

Bylaws
The Chesapeake Association
The Central Atlantic Conference
The United Church of Christ

Preamble

The Chesapeake Association, embodying the power of God present in its member congregations, exists to make a unified witness to Christ and enliven individual congregations in their efforts to be faithful in discipleship.

Article I. Name

The name of this Association is the Chesapeake Association of the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ, hereafter referred to as the Association.

Article II. General Provisions

Section 1. Purpose

The Association is that body of the Central Atlantic conference, hereafter referred to as the Conference, of the United Church of Christ, hereafter referred to as the UCC which is composed of the local congregations within the geographical area constituting the Chesapeake Association which are members of the UCC, as defined in the Constitution of the UCC as amended 16 July 1963, (Article IV, paragraph 7-22) and the Bylaws of the Conference (Article VIII, section 2 c) as adopted 16 January 1965 as amended, and all Ordained, Commissioned and Licensed Ministers who hold standing in the Association. The purpose is to: **1.** Determine, confer and certify the standing of the local churches within its area. And determine, confer and certify all ministerial standing. **2.** To fulfill its mission as stated in Article II Section 2.

Section 2. Mission

In accordance with its faith and practice, the Association claims as its own the historic mission of the church of Jesus Christ, which includes but is not limited to:

- a. The proclamation and teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- b. Living and acting in covenant with its member congregations, the Conference and with the UCC; its Boards, Agencies and Covenanted Ministries.
- c. Being in mutual relationship and mission with other Christian churches as well as ecumenical and interfaith partners.
- d. Being a community of faith that works for justice, peace and reconciliation by means of Christian witness and service.

Section 3. Incorporation

The Association is a non-stock, religious body organized under the laws of the State of Maryland, and in conformance with the articles of incorporation of the Central Atlantic Conference and the term of its existence shall be perpetual.

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Additionally, the Association is also incorporated in the state of Maryland as an individual entity.

Section 4. Geographic Boundaries

Any adjustments of boundaries or transfer of membership of churches between Associations shall be in conformance with Conference Bylaws.

Section 5. Separability

Should any of the provisions of these Bylaws be invalid for any reason, it shall be in no way affect the validity of any other portion of the Bylaws. In the event of an unforeseen contradiction in these Bylaws, the Association Council shall have the authority to resolve the issue by simple majority vote. That decision shall be binding on the Association until the contradiction is eliminated by amendment or change to the Bylaws in the regular fashion.

Section 6. Association Powers

All powers entrusted to the Association Council are derived from that of the Association. Wherever these Bylaws specifically authorize the Association Council to act, it is implicit that the Association, at a duly called meeting, also has such powers.

Section 7. Local Church Autonomy

The Association affirms the autonomy of the local congregation, which is inherent and modifiable only by its own action. Nothing in these Bylaws shall be construed to limit the right of the local congregation to self-determination, such as ownership or control of real or personal property belonging to the congregation.

Article III. Membership

Section 1. Voting Membership

Ordained ministers holding standing in the Association, commissioned and licensed ministers of the Association, lay delegates from member congregations, lay members of the Association Council, lay delegates to the Conference, lay delegates to the General Synod of the UCC and the Associate Conference Minister are members with vote.

Section 2. Representation

Each member congregation is entitled to representation at meetings of the Association by two lay delegates, one of which should be the chief lay officer of the congregation, plus an additional lay delegate for each additional 100 members, or major fraction thereof, above the initial 200 members. Each member congregation is entitled to an additional delegate to the above listed, who shall be under twenty-one years of age at the time of election or appointment, and such delegates are to have full voice and vote. Every delegate must be a member of the congregation represented. Each member congregation shall determine the process by which its

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delegates are selected.

Section 3. Affiliated Members

Ministers of other denominations who have become pastors of yoked charges or federated congregations, one part of which is affiliated with the UCC, and who wish to retain their present denominational standing, shall be enrolled as affiliated ministerial members of the Association for the duration of their pastorates and during that period have the rights and privileges of membership except that they shall have no vote on matters affecting the standing of ministers or local congregations. They shall not be elected as officers of the Association, nor be delegates to Conference but may serve on committees and other non-elective positions in the various bodies of the Association.

Section 4. Eligibility

The Association shall follow the guidelines set forth in the UCC Manual on Ministry, and the Constitution and Bylaws of the UCC, regarding eligibility and procedures for calling persons or accepting congregations in the Association. The Church and Ministry Commission shall act as the Association's committee on ministry.

Section 5. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the members of the Association to attend the meetings, serve as officers and members of commissions and to support the Association's budget as recommended by the vote of the Association.

Article IV. Meetings

Notice of the Meetings, shall be given to each member congregation and ministerial member at least forty-five days prior to the stated date of the meeting. Non-delegate members of local congregations may attend.

Section 1. Spring Meeting

The Spring Meeting of the Association shall be held sufficiently in advance of the Conference Annual Meeting to enable the actions of the Association to be introduced to the Conference in a timely manner. The time and place of the Association Spring Meeting shall be set by the Association Council.

