

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CONSTITUTION

“Listen here, mortal: God has already made abundantly clear what “good” is, and what YHWH (Yahweh) needs from you: simply do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8 (*The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation*).

PREAMBLE

God has called people of faith to be thoughtful, compassionate members of Covenant. God is still speaking through the Bible, the Spirit, and our world. Guided by the Holy Spirit the members of the Pacific Northwest Conference (PNC) are called to express love (agape) and justice in all we do. We prayerfully choose our actions with the whole of God’s creation in mind. We strive to assure that we are careful not to place a period where God is placing a comma. To this end we write this Constitution and freely enter covenant with one another as members of the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ.

In keeping with the United Church of Christ’s Constitution, we affirm it is “ the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own in reality of worship, in honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart before God.”<sup>1</sup>

What binds us together is Covenant. Our communities, churches, the Pacific Northwest Conference, the United Church of Christ (UCC), and our ecumenical siblings enter into covenant with one another. Covenant is the mutual commitment we share to be the Church in our world.

We covenant with one another to:

- Follow the Call of God each day as revealed through the Bible, the historic Jesus, the risen Christ, and the continuous revelation of the Holy Spirit. We remember that there is still more truth being revealed. We will continue to be a “united and uniting” Conference, welcoming all and affirming their proclaimed identity in our world.
- Reach out in love, patience, and understanding to all people – instructed by justice, kindness, and humility. We commit to partner with and be actively

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<sup>1</sup> Preamble to the UCC Constitution, Paragraph 1, fourth sentence.

engaged with the wider United Church of Christ and the larger ecumenical community.

- Dismantle discrimination of all kinds. We will not stop expanding both our understanding and awareness of the impact of discrimination within our individual lives, churches, Conference, and our world. We will find ways to stop discrimination using our actions and by our governance. We will resist systems of dominance, including empire, colonialism, and white supremacy, to name a few.
- Become communities of nurture and care. We will gather as the body of Christ for healing, fellowship, celebration, and growth. We will intentionally build neighborhoods of justice and peace. We will share with our sibling churches the richness of time, talent and money that are ours to steward.
- Share communally our resources and opportunities for spiritual growth, education, mission, evangelism, and finances. This sharing will include the individual congregations, PNC covenanted church bodies, our neighborhoods, and the world.
- Support those with Authorized Ministerial Standing in our midst. We covenant to honor the training, experience, and wisdom of our clergy. We will collaborate with them to strengthen our communities. This will enhance collegiality among all clergy and laity.
- Embrace our faith by recognizing boundaries as a Conference, choosing consent culture as we conduct our individual and corporate lives responsibly and ethically.

Entering this covenant with intentionality, we commit ourselves to fulfilling our duties and privileges as outlined in this Constitution and the Constitution of the United Church of Christ. We aspire to express God's will in the world by word and deed as we journey with all who join us in our quest.

## THE LOCAL CHURCH

As people of God, we affirm and celebrate our local communities of faith. We thank God that we can draw our circles wider by offering both in-person and virtual participation. We covenant to continue offering new ways – such as small group gatherings, service projects, and creative worship experiences – for expressing what it means to walk with Jesus in love and community.

We affirm the authority and responsibility of each local congregation to shape its life as a unique gathering of God's people. We recognize and cultivate each congregation's relationship with and responsibility for their sibling congregations in the PNC and the greater body of Christ. Though we are autonomous congregations, we will embrace our covenantal responsibility to one another. Further, we pledge fidelity both

denominationally and ecumenically, seeking to give expression to the fullness of God's presence in our world.

## MINISTRY

As people of God, we affirm that the whole church and every member of it is called to extend the ministry of Jesus Christ. By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ, also recognize that some members of the church are called to function in various forms of Authorized Ministry both within the Church and in society at large. When the need for ecclesiastical authorization is discerned, we call on the Committee on Ministry (COM) to grant Ordained Ministerial Standing and Lay-Ministerial Standing as the Spirit leads.

The COM will use the current UCC Manual on Ministry (MOM) in all discernment dealing with Authorized Standing. We enter into covenant with Ministers receiving Authorized Standing for the extension of our mutual ministry of, and witness to God's compassion, justice, and peace. The COM will be responsible for all areas of ecclesiastical oversight of members with Authorized Standing in the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The PNC will use the current Manual on Local Church to vision and direct member church participation. We call the Committee on Local Church (COLC) to oversee the support and care of our individual and collective churches. The COLC will join with the Conference Minister assisting and welcoming new congregations seeking to join the PNC. The COLC will be responsible for the authorization and care of churches with Standing in the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ.

## ASSIGNMENT OF LEADERSHIP ROLES

### **The Conference Board Of Directors**

By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ, establish the Board of Directors. The Board will thoughtfully set the priorities for the ministry, then commission and decommission Intentional Committees and Task Forces, alongside the established Standing Committees of the Conference, to implement our collective vision and objectives. We acknowledge the importance of discernment and leadership from our Board of Directors in focusing and projecting our organization's vision. They will efficiently coordinate resources to advance our shared mission. This document establishes this leadership model. The Board of Directors will also collaborate with the Conference Minister for unity and vision. The Board of Directors (BOD) will oversee the Conference Minister (CM) and offer guidance and support for their ministry.

