

**Constitution and Bylaws  
for  
Hope United Church of Christ**

**Approved at the annual  
congregational meeting on  
29 January 2023.**

**Effective 29 January 2023**

# Constitution

## Preamble

This Constitution and these Bylaws define and regulate the structure and governance of Hope United Church of Christ.

## Article 1: Name

The name of this Church shall be Hope United Church of Christ, hereafter referred to in this document as Hope U.C.C..

## Article 2: Structure

Hope U.C.C. is composed of its members, whose organization includes officers, Church Council, Trustees, Ministries, and other groupings as determined by the agreement of the members.

## Article 3: Covenantal Relationships

- 3a.** As a member of the United Church of Christ, Hope U.C.C. will relate to the various expressions of the Church in a covenantal manner. Hope U.C.C. will seek God's will and be faithful to God's mission, attending to its responsibilities in relation to all expressions of the Church. Its decisions are made in consultation and collaboration with other parts of the structure, including its Association, Conference, and the General Synod. As a member of the Body of Christ, Hope U.C.C. is called to honor and respect the work and ministry of each part of the United Church of Christ. Hope U.C.C. listens, hears, and carefully considers the advice, counsel, and requests of others. In this covenant, Hope U.C.C. joins the various expressions of the United Church of Christ to seek to walk together in all God's ways.
- 3b.** Hope U.C.C. has, in fellowship, a God-given responsibility for the United Church of Christ, its labors and its extension, even as the United Church of Christ has, in fellowship, a God-given responsibility for the well-being and needs and aspirations of its Local Churches. In mutual Christian concern, and in dedication to Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, Hope U.C.C. shares with the entire United Church of Christ in common Christian experience and responsibility.
- 3c.** Actions by, or decisions or advice emanating from the General Synod, the Illinois Conference or the Western Association, will be held in the highest regard by

Hope U.C.C.. This regard will be evidenced by discussion and prayerful consideration, by seeking to understand the intent, and by using respectful language about areas of disagreement.

## Article 4: Officers

- 4a. The officers of Hope U.C.C. include:
- President of the Congregation
  - Vice President of the Congregation
  - Treasurer
  - Financial Clerks
  - Recording Clerks
  - Registrar/Historian
- 4b. The officers of Hope U.C.C. shall be responsible to, and called by election of the membership of Hope U.C.C..
- 4c. Duties and responsibilities of these officers are included in the Bylaws of Hope U.C.C..

## Article 5: Membership

Hope U.C.C. is composed of persons who, believing in God as heavenly Father, and accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and depending on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are organized for Christian Worship, for the furtherance of Christian fellowship, and for the ongoing work of Christian witness.

- 5a. Persons become members of Hope U.C.C. by either
- (a) baptism and/or confirmation or profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior,
  - (b) reaffirmation of faith, or
  - (c) letter of transfer or certification from other Christian churches.
- 5b. All persons who are or shall become members of Hope U.C.C. are thereby members of the United Church of Christ.
- 5c. **Members in Full Standing.** Those members who, according to their ability, support Hope U.C.C. by attendance at its services of worship, by sharing in its organized activities, and/or contributing to its financial program and benevolences shall be Members in Full Standing. They may act in all affairs of Hope U.C.C. and may be elected or appointed to serve as officers of Hope U.C.C. or members of Council, Trustees, or any of the Ministries. Members in Full Standing shall comprise the voting constituency in all transactions of Hope U.C.C..

- 5d. Associate Members.** Those members who may be in temporary residence in the community or who, for various reasons, wish to maintain their membership in another Church (outside the immediate environs of Moline Illinois) and yet wish to engage in the activities and programs of Hope U.C.C. shall be Associate Members. They shall be entitled to the same rights and privileges as Members in Full Standing except they shall not be numbered among Members in Full Standing for reporting purposes to the Illinois Conference.
- 5e. Termination of Membership.** Membership in Hope U.C.C. may be terminated in the following ways:
- 5e(1)** Letter of Transfer. Upon request, a member shall be given a Letter of Transfer to another church and membership in Hope U.C.C. shall be terminated therewith.
- 5e(2)** Letter of Church Standing. If such other church body will not accept a Letter of Transfer, a certificate of Church Standing may be given to a member upon that member's written request, and membership in Hope U.C.C. shall terminate therewith.
- 5e(3)** Withdrawal. A member of Hope U.C.C. may withdraw from membership by writing a letter of intent to the Church Council through the Council President. An acknowledgement letter to the member will be provided by the Church Council President.
- 5e(4)** Removal from roles. A member of Hope U.C.C. that has been deemed inactive, through lack of financial support and attendance for one year or more by the Registrar/Historian may be removed from membership of Hope U.C.C. following all of the following actions:
- 5e(4)(i)** Written contact by the Registrar/Historian to which the member does not respond
  - 5e(4)(ii)** Email contact (if contact information is available) by the Registrar/Historian to which the member does not respond
  - 5e(4)(iii)** Personal contact by the Pastor or Associate Pastor of Hope U.C.C., during which the member expresses the desire to be removed from membership of Hope U.C.C.
  - 5e(4)(iv)** If, following any of the above, the member expresses the desire to be retained as a member of Hope U.C.C. that desire will be fulfilled by the Registrar/Historian
  - 5e(4)(v)** Upon determination that an individual should be removed

from membership of Hope U.C.C. the Registrar/Historian shall notify, in writing, the Trustees of Hope U.C.C., which will then proceed with a vote to remove the individual from membership at Hope U.C.C.

