

**BYLAWS – 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 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, and Solano County except the portion that lies south of Binghamton Road and east of State Highway 113.

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; to actively concern itself with the welfare of all local churches within its boundaries; to 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. **Officers:** The officers of the Association shall be the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer. These officers shall be elected by vote at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year or until their successors are elected. The term year is January 1st to December 31st.
2. **Executive Board:** The Executive Board shall consist of the officers, two Deans (who act as pastors to ministers), two representatives from the Association to the Northern California Nevada Conference Board of Directors, and four members-at-large (one of whom may be a member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)). The terms of the representatives to the Conference Board of Directors shall be four years with one representative elected in each even numbered year. The terms of the four

members-at-large shall be three years with terms organized such that one or two members-at-large are elected to a three-year term at each Annual Meeting. The Associate Conference minister(s) assigned to the Association are ex officio members of the Executive Board. The chair of the Nominating Committee described in Article VII is an ex officio member of the Executive Board.

The Executive Board shall meet at least ten times a year at a time and place decided upon by the new officers at their first meeting. A quorum shall consist of one more than half of the members of the Executive Board. Any member of the Board who misses three meetings without acceptable excuse shall be replaced.

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

- 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, and
- calling special services (authorization for ministry or reception of new churches) in consultation with a local church.

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

For time-sensitive items, the Executive Board may conduct its business between regularly scheduled meetings by telephone, electronic mail, or similar electronic means provided that all members of the Board have access to one another's comments. All actions considered by electronic means require a unanimous vote (excluding abstentions) in order to pass.

3. **Fiscal Year:** The Association fiscal year shall begin January 1st and continue through December 31st, for purposes of budgeting and record keeping.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

1. The Annual Meeting shall be held within the first two weeks of November or at the time and place designated by the Executive Board. Written notice shall be given at least six weeks in advance of said meeting. Business shall include adoption of the budget, election of officers and a nominating committee, and any other matters that may properly come before the body.
2. Other meetings of the Association including Ecclesiastical Councils, Ordinations and Commissioning services, Installations, Reception of New Churches, and other events may be called by the Executive Board.
3. 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 twenty-five years of age or under at the time of appointment by the local church.
4. Quorum: Representation by one-third of the churches with full standing in the Association shall constitute a quorum.
5. All meetings shall be governed by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

A. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

There shall be a Nominating Committee with three (3) members. Each member shall serve a term of three (3) years. Members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Association at its Annual Meeting. An effort will be made to represent diversity within the Association. The terms shall be three years with terms organized such that one member is elected to a three-year term at each Annual Meeting. The Nominating Committee shall elect its own chair and recording secretary.

The duties of the Nominating Committee shall include preparing, for consideration and action by the voting delegates at the Annual Meeting of the Association, a slate of nominations of persons qualified and willing to serve as officers, deans, member of the Nominating Committee, persons who represent the Association on the Conference Board of Directors, and at large members of the Executive Board of the Association as provided for by Article V of these by-laws. When preparing the slate, the Nominating Committee shall seek representation that honors the diversity of the Association paying particular attention to the historically under-represented groups recognized in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. All nominees must indicate their willingness to serve and demonstrate an understanding of the responsibilities with which they will be entrusted.

Preparation of a slate of nominees shall not abridge the right of members of the Association to nominate qualified persons from the floor at the Annual Meeting. Nominations from the floor, however, must be made with the consent of the nominee.

The Nominating Committee shall recommend nominees to the Executive Board, for its consideration and action, to fill vacancies in any elective office. Persons so appointed shall serve only until the next Annual Meeting where they may be placed in nomination for consideration and action by the voting delegates. Between meetings of the Association the Nominating Committee shall develop a list of qualified persons who would be available to fill vacancies for nomination at the next Annual Meeting.

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, on its behalf, to issue to each applicant for licensure approved by the Committee a temporary license to perform such ministerial duties as determined by Committee.
3. The same procedure shall apply to an ordained minister of another denomination at present 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 in-care 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, or 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 submitting a written request for in-care status to the Executive Board. If approved by the Executive Board, the request of the local church shall be forwarded to the Committee on Ministry of the Conference. (Note: The complete procedure for reviewing a request of a local church to receive standing in the Association is published by the Committee on Ministry.) 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 Committee on the Ministry and 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 clear consensus about a course of action among those clergy and lay delegates who were eligible to vote at the Ecclesiastical Council.

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