

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS  
OF  
THE NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION  
OF  
THE CENTRAL ATLANTIC  
CONFERENCE  
OF  
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

April 28, 2012

**CONSTITUTION OF  
THE NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF  
THE CENTRAL ATLANTIC CONFERENCE OF  
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of this Association is the New Jersey Association of the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ.

**ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of this Association shall be composed of local churches located in New Jersey that are members of the United Church of Christ and all ordained, licensed and commissioned ministers (hereinafter referred to collectively as “authorized ministers”) who have standing in this Association, in accordance with the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and the By-laws of the Central Atlantic Conference.

**ARTICLE III. PURPOSES**

Section 1. To encourage, nurture and support the health, faithfulness, and effectiveness of the congregations of member churches in this Association.

Section 2. To carry on the work and exercise the functions of an Association of the United Church of Christ as outlined by the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.

Section 3. To act with all others led by the spirit of God for ministry to the needs of the people of New Jersey as they seek to witness to our Christian faith.

**ARTICLE IV. GOVERNING BODY**

The governing body of this Association shall be the Association in meeting.

**ARTICLE V. OFFICERS**

The officers of this Association shall be a Moderator, a Vice-Moderator, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

**ARTICLE VI. ASSOCIATION COUNCIL**

The Association Council shall consist of the following: the Association officers, the Chairpersons of the Standing Commissions or their designees, one representative from each Working Group of the Council, three (3) members-at-large, a Conference Liaison who shall be a New Jersey member of the Central Atlantic Conference Board of Directors, and the Associate Conference Minister serving in New Jersey.

**ARTICLE VII. COMMISSIONS**

Section 1. There shall be the following Standing Commissions:

- a. Church and Ministry
- b. Pre-Ordination

Section 2. There shall be such other commissions, ad hoc committees or Working Groups as the Association may deem necessary.

Section 3. All Commissions shall be composed of clergy and lay members who are members of churches that are members of the New Jersey Association.

**ARTICLE VIII. FINANCE**

This Association shall be supported by contributions and dues of its member churches. The fiscal year shall be the calendar year.

**ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS**

Section 1. The Annual Meeting and other regularly scheduled meetings of this Association shall be held at such times as provided in the By-Laws.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called as provided in the By-Laws.

Section 3. When this Association meets, its voting membership shall be composed of the authorized ministers holding standing in this Association, of lay delegates selected by and representing the local churches, of members of the New Jersey Association Council, of regular members of commissions as defined in Article VII, of elected delegates to General Synod, and of the New Jersey members of the Board of Directors of the Central Atlantic Conference.

Section 4. A quorum at meetings of this Association shall be constituted as defined in the By-Laws.

**ARTICLE X. RELATION TO CENTRAL ATLANTIC CONFERENCE**

This Association shall be related to the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ as provided for in the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ and the Central Atlantic Conference.

**ARTICLE XI. RELATION TO GENERAL SYNOD**

This Association shall be related to the General Synod through the Central Atlantic Conference as provided for in the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ and the Central Atlantic Conference.

## **ARTICLE XII. INTERPRETATION OF THIS CONSTITUTION**

This Constitution is prepared with a view toward consistency with the constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ and with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Central Atlantic Conference. Should it be, at any time, found to be inconsistent with the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ, or the Constitution and By-Laws of the Central Atlantic Conference, the matter shall be clarified by a Judicial Committee to be appointed by the Association Council and to report at the next meeting of the Association.

## **ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by the Association Council, any local church or any group of thirty (30) voting members of this Association.

Section 2. Such proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Association Council at least six (6) weeks prior to the meeting of this Association at which they are to be presented. At least one (1) month prior to the meeting of this Association, the Association Council shall transmit such proposed amendments to all ministerial members and to the chief lay officer of each member church. Adoption of an amendment shall require a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting at the annual, special or regularly scheduled meetings of this Association.