**5e(5)** Death.

## **Article 6: The Ministry**

- 6a.** Since all persons are called to be ministers for Jesus Christ, we covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and Will of God. We purpose to walk together in the ways of God, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of Hope U.C.C. to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice and peace. As did our forbearers, we depend upon the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the realm of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.
- 6b.** Hope U.C.C. recognizes that God calls the whole Church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the Gospel. Hope U.C.C. seeks to promote the ministry of its members by nurturing faith, calling forth personal gifts, and equipping members for Christian service.
- 6c.** Hope U.C.C. recognizes that God calls certain individuals to forms of ministry in and on behalf of the Church for which ecclesiastical authorization is required. The Call of an Ordained, Licensed or Commissioned Minister to Hope U.C.C. establishes a covenantal relationship with both the authorized minister and the United Church of Christ as represented by the Western Association and Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ.
- 6d.** Likewise, if members of Hope U.C.C. are called to ministries by other bodies in cooperation with the United Church of Christ a covenantal relationship shall exist between Hope U.C.C., the member, the other calling body, and the United Church of Christ, as represented by the Western Association and Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ.
- 6e.** Hope U.C.C. will act in partnership with the Western Association and the Illinois Conference as it seeks calls and installs pastoral and other leadership, and as it calls forth leadership from its own membership to lead in other settings of the United Church of Christ.

## **Article 7: Organization and Governance**

- 7a. Governing Body.** The governing body of Hope U.C.C., with full and final control in all affairs, shall be the active membership assembled in a properly called

Congregational Meeting.

- 7b. Legal Body.** The Church Council shall be the legal body of the corporation. General supervision and control of every activity and of the property of the Church shall be vested in the Church Council.
- 7c. Church Council Procedures.** The composition, Ex Officio members, voting rights, open meeting procedures, exclusions, responsibilities, appointment of administrative staff, tenure of council members, supervision, meeting processes and dates, quorum, voting, naming of delegates, governing of the use of church property, ministries, appointments, governance of real property, bequests and gifts, and other duties of the Church Council are outlined in the Bylaws of Hope U.C.C..
- 7d. Trustees and Other Standing Church Ministries.** The Trustees and names of other ministries of Hope U.C.C., as well as their composition, membership, and procedures, are outlined in the Bylaws of Hope U.C.C.

## Article 8: Church Meetings

- 8a.** The annual Congregational Meeting shall ordinarily be held in January. Its date shall be determined by the Church Council. The congregation, at its annual Congregational Meeting, shall receive written annual reports from the Church Council, Trustees, standing ministries, professional staff, and all organizations of Hope U.C.C.. During the Congregational Meeting officers, members of the Trustees and ministries shall be elected and other business shall be transacted as noted on the agenda. Persons elected shall normally take office the first Sunday following the Annual Meeting, following their installation.
- 8b.** Fifty percent (50%) plus one individual of the average attendance for the two (2) months prior to a properly called congregational meeting shall be required for a quorum. Unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws of this constitution, at all meetings of the church, a simple majority of those present and voting shall be the action of the church.
- 8c.** A special meeting of the congregation may be called by the Church Council at its own initiative. A special meeting of the congregation may also be called upon receipt by the Church Council of a petition signed by no fewer than ten (10) members in full standing of the congregation. Upon receipt of such petition, the Church Council shall schedule a meeting to be convened within three weeks.
- 8d.** Notice and announcement of a Congregational Meeting shall be given on two consecutive Sundays prior to the time of the meeting. Notice shall contain the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting. Notice may be given in the newsletter, by mail, electronic mail, in the Sunday worship bulletin, or

announcement at regularly schedule services of worship. Except for stated business, no other business may be transacted at a special Congregational Meeting.

## **Article 9: Services**

**9a. Worship.** Services of worship shall be held each Sunday and at other appropriate times as be determined by the Church Council in consultation with, and upon recommendation of, the Pastor and the Worship and Music Ministry.

**9b. The Sacraments.**

**9b(1)** Holy Communion. This sacrament shall be celebrated at such times as the Pastor shall determine, in consultation with the Worship and Music Ministry and as approved by the Church Council.

**9b(2)** Holy Baptism. This sacrament shall be administered at such times as determined by the Pastor.

## **Article 10: Rules of Order**

All church meetings shall be conducted by the latest edition of modified Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article 11: Amendments**

Proposed amendments to this Constitution or its Bylaws shall be submitted in writing to the Church Council and shall be made available to the membership for two months before a meeting is called to amend either the Constitution or Bylaws. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of a duly called congregational meeting shall be necessary for amendment.

