



CONSTITUTION

COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

805 S. Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois

Adopted January 29th, 1995

Amended:	January 25, 1970	Article I
	January 23, 1972	Article XI, #8
		Article V, #5
	April 29, 2979	Article VII, #1
		Article VIII, #3
		Article XI, #9
		Article XI, #1
	January 25, 1987	Article XI, #10
	April 10, 1988	Article I
		Article XI, #9
		Article XVII
	January 29, 1995	Article VIII, #2
		Article X
		Article XI, #3
		Article XI, #5
		Article XI, #7
		Article XI, #8
		Article XVII

COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this Church shall be the Community United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE II - OBJECT/PURPOSE

The avowed purpose of this Church shall be to worship God, to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to celebrate the Sacraments, to realize Christian fellowship and unity within the Church, to render loving service toward humankind and to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.

ARTICLE III – POLITY AND GOVERNMENT

This Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its Head and finds in the Holy Scriptures its guidance in matters of faith and discipline. The government of the Church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all of its affairs, subject, however, to the laws of the State of Illinois relating to religious corporations. This Church shall be a part of the United Church of Christ described in those portions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ relating to local churches.

ARTICLE IV – DOCTRINE, FAITH AND COVENANT

This Church acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of us all, and acknowledges as brothers and sisters in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the Scriptures and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord, it recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

1. (a) Membership in this Church shall be open to any person who has been baptized, has been confirmed, or has made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Members may be received (upon recommendation of the Pastor or Diaconate) by baptism and confirmation; by confession of faith; by reaffirmation of faith; or by presentation of a satisfactory letter of transfer from another church.

(b) Affiliate membership may be granted to a person who is a temporary resident of the community, retains membership in another church, and wishes to associate himself or herself with this Church for purposes of Christian worship and fellowship. Such Affiliate membership shall be terminated when the person holding such membership moves from the community. Affiliate members do not have voting rights.
2. Members shall attend the regular worship services of the Church and celebrate the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion; live the Christian life; share in the life and work of the Church, contribute to its support and its program of benevolences; and seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and the community.
3. Members shall be received into this Church at any worship service by the Pastor or in the Pastors absence by the Board of Deacons. In unusual cases, a member may be received by the Pastor or the Board of Deacons at some time other than a worship service.
4. Any member may, at his or her request, be granted a letter of transfer to another church. If wishing to join a church not in fellowship with this Church, he or she may be dismissed with a certificate of church membership. If a member requests in writing to be released from membership obligations, the Church shall patiently endeavor to secure the continuance in its fellowship, but failing in such effort, the Church may grant the request and terminate the membership. Such a request shall be approved by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons, and the Clerk shall issue the appropriate letter of release.
5. The status of an absentee or non-participating member may be decided by the Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE VI – GOVERNING BODY

The governing body of this Church shall be the membership assembled in congregational meeting. The congregation shall meet at least once a year and shall elect the officers and committees as provided for in this Constitution. The Moderator shall preside at the congregational meetings and the Church Council and the Clerk shall serve as secretary. In the temporary absence of the Moderator, the Council shall select as Acting-Moderator the senior Member-at-Large, chair of the Deacons, or the Treasurer. The Moderator shall not serve more than two consecutive terms in that office. The vote of a majority of the members present and voting in the presence of a quorum at a congregational meeting, except where otherwise specified, shall be the action of the Church. A vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting shall be required for the transfer of real estate. A quorum shall consist of forty (40) members.

ARTICLE VII - CHURCH COUNCIL

1. The Church Council shall be the policy making body of this Church and shall conduct the business of the Church. It shall be composed of the Pastor; the Moderator, who shall serve as chair of the Council; the Treasurer; the Financial Secretary; the three (3) Members-at-Large; the chair of the Board of Deacons, the chair (or a permanently designated member) of the following committees: Religious Education, Budget and Finance, Program and Mission, Stewardship, Fellowship, Building and Grounds, Campus Ministry and a representative from both the Women's Fellowship and the Men's Fellowship. In the temporary absence of the Moderator, the Council shall select as Acting-Moderator the senior Member-at-Large, chair of the Deacons, or the Treasurer.
2. The Council shall meet once each month for the transaction of such business as may properly come before it. The Council may vote to cancel the next meeting if it is not warranted by its agenda. Nine (9) members shall constitute a quorum. Special meetings may be called by the chair or by five (5) members of the Council.
3. The Council shall act as Trustees for all property of the Church. It shall make provisions for determining and obtaining the current expense budget as well as the budget for the benevolence program of the Church. The Council is empowered to authorize extraordinary expenses if funds are available. Borrowing in excess of three thousand dollars (\$3000) per year must be approved by the congregation. It shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, be custodian of all Church records, and report to the Church at its Annual and Special meetings.

4. Staff and additional officers may be chosen as the Church Council deems necessary. Staff, such as associate minister, secretary, choir director, organist, and custodian shall be recruited by the respective committees with duties and terms stated in written contract as arranged by the Personnel Committee and approved by the Council.
5. The Council shall, upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee, make temporary appointments to fill any vacancies existing among the officers (except the Minister--see Article VIII) of the Church, Members-at Large, and members of any board or committee pending election of such replacements at the next Annual Meeting of the congregation.
6. An Executive Committee shall consist of the Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, the senior Member-at-Large and chair of the Deacons. A majority of this committee may act for the Council between its meetings. All actions of the Executive Committee shall be subject to approval of the Council.
7. All members of the Church are invited to attend the meetings of the Council and audit its proceedings.

ARTICLE VIII - OFFICERS

Officers shall be members of the Church.

1. Pastor: A Pastor is to be called by the Church to serve for an indefinite period. When a vacancy occurs in the office of Pastor, the Church Council shall appoint a Pulpit Committee to seek a candidate for the office. As soon as the vacancy occurs, it shall be reported to the Association Minister, whose counsel may be sought concerning any candidate for the vacancy. After due consideration, the Pulpit Committee shall present to the Church the name of a candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy. The Pastor shall be called after a two-thirds (2/3) favorable vote of the members present and voting at a meeting of the congregation. In the call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated in written contract as arranged by the Personnel Committee and approved by the Council. Upon accepting the call, the new Pastor shall become a member of this Church and of the Association to which the Church belongs. At the first opportunity, the Church and the Pastor shall request the Association to arrange for a service of the installation or recognition. The pastoral relationship may be terminated by action of the congregation upon recommendation of the Church Council. When terminating the relationship, at least sixty days (60) written notice shall be given by either party. Notice of such termination shall be sent to the Association Minister. The Pastor shall be in charge of the spiritual welfare and development of the Church with the Counsel of the Diaconate and shall be a full member of the

Council and an ex-officio member of all boards and committees. The Pastor shall make a written report at the annual meeting of the congregation.

2. A Moderator to be elected at the Annual Meeting and to serve for a term of one (1) year. A person may serve as Moderator for not more than two (2) consecutive terms. The Moderator shall be the Executive Officer of the Church, shall preside at all meetings of the congregation, shall be chair of the Church Council, and shall make a written report of the year's work at the Annual Meeting of the Church. The Moderator or persons (preferably members of the Church Council) designated by the Moderator will be one of the delegates to the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ, the Eastern Association of the United Church of Christ, and to the Sunrise Cluster. The Moderator is a member of the Executive and Personnel Committees and is empowered, in consultation with the Pastor, to designate persons to represent the congregation in meetings, committees, associations, United Church Foundation Board, and the like when participation of the Community United Church of Christ has been approved by the Church Council.
3. A Clerk to be elected at the Annual Meeting and to serve for a term of one (1) year. The Clerk shall keep an accurate record of proceedings of the Church, Executive Committee, and of the Church Council. He or she shall keep a register of the members and the mode of their reception and removal; also a record of baptisms, marriages, and funerals performed by the Minister or by a person designated to serve in the Minister's absence. The Clerk shall issue letters of transfer in accordance with the provisions of Article V, Section 4, and shall make a written report at the Annual Meeting of the congregation. He or she shall keep on file all communications and written reports; notify all person elected to offices and committees, give notices of all meetings when such notices are necessary. The Clerk shall make such reports as may be requested from time to time to the Association and the State Conference. The Clerk shall be a member of the Council, Executive Committee, and the Personnel Committee.
4. A Financial Secretary to be elected at each Annual Meeting and to serve for a term of one (1) year. The Financial Secretary shall receive payments on pledges and special offerings; keep an accurate account of each member's pledge payments; deposit funds received in such depository as the Church Council shall designate; report such deposits to the Treasurer; and furnish each member with periodic statements of pledge payments. The Financial Secretary shall be bonded in such amount as the Council shall prescribe. The Financial Secretary shall be a member of the Stewardship Committee and of the Council.
5. A Treasurer to be elected at each Annual Meeting and to serve for a term of one (1) year. He or she shall receive a record from the Financial Secretary of all monies deposited by the latter, and shall receive all other monies of the Church and deposit them in such depository as the Church Council shall designate. The Treasurer shall disburse the funds of the Church in accordance with the approved budget of the Church and upon proper authorization, and shall keep an accurate

record of all such receipts and expenditures and make a report of the same to the congregation at the Annual Meeting. He or she shall be bonded in such amount as the Council shall prescribe. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Budget and Finance, Executive and Personnel Committees and of the Council.

ARTICLE IX – MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

There shall be three (3) Members-at Large elected to serve on the Church Council and on the Nominating Committee. These members shall serve a three (3) year term, with one member elected at each Annual Meeting. The Members-at-Large shall not serve as officers of the Church or as a chair of a committee that is represented on the Church Council.

ARTICLE X – THE DIACONATE

The Board of Deacons shall consist of eighteen (18) men and women elected from the membership of the Church at its Annual Meeting. Each shall serve for a three (3) year term with six (6) deacons to be elected each year. The Board shall elect one of its members to be chair to simultaneously serve as a member of the Church Council. The chair shall also be a member of the Executive Committee (Article VII, Section 6) and of the Personnel Committee (Article XI, Section 9). In the temporary absence of the Moderator the chair may be selected by the Council as Acting Moderator (Article VI). The chair, or a member designated by the chair, shall be a delegate to the Sunrise Cluster. The Diaconate shall assist and support the Pastor in the spiritual affairs of the Church, shall be responsible for the worship program and membership concerns, and shall cooperate with the Pastor in these areas. The Diaconate shall prepare the elements of the Lord's Supper and may aid in the distribution. The Diaconate shall counsel with the Pastor of the membership whenever a problem may seem to exist in any relationship. The Diaconate shall provide for the supply of the pulpit in the absence of the Pastor or in case of a vacancy.

The chair shall appoint a Music subcommittee with a member of the Deacons as chair. This subcommittee shall be responsible for selecting the organist and choir director when needed, and for the job description and terms of employment stated in written contract as arranged by the Personnel Committee and approved by the Diaconate and the Council. The chair of the Music subcommittee shall represent the Diaconate in providing for music for the worship program and in managing the budget of the Music Committee. The chair of the Music subcommittee shall be a member of the Personnel Committee (Article XI, Section 8).

The Diaconate shall work with the Pastor in approval of membership and transfer of membership. The Diaconate is charged with reviewing membership records and with

keeping them current through contacts with inactive members regarding their interest in continuing their relationship with this Church. The Board shall advise the Clerk of changes in membership. The Deacons may recommend to the Council the designation of a member of the Church as "Honorary Member" in recognition of such member's special service or unique relationship to the Church. A member of the Board of Deacons shall be designated by the Board to serve on the Nominating Committee (Article XI, Section 8).

ARTICLE XI – COMMITTEES

1. Nominees for committees shall be elected by the congregation at its Annual Meeting for a term of two years with approximately one-half its members to be elected each year. Members of the committee for Campus Ministry shall be designated by the Moderator prior to the first Council meeting of the year. All committees shall work under the direction of the Church Council and shall render a report to the Council either in person or in writing at or prior to Council meetings. They shall also make a written report at the Annual Meeting of the Church. Each committee shall elect its chair before the first meeting of the year of the Church Council.
2. The Religious Education Committee shall consist of at least five (5) elected members and shall choose its own chair from among the members of the committee. It shall have supervision and direction of the educational program of the Church, including the church school, youth fellowship, vacation church school, and any other educational activities. It shall appoint the superintendent of the church school and secure such personnel as is necessary to carry out the program of religious education. The superintendent of the church school, if not an elected member, shall be an ex-officio member of the committee. The chair, or a permanently designated member of this committee, shall be a member of the Council.
3. The Budget and Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, the chairs or permanent representatives of the Building and Grounds and of the Stewardship committees and at least four (4) elected members. It shall choose its chair from among the elected members of the committee. It shall be responsible for the financial affairs of the Church, including the supervision of investments and other assets of the Church. It shall arrange for adequate insurance protection of the property owned by the Church. It shall prepare the Annual Budget of the Church based upon the recommendation of the various boards and committees as to their respective needs. This committee shall also arrange for an independent review of the financial records of the Church at least once every three (3) years, and the report of the review shall be made available to the Church Council. The chair, or a permanently designated member of this committee shall be a member of the Council.

4. The Building and Grounds Committee shall consist of at least five (5) elected members and shall choose its own chair from among the members of the committee. It shall maintain the buildings and grounds, church furniture, and furnishings in a good state of repair and make input into long range planning in terms of specific projects and financing. It will recruit the custodian with the job description and terms of employment stated in written contract as arranged by the Personnel Committee and approved by the Council. It will oversee the distribution of Church property for use by Church members; promote projects to enhance the appearance of Church property; and it shall supervise the custodian and the use of all Church facilities, including rental of any Church properties. The chair, or a permanent representative of this committee, shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee. The chair or a permanently designated member of this committee shall be a member of the Council.
5. The Program and Mission Committee shall consist of at least five (5) elected members and shall choose its chair from among the members of the committee. It shall take leadership in bringing to the congregation the broader concerns of the larger Church, especially those designated by the National Synod. It shall also be aware of the problems of the local community and direct the attention of the congregation to them. When there is need for action the committee may enlist the aid of the members of the congregation and appoint task forces to make specific plans for this kind of ministry. When there is need for financial support to further the mission of the Church at home or abroad, this committee shall recommend appropriate action to the Council. The chair or person(s) designated by the chair, will be one of the delegates to the Eastern Association and to the Sunrise Cluster. The chair or a permanently designated member of this committee shall be a member of the Council.
6. The Fellowship Committee shall consist of at least five (5) elected members and shall choose its own chair from among the members of the committee. It shall be entrusted with the task of developing a spirit of unity in the congregation by means of social and work programs. This committee shall enlist groups or individuals to be responsible for Sunday coffees, fellowship dinners, receptions, picnics, and other social gatherings. The chair or a permanently designated member of this committee shall be a member of the Council.
7. The Stewardship Committee shall consist of the Financial Secretary and at least six (6) elected members. It shall choose its chair from among the elected members of the committee. It shall be responsible for the annual campaign of the Church to obtain a commitment of financial support from the members and friends. This committee shall also seek to obtain appropriate involvement of the members in service to the Church. The chair or a permanent representative of this committee shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee. The chair or a permanently designated member of this committee shall be a member of the Council.

8. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Minister; a member of the Board of Deacons, as designated by that Board; a member of the Program and Mission Committee, as designated by that committee; and the three (3) Members-at-Large. The Moderator shall convene the committee within two (2) months after the Annual Meeting to elect a chair. The committee shall present a slate of nominees for the officers of the Church, the Members-at-Large and the members of the boards and committees to be elected by the congregation at its Annual Meeting. Prior to obtaining the slate of nominees, the committee shall solicit an annual commitment of time and talent from the members and friends. In case of vacancies occurring among the officers, Members-at-Large, or the members of the boards and committees between the annual meetings, this committee shall recommend replacements to the Church Council.
9. The Personnel Committee shall consist of the Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, chair of the Board of Deacons, and of its Music subcommittee, the chair of the Building and Grounds Committee, and the chair of the Religious Education Committee. The Personnel Committee shall recommend the employment policies, job descriptions, and written contracts relevant to employment of staff. It may interview applicants and mediate personnel problems when requested.
10. The Committee for Campus Ministry shall consist of the Pastor, the two (2) lay members of the United Church Foundation Board, and a representative from the Program and Mission Committee. In addition, the Moderator will appoint a member of the church congregation and a student who is a full or affiliate member of the church congregation to serve on this committee. The committee shall meet regularly and serve to facilitate the Church's program of campus ministry in cooperation with the United Church Foundation. The committee shall also meet with the Campus Minister as the need arises.

ARTICLE XII - PROPERTY

1. The Church 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 both real and personal for such work as the Church may undertake and may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer, and convey such property for the general purposes of the Church; 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 Church.
2. Upon the dissolution of the Church, its assets and all property 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 Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE XIII - CHURCH MEETINGS

The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held in the month of January on a day to be designated by the Church Council. At this meeting the Pastor, Moderator, Treasurer, and the boards and committees shall submit their Annual Reports in writing.

Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Church Council or by the Church Council on the written request of at least twenty-five (25) members of the congregation. Notice for any congregational meeting shall be prepared by the Clerk and shall be mailed to all members at least ten (10) days prior to the date of such meeting. Notice of special meetings shall state the time, place and agenda.

ARTICLE XIV – FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year for this Church shall be the calendar year.

ARTICLE XV – RULES OF ORDER

“Robert’s Rules of Order” shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by this constitution.

ARTICLE XVI - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this constitution may be made at any duly called meeting of the congregation by a two thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting, written notice of the proposed amendment(s) having been sent to the members at least ten (10) days prior to the date of the meeting.

ARTICLE XVII - YOUTH DELEGATE

In addition to the delegates described in Article XIII, Article X, and Article XI, 5., a youth delegate may be sent to Eastern Association and Illinois Conference meetings.

This delegate shall be selected by a committee consisting of the Minister, the chair of the Board of Deacons, and the chair of the Religious Education Committee. Guidelines for selection and preparation of the youth delegate shall be approved by the Church Council.

* * * * *