

**BYLAWS of the Bay Association**  
**Northern California Nevada Conference, United Church of Christ**

**ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of the Association shall be the BAY ASSOCIATION of Churches and Ministers of the United Church of Christ, hereafter referred to as Association, or as Bay Association.

**ARTICLE II: STRUCTURE**

The Bay Association is an integral part of the United Church of Christ, and as such it assumes and accepts all of the duties, responsibilities, rights, and privileges placed upon it as an Association of the United Church of Christ. The Bay Association is related to the General Synod of the United Church of Christ through the Northern California Nevada Conference (NCNC) of the United Church of Christ, hereinafter referred to as the Conference, of which Conference, the Association is a member body. The standing of the Association as a body of the United Church of Christ is determined by the Conference.

The geographic boundaries of the Association are the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano, (north of Binghamton Road and west of State Highway 113), Stanislaus (south of highways I-205 and CA-120) and San Joaquin (south of highway CA-132).

**ARTICLE III: PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS**

The purpose of the Bay Association is to unite in Christian fellowship all of the local churches of the United Church of Christ within its boundaries. In mutual Christian concern and in dedication to Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, the Association does purpose with divine help and guidance, to develop and promote among its members an understanding of the work of the United Church of Christ in their spiritual life, stewardship and sacrificial giving, and of Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) in the home, church, community, nation and world; the Association shall actively concern itself with the welfare of all local churches within its boundaries, correlate its work with that of the Conference and the General Synod and its Covenanted Ministries, and to give its full support to, and promote the individual support of its member churches and ministers in the work and programs of the Conference.

The chief function of the Bay Association shall be those specifically delegated to it as an Association under the Constitution, Article VIII, and Bylaws, Article II, of the United Church of Christ, except such of those functions which the Bay Association does delegate hereinafter to the Conference.

**ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the Bay Association consists of all local churches of the United Church of

Christ with full standing within the geographic boundaries of the Association and all authorized ministers in the Association.

#### **ARTICLE V: ORGANIZATION**

1. The officers of the Association shall be the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary (or a combined Secretarial position), and Treasurer. These officers shall be elected by vote at the Annual Meeting of the Association for a term of one year or until their successors are elected. The term is January 1 to December 31 of the current year.
2. The Executive Board shall consist of the officers, at least one Clergy Support Coordinator (to act as pastor to ministers), two representatives from the Association to the Northern California Nevada Conference NCNC Board of Directors, and three members-at-large, one of whom may be a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and one may be thirty years of age or under at the time of appointment. The terms of the representatives to the Conference Board of Directors shall be in compliance with Conference policies, with members elected to alternating terms to maintain continuity. The terms of the three members-at-large shall be two years with alternating terms elected at each Annual meeting of the Association. **Any conference staff assigned to the Association are ex officio members of the Executive Board.**

The Executive Board shall meet at least ten times a year either in person or using any appropriate available technology. A quorum shall consist of one more than half of the members of the Executive Board. Any member of the Board with more than three unexcused absences shall have a conversation with the Moderator determining their continuing service to the Executive Board.

The Executive Board shall conduct the regular business affairs of the Association including, but not limited to:

- maintaining a policies and procedures manual,
- planning the Annual Meeting of the Association,
- implementing actions of the Annual Meeting,
- filling any vacancies on the Executive Board or committees of the Association between Annual Meetings,
- proposing a budget to the Annual Meeting and managing the finances of the Association,
- maintaining relationships with candidates for licensure or ordination while they are being examined by the Conference Committee on the Ministry,
- calling Ecclesiastical Councils,
- calling special services (e.g., authorization for ministry, reception of new churches, installation of ministers to serve a church, and release of minister from service to a church) in consultation with a local church, and

- holding an Annual Retreat for the Executive Board.

Actions of the Executive Board shall be consistent with actions taken at a duly called meeting of the Association.

For items requiring decisions or actions between meetings, the Executive Board may conduct its business by telephone, electronic mail, or appropriate technology that all members of the Board have access to use. An effort will be made to include all Board members. A quorum is necessary for voting. All actions will require a majority of the quorum to pass.

For purposes of budgeting and record keeping the Association's fiscal year shall begin January 1 and continue through December 31 of each year.

#### **ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS**

1. The Annual Meeting shall be held for the adoption of the budget, election of officers, and any other matters that may properly come before the body. The Annual Meeting shall be held between the NCNC Annual Gathering and before the end of the Association's fiscal year at a time and place designated by the Executive Board. Written notice shall be given at least three weeks in advance of said meeting to all member churches and in-care churches within the Bay Association.
2. An additional meeting may be called between the beginning of the Association's fiscal year and prior to the NCNC Annual Gathering at a place and time designated by the Executive Board. Written notice shall be given to all member churches and in-care churches in the Bay Area at least three weeks in advance of said meeting.
3. The Executive Board may call other meetings of the Association including Ecclesiastical Councils, Ordinations and Commissioning services, Installations, Reception of New Churches, and other events.
4. Voting members at meetings of the Association shall be authorized ministers in the Association, lay delegates selected by the local churches, and members of the Executive Board. Each local church with full standing is entitled to be represented at all meetings of the Association by lay delegates, the number of whom is determined by the number of active church members reported to the Conference as of January 1 preceding the meeting. Each local church is entitled to three lay delegates for the first 250 active church members and one additional lay delegate for each 100 members or fraction thereof above the original 250 except that no church shall be entitled to more than six lay delegates; at least one lay delegate position from each local church shall be reserved for a person thirty years of age or under at the time of appointment by the local church.
5. A quorum shall be representation by one-third of the churches with full standing in the Association.
6. The current edition of Robert's Rules and Order shall inform the basic framework in governing all meetings

## ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

### **A. BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

The Vice Moderator shall be responsible for assembling a Board Development Committee. The committee may be made up of Board members and non-Board members. The purpose of the committee is to identify needs, and recruit nominees for vacancies in the Board. The Executive Board as a whole will support and participate in the process of Board development. This committee shall strive to find nominees representing all levels of diversity (ethnic, geographic, gender, sexual orientation, age, lay leader, clergy, etc.) within the Association, being mindful of the historically under-represented groups recognized in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. If a Board vacancy occurs in the middle of a term, the Board shall appoint a person to fulfill the remainder of the calendar year. A vote of the Association is needed to approve that person to serve for the remaining extent of the term.

### **B. OTHER COMMITTEES**

The Executive Board may, from time to time and as needed, establish other Standing or Ad Hoc Committees. These Committees shall be chaired by a person who holds current membership on the Executive Board, but may be made up of any persons with appropriate standing and qualifications in relationship to the Association, Conference, or relationship to the matter to be addressed by the Committee. The Executive Board shall be responsible for the oversight of the work of these Committees and regular reporting procedures shall be established.

## ARTICLE VIII: AUTHORIZED MINISTRY

The Constitution of the United Church of Christ provides that "Ministerial Standing in the United Church of Christ is held in an Association." The Bay Association assigns the following to the Conference Committee on the Ministry:

1. The responsibility for the careful examination of the credentials of each applicant for licensure or ordination, or for ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ as an in-care student.
2. The authority to issue to each applicant for licensure approved by the Committee a temporary license to perform such ministerial duties as determined by the Committee.
3. The same procedure shall apply to an ordained minister of another denomination currently serving a local church of the United Church of Christ, and/or as stated in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, Article I, Paragraph 134. Continuance in Ministerial Standing shall be in accord with the "Position Paper on Ordination and Ministerial Standing" as adopted by the Conference on January 11, 1974. The Association Conference Ministers shall cooperate with the Conference Committee in this and all similar matters.

After a candidate has been received in care of a local church and recommended for in-care status to the Conference, the person enters into a relationship with the Association that continues until the candidate becomes an authorized minister or the candidate's MID (Member in Discernment) status is dropped.

Following a favorable recommendation of the Conference Committee on Ministry, the Association may authorize an applicant for ministry in accord with the guidelines of the Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ (MOM) and the supplements and appendices of the Conference (MOMSA). All actions of the Association to grant Ministerial Standing in the United Church of Christ, or to authorize an applicant for ministry shall be by a two-thirds affirmative vote of those present and voting at any duly called meeting of the Association.

## **ARTICLE IX: ECCLESIASTICAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. STANDING OF CHURCHES**

Local churches within the geographic boundaries of the Association whose articles of faith, statement of principles, and expression of polity agree with those commonly held by the United Church of Christ may seek in-care status in the Association by entering into a period of discernment with the Board, after which they may submit a formal written request for in-care status. The Executive Board may approve a request for in care status, which shall be informed by the policies and procedures of the NCNC. After a congregation has been received in care of the Association, that congregation enters into a relationship with the Association that continues until the congregation is granted full standing or the congregation's in-care status is dropped. Upon recommendation of the Executive Board, the local church may be granted full standing as a member of the United Church of Christ by two-thirds affirmative vote at a duly called meeting of the Association.

### **B. ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCILS**

The Association may, upon request of a local church, or of a Minister with Standing in the Association, meet as an Ecclesiastical Council on behalf of the church or Minister for the purpose of authorization for ministry, installation or dismissal of Ministers, the granting of licensure, the adjudication of disputes, and for the discharge of other responsibilities placed upon the Association under the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, or which are historically served by the Ecclesiastical Councils. Any church or minister wishing to call the Association to meet as an Ecclesiastical Council for purposes other than authorization for ministry shall first confer with the Executive Board of the Association, and then, upon recommendation of that Board, may petition to so meet and act on behalf of the church or minister.

The Executive Board may ratify the action of an Ecclesiastical Council for which a quorum was not present provided that at least three members of the Executive Board were present at the Ecclesiastical Council and there was a clear consensus about a course of action among those clergy and lay delegates who were eligible to vote.

## **ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote of those present and voting at any regular meeting of the Association, or at a special meeting called for that purpose, provided that in either event written notice with the proposed change has been sent to all member churches and Ministers at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be presented for action.

Effective Date of Adoption: October 27, 2002

Amended: November 14, 2005

Amended: November 13, 2006

Amended: November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Amended: November 2, 2019