# Bylaws

## Preamble

These Bylaws, consistent with the Constitution of Hope U.C.C., further define and/or regulate the officers, Council, Trustees, ministries, and membership. They also describe its free and voluntary relationship with the Illinois Conference and the Western Association of the United Church of Christ, and with the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, its Executive Council, and the Covenanted Affiliated and Associated Ministries.

## Article 1. Pastor, Associate Pastor, and Staff Positions

Sections under this article describe the role of the Pastor and other positions of ministerial leadership of Hope U.C.C..

### 1A Pastoral Search Ministry

- 1A(1) The Pastoral Search Ministry will be formed by the Church Council within thirty (30) days of the occurrence of a pastoral or other ministerial vacancy.
- 1A(2) The Pastoral Search Ministry shall be composed of nine (9) members in full standing of Hope U.C.C.
- 1A(3) The members of the Pastoral Search Ministry shall be approved by the congregation at an appropriately convened Congregational Meeting.
- 1A(4) In filling a vacancy or securing pastoral services during the period of a vacancy, the Pastoral Search Ministry will report the vacancy, and seek the counsel of the Illinois Conference Search and Call Specialist through the Western Association office.
- 1A(5) The Pastoral Search Ministry shall develop a budget, in consultation with the Trustees, and present it to the Church Council for approval. It shall also request, as needed, amendments to this budget from the Church Council following consultation with the Trustees.
- 1A(6) It shall be the responsibility of the Pastoral Search Ministry to seek candidates for the vacancy of the office of Pastor and/or Associate Pastor from those candidates whose professional profiles are secured through the Western Association of the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ.
- 1A(7) When the Pastoral Search Ministry is ready to present the name and



profile of a candidate to the congregation, it will arrange for the candidate to preach at a worship service of Hope U.C.C.. Following that service, a special Congregational Meeting shall be held. A two-thirds (2/3) favorable vote constitutes a call.

- 1A(8)** The details of a contract of call shall be negotiated by the Chairperson of the Pastoral Search Ministry in consultation with the President of the Congregation and the Chairperson of the Trustees. The contract of call shall detail the initial terms of compensation and other benefits and be approved by the Church Council.
- 1A(9)** If Hope U.C.C. selects a Pastor or Associate Pastor who does not have standing in the United Church of Christ, the Pastor or Associate Pastor will be required to seek and obtain Dual Standing from the Western Association of the Illinois Conference.
- 1A(10)** When an ordained minister accepts the call to Hope U.C.C., the newly called Pastor and the President of the Search Ministry and the President of the Church Council will join in requesting the Western Association to arrange for a service of installation or recognition.
- 1A(11)** Within six (6) weeks following the service of installation or recognition, the newly called Pastor or Associate Pastor shall become a member of Hope U.C.C..
- 1A(12)** When a minister authorized by the Western Association, or Hope U.C.C., decides to terminate their relationship, notice of the decision is sent to the Illinois Conference Minister and the Western Association.
- 1A(13)** The Pastor, Associate Pastor and Hope U.C.C. shall adhere to all terms of the contract of call signed at the time of call and/or as subsequently modified. The pastoral/associate pastoral call is for an indefinite period. In order to terminate the contract of call sixty (60) days notice shall be given by either party unless otherwise approved by the Church Council. In the event that the Pastor/Associate Pastor loses his/her ministerial standing in the Western Association, the call shall be terminated immediately.
- 1A(14)** Procedures of termination shall be in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.
- 1A(15)** If serious or divisive conflicts arise between members of Hope U.C.C. and its ministerial leadership, the Church Council and the Pastoral Relations Ministry will seek assistance of the Western Association and/or Illinois Conference.
- 1A(16)** Should the Western Association have reason to question the fitness for

ministry of any of the leaders of Hope U.C.C., every effort will be made to cooperate fully in the investigation, to remain in covenant with all parties, and to provide appropriate leadership and nurture for the congregation during and after the fitness review.

## **1B The Pastor**

- 1B(1)** The Pastor shall be both the spiritual and administrative leader of the Church, reporting to the congregation through the Church Council.
- 1B(2)** The Pastor shall be responsible for all functions normally associated with parish ministry, and shall have authority to delegate or share functions as appropriate to staff size, following consultation with the Church Council.
- 1B(3)** The Pastor shall serve as an ex officio (non-voting) member of the Church Council, Trustees, and all ministries of Hope U.C.C.
- 1B(4)** The Pastor shall be responsible for executive direction of all staff, including a periodic performance review.
- 1B(5)** The Pastor shall be responsible for coordination and cooperation with The United Church of Christ at all levels.

## **1C The Associate Pastor**

- 1C(1)** Hope U.C.C., in consultation with the Pastor, may choose to hire or call an Associate Pastor who shall report to the Pastor.
- 1C(2)** A job description and contract for employment for this position will be developed by the Pastor and the Pastoral Relations Ministry, and approved by the Church Council and Trustees.
- 1C(3)** The Associate Pastor shall be responsible for any and all functions delegated to him/her by the Pastor.
- 1C(4)** The Associate Pastor shall serve as an ex officio (non-voting) member of the Church Council, Board of Trustees, and all ministries of Hope U.C.C.

