

1 Bylaws

2 Of

3 **The Eastern Association**

4 Southern California Nevada Conference

5 United Church of Christ

6 As revised November 5, 2016

7 I. NAME AND AFFILIATION

8 The name of this Association is the Eastern Association of the Southern California Nevada Conference of the  
9 United Church of Christ. It succeeds and continues without break portions of the Foothills Association, Orange  
10 Association and San Bernardino Association as determined by the Board of Directors of the Southern California  
11 Nevada Conference.

12 II. PURPOSE AND POWERS

13 The purposes and powers of the Association are:

- 14 1. To stimulate the spiritual life and mission interests of the churches of the Association in cooperation  
15 with the Conference, and through the Conference with the United Church of Christ and its boards,  
16 agencies and covenanted ministries, and to provide avenues of Christian community and service among  
17 and between the members of the churches of the Association.
- 18 2. To determine, confer and certify the standing of local churches of the United Church of Christ within its  
19 boundaries.
- 20 3. To determine, confer and certify the standing of authorized ministers of the United Church of Christ,  
21 and of any other Congregational Christian minister.
- 22 4. To exercise the power and perform the functions of an ecclesiastical council in such matters as  
23 ordination, installation, church recognition and adjudication of disputes.
- 24 5. Any adjustments of Association boundaries or transfer of membership of churches between  
25 Associations shall be carried out by the Associations and churches involved, in consultation with the  
26 Conference Minister and with the approval of the Board of Directors, Southern California Nevada  
27 Conference of the United Church of Christ.

28 III. FAITH

29 This Association claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed  
30 in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers, particularly as that faith is expressed in the Preamble of the  
31 Constitution of the United Church of Christ and in the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ.

32 IV. MEMBERSHIP

33 The following are eligible for membership in the Eastern Association of Southern California Nevada Conference  
34 of the United Church of Christ:

Revised November 5, 2016

- 35 1. Churches
- 36 (a) The United Church of Christ congregations located within the boundaries of the Association as of
- 37 October 1, 1995.
- 38 (b) The Congregational Christian Churches located within its boundaries that have not voted or have
- 39 abstained from voting to be a part of the United Church of Christ.
- 40 (c) Any local church within the boundaries of the Association whose articles or Statement of Faith are in
- 41 essential agreement with that of this Association, and which, having covenanted with the
- 42 Association to assume and fulfill faithfully the obligations of a member church as hereinafter set
- 43 forth and having been recommended by the Church and Ministry Committee of the Association (as
- 44 described in Article IX, Section 2), is received into membership by a majority vote of those present
- 45 and voting at a duly called meeting of the Association.
- 46 (d) Any virtually located church having its legal address (e.g. corporate) within the boundaries of the
- 47 Association whose articles or statement of faith are in essential agreement with that of this
- 48 Association, and having at least one member of its Board of Directors a member of another Eastern
- 49 Association member church, and which, having covenanted with the Association to assume and
- 50 fulfill faithfully the obligations of a member church as hereinafter set forth and having been
- 51 recommended by the Church and Ministry Committee of the Association (as described in Article IX,
- 52 Section 2), is received into membership by a majority vote of those present and voting at a duly
- 53 called meeting of the Association.
- 54 (e)
- 55 2. Ministers
- 56 (a) Ordained ministers, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ministers with ordained ministerial
- 57 partnership standing, commissioned ministers and licensed ministers of the United Church of Christ
- 58 within this Association.
- 59 (b) Ordained ministers of Congregational Christian Churches within this Association.
- 60 (c) Any person upon whom full ordained ministerial standing is conferred through ordination by this
- 61 Association in cooperation with a member church.
- 62 (d) Any ordained member who presents to the Church and Ministry Committee evidence of
- 63 membership in a church of the Association and a letter of transfer from an Association of the United
- 64 Church of Christ or a Conference of that church exercising the function of an Association, has a call
- 65 to a United Church of Christ setting or a four way covenant among the ordained minister, the calling
- 66 body, the local church and the association, and is received into membership by a majority vote of
- 67 the Church and Ministry Committee.
- 68 (e) Any ordained minister of a denomination other than the United Church of Christ, who, having been
- 69 examined by the Church and Ministry Committee; having been found to be qualified by virtue of
- 70 education and theological attainments, knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United
- 71 Church of Christ, and Christian faith and experience; having presented evidence of membership in a
- 72 member church of the Association; and having a call to a United Church of Christ setting or a four
- 73 way covenant, and is into the Association by a majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee.
- 74 (f) Any ordained minister of another denomination who wishes to retain ordained ministerial standing
- 75 in that denomination and who has been called to a United Church of Christ ministry or responsibility
- 76 recognized by this Association and requiring ministerial standing within the geographical boundaries
- 77 of this Association; and having applied to the Church and Ministry Committee for dual ordained
- 78 ministerial standing for the duration of that specific call or responsibility; and having been examined

