

DETROIT METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**ARTICLES  
AND BYLAWS  
OF THE ASSOCIATION**

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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**DETROIT METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION**

*Article 1*

The name by which this corporation shall be known is the “**Detroit Metropolitan Association of the United Church of Christ.**”

*Article 2*

The location of this Association shall be within the geographic boundaries surrounding the member churches. Any adjustment of Association boundaries or transfer of membership of churches between Associations shall be done in consultation with the Michigan Conference.

*Article 3*

The time for which this Association shall be created shall be in perpetuity.

*Article 4*

The purpose for which this Association is organized shall be:

1. To express the oneness in Christ as an association of churches and ministers of the United Church of Christ according to the faith and usage of the United Church of Christ, a denomination in the United States of America which is a union of Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church, without break in the respective continuities and traditions, and in accordance with the recognition of the inherent and complete autonomy of the local church contained in the Constitution and By-laws of the United Church of Christ.
2. To determine, confer and certify to the standing of local churches with this Association.
3. To determine, confer and certify to the standing of ministers with this Association.
4. To stimulate the mission interests of the churches of this Association in support of local programs which in the spirit of Jesus Christ extend the Gospel.
5. To respond to the needs and concerns of its member churches and ministers.
6. To exercise the powers and perform the functions of an ecclesiastical council on request of a member church or minister.

*Article 5*

The voting membership of this Association shall consist of the ordained ministers who hold standing in the Association, the Linking Board of the Association, delegates selected by the local churches of the Association and other members as provided for in the By-laws.

### *Article 6*

The government of this Association is vested in its members in meeting who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject to the Bylaws of this Association and the laws of the State of Michigan. The autonomy of the local church is inherent and modifiable only by its own action. Nothing in the By-laws of this Association shall destroy or limit the right of each local church to continue to operate in the way customary to it; nor shall be construed as giving to the Association now, or at any future time, the power to abridge or impair the autonomy of any local church in the management of its own affairs, or to withdraw from this Association at any time without forfeiture of ownership of real or personal property or any rights therein belonging to the local church.

### *Article 7*

This Association shall have that relationship to the General Synod of the United Church of Christ as is described in those portions of the constitution and By-laws of the United Church of Christ adopted July 1999, as amended, which relate to Associations of the United Church of Christ, and shall have that relationship to the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ as is described in those portions of the Constitution and By-laws of the Michigan Conference adopted May 22, 1963, as amended, which relate to Associations of the Michigan Conference.

### *Article 8*

No substantial part of the activities of this Association shall include the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and no part of the income, earnings or assets of this Association shall inure to the benefit of any individual, member thereof, contributor thereto, or for any private, personal or selfish purpose. No part of the income, earnings or assets of this Association shall be given to or inure to the benefit of any person, corporation or organization not tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Code of the United States of America. In the event of dissolution of this Association its assets and all properly and interests of which it shall then be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after such dissolution, shall be transferred to the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ.

### *Article 9*

The Association may in its corporate name sue or be sued; acquire by purchase, gift devise, bequest or otherwise, and own, hold, invest, reinvest or dispose of property real and personal for such work as the Association may undertake; and may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer and convey such property for the general purposes of the Association. It may receive and hold in trust both real and personal property and invest and reinvest the same and make any contracts for promoting the objects and purposes of the Association.

## **BY-LAWS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

### *Article 1*

#### **FAITH AND VISION**

The Detroit Metropolitan Association is a community of covenanted congregations, living in the way of Jesus, guided by the Still Speaking God, and empowered by the Holy Spirit for mutual ministry.

The Association claims as its own, as testimony and not a test, the faith expressed in the Preamble of the constitution of the United Church of Christ, and in the Statement of Faith in the form of a doxology, used by the United Church of Christ.

### *Article 2*

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

##### **A. ELECTION OR TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Election or termination of membership in this Association requires a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a meeting of the Association, unless otherwise provided in these By-laws, due notice of the proposed action and meeting having been given as prescribed in these By-laws (Article 3).

