

**BYLAWS OF UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST PARKER HILLTOP
2015**

DRAFT 06/13/2017 - Approved by Congregational Vote 06/25/17

Council Approved—12/10/19

New Amendments 1/14/2020 (secs. 112, 212, and 303)

New Amendments (secs. 202,301a, 303, and 600a)

Council Approved—2/11/20

New Amendment proposed (sec. 303)

Section 100. These Bylaws, consistent with the Constitution of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop, further define and/or regulate the Church offices, ministerial offices, ministry teams, and membership. They also describe its relationship with the Southeastern Association and Rocky Mountain Conference 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 I. The Pastoral Ministry

Section 101. A Search Committee of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop will be formed to fill pastoral or other ministerial vacancies. This search committee slate will be formed by the Church Council and elected by the active church partners of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop at a special congregational meeting.

Section 102. In filling a vacancy or securing interim pastoral services during the period of a vacancy, the Search Committee will report the vacancy, and seek the counsel of the Conference or Association placement committee through the Conference Minister.

Section 103. The Search Committee will request that the Conference Minister secure relevant information about any candidate whom it wishes to consider for the vacancy.

Section 104. The Search Committee will present a candidate it recommends to the congregation of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop, which will determine whether it wishes to call the candidate recommended. The presentation process of the candidate to the congregation will be determined by the Search committee, of which may include the presentation of a sermon by the candidate on the day of the vote. A minimum vote of 2/3rds of the congregation present at a duly called meeting will be required for approval of the candidate.

Section 105. The terms of the call will be presented to the Association, and the call format will be one agreed on by the Southeastern Association, Rocky Mountain Conference and the Search Committee. A copy of the call agreement will be given to the United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop's Council and the minister called.

Section 106. When an Authorized Minister, as defined by United Church of Christ's Manual on Ministry, accepts the call to United Church of Christ Parker

Hilltop, the Minister and United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop will join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of installation. If a minister who is not yet ordained, but who is qualified by the Association to accept a call, in fact accepts a call to the ministry of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop, the Minister and the Church will join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of ordination and installation.

- Section 107.** When a minister authorized by Southeastern Association, or United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop decides to terminate the pastoral relationship, notice of the decision is to be sent forthwith to the Conference Minister and the Association.
- Section 108.** United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop shall select a ministerial leader who has active ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ, or has privilege of call in the UCC, or is a minister with active standing with their ecumenical partner, the Disciples of Christ.
- Section 109.** If serious issues or divisive conflicts arise between the church partners of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop and its ministerial leadership, the Council and/or Pastor Parish Team will seek the assistance of the Southeastern Association or Conference Minister.
- Section 110.** In the event of a formal fitness review of a pastor of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop, 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.
- Section 111.** The Senior Pastor and any Associate Pastors of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop must have or obtain active ministerial standing in the Southeastern Association and be duly installed by the Association. United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop strongly encourages and expects its clergy leadership to participate in the greater work of the Association, Rocky Mountain Conference, the national UCC, and ecumenical ministries.
- Section 112.** The Settled Senior Pastor of the Church shall be able to have information about who has pledged their financial support for the Church in any given year, who has donated to the church or not, and the amounts donated by name of donor, and will be informed of any comments on the pledging documents that affect a church partner's standing in the Church or spiritual health.
- Section 113.** The Church Secretary will not open sealed pledge envelopes, but will put them in a safe place for the Financial Secretary to collect. All individual pledge information shall be confidential and not subject to disclosure to any other church partner as amended on 8/18/2019 in the Constitution of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop Section 3.1.2.01 Financial Secretary.
- Section 113.** All retired clergy of the church shall enter a 3-way covenant as agreed by the Senior Pastor and the retired clergy person.