## **1D Other Church Staff**

### **1D(1) Music Staff**

- 1D(1a)** Hope U.C.C., in consultation with the Pastor, may choose to hire or call music staff. The hiring process shall be determined by the Pastor and the Church Council, in consultation with the Trustees and appropriate ministries of Hope U.C.C.

- 1D(1b)** Job descriptions will be developed by the appropriate ministry/ministries, in consultation with the Pastor. These job descriptions will then be approved by the Church Council and Trustees.
- 1D(1c)** Music staff would be recommended to the Church Council by the Pastor and appropriate Ministry for approval.
- 1D(1d)** In consultation with the Trustees, the Church Council shall approve a contract for employment.

**1D(2) Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper**

- 1D(2a)** Hope U.C.C., in consultation with the Pastor, may choose to hire an Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper. The hiring process shall be determined by the Pastor and the Church Council, in consultation with the appropriate standing ministry/ministries of Hope U.C.C.
- 1D(2b)** A job description will be developed by the appropriate Ministry, in consultation with the Pastor. This job description will then be approved by the Church Council and the Trustees.
- 1D(2c)** The Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper would be recommended to the Church Council by the Pastor and appropriate ministry/ministries for approval.
- 1D(2d)** In consultation with the Trustees, the Church Council shall approve a contract for employment.

**1D(3) Custodian**

- 1D(3a)** Hope U.C.C., in consultation with the Pastor, may choose to hire a custodian. The hiring process shall be determined by the Pastor and the Church Council, in consultation with the appropriate standing ministries of Hope U.C.C.
- 1D(3b)** A job description will be developed by the appropriate Ministry/ministries, in consultation with the Pastor. This job description will then be approved by the Church Council.
- 1D(3c)** The Custodian would be recommended to the Church Council by the Pastor and appropriate ministry/ministries for approval.
- 1D(3d)** In consultation with the Trustees, the Church Council shall approve a contract for employment.

**1D(4) Other Program Staff**

- 1D(4a)** Hope U.C.C., in consultation with the Pastor, may choose to hire other program staff. The newly created positions and hiring process shall be determined by the Pastor and the Church Council, in consultation with the appropriate standing ministries of Hope U.C.C.
- 1D(4b)** The newly created position(s) and job description(s) will be developed by the appropriate ministry/ministries, in consultation with the pastor. This/these job description(s) will then be approved by the Church Council.
- 1D(4c)** The candidate(s) would be recommended to the Church Council by the pastor and appropriate ministry/ministries for approval.
- 1D(4d)** In consultation with the Trustees, the Church Council shall approve contracts for employment.

**Article 2. Officers of the Church**

**2A** Elected officers of the congregation are eligible for election as members of any standing Ministry.

- 2A(1)** Elected officers must remain members in full standing throughout the duration of their term of office. Any officer of the church that does not remain a member in full standing during his/her term of office must resign from that office, and a replacement shall be named by the Church Council to fulfill the remainder of that term.
- 2A(2)** Officers of the Church, including members of the Church Council, Trustees, Ministries (standing and Ad Hoc) shall be installed at a regular or special service of worship on the first Sunday following the Congregational Meeting at which they were elected. They shall hold office until their successors are installed, or until removed either by action of the Congregation or Church Council.
- 2A(3)** The President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Financial Clerks shall, within thirty (30) days of installation, update all financial signature cards as needed to keep them current.

**2B President of the Congregation**

- 2B(1)** The President of the Congregation shall preside at all meetings of the Congregation and all meetings of the Church Council.

**2B(1a)** If neither the President nor Vice President is able to preside at any such meeting the President shall appoint a President Pro Tem to preside over the meeting in his/her absence.

**2B(2)** The President shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year, and is limited to two consecutive terms of service.

**2B(3)** The President shall be a voting member of the Trustees and an ex officio member of all Ministry teams.

**2B(4)** The President shall present a written report on the Church Council and Congregational activities for the Annual Meeting.

## **2C Vice President of the Congregation**

**2C(1)** In the President's absence, the Vice President shall preside at all meetings of the congregation and Church Council.

**2C(2)** The Vice President shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year, and is limited to two consecutive terms of service.

**2C(2a)** Although the congregation may choose to do otherwise, it is hoped that, upon completion of service as Vice President of the Congregation, the Vice President would be willing to serve as President of the Congregation should that position be vacant.

## **2D Treasurer**

**2D(1)** The Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year and may be re-elected for no more than six consecutive terms.

**2D(2)** The Treasurer shall disburse available funds in accordance with the Annual Budget and under the guidance of the Church Council and Trustees.

**2D(3)** The Treasurer shall keep accurate records of all receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer shall report, in writing and on a monthly basis, to the Church Council and Trustees regarding all receipts and disbursements associated with any and all church funds.

**2D(4)** The Treasurer shall submit a written report to the congregation at the annual meeting.

## **2E Financial Clerks**

**2E(1)** The Financial Clerks shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of

one year and may be re-elected for six consecutive terms.

