5) Provision, annually, to the Office of General Ministries, the names of those member institutions and programs which conform to the standards set by CHHSM; 6) Cooperation with the Office of General Ministries in collecting information on institutions and programs in health and welfare to be listed in the United Church of Christ Yearbook; and 7) Participation in secular, ecumenical, and inter-faith networks in the field of health and welfare.

**303 Council for Hispanic Ministries** The Council for Hispanic Ministries (CHM) is an autonomous body working cooperatively with Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, Regions and other Ministries of the United Church of Christ. It offers a perspective that honors the context and culture of its members while encouraging inter-cultural, inter-faith, and international dialogue among all constituencies. The Council shall promote its mission within the United Church of Christ and work with the Church to monitor boards and ministries that deal with concerns and issues important to Hispanics/Latinos/Latinas in the USA, Puerto Rico, Mexico and other nations of the Caribbean and Central and South America.

**304 Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice** Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice (MRSEJ) is a group which brings together clergy who advocate on behalf of African Americans in church and society, providing a caucus of ministers for fellowship, for sharing mutual concerns, and for actions regarding the agenda of the black constituency within the United Church of Christ. MRSEJ challenges, monitors, initiates, and supports the cause of African American involvement to the fullest possible measure in the life of the United Church of Christ.

**305 UCC Disabilities Ministries** The UCC Disabilities Ministries (UCCDM) strives for the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in the life and mission of the Church. The UCCDM encourages Local Churches to be open, inclusive, affirming, and accessible in their buildings, worship, education, fellowship, and service so that they may proclaim God's word to and with all persons, including those with disabilities. It seeks to enable all members of the United Church of Christ to affirm the theological/biblical affirmations of the wholeness of all people, and to recognize the ministry to and with persons with disabilities as a part of the ministry of all the baptized. The UCCDM is composed of between twenty-five and fifty active and associate members. These representatives include persons with disabilities, members of families of persons with disabilities, experts on disabilities, and other persons from the United Church of Christ who support the purposes of the UCCDM.

306 **Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries** Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM), organized in 1974 and recognized by the Tenth General Synod, advocates for the presence, participation and contributions of PAAM in the life of the United Church of Christ and serves its constituent members and churches, initiating and supporting their life, and working for greater representation in wider church settings. It seeks to strengthen local churches, to nurture and develop lay and clergy leadership for the church, and to address issues of justice. As an advocate group for the rights of people, PAAM is involved in issues of the rights of Pacific Islander and Asian people in the United States and in the United Church of Christ and works in the areas of rights for women and children, the poor on welfare, institutional racism, and political prisoners.

307 **United Black Christians** United Black Christians (UBC) is a special interest group which represents over 50,000 African-American members of the United Church of Christ. It stands in the affirmation that each person has gifts to offer to the Church, and that each is entitled to full rights and privileges as children of God. UBC dedicates itself to providing voice for all African-American members of the United Church of Christ, seeking to witness to, and preserve the history and legacy of the African-American people and churches. UBC is an active advocate for liberation and social justice at home and abroad.

308 **United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns** The United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns (The Coalition) is composed of members and friends of the United Church of Christ who affirm the good news that all persons of all sexual orientations are loved and empowered by God. The Coalition actively works to combat prejudice and seeks justice for, and the full inclusion and involvement of, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered Christians in all expressions of the United Church of Christ. In its leadership and outreach, The Coalition is committed to ending exclusion based on sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, race, age, size, class and/or ableness. It promotes mutual ministries of pastoral care, education, and advocacy within the United Church of Christ and society as a whole; encourages Local Churches, Associations and Conferences to become "Open and Affirming" (ONA); and organizes within Conferences to make resources of The Coalition available to all.

309 **Relationships** Unless otherwise designated in these Bylaws, each of the aforementioned bodies shall have a primary relationship with one of the Covenanted Ministries which shall serve as its primary linkage to the national expressions of the United Church of Christ, to which it shall report annually. This primary relationship shall be defined by the Executive Council in consultation with the Boards of Directors of the Covenanted Ministries and with the respective group. The designated relationship shall be reviewed each biennium by the appropriate partners, and may be changed upon the mutual consent of those partners, and so declared by vote of the Executive Council. The Collegium of Officers shall be responsible for initiating said review.

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References to the Constitution are in roman type.

References to the Bylaws are in italic type and preceded by the sign (*BL*)