

UNITED CHURCH OF GAINESVILLE BY-LAWS
Revisions approved by UCG Congregational Vote 5/2/2021

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 voting 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 voting congregational meetings and are not eligible for election to an office or a board of the Church.

Members who become inactive due to changing health conditions such as dementia or very advanced age will not be removed from the membership rolls, despite lack of attendance or other markers of active membership, unless by a request of the member or their Power of Attorney.

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 annually as outlined in the Church policies and procedures.

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 executive bodies 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 board chairpersons 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 the Clerk 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.

Section 6. Virtual Congregational Meetings

- A.** With the approval of the Church Council, any Congregational meeting may be held virtually (i.e. via telephone, video conference, etc.) and require the same notifications as in Section 5 above. Any business conducted virtually, including all Congregational votes and decisions, will follow the same rules, policies and procedures, as is practically possible, as an in-person Congregational meeting. All Congregational votes and decisions at a virtual Congregational meeting shall be valid and enforceable as if the business had been conducted at an in-person Congregational meeting.

ARTICLE VI – COUNCILS OF GOVERNANCE

Section 1. Church Council.

- A. Members** – The Church Council shall be composed of active and associate members of the Church. 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. Each Board and Committee should have at least one 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 every other month. 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. 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 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. Ministerial Staff.

- 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 Policies and Procedures regarding the composition of a Search Committee. The Minister (ordained, licensed, or commissioned) 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 Minister themselves 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 Minister submits a resignation, a meeting of the Church Council shall be called as soon as possible to act upon this resignation. The Church Council will then call a special meeting of the Congregation as soon as possible to further act upon this resignation. The Congregation may terminate the contract of the 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** – Each Minister serves as a member of the Church Council and an ex-officio non-voting member of their assigned Boards and Committees. The job description for each Minister is developed by the Board of Congregation-Ministry Review in collaboration with that Minister and is updated between June and September of each year. The job description shall define any reporting relationships.
- D. Evaluation** – Each 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 Ministers 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 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 **Board of Human Resources for equity considerations and** approved by Church Council. The supervising minister or the supervising staff person may hire part-time employees as defined in Church policies and procedures. Full-time positions need a hiring committee of a minister and the supervising staff person.
- B. Release** – ~~On written request from either the full-time employee, the supervising minister/employee or Church Council, the employment relationship of the employee to this Congregation may be severed. On written request from either the part-time employee or~~

~~supervising minister/employee, the employment relationship of the employee to this Congregation may be severed. If the Church terminates the contract, such notice must be provided by the supervising minister/employee 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 minister/employee. The job description will be reviewed annually between June and September by the supervising minister/employee.~~

~~**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 as outlined in the church policies and procedures. 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 chairpersons, chosen from members willing to serve, for election by the Congregation at the Spring Congregational meeting.

At least ten days prior to the annual Congregational meeting at which Board members are elected, the Nominating Committee shall submit to the Congregation a slate of Board members willing to serve, for election by the Congregation at the designated 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 and Committee 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. The Moderator may serve no more than two full consecutive terms.

B. Duties – The Moderator, in consultation with the Ministers, coordinates the total work of the Church. In this capacity, The Moderator is responsible for the agenda and presides over the meetings of the Church Council, Council Executive Committee, and the Congregation. The Moderator serves as a non-voting, ex-officio member of all Boards and Committees, 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. The Clerk 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, the Treasurer will meet with the 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 and provide a monthly report to Church Council. The Treasurer will invite the 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. 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 Congregation-Ministry Review, the Board of Membership, the Board of Benevolence, the Board of Justice, the Board of Parish Ministry, and the Board of Children, Youth and Families, and the Board of Human Resources.

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. Subcommittees, 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 may nominate to the Nominating Committee 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 and Committees. Each Board may establish subcommittees, utilizing other members of the Church, or dissolve subcommittees, as needed.

The “no fewer than” number of members listed under each Board or Committee is a goal to ensure proper functioning and decision-making of the Board or Committees’ ministry work. If the number of members falls below this ideal number, the Board or Committee members shall work with their Minister liaison for recruitment strategies to increase the number of members.

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. Small Groups Committee

1. Members - The Small Groups Committee should be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

2. Duties – The Small Groups Committee envisions, plans and coordinates small group offerings of spiritual growth, personal enrichment, trips and retreats, and outreach and fellowship opportunities for the Church.

B. Seminar Committee

1. Members – The Seminar Committee should be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

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 should be composed of no fewer than nine members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

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 gifts to the Church, all investments that are not included in the endowment, and special accounts.

The Church Accountant will provide to the Board a monthly written accounting of the status of the Church budget and fund balances. The 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 Church Accountant will insure that individual pledge records and any correspondence with respect to pledges shall be confidential between the Church Accountant and the pledger. Names of those who have not re-pledged will be made available to the Ministers 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 as defined by Church policies and procedures.

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 Minister liaison 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 Board of Congregation-Ministry Review 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. Board of Human Resources

A. Members-- The Board of Human Resources shall consist of no fewer than seven members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis at Spring Congregational Meetings. The Board seeks members with interest and expertise in Human Resources, budgeting, non-profit leadership, experience with the UCG children's programs, or other related experience. Prospective Board members may self-nominate and also may be nominated by the Moderator and present members of the Board of Human Resources. No immediate family member of a current staff member other than Child Care Aides may serve on the Board. Outside expertise may be solicited as needed. The current Moderator will submit names of potential nominees to the Church Council, seeking to maintain a diversity of expertise and demographics on the Board.

B. Duties--The Board of Human Resources works closely with the Board of Business and is responsible for recommending the total compensation packages for all clergy and lay staff in the annual budget process. They review all requests for compensation changes for

consistency with the UCG compensation philosophy. The Board of Human Resources acts in an advisory capacity to the ministers for human resource issues, reviews new or significantly changed job descriptions for compensation implications, and maintains and updates the compensation procedures and personnel policies as needed.

Section 45. The Board of Endowment Management.

A. Members – The Board of Endowment Management should be composed of no fewer than six members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually. 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 Board by the 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 56. Board of Congregation-Ministry Review.

A. Members – The Board of Congregation-Ministry Review should be composed of no fewer than nine members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

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 the Board of Congregation-Ministry Review, seeking to maintain a balance of age, gender, and other diversity on this Board. The Board will select nominees for the vacant positions and submit these names to Church Council for approval.

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 67. Board of 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. Compassion in Action

1. Members – Compassion in Action should be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

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 should be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

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 78. Board of Parish Ministry.

A. Members – The Board of Parish Ministry should be composed of no fewer than nine members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

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; Ministers, as needed; Tech coordinator; Music Librarian; and others as required.

Section 89. The Board of Children, Youth and Families.

A. Members - The Board of Children, Youth and Families should be composed of no fewer than eight members serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

B. Duties - (1) BCYF supports and collaborates with staff responsible for children and youth programs. (2) BCYF provides programming that exemplifies the values reflected in the UCG compact. Programming will foster connection within and across age groups, include opportunities for service, and include spiritual, educational and social components.

Section 910. The Board of Membership.

A. Members – The Board of Membership should consist of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

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 40.11 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 should be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

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 should be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

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 should be composed of no fewer than eight members, each serving three-year terms, elected on a staggered basis annually.

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 – Except as otherwise stated in the By-laws, 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, the member may authorize another member to vote in their place. 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 XIII – Amendments to the By-Laws

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