

**BYLAWS OF THE PHILADELPHIA ASSOCIATION OF THE  
PENNSYLVANIA SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Article I—Name**

1. The name of this Association shall be the Philadelphia Association of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

**Article II—Boundaries**

1. The Philadelphia Association shall include congregations within Philadelphia County and, from the Philadelphia Metropolitan Area beyond Philadelphia County, those congregations desiring to hold membership in the Association.

**Article III—Purposes**

The purposes of the Philadelphia Association, with the grace and guidance of God, are:

1. To maintain and deepen Christian fellowship among its member congregations.
2. To promote the worship and work of the church through spiritual nurture, education and stewardship — in the home, the community, the nation and the world.
3. To encourage participation in Our Church's Wider Mission of the United Church of Christ.
4. To serve as a link among member churches in their community outreach programs for the advancement of the realm of God.

**Article IV—Membership**

The membership of the Philadelphia Association shall include:

**Churches**

1. The local churches of the United Church of Christ located within the boundaries defined in Article II.
2. Any other local church within the boundaries of the Association that, upon request and subject to the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ, is accepted by the Association.

**Ministers**

3. Ordained Ministers who hold standing in the Philadelphia Association.
4. Commissioned Ministers and Licensed Ministers who are granted voice and vote by the Association.

**Article V—Organization**

1. The Officers of the Association shall be: Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary, Treasurer.
2. The Executive Committee shall conduct the business of the Association, in accordance with these Bylaws and the will of the Association as expressed at its regular and special meetings and shall appoint committees and task forces to implement such programs as it deems necessary. Voting membership of the Executive Committee shall consist of the following:
  - a. the officers of the Association;
  - b. the immediate past Moderator of the Association;
  - c. three members-at-large, to be elected by the Association;
  - d. the chairpersons of the Nominating Committee, and the Committee on Ministry;
  - e. such additional members for specialized ministries and for particular tasks shall be appointed annually by the Executive Committee for a renewable term up to one (1) year in length with voice but not vote.
3. The Nominating Committee shall seek and recommend qualified candidates for election or appointment to the positions of service set forth in Articles V and VI of these Bylaws. Membership of the Nominating Committee shall consist of five persons, one of whom shall be elected by the Association as chair (ordinarily a lay person); the other four members elected by the Association shall include two lay persons and two ordained ministers. In addition, the Association representatives to the Conference Nominating Committee shall serve ex officio with vote on the Nominating Committee of this Association.
4. The Committee on Ministry shall fulfill the responsibilities outlined in *The Manual on Ministry* as published by the Ministerial Excellence, Support & Authorization (MESA) Team of the United Church of Christ. The Committee on Ministry shall make recommendations to the Association or to the Executive Committee between meetings of the Association for its decision. Appeals to decisions of the Association or its Executive Committee shall go to an Ecclesiastical Council. Membership of the Committee on

Ministry shall be reflective of the diverse membership of the Association. The members of the Committee on Ministry shall be elected by the Association; one person shall be elected by the Association as the chairperson or two persons as co-chairs, who may appoint a secretary/record-keeper if needed; the other persons on the Committee on Ministry in addition to the chair or co-chairs shall be balanced between ordained clergy and lay persons. The Moderator of the Association is by virtue of office a member of the Committee on Ministry, without vote.

#### Article VI—Nominations and Elections

1. Elections shall be held annually at the Spring Meeting of the Association, under the direction of the Moderator. The recommendations of the Nominating Committee shall be included in the call to that meeting. In addition to recommendations made by the Nominating Committee, nominations may be made from the floor provided that those so nominated have agreed to serve if elected.
2. The offices of Moderator and Vice Moderator shall be held alternately by an ordained minister and a lay person. They shall serve a single two-year term.
3. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected for a term of two years, and may not serve for more than four consecutive years in the same office.
4. Members-at-large of the Executive Committee, members of the Nominating Committee, and members of the Committee on Ministry shall be elected for terms of two years, and no elected Committee member may serve more than four consecutive years. Committee terms shall be staggered so that one-half of the terms shall expire each year.
5. Between regular elections, the Executive Committee shall fill a vacancy in any Association-level office or committee by appointment for the unexpired term.

#### Article VII—Meetings

1. Regular meetings of the Association shall be held semi-annually.
2. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall call a special meeting upon written request of one-third of the member churches.
3. The call to semi-annual and special meetings shall be issued by the Executive Committee and sent to the pastor and an appropriate lay officer of each member church and to all other persons holding ministerial standing in the Association at least 30 days prior to the meeting.
4. The voting membership of the Association shall consist of all persons holding ministerial standing in the Association and two lay delegates elected by and representing each local church. In the event of a tie vote, the chair shall cast the deciding vote.
5. All other members of member churches within the Association shall be nonvoting members of the Association.
6. A quorum shall be effected when 50 percent of the member churches are represented by at least one lay delegate each and at least 50 percent of the pastors serving churches are present.

#### Article VIII—Finances

1. A current financial report shall be presented at each semi-annual meeting of the Association.

#### Article IX—Ministerial and Church Standing

1. The Association receives under its care students for the ordained ministry and extends to them fellowship, counsel, assistance and supervision during their academic preparation.
2. The Association ordains, commissions and licenses qualified candidates; grants, certifies to, transfers and terminates ordained ministerial standing; installs ordained ministers and grants privilege of call and leaves of absence; reviews and disciplines ordained, commissioned, and licensed ministers.
3. The pastor or leader of any congregation anticipating dissolution, merger, relocation, or sale of their property is asked to contact the Association Committee on Ministry and the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference staff to ensure that the change happens smoothly, legally, and with equity for all parties.

#### Article X—Amendments

1. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those voting at a regular or special meeting of the Association.
2. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Executive Committee at least sixty days prior to the meeting of the Association at which they are to be considered, in order that the Executive Committee may submit the proposed amendments to the member churches at least thirty days prior to the meeting of the Association.
3. No part of these Bylaws and no part of the subsequent amendments shall be in violation of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ.