

**BYLAWS
OF
COMMUNITY
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Fresno, California
5550 North Fresno St. Fresno CA 93710**

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

The name of this Church in Fresno, California, shall be the Community United Church of Christ.

**ARTICLE II
MISSION**

Community United Church of Christ is an inclusive and progressive Christian Church doing social justice, environmental faithfulness, interfaith collaboration and spiritual formation to help and others grow in faith, hope and love.

**ARTICLE III
STATEMENT OF FAITH**

Section 1. THEOLOGY

God calls us into being and to be in harmony within ourselves, with each other, and with the world. This harmony is created out of our diversity and is rich, beautiful, deep, and mysterious.

Led by the Spirit, the followers of Jesus intentionally gather as the Church to worship, to hear, and to carry the Word of God to all through the doing of justice, which is God's love in action.

Section 2. COVENANT

As Community United Church of Christ, we promise to be a Christian community where inclusivity and diversity are valued, peace is celebrated, social and environmental justice represent our progressive theology, and interfaith relationships are nurtured through action.

Section 3. STATEMENT OF INCLUSIVENESS

As Community United Church of Christ, we experience God's love and justice. Following Jesus' example, we stand with those who suffer discrimination, isolation, and alienation. In this spirit, our family of faith is open to people of every religious background, sexual orientation, family composition, physical and mental ability, race, age, gender, education, and economic status. We welcome all people, who live in love, to participate fully in our church's life and ministry. With this statement, we affirm our commitment to work for justice, healing, and wholeness of life for all people.

ARTICLE IV
GOVERNMENT

The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right to control all its affairs, subject in legal matters to the Articles of Incorporation granted to it by the State of California.

While this church is legally subject to no ecclesiastical body, as an autonomous church, it accepts the covenant and the obligation of mutuality, cooperation, and pledges to share its common aims and work with the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE V
MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. ACCEPTANCE INTO MEMBERSHIP

Community United Church of Christ welcomes into its membership all who wish to join and be an active member in this Congregation's ministry and to make it their own. Persons may also be accepted into membership by presentation of letters of transfer from other churches, and through confirmation. New member classes will be offered to persons seeking membership. New members will be welcomed into the life of this church at a worship service or another avenue of their choosing.

Section 2. CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. **Voting Membership:** Active members and Associate persons (members of another church but who share in the spirit and covenant of this church) are eligible to vote at any congregational meeting.
- B. **Non-Voting Persons:** All persons and friends of this congregation, who are not active members are welcome in all respects, except that they shall not vote at Congregational Meetings.

Section 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Members of this church are expected to participate and to serve in the life of the church so far as they are able and as their interests and talents determine, and to share freely in the financial support of the church.

Section 4. MAINTENANCE OF THE MEMBERSHIP ROLL

It is the responsibility of the Extravagant Welcome Team (EWT) to maintain the membership roll.

ARTICLE VI
THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Section 1. MEMBERSHIP

The Church Council shall consist of the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, two congregational representatives, a chair person from each standing team and a marketing/communications liaison. The Pastor(s) serve as non-voting members. Any Council member who wishes to resign shall do so by notice to the Moderator. Vacancies on Church Council which occur between Annual Meetings, shall be filled by the Council.

Section 2. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Church Council shall:

- A. Act as the governing body of the Church setting policy and administering church life.
- B. Coordinate the programs of the church through the work of the teams.
- C. Appoint *ad hoc* teams in response to identified needs, designating the chairperson(s) for such teams. *Ad hoc* teams report directly to the Church Council.
- D. Be responsible for calling an Interim Minister when necessary, in keeping with Article X, Section 3.
- E. Consider proposals from teams and take action as needed.
- F. Participate in the annual leadership retreat.
- G. Oversee the development of an annual marketing plan for the Church and appoint a marketing/communications liaison.
- H. Assure that periodically the Church engages in a process for envisioning its future in the coming five or ten years.
- I. Provide oversight and management of the Church's financial life, legal responsibilities, and facilities.
- J. Draft, or arrange the drafting of, and execute all legal documents and contracts, in keeping with the Articles of Incorporation and the purposes of the Church.
- K. Promote church camp and retreat opportunities.
- L. Encourage youth leadership and development by inviting youth to Council meetings.

Section 3. LIMITATIONS

Any decision of the Church Council is subject to review by the Congregation.

Section 4. MEETINGS

- A. The Council shall hold at least 10 meetings a year.
- B. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Moderator and must be called by the Moderator at the request of any three members of Council.
- C. All Council meetings are open to the Congregation.
- D. The Council may vote to enter into Executive Session in cases of litigation.
- E. One-half of the members of Council shall constitute a quorum, of which at least two must be Officers.

ARTICLE VII
OFFICERS

Section 1. ELECTION

The officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the congregation. Officers must be active members of the church.

Section 2. TERMS

- A. **Moderator** shall be elected for a term of one year, and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms.
- B. **Vice-Moderator** shall be elected for a term of one year, and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms.
- C. **Clerk** shall be elected for a term of one year and shall not serve more than four consecutive terms.
- D. **Treasurer** shall be elected for a term of one year, and shall not serve more than four consecutive terms.
 - 1. During the last term an assistant treasurer will be appointed by council and approved at the Annual Meeting as the Treasurer for the following year.

Section 3. DUTIES

A. The Moderator shall:

1. Be a member of the Council, serve as its chairperson, and be chief lay officer of the Congregation.
2. Call and preside at the Annual Meeting and all special meetings of the Church.
3. Be a non-voting member of all Church teams.
4. Consult with the Pastor(s) as needed.
5. Request annual reports from Council for Annual Meeting.

B. The Vice-Moderator shall:

1. Be a member of Council and serve as its parliamentarian.
2. Assume the duties of the Moderator any time the Moderator is unable to serve.
3. Become familiar with the organization of the Church in order to become Moderator.
4. Coordinate the nominating process by proposing nominees, in coordination with Council, for the Officers and Association and Conference Delegates and preparing the Nominating Report for the team members, Officers, and Delegates for approval at the Annual Meeting.

C. The Clerk shall:

1. Be a member of Council, serve as its secretary, and prepare minutes of its meetings;
2. Serve as secretary for all Congregational Meetings.

D. The Treasurer shall:

1. Be a member of Council and make a monthly report to it.
2. Oversee all income and expenses in accordance with the annual budget and all other Church funds, projects and accounts.
3. Receive all income, pledges and donations.
4. Report the financial status of the church in concert with the Finance Team at the Annual Meeting.
5. Submit the accounts for a Record of Review every two years.
6. Be a non-voting member of the Finance Team, oversee the work of the bookkeeper, and notify the bookkeeper of all Finance Team and Council decisions pertaining to church finances.
7. Oversee the teams who count Sunday offerings and make weekly deposits.
8. Be a signatory on any church account; can only sign checks for day-to-day operations unless approved by the Moderator.

E. EXECUTIVE TEAM

The above elected officers will comprise the Executive Team. The Pastor(s) shall be non-voting members of the Executive Team.

The Executive Team shall:

1. Conduct an annual evaluation of the pastors.
2. Hold an annual leadership retreat to develop goals and objectives for the Church.
3. Set the Council agenda and meeting dates.
4. Hear personnel matters as needed.

ARTICLE VIII

ELECTED CONFERENCE AND ASSOCIATION DELEGATES

Section 1. ELECTION

The delegates shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation for a term of one year. They must be active members of the church.

Section 2. DUTIES

- A. The **Conference Delegates**, including one youth member, shall be the official representatives of the Church at all meetings of the Northern California Nevada Conference of the UCC. If these official delegates are unable to attend specific meetings, the Council may appoint substitutes for those meetings.
- B. The **Association Delegates** shall be the official representatives of the Church at all meetings of the Sequoia Association of the Northern California Nevada Conference of the UCC. If these official delegates are unable to attend specific meetings, the Council may appoint substitutes for those meetings. The Association Delegates shall choose one of themselves to be a UCC Council member.

