

Ratification of Changes to United Church of Christ Constitution

At General Synod 31 in Baltimore this past summer, delegates approved changes to the Constitution of the United Church of Christ. These changes need to be ratified by our Conference at this year's Annual Meeting. There were two substantive changes and several coordinating technical changes. The first substantive change regards the national Officers of the UCC. It shifts primary leadership from four shared Executive Ministers (formerly known as the Collegium) and vests more authority in the Office of the General Minister and President. The Constitution calls for Associate General Ministers, as the GMP and Board of Directors see fit, to be elected by the General Synod. The second Constitutional change celebrates and clarifies the new Ministerial Partnership between the United Church of Christ and the United Church of Canada.

This document is an excerpt showing the key proposed revisions. Links to an expanded the complete documents are available on the Conference website at wcucc.org/uccgovernance.

ARTICLE III. COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIPS

6 Within the United Church of Christ, the various expressions of the church relate to each other in a covenantal manner. Each expression of the Cehurch has responsibilities and rights in relation to the others, to the end that the whole Cehurch will seek God's will and be faithful to God's mission. Decisions are made in consultation and collaboration among the various parts of the structure. As members of the Body of Christ, each expression of the Cehurch is called to honor and respect the work and ministry of each other part. Each expression of the Cehurch listens, hears, and carefully considers the advice, counsel, and requests of others. In this covenant, the various expressions of the United Church of Christ seek to walk together in all God's ways.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

7 The Officers of the United Church of Christ shall be a General Minister and President, ~~an Executive Minister for Local Church Ministries, an Executive Minister for Wider Church Ministries, an Executive Minister for Justice and Witness Ministries,~~ the Associate General Ministers, and such other Oefficers as the General Synod may from time to time determine. They shall be responsible to and called by election of the General Synod as Oefficers of the United Church of Christ.

~~Collegium of Officers~~

8 ~~Composed of the~~ Officers of the United Church of Christ shall attend to the quality of relationships among the United Church of Christ Board and the Covenanted Ministries. The General Minister and President is the presiding Officer. The Officers of the United Church of Christ support and consult with the United Church of Christ Board and the Covenanted Ministries in carrying out their work in a spirit of coordination and cooperation. Led by the General Minister and President, the Officers of the United Church of Christ are responsible for providing leadership for the mission programming of the United Church of Christ and for the proper implementation of General Synod actions. The Officers of the United Church of Christ coordinate research, long-range planning, program evaluation, and report on the ongoing programs of the United Church of Christ. The election of Officers of the United Church of Christ shall reflect the commitment of the United Church of Christ to be an inclusive church. ~~meeting as peers, the Collegium of Officers is responsible for providing leadership for the mission programming of the United Church of Christ and for the implementation of General Synod actions. The General Minister and President is the presiding officer of the Collegium. The Collegium shall attend to the quality of relationships among the United Church of Christ Board and the Covenanted Ministries and foster a climate of respect, collaboration, and collegiality among various expressions of the church. The Collegium provides a setting for mutual accountability, for mutual reporting, and for assessing the ongoing programs of the United Church of Christ. It shall reflect the commitment of the United Church of Christ to be an inclusive church.~~

254 history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ. Ordained ~~M~~inisterial ~~P~~artner
255 ~~S~~tanding provides ongoing ecclesiastical authorization to perform the duties and exercise the
256 prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ.

257
258 **[New ARTICLE]. RECOGNITION AND RECONCILIATION OF THE ORDAINED**
259 **MINISTRIES OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST AND THE UNITED CHURCH**
260 **OF CANADA**

261 [New ¶] The United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada recognize the ordained
262 ministries of the other church to be efficacious ministries of grace within that church and these
263 ministries to be valid and full ministries of the one Church of Jesus Christ.

264
265 [New ¶] The ordained ministries of the United Church of Christ and The United Church of
266 Canada are reconciled. An ordained minister with ordained ministerial standing in one church
267 may function, whenever invited, and as established procedures permit, as an ordained minister to
268 the other.

269
270 [New ¶] The designations “Ordained Ministerial Partner” and “Ordained Ministerial Partner
271 Standing” manifest the corporate and individual nature of the recognition and reconciliation of
272 the ordained ministries of the United Church of Christ and The United Church of Canada.

273
274 [New ¶] Each member of The United Church of Canada who holds ordained ministerial standing
275 in The United Church of Canada is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the United Church of
276 Christ.

277
278 [New ¶] Each member of the United Church of Christ who holds Ordained Ministerial Standing
279 in the United Church of Christ is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of The United Church of
280 Canada.

281
282 [New ¶] Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is authorization granted to an ordained minister
283 with ordained ministerial standing in The United Church of Canada who has a call to perform the
284 duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ. This
285 authorization assumes knowledge of, and appreciation for, the history, polity, and practices of the
286 United Church of Christ. Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing provides ongoing ecclesiastical
287 authorization to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the
288 United Church of Christ.

289
290
291 **ARTICLE VIII. ASSOCIATIONS AND CONFERENCES**

292 37 Associations and Conferences are bodies organized on a territorial basis to perform functions
293 in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of
294 Christ.

295
296 **Associations**

297 38 An Association is that body within a Conference of the United Church of Christ which is
298 composed of all Local Churches in a geographical area, all Ordained Ministers holding ~~S~~tanding
299 or ~~O~~rdained ~~M~~inisterial ~~P~~artner ~~S~~tanding therein, all Commissioned Ministers and Licensed
300 Ministers in that Association.

301
302 ~~39 Subsequent to the initial organization of Associations in the United Church of Christ, the~~
303 ~~boundaries of any new Association, or any adjustment of boundaries between Associations, shall~~
304 ~~be determined by the Associations concerned with the approval of the Conference or Conferences~~