Article II. The Church Council and Officers

- Section 200.** The Council of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop is its primary governing body, accountable directly to the membership.
- Section 201.** The Council will have five to ten active church partners including the Moderator of the Congregation and the Vice Moderator. The Vice-Moderator shall serve as the Clerk of the Church and its Registered Agent. *To serve on Church Council, a person must have been an active church partner for a full year prior to the time of the Council election. To be considered for Vice-Moderator, a person must have served on Council for a minimum of a full year at the time of the Council election and be vetted by the Nominating Team. To be considered for Moderator, a person must have served on Council for a minimum of two full years at the time of the Council election and be vetted by the Nominating Team.*
- Section 201a.** *Church Council terms shall be three (3) years. However, the term may be extended for currently-serving Vice Moderators and Moderators to finish out their full terms, and for Vice Moderator, this may include a following full term as Moderator. A person must have at least one year off before being nominated to serve on Council again.*
- Section 202.** *Persons wishing to be Council Members and/or Church Officers shall first be interviewed and vetted by the "Nominating Team" (NT) See Section 401a and b.*
- Section 203.** Vacancies may be filled by appointment by the Council until the next scheduled meeting of the Congregation.
- Section 204.** The Church Pastor will have voice, but no vote at Council meetings. The Pastor may bring items to the attention of Council, and may veto any vote that violates the freedom of the pulpit, violates the core values of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop as expressed in "The Ordained Minister's Code" and the "Local Congregation in Relation to its Pastor" (Attached), or the Terms of Call of the Pastor.
- Section 205.** The Council will meet monthly or more often, as needed and no less than 7 times each year. Unless previously announced, Council meetings will take place at the Church. A quorum will consist of one more person than half of its voting members. Action may be taken by the Council in a meeting, in the event a quorum is not present, subject to quorum approval at the next called meeting. Electronic voting will be permitted.
- Section 206.** The Council's work will include: reviewing, modifying and approving the budget of the Church; setting goals for the congregation; reviewing recommendations of the Pastor and Ministry Teams and approving all actions; reviewing the work of all Teams; approving new initiatives of Teams, and taking such action as it deems necessary to promote the purpose of the Church.
- Section 207.** The Council shall, from time to time, convene additional Ministry Teams to assist in attaining its goals. It will specify the purpose of these Teams and oversee their work. Each ministry team shall have a Council liaison assigned, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws or by approval of Council. The Council liaison will be a voting member and may or may not serve as the leader of the ministry team as the team decides.

- Section 208.** *The Church Council shall be responsible for hiring staff employees of the church, setting and revising the terms of compensation, and general oversight of all staff employees. The Pastor (Senior Minister and Head of Staff) will be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of church staff employees. Where such employees work directly with the Senior Pastor, the Church Council will strongly weigh the views of pastoral staff when performing this oversight function. Specific duties, responsibilities and review of the Church staff employees may be delineated in a job description approved by the Church Council.*
- Section 209.** *The financial records of United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop shall be reviewed internally every two (2) years by the Financial Responsibility Team. A review team shall be appointed by the Council. Every five (5) years a professional review of all financial accounts shall be conducted outside of the Financial Responsibility Team.*
- Section 210.** *The Council shall report on its work to the Congregation at least monthly through the posting of the minutes, except those minutes of Executive Sessions, which shall remain confidential, unrecorded, and unpublished.*
- Section 211.** *Any member of Church Council or the Senior Pastor of the Church may call for an Executive Council Session. The sole business of the session will be the item presented in the call or the session. All members of Council who are present and the Senior Pastor must agree that the session should be closed, confidential, and unrecorded. Reasonable efforts shall be made to give notice to all Council members and the Senior Pastor of the meeting time and place, if possible, at least 24 hours in advance.*
- Section 212.** *A petition may be filed for discipline of a Council member or Officer of the Church or church partner or attendee. The petition may initially be directed to Council or to the Pastor, or directly to the Pastor Parish Team and will be handled collaboratively. In situations where resolution is not reached using this process, Council will make the final decision, by majority vote as to how to proceed.*
- Section 213.** *United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop's church officers: Moderator, Vice Moderator, Treasurer and Financial Secretary will take a Healthy Ministry Training course as soon as possible following their first election.*

