

Federation Bylaws

The United Churches of Olympia

First Presbyterian Church (USA) and
First United Church of Christ

Federation Bylaws – 2005

For the purposes of administration and promotion of the program of The United Churches of Olympia (also known as the Federation), the church shall be organized as follows:

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

The United Churches of Olympia will have one class of membership composed of persons who subscribe to the theological stance and believe in the mission of The United Churches of Olympia and who express a willingness to support that mission through participation and sharing of talents and resources. For denominational reporting and budgeting purposes, the total membership will be counted as half members of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and half as members of the United Church of Christ.

At the time of joining or anytime thereafter, each member is invited to declare him/herself as affiliated with one or the other denomination. However, designation will not be a condition of membership.

ARTICLE II – THE OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

At its annual meeting in November, the congregation of The United Churches shall elect from its membership persons to fill the following positions. Upon their election, such persons shall be ordained as officers of The United Churches. Officers who have designated themselves as affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA) or the United Church of Christ will be ordained as Elders or Deacons respectively.

A. Members of Ministries

The congregation shall elect from its active membership two (2) persons to each Ministry as defined in Article III for a term of three years. Terms of office shall begin on January 1 of the next year.

B. Moderator

The congregation shall elect from among its active membership a moderator who shall serve for a term of one year. The term of office shall begin on January 1 of the next year. The moderator can be re-elected once at the

pleasure of the congregation. Thereafter, that person will not be eligible for re-election for a period of two years.

C. The Elders and Deacons

1. The Presbyterian Session

Ruling Presbyterian Elders shall be those currently elected officers who have declared themselves affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA). The Ruling Elders shall comprise the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Olympia and shall elect from their membership a Clerk who shall serve as Clerk of the Presbyterian Session for a term of one year. The Presbyterian pastor shall moderate Session. The duties of the Elders shall be those prescribed by the Presbyterian Church (USA).

2. The United Church of Christ Board of Deacons

The Board of Deacons shall be those currently elected officers who have declared themselves affiliated with the United Church of Christ. The duties of the Deacons shall be those accepted by the United Church of Christ. The congregation of the First United Church of Christ of Olympia shall elect from their membership a Moderator and a Clerk who shall each serve for a term of one year.

3. A quorum for meetings of the individual bodies shall consist of a simple majority of the Presbyterian Session or a simple majority of the United Church of Christ Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE III – MINISTRIES

The Ministries are established to initiate, together with the Council, staff and congregation of The United Churches, the ministry and mission of the congregation and to implement its objectives. The duties of each ministry shall be defined by the Council. The Council may establish new, or discontinue existing, ministries at their discretion. The change will take effect, after ratification by the congregation at the November congregational meeting, on January 1 of the next year.

A. The Ministries named

1. Administration
2. Christian Education
3. Congregational Life
4. Missions, Peace and Justice
5. Personnel
6. Stewardship
7. Theology, Natural Sciences and Continuing Creation

8. Worship

B. Membership

There shall be six (6) elected members of each Ministry, selected in the manner provided in Article II. Other members and friends of The United Churches of Olympia shall be invited and welcomed to serve as additional members of each Ministry except Personnel, which to preserve confidentiality, shall be limited to elected officers.

C. Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

The elected members of each Ministry shall, at the October meeting of the Ministry elect from the continuing elected members of that Ministry, a chairperson and vice-chairperson to serve for a period of one (1) year beginning on January 1 of the next year. The chairperson and vice-chairperson may be re-elected twice at the pleasure of the Ministry. Thereafter, that person will not be eligible for re-election for a period of two years. The vice-chairperson of a ministry shall serve as chair in the absence of the chairperson.

D. Representative to Council

The elected members of each Ministry shall, at the October meeting of the Ministry elect from their continuing elected membership, a Representative to Council to serve for a period of one (1) year beginning on January 1 of the next year. The Representative may be re-elected twice at the pleasure of the Ministry. Thereafter, that person will not be eligible for re-election for a period of two years. The Ministry shall submit to the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee the name of the newly elected Council Representative to be presented to the congregation for confirmation.

ARTICLE IV – THE COUNCIL

A. Duties

The Council shall be the coordinating and policy-making body of The United Churches of Olympia and shall oversee relationships with the denominational bodies; receive, dismiss, and supervise the oversight of members; and hir staff. Substantive changes in work duties or status of paid staff employed by the United Churches of Olympia shall be approved by Council. All policy decisions of the Council shall be adopted in announced open meetings.