### **The Conference Minister**

108 The Conference Minister will exercise direct supervision of the Conference Staff,  
 109 including those associated with Conference owned properties. The Conference Minister  
 110 will offer guidance and support to the Officers of the Conference, the Board, and the  
 111 Chairs and members of all PNC committees and task forces.

112 We confirm that a Conference Minister will be visionary, work well with others, and excel  
 113 at nurturing, teaching, and helping people develop their talents. The Conference  
 114 Minister will serve as the primary leader of our staff team. The Conference Minister will  
 115 function as a spiritual guide, communicating areas of concern and opportunities for  
 116 ministry. They will represent the Conference in various denominational and ecumenical  
 117 settings embodying the heritage and traditions of the United Church of Christ.

#### 118 **Professional Staff**

119 By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ give thanks for our knowledgeable staff  
 120 (past, present, and future). We acknowledge and honor each of our staff members for  
 121 their skills and their caring attitudes. Their diverse skills contribute to the PNC's vision  
 122 and cohesion. The BOD will maintain job descriptions for all Staff including the Directors  
 123 of N-Sid-Sen and Pilgrim Firs.

#### 124 **Standing Committees**

125 By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ, establish Standing Committees charged  
 126 to function as Conference-wide centers for coordination, resourcing, and fostering  
 127 ministries to serve individual, church, and Conference needs. These committees will link  
 128 our ministry to one another and the Conference. The By-Laws will define the Standing  
 129 Committees' identity, scope, and authorization.

#### 130 MUTUALITY AND COLLEGIALLY

131 By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ, affirm that all members are ministers with  
 132 gifts they bring to the church. The Conference functions best when all its members  
 133 regard each other in a covenantal sense recognizing that each one's specific ministry is  
 134 in fact a particular extension of the mutual ministry of all.

135 We freely covenant to work together, recognizing that no one in the Conference is either  
 136 more important or less important than anyone else. Those we elect to positions of trust  
 137 within the life of the Conference are to fulfill the various functions of their office  
 138 responsive to the goals and mission of the Conference. Members of the conference are  
 139 expected to support those who have been elected to these roles.

#### 140 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSIVITY

141 By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ, recognize our moral responsibility to  
 142 admit that intersectional forms of oppression—including racism, misogyny, homophobia,

xenophobia, transphobia, and ableism—affect our mutual covenants. The PNC is committed to dismantling intersectional oppressions in our individual lives, in our Conference ministries, and the communities in which we reside. To do so we must not only expand our knowledge of these threats as defined by those harmed but create intentionally responsive actions. White supremacy and dominant culture are realities in the PNC as well as in our world. They oppose expressions of equity and inclusion. The PNC is therefore committed to seeking forgiveness, cultivating a culture of repentance, promoting restorative justice, and creating intentional changes in our Conference and our world.

#### ETHICAL CONDUCT

By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ, the PNC, and its individual members, covenant together to maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct among ourselves, our members, and in all our dealings. As guidelines for ministerial conduct, we will use the current UCC Manual on Ministry, Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers, and the Ministerial Code of Ethics. As guidelines for churches' congregational conduct, we will use the current UCC Manual on Local Church, Marks of Faithful and Vital Local Churches, and the Congregational Code. The PNC Fiscal Policies and Human Resources policy will also guide our ministry.

#### CONFERENCE MEETINGS

By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ, affirm that all leaders and PNC representatives will gather to seek God's will on a regular basis. Each year, the Conference will hold an Annual Meeting of the Conference delegates to address the official business of the Conference. Special meetings may be held as set forth in the Bylaws. To the extent possible, programming emphasizing spiritual and educational needs will be included. With trust and patience, we will listen for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. With joy and thanksgiving, we will share and celebrate with one another our participation in the life and ministry of Christ. With courage and humility, we will agree upon common tasks and action opening ourselves anew to God's presence in the wider world. All Conference meetings will increase participation by including in-person and virtual participation.

#### CONFERENCE NAME, BOUNDARIES, AND MEMBERSHIP

By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ, denote our name, physical boundaries, and membership for ministry. Our name will be the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ. The PNC boundaries include Alaska, Washington (excluding some Central Pacific Conference areas), and North Idaho (east from the Washington-Oregon border). Membership will extend to all United Church of Christ congregations in good standing within these boundaries. We will embrace the Manual on Local Church

as our PNC guideline for congregations. We accept the full rights and responsibilities of a Conference serving as an Association of the United Church of Christ in good standing with the General Synod as provided for in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

#### ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT

By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ, come together to build and renew our covenants to the greater glory of God. After consideration, conversation, and prayer, delegates of the PNC will adopt this and any amendments to the constitution at a PNC Meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of the Conference. The Board of Directors will announce the intent to adopt or amend the PNC constitution one month before Annual Meeting. Upon adoption, our Constitution with Bylaws will be the basic framework of our life together. Amendments are anticipated and received as a healthy expression of vital life and growth.