Article III. Church Partners

- Section 300.** *A church partner may be either active or inactive.*
- Section 301a.** *An active church partner is any adult and their UCC Parker Hilltop confirmed youth living at home who attends worship services, offers their time, skills and/or participation in sponsored church activities each year, and contributes financially to the church in a recorded yearly donation of at least \$100 plus the per capita rate currently in effect for the Rocky Mountain Conference and the Southeastern Association. Confirmed youth living in the household are not expected to meet a financial requirement.*
- Section 301b.** *An inactive church partner is any person who attends, aids through voluntary services, or invests financially in UCC Parker Hilltop at a*

minimum level as defined in Section 301a.above but does not perform all three obligations together in a single year or does none at all. All persons are welcome to be guests or inactive church partners of the church.

Section 302. Only active church partners may vote in church elections, hold church offices, and file motions or resolutions for the church to consider, or receive special pastoral services at the reduced rates offered for active church partners. A person running for church office should demonstrate a substantial commitment to the church beyond the bare minimum necessary to qualify for active church partner status.

Section 303. Per Capita contributions to the Rocky Mountain Conference and the Southeastern Association will be calculated by taking the summation of dues per head multiplied by the number of active adult and confirmed church partners in the congregation. The Vice Moderator (acting as Church Clerk) and the Senior Pastor will determine active or inactive status of a person's church partnership which will be vetted by the church council and included in the Annual Report. Upon the absence of a Vice Moderator, the Moderator will act as Church Clerk.

Section 304. The look back period for making the initial determination of active or inactive status will be 2017. A person who is initially classified as inactive may appeal this determination to Church Council or may move to active church partner status by meeting the three thresholds stated in Section 301a.

Article IV. Ministry Teams

Section 400. A Pastor-Parish Team shall exist as a vehicle to promote and maintain open and healthy relationships between the pastor and the congregation in which confidentiality and trust is the foundation for constructive and caring communication. The members of the team shall *consist of: The Pastor, plus three to five active church partners, selected jointly by the Pastor and the Moderator and vetted by the Nominating Team. New members of the team will be approved by Council.* The term of the team service shall be *three years, renewable for one term.* The leader of the Pastor-Parish Team shall serve as the liaison to Council should one of the other team members not be actively serving on Council. The work and discussions of the Pastor Parish Team shall be confidential unless by law, they must be disclosed to law enforcement.

Section 401. Nominating Team. The purpose of the team is to interview, vet, and present to Council the candidates needed to fill open Council, Church Officer, Pastor-Parish Team and other positions as requested by Council.

Section 401a. The Nominating Team will consist of either three or five persons, including a former Council member and others who have been active church partners of the church for at least three years prior to the start of their term. The team members will be selected by and asked to serve by the Council for a period of three years, renewable for one term. The initial

terms of office shall be staggered as the team shall decide. The church will vote on the members of the team at an announced and duly convened Congregational Meeting.

Section 401b. *The tasks of the Nominating Team are:*

- 1. To recruit members for Council and for the various Church Officer positions;*
- 2. To vet persons who have expressed an interest in filling Church Council and/or Church Officer positions; Pastor-Parish Team, and other positions as requested by Council.*
- 3. To fill vacancies on Church Council or Church Officer positions until the next Congregational meeting.*

Section 402. Ministry Teams may be created at the suggestion of Council and/or the Pastor to carry out specific ministries of the Church. The terms of service, size of the team, and quorum/voting rights will be determined by the team. Teams shall have a Council liaison unless as otherwise provided in these Bylaws or with approval of Council. Ministry teams will determine their creative projects and functions with the oversight of the Pastor and/or Council.

Article V. Organizational Structure

Section 500. United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop seeks to be broadly inclusive and diverse in its organizational structure, with accountability resting as much as possible in the entire congregation, along with its partners in authorized ministry, the Southeastern Association and Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Section 501. The Pastor's service may be terminated by a 2/3 vote of the active church partners of the congregation. If a minister's active ministerial standing is withdrawn for any reason, such loss of active ministerial standing, if not restored, shall be grounds for dismissal as minister in the Church.