Approved May 10, 1975

Revised May 18, 1985

Revised May 21, 1988

Revised May 19, 1990

Revised May 16, 1992

Revised May 15, 1993

Revised January 25, 1997

Revised January 22, 2000

Revised April 23, 2005

Revised April 17, 2010

Revised April 2, 2011

Revised April 28, 2012

**BY-LAWS OF  
THE NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF  
THE CENTRAL ATLANTIC CONFERENCE OF  
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**ARTICLE I. FUNCTIONS**

Section 1. To determine, confer and certify the standing of local churches of the United Church of Christ within the boundaries of the Association.

Section 2. To determine, confer and certify the standing of authorized ministers of the United Church of Christ within the boundaries of the Association.

Section 3. To cooperate with the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ, and through the Conference, with the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, its boards, agencies and instrumentalities.

Section 4. To receive and act upon business referred to it by its local churches, its Conference, the General Synod and other bodies.

Section 5. To be concerned with the welfare of all member churches within its boundaries to the extent of seeking ways and means to assist local churches in situations calling for help beyond their own resources.

Section 6. To give guidance and assistance in organization of new churches.

Section 7. To receive and act upon applications of persons for In-Care status through their pastors and local churches and to supervise their preparation for ministry in accordance with the By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.

Section 8. To receive and act upon applications for Licensure or Commissioning made by persons through a local church of this Association in accordance with the By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.

Section 9. To receive and act upon applications for Ordination made by persons through a local church of this Association in accordance with the By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.

Section 10. To issue, upon request of a minister moving from this Association, a transfer of ministerial standing to another Association in the United Church of Christ.

Section 11. To be responsible for the discipline of a minister or a congregation holding standing in the Association.

Section 12. To receive and act upon applications for Installation and to arrange for services of the installation or recognition of a minister in accordance with the By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.

Section 13. To take appropriate action in the termination of a pastoral relationship with a local church in accordance with the By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.

Section 14. To receive and act upon applications for membership in the United Church of Christ of ordained ministers of another denomination, in accordance with the By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.

Section 15. To receive and act upon applications for membership in the United Church of Christ of congregations of other denominations, independent congregations, and newly formed congregations in accordance with the By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.

## **ARTICLE II. MEETINGS**

### **Section 1. ANNUAL MEETING**

- (a) Time - The Annual Meeting of this Association shall be held in the spring.
- (b) Place - The Annual Meeting of this Association shall be held at a place designated by the Association Council.
- (c) Functions - The Annual Meeting shall transact the business of the Association including:
  - (1) Election of the appropriate Association officers, members of the Association Council and Commissions, members of the Board of Directors of the Central Atlantic Conference, and delegates to the General Synod.
  - (2) Adoption of the annual budget for the next fiscal year and determining the means for raising the necessary funds.
  - (3) Action on resolutions from local churches, from delegates, from groups of members of the Association, from the Central Atlantic Conference, and from the United Church of Christ.
  - (4) Involving delegates in the ongoing work of the Association through opportunities for information sharing, decision-making, worship and fellowship.
  - (5) Action on other such business as may properly come before the Association in meeting.

## Section 2. **SPECIAL MEETINGS**

Special meetings of the Association may be called by the Association Council, or upon written request of four (4) member churches, or upon written request of thirty (30) voting members. The written request must state specifically the purpose of the meeting. Only such business as shall be stated on the call of the meeting may be transacted.

## Section 3. **ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCILS**

Ecclesiastical Councils for the purpose of examining and approving candidates for ordination to the Christian ministry may be called at the recommendation of the Pre-Ordination Commission. Ecclesiastical Councils may also be called at the request of the Church and Ministry Commission for the purposes of examining and granting Privilege of Call to ordained ministers from other denominations. Ecclesiastical Councils may also be called for the purposes of examining and approving a church for full standing in the New Jersey Association, for the purpose of commissioning a minister, or for the purpose of fulfilling provisions of the United Church of Christ's *Manual on Ministry*.

## Section 4. **NOTICE OF MEETINGS AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION**

(a) Notice of the time and place of all meetings of the Association shall be sent at the Moderator's direction to each member church of the Association at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting.