#### CONFESSION AND BENEDICTION

By mutual consent, we, as the body of Christ and as children of a loving God, confess that without the blessings of the Spirit through the Grace of Jesus Christ we cannot keep these covenants as we ought. We, therefore, covenant among ourselves to counsel with one another and to seek the will of God through attentiveness to God's Word and Spirit. We dedicate ourselves to growing into, living, and improving our covenant together. We celebrate one Body and one Spirit, one hope to which we are called. We serve one God of all Creation. We affirm a mutual blessing on our common life. To God be the glory, now and forever. Amen.

"To God – whose power now at work in us can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine – to God be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus through all generations, world without end! Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21 (*The Inclusive Bible, The First Egalitarian Translation*).

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

BYLAWS

13th Draft of the PNC Bylaws total Revision

PREAMBLE

We declare that the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ resembles a tapestry, where the distinctiveness of each church and member enhances the collective richness of our community. God continually works among us, offering both inspiration and challenge.

The Bylaws provide a structured framework that guides our collaborative efforts. They support our initiatives to creatively share resources, in accordance with our faith, highlighting the individuality of each component within our organization. They assist us in weaving together the intricate patterns that we are called to create.

ARTICLE 1 – MEMBERSHIP

The primary unit of life and organization in the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ is the Local Church. Local Churches are communities of faith and justice. The people in the Local Church are the heart of the PNC. Local Church Standing refers to the ecclesiastical relationship between a Local Church and its Association or Conference. The Committee On Local Church (COLC) has the responsibility of defining the Local Church's membership in the PNC and the UCC. The local Association or Conference of the UCC is responsible for determining, conferring, and certifying the Standing of the Local Churches for the United Church of Christ within its area.

The second important unit of life and organization in the PNC is the body of ministers serving the Local Churches and the community at large. Authorized Ministers of the PNC follow the guidelines of the PNC Committee on Ministry (COM). The COM establishes the requirements for these leaders using the current Manual on Ministry (MOM). Authorized Ministers have earned UCC Ordained Ministerial Standing and Lay Ministerial Standing or are Ministers from other denominations who have completed work with the PNC Committee on Ministry for Dual Standing and are serving a PNC church or in a local ministry affirmed by the Conference.

Ministers with Authorized Standing (working or retired) living in the PNC are in good Standing if they fulfill the requirements approved by the COM. The requirements are available on the PNC website.

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## ARTICLE 2 – MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

244 The Conference holds an Annual Meeting to manage business matters and choose new  
 245 officers. The Board of Directors determines the date and location for each meeting,  
 246 typically held in the spring. The Registrar informs all Conference Members of the date  
 247 and location of the meeting three months before the meeting. Delegates and churches  
 248 receive program materials no later than two weeks prior to the meeting. Meetings will  
 249 accommodate both virtual and in-person attendance options. Delegates can attend  
 250 virtually using remote communication tools, allowing them to participate fully by asking  
 251 questions, making comments, and voting in real time.

252 The Board of Directors has the authority to call special meetings of the Conference  
 253 whenever it chooses. The Board must convene a special meeting if seven Churches  
 254 with Standing in the PNC request one for a particular purpose. The Registrar informs all  
 255 Conference Members of the gathering date and location of the meeting at least ten days  
 256 but no more than sixty days before the meeting. Delegates and churches receive  
 257 program materials no later than two weeks prior to the meeting. Meetings will  
 258 accommodate both virtual and in-person attendance options. Delegates may attend  
 259 virtually using remote communication to participate, vote, ask questions, and make  
 260 comments during the meeting.

261 A quorum for Conference Meetings is reached when 40% of congregations have at  
 262 least one lay delegate present from each church.

263 The Board of Directors or any Committee of the Conference in coordination with the  
 264 Board may sponsor gatherings with a focus on spiritual and educational content. These  
 265 gatherings may be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Conference or  
 266 independently.

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## ARTICLE 3 – VOTING MEMBERSHIP

268 Local Churches in good standing are entitled to three voting lay delegates at  
 269 Conference meetings, plus one delegate between the age of 16-35 years old. They are  
 270 entitled to an additional delegate for every hundred members over two hundred, based  
 271 on the latest National United Church of Christ Annual Yearbook statistics.

272 Individuals with Authorized Ministerial Standing in the PNC are automatically voting  
 273 delegates and do not count towards each church's delegate total.

274 Ordained ministers from other denominations serving in a Local Church of the Pacific  
 275 Northwest Conference are voting members if granted Ministerial Standing by the COM.

276 Board members are delegates to all meetings of the Pacific Northwest Conference.



277 A mission co-worker residing within the Conference, appointed or commissioned by the  
 278 Common Global Ministries, may have voice and vote.

