

# UNITED CHURCH OF GAINESVILLE BY-LAWS

revised on October 2, 2011

modified for review on September 20, 2017

## ARTICLE I – Name

The name of this church shall be The United Church of Gainesville, Inc.

## ARTICLE II – Compact

We join as a spiritual community in this Compact:

- to worship God, however known,
- to welcome into our church those of differing understanding and theological opinion,
- to learn from our religious heritage, yet to grow by seeking new dimensions of truth,
- to follow, even imperfectly, the way of Jesus in personal involvement with each other,
- and, strengthened by this bond, to act in Christian concern for the welfare of all people.

## ARTICLE III – Membership

**Section 1. Active Membership.** Membership is open to all persons who subscribe to the Compact and wish to participate in and support the activities of this Church. Persons become members in a service of church membership. If a person is a member in good standing of another church, normally a letter of transfer will be requested from that church. An active member of the Church shall have the privilege of vote at congregational meetings and is eligible for election to any office or any board of the Church. Membership records, including baptisms, marriages, and deaths, shall be kept by the office staff.

**Section 2. Associate Membership.** Any person who wishes to retain membership in another church may become an Associate Member of the United Church of Gainesville.

- A. An Associate Member shall enjoy all of the privileges and responsibilities of membership except that of voting on dissolution of the Church and on the calling or dismissal of the minister.
- B. An Associate Membership shall cease with permanent removal, or continued absence of one year or more, from the community.

**Section 3. Inactive Membership.** Inactive members shall not be included in reports of membership made by the Church. Such Inactive Members may request Church Council to restore their active membership at any time. Inactive members shall not have the privilege of vote at congregational meetings and are not eligible for election to an office or a board of the Church. By action of the Church Council, regular members shall be classified as Inactive Members upon their:

- A. temporary absence from the community for a year or more, during the period of such absence;
- B. own request, if so desired, even if remaining in the community.
- C. by action of the Church Council for any member who for a period of one year or more has not communicated with the Church or contributed to its support by any means. Before such action is taken, the office shall endeavor to contact the member to indicate the anticipated action and to give opportunity for said member to request an alternative action by Church Council.

**Section 4. Termination of Membership.** Membership in the Church shall terminate:

- A. by the issuance of a letter of transfer to another church;
- B. by request of a member in writing;
- C. by permanent move away from Gainesville, unless otherwise requested.
- D. upon death.

**Section 5. Membership Review.** Review and revision of the Church membership rolls shall be made by Church Council each fall.

**Section 6. Official Friends of the Church.** Any person who, through participation in Church activities, demonstrates an interest in and support for the Church may request to be designated as "an official friend of the Church" upon approval of Church Council. Such individuals shall have all the privileges of members except that of voting.

#### **ARTICLE IV – Governance**

The governance of the Church shall be congregational in form. The leadership of the Church shall be vested in an executive body ies to be known as the Church Council and the Council Executive Committee. The implementation of the programs of the Church shall be vested in the various Boards and Committees of the Church. These Boards and Committees report to the Church Council and act on Church Council directives, as well as upon their own initiative.

Although the governance of this Church and the control of its affairs are vested in its members, direct fellowship and free affiliation with the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ is maintained.

#### **ARTICLE V – Congregational Meetings**

**Section 1. The Fall Congregational Meeting.** A Fall Congregational Meeting shall be held to present to the congregation a tentative budget for the next fiscal year and to conduct other Church business as needed.

**Section 2. The Winter Congregational Meeting.** A Winter Congregational Meeting shall be held in January or February of each year to accept the budget and to conduct other Church business as needed.

**Section 3. The Spring Congregational Meeting.** A Spring Congregational Meeting shall be held in April or May of each year to consider annual reports by the Church Council and the Boards and Committees of the work of the preceding Church year, to elect officers and boards for the next year, and to conduct other Church business as needed.

**Section 4. Other Meetings of the Membership.** Other Congregational meetings may be called to discuss and vote on Church affairs:

- A. by action of Church Council;
- B. by written petition of five members of the congregation, but only when these five members have previously brought their matter of concern before Church Council and the Council Executive Committee. If Church Council or the Council Executive Committee acts unfavorably upon such a matter, the five members may then send a

petition to the Clerk to call a Congregational Meeting to consider the matter and he/she is obliged to do so.