##### **B. CHURCHES WITH STANDING**

1. All local churches registered with the United Church of Christ through this Association are members of this Association.
2. When the standing of a local church is in dispute, the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team shall make inquiry. If the matter is not satisfactorily settled, the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team shall submit the concern and a recommendation to the Association.
3. The standing of a local church of this Association shall be terminated by action of this Association at the request of a local church, after consultation with the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team or may be terminated by action of this Association in meeting, upon its' recommendation, when that local church gives evidence that it is no longer in sympathy with the purposes and programs of the United Church of Christ.

##### **C. MINISTERS**

1. All persons who serve as ordained, licensed, partner, commissioned ministers or ministerial partners shall be members of the Association with voice and vote. The process for obtaining such ministerial designation shall be in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of United Church of Christ and Michigan Conference and guided by the Manual on Ministry under the aegis of Church and Ministry Mission Area Team.
2. HONORARY AND AFFILIATED MEMBERS
  - a. The Michigan Conference Minister, other members of the Michigan Conference executive staff and official representatives of the United Church of Christ, its boards, instrumentalities and agencies that may be in attendance at Association meetings are honorary members with this Association with voice but not vote.
  - b. Benevolent institutions within the bounds of the Association, such as hospitals and homes for the aged that are recognized by the United Church of Christ Council for Health and Human Services as being fully affiliated with the denomination, may request representational voice but not vote at Associational meetings.

- c. Other United Church of Christ organizations regarded as self-governed and affiliated organizations, sharing the common work and purposes of the Association, may request representational voice but not vote at Association meetings.

#### **D. PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS**

1. A church holding standing in the Association has a covenantal relationship with the Association and other churches within the Association. It is in this context member churches live out their covenant with God and support the ministries of each other.
2. Actions, decisions or advice emanating from the General Synod, the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ or this Association, should be held in the highest regard. Churches and those ministers having standing in the Association will live out the covenant of mutual concern for each other's ministries by being faithful in attendance at meetings of the Association and participating in its work.
3. The privilege and responsibility of witnessing to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the church and society belongs to every covenantal partner. This Association diligently seeks, in concert with the Michigan Conference and the United Church of Christ, to under gird the ministry of its members by nurturing faith, calling forth God-given gifts and equipping members for Christian service.
4. Except in the case of an interim minister or a minister in retirement, a minister serving a local church, including an Ordained Ministerial Partner serving as a local church pastor, must hold his/her church membership in that church.

#### *Article 3*

#### **ASSOCIATION MEETINGS**

##### **A. NOTICE OF ASSOCIATION MEETINGS**

Notice of Association meetings specifying the time, place and purpose thereof, shall be given by the Registrar to each member church, each ministerial member and all other members as defined in Article 2 of these Bylaws, at least fourteen (14) days preceding the date of the meeting and sixty (60) days preceding the date of a meeting involving amendments to these Articles of Association and By-laws. The Linking Board shall fix all Association meeting dates.

##### **B. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING**

There shall be two regular business meetings of the Association. The Agenda of these meeting must be approved by a majority vote of the members of the Association present and voting at the beginning of the meeting. These shall typically be held in the spring and fall of the year.

1. The "Annual" meeting will normally be held in the spring. Included in the business at this meeting will be the annual reports from the Michigan Conference, Mission Area Teams, other affiliated organizations, and Association Officer; elections, consideration of the reauthorization or modification of mission areas and any other matters included in the Notice of Meeting.
2. The fall meeting business shall include the adoption of an annual budget for the ensuing fiscal year and any other matters included in the Notice of meeting. The fiscal year of the Association shall be the calendar year.