#### 279 ARTICLE 4 – ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

280 The following individuals may, by vote of the Conference, become an Associate  
 281 Member of the Conference with the privilege of voice but not vote at official meetings of  
 282 the Conference:

- 283 • Ministers with Privilege of Call status and all ministers seeking Authorized  
 284 Ministerial Standing in the PNC while serving PNC churches or in other ministries  
 285 recognized by the Conference; or
- 286 • Ministers with Authorized Ministerial Standing in the United Church of Christ  
 287 holding standing in an Association or Conference other than the Pacific  
 288 Northwest Conference.

#### 289 ARTICLE 5 – CONFERENCE ACTING AS AN ASSOCIATION

290 No Associations exist in the Pacific Northwest. Therefore, the Pacific Northwest  
 291 Conference of the United Church of Christ will exercise the functions of an Association  
 292 in determining all work of the Conference. This work includes oversight of the Local  
 293 Churches and Ministers with Authorized Ministerial Standing in the PNC UCC.

#### 294 ARTICLE 6 – COMMITTEES & TASK FORCES

##### 295 **Standing Committees**

296 The Conference Standing Committees exist for the governance and operational support  
 297 of the mission of the PNC and the UCC. Their missional purpose is to support all PNC  
 298 Local Churches as they foster inclusive communities, promote social justice, and  
 299 deepen spiritual growth. All Standing Committees are entrusted with the authority to  
 300 lead and empower local congregations so that they, the churches, can embrace the  
 301 mission and vision of the broader United Church of Christ.

302 Standing Committee members should take an active role in their committee's ministry,  
 303 with no more than two absences per year. If a member is absent more than twice, the  
 304 committee chair will inquire as to the member's continued interest and ability to serve on  
 305 the committee. Upon providing thirty days' notice to the members in question, the  
 306 committee may proceed with a vote of removal from their committee.

307 Standing Committees membership will strive to reflect a diverse range of backgrounds,  
 308 including clergy, laity, race, gender, gender identity, age, ability, sexual orientation,  
 309 socioeconomic status, class diversity, education, life experiences, personality, and  
 310 general worldview or opinions that embody the character of the PNC. Every reasonable

effort will be also made to include two members between 16 – 35, at the time of nomination, on each standing committee.

Standing Committee chairs can attend all Board of Directors meetings with voice but not vote to ensure transparency and communication. The Board of Directors will distribute the agenda for all upcoming meetings one week prior to the scheduled date to all Board of Directors members and Standing Committee Chairs. Committees may submit items for inclusion on the agenda through the Moderator. Chairs may bring up to three committee members to assist with presentations. These members will have voice but not vote.

The Standing Committees of the PNC are as follows:

- Committee on Ministry (COM)
- Committee on Local Church (COLC)
- Finance and Stewardship Committee
- Human Resources Committee
- Nominating Committee

Every Standing Committee will meet at least once every quarter and maintain detailed records, which will be sent to the Registrar for documentation and filing.

Standing Committee members are elected at the Annual Meeting and serve terms of three years. No member can serve more than two consecutive terms on the same committee. The Nominating Committee will submit thoroughly reviewed nominees for the vote. All committees, except as otherwise defined herein, will be comprised of a total membership determined by the Board of Directors. When there is a vacancy, each committee may find replacements for their committee and present them to the Nominating Committee for evaluation. The Board of Directors has the final vote to accept or reject the nominees.

Each Standing Committee will have one-third of its positions reserved for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and HUG (historically underrepresented groups) members. If these positions be unfilled, the Nominating Committee, with the help of the Conference Minister, will actively seek members to satisfy this aspirational goal. The openings will remain vacant until appropriate members can be found. This policy seeks to ensure that we are actively fulfilling our commitments to inclusive representation.

Chairs and members of Standing Committees will serve terms of three years. They will be elected in staggered cycles, with one-third chosen each year. This annual process helps maintain consistency in practice. The Nominating Committee is responsible for this process.

### 347 **The Committee on Ministry:**

348 The United Church of Christ assigns authority for the authorization and oversight of  
 349 ministers, including their ordination and continued standing, to the Committee on  
 350 Ministry (COM). In their role of authorization and oversight of those with Authorized  
 351 Ministerial Standing, the COM collectively discerns the guidance of the Spirit, the Call of  
 352 Christ, and the mission of God, on behalf of the United Church of Christ. The current  
 353 Manual on Ministry outlines the processes, guidelines, and best practices  
 354 recommended to COMs for conducting their work. These common guidelines are  
 355 important for maintaining shared expectations in ministry. The COM is responsible for  
 356 providing support and accountability for those seeking or holding Authorized Ministerial  
 357 Standing. In the PNC, the COM will intentionally welcome and bring into the  
 358 discernment process those who need to follow alternative paths to ministry. Historically  
 359 some, because of race, poverty, sexual orientation or gender expression to name a few,  
 360 have been unjustly denied a place to fulfill God's Call to ministry.