(b) Churches and individuals shall present written resolutions for action to the Association Council and to the Secretary of the Association for distribution to churches at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting at which action is to be taken. Any resolution not distributed with the call to the meeting may be considered upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members present and voting.

## Section 5. **QUORUM AND PROCEDURES**

(a) **QUORUM AT MEETINGS:** Fifty (50) persons, representing at least twenty (20) member churches, shall constitute a quorum at any annual, regularly scheduled, or special meetings of the Association.

(b) **QUORUM AT ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCILS:** Twenty-five (25) persons, representing at least one-fifth of the member churches, shall constitute a quorum at any Ecclesiastical Council.

(c) *Robert's Rules of Order Revised* shall be followed in the conduct of official business. Ecclesiastical Councils will also be governed by the guidelines established in the United Church of Christ's *Manual on Ministry*.

## Section 6. **VOTING MEMBERS**

(a) Each local church shall be entitled to representation at meetings of the Association by its pastor(s) with standing, the chief lay officer designated by the local church and two lay delegates, plus an additional lay delegate for each 250 member increment above 250 members, and one additional lay delegate provided such delegate is under thirty (30) years of age. Representation shall be based on the last published edition of the Yearbook of the United Church of Christ. All official delegates are voting members.

- (b) Each authorized minister who has standing shall be a voting member.
- (c) New Jersey lay members of the Board of Directors of the Central Atlantic Conference shall be voting members.
- (d) Each lay member of the New Jersey Association Council shall be a voting member.
- (e) Each regular lay member of any Commission as defined in Article V, section 3, shall be a voting member.
- (f) Each lay delegate to General Synod shall be a voting member.

### **ARTICLE III. OFFICERS**

#### **Section 1. OFFICERS**

The officers of the Association shall be a Moderator, a Vice-Moderator, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

#### **Section 2. DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS**

(a) Moderator - The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the Association, shall appoint all committees which function only during meetings of the Association, and shall decide questions of order. The Moderator shall act for the Association at Ordinations and Installations. The Moderator shall serve as the Vice-President of the Association Council and shall be an ex officio member of all Commissions.

(b) Vice-Moderator - The Vice Moderator shall perform the duties of the Moderator at the request or in the absence of the Moderator. The Vice-Moderator shall serve as the President of the Association Council.

(c) Secretary - The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of Association meetings and shall also serve as secretary of the Association Council.

(d) Treasurer - The Treasurer shall ensure that all funds are properly accounted for and deposited and be responsible for all funds, securities, and personal property belonging to or in any way committed to the care or custody of the Association. The Treasurer shall properly disburse Association monies and shall maintain detailed records of all financial transactions. The Treasurer shall make a written report at all meetings of the Association Council and at the Annual Meeting.

#### **Section 3. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE**

Association Officers shall be elected for three (3) year terms. They may serve for two consecutive full terms, and then the officers shall be ineligible for re-election for a period of one (1) full year. Serving an unexpired term will be reckoned as a full term. No one church may have more than one of the four Association Officers from its congregation.



## **ARTICLE IV. THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL**

### **Section 1. COMPOSITION**

The Association Council shall consist of all the Association Officers, the Chairpersons of the Commissions or their designee, one representative of each Working Group of the Council, three (3) members-at-large, the Associate Conference Minister serving in New Jersey, and a New Jersey member of the Board of Directors of the Central Atlantic Conference whose duty is to attend all appropriate meetings and to maintain communication between the Association Council and the Conference Board of Directors.

### **Section 2. MEETINGS**

The Association Council shall generally meet at least once every two months from September through June and as otherwise deemed necessary by the Council President or Associate Conference Minister serving in New Jersey.

### **Section 3. SPECIAL MEETINGS**

Special meetings of the Association Council may be called 1) by the President of the Council, 2) by the Associate Conference Minister serving in New Jersey in consultation with the president of the Council, or 3) upon written request of four (4) Council members. Notice of special meetings must be given at least one (1) week prior to the meeting date.