B. Membership

The Council of The United Churches of Olympia shall consist of the following members, all of whom shall be entitled to vote:

1. Eight (8) persons who are the Representatives to Council from the Ministries.
2. The Moderator of Council, who shall preside at all Council meetings.
3. The Moderator of the First United Church of Christ of Olympia
4. The Clerk of the Presbyterian Session
5. The Pastor/Head of Staff and Associate Pastor(s) if any
6. The Clerk of Council

The Council shall elect either the Clerk of the Presbyterian Session or the Clerk of the United Church of Christ Board of Deacons as the Clerk of Council for a term of one year. The denominational Clerk not so elected shall serve as the Assistant Clerk of Council for the same term and shall act as Clerk of Council in her/his absence. The Clerk of Council shall be responsible for minutes and records of all proceedings of the Council and The United Churches of Olympia congregational meetings and shall be responsible for maintaining the proper records as prescribed by each denomination.

- C. In the absence of the Moderator, the chair will temporarily be filled in the following order: The Pastor/Head of Staff, the Associate Pastor(s), any other Council member as appointed by the Moderator.
- D. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the members of the Council.
- E. A review of the church's financial records by an independent person appointed by the Council shall be performed at least every three years or after a change in Treasure and/or bookkeeper. The completed report of findings shall be furnished to the January Annual Meeting of the Congregation.

ARTICLE V – THE BOARDS OF TRUSTEES FOR DENOMINATIONAL CONCERNS AND THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON AND THE FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON, A FEDERATION INCORPORATED:

To serve as property-holding bodies and to transact such business as may be referred to them by the respective denominations or the Council.

- A. Two positions of each class of elected officers of The United Churches of Olympia shall be designated as Trustees for the Federation and for each denomination to serve for a term of three years. The Nominating Committee shall so designate those positions at the time of nomination.
- B. A quorum shall consist of at least two-thirds of the members of the Board of Trustees.
- C. In the event of suit brought or judgment rendered against any Trustee in his or her individual capacity arising out of the performance of duties as Trustee, the Federation shall indemnify and hold said Trustee harmless from all costs or judgment, including reasonable attorney's fees incurred in defending said suit, PROVIDED that there shall be no indemnification where any suit instituted or judgment rendered is the result of the Trustee's willful misfeasance or willful nonfeasance in the performance of such duties.

ARTICLE VI – ENDOWMENT FUND

The Council shall have authority to establish and Endowment Fund to be known as The United Churches Endowment Fund, which shall be established, managed, and maintained pursuant to a Declaration of Trust to be adopted by the Council.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

- A. A voting member of the congregation of the Federation shall be defined as any member on the active roll as determined by Council. A voting member of either denominational congregation shall be defined as any active member who has designated her/himself as affiliated with that denomination. In order to cast a vote, the member must be personally present and cast his or her own vote.
- B. Meetings of the congregation of The United Churches of Olympia will be held for the election of officers, the adoption of the budgets of the church, and transaction of business pertaining to the work of the church.
 - 1. There shall be two scheduled congregational meetings conducted each calendar year.
 - a. The Annual Meeting of the congregation of The United Churches of Olympia shall be held on or near the third Sunday of January of each year to hear annual reports, to take action on the "terms of call" of the clergy, if required, and to conduct such other business as may be required.

- b. A congregational meeting of The United Churches of Olympia shall be held on or near the third Sunday in November of each year to conduct the business of the church as follows:
 - 1) Elect officers of the church as defined in Article II.
 - 2) Elect one at-large member to the Nominating Committee.
 - 3) Elect one member of the Endowment Fund Management Board for a term of five years.
 - 4) Adopt the budget for the following calendar year.
 - 5) Conduct such other business as may be required.

2. Special Meetings

- a. Special meetings must be called by a vote of the Council or upon their receiving a petition signed by 10 percent of the active members of the congregation.
- b. Notice of any special meeting of the Federation shall be given at least ten days in advance, including public announcement on at least two Sundays preceding the meeting. The announcement shall include a statement of business to be conducted at the meeting.

- 3. The meetings of the congregation shall be presided over by the Moderator of the Council. In the absence of the Moderator, the chair will be temporarily filled in the same manner as for Council meetings. The Clerk of Council shall serve as Clerk of the Federation and shall be responsible for turning over the minutes to the other denominational Clerk, who shall serve in the absence of the Clerk.
- 4. At any congregational meeting at which an election is part of the business, any active member attending shall be given full opportunity to nominate from the floor candidates for any office for which nominations are open. The person(s) so nominated must have given their consent and will serve if elected.

- C. Meetings of the congregations of the First Presbyterian Church of Olympia and the First United Church of Christ of Olympia denominations shall be called for the transaction of business pertaining to that denomination and shall be held separately. Voting members of either congregation shall be defined as those members of the Federation who have designated themselves affiliated with that denomination. Designation of the presiding

officer and all proceedings shall be in accord with the rules of the denominational group represented. The business of the denominational meeting shall be that for which the meeting was called.