ARTICLE IX **TEAMS**

Section 1. GUIDELINES FOR TEAMS

- A. Teams may consist of six to nine members. Exception: Personnel Team shall consist of three members. Members of teams may serve no more than three one-year consecutive elected terms. Previous appointment to complete the unexpired term of another does not constitute election. Any additional terms must be approved by Council. Exception: Charitable Gifts and Finance Teams may serve no more than two, two-year consecutive elected terms. Members of the Finance and Charitable Gifts Teams must be active or associate members of the church.
- B. Teams shall recruit members as needed and report membership to the vice-moderator prior to the Annual Meeting.
- C. Teams have the right to organize themselves for the effective execution of their duties. Each team will notify the Moderator of its chairperson. Once elected, a Chairperson becomes a member of the Church Council. In the event that a Chairperson resigns, the team shall elect another.
- D. In the event that a team member is unable to fulfill his/her commitment, the Chairperson shall seek the resignation of the member and the team can fill that position with Council approval.
- E. Teams are encouraged to involve others to carry out the full range of their duties and to share in the spiritual growth of the church.

Section 2. WORSHIP TEAM

- A. **Focus:** This team shall plan and implement the worship life of the Congregation, in close consultation with the Pastor(s) and Music Director.
- B. **Duties**
 - 1. Be responsible for decorating and supplying the worship space.
 - 2. Assist the Pastor(s) in sacraments and rites of the church.
 - 3. Obtain substitute ministers to lead worship services in the Pastor's absence.
 - 4. Supervise Director of Music in consultation with the Pastor(s).
 - 5. Keep musical instruments, equipment, and choir vestments in repair.
 - 6. Responsible for sound tech volunteer.

Section 3. EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME TEAM

- A. **Focus:** This team shall have as its primary focus the invitation, reception, and nurture of the members of this Church, including concern for their well-being and their involvement in the life of the Congregation.

B. Duties

1. Oversee processes designed to invite and welcome newcomers.
2. Be responsible, with the Pastor(s), for contacting newcomers.
3. Assist the Pastor(s) in providing membership orientation sessions where prospective members can explore the meaning of membership, its commitments, and opportunities.
4. Plan, in consultation with the Pastor(s) and the Worship team, for the reception of new members in the worship service.
5. Staff, train, and support the Lay Care team to assist the Pastor(s) in care-giving to every member of the Congregation.
6. Be responsible for an annual examination of Church membership rolls and for their orderly maintenance.
7. Grant any request for transfer or termination of membership; grant a letter of transfer to any other church for any member in good standing.
8. Call the Congregation during the Annual Meeting to a time of recognition and remembrance for those members who have died during the year.
9. Make a report of membership to the Annual Meeting.

Section 4. FACILITIES AND GROUNDS

A. **Focus:** This team's primary focus is the oversight and management of Community United Church of Christ's buildings and grounds.

B. Duties

1. Seek the Treasurer's approval for any expenditure. Obtain three bids on expenses over \$500.00 and recurring services. The Treasurer will bring any unbudgeted expense over \$2,000 to the Council for approval.
2. At the first council meeting of the fiscal year, or shortly thereafter, bring a prioritized list of needs of the facilities to Council for approval.
3. Maintain and improve the building and property in keeping with the decisions of the Congregation.

Section 5. FINANCE TEAM

A. **Focus:** This team shall have as its primary focus budget development, stewardship, and fundraising.

B. Duties

1. Periodically examine and assess the Church budget, its income and expenses. Allocate funds to expenses and adjust expenditures as necessary to conform to changes in income and costs.
2. In concert with the Treasurer, prepare and submit an annual budget and a full annual financial report to the Council and to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.
3. Educate and encourage the Congregation in its role as stewards of time, talent, and money by conducting an annual stewardship campaign in support of the Church's ministry.
4. Develop an annual fundraising plan.
5. Establish rental policies and review annually.
6. Designate individuals who will be signatories on all church accounts.

Section 6. FAITH EDUCATION TEAM

A. **Focus:** This team shall shape programs and opportunities designed to communicate the major stories, beliefs, understandings, and values of the faith; to aid persons in discovering the relationship of faith to life; and to prepare persons for meaningful and faithful participation in the human community.