### **Section 4. QUORUM AND PROCEDURES**

(a) Quorum - A quorum shall be a majority of the Association Council members.

(b) Procedures - *Robert's Rules of Order Revised* shall be followed in the conduct of official business.

### **Section 5. DUTIES**

The Association Council shall:

(a) Act for the Association in all matters whenever the Association is not meeting. Such action shall be reported to the Association churches in a timely manner.

(b) Arrange for all meetings of the Association.

(c) Coordinate the implementation of Association-wide programs.

(d) Be responsible for the over-all planning, budgeting and evaluation of the use of Association resources.

(e) Administer all aspects of the New Jersey Mission Fund, including the review of all requests and the approval of all disbursements.

(f) Be responsible for carrying out the constitutional and legal requirements of the Association's Constitution and By-laws.

(g) Assign responsibilities to its members-at-large as deemed necessary.

(h) Establish such ad-hoc committees and make appointments as deemed necessary. When appropriate, such actions shall be subject to confirmation by the Association in meeting.

**Section 6. OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL**

The Officers of the Association Council shall be a President (Vice-Moderator of the Association), a Vice-President (Moderator of the Association), a Secretary (Secretary of the Association), and a Treasurer (Treasurer of the Association).

(a) Duties of the Association Council Officers

(1) President - The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association Council and shall be responsible for its program and agenda.

(2) Vice-President - The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President at the request of, or in the absence of, the President.

(3) Secretary - The Secretary shall issue notice of Council meetings, keep an accurate record of proceedings, and distribute minutes.

(4) Treasurer – The Treasurer shall make a written report at all meetings of the Association Council.

**Section 7. ELECTION AND TERMS OF AT-LARGE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL**

The three (3) members-at-large of the Association Council shall serve three (3) year terms so arranged that no more than one of the members retires each year. They may serve for two (2) full terms, and then the members-at-large are ineligible for re-election for a period of one (1) year.

**ARTICLE V. COMMISSIONS**

**Section 1. DEFINITION**

Commissions are standing bodies of the Association charged with coordinating program responsibilities within their stated areas.

**Section 2. DUTIES**

(a) The Church and Ministry Commission is charged with 1) overseeing and maintaining the standing of pastors and churches, 2) receiving and acting upon the requests from pastors and churches on behalf of persons who desire status as "Licensed" (with the exception of those candidates for ordination, who will be licensed by the Pre-Ordination Commission) or "Commissioned" Minister, "Privilege of Call", and "Dual Standing", 3) providing for the installation of a duly called minister as pastor and teacher of a church or related ministry (with the exception of those candidates for installation who have been approved for ordination and installation by the Pre-Ordination Commission), 4) acting in case of need for counsel or discipline of churches or ministers, 5) cooperating with the Associate Conference Minister serving in New Jersey in the placement of clergy, 6) acting on ecclesiastical endorsement for clergy for AAPC, ACPE, and all other forms of chaplaincy, 7) aiding clergy in developing clear contracts with churches, 8) collaborating with the Central Atlantic

Conference's New Church Development Committee to establish new UCC congregations in New Jersey and receiving and acting upon requests from both new congregations and existing congregations seeking to affiliate with the New Jersey Association, 9) supporting and relating to clergy in specialized settings, and 10) planning and implementing continuing education and boundary awareness training for authorized ministers. The procedures outlined in the United Church of Christ's *Manual on Ministry* shall be followed except that any voted policy of the New Jersey Association shall take precedence.

(b) The Pre-Ordination Commission is charged with 1) acting on the applications for in-care status and supervising in-care persons through the ordination process, including the responsibility to appoint advisors for them, having them go through appropriate evaluation, and seeking other ways to keep them in touch with the Association; 2) acting on applications for ordination including the examination of a candidate as to his or her qualifications and fitness for ordination. After a positive vote from this commission, the Association will then call an ecclesiastical council and, pending its outcome, proceed to a service of ordination and, when the candidate has been duly called to a position within the Association, an installation; and 3) acting on applications for licensure as well as applications for commissioned worker and lay worker status.