- 79 by the Church and Ministry Committee; and is received into the Association with dual standing with  
80 a majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee, with all the rights of ministerial membership  
81 except that a minister with dual standing shall not be eligible to hold office in the Association or  
82 have vote on matters regarding General Synod or affecting the standing of ministers or churches.
- 83 (g) Any ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who holds ordained ministerial  
84 standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and who has been called to a Christian Church  
85 (Disciples of Christ) ministry within the geographical boundaries of this Association, is accepted as an  
86 ordained ministerial partner in the Eastern Association of the United Church of Christ with voice but  
87 not vote in the Eastern Association.
- 88 (h) Any ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who holds ordained ministerial  
89 standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); and who has been called to a United Church of  
90 Christ ministry or responsibility recognized by this Association and requiring ministerial standing  
91 within the geographical boundaries of this Association; and who having applied to the Church and  
92 Ministry Committee, having been found to be qualified by virtue of education and theological  
93 attainments, knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ, and  
94 Christian faith and experience; is received into the Association with ordained ministerial partnership  
95 standing in the Association by a majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee, with  
96 authorization to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United  
97 Church of Christ including voice and vote in the Association.
- 98 (i) Retired United Church of Christ ordained ministers who wish to retain ministerial standing in the  
99 Association or transfer ordained ministerial standing from a different association to the Association  
100 and is received into membership by a majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee.

101 V. PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBER CHURCHES

- 102 1. Since the member churches, ordained ministers, ordained ministerial partners with ordained ministerial  
103 partnership standing, commissioned ministers and licensed ministers of the United Church of Christ constitute  
104 the Association, the responsible participation of member churches, lay persons and authorized ministers is  
105 necessary to carry out the purposes of the Association.
- 106 2. The autonomy of the local church is inherent and modifiable only by its own action. Nothing in the Bylaws of  
107 the Association shall destroy or limit the right of each local church to continue to operate in the way customary  
108 to it; nor shall be construed as giving to the Association now, or at any future time, the power to abridge or  
109 impair the autonomy of any local church in the management of its own affairs or its right to withdraw from the  
110 Association at any time without forfeiture of ownership or control of real or personal property or any rights  
111 therein belonging to the church.
- 112 3. A local church in this Association shall have the responsibility of participating in meetings of the Association:  
113 faithfully supporting Our Church's Wider Mission; paying of the Southern California Nevada Conference per  
114 capita dues; supplying information requested by the Conference or Association; holding actions, decisions or  
115 advice from General Synod, a Conference or Association in highest regard; recognizing the Association as an  
116 instrumentality of all the churches in their common life and service; and using the staff and facilities of the  
117 Association or Conference in order to strengthen the life and work of the churches and the Association.