B. Duties

1. Articulate the philosophy of Community United Church of Christ.
2. Shape educational programs for all ages and train staff to carry them out.
3. Provide and oversee youth ministries.
4. Assist the Pastor(s) in providing confirmation education.
5. Oversee the Sue Dennen Children's Library.
6. In consultation with the Pastor supervise the youth leader and child care staff.

Section 7. FELLOWSHIP TEAM

A. **Focus:** This team shall nurture relationships and build a sense of community by providing recreational and social occasions for Church members and friends.

B. Duties

1. Design social occasions that address age-appropriate, intergenerational, and special group interests.
2. Make arrangements for fellowship hours prior to or following worship.
3. Be responsible for organizing, equipping, and stocking the kitchen, and making recommendations for non-budgeted purchases to the Trustees.
4. Cooperate with other teams in shaping special seasonal programming.

Section 8. PASTORAL RELATIONS TEAM

A. **Focus:** This team shall have as its primary focus the nurture of the Pastor(s), and of a healthy relationship between Pastor(s), staff, and Congregation.

B. Duties

1. Serve as a support group for the Pastor(s) and for the family(ies) of the Pastor(s).
2. Receive regular input from the Pastor(s) concerning the state of the ministry and the Congregation.
3. Receive input from the Congregation concerning the state of the ministry and the Congregation.
4. Facilitate communication between the Pastor(s) and the Congregation or the staff or the Council.
5. Attempt to mediate conflicts, crises, or misunderstandings between the Pastor(s) and the staff, or the Congregation.
6. Assist in facilitating healthy, positive relationships within the pastoral staff when the Church is served by more than one Pastor.
7. Use the highest professional ethical standards to maintain confidentiality and to safeguard the Pastor(s), the staff, and the Congregation.
8. In its deliberations, this team shall be directed by the *Manual on Ministry* of the United Church of Christ and by the *Manual on Ministry, Supplements and Appendices* of the Northern California Nevada Conference.

Section 9. MISSIONS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE TEAM

A. **Focus:** This team shall provide information and education on social justice issues and the mission/service needs of the human community.

B. Duties

1. Develop awareness, recommend, and facilitate this congregation's involvement in missions and social justice programs.
2. Design and implement special moments in the worship service to educate the congregation and request special offerings and service opportunities.

3. Encourage and assist individuals and groups within the congregation in taking action on Missions and Social Justice issues.

Section 10. CHARITABLE GIFTS AND ENDOWMENT FUNDS TEAM

A. Focus: This team shall be the custodian of the Charitable Gifts and Endowments Funds of the Community United Church of Christ. This team shall act as the financial investment agent of the Church.

B. Duties

1. Solicit and accept memorials, donations, endowments, and bequests into the Funds.
2. Invest, manage, and oversee the Funds within the framework of the Church and specifically within the umbrella of the Church's tax exempt status, exclusively for religious or charitable purposes consistent with the purposes and ministries of the Church.
3. Report quarterly to the Council and Congregation.
4. Report changes in investments to the Council.
5. Conduct an independent Record of Review of Charitable Gifts and Endowments funds as necessary, but not less than once every two years.

Section 11. PERSONNEL TEAM

A. Focus: This team shall provide appropriate employment, through the interview process, for church positions and be responsible for staff evaluations and/or conflict.

B. Duties:

1. Ensure that staff members are hired appropriately and are periodically evaluated.
2. Attempt to mediate conflicts, crises, or misunderstandings between the Pastor and the staff.
3. Hear personnel matters involving staff that cannot be resolved by the Pastor or upon request of the Pastor.
4. The team will discharge employees in consultation with the Chair of the Team to whom the staff is assigned and will keep the Moderator and Executive Team apprised of the process.
5. The Executive Team will hear personnel issues not resolved by the Pastor or Personnel Team.
6. The teams and Pastor, in consultation with the Personnel Team and Council, will hire and supervise staff using a process of consultation and mutual agreement:
 - a. Faith Education Team: Youth Director, Nursery Attendant(s), Director of Christian Education (if not Ordained or Commissioned)
 - b. Worship Team: Music Staff
 - c. Treasurer: Bookkeeper,
 - d. Council: Office Staff

ARTICLE X

THE ORDAINED AND COMMISSIONED MINISTRY

Section 1. GENERAL ROLES

In keeping with the tradition of ministry in the United Church of Christ, the primary roles of the ordained and commissioned minister(s) shall be to preach and teach, and to provide pastoral care. The ordained minister shall administer the sacraments,

Section 2. ADDITIONAL PASTORAL DUTIES

The Pastor(s) of this Congregation shall also perform the following duties:

- A. Serve as spiritual and visionary leader(s) of the Congregation.