### Section 3. **ELECTIONS AND TERMS OF STANDING**

(a) Terms of election. Each member shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. Members may serve two (2) terms and shall be ineligible for re-election for a period of one (1) year. Members elected to complete an unexpired term are eligible for re-election for one full term and shall thereafter be ineligible for re-election for a period of one year. To the extent possible, each commission should be comprised of both clergy and laity.

(b) Chairpersons for each Commission shall serve a one (1) year term of office and shall be elected by the New Jersey Association. They may be re-elected twice. Serving an unexpired term will be reckoned as a full term.

(c) Church and Ministry Commission - The Church and Ministry Commission shall be composed of nine (9) persons, serving in three (3) classes of three (3) persons each.

(d) Pre-Ordination Commission - The Pre-Ordination Commission shall be composed of nine (9) persons, serving in three (3) classes of three (3) persons each.

### Section 4. **COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES**

Particular aspects of the work of the Commissions may be performed by Committees and/or Task Forces. Committees and Task Forces are accountable to their appropriate Commissions.

Section 5. Particular aspects of the common mission of the Association will be performed by Working Groups of the Council that may include, but are not limited to, Christian Education and Youth Ministries; Church Vitality; Communications; and Stewardship. Working Groups are appointed by Council for specific tasks and are retired following the completion of their assignments. Local churches and their members may request the formation of a new Working Group at the Association Annual Meeting or by contacting the Council.

## **ARTICLE VI. THE ASSOCIATE CONFERENCE MINISTER SERVING IN NEW JERSEY**

### **Section 1. ELECTION AND FUNCTION**

The election, separation and functions of the Associate Conference Minister serving in New Jersey shall be as specified by the By-Laws of the Central Atlantic Conference.

### **Section 2. RELATION TO THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL**

(a) The Associate Conference Minister serving in New Jersey shall relate to and be a voting member of the Association Council.

(b) The Associate Conference Minister serving in New Jersey, in consultation with the President of the Association Council, may call special meetings of the Association Council.

### **Section 3. RELATION TO ASSOCIATION BODIES**

The Associate Conference Minister serving in New Jersey may convene Commissions, Committees and Task Forces as he/she may deem necessary.

### **Section 4. STAFF RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

(a) The Staff Relations Committee shall be composed of the President of the Association Council and two to four additional members selected by the President of the Council and the Associate Conference Minister serving in New Jersey. The term of service for members other than the President of the Association Council shall be three years. This committee shall meet at least once each year and may meet more often at the request of the Associate Conference Minister or other Conference staff person serving in New Jersey.

(b) Recognizing that the Associate Conference Minister is a member of the Central Atlantic Conference staff and is supervised by the Conference Minister, this Committee shall function in a supportive manner to the Associate Conference Minister and to any other Conference staff serving in New Jersey.

### **Section 5. OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF**

The Association Council, empowered by the Association in meeting, may hire personnel as needed on a contract basis for special ministries or specific projects. The Association Council will serve in an advisory capacity to any personnel serving on a contract basis and receiving remuneration from the Association.

## **ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. Amendments to these By-Laws may be proposed by the Association Council, any local church or any group of ten (10) voting members of this Association.

Section 2. Such proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Association Council at least six (6) weeks prior to the meeting of the Association at which they are to be presented. At least one month prior to the meeting of this Association, the Association Council shall transmit such proposed amendments to all ministerial members and to each member church. Adoption of an amendment shall require a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting at the meeting of this Association. Amendments may also be adopted at any special meeting properly called for that purpose.

Revised May 15, 1993  
Revised January 25, 1997  
Revised January 22, 2000  
Revised April 28, 2001  
Revised April 25, 2005  
Revised April 28, 2007  
Revised April 17, 2010  
Revised April 2, 2011  
Revised April 28, 2012