- 2E(2)** The Financial Clerks shall be responsible for receiving all monies from the weekly collections, recording the pledges and offerings of members, and recording accountings of receipts from organizations in a timely fashion.
- 2E(2a)** If one of the Financial Clerks is unavailable on a Sunday the Financial Clerk in attendance may ask an individual to assist in the counting of the weekly offering. The procedure utilized shall guarantee the anonymity of the church's donors.
- 2E(3)** The Financial Clerks are to provide each member with a statement of contributions by 31 January of each year with the assistance of the Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper.
- 2E(4)** The Financial Clerks are to provide the Church Council with a monthly written report of income in relationship to monies pledged.
- 2E(5)** If the Financial Clerks are also willing to serve in the capacity of Recording Clerks, those two offices may be combined for the duration of the Financial Clerks' term in office.

## **2F Recording Clerk**

- 2F(1)** The Recording Clerk shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year and may be re-elected for nor more than six (6) consecutive terms.
- 2F(2)** The Recording Clerk shall record and report minutes of all meetings of the congregation and Church Council.
- 2F(3)** The Recording Clerk shall submit a written copy of any regularly scheduled or special congregational meetings to the congregation for approval at the next regularly scheduled annual meeting of the congregation.

## **2G Registrar/Historian**

- 2G(1)** The Registrar/Historian shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year and may be re-elected for nor more than six (6) consecutive terms.
- 2G(2)** The Registrar/Historian shall maintain records of all members of the church, shall write letters of transfer and seek letters of transfer when so directed by the Worship and Music Ministry.

- 2G(3)** The Registrar/Historian, with the assistance of the Worship and Music Ministry, shall be responsible for a yearly review of the rolls.
- 2G(3a)** The Registrar/Historian shall report all membership changes in a written report submitted to the Annual Meeting.
- 2F(4)** The Registrar/Historian shall be responsible for maintaining the church archives and history.

### **Article 3. Church Council, Trustees, and Ministries**

The Bylaw articles which follow describe, in detail, the workings of the Church Council, Trustees, and Ministries of Hope U.C.C., and how each is elected and functions.

- 3A** All members of Hope U.C.C. elected to the Church Council, Trustees, and Ministries of Hope U.C.C., be they regular or Ad Hoc Ministries, must be members in full standing.

#### **3B Church Council**

- 3B(1)** All members of the Church Council shall be elected for a two-year term by the members of Hope U.C.C. at the annual Congregational Meeting.
- 3B(2)** The Church Council shall consist of the following voting members:
- 3B(2a)** President
  - 3B(2b)** Vice-President
  - 3B(2c)** Treasurer
  - 3B(2d)** Financial Clerks
  - 3B(2e)** Historian/Registrar
  - 3B(2f)** Recording Clerk
  - 3B(2g)** One representative from each of the following:
    - Trustees
    - Faith Exploration and Education Ministry
    - Music and Worship Ministry
    - Mission and Outreach Ministry
  - 3B(2h)** At-Large Members chosen by the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting.

- 3B(2i)** Vacancies from the At-Large members may be filled by appointment by the Church Council and such newly appointed members shall serve until the next scheduled Congregational Meeting.
- 3B(3)** The Church Council shall meet monthly. Special meetings may be held at any time at the request of the Pastor or the President or Vice-President. Seven members shall be necessary for a quorum.
- 3B(4)** The Church Council shall act for the congregation between Congregational Meetings. It shall set policy and coordinate the activities of the congregation, including (but not limited to):

  - 3B(4a)** Setting annual mission and outreach direction and goals for the congregation and provide for their publication and distribution to the members
  - 3B(4b)** Reviewing recommendations of the Pastoral Relations Ministry and approving all personnel actions
  - 3B(4c)** Reviewing the work of all ministries by way of reports presented to the Council monthly
  - 3B(4d)** Taking any action as it deems necessary to promote the mission of the Church
  - 3B(4e)** Determine all special offerings collected by the Church.
  - 3B(4f)** The Council shall, as needed, appoint temporary ministries to assist in attaining its goals. It will specify the purpose of these groups and oversee their work. Such groups whose plan of work extends from one fiscal year into the next fiscal year of the church will require a congregational vote to approve their continued plan of work.
  - 3B(4g)** Appoint a delegate to the Western Association and Illinois Conference meetings
  - 3B(4h)** Provide an avenue for suggestions, complaints, and needs of the congregation to be heard, referred to the appropriate Ministry, and responded to by the officers of the congregation in a spirit of Christian Community.
- 3B(5)** The Church Council shall develop, recommend and approve an annual budget, in consultation with the Trustees, and all standing ministries of Hope U.C.C.. This budget will then be presented to the Trustees for review and approval and, ultimately, to the congregation for its approval at



the annual Congregational Meeting. The Council will work closely with the Trustees in monitoring and, if necessary, amending the budget as needed.

- 3B(6)** All meetings of the Church Council are open to members and friends of Hope U.C.C.
- 3B(7)** All minutes of every meeting shall be posted and made available for members and friends of Hope U.C.C.
- 3B(8)** All financial reports shall be presented to the Church Council for review, possible amendment, and approval on a monthly basis. Following review, possible amendment and approval, these reports shall be posted and made available for members and friends of Hope U.C.C.
- 3B(9)** The Church Council shall report on its actions to the congregation, in writing, at each annual Congregational Meeting.