- B. Oversee the worship and program life of the Church.
- C. Serve as staff resource to the Council and teams, non-voting status.
- D. Officiate at the rites of the Church.
- E. Represent Community United Church of Christ in the community.
- F. Nurture strong denominational and ecumenical relationships.
- G. Supervise staff in day-to-day operations.

Section 3. VACANCY

When a Pastoral vacancy occurs, the Council shall consult with the staff of the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ concerning the period of pastoral transition. Should an Interim Minister be deemed advisable by the Council, candidates for that position shall be sought through the Conference. The term of the Interim Ministry shall be at the discretion of the church. Either party may terminate the arrangement by giving at least 30 day notice to the other party.

In keeping with the practice of the United Church of Christ, the Interim Minister may not be considered as a candidate for the pastoral office.

Section 4. SELECTION

When in search for a pastor, a representative Pastoral Search Team shall be nominated by the Council, with possible further nominations by the Congregation, and elected at a meeting of the Congregation. The Pastoral Search team shall consider as candidates only those authorized to circulate a ministerial profile within the United Church of Christ. The Pastoral Search Team, working with the staff assistance of the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ, shall select and recommend a prospective Pastor.

When that recommendation has been made known by the Pastoral Search Team, the Council shall arrange for the introduction of the candidate to the Congregation and call a Congregational Meeting for action on the recommendation. A pastoral call shall require a 3/4 majority vote of the voting members present, as long as there is a quorum (see Article XI, Section 5). The vote shall be taken by a written ballot.

Once a Pastor has been duly called, it shall be the responsibility of the Pastoral Relations Team to work with the Pastor in establishing and maintaining a healthy Pastor/Church relationship.

Section 5. TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time. A written contract shall be proposed by the Council, in consultation with the Pastoral Search Team, setting forth the terms of the call, including compensation, benefits, vacation, days off, continuing education, and sabbatical leave. Copies of this signed contract shall be supplied to the Pastor, the Moderator, the Church office, Pastoral Relations Team, and the Northern California Nevada Conference, United Church of Christ. It shall be the responsibility of the Council to work with the Pastor(s) toward an annual compensation.

Section 6. TERMINATION

The Pastor's call shall be terminated immediately in the event the Pastor loses ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ or is refused ministerial standing in the Northern California Nevada Conference.

In the event that a Pastor wishes to resign, that person shall submit a letter to the Moderator, providing a minimum of sixty days notice.

In the event that the Moderator becomes aware that some members of the Church are displeased by the job performance of a duly called clergy member, then the Moderator will, first, encourage those members to address their concerns with the Pastoral Relations team. In the event that the Moderator deems such displeasure to be widespread or to pertain to a multiplicity of issues, the Moderator at his/her sole discretion may concurrently or subsequently convene a panel of advisors. This panel of advisors may be either the Church Council meeting in a session without clergy present or a group of at least ten Church members with at least five being Council members and none being clergy. The purpose of this advisory panel is to assist the Moderator in discerning whether a Congregational Meeting should be called to discuss a resolution of no confidence in the Pastor's job performance.

If the Moderator, advised by the panel of advisors, decides to proceed to Congregational meeting to obtain a vote of confidence or no confidence in the Pastor's job performance, then before such Congregational Meeting is called, the Moderator shall inform the Associate Conference Minister for the Sequoia Association of the state of affairs and invite the Northern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ to assist the Church and the Pastor in an attempt to mediate the issues between the Pastor and the disaffected members of the Church.