361 The COM diligently oversees the covenantal relationships among individuals with  
 362 Standing in the Conference, the Local Church, and various ministry settings. They  
 363 ensure adherence to faithfulness and foster ongoing ministerial growth in accordance  
 364 with the current Manual on Ministry, the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized  
 365 Ministers, and the Ministerial Code of Ethics.

366 Though COM members are divided into East COM and West COM to balance workload  
 367 and proximity to the ministers they oversee, they function as one COM. All decisions  
 368 about how the PNC will comply with the Manual on Ministry must come from consensus  
 369 and collaboration of the full COM. This will allow consistency of actions in the PNC. The  
 370 COMs East and West designation is designed to allow geographic proximity for  
 371 oversight to Authorized Ministers. The COM has at least twenty-six members. West  
 372 COM will have at least eighteen members. East COM will have at least eight members.  
 373 Of the eight, six members will reside in Eastern Washington and North Idaho and two  
 374 members will reside in Alaska. The COM will assist the Conference Minister to ensure  
 375 support for Authorized Ministers in line with the Manual on Ministry and the UCC  
 376 Ministerial Code of Ethics.

### 377 **The Committee on Local Church (COLC):**

378 The Committee on Local Church will use the UCC Manual on Church, the Marks of  
 379 Faithful and Vital Local Churches, and the Congregational Code for guidance. The  
 380 current Manual on Church outlines the processes, guidelines, and best practices  
 381 recommended to COLCs for conducting their work. These common guidelines are  
 382 important for maintaining shared expectations in ministry.

383 The COLC is responsible for providing support and accountability for Churches of our  
 384 Conference. It will establish the basic foundations of Conference life with congregations  
 385 that are healthy, skilled, and well-supported. The COLC will assist the Conference  
 386 Minister in managing transitions of Local Churches during times of call and crisis. The  
 387 COLC will, with the Conference Minister, work with, encourage, and facilitate new  
 388 congregations who seek to join the PNC.

389 The COLC will also serve as the point of contact for inviting and accepting new  
 390 congregations into the life of the PNC. Our COLC will creatively envision the use of the  
 391 Manual on Church to open doors of justice to the marginalized congregations seeking  
 392 covenant with the PNC in ministry.

393 Local churches and spiritual gatherings are in good standing if they meet the criteria  
 394 established in the Manual on Church. In the PNC, they must also:

- 395 • Contribute to the United Church of Christ by supporting Our Church's Wider  
 396 Mission, joining Conference activities, and having delegates attend official  
 397 Conference meetings on their behalf.
- 398 • Pay per capita dues.

399 The COLC has at least six members.

#### 400 **The Nominating Committee:**

401 The Nominating Committee seeks volunteers and evaluates candidates for election at  
 402 the Annual Meeting and throughout each year as needed. They will intentionally seek  
 403 out voices of those who historically have not been at the table, welcoming and inviting  
 404 them to serve. They will review and nominate candidates for Conference Leadership  
 405 positions, including committees and ecumenical representatives. Their tasks also  
 406 involve selecting Conference Board of Directors nominees and Synod Representatives.  
 407 Throughout the year, they vet candidates for vacant committee and task force seats,  
 408 bringing the candidates to the Board of Directors for approval votes. The Nominating  
 409 Committee has at least six members.

#### 410 **The Finance and Stewardship Committee:**

411 The Finance and Stewardship Committee oversees stewardship interpretation, including  
 412 Our Church's Wider Mission and other stewardship programs. They intentionally bring  
 413 the lens of justice and reparation to the task of finance. The committee forms teams to  
 414 manage budgeting, investment, and property management in line with Board policies.  
 415 They will be responsible for obtaining funding, growing the endowment, and addressing  
 416 the challenging work of strengthening the Conference's financial security. The  
 417 Committee will have at least six elected members, plus the Board's Vice Moderator and  
 418 Treasurer. The PNC Treasurer is the Chair of the Stewardship Committee. This

419 committee will be responsible for being knowledgeable of the current Washington State  
 420 law governing non-profit organizations regarding finances.

421

#### 422 **The Human Resources Committee:**

423 The Human Resources Committee offers support and counsel to the Conference  
 424 Minister in overseeing the staff. They are charged with the personnel policies for the  
 425 Conference and are expected to become knowledgeable about employment law as  
 426 applicable to Conference employees. The Human Resources Committee also conducts  
 427 an annual review of the Conference Minister based on set goals and reports the findings  
 428 to the Board of Directors. The committee has at least six members.

#### 429 **Task Forces and Intentional Committees**

430 The Board of Directors may, by consensus, authorize the establishment of additional  
 431 Intentional Committees and Task Forces to accomplish specific mission-related  
 432 objectives. Task Forces will be assigned distinct goals and operate within defined time  
 433 limits. In contrast, Intentional Committees will focus on ministry initiatives and maintain  
 434 broader flexibility regarding their objectives and duration. Each Task Force and  
 435 Intentional Committee will be assigned a Board of Directors Liaison responsible for  
 436 facilitating communication with the Board and providing strategic guidance and  
 437 oversight.