### **3C Trustees**

- 3C(1)** The Trustees shall consist of the President of the Congregation, Treasurer, Financial Clerks, and at least five members elected by the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting. It shall be the legal representative of Hope U.C.C., as determined by the laws of The State of Illinois.
- 3C(2)** The Trustees shall elect its chairperson from its membership at its first meeting after the annual Congregational Meeting.
- 3C(3)** The Trustees shall, in consultation with the Pastoral Staff and Church Council, conduct an annual congregational pledge drive and develop the annual budget of the Church.
  - 3C(3a)** The Trustees shall request suggested budgets from the pastoral staff and all Ministries of the Church. From these suggested budgets the Trustees shall develop and approve the annual budget of the Church.
  - 3C(3b)** The Trustees shall then present the proposed annual budget to the Church Council in adequate time for the Council to approve the budget and prepare it for presentation to the congregation at the annual meeting.
- 3C(4)** The Trustees shall review and, as necessary, recommend changes to the annual budget of Hope U.C.C., as presented by the Church Council. The Trustees shall work with the Church Council for assuring that the annual budget is not exceeded by any standing or temporary committees of Hope

U.C.C.. If budget modifications are needed it shall recommend the appropriate changes to the Church Council for its approval.

- 3C(5)** The Trustees, through the Financial Clerks, shall assure that all pledge payments are recorded and reported appropriately and that contributing members of the Church are furnished with statements of contributions.
- 3C(6)** The Trustees shall approve or disapprove any fund raising activities put forth by any Ministry of the Church or any other group of the Church.
- 3C(7)** The Trustees are responsible for the management and maintenance of the building and grounds belonging to Hope U.C.C., including the service systems and equipment within the buildings.
  - 3C(7a)** The Trustees may authorize emergency repairs in consultation with the Church Council.
  - 3C(7b)** Any non-emergency expenditures or indebtedness greater than fifteen percent (15%) of the annual budget must have the prior approval of the congregation, either at the annual meeting or at a specially called meeting of the congregation.
- 3C(8)** The Trustees, unless specified in these Bylaws, shall administer all funds of the congregation. This includes, but is not limited to
  - 3C(8a)** Ensuring that all bills are paid in a timely manner and as requested by any and all vendors
  - 3C(8b)** Shall obtain competitive quotes for any purchases for and/or repairs to the building and grounds belonging to the Church, including service systems and equipment within the buildings, that are greater than \$1,000.
  - 3C(8c)** Informing the Church Council and obtaining Council permission for the transfer of any funds, be they in saving accounts, checking accounts, or capital fund accounts.
  - 3C(8d)** Ensure that funds within the budget that are indicated as “Designated funds” may only be used for their designated purpose. “Designated funds” in the amount of \$250 or less may be used for purposes other than their initial and/or current designation only upon approval by the Church Council and notification of the congregation. The suggested usage of “Designated funds” in any amount greater \$250 may be used for purposes other than their initial and/or current designation only upon approval of the Church Council and upon approval of a majority of the congregation

present at a specially called Congregational Meeting.

- 3C(8e)** Informing the Church Council and obtaining Church Council permission for the sale, deposit and/or withdrawal of investment funds and/or divestiture of investment funds of Hope U.C.C.
- 3C(8f)** Shall ensure that no member of the Trustees or any member of Hope U.C.C. has a conflict of interest regarding any of the financial decisions made on behalf of Hope U.C.C.
- 3C(9)** At the discretion of the Trustees and/or Council, the Trustees shall appoint a subgroup of the Trustees to conduct an internal examination of the Church's finances and financial procedures.
  - 3C(9a)** The results of this internal examination shall be reported to the Church Council, in writing, no later than the first Council meeting following the conclusion of the internal examination.
  - 3C(9b)** The results of this internal examination shall be reported to the congregation within the Trustees' report to the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting.
- 3C(10)** The Trustees, in consultation with the Church Council, shall appoint an appropriate individual or individuals to do an external examination of Hope U.C.C.'s finances at least every other year.
  - 3C(10a)** The results of this external examination are to be reported to the Church Council, in writing, at first Council meeting following the conclusion of the audit.
  - 3C(10b)** The results of this external examination shall be reported to the congregation within the Trustees' report to the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting.
- 3C(11)** The Trustees shall file the following reports to the congregation, in writing, at each annual Congregational Meeting. This report shall include, but not be limited to, the following
  - 3C(11a)** An annual financial report, along with a financial comparison to (at least) the previous fiscal year's financial standing.
  - 3C(11b)** A rationale/explanation as to why any ministry of the Church spent more money during the fiscal year than was budgeted for that year.
  - 3C(11c)** An explanation as to how any budgetary deficit was corrected, and from what funds those dollars were transferred.

**3C(11d)** If, at the end of the current budget year, a surplus is experienced the Trustees shall consult with the Church Council and then report to the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting as to how that surplus will be accounted for in the new fiscal year.