### **Section 5. Notice of Meetings of the Membership.**

- A. Written notice of the Fall, Winter, and Spring Congregational meetings must be sent to the members at least ten days prior to the scheduled meeting date.
- B. Written notice of other Congregational Meetings must be sent to the members at least five days prior to the scheduled meeting date.

## **ARTICLE VI – COUNCILS OF GOVERNANCE**

### **Section 1. ~~Composition.~~ Church Council.**

- A. Members** – The Church Council shall be composed of active and associate members of the Church except as indicated herein. Voting Church Council members shall consist of the Moderator, the Moderator-Elect, the Ministers, the Clerk, two Council Members-at-Large, and a representative of each Board and Committee. ~~At the first formal meeting of the year, the Council may grant voting privileges to representatives of standing committees for that calendar year with approval by majority vote. Such approval shall be reviewed annually.~~ Each Board and Committee should have at least one Board member present at each Church Council meeting and, preferably, should have the same member attending Church Council on a regular basis for the preservation of continuity.
- B. Meetings** – The Church Council shall meet at least bi-monthly. Meetings are usually not held in July and December. The first meeting of the Church Council after the election of new officers and Boards and Committees shall be determined by the newly-elected Moderator. Members of the Church shall be notified of regular Church Council meetings and are welcome to attend. Special meetings of the Church Council shall be called as needed by the Moderator or any three concurring Church Council members, providing all Church Council members have been notified.
- C. ~~Section 2.~~ Powers of the Church Council** – The Church Council is charged by the Congregation with the responsibility and authority for guiding the overall activities of the Church by:
  - 1. Providing general leadership in the attainment of goals as determined by the Congregation.
  - 2. Recommending new goals for consideration by the Congregation.
  - 3. Setting policy.

~~**Section 3. Meetings of the Council.** The Council shall meet at least bi-monthly. Meetings are usually not held in July and December. The first meeting of the Council after the election of new officers and Boards shall be determined by the newly-elected Moderator. Members of the Church shall be notified of regular Council meetings and are welcome to attend. Special meetings of the Council shall be called as needed by the Moderator or any three concurring Council members, providing all Council members have been notified.~~

### **Section 2. Council Executive Committee.**

- A. Members** - The Council Executive Committee shall be composed of the Moderator, the Moderator-Elect, the Ministers, and two Council Members-at-Large.

- B. Meetings** - The Council Executive Committee shall meet monthly, prior to the regularly scheduled Church Council meetings.
- C. Duties** - The duties of the Council Executive Committee shall be:
  1. To consider proposals pertaining to the structural and organizational aspects of the Church, including By-Laws and Policies and Procedures. Some proposals may be referred to appropriate Boards or Committees or staff and some proposals may be put on the agenda of the Church Council meetings.
  2. To set the agenda for Church Council meetings and to gather input from Board and Committee chairs, ministers and officers.
  3. To review minutes from the previous meetings and follow through with appropriate reminders, actions, referrals or schedules for further discussion.
  4. To recommend nominees for Church Council Member-at-Large positions.

## **ARTICLE VII – Staff**

### **Section 1. Senior Minister.**

- A. Appointment** – A Ministerial Search Committee to seek another Minister shall be elected by the Congregation at a Congregational meeting from a slate proposed by the Church Council in accordance with the UCG ~~Procedures and Policies~~ Policies and Procedures regarding the composition of a Search Committee. The Senior Minister is called by the Congregation at a special Congregational meeting by an affirmative vote of 75% of those voting, provided a quorum of 30% is present.
- B. Release** – On written request from either the Senior Minister or the Congregation, the relationship of the Minister to this Congregation may be severed. Advance notice of two months is required to make this action binding. When the Senior Minister submits a resignation, a meeting of the Congregation shall be called as soon as possible to act upon this resignation. The Congregation may terminate the contract of the Senior Minister, with cause and in writing, and with the approval of Church Council, by a 75% affirmative vote at a specially called Congregational meeting, provided a quorum of 30% is present.
- C. Duties** – All activities of the Church are within the province of the Senior Minister who serves as a member of the Church Council and an ex-officio non-voting member of Boards. The job description for the Senior Minister is developed by Congregation-Ministry Review Board and updated between June and September of each year.
- D. Evaluation** – The Senior Minister shall meet regularly, no fewer than six times a year, with the Board of Congregation-Ministry Review to set goals for each year, to receive input and feedback, and to discuss issues that arise both from the perspective of the Senior Minister and from the perspective of the Congregation. The Board of Congregation-Ministry Review will provide a written performance evaluation to Church Council once a year between March and June.