438 The Nominating Committee will collaborate with the Board and Board appointees to  
 439 identify potential committee members, conduct interviews, and recommend term lengths  
 440 based on the needs of the PNC. This process ensures that recruitment and term  
 441 determination are transparent and tailored to each committee's mission and  
 442 requirements. The overall goal of the PNC Board of Directors, as well as all Committees  
 443 and Task Forces, will be:

- 444 • To nurture a comprehensive and earth-affirming Outdoor Ministry program led by  
 445 the Staff assigned to oversee Camp N-Sid-Sen and Camp Pilgrim Firs.
- 446 • Foster an environment that challenges injustice and racism among us including  
 447 in our congregations, our communities, our nation, and our world.
- 448 • Organize direct action and education to help us embrace a wholistic view of  
 449 God's creation.
- 450 • Find and break down the walls that separate us from one another and build a  
 451 Conference Community that reflects God's call to love our neighbors without  
 452 condition.

#### 453 **ARTICLE 7– PLANNING SESSION TO FOLLOW THE ANNUAL MEETING**

The Chairs of Standing Committees, the Board of Directors, and the Conference Minister will meet within two months after the Annual Meeting to plan Conference work and ministry. Chairs of Standing Committees endeavor to maintain communication with each other, the Conference Minister, and the Board of Directors between ensuing meetings.

## ARTICLE 8 – CONFERENCE OFFICERS

The officers of the conference will consist of a Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Scribe, and Treasurer. All conference officers will serve terms of three years and be limited to two consecutive terms in any office.

Conference officers and committee members may serve a maximum of six consecutive years on the Board of Directors or any Standing Committee. The outgoing Moderator may serve one year as Past Moderator with voice but not vote. The duties of the Past Moderator are to mentor the incoming Moderator and provide institutional memory to new members as needed.

The Moderator is responsible for presiding at Board meetings, and the Annual Meeting. They set the Agenda for the Annual Meeting along with the Conference Minister and may facilitate discussions between Conference Committees if necessary. They also serve as a liaison between the Conference and local congregations, ensuring conference-wide communication between Annual Meeting sessions.

The Vice Moderator will lead the Annual Meeting planning. They will also serve on the Financial and Stewardship Committee, focusing on budget and financial matters, and assist the Moderator in communicating with local congregations and facilitating conference-wide communications.

The Scribe will document the detailed events of the Board of Directors meetings, Special Meetings of the Conference, and the Annual meeting.

The Treasurer performs the standard duties of the position, which include interpreting periodic financial reports for the Financial and Stewardship Committee and the Board of Directors and providing financial statements to the Conference membership. This role includes producing annual Statements of Activities and Financial Position for all Conference Funds. The Treasurer may delegate these duties to the Accounting Manager but must retain oversight and ultimate responsibility for these duties.

The Treasurer, as Chair of the Financial and Stewardship Committee, in collaboration with the Conference Minister will oversee:

- Managing financial assets and obligations.
- Developing and reviewing fiscal policies.

- Preparing and monitoring the annual budget which the Conference Members have approved at Annual Meeting.
- Arranging independent financial reviews and audits.

## ARTICLE 9 – CORPORATION OFFICERS

The Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Treasurer of the Conference will serve as President, Vice President, and Treasurer of the Corporation during their term.

The Conference Minister will serve as the Secretary of the Corporation. They may hire and oversee a Registrar, who will be responsible for maintaining the official records of the Conference, including the roll of ministers and churches.

## ARTICLE 10 – THE CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Conference Board of Directors will have at least twelve members and is composed of the following:

1. The Officers of the Conference: the Moderator, the Vice Moderator, the Scribe, and the Treasurer. The past Moderator may also serve - (ex officio, without vote).
2. The Conference Minister (ex officio, without vote).
3. At least two members between the ages of 16 and 35 at the time of their election.
4. At least three members from three different congregations located west of the Cascades.
5. At least two members from two different congregations located east of the Cascades.
6. At least one member from a congregation located in the State of Alaska.
7. It is an aspirational goal that at least one-third of the Board and Officers of the Conference will be comprised of members from the BIPOC community.
8. It is also an aspirational goal that at least one-third of the Board and Officers of the Conference will be from among the LGBTQIA+ and Disability communities.
9. The Board and Officers of the Conference will consist of at least twelve members, with an equal split between laity and Ministers with Authorized Standing in the PNC UCC. Each member's designation at the time of election will remain unchanged until their term ends.
10. A quorum of the Board of Directors will be at least six members with vote.
11. BOD members will serve terms of three years. They will be elected in staggered cycles, with one-third chosen each year. This annual process helps maintain consistency in practice. The Nominating Committee is responsible for this process.
12. BOD members must take an active role, with no more than two absences per year. If a member is absent more than twice, the BOD chair will inquire as to the

527 member's continued interest and ability to serve. Upon providing thirty days'  
 528 notice, the BOD will proceed with a vote of removal from the BOD and request  
 529 that the Nominating Committee help search for a replacement.

