

FIRST UNITED  
CHURCH OF CHRIST, INC.

CONSTITUTION  
AND BYLAWS

200 NORTH 46<sup>th</sup> AVENUE  
HOLLYWOOD, FL 33021  
954-983-2603

## Article I

### NAME

The name of this church is the First United Church of Christ, Inc. in this document referred to as First UCC.

## Article II

### MISSION STATEMENT

First UCC is a self – governing congregation of seekers guided by the three principles of the United Church of Christ: a) a church of extravagant welcome and hospitality; b) witnesses to justice as we have concern for our neighbors; and c) priesthood of all believers, every person has the right to discover who God is calling them to be. We are not a one size fits all faith. You come to God your own way and on your own terms. Christ is the head of the Church. Through our relationship with God, we know He is still speaking.

We strive to provide a place for prayerful worship and fellowship, within a respectful and welcoming environment; and to meet the spiritual needs of our congregation and community, using Christian ideals and values.

Those who self-identify as Christians and those who are seeking a path are equally valued.

## Article III

### POLITY

1) The governance of this church is vested in its members as a congregation that exercises the right of control in all of its affairs, subject to the laws of the State of Florida relating to non-profit corporations. The congregation shall elect a Church Council and Board of Trustees. The congregation will designate specific functions and areas of responsibilities to those bodies. Any authority not delegated to that body by vote of the congregation would remain the prerogative of the congregation.

2) This church shall be part of the United Church of Christ (UCC) and shall actively promote and participate in the programs of that denomination. We accept the historic creeds and statements of faith of our denominational heritage as being valid expressions of faith and practice.

#### Article IV

### COVENANT

We are united in striving to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures and in our mission to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ to proclaim the Gospel to all persons, exalting the worship of the one true God and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, the realization of creative human relationships in communities, fellowships and families. Depending, as did our fathers and mothers, on the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world into the Kingdom of God; and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and life everlasting.

#### Article V

### MEMBERSHIP

#### Full and Associate

1) Full membership in this church shall be open to any person, who has been baptized, has been confirmed, has presented a letter of transfer from another Christian Church, or has made public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

2) Members shall pledge themselves to support the church to the best of their ability by:

A) attending worship service;

B) participating in the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and

C) contributing regularly and proportionately of their time, self and wealth.

3) Any member at his or her own request may be granted a letter of transfer and be removed from the rolls of this church. If wishing to join a body not in fellowship with this church, he or she may be dismissed with a certificate of church membership.

4) Members who have not communicated with the church for a period of one (1) year or more may be placed on the inactive rolls. See Article V, paragraph 2. The Committee for Spiritual Life stating such intent will send letters. If there is no response within 60 days, they will be transferred to the inactive list by vote of the Church Council. From the date of such transfer, these persons shall cease to be reported on the active membership roll. They will be restored to active membership at their request.

5) A person who wishes to participate in the life of this church while maintaining membership in another church may be received as an Associate member by the same process as regular active members are received. Associate members shall have all rights and duties of regular active members except the right to a letter of transfer to another church.

6) For purpose of statistical reporting, the assessment of per capita dues, etc., shall be based on the total number of active members.

## Article VI

### GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body of this church shall be its membership assembled in a duly called congregational meeting. A quorum shall consist of 20% of active church membership. The vote of members present at the meeting shall be the action of the church. The governing body will elect annually representatives as outline in its polity to carry on normal business functions of this church.

## Article VII

### CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

1) There shall be at least two (2) stated congregational meetings each calendar year. They will be held in January and November. The specific date, time, place and information needed for the meeting shall be decided by the Church Council and posted two (2) weeks in advance by the Church Clerk.

A) At the January meeting the final budget for the new fiscal year shall be approved.

B) Each Officer of the Church, the Chairpersons of the Spiritual Life and Christian Mission Outreach Committees and the Board of Trustees shall present a written account of their activities during the preceding calendar year. Said reports shall be in writing and in the hands of the Church Clerk the first week of January.

C) At the November meeting the:

1. Budget Committee will present the tentative budget for the coming year for acceptance by the congregation.
2. Nominating Committee will present its report, and the election of officers, board and committee members will follow. Those elected will take office on January 1<sup>st</sup>.
3. Any other business may be presented at this meeting.