### **C. SPECIAL MEETINGS**

Special meetings shall be called in a manner specified in Article 3, Section A of these By-laws upon the request of the Moderator, the Associate Conference Minister, a majority of the members of the Linking Board, or upon written request of at least ten (10) churches with standing in the Association. Only such business as is specified in the call may be transacted at a special meeting.

### **D. ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCILS**

Ecclesiastical Councils shall be called in a manner specified in these By-laws upon the request of the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team. Such a council may be called to examine the fitness of a candidate for Christian ministry or taking disciplinary action including censure, suspension or termination of standing. Ecclesiastical Council is an official Association meeting.

### **E. VOTING MEMBERS** of this Association shall consist of:

1. The ordained ministers holding full and limited standing, licensed ministers and commissioned ministers.
2. The voting members of the Linking Board of this Association.
3. Two (2) lay delegates from each local church with standing in the Association. Churches with more than 400 members are entitled to one additional delegate for each additional 400 members, or major fraction thereof (more than half), according to the latest published United Church of Christ yearbook.
4. Each member or delegate is entitled to one vote, except as specified in these By-Laws.
5. One (1) youth lay delegate from each local church with standing in the Association. A youth delegate must be a confirmed member of the church, under the age of eighteen (18) years, at the time of the Association Meeting.

### **F. QUORUMS**

Thirty (30) persons eligible to vote, including delegates from at least 10 churches shall constitute a quorum at all Association Meetings. No business shall be transacted without a quorum.

### **G. PROCEDURE**

While the Association shall act in covenant and strive to reach consensus where required Robert's Rules of Order shall be the standard for all parliamentary procedures of this Association.

#### *Article 4*

### **ASSOCIATION OFFICERS**

#### **A. OFFICERS** of the Association shall be:

Moderator  
Vice Moderator  
Secretary  
Treasurer

#### **B. ELECTION**

1. All officer positions shall alternate between clergy and laity in a rotational manner to the fullest extent possible.
2. The nominating committee shall nominate the Moderator and Vice Moderator. Election shall be by a majority of voting members present at the Annual Meeting to serve a two (2) year term and until

their successors are elected. The Moderator and Vice Moderator shall serve for a period of at least two (2) years, except that a person filling an unexpired term will be eligible to serve a full term thereafter.

3. The Secretary and, Treasurer, who shall be members of churches with standing in this Association, shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by a majority of voting members present at the Annual Meeting to serve a three (3) year term and until their successors are elected. They shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms, except that a person filling an unexpired term will be eligible to serve two (2) consecutive full terms thereafter. These amendments will not affect the terms of office of persons serving as officers holding office at the time of their adoption.
4. All elected officers shall begin their terms of office the first day of the month following the Annual Meeting and all officers, and agents responsible for the handling of funds, shall be bonded.
5. The Linking Board shall designate the Registrar of this Association.

### **C. DUTIES**

1. The MODERATOR shall:
  - a. Be the Senior Officer of the Association and preside at all meetings of the Association, the Linking Board and the Executive Committee.
  - b. Vote only in case of a tie at any meeting of the Association, Linking Board and Executive Committee.
  - c. Be an ex-officio member with voice but not vote of all Committees, Mission Area Teams and Task Forces.
  - d. In consultation with the Associate Conference Minister and the Executive Committee of the Linking Board, report to the Association at its Annual Meeting pertinent information about actions taken by the Linking Board.
2. The VICE MODERATOR shall:
  - a. Handle the responsibilities of the Moderator's office during a specific absence of the Moderator.
  - b. Be a member with voice and vote of the Linking Board and the Executive Committee.
  - c. Be an ex-officio member with voice but not vote of all committees, Mission Area Teams and task forces.
  - d. Act as temporary chairperson for Mission Teams and the Nominating Committee at their initial organizational meetings as may be required to effect a smooth operating transition.
  - e. Perform such other duties as may be requested by the Moderator.
3. The SECRETARY shall:
  - a. Be custodian of the seal and maintain a current and accurate copy of the Articles of Association and Bylaws of the Association and provide the same to the Linking Board.
  - b. Serve as Secretary of and be a member with voice and vote of the Linking Board and the Executive Committee.
  - c. Perform the duties as ordinarily pertain to the office of Secretary.



4. The TREASURER shall:
  - a. Have custody of all monies and securities of the Association and disburse funds as intended in the adopted budget or as may be amended by the Linking Board in accordance with these By-laws.
  - b. Receive, record, tally and deposit and report monthly all receipts and disbursements.
  - c. Submit a monthly financial report to the Linking Board.
  - d. Submit an annual financial report to the Association at the Annual Meeting.
  - e. Be a member with voice and vote of the Linking Board and the Executive and Finance Committees.
  - f. Maintain a checking account, savings account and safety deposit box at such bank or banks as the Board may designate and ensure that all officers and agents responsible for the handling of funds are bonded; reporting annually to the Board on these bonding arrangements at its January meeting.

**D. ACCOUNTABILITY**

Officers shall be accountable to the Association and may be removed from office at a regular or special Association meeting called for that purpose in accordance with Article 3 of these Bylaws.

**E. VACANCIES**

Vacancies of Association officers shall be filled by the Linking Board except for the Moderator's office which is automatically filled for the remainder of the term by the vice Moderator. The person appointed shall serve until the next annual meeting (see Article 4, Section B 3) when a person shall be elected to a new term or to fulfill the remainder of the unexpired term.

*Article 5*  
**LINKING BOARD**

**A. MEMBERSHIP**

1. The Linking Board shall include:
  - The Moderator
  - The Vice Moderator
  - The Secretary
  - The Treasurer
  - Three (3) Members-At-Large
  - A Representative from each Mission Area Team
2. Two (2) Ex-Officio members with voice but not vote of the Linking Board shall be:
  - The Associate Conference Minister
  - The Immediate Past Moderator

3. All members of the Linking Board shall be members of Churches with standing in this Association and shall reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of this Association. The at large members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected to staggered three year {(3)} terms by a majority vote of those present and voting at the Annual Meeting. Terms of office shall begin the first day of the month following the Annual Meeting. The Mission Area Team representatives shall be selected by the participants in that Mission Area Team. The Teams shall designate a meeting at which the representative shall be selected no less than 14 days before the annual meeting. While they should endeavor to select the representative by consensus if an election is requested by any member of the Mission Area Team the representative will be selected by a vote of a majority of those in attendance at the meeting. No Board member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms and shall not succeed themselves for a period of at least one (1) year, except that a person filling an unexpired term will be eligible to serve two (2) consecutive terms thereafter.
4. The Moderator shall serve as Chairperson of the Board.

## **B. DUTIES**

The Linking Board shall:

1. Facilitate communication and covenant within the Association. It shall act for the Association between Association Meetings in accordance with these By-laws, except that it shall not act for the Association in matters concerning election or termination of membership in this Association. Upon recommendation of the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team, the Board may confer “Persons of Discernment,” “Licensed Minister” or “Commissioned Minister” standing for the Association.
2. Appoint official representatives to ecumenical and denominational agencies including the Michigan Conference Board of Directors.
3. Oversee and administer the financial affairs of the Association including; the presentation adoption, monitoring and modification of an annual budget in accordance with generally accepted fiscal practices. As a part of the budgeting process the board shall recommend a Per Capita donation to be received from its member churches, for approval at the fall meeting.
4. Maintain endowment funds to which donations may be made for specific purposes. Unless otherwise restricted, the interest and dividends received from any related investments shall be credited to the operating fund.
5. Provide for an annual audit of the financial records.
6. Report each year to the churches and ministers at the Annual Meeting as set forth in Article 4, Section C 1 f of these By-laws.
7. Annually submit a slate of nominees to the Registrar’s office thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting.
8. Fill all vacancies.
9. The Linking Board shall serve as Directors of the Association. Except as otherwise provided in these By-Laws, have all the powers conferred by law on the Board of Directors of a Corporation.
10. Serve as the long range planning body for the association.
11. Shall appoint a person to serve as registrar of the Association to fulfill all of the responsibilities of the registrar as outlined in these by-laws and the by-laws of the Michigan Conference and the by-

laws and constitution of the General Synod as from time to time shall be amended.

### **C. ORGANIZATION**

1. Within thirty (30) days after the Annual Meeting, the Linking Board shall establish dates, time and place for its regular meetings and for the regular meetings of the Executive Committee, and organize to administer its duties effectively. All meetings of the Association, its Linking Board and operational Mission Area Teams are open to any members of a church that is a member of the Association.
2. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary and Treasurer of the Association and the Associate Conference Minister.

#### THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE shall:

- a. Plan the agenda for Board and Association Meetings, to the end that the business shall be accomplished expeditiously, but without denying to any point of view its full expression.
  - b. Plan and make arrangements for the Annual and Fall Meetings of the Association and present such to the Board for approval.
  - c. Review activities of the Association and its members and advise the Board of Action required.
  - d. Coordinate the calendar of Association activities and meetings, resolving conflicts if necessary.
3. The Finance committee shall consist of five (5) members of the Association. The Treasurer shall be a member and serve as chairperson of the committee at least one other member of the Committee shall also be a member of the Linking Board. The remaining Committee members shall be appointed by the Moderator.

#### THE FINANCE COMMITTEE shall:

- a. Prepare and propose an annual budget, soliciting from persons responsible for all areas of Association work, their goals, priorities and estimates of financial resources required to fulfill projected ministries. Following negotiations, it shall recommend a calendar year budget to the Board for review, acceptance and presentation for approval at the Fall Business Meeting of the Association.
  - b. Direct and supervise the investment of the endowment funds of the Association and any other funds referred to it by the Board for investment. It shall consider the social impact of its investment policies.
4. The board may establish and terminate other committees and task forces as it sees fit to assist in its functions. Members of such committees and task forces shall be appointed by the Moderator.

### **D. MEETINGS**

1. The Linking Board shall meet at least Bi-monthly. Meeting dates shall be coordinated with the Mission Area Teams.
2. Special meetings of the Linking Board shall be called in accordance with Article 5, Section E of these By-laws upon request of the Moderator, the Association Conference Minister or written petition of seven (7) voting members of the Board.
4. Executive sessions of the Board with only voting members present may be convened by the Moderator for considering sensitive legal or personal and/or congregational issues.

## **E. NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

Board members shall be notified, by the Registrar of the date, time and place of each meeting, by written notice at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. In the case of a special meeting, the purpose of the meeting shall be specified. Emergency special meetings may be called by the Moderator by a twenty four (24) hour verified; oral notice if in the opinion of the Moderator there is no other alternative. Only business specified in the notice may be acted upon in the special meeting.

## **F. QUORUM**

The Linking Board shall be accountable to the Association in meeting. Elected members may be removed from office at a regular or special meeting of the Association called for that purpose.

## **G. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The board shall be accountable to the Association in meeting. Elected members may be removed from office at a regular or special meeting of the Association called for that purpose.

## **H. VACANCIES**

Vacancies of elected members of the Linking Board shall be filled by the Linking Board. The person appointed shall serve until the next Annual Meeting when a person shall be elected to a new term or to fulfill the remainder of the unexpired term.

### *Article 6*

## **MISSION AREA TEAMS**

### **A. PURPOSE**

1. The work of the Association shall be done through a variable number of Mission Area Teams. With the exception of Church and Ministry the number and assigned missions of the Teams shall be approved by the Association at its annual meeting, by a simple majority vote without By-Law amendment. At the close of the 2010 annual meeting after ratification of these By-Laws the Mission Area Teams are:

**Church and Ministry:** Acts regarding authorizing ministry and the nurture of churches and authorized ministers in the Association.