530 **Responsibilities of the Board of Directors:**

531 The Board will be responsible for establishing policies for the operations of the  
 532 Conference. These policies and other responsibilities of the Board of Directors include:

- 533 • Establishing priorities, long range plans and strategies for the Conference,  
 534 Standing Committees and Staff.
- 535 • Evaluating and coordinating current programs and projects.
- 536 • Maintaining the Personnel Policy Handbook and the Financial Policy Handbook.
- 537 • Overseeing the Conference Minister.
- 538 • When there is an opening for a new Conference Minister the Board of Directors  
 539 assesses the final candidate the search committee has recommended. If they  
 540 approve the nomination, the Board of Directors will subsequently present the  
 541 Conference Minister candidate for the Conference's vote. The candidate's Call is  
 542 determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the Conference delegates.
- 543 • Governance of the Conference, as conducted by the various Committees of the  
 544 Conference, the Conference Minister, and the staff.
- 545 • Proposing and presenting the PNC annual budget, with the assistance of the  
 546 Finance and Stewardship Committee at the Annual Meeting. The Board will  
 547 periodically review the performance of the Conference budget, making any  
 548 necessary adjustments.
- 549 • Appointing a Search Committee when there is an opening in the PNC for a new  
 550 Conference Minister.

551 Members of the Conference who serve on the United Church of Christ Board (UCCB) or  
 552 any other national boards or committees are welcome to attend PNC Board meetings  
 553 and share their reports. They will be granted voice without vote during Board of  
 554 Directors sessions.

555 The Board of Directors controls the Conference's funds and undesignated  
 556 benevolences. While the Board of Directors provides oversight of the PNC UCC Camp  
 557 properties, it does not engage in their direct management. The Executive Director for  
 558 Outdoor Ministries and the Camp Directors manage the camps in consultation with the  
 559 CM. Any transaction concerning the selling, mortgaging, or transferring of these assets  
 560 must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Conference Members at a duly  
 561 called Conference meeting. Transaction documents require signatures from the  
 562 President, Vice President, and either the Secretary or Treasurer of the Conference.



563 The Board of Directors will publish an annual report to the Conference and periodically  
564 present reviews of its finances.

565 The Board of Directors has the authority to make necessary adjustments to the Annual  
566 Budget of the Conference for operational purposes, as they deem appropriate.

567 Throughout the year, the Nominating Committee will vet candidates for vacant  
568 committee and task force seats. The Board of Directors must approve the vetted  
569 candidates. Appointed individuals will serve until the next Conference elections.

570 The Board of Directors may, with a two-thirds majority vote, remove any individual from  
571 Board membership, the membership of a Standing Committee, other committee, and/or  
572 any group elected or appointed by the Conference, with or without cause.

573 The Executive Committee, which includes the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Secretary of  
574 the Corporation, and Treasurer, has limited authority to make urgent "ordinary course"  
575 decisions when the full Board of Directors cannot convene. They are not empowered to  
576 sell property or take any actions outside the ordinary course. Any decisions taken by the  
577 Executive Committee will be shared with the full Board by the next scheduled meeting  
578 so they can review and take necessary action.

#### 579 ARTICLE 11 – THE CONFERENCE MINISTER

580 The Conference Minister must be an Ordained Minister with Ordained Ministerial  
581 Standing, or Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ. They  
582 will provide support to clergy through counsel, offering guidance through times of  
583 conflict, attentive listening, and effective communication. They will engage in teaching,  
584 preaching, and sharing the faith, presenting the Gospel, and promoting critical thinking  
585 within our PNC churches. The Conference Minister will address issues of justice and  
586 peace both within the Conference and the broader community. They will guide churches  
587 and ministers in the Search and Call and other processes of discernment.

588 The Conference Minister of the PNC will serve both as the Executive of the Conference  
589 and as our Corporate Agent. In this capacity, the Conference Minister will support  
590 elected leaders in executing their duties and keep them informed about relevant issues  
591 and ministry opportunities. The Conference Minister facilitates communication and  
592 collaboration among Local Churches, Conference Committees, the National setting of  
593 the UCC, and ecumenical partners. The Conference Minister will represent and/or  
594 delegate representation of the Conference in Local Church, denominational and  
595 ecumenical settings. The Conference Minister is responsible (in collaboration with the  
596 Human Resources Committee and the Board of Directors) for managing the staff and  
597 overseeing the business and financial affairs of the Conference. The Conference  
598 Minister represents the Conference in denominational and ecumenical settings. They

599 will serve as the Secretary of the Conference. The Conference Minister is accountable  
600 to the Board of Directors.