2) Special congregational meetings may be called by the Church Council, the Pastor or 20% of the active membership by written request to the Church Clerk. a) A written statement of purpose of the special meeting must be included. b) Special congregational meetings, regardless of their purpose, will be announced at least two (2) weeks prior to their date.

3) Roberts Rules of Order shall be observed in the conduct of all meetings.

4) All active members present will have a voice and vote at all congregational meetings.

5) Any changes to the Constitution and Bylaws will be distributed to the congregation at least three (3) weeks prior to the November congregational meeting.

## Article VIII

### OFFICERS

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH	OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION
Pastor	
Moderator	President
Clerk	Secretary
Treasurer	Treasurer
Financial Secretary	

The Moderator shall serve as the President of the Corporation, the Clerk as the Secretary, and the Treasurer as the Treasurer.

#### 1) **The Pastor**

A) The term of service of the Pastor shall be indefinite. The congregation may at any time by majority vote at a meeting called for this purpose request his or her resignation to be effective within 90 days. Likewise, the Pastor shall give 90 days notice if the Pastor wishes to leave of his or her own volition.

B) The Pastor shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the church. The Pastor shall seek to enlist all people as followers of Christ, preach and teach the Christian gospel, administer the Sacraments, have under his or her care all service of public worship. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio\*\* member of and advisor to the Church Council, and serve as a resource person and advisor for the various church boards and committees. The Pastor shall be responsible for involving this church in the community as stated in the Mission Statement. (See Article II.)

\*\* by virtue of office

C) The Pastor serving this church must apply and be eligible for fully accredited standing in the United Church of Christ and/or Disciples of Christ and participate to the best of his or her ability in its ongoing programs. In the case of loss of ministerial standing on the part of the Pastor, employment with this church shall cease at once.

The following officers shall be active members of this church. They shall be elected by the congregation for one (1) year and shall be eligible for re-election.

2) **The Moderator** shall be a member of the Church Council, and shall preside at all congregational meetings of the church and the Church Council.

3) **The Clerk** shall keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the church and the Church Council, of which he or she shall be a member and its secretary. He or she shall keep a register with addresses of the members of the church, with dates and methods of their reception and removal; also, a record of baptisms and marriages. He or she shall issue letters of transfer, issue legal notices of meetings, conduct correspondence, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to the office of Clerk and Secretary of an assembly. He or she shall assume all duties and responsibilities in the absence of the Moderator.

4) **The Treasurer** shall have responsibility for paying all bills, keeping open and true accounts of all the fiscal transactions, and paying church taxes in a timely manner of this church under policies set by the Trustees with approval of the congregation. The Treasurer must provide monthly financial reports to the Church Council, to the Board of Trustees, and give financial summary reports at the regular congregational meetings. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Church Council and a non-voting member of the Board of Trustees.

5) **The Financial Secretary** shall complement the Treasurer in the performance of his or her duties. He or she will have as a function the collection of all offerings and the keeping of all records and contributions. The records of the individual contributors shall remain confidential. He or she must provide monthly financial reports to the Church Council, the Treasurer, the Board of Trustees, and financial summary reports at the regular congregational meetings. The Financial Secretary shall be a

member of the Church Council. An Assistant Financial Secretary may be appointed by the Church Council, as necessary. The Financial Secretary is responsible for accounting for and recording funds from the Thrift Store and rentals.

## Article IX

### CHURCH COUNCIL, BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND POSITIONS

1) **The Church Council** shall be the primary executive body of this church. It shall consist of the officers of the church and chairpersons or designee from the Committee for Spiritual Life, the Board of Trustees, and the Committee for Christian Mission Outreach, and a representative from each active committee, as appropriate. The Church Moderator shall preside over the Church Council meetings. In the absence of the Moderator, the Secretary will preside over that meeting. The disposition of any and all church policies will have Church Council approval.

The Church Council shall:

A) have responsibility for the coordination of all program activities of this church and shall maintain the official church calendar.

B) have the authority to conduct the ongoing business of the church between meetings of the congregation including the authority to elect delegates to appropriate conference functions.

C) appoint ad hoc committees as it deems appropriate for the conduct of the church's business and disband such committees upon completion of said purpose.

D) have the authority to fill vacancies on boards and committees of the church with active members, recommended by the Nominating Committee, who will serve until the end of the unexpired term.

E) may appoint an auditor to prepare a review of the ledgers and other financial records at least once a year and more often if the need arises. The Church Council will report the auditor's findings at the November congregational meeting.