118 4. The standing and membership of a local church in this Association may be voluntarily terminated at any  
119 meeting of this Association by a majority vote of delegates present and voting, provided action to withdraw  
120 from the Association has been taken by the local church requesting voluntary termination pursuant to its  
121 constitution: and further provided there are no loans, agreements for disposition of property or other  
122 encumbrances between the local church and any conference, board, agency or instrumentality of the United  
123 Church of Christ; and further provided the Conference Minister and Conference Board of Directors have been  
124 consulted regarding such pending action; and further provided certification of such action is delivered to the  
125 Association Registrar at least 90 days prior to the Association meeting at which such action is to be taken; and  
126 further provided such action is specified in the call to the meeting.

127 The standing and membership of a local church in this Association may be involuntarily terminated at any  
128 meeting of this Association upon majority vote of the voting membership of this Association, provided the  
129 Conference Minister and Conference Board of Directors have been consulted regarding such pending action; and  
130 further provided that notice of such proposed action is delivered to the local church at least 90 days prior to the  
131 Association meeting at which such action is to be taken and is specified in the call to the meeting at which the  
132 action is taken.

#### 133 VI. PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBER MINISTERS

134 1. Ministerial members of the Association are expected to attend its meetings and cooperate in its work to the  
135 extent of their ability, and to maintain their memberships in the churches of the Association. Each minister, as  
136 part of a periodic review, shall confirm to the Chairperson of the Church and Ministry Committee, Section B,  
137 annually in writing, his or her address, church membership, and status in ministry or otherwise. Any ministerial  
138 member failing thus to report for two consecutive years, shall be notified of such default. Notice shall be sent to  
139 the last known address of such a minister, and if such notice remains unanswered for another year, the member  
140 shall be removed from membership in the Association. A minister so dropped may be restored to membership if  
141 the application is approved by majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee.

142 2. A minister retiring from the active ministry by reason of age or sickness shall not thereby forfeit ministerial  
143 standing in this Association.

144 3. Any ordained minister who is in good and regular standing in this Association may receive transfer to the  
145 ecclesiastical body of his or her choice upon written request to the Chairperson of the Church and Ministry  
146 Committee, providing that no charges are pending against the minister at the time of the request.

#### 147 VII. MEETINGS

148 Regular meetings of the Association shall be held in April or May which shall be the Annual Meeting at which  
149 time elections will be held and in October or November at which the budget will be adopted. Notice of any  
150 Association meeting shall be given to each church and each ministerial member prior to the second Saturday  
151 preceding the date of the meeting. A resolution may be submitted to the Executive Committee by any member  
152 or church in good standing in the Eastern Association. The resolution must be submitted at least 60 days prior  
153 to the spring or fall Association meeting at which the resolution is to be considered.

154 2. Special meetings, including Ecclesiastical Councils, shall be called by the Registrar upon request of the  
155 Executive Committee or Church and Ministry Committee, or upon written request of the official boards of five  
156 member churches, which request shall contain a clear statement of the reasons for the call.

157 3. Voting rights of members

158 Each member church is entitled to be represented at meetings of the Association by three (3) lay delegates who  
159 are entitled to voice and vote.

160 Every ministerial member (as provided in Article IV, Section 2) of the Association is entitled to voice and vote.

161 Lay officers of the Association who are not delegates of their local churches are entitled to voice and vote.

162 The Conference Minister, other members of the Conference Ministry Ordained Staff (when not ministerial  
163 members of the Association), delegates to General Synod, persons serving on national boards, agencies, and  
164 instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ who are members of the Association) and professional staff  
165 persons of judicatories, boards, agencies or instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ in attendance at an  
166 Association meeting shall have voice but no vote.

167 4. Twenty voting members, representing at least one-third of the active churches of the Association shall  
168 constitute a quorum. Active churches are those who have done either of the following within the previous 24  
169 months: sent one or more delegates and/or pastors to an Association meeting or Ecclesiastical Council, or paid  
170 per capita dues to the Conference

171 5. The Association as Ecclesiastical Council:

172 An Ecclesiastical Council is a meeting of the Association for the purpose of considering the standing of local  
173 churches, authorizing ministry and acting on questions of discipline. The Executive Committee or Church and  
174 Ministry Committee shall invite all the churches and ministers of the Association, together with its officers, to  
175 act as an Ecclesiastical Council, whose findings shall become the findings of the Association. Twenty (20) voting  
176 members, representing at least one third (1/3) of the churches of the Association shall constitute a quorum at  
177 such a Council.