### **Section 2. Other Ministerial Staff.**

- A. Appointment** – A Ministerial Staff Search Committee shall be appointed by Church Council. Ministerial staff (ordained, licensed, or commissioned) may be called by the Congregation at a special Congregational meeting by an affirmative vote of 75% of those voting, provided a quorum of 20% is present.

- B. Release** – On written request and with cause from either the Senior Minister or the Congregation, the relationship of other ministerial staff to this Congregation may be severed. The Congregation may terminate the contract, with cause and in writing, and with the approval of Church Council, by a 75% affirmative vote at a specially called Congregational meeting, provided a quorum of 20% is present. Advance notice of one month is required to make this action binding. When other ministerial staff submits a resignation, a meeting of the Church Council shall be called as soon as possible to act upon this resignation. Advance notice of one month is required.
- C. Duties** – The duties of ministerial staff shall be clearly defined in a job description that is updated between June and September of each year. The job description is developed by the supervisor(s), reviewed by the Congregation-Ministry Review Board, and approved by Church Council.
- D. Supervision and Evaluation** – The job description shall specify who supervises ministerial staff members: the Board of Congregation-Ministry Review, the Senior Minister, or another member of the ministerial staff. ~~The supervisor(s) will provide a written performance evaluation to Church Council each year between March and June.~~ The Board of Congregation-Ministry Review will provide a written performance evaluation to Church Council once a year between March and June.

Ministerial staff shall meet regularly, no fewer than six times a year, with the Board of Congregation-Ministry Review to set goals for each year, to receive input and feedback, and to discuss issues that arise both from the perspective of the ministers and from the perspective of the Congregation.

### **Section 3. Other Staff.**

- A. Appointment** – Other staff may be appointed at any time. If a new position is being created, it must be discussed with the Board of Business for financial implications and approved by the Senior Minister and by Church Council. The Senior Minister, the supervising minister or the supervising staff person may hire part-time employees. Full-time positions need a hiring committee of the Senior Minister, the supervising minister or the supervising staff person, plus at least two members of the congregation who are involved in the relevant area of the Church’s program. Recommendations for these two members will be approved by Church Council.
- B. Release** – On written request from either the staff member or Church Council, the employment relationship of the staff member to this Congregation may be severed. If the Church terminates the contract, such notice must be in writing and with cause. The timing of such notice will be placed in the employee’s contract.
- C. Duties** – The duties of other staff shall be clearly defined in a job description that is developed by the supervising staff person and reviewed by Church Council. The job description will be reviewed annually between June and September.
- D. Supervision** – The job description shall specify whether one of the ministers or a staff person shall provide supervision for other staff positions. The supervisors shall provide an annual review for all full-time staff, as specified by our Personnel Policies.

## **Article VIII – Election of Officers and Boards**

**Section 1. Nominating Committee.** The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, or an official designee, of each Board and Committee, the Clerk, the Moderator-

Elect and the two Council Members-at-Large. The Nominating Committee may invite the Ministers and the Moderator to attend and to vote. The Nominating Committee may invite any other staff members and other Church members at its discretion; these people shall not have voting privileges.

The Moderator shall appoint the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee. This Committee is responsible for the preparation of a slate of nominees for election, including officers and members of the Boards and Committees. Church Council shall recommend names of nominees to the Board and Committee chairpersons, utilizing the results of a volunteer recruitment.

**Section 2. Procedure of Election.** At least ten days prior to the Spring Congregational Meeting, the Nominating Committee shall submit to the Congregation a slate of officers and Board members, chosen from members willing to serve, for election by the Congregation at the Spring Congregational meeting. Nominations may be made from the floor for each position. If there are two or more nominations for any office, the ballot for that office shall be written. Any unopposed office may be voted on collectively by voice.