F) supports and maintains an open relationship between the Pastor and the congregation. It helps the Pastor and members of the church share ideas, hopes, dreams and interpretations of mission.

1. It informs the Pastor of the thoughts and feelings of the church members.
2. It gives a framework for dealing with conflict creatively.
3. Individual members and others may meet with the Pastor as needed based on mutual agreement between the Pastor and the individual.

G) address all concerns regarding the Memorial Fund.

All members of the congregation are invited to attend Church Council meetings.

### Operations of Boards and Committees

The Congregation shall elect the following board and committees, all of whom must be active members of this church. The members of the boards and committees shall be divided into three (3) classes with one-third (1/3) of the members elected to terms which expire each year. All boards and committees may have a majority of its members present for any and all decisions to become official.

1) Members of boards and committees who miss three (3) consecutive meetings can be replaced. When a member is not able to attend in person, he/she can attend by telephone, email, text or US mail when appropriate.

2) Officers who are unable to fulfill their responsibilities for 3 consecutive months can be replaced by the Church council to fulfill the remaining term. A slate is developed by the Nomination Committee for election at the November congregational meeting.

1) **The Board of Trustees** shall consist of at least four (4) members elected by the congregation and actively participate in Board meetings. Under policies set by this church, and except as otherwise provided, the Board of Trustees shall:

A) have the care and custody of the property of the church and have charge of its affairs;

B) see to repairs and replacement of church property not to exceed the amount of \$10,000 without the approval of the congregation;

C) set-up accounting procedures for the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary.

D) set rules for the use of church property, (Appendix B). Members can use the facilities at no cost, however, donations are accepted.

E) maintain copies of completed forms from outside groups/organization.

The forms are:

- Outside Group/Organization Application and Statement of Compliance form (Appendix A).
- Rental Agreement form (Appendix B).
- Door Key Receipt (Appendix C).

F) be responsible for the safe-keeping of money, legal documents and important papers pertaining to this church and its property;

G) not buy, sell, mortgage or transfer any real property without approval of the congregation; and

H) with Council approval, have the right to enter into lease agreements of church property for income to the church.

I) annually elect a member as its chairperson. The chairperson or the designee must attend all Church Council meetings.

J) meet monthly:

Prepare an annual budget request to be presented to the Budget Committee,

- Write an annual report to be presented at the annual congregational meeting,
- Keep minutes of all its meetings.

**2) Committee for Spiritual Life** shall consist of at least two (2) members elected by the congregation.

The Committee for Spiritual Life shall:

- A) communicate with the Pastor regarding matters of the spiritual life of the church,
- B) be concerned with the nurture and care of its members,
- C) conduct a program of evangelism, reaching out to welcome and invite new members into the church.

Duties of the Committee for Spiritual Life:

- a) assist with the administration of the Sacraments,
- b) oversee altar preparation, including flowers,
- c) have charge of the supply of the pulpit during the absence of the Pastor or during any interim between pastorates,
- d) communicate with inactive members according to Article V, paragraph 4.
- e) keep minutes of all its meetings.

The Committee shall annually elect a member as its chairperson, and it shall be his or her responsibility to preside at meetings of the Committee and carry out such responsibilities as the Committee may determine. The chairperson or designee must attend all Church Council meetings.

The Committee will meet as necessary to perform its duties: Prepare an annual budget request to be presented to the Budget Committees

**3) The Committee for Christian Mission Outreach** shall consist of at least three (3) members elected by the congregation.

The Committee of Christian Mission Outreach shall:

- A) be responsible for informing this church of opportunities for carrying out the mission of this church locally, in the community, state and nation, and throughout the world by giving to the offerings of the United Church of Christ and other agencies, and by participation of study and action to further the missionary cause.
- B) annually elect a member as its chairperson. The chairperson or designee must attend all Church Council meetings.

- C) The Committee will meet as needed to:
- Write an annual report to be presented at the annual congregational meeting.
  - Keep minutes of all its meetings.

## **AD HOC COMMITTEES**

**The Budget Committee** shall will be made up of the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary, as well as, one (1) member from:

- The Board of Trustees
  - The Committee for Spiritual Life
  - The Committee for Christian Mission Outreach
- a) The Budget Committee shall elect a member as its chairperson.
- b) The Budget Committee shall consider the needs of all departments of the church's life and work.
- c) Present a proposed budget to the Board of Trustees at the first meeting of the Trustees prior to the November congregational meeting.

**The Nominating Committee** shall consist of at least three (3) members elected by the congregation for interlocking terms of three (3) years.

The Nominating Committee shall:

- A) choose among the members of the congregation individuals it deems best qualified for the positions of officers, board members, committee members and conference delegates to be placed in nomination for election by the congregation at the November congregational meeting
- B) choose from among the members of the congregation individuals it deems best qualified to fill vacancies on boards and committees as stated in Article IX, paragraph 1.E.
- C) post or publish the nominations no less than two (2) Sundays prior to the November congregational meeting. The ballot thus prepared shall be the official ballot: nominations can be taken from the floor
- D) The Nominating Committee shall elect a member as its chairperson. When a position is vacant, one member of the

Committee must advise the Church Council of the status of that position.

**Pastoral Search Committee** shall be nominated by the Church Council and elected by the congregation should a vacancy occur or pastoral resignation be submitted and accepted.

a) The Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members which shall consist of a representative of the Committee for Spiritual Life, the Board of Trustees, the Committee for Christian Mission Outreach, and three (3) members-at-large.

b) The Church Council shall fill vacancies on this Committee.

The Pastoral Search Committee shall:

c) meet, organize, and give consideration to the type of minister desired within ten (10) days of their election

d) recommend only one candidate at a time and provide said candidate the opportunity to be heard by the congregation

e) at a subsequent congregational meeting, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present in favor shall be needed in order to hire the new minister. The candidate shall be informed ahead of time that a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present is required.

The congregation may issue a call for additional ministers. The Pastoral Search Committee shall select these with possible input from the Pastor.

A special congregational meeting shall be called to confirm the Pastoral Search Committee recommendation.

## OTHER POSITIONS

**Music Director** works in collaboration with the Pastor and other musicians this church employs on weekly music for service as well as other music programs.

**The Historian** shall be elected by the congregation for one (1) year with eligibility for re-election.

The Historian shall:

- keep a faithful record of important events in the life of this church.
- Maintain a scrapbook of newspaper clippings, celebrations, building dedications, and other occasions, and either write or cause to be written an account of the ongoing history of the church.

**Thrift Store Manager** shall be a member of this church. It is possible to have co-managers who are members of this church.

The Manager or designee shall:

- Oversee the processing of donated items; manage the rotation of items and the disposal of donated items in a timely fashion.
- Assign and oversee the work of volunteers.

**Conference Delegates** shall be elected by the congregation for a one-year term with eligibility for re-election. The delegates will attend the Annual Meeting of the Florida Conference and report back to the congregation.

## Article X

### ACQUISITION AND TERMINATION

First UCC and its property shall be forever devoted to religious or charitable purposes. No officer, member, or employee thereof shall receive any monetary profit from this church except reasonable compensation for services in effecting one or more of its purposes.

1) First UCC may in its corporate name, First United Church of Christ, Inc., acquire by purchase, gift, devise, bequest, or otherwise own, hold, invest, reinvest, or dispose of property both real and personal for such work as this church may undertake and may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, sell, assign, lease, transfer, and convey such property for the general purpose of this church.

2) In the event of the dissolution of First UCC, the Church Council will be charged with the responsibility of disposing of the church assets and liabilities. It is the desire of the congregation that after all liabilities have been met, the remaining assets will be used exclusively for religious or charitable purposes.

3) Furthermore, groups and organizations claiming autonomy from the governing body of First UCC shall not use the name of this church, the banking accounts or the tax identification number. Any group, organization, or committee that applies in writing to the Council for recognition as a group or organization to be affiliated will also include in the application an acquisition and termination paragraph as follows:

a) The Group/Organization/Committee and its property shall be forever devoted to religious or charitable purposes.

b) In the event of the dissolution of the Group/Organization/Committee, after all liabilities are paid, all remaining assets and or monies shall revert to the General Fund of this church to be used at the discretion of the governing body of this church.

## Article XI

### AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws may be made at a congregational meeting. Proposed amendments may be accepted by a majority of members present. Final adoption of the proposed amendment may be made by a majority vote at the next congregational meeting.

First United Church of Christ Church Council Approval on – 10/16/2023

First United Church of Christ Congregation Approval on