Section 502. The Council will be responsible for coordinating congregational review and response to proposals and actions of the national, regional, and local settings of the United Church of Christ.

Section 503. *The bylaws will be reviewed every two years. The review will be conducted by a team consisting of two or more current Council members, at least one active church partner, and the Pastor. Any time the Council determines that the bylaws need to be amended, a team with the above composition is to be formed to write and submit the amendments to the Council for consideration. Amendments favorably received by the Council are to be published on the website, and hard copies then submitted to the congregation for a 30-day review and comment period. The review and comment period is to be announced from the pulpit and published on the website. The Council may act upon the amendment(s) following the*

comment and review period. A simple majority vote of the Council is required. The actions will be reported to the congregation.

Article VI. Congregational Meetings, Quorum, and Voting

Section 600. There are two categories of congregational meetings.

Section 600a. The Annual Congregation Meeting.

This will be held in January each year, directly following the worship service. The Annual Report will be posted on the Church website, and hard copies made available two (2) weeks prior to the meeting. An additional hard copy shall be retained in the Church office.

*The **Annual Report** shall include the following:*

Agenda for the Annual Congregational Meeting

Pastor's Report

Moderator's Report

Clerk's Report

Treasurer's Report

Financial Secretary's Report

Presentation of Slate of New Council Members

Presentation of Slate of Church Officers

Ministry Team Reports

Discussion of and Vote on New Budget

The business to be conducted at the Annual Congregational Meeting will include, but not limited to: discussion of the Annual Report, discussion and vote of the new Budget, Receipt of the Report of the Nominating Committee, and election of Church Council Members, Church Officers, and Nominating Team Members plus any other church business brought forth by Church Council.

Section 600b. Special Congregational Meetings

Special Congregational meetings may also be called by either the Moderator or the Pastor with written (email) notice to Council and the active church partners two (2) weeks prior to the meeting, or as soon as possible if a two-week notice is not possible. The notice shall be published in the Weekly Church Email, on the Church Website, and announced at worship services. The Agenda for the public session shall be limited to the stated reason for the special congregational meeting.

Section 601. The quorum for the Congregational Meetings shall be 50% of active church. A quorum will not be required for Special Congregational Meetings unless a vote will be taken.

Section 602. The method of voting shall be determined by a motion, which must be seconded (if not brought by Council or a ministry team) and passed by majority vote of the active church partners present. Written absentee voting is permitted; proxy voting is not permitted.

Section 603. For all other meetings where votes will be taken, including during ministry team meetings, a quorum will be achieved at one person more than half the active members of the body.

Section 604. Unless otherwise specified in the Constitution of the Church or in the Bylaws of the Church, a majority vote of those present will be required to carry a vote. Where acclamation cannot be reached in congregational meetings, in Council meetings, and in ministry team meetings in voting, Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall be used to resolve motions and voting.

VII. Covenantal Relationships

Section 700. United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop is an Open and Affirming Church as that term is used within the denomination.

Section 701. United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop is aUCC SafeChurch as that term is used within the denomination.

Section 702. United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop is an Accessible to All Church as that term is used in the denomination.

Section 703. United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop will carry a general liability insurance policy with the UCC National Insurance Board, with limits and terms no less than in the previous calendar year.

Section 704. United Church of Christ Parker Hilltop is a progressive Church within the Christian faith. We revere scripture as our most sacred resource for understanding: our historical faith, our relationship with God as a Church, our call from Jesus to act in all things with compassion and justice, and our living relationship with God's Holy Spirit. We construe scripture historically, sacramentally, and metaphorically, rather than literally, so as to support all human and other life, to celebrate the love of God for all God's children, and to extend the Good News of Jesus Christ to all persons without exception. We are a non-creedal Church; we affirm the responsibility of every member to make this faith their own in reality of worship, in honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart before God.

The goal of coordinating the organization of the Local Church with the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ is to strengthen our covenantal partnerships. May we humbly seek to follow where Christ leads, and to do so as companions on the journey.