

1 PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

2
3 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

4
5 CONSTITUTION

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

12 PREAMBLE

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

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

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

28 We covenant with one another to:

- 29
- 30 • Follow the Call of God each day as revealed through the Bible, the historic
 - 31 Jesus, the risen Christ, and the continuous revelation of the Holy Spirit. We
 - 32 remember that there is still more truth being revealed. We will continue to be a
 - 33 “united and uniting” Conference, welcoming all and affirming their proclaimed
 - 34 identity in our world.
 - 35 • Reach out in love, patience, and understanding to all people – instructed by
 - justice, kindness, and humility. We commit to partner with and be actively

¹ Preamble to the UCC Constitution, Paragraph 1, fourth sentence.

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

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

62 THE LOCAL CHURCH

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

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

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

75

76 MINISTRY

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

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

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

95 ASSIGNMENT OF LEADERSHIP ROLES

96 **The Conference Board Of Directors**

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

107 **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,

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

152 ETHICAL CONDUCT

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

161 CONFERENCE MEETINGS

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

173 CONFERENCE NAME, BOUNDARIES, AND MEMBERSHIP

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

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

184 ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT

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

193 CONFESSION AND BENEDICTION

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

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

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208

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

209

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

210

BYLAWS

211

13th Draft of the PNC Bylaws total Revision

212

PREAMBLE

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

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

221

ARTICLE 1 – MEMBERSHIP

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

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

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

242

243

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.

267

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

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

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

320 The Standing Committees of the PNC are as follows:

- 321 • Committee on Ministry (COM)
- 322 • Committee on Local Church (COLC)
- 323 • Finance and Stewardship Committee
- 324 • Human Resources Committee
- 325 • Nominating Committee

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

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

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

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

346

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**

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

459 ARTICLE 8 – CONFERENCE OFFICERS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 487 • Managing financial assets and obligations.
- 488 • Developing and reviewing fiscal policies.

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

492 ARTICLE 9 – CORPORATION OFFICERS
 493

494 The Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Treasurer of the Conference will serve as
 495 President, Vice President, and Treasurer of the Corporation during their term.
 496

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

500 ARTICLE 10 – THE CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

- 503 1. The Officers of the Conference: the Moderator, the Vice Moderator, the Scribe,
 504 and the Treasurer. The past Moderator may also serve - (ex officio, without vote).
 505 2. The Conference Minister (ex officio, without vote).
 506 3. At least two members between the ages of 16 and 35 at the time of their election.
 507 4. At least three members from three different congregations located west of the
 508 Cascades.
 509 5. At least two members from two different congregations located east of the
 510 Cascades.
 511 6. At least one member from a congregation located in the State of Alaska.
 512 7. It is an aspirational goal that at least one-third of the Board and Officers of the
 513 Conference will be comprised of members from the BIPOC community.
 514 8. It is also an aspirational goal that at least one-third of the Board and Officers of
 515 the Conference will be from among the LGBTQIA+ and Disability communities.
 516 9. The Board and Officers of the Conference will consist of at least twelve members,
 517 with an equal split between laity and Ministers with Authorized Standing in the
 518 PNC UCC. Each member's designation at the time of election will remain
 519 unchanged until their term ends.
 520 10. A quorum of the Board of Directors will be at least six members with vote.
 521 11. BOD members will serve terms of three years. They will be elected in staggered
 522 cycles, with one-third chosen each year. This annual process helps maintain
 523 consistency in practice. The Nominating Committee is responsible for this
 524 process.
 525 12. BOD members must take an active role, with no more than two absences per
 526 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

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

643 ARTICLE 14 – GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES

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

649 ARTICLE 15 – AMENDMENTS

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

662 ARTICLE 16 – CONFERENCE DISSOLUTION OR MERGER

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

- 665 1. The Board of Directors will create a liquidation plan directed by the Treasurer.
- 666 2. The Treasurer will then prepare a recommendation for approval at the final
 667 Annual Meeting of the Conference or at a special meeting called by the Board of
 668 Directors.
- 669 3. Delegates must approve the plan by a vote of two-thirds of the majority of
 670 delegates present.
- 671 4. The distribution of the assets must align with the purpose of the United Church
 672 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.