**Section 3. Vacancies.** The Church Council, upon recommendation of the Moderator, shall have the power to fill vacancies in any office or Board until the next Spring Congregational meeting, at which time the unexpired term of office shall be filled in the usual way.

## Article IX – Officers

**Section 1. Designated Officers.** The Officers of the Church shall be: Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Clerk, Treasurer, two Council Members-at-Large, and any other officers as may be designated by the Congregation.

### Section 2. Moderator.

- A. Term** – The Moderator-Elect shall be nominated by Church Council in February and elected at the Spring Congregational meeting. The Moderator-Elect assumes the office of Moderator at the following Spring Congregational meeting. The term of office is two years: one year as Moderator-Elect and the following year as Moderator. He/she may serve no more than two full consecutive terms as Moderator.
- B. Duties** – The Moderator, in consultation with the Ministers, coordinates the total work of the Church. In this capacity, he/she is responsible for the agenda and presides over the meetings of the Church Council, Council Executive Committee, and the Congregation. He/she serves as a non-voting, ex-officio member of all Boards and, as directed by Church Council, appoints ad hoc committees.
- C. Succession** – If the Moderator is unable to serve, the Moderator-Elect will serve as Moderator for the remainder of the Church year. If the Moderator-Elect cannot serve in the Moderator's place, in order of seniority, a Council-Member-at-Large will serve as Moderator for the remainder of the year.

### Section 3. Clerk.

- A. Term** – The Clerk shall be elected at the Spring Congregational meeting to serve for a term of one year. He/she may serve no more than six consecutive years.
- B. Duties** – The Clerk keeps a record of all Church Council and Congregational meetings and handles the correspondence relative to them.

#### **Section 4. Treasurer.**

- A. Term** – The Treasurer shall be elected at the Spring Congregational meeting to serve for a term of one year to begin immediately.
- B. Duties** – The Treasurer will chair the Board of Business. In addition, he/she will meet with the ~~Bookkeeper~~ Church Accountant once a month to review the Church financial statement. The Treasurer will present the monthly financial statement for review to the Board of Business. The Treasurer will invite the ~~Bookkeeper~~ Church Accountant to attend Board of Business committee meetings on an as-needed basis, particularly when the yearly budget is being planned.

#### **Section 5. Council Members-at-Large.**

- A. Term** – There shall be two Council Members-at-Large, elected in alternating years, each serving two-year staggered terms.
- B. Duties** – Council Members-at-Large are members of the Church Council and the Council Executive Committee without specific responsibilities, functions, duties, or obligations, who serve to represent the entire Congregation and to carry out special assignments as needed.

### **ARTICLE X – Boards**

#### **Section 1. Designated Required Boards.**

The Church's required Boards shall consist of the Board of Adult Ministry, the Board of Business, the Board of Endowment Management, the Board of Children's Ministry, the Board of Congregation-Ministry Review, the Board of Membership, the Board of Outreach Benevolence, the Board of Justice, the Board of Parish Ministry, and the Board of Youth Ministry.

In addition to the required Boards and those Boards, Committees and subcommittees listed below, the Church Council may, from time to time, form other Boards, Committees, and subcommittees to carry out such activities and duties as approved by the Church Council following a majority vote of the Church Council Members. After formation of a new Board or Committee, each will be authorized to vote on any business to come before the Church Council. Committees, when formed by Boards, carry out the work of the Board.

Board and Committee members are elected for designated terms in such a way that terms will be staggered and Board and Committee members shall serve no more than six consecutive years on one particular Board or Committee. Duties of all Board and Committee members shall commence immediately upon election. Each Board and Committee shall elect its own chairperson.

It is anticipated that each Board and Committee will initiate and maintain policy within its sphere of activity, but the Church Council will coordinate such activities among the Boards. Each Board may establish committees, utilizing other members of the Church, or dissolve committees, as needed.

**Section 2. Board of Adult Ministry.** The Board of Adult Ministry is composed of committees acting independently of each other, but all charged with the responsibility for planning, implementing, maintaining, and overseeing an educational program and ministry for the adults of the Church.

- ~~**A. Members**—The Board of Adult Ministry shall be composed of no fewer than nine members, serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis at Spring-Congregational meetings.~~
- ~~**B. Duties**—The Board of Adult Ministry is responsible for planning, implementing, maintaining, and supervising an educational program and ministry for the adults of the Church.~~

**A. Small Groups Committee**

1. **Members** - The Small Groups Committee shall be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis, at Spring Congregational Meetings.
2. **Duties** – The Small Groups Committee envisions, plans and coordinates small group offerings of spiritual growth, personal enrichment, trips and retreats, outreach and fellowship opportunities for the Church.

**B. Seminar Committee**

1. **Members** – The Seminar Committee shall be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis, at Spring Congregational Meetings.
2. **Duties** – The duties of the Seminar Committee are to provide opportunities for enrichment and connection by offering seminars that contribute to the spiritual, personal and intellectual growth of the Church.

**Section 3. Board of Business.**

- A. Members** – The Board of Business shall be composed of no fewer than nine members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis, at Spring Congregational meetings.
- B. Duties** – The Board of Business is responsible for the fiscal welfare of the Church, overseeing the prudent use and maintenance of the assets of the Church to include cash, equipment, structures and land. The Board, chaired by the Treasurer, is responsible for overseeing and authorizing Church expenditures, including salaries and benefits for staff personnel. These responsibilities include preparing and submitting the annual budget and reviewing the status of the budget throughout the year. Other responsibilities include overseeing ~~endowments and gifts to the Church, and all investments~~ that are not included in the endowment, and special accounts.

The ~~Bookkeeper~~ Church Accountant will provide to the Board a monthly written accounting of the status of the Church budget and fund balances. The ~~Bookkeeper~~ Church Accountant will also report on the general status of financial pledges as requested by the Board. In all communications regarding the status of financial pledges, the ~~Bookkeeper~~ Church Accountant will insure that individual pledge records and any correspondence with respect to pledges shall be confidential between the ~~Bookkeeper~~ Church Accountant and the pledger. Names of those who have not re-pledged will be made available to the Senior Minister for ministerial purposes.

In addition, the Board of Business is responsible for the care and custody of all Church property as well as for the procurement and disposal of real property as directed by the Congregation.

The Board of Business shall be responsible for the performance of a biennial (on even-numbered years) review of Church financial records.



**C. Committees** – The Board of Business oversees the following committees; individual members of the Board of Business may serve as liaisons with these committees.

**1. Enlistment Committee**

**a. Members** – The Enlistment Committee is recruited by the Senior Minister in collaboration with the Board of Business and is composed of between five and nine persons. The Chairperson of the Board of Business sits on the Enlistment Committee and provides communication and assistance during the pledge campaign.

**b. Duties** – The Enlistment Committee is responsible for organizing, implementing and evaluating the annual enlistment (pledge) campaign.

**2. Compensation Committee**

**a. Members** – The Compensation Committee is appointed by Church Council and is composed of four members: one from the Board of Business, one from the Board of Parish Ministry, one from the Congregation-Ministry Review Board and one from the previous year’s Compensation Committee, who shall act as the Chairperson.

**b. Duties** – The Compensation Committee is responsible for making recommendations regarding cost-of-living raises and merit raises for continuing staff members and salary recommendations for new staff members. The Compensation Committee shall follow the timeline and procedures established by Church Council.

**Section 4. The Board of Endowment Fund Trustees Management.**

**A. Members** – The Trustees Board of Endowment Management shall be composed of no fewer than six members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis at Spring Congregational meetings. Members of the Board of Endowment Management shall be the Trustees of the Endowment. No member shall serve more than two consecutive three-year terms.

**B. Duties** – In coordination with the Treasurer, the Trustees are responsible for the encouragement and promotion of special gifts and bequests to the fund. The Trustees shall meet at least quarterly to oversee the investment of endowed funds in accordance with an adopted investment policy. The fund balance is reported to the Bookkeeper Church Accountant and the Treasurer at the start of each month for the monthly Financial Report. The Trustees shall provide a full and complete account of the status of the fund at the Fall Congregational meeting, including the amount of the fund available for special projects in the coming year.

**Section 4 5. Board of Children’s Ministry.**

**A. Members** – The Board of Children’s Ministry shall be composed of no fewer than eight members serving two-year terms, elected on a staggered basis at Spring Congregational meetings.