**Covenant:** The Detroit Metropolitan Association encourages congregations, their members and clergy to experience, strengthen and live into covenantal relationships with the United Church of Christ in all its settings and ecumenical relationships.

**Inclusiveness:** The Mission of the Detroit Metropolitan Association is to empower and equip local churches to become extravagantly welcoming United Church of Christ faith communities, reaching out and accepting all people wherever they are on their life's journey, with the goal of becoming a multi-cultural/multi-racial, radically inclusive church.

**Led By the Spirit:** Detroit Metropolitan Association is a covenanted fellowship of unique local congregations, centered in God and compelled by the Spirit, to awaken and build faith in persons of all ages (churched and unchurched) through education, to inspire outreach and advocates for social justice.

**Resources:** Detroit Metropolitan Association creates and evaluates available resources and communicates and shares these with local congregations through all available media.

**Social Justice:** Detroit Metropolitan Association empowers and affirms local congregations in living out the gospel of Jesus Christ by sharing the faith, supporting their missions and social justice actions.

These Mission Area Teams will continue in existence until further action by the Association.

2. The Mission Area Teams shall act in covenant with the similar instrumentalities, councils, commissions, committees or agencies of the Michigan Conference, the General Synod and other local and national bodies in order that the program of the United Church of Christ may have effective expression in this Association.

## **B. MEMBERSHIP**

1. Except for Church and Ministry, all Mission Area Team membership is open and unlimited, but the majority of members of all Mission Area Teams shall be members of Detroit Metropolitan Association, United Church of Christ churches. The Teams are encouraged to actively recruit participants to their mission and reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of this Association.
2. Church and Ministry Mission Area Team shall have no less than 9 members and shall reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of this Association and shall include laity and clergy. These persons shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected to staggered three (3) year terms by a majority vote of those present and voting at the Annual Meeting. Terms of office shall begin the first day of the month following the Annual Meeting. They shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms and shall not succeed themselves for at least a period of one (1) year, except that a person filling an unexpired term will be eligible to serve two (2) consecutive full terms thereafter. The Church and Ministry Mission Area Team members' terms of office will be unchanged by these amendments.

## **C. DUTIES**

1. The CHURCH AND MINISTRY MISSION AREA TEAM shall:
  - A. Review the credentials of local churches applying for membership in the Association, using criteria consistent with the appropriate descriptions set forth in the constitution of the United Church of Christ, and recommend its decision to the Association.
  - B. Review the credentials of ministers applying for standing in the Association, using criteria consistent with the appropriate descriptions set forth in the Constitution and By-laws of the United Church of Christ as adopted by the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, and recommend its decision to the Association. Standing may be authorized as:
    - a. **ORDAINED MINISTERS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST** living within or serving member churches within the geographical boundaries of the Association
    - b. **MINISTERS WITH DUAL STANDING AND PRIVILEGE OF CALL**  
An Ordained Minister of another denomination who wishes to retain ordained ministerial standing in that denomination and who has become pastor of a local church of the United Church of Christ, or serves in an Instrumentality of the United Church of Christ, or has become pastor of a yoked charged or a federated church one part of which is affiliated with the United Church of Christ, or has been called to an ecumenical ministry one constituent of which is the United Church of Christ, may apply to the Association for dual ordained ministerial standing for the duration of that pastorate or that responsibility, and during that period (nowhere is this condition defined) all the rights and privileges of

such membership.