178 A church or an individual who wishes to invoke the services of the Association as a Council shall request the  
179 Church and Ministry Committee to call an Ecclesiastical Council and shall confer with that committee. If the  
180 Church and Ministry Committee declines the request, an appeal may be made to the Executive Committee. The  
181 Church and Ministry Committee or Executive Committee may instruct the Registrar to issue the call.

## 182 VIII. OFFICERS

183 1. The officers of this Association shall be a Past Moderator, Moderator, a Vice Moderator (At least one of  
184 whom shall be a lay person and at least one of whom shall be an ordained minister) a Treasurer, Registrar,  
185 Historian, and such other officers as the Association may deem advisable. All officers shall be members of  
186 member churches in the Association.

187 2. The duties of the Moderator, the Vice Moderator and the Treasurer shall be such as usually pertain to such  
188 offices. The Vice Moderator shall be the Moderator elect. The Moderator shall serve one term as Moderator

189 followed by one term as Past Moderator. The position of Moderator shall alternate between ordained ministers  
190 and laypersons.

191 3. The Historian shall preserve historical records of the Association and shall encourage the churches to  
192 preserve their own records, reports and documents of historical value, and to forward to the Conference  
193 Historian significant records for placing in proper archives.

194 4. The Registrar shall preserve records of all proceedings of the Association, shall issue calls for all meetings,  
195 shall make an annual report to the Association, shall conduct correspondence, shall maintain the minutes of the  
196 Executive Committee, the Nominating Committee, and the Church and Ministry Committee. A record of  
197 Association Membership, church and ministerial, shall be maintained by the Registrar who shall submit reports  
198 to the Association and Conference regarding church and ministerial standing.

199 5. Term of office shall be for one year beginning June 1 of each year. After one full term, the Past Moderator  
200 and Vice Moderator shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of one term. The Treasurer, Registrar, and  
201 Historian shall be eligible to serve consecutive terms if properly nominated and elected.

## 202 IX. COMMITTEES

### 203 1. The Executive Committee

204 There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the Officers of the Association, the chairpersons of the  
205 Association Committees, and such other representatives of United Church of Christ organizations at the  
206 Association level recognized by the Association, and three (3) members-at-large elected by the Association for a  
207 three (3) year term so arranged that one (1) member-at-large shall be elected annually. The Executive  
208 Committee shall be chaired by the Moderator.

209 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for implementing all programs voted by the Association. It shall  
210 be responsible for creating various programs designed to enable local churches and ministers to know and to  
211 discharge their mission more effectively. It shall develop the agenda for Association meetings.

212 The Committee shall ordinarily meet every two (2) months. Special meetings of the Committee may be called by  
213 the Moderator or the Vice Moderator. A quorum shall consist of one half (1/2) its members.

214 The Executive Committee shall present a budget to a fall meeting of the Association and recommend procedures  
215 for securing funds. The fiscal year shall be the calendar year (January 1 – December 31.)

216 The Executive Committee shall have power to fill all vacancies in elected offices until the next Association  
217 Annual Meeting.

### 218 2. Church and Ministry Committee

219 (a) There shall be a Church and Ministry Committee consisting of twenty-seven (27) persons elected to serve  
220 three (3) years; nine (9) shall be elected annually; of the twenty-seven (27) at least thirteen (13) persons shall be  
221 clergy and at least nine (9) persons shall be laity. The Nominating Committee shall give careful concern to  
222 diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, geography, physical ability, and medical condition.  
223 The term of office shall begin June 1. The Nominating Committee will assign nominees to one of three sub-  
224 committees, Section A or Section B or Section N, and nominate Section chairpersons from among the nominees,

225 who shall serve as co-chairs of the Committee of the Whole. Having served a full term, a member of this  
226 Committee shall be eligible for re-election for a second term if nominated. The outgoing chair shall serve on  
227 their section not as chair but as a member of their section for one year for the purpose of continuity.