**3C(11e)** An explanation of any changes in any of the Church's capital fund accounts.

### **3D Pastoral/Personnel Relations Ministry**

**3D(1)** Following the installation of a new Pastor and prior to the disbanding of the Pastoral Search Ministry, the Pastoral Search Ministry shall elect a Pastoral/Personnel Relations Ministry from the membership of the Pastoral Search Ministry and the congregation. This ministry shall consist of two members from the Pastoral Search Ministry and a member-at-large, elected from the congregation. If the Church Council President was not a member of the Pastoral Search Ministry, the Church Council President shall be the fourth member of the ministry, and shall serve on this ministry throughout his/her term as Council President. This ministry shall serve for the duration of the pastor's call.

**3D(2)** All members of this ministry shall serve a term of three (3) years. At the end of three years the Pastoral/Personnel Relations Ministry will retain one member from the previous Pastoral Search Ministry and will appoint one (1) new member from the previous Pastoral Search Ministry that called the current Pastor. The congregation will also elect a member-at-large at the annual congregational meeting. No member may serve longer than two (2) consecutive terms. If a vacancy occurs during the interim, the ministry members, in consultation with the Church Council, will appoint a new member from those eligible members of the Pastoral Search Ministry that called the current Pastor or from the congregation, as needed. The newly appointed member will fill the unexpected term.

**3D(3)** The Pastoral/Personnel Relations Ministry shall act as a liaison between the congregation and the personnel employed by the Church. Employees include, but are not limited to, the Administrative Assistant, Bookkeeper, Custodian, Organist, Bell Choir Director, as well as the Pastor and Associate Pastor. A review of any situation submitted in writing shall be confidential.

**3D(3a)** If a situation arises involving the Pastor of the Church, the Pastoral/Personnel Relations Ministry shall meet without the Pastor to review the situation. Then, if needed, this Ministry will seek assistance from the Western Association prior to meeting with the Pastor in an attempt to resolve the situation. If the Ministry feels it is necessary to have a representative of the Western Association

present during the meeting with the Pastor then it should do so.

- 3D(3b)** If the situation involving the Pastor cannot be resolved following a predetermined length of time this Ministry will then work with the Western Association to take any further action that is deemed necessary.
- 3D(4)** The Pastoral/Personnel Relations Ministry shall report in writing to the Church Council any efforts for further resolution in which consensus cannot be met.
- 3D(5)** The ministry shall file a written report to the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting. This report shall include, but not be limited to the following:
  - 3D(5a)** Any actions the ministry undertook during the previous year.
  - 3D(5b)** Every aspect of this report shall, to the best of the ministry's efforts, retain the confidentiality of written submissions and any actions taken as a result of a written submission to the ministry regarding any staff member of the Church.

### **3E Worship and Music Ministry**

- 3E(1)** This ministry shall be comprised of members elected by the congregation. The ministry shall elect its chairperson from its membership at its first meeting after the annual Congregational Meeting.
- 3E(2)** The ministry shall, in consultation with the Pastor, serve as a sounding board for the Pastor as she/he considers any major changes to the regular worship services and/or the organization of the worship space. In addition, this ministry, in consultation with the Pastor, shall plan worship services that are outside the normal worship service.
- 3E(3)** This ministry is responsible for arranging for the preparation of Communion and the supervision of such.
- 3E(4)** The ministry shall arrange for greeters, liturgists, ushers, and communion servers for each service, as needed.
- 3E(5)** The Worship and Music Ministry shall make sure that the worship space is in proper order. In consultation with the Pastor, the ministry may choose special bulletins for services and suggest services and programs for various times of the Church year.
- 3E(6)** The ministry shall receive names of those individuals that wish to join Hope U.C.C. and then recommend the individual(s) to the congregation for

reception into full membership. The ministry will also work with the Pastor to incorporate the reception of new members during a future worship service.

- 3E(7)** The ministry shall oversee the music ministry of the Church, in cooperation with the Pastor and in consultation with the Church Council.
- 3E(8)** The ministry shall endeavor to communicate the weekly services to the general public and make known to the congregation and general public any special services that are planned throughout the year.
- 3E(9)** The ministry shall file a written report regarding any actions taken during the year to the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting.

### **3F Mission and Outreach Ministry**

- 3F(1)** This ministry shall be comprised of members elected by the congregation. The ministry shall elect its chairperson from its membership at its first meeting after the annual Congregational Meeting.
- 3F(2)** The ministry shall, in consultation with the Pastor, be responsible for promoting interest and participation in the ministries of the Church. The ministry shall work to promote the Church's rendering of loving service to all people and strive for justice and peace. This work shall be in conjunction with community and welfare agencies and the Faith Exploration and Education Ministry.
- 3F(3)** The ministry shall file a written report regarding any actions taken during the year to the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting.