601 When there is an opening in the PNC for a new Conference Minister, the process for  
602 selecting the PNC Conference Minister will be:

- 603 1. The Board of Directors will appoint a Search Committee of at least six members.
- 604 2. The Search Committee will collaborate with the national setting of the UCC to  
605 search for and vet candidates. They will conduct interviews and do background  
606 and reference checks.
- 607 3. When they have discerned the chosen candidate, the Search Committee  
608 nominates the candidate to the Board of Directors.
- 609 4. If the Board of Directors agrees with the Search Committee's choice, The Board  
610 of Directors will call a Special Meeting of the Conference delegates or bring the  
611 candidate to the Annual Meeting at which time the Board of Directors will  
612 nominate the candidate to the Conference delegates for a vote. To Call the  
613 Conference Minister, two-thirds of the Conference delegates must vote in favor.
- 614 5. The newly Called Conference Minister assumes the role of "settled" Conference  
615 Minister for an indefinite period, unless the terms of the Call agreement specify a  
616 different appointment duration, such as Interim Conference Minister or Limited  
617 Term Conference Minister.
- 618 6. The Board of Directors determines the final terms of the Conference Minister's  
619 Call Agreement, which must be consistent with the PNC Conference Employee  
620 Manual.
- 621 7. Consultation with the National UCC Representatives will assure us that PNC's  
622 practices and procedures align with the broader denominational standards and  
623 requirements.

624 The Board of Directors, acting on behalf of the Conference, may terminate the  
625 Conference Minister's employment by a two-thirds majority vote. Loss of UCC  
626 Authorized Ministerial Standing immediately terminates the Conference Minister's Call.

## 627 ARTICLE 12 – CONFERENCE EMPLOYEES

628 All Conference employees are employed on an "at-will" basis. The Conference Minister,  
629 in consultation with the Human Resources Committee, has the authority to hire or  
630 terminate additional program staff. These employees will work at the discretion of the  
631 Conference Minister and in collaboration with other professional staff members. The  
632 Board of Directors has the authority to terminate the Conference Minister.

## 633 ARTICLE 13 – GENERAL SYNOD DELEGATES

634 Delegates and their alternates who will attend the UCC General Synod are chosen and  
635 appointed at the Annual Conference Meeting that takes place one year before they

serve at Synod. The selected delegation must meet the demographic balance requirements set by General Synod. The delegates start service at the beginning of the first General Synod after their election. The term ends at the beginning of the third General Synod so that they attend all Special Synods as delegates during their term. Any member of the Conference is eligible for nomination as a General Synod Delegate. Conference members are welcome to volunteer for selection as a General Synod delegate.

#### ARTICLE 14 – GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES

The Conference boundaries include Alaska, Washington (excluding some Central Pacific Conference areas), and North Idaho (east from the Washington-Oregon border). Changes to these boundaries require cooperation with neighboring Associations or Conferences and General Synod approval, as per the United Church of Christ's Constitution and Bylaws.

#### ARTICLE 15 – AMENDMENTS

The Board of Directors may propose amendments to the Constitution and By-laws to the PNC. A Standing Committee or members representing seven collaborating Conference Congregations can also bring suggestions for amendments to the Board of Directors. The Board will review the proposed amendments before proposing them to the PNC. Amendments will be submitted to the PNC delegates either at their Annual Meeting or at a specially convened meeting, where delegates will vote on them. The Registrar informs all Conference Members of the time and place of one month before the meeting. Delegates and churches receive program materials no later than two weeks prior to the meeting. Meetings will accommodate both virtual and in-person attendance options. A quorum for Conference Meetings is 40% of congregations with at least one lay delegate per church. A two-thirds majority of Conference delegates voting in the affirmative will be necessary for the approval of amendments.

#### ARTICLE 16 – CONFERENCE DISSOLUTION OR MERGER

The procedure dealing with the assets of the Pacific Northwest Conference should the Conference dissolve or merge with other Conferences or Associations is:

1. The Board of Directors will create a liquidation plan directed by the Treasurer.
2. The Treasurer will then prepare a recommendation for approval at the final Annual Meeting of the Conference or at a special meeting called by the Board of Directors.
3. Delegates must approve the plan by a vote of two-thirds of the majority of delegates present.
4. The distribution of the assets must align with the purpose of the United Church of Christ, ensuring that no individuals benefit directly or indirectly.

- 673 5. Any assets left over will be transferred to a successor organization or contributed  
674 to the national United Church of Christ.
- 675 6. The Board of Directors will also ensure that all final processes comply with  
676 current Washington State law governing non-profit organizations.

677 CONCLUDING STATEMENT

678 As we affirm this Constitution and Bylaws, we dedicate ourselves anew to the ongoing  
679 work of justice, kindness, and humility in the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United  
680 Church of Christ. Guided by the Spirit and united in covenant, we commit to nurturing  
681 inclusive communities, fostering spiritual growth within and outside of our churches, and  
682 responding faithfully to God's Call in every generation. May our shared journey reflect  
683 the love of God, the wisdom of our collective traditions, and the hope we hold for a  
684 world transformed by grace. To God be the glory, now and always. Amen.