228 (b) The Registrar shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee of the Whole with voice and vote and be the  
229 secretary of the Committee of the Whole.

230 (c) The Committee of the Whole shall be responsible for matters pertaining to policy, the tasks of ministry, and  
231 other related matters. The Committee shall be responsible for implementing and interpreting the Bylaws of the  
232 United Church of Christ relating to the Ministry (Article 1, 101 through 142 inclusive), and shall be guided by the  
233 Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ.

234 (d) Section A shall be responsible for persons and churches seeking initial standing in the Association. This shall  
235 include the nurture, support, and examination of Candidates/Students in Care, Christian Church (Disciples of  
236 Christ) partners seeking Dual Standing, Privilege of Call, commissioning or licensing, ordinations and  
237 scholarships. The Section shall be empowered to take action on behalf of the Association on matters dealing  
238 with ministerial standing.

239 (e) Section B shall be responsible for persons and churches that have standing in the Association. This shall  
240 include the periodic review of authorized ministers and local churches, continuing education, facilitation of  
241 collegiality, transfers of standing in and out of the Association, review of letters of call, installations, financial aid  
242 and continual up-dating of criteria for evaluation. Section B shall be responsible for the discipline of ministers  
243 through Special or Disciplinary Review as stated in the Manual on Ministry except that any Committee member  
244 who is the subject of a Special or Disciplinary Review or any Committee members who is a complainant shall be  
245 excluded from participation in the Committee until the Review is adjudicated. The Section shall be empowered  
246 to take action on behalf of the Association on matters dealing with ministerial standing and shall make  
247 recommendations to the Association on matters dealing with local church standing. The process of any action  
248 or discipline may be appealed to an Ecclesiastical Council.

249 (f) Section B shall require Boundary Training for all active authorized ministers every five years. Each authorized  
250 minister must do this in order to maintain his or her standing within the Association. Ministers granted new  
251 standing shall complete the training within one year.

252 (g) Section N shall be responsible for all the functions of Church and Ministry in the Nevada portion of the  
253 Southern California Nevada Conference.

### 254 3. Nominating Committee

255 There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of four (4) persons elected for a term of two (2) years and so  
256 arranged that two members shall be elected annually. The term of office shall begin June 1. The Moderator  
257 shall convene the first meeting at which the Committee shall elect its chairperson from among its elected  
258 members.

259 The Moderator shall be an ex-officio member of this committee with voice and vote.

260 Subject to provisions of Article IX, this Committee shall nominate persons for all offices in the Association where  
261 there vacancies and for all officers in the Conference for which the Association has elective responsibility, and  
262 for such other offices as the Association may direct.

263 Nominations shall be made in such a way that the leadership of the Association shall reflect the cultural and  
264 geographic diversity of the Association.

265 The Committee shall consult with member churches for suggested names for candidates for all offices.

266 4. Special committees may be appointed as needed by the Moderator or Executive Committee.

267 X. AMENDMENTS

268 These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting at any regular meeting of  
269 the Association, or at a special meeting called for that purpose, provided that notice thereof and a copy of such  
270 proposed amendments is sent in writing to the member churches and ministers at least thirty (30) days before  
271 the proposed amendment or amendments are acted upon.

272 XI. PROCEDURES

273 1. Business shall be transacted by a majority of those present and voting at any duly called meeting, except as  
274 otherwise provided in the Bylaws.

275 2. The Constitution of the United Church of Christ and the Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ  
276 shall provide standards for all ecclesiastical procedures. Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised) shall govern all  
277 parliamentary procedures unless otherwise provided for in this document.

278 3. These Bylaws shall be in force when adopted by two-thirds (2/3) vote of those delegates and ministerial  
279 members present and voting at a meeting of Association called for that purpose.

280 END