- c. **ORDAINED MINISTERIAL PARTNER:** All ordained ministers with standing in the Disciples of Christ are at the same time Ordained Ministerial partners in the United Church of Christ. This affirmation is unique to the ecumenical partnership between the two denominations and is an expression and celebration of the oneness of the church in Christ. The validity and efficacy of the partner church's ministry is affirmed. Ordained Ministerial Partners may be invited to fulfill occasional acts of ministry in the United Church of Christ from time to time without further authorization. On recommendation of the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team, the Association may grant an Ordained Ministerial Partner permission to circulate his or her profile among United Church of Christ churches.
  - d. **LICENSED MINISTERS:** On recommendation of the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team, the Association may grant a license to preach, teach and conduct the pastoral and administrative duties of a church, including administration of the Sacraments, for a period of one year subject to annual renewal. A licensed minister shall be listed separately on the rolls of this Association.
  - e. **COMMISSIONED MINISTERS:** On recommendation of the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team, the Association may grant the status of Commissioned Minister to an unordained person for specific, full-time, church related service.
- C. Recommend approval of the transfer of ministerial standing from this Association to another into which the minister has moved, using criteria consistent with the appropriate descriptions set forth in the Constitution and By-laws of the United Church of Christ as adopted by the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. These transfers shall not require undue formality or delay and may be approved by the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team as a routine procedure.
  - D. Receive requests from pastors and churches on behalf of persons who desire status as a student in care of Association, licensed minister or commissioned minister and present the same to the Linking Board with recommendation. If such person is approved by the Board, this Team shall be the instrument of the Association for carrying out such relationships in accordance with the appropriate descriptions set forth in the Constitution and By-laws of the United Church of Christ as adopted by the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, July 1999, and pursuant thereto shall make such recommendations to the Board.
  - E. Consider the application of a local church for the ordination of a member to the ministry. Examine the fitness for ministry of the candidate and recommend the candidate to the Association for ordination.
  - F. Consider the application of an ordained minister of another denomination who resides within the boundaries of this Association and who desires privilege of call to enter the ordained ministry of the United Church of Christ. Examine the fitness for ministry of the candidate and recommend such individual to the Association for privilege of call.
  - G. Periodically review all ordained ministerial standings, commissioned and licensed ministry standings and authorizations for student in care status granted by this Association.
  - H. Periodically review standing of all churches.

- I. Arrange for and promote attendance at an Association Ecclesiastical Council as provided in Article 3, Section D of these By-laws.
  - J. Report at regular business meetings of the Association all church, ministerial and student in care changes that have occurred since the previous business meeting.
  - K. Use the Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ as the procedural guide, and be responsible for implementing the current By-laws of the United Church of Christ as adopted by the General Synod of the United Church of Christ.
  - L. Authorize the installation of a minister as pastor and teacher of a church. In so far as possible, the installation shall be conducted at the time and in the manner desired by the church and minister.
  - M. Promote and encourage young people to pursue professional ministry in the United Church of Christ. Provide financial assistance to needy students seeking seminary education.
  - N. Promote fellowship and strengthen collegiality among minister of the Association.
  - O. Promote healthy Pastor-Church relations within the churches of this Association.
  - P. Serve as a source of counsel to churches and pastors in conflict.
  - Q. Respond to requests from churches of this Association for advice and program assistance relative to the above.
  - R. In case the standing of an ordained minister in this Association is in dispute, the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team shall make inquiry. If the matter is not satisfactorily settled, the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team shall submit the concern and a recommendation to the Association. A minister's standing shall be terminated by action of this Association upon the minister's written request; or may be terminated by action of this Association in meeting, upon the recommendation of the Church and Ministry Mission Area Team, for the following reasons;
  - S. After the minister has moved beyond the bounds of this Association, as mutually agreed upon by local churches and the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ, for three or more years, without having good reason for continuing in full standing or requesting transfer to another Association.
  - T. After entrance into service of another denomination before retirement, and/or when that minister gives evidence that he/she is no longer in sympathy with the purposes and programs of the United Church of Christ.
2. Each Mission Area Team shall have a particular mission focus but is encouraged to seek to fulfill its' mission in covenant and concert with other mission area teams and other persons communities and organizations.