If the Moderator at his/her sole discretion deems that such measures have resulted in insufficient improvement for the Church as a whole, then the Moderator shall call for a Congregational Meeting to take a vote of confidence by the Church of the Pastor's job performance. If a vote of no confidence prevails from a written ballot, then the Moderator will announce the date and time of a second Congregational Meeting for the purpose of deciding whether to terminate the Pastor's call with the proviso that at least two weeks and no more than four weeks shall intervene between the two Congregational Meetings. During this interval the Pastor may choose to resign, thus precluding the need for the Church to move to terminate the Pastor's employment.

If the Pastor chooses not to resign, then the Church shall, at the duly called Congregational Meeting constituted to decide whether to terminate, vote whether to terminate the Pastor's call. The financial support of the Church, including benefits, shall continue for sixty (60) days. The services of the Pastor may be terminated at any time within the sixty (60) days according to the vote of the Congregation.

Section 7. OTHER ORDAINED MINISTERS

Should other ordained ministers, active or retired, of the United Church of Christ, hold membership in this Congregation, the Council shall make reasonable effort to support them in their professional calling and ecclesiastical standing, within the boundaries of the UCC polity.

Section 8. SEMINARIANS

Should a member of the Congregation experience a call to the ordained ministry and seek to be trained for it, the Council shall carry out those roles delegated to the local Church by the *Manual on Ministry* of the United Church of Christ and the *Manual on Ministry, Supplements and Appendices* of the Northern California Nevada Conference.

ARTICLE XI **CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS**

Section 1. QUORUM AND VOTING

For all Congregational Meetings, Members must be present to fill a quorum or to vote. Proxy voting and absentee voting shall not be allowed.

Section 2. ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting shall be held at a date and time selected by the Council at which time officers and teams shall be elected, year-end financial and team reports shall be received, the budget shall be adopted, and such other business shall be transacted as these Bylaws authorize.

The call for the Annual Meeting shall be made available by Council to the membership at least two weeks in advance of the meeting by announcement from the pulpit and publication in electronic media.

Section 3. SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Special Congregational Meetings may be called by the Moderator, and shall be called by the

Moderator at the request of the Pastor(s), Council, or any 10 Voting Members. The call and agenda for such a meeting shall be made available at least two (2) weeks in advance of the meeting.

Section 4. RESOLUTIONS

- A. Resolutions are written documents in which this Congregation states a position on social or political issues.
- B. Resolutions may be drafted and proposed by the Council, any Standing Teams, or any group of ten Active Members of the Congregation. Once drafted, they must be forwarded to the Council for addition to the agenda of a Congregational meeting. Notice of a Congregational Meeting at which a resolution is to be considered must be given from the pulpit and by publication in the Church newsletter at least two weeks in advance, and copies of the resolution must be available to the Congregation at that time.
- C. An affirmative vote by two-thirds of those voting is required for adoption.

Section 5. QUORUM

Fifteen percent (15%) of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business of the Congregation, except that the quorum shall be 25% for any of the following actions: the call or dismissal of a Pastor, the acquisition or sale of real property, the encumbrance of a major financial obligation, Bylaw changes, or the dissolution of the Congregation and Corporation.

Section 6. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern proceedings of Congregational Meetings unless otherwise specified.

Section 7. FISCAL YEAR

The Fiscal Year of the Church shall be July 1 through June 30.

ARTICLE XII **Amendments**

Adoption, amendment, revision or repeal of the Bylaws shall require a two-thirds vote of members voting, once an appropriate quorum is declared, at a Congregational Meeting. Any proposed amendment or an appropriate summary shall be made available to the Congregation at least two weeks in advance of the meeting, by announcement from the pulpit and publication in the Church newsletter or by a special mailing.

As the Bylaws are amended, edited and dated copies will be printed and provided to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.

Adopted January 27, 1991

Amended

- September 19, 1993,
- January 30, 1994,
- January 22, 1995,
- June 14, 1998, (Open & Affirming)
- December 6, 1998,
- January 24, 1999,
- January 23, 2005,
- January 27, 2008
- January 12, 2014
- June 8, 2014
- June 10, 2018