1. Meetings of the Presbyterian congregation must be called by a vote of the Session or in another designated way according to rules set forth under the Book of Order.
 2. Meetings of the United Church of Christ congregation must be called by a vote of the Board of Deacons or upon their receiving a petition signed by 10 percent of the members who have designated themselves affiliated with the United Church of Christ.
- D. A quorum of any of the above meetings shall consist of 10 percent of the eligible voters of the respective congregation provided that the full requirements for the proper call and notice of the meeting shall have been met.

ARTICLE VIII – PASTORS

The calling of a Pastor shall be in accordance with the rules governing such a call by the denomination of which the Pastor is a member. The pastor, while called from a particular denomination, shall obtain recognition from the other denomination and maintain proper relationships with both denominations. In the spirit of the Federation, s/he shall represent The United Churches through participation in and encouragement of both denominational programs.

- A. The Pastor/Head of Staff and Associate Pastor(s), if any, shall be elected by the congregation of the Federation at a meeting called for that purpose, providing full requirements regarding proper calling and notice of the meeting shall have been met. A vote of at least three-fourths of all voting members present shall be required to elect any Pastor.
- B. The Pastor/Head of Staff shall be placed in charge of all church personnel including any Associate Pastor(s) and shall have general supervision over all official church activities, subject to the authority of the Council to whom s/he must report and from whom s/he shall receive instructions. Recruitment and selection of all employees of The United Churches shall be in accordance with the Personnel Policy as adopted or as amended by Council.
- C. At such time as the Pastor/Head of Staff leaves The United Churches of Olympia for any reason, s/he must be replaced by a person from the other denomination.

- D. When searching for and calling an Associate Pastor, s/he must be recruited from the denomination such that a balance of all pastors from both denominations is maintained.
- E. In the event the congregation chooses to elect co-pastors, they will share duties equally and both denominations must be represented.

ARTICLE IX – NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Nominations for Moderator, members of Ministries with two designated as Trustee, and a member of the Management Board of The United Churches Endowment Fund shall be made by a Nominating Committee of active members of The United Churches of Olympia.

- A. The Nominating Committee shall serve for a term of one year and shall consist of the Pastor/Head of Staff and Associate Pastor(s), if any, plus ten (10) active members who shall be selected as follows:
 - 1. Eight (8) members, one member to be selected by and from among the elected members of each of the eight ministries.
 - 2. The immediate past Moderator of Council
 - 3. One at-large active member selected by the Federation at the November congregational meeting.
- B. The immediate past Moderator of Council shall serve as the chairperson.
- C. Nominations to fill any vacancy occurring in any Ministry or in the office of Moderator shall be made by the Nominating Committee to complete the unexpired term. Elections shall be conducted at a regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose.
- D. It shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to assure that the Ministries are composed of a fair representation of both the female and male constituency and of all ethnic members of the congregation. The Ministries shall also be representative of all age categories of the congregation including youth, young adults, and seniors.

ARTICLE X – MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

In receiving new church members and in choosing church leadership (either volunteer or paid), The United Churches of Olympia will accept any person of God.

ARTICLE XI – CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

The rules contained in the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order – Newly Revised shall govern meetings of the congregation and the Council in all cases to which they are applicable except when they are inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the congregation of the Federation may adopt.

ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be amended or repealed by the congregation of the Federation at a regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose. A vote of at least two-thirds of those voters present shall be required. Full notice of the intention to change the bylaws shall have been read with the call of the meeting.

Adopted by congregation, April 20, 1975.

Revised January 18, 1981; May 17, 1981; March 17, 1985; May 22, 1988; November 12, 1989; October 11, 1992; November 15, 1992; May 4, 1997; February 25, 1998; November 21, 1999; November 19, 2000, January 20, 2004.

Active/Inactive Membership

Replaces policy of May 14, 1992

Guidelines for Change from Active to Inactive Membership

Authority. An active Presbyterian or United Church of Christ member of The United Churches may be transferred to inactive status:

- At his or her own request, or
- By review of the Presbyterian Session or the UCC Deacons with recommendation to the Council for action.

Criteria. If transfer to inactive status is initiated by review of the Session or Deacons, one or more of these three criteria shall apply:

1. The member regularly attends another church.
2. The member has moved his or her permanent residence to a distant location.
3. The member no longer exhibits *any* of the following indications of participation in the work and worship of The United Churches:
 - a. Attendance at worship, or
 - b. Involvement in programs or activities, or
 - c. Provision of more than token financial support

Procedure. Members meeting one or more of the above criteria shall be notified in writing of the impending action and shall be encouraged to reply if they feel the action is unwarranted. If there is no reply within 30 days, transfer to the inactive role shall take place.

Guidelines for Deletion from Membership

1. If pastoral care for a period of *two years* fails to accomplish that person's restoration as an active member, the Council may without further notice, delete the person's name from the role.
2. When a nonresident *has been given the notice required above*, and that member's name has been on the inactive roll for one year, the Council may delete that person's name from any roll on which it has been listed.