## **D. MEETINGS**

Each Team shall meet at least quarterly and meeting dates shall be coordinated with the Linking Board. Within twenty (20) days after the Annual Meeting each Team shall hold an organizational meeting to select a team facilitator, designate a Board representative and establish dates, time and place for its meetings and organize to administer its duties effectively. Special meetings may be called by the Team Facilitator. The Vice Moderator may act as temporary facilitator for these organizational meetings until a permanent facilitator is elected.

## **E. NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

Team members shall be notified of the date, time, place and agenda by oral or written notice of each meeting of their respective team at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

## **F. QUORUM**

Teams shall operate by consensus whenever possible however, where division is requested. A majority of the members in attendance shall constitute a quorum to conduct business at a meeting.

## **G. ACCOUNTABILITY**

All Teams shall be accountable to the Association in meeting and when the Association is not in meeting, the Teams shall be responsible to the Linking Board. Upon the recommendation of the Team, a member may be removed from office.

## **H. VACANCIES**

Church and Ministry Mission Area Team vacancies shall be filled by the Linking Board. The person appointed shall serve until the next annual meeting-when a person shall be elected to fill a new term or to fulfill the remainder of the unexpired term.

### *Article 7*

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

### **A. MEMBERSHIP**

The Nominating Committee shall be composed of six (6) persons who shall be members of churches with standing in this Association and who shall reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the Association. They shall be nominated by the Linking Board and elected to staggered three (3) year terms by a majority vote of those present and voting at the Annual Meeting. Terms of office shall begin the first day of the month following the Annual Meeting. They shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms and shall not succeed themselves for at least a period of one year, except that a person filling an unexpired term will be eligible to serve two (2) consecutive full terms thereafter. The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall be a member of the Linking Board

### **B. DUTIES**

The Nominating Committee shall:

1. Identify and recruit qualified members to serve within the Association.
2. Develop, maintain and utilize a skills and interest bank of church members.
3. Invite churches, ministers and other individuals in the Association to submit names of persons for consideration as nominees. The Nominating Committee shall consider all names submitted.



4. Prepare a slate of nominees for all Association Officers, at large members of Linking Board and Church and Ministry Mission Team members as provided in these By-laws. The slate shall be submitted to the Linking Board. Additional nominations including self-nomination may occur from the floor at the Annual Meeting providing the nominee's permission has been secured.
5. Obtain the consent of all nominees prior to including the name on the slate..

**C. MEETINGS**

The Nominating Committee shall meet at the call of the Chairperson. Within twenty (20) days after the Annual Meeting the Committee shall hold an organizational meeting to elect a Chairperson and organize to administer its duties effectively.

**D. NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

Nominating Committee members shall be notified of the date, time, place and agenda by verbal or written notice of each meeting at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

**E. QUORUM**

A majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum to conduct business at a Nominating Committee meeting.

**F. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Nominating Committee shall be accountable to the Association. When the Association is not in meeting, it shall be responsible to the Linking Board. Upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee; members may be removed from the Committee by the Linking Board.

**G. VACANCIES**

Nominating Committee vacancies shall be filled by the Linking Board. The person appointed shall serve until the next Annual Meeting, when a person shall be elected to fill a new term or to fulfill the remainder of the unexpired term.

*Article 8*

**ECUMENICAL AFFILIATIONS**

Recognizing the essential unity of Christ's Church in the work of promoting the realm of God, the Association affirms its cooperation other interdenominational agencies wherein our cooperation is helpful.

*Article 9*

**AMENDMENTS**

These Articles of Association and By-laws may be amended at a duly called meeting by two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting provided that such amendments shall have been:

- A. Recommended to the Association by the Board or requested by official action of not less than ten member churches, such request, including copies of the official action, having been received in writing by the Association Secretary.
- B. Mailed by the Registrar with notice of meeting to each church and minister with standing in this Association not less than sixty (60) days prior to the meeting date at which action on the proposed amendment is to be taken.