### **3G Faith Exploration and Education Ministry**

- 3G(1)** This ministry shall be comprised of members elected by the congregation. The Faith Exploration and Education Ministry shall elect its chairperson from its membership at its first meeting after the annual Congregational Meeting.
- 3G(2)** The Faith Exploration and Education Ministry shall, in consultation with the Pastor, plan, coordinate, and implement educational programs for all members of the Church, regardless of age.
- 3G(3)** This ministry shall, in consultation with the Pastor, plan, coordinate, and implement the Confirmation program for the Church.
- 3G(4)** The ministry shall file a written report regarding any actions taken during

the year to the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting.

### **3H Nominating Ministry**

- 3H(1)** The Nominating Ministry shall be composed of at least one member of the Church Council, one member of the Trustees, and one representative from each of the ministries of the Church, with the exception of the Pastoral/Personnel Relations Ministry. The Nominating Ministry shall elect its chairperson from its membership at its first meeting after the annual Congregational Meeting.
- 3H(2)** The Nominating Ministry shall prepare a written list of nominees for officers, Church Council, Trustees, and ministry members of the Church that will be presented to the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting.
- 3H(3)** Whenever there are vacancies on any committees or boards of the Church, the Nominating Ministry shall work with the Church Council to seek a replacement member.

## **Article 4. Auxiliary Organizations of the Church**

Independent organizations operating as integral parts of the Church, that are organized under their own bylaws and have their own budget, shall be classified as Auxiliary Organizations of the Church, and come under the general jurisdiction of the Church. All funds of auxiliary organizations are not to be commingled with those of the Church. All Auxiliary Organizations shall prepare a written annual report of their activities and finances for the Annual Congregational Meeting.

- 4A Ruth Circle** is an Auxiliary Organization of the Church and is open to all women of the congregation.
- 4B Men's Fellowship** is an Auxiliary Organization of the Church and is open to all men of the congregation.
- 4C Singles and Doubles** is an Auxiliary Organization of the Church and is open to all members of the congregation.
- 4D Visitation Ministry** is a ministry that, in cooperation with the Pastor, visits members and friends of the congregation in times of illness, bereavement, and personal or spiritual needs, visits shut-ins on a regular basis, and assists the Pastor in welcoming visitors and helping to maintain membership and visitor information.
- 4E Other auxiliary organizations** wanting to become an Auxiliary Organization of

the Church shall present such a request for approval to the Church Council.

## **Article 5. Indemnification**

- 5A** Any staff or officers of Hope U.C.C., or any member of its Trustees, Ministries, Task Forces, or Auxiliaries and any member engaged in recognized ministries of the Church, may, to the full extent allowed by law, be indemnified by the Church against all judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement of, and against all reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees, actually and necessarily incurred in defense of the lawsuit, proceeding or prosecution (including appeal thereof) wherein such person is made a party by reason of being such officer or member. This provision shall also extend to any lawsuit, proceeding, or prosecution in which an officer or member of another organization in which the person serves at the request of The Church.
- 5B** Indemnity shall not be made in connection with any derivative lawsuit or proceeding for any matter with regard to which the member or officer is adjudged to have breached the duty owed by the member or officer of the Church by the right of which the action is brought. In all other lawsuits, proceedings or prosecutions, indemnity shall not be made unless the officer or member acted in good faith and for a purpose which the person reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the Church and in criminal actions or proceedings only upon the additional requirement that the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the operative conduct or inaction was unlawful.
- 5C** These indemnity provisions shall also operate for the benefit of anyone duly serving in a representative capacity for such member or officer.
- 5D** The officers of Hope U.C.C. are authorized to purchase insurance providing indemnification pursuant to the provisions of the preceding paragraphs, subject to the approval of the Church Council as to the amount of coverage and premium for such insurance. Any such contract of insurance may afford coverage for matters as to which the Church may not give indemnity, if in such case the insurance shall provide in such manner as may be required under applicable law for a retention amount and for co-insurance.

## **Article 6. Dissolution of the Church**

- 6A** This Church may only be dissolved at a Special or annual Congregational Meeting of the Church at which at least fifty percent (50%) plus one individual of the average attendance for the two (2) months immediately prior to the properly called Special or annual Congregational Meeting is held. At least two-thirds (2/3) of those present must concur with the motion to dissolve the Church. The proposed motion to dissolve the Church must be laid before the congregation in writing no less than two (2) months prior to the meeting, having been read before the congregation on four (4) consecutive Sundays preceding such Special or annual Congregational Meeting, and copies made available to all members of the Church.
- 6B** Upon dissolution of the Church, its assets and all property and interests of which it



shall then be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift or grant continued in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after such dissolution, shall be transferred to the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ and other agency, instrumentality or national body of the United Church of Christ as the Church membership may choose at the time of dissolution. Transfer of said assets, property and interests shall comply with the provisions of current State Law and applicable Federal Regulations.

## **Article 7: Effective Date**

- 7A** This constitution and bylaws shall go into effect in January 2023, pending an affirmative vote of no less than 2/3 of those present and voting at a duly called Annual Meeting of the Congregation in January 2023.
- 7B** This constitution and these bylaws shall, upon a 2/3 majority vote at the duly called Annual Meeting of the Congregation in January 2023, along with any amendments shown needful prior to that date, become the permanent Constitution and Bylaws of Hope U.C.C., replacing all such documents preceding it.