**B. Duties** – The Board of Children’s Ministry is responsible for planning, implementing, maintaining, and supervising an educational program and ministry for the children of the Church from the nursery through grade five.

## **Section 5 6. Board of Congregation-Ministry Review.**

**A. Members** – The Board of Congregation-Ministry Review shall be composed of no fewer than nine members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis at Spring Congregational meetings.

Members shall include the current Moderator, the most recent past Moderator and the Moderator Elect, and not less than six at-large members, all serving three-year terms. The ministers, chairperson, and the current Moderator will submit names of potential nominees to CMRB, seeking to maintain a balance of age, gender and lifestyle on this Board. The Board will select nominees for the vacant positions and submit these names to Church Council.

**B. Duties** – The Board of Congregation-Ministry Review acts as a liaison between the congregation and the ministry team; discusses issues of mutual concern; helps define objectives and goals for the ministers and for the congregation; coaches the ministerial team; and provides the necessary review of ministerial staff as provided in Article VII.

## **Section 6 7. Board of Outreach Benevolence. The Board of Benevolence is composed of committees acting independently of each other, but all acting with the mission of providing outreach opportunities for the Church. Each committee shall establish communication and liaison between the Church and the local, national, and world communities and shall develop opportunities for social action and provide a framework for activity in the Church's wider mission.**

~~**A. Members**—The Board of Outreach shall be comprised of the chairs of each of the committees functioning under the Board of Outreach. All chairs of Outreach committees have a seat on Council; together they constitute one vote.~~

~~**B. Committees**—Names, descriptions and terms of office for the various Outreach Committees for the upcoming Church year shall be presented to, and approved by, Council at the time of board and committee recruitment each year. Committee members may serve no more than six consecutive years.~~

~~**C. Duties**—The Board of Outreach shall establish communication and liaison between the Church and the local, national, and world community. It shall develop opportunities for social action and provide a framework for our activity in Our Churches' Wider Mission.~~

### **A. Compassion in Action**

**1. Members** – Compassion in Action shall be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis, at Spring Congregational Meetings.

**2. Duties** – Compassion in Action shall be a conduit for the Church to provide funds, goods and services to the people in need in our community.

### **B. Family Promise Committee**

**1. Members** – Family Promise Committee shall be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis, at Spring Congregational Meetings.

**2. Duties** –The Family Promise Committee assists and supports community efforts to serve the homeless in our community and provides an opportunity for the Church to serve families in need.

## **Section 7 8. Board of Parish Ministry.**

- A. Members** – The Board of Parish Ministry shall be composed of no fewer than nine members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis, at Spring Congregational meetings.
- B. Duties** – In consultation with the Ministers, the Board of Parish Ministry is responsible for preparing the worship environment for each service, for the administration of the sacraments, and for the spiritual nurture of the congregation. In the absence of the Ministers, the Board of Parish Ministry is responsible for the planning and implementation of the worship services.
- C. Committees** – The following Committees fall under the umbrella of the Board of Parish Ministry, acting independently of each other:
- 1. Kairos**
    - a. Members** – Kairos is an unlimited group of Church members joined together to address prayer concerns and provide support for the congregation during significant life events.
    - b. Duties** – Kairos aims to ensure that Church members receive compassion and care. Ways to serve include sending cards, bringing meals, booklets, baskets, and other gifts when births, adoptions, catastrophic illness, or deaths have occurred; assisting with the coordination of receptions following memorial services, making visits or phone calls, offering educational information and workshops regarding wellness, providing help for those with chronic or long-term illness, and offering resources for aging in place and support for end-of-life care.
  - 2. Lively Arts**
    - a. Members** – The Lively Arts Committee is composed of persons from the congregation who have interest and gifts in the areas of music, visual arts, dance, drama, creative writing and liturgy.
    - b. Duties** – The Lively Arts Committee shall strive to reach every member of the congregation in worship services through music, singing, liturgical dance, and the visual arts and to provide additional avenues of worship through spiritual service for visual and performing artists.
    - c. Subcommittee** – A subcommittee of the Lively Arts Committee will be responsible for the planning and implementation of the annual Services of Nine Lessons and Carols. Members of this subcommittee will include the Choir Director/accompanist; church musicians and composers, as needed and recruited by the director; Senior Minister and Associate Ministers, as needed; Tech coordinator; Music Librarian; and others as required.

## **Section 8 9. The Board of Youth Ministry.**

- A. The High School Team** shall be composed of no fewer than eight members of the Church, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis at Spring Congregational meetings. The High School Team is responsible for establishing and maintaining a program for the youth of the Church, grades 9 through 12, which includes spiritual, educational, social, and outreach components.
- B. The Middle School Team** shall be composed of no fewer than eight members of the Church, serving two-year terms, elected on a staggered basis at Spring Congregational

meetings. The Middle School Team will work with the appropriate ministerial staff to plan and implement the program for middle schoolers in the Church, grades 6 through 8, which includes spiritual, educational, social and outreach components.

**Section 9 10. The Board of Membership.**

- A. Members** – The Board of Membership shall consist of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis at Spring Congregational Meetings.
- B. Duties** – In coordination with the Ministers, the Board of Membership is responsible for planning and implementing programs to invite and welcome potential new members and to integrate new members into the Church community.

**Section 11. Board of Justice.** The Board of Justice shall consist of committees acting independently of each other, with the mission of furthering the Church’s mission of seeking justice for all regardless of their station in life.

**A. Open and Affirming Committee**

- 1. Members** – The Open and Affirming Committee shall be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis, at Spring Congregational Meetings.
- 2. Duties** – The Open and Affirming Committee will celebrate and advocate equal rights for all by promoting, within the Church, an inclusive spiritual sanctuary for LGBTQ+ individuals through awareness, positive image and education and with the larger community to inform, promote, educate and advocate an open and affirming ministry.

**B. Racial Justice Committee**

- 1. Members** – The Racial Justice Committee shall be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis, at Spring Congregational Meetings.
- 2. Duties** – The Racial Justice Committee educates Church members and non-Church members about white privilege and systemic racism and builds community partnerships to advocate for racial justice.

**C. Social Justice Committee**

- 1. Members** – The Social Justice Committee shall be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis, at Spring Congregational Meetings.
- 2. Duties** – The Social Justice Committee works to build awareness of issues and takes thoughtful action to promote social justice and peace. The Social Justice Committee sets its priorities each year to focus on current social justice issues.

**ARTICLE XI – Dissolution**

An affirmative vote of at least 51% of the Congregation is required to dissolve the United Church of Gainesville, Inc., which is legally constituted under the statutes of the State of Florida. This vote must be cast in an open meeting that has been called for this specific purpose. Written notice of a meeting to dissolve the Church must be mailed to the membership no less than one month in advance.

Upon dissolution of the Church, all property and assets of the Church shall be transferred to the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ. This shall include any devise,

bequest, gift, interest, or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after such dissolution.

### **ARTICLE XII – General Rules**

**Section 1. Quorum of Members and Church Council Members** – 20% of Church members shall constitute a quorum at Congregational Meetings.

The quorum for transaction of Church Council business shall be 50% of the voting members.

A simple majority vote will decide any issue, except as otherwise stated in the By-Laws.

**Section 2. Proxy Voting** – If a member is unable to attend a Congregational Meeting, he/she may authorize another member to vote for him/her. This authorization is to be in writing, valid for one meeting only. Proxies shall not be counted in determining the quorum.

**Section 3. Rules of Order.** All meetings of the Congregation and the Church Council shall be conducted in accordance with the rules contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except as may otherwise be provided for in these By-Laws.

### **ARTICLE XIII – Amendments to the By-Laws**

**Section 1. Amendments to the By-Laws** may be proposed a) at any Congregational Meeting if included in the agenda or b) at a Congregational meeting which is called for this purpose.

#### **Section 2 – Quorums and Voting.**

A quorum of 20% of the Church membership shall be required to amend:

- Article III – Membership
- Article IV – Governance
- Article V – Congregational Meetings
- Article VI – Councils of Governance
- Article VII – Staff
- Article VIII – Election of Officers and Boards
- Article IX – Officers
- Article X – Boards
- Article XII – General Rules

A quorum of 50% of the Church membership shall be required to amend:

- Article I – The Name of the Church
- Article II – The Compact
- Article XI – The Dissolution of the Church
- Article ~~XII~~ XIII – Amendments to the By-Laws

A simple majority of those present and voting shall be required to amend the By-Laws.