

**BYLAWS OF UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST PARKER HILLTOP**  
**Proposed Amendment January 8, 2025**

**Preamble**

**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, 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 worship, in honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart before God.**

**Article I. The Pastoral Ministry**

**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.

**Section 100a.** All following references to Church refer to UCC Parker Hilltop

**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 members 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 the 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, which may include the presentation of a sermon by the candidate on the day of the vote. A minimum vote of

2/3rds of active church members 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 upon by the Southeastern Association, the 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 the 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 members 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 Pastor and any ordained staff 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, the Rocky Mountain Conference, the national UCC, and ecumenical ministries.
- Section 112.** The Pastor of the Church shall be able to have information about who has pledged their financial support for the Church in any given year and who has donated to the church or not and will be informed of any comments on the pledging documents that affect a church member's standing in the Church or spiritual health.
- Section 113.** The Church Administrator 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 member, other than the pastor, as described in Section 112.

**Section 114.** All Active retired UCC clergy who become active members in UCCPH shall enter a UCC 3-way covenant between the Rocky Mountain Conference, UCCPH, and themselves as agreed upon by the 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 200a.** As amended on January 8, 2025, the Bylaws will reflect a Council that has Chairpersons who will serve on a quarterly basis, rotating between agreed upon members of Council beginning after the Annual Meeting in January of each year until otherwise determined. All references to Moderator in the remaining text of the Bylaws should be considered as Chairperson and with the understanding that the role is done on a quarterly basis. Requirements for serving as Chairperson are consistent with requirements to serve on Council. There will not be a Vice-Chairperson.

**Section 200b.** The Council will fulfill the role of the Nominating Team as described in Sections 401, 401a. and 401b.

**Section 201.** The Council will have five to ten active church members, 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 member for a full year prior to the time of the Council election. To be considered for Vice-Moderator, a person must have been an active church member for at least two years. The person must have served on Council for at least one year prior to the time of the election within the previous three years and be vetted by the Nominating Team. To be considered for Moderator, a person must have been an active church member for at least two years. The person must have served on Council for at least one year prior to the time of the election within the previous three years and be vetted by the Nominating Team. *Under special circumstances, the term of Moderator and/or Vice Moderator may be extended by up to, but not more than, one year: This extension can only be implemented after a Unanimous vote by the current Council members and notification of the active members of the congregation.*

**Section 201a.** Church Council terms shall be three (3) years renewable for one term with affirmation at the Annual Congregational meeting. 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. At the end of the second term, a person must have at least one year off before being nominated to serve on Council

again.

- Section 201b.** The Church Treasurer and the Financial Secretary shall be elected for a 3-year term at the annual meeting of the congregation (or other specially called meeting) and may hold these positions for no more than 2 consecutive terms. *Under special circumstances, the term of Treasurer and/or Financial Secretary may be extended by up to, but not more than, one year: This extension can only be implemented after a Unanimous vote by the current Council members and notification of the active members of the congregation.*
- 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 4 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 health and 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, when possible, 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 will be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of church staff employees. Where such employees work directly with the 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 are 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. 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 quarterly** 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 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 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 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, Officer of the Church, or church member 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 Members**

- Section 300.** A church member may be either active or inactive. Membership may be conferred upon any person(s) who accept and affirm publicly to the congregation The Preamble of the Bylaws and Constitution.
- Section 301a.** An active church member 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, contributes financially to the church and has affirmed their membership as described in Sec. 300. The suggested financial contribution shall be 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.
- Section 301b.** An inactive church member is any person who does not attend, aid through voluntary services, or participate financially in UCC Parker Hilltop in a period of a single year.
- Section 302.** Only active church members 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 members. A person running for church office should demonstrate

a substantial commitment to the church beyond the bare minimum necessary to qualify for active church member 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 members in the congregation. The Financial Secretary will determine the number of active church members and submit the number to the Pastor and Church Clerk to be included in the Annual Report. Upon the absence of a Vice Moderator, the Moderator will act as Church Clerk.

**Section 304.** A person who is initially classified as inactive may appeal this determination to Church Council or may move to active church member 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 members, 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.** A Nominating Team shall exist in order 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 members of the church for at least three years prior to the start of their term. The team members will be selected and voted on by Council and asked to serve 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 confirm with the Financial Secretary a record of financial contributions of interested persons
4. To work with Council to fill vacancies on church Council or church officer positions until the next Congregational Meeting

**Section 402.** Additional 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 Council and/or Pastor.

### **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 members of the congregation. If a minister's active ministerial standing is withdrawn for any reason and if not restored, it 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 member, 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 made available in the church office 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. After considering/accepting any comments on the proposed amendments, the Council will vote on the proposed amendments using a simple majority vote. The final amended Bylaws will be posted on the website, emailed to active church members, and a hard copy kept in the church office.

### **Article VI. Congregational Meetings, Quorum, and Voting**

**Section 600.** There are two categories of congregational meetings.

**Section 600a. The Annual Congregation Meeting.**

This meeting will be held in January each year, directly following the worship service. The Annual Report will be posted on the Church website and emailed to all active church members two (2) weeks prior to the meeting. An additional hard copy shall be retained in the Church office. The business to be conducted at the Annual Congregational Meeting will include, but not be limited to:

- Annual Report
- Presentation and affirmation of the new Budget
- Presentation of the slate of new Council members by Nominating Team
- Presentation of the slate of church officers by the Nominating Team
- Election of church Council members and church officers
- Any other church business brought forth by church Council or any church member

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

- Pastor's Report
- Moderator's Report
- Clerk's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Financial Secretary's Report
- Ministry Team Reports

**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 members 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 30% of active church members. A quorum will not be required for Special Congregational Meetings unless a vote will be taken.

**Section 602.** The method of voting shall be by show of hands of active church members. In the case of a Special Congregational Meeting, the voting method will be by secret ballot of active church members as determined in Section 301a. Written absentee voting is permitted; proxy voting is not permitted.

**Section 603.** For all other meetings where votes will be taken, a majority of active church members present will be counted.

**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 a UCC Safe Church 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.

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)

New Amendments proposed February 14, 2023 (Sec. 100a., 105, 112, 113, 201, 201a., 201b., 209, 300, 301a., 301b., 303, 304, 401b., 501, 503, 600a., 601, 602, 603, 704)

Amendments approved by Council April 11, 2023

Amendments proposed October 10, 2023 (Sec. 201, Sec. 201b.)

Amendments approved by Council January 3, 2024