The purpose of the Spring meeting shall be:

- a. To bring together in fellowship and counsel all the local congregations in the Association for mutual concern, Christian witness and service.
- b. To carry on the work and exercise the functions of an Association of the UCC as outlined in these Bylaws.
- c. To cooperate with the Conference and the UCC, their boards, agencies and Covenanted Ministries .

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- d. To receive and act upon the business referred to it by its local congregations, the Conference and the UCC.
- e. To elect the members of the Association Council and its Commissions.

Section 2. Fall Meeting

- a. Conduct any business deferred to this meeting at the Spring meeting.
- b. Approve the Association budget for the upcoming year and review financial statements for the year to date.
- c. Provide programs that are relevant to the purposes of the Association.

Section 3. Special Meetings

Special Meetings of the Association may be called at any time by the Association President, upon the request of the Association Council or by the written request of five local congregations in the Association for the consideration of matters specified in the call. Notice of the Special Meeting shall be given to each member congregation and ministerial member at least forty-five days prior to the stated date of the meeting.

Section 4. Quorum and Rules for all Business Related Meetings

Lay delegates from not less than 10 local congregations of the Association and 25% of the ordained ministers who are members of the Association shall constitute a quorum. Roberts Rules of Order Revised shall be followed in the conduct of official business at all meetings. Except as otherwise provided herein, all motions shall be adopted and all actions shall be taken by a majority vote of those present and voting at any meeting.

Section 5. Pronouncements and Overtures

As used herein, the following words shall have the meanings below.

- a. Pronouncement - A declaration of Christian conviction, approved by a majority of those Association delegates voting on the matter and directed to local churches and to the public.
 - b. Overture - A formal proposal or request by the Association for legislation or change of polity or doctrine made to the Conference or to the General Synod.
 - c. Proposal - A proposed pronouncement or overture.
1. Initiation - Any local church which is a member of the association, any group of ten or more members of one or more such local churches, or the Association Council, may propose a pronouncement or overture to be acted upon at a meeting of the Association. Each proposal shall be accompanied by the name of the sponsor and the name and address of one or more spokespersons who could defend the proposal before the appropriate bodies of the Association or of the Association assembled in session. For the purposes of this section, the term local churches shall be construed to mean

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the congregation or any person or organized body authorized by that congregation to act in its behalf.

2. Receipt – Each proposal shall be forwarded in time to reach the Association Council President at least sixty days before the date of the meeting at which the action is to be taken. Upon receipt, the Association Council shall refer the proposal to the appropriate body in the Association which shall review each proposal carefully to avoid duplication, checking with the Conference to coordinate submission to the Conference Annual Meeting. The Association Council shall ensure that each proposal is factually correct and in proper form and shall make arrangements for its distribution.
3. Distribution - A copy of each proposal received by the Association Council, as indicated above, revised as necessary by the body designated by the Association Council and displaying the date at which it was current, shall be distributed with the call of the meeting. Any proposals received after the deadline date shall be distributed by mail, if at all feasible, or shall be distributed at the meeting at the time such proposal is preliminarily reported on the floor. Such proposal may be considered upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members present and voting. Such proposal shall be referred to the appropriate body of the Association by the Association Council. The two-thirds rule is waived only for the case of any proposal emanating from a meeting of a church or a church council held within the 60 day period just prior to the Association meeting.
4. Adoption - Pronouncements and Overtures shall be adopted upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting members present and voting. The number of members voting for and against, and the number of voting delegates registered at the session, shall be recorded by the secretary.
5. Dissemination – those proposals which are adopted shall be distributed to the local churches, ministerial members & lay leaders, for study and action. If so indicated at the time of adoption, certain Pronouncements or Overtures may be distributed to public officials, to the news media for information or publication, or to others outside the United Church of Christ. In such event, the definition of Pronouncement or Overture as applicable, given previously, plus the date of adoption and the division of the vote, including number of delegates registered, shall be included on all the copies or distributed.

Article V Association Elected Positions

Section 1 Officers

The officers of the Association shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer who may function as an Executive Committee in responding to crisis situations and provide for the planning of the Association meetings. The Executive Committee may also make decisions regarding the Association when Council is not in session.

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Section 2. President

The President shall sign and execute for the Association in all deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts or other instruments required to be signed on the behalf of the of the Association, except in cases in which the signing and execution thereof shall have been expressly delegated to some other officer or agent of the Association. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association and at all meetings of the Association Council.

Section 3. Vice-President

The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of or at the request of the President. Should a vacancy occur in the office of President, the Vice-President shall assume the duties of the President until such time as a President has been chosen for a full term or for the unexpired portion of the then current term.

Section 4. Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping an accurate record of the proceedings of the meetings of the Association and of the Association Council, and providing for their distribution to Association Council members. The Secretary shall have custody of the corporate seal. (The Secretary shall countersign all deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments signed by the President and affix the corporate seal, as required, when ordered to do so by the Association or the Association Council.) The power to order the affixing of the corporate seal may not be delegated to any person or persons other than the Association or the Association Council. The Secretary shall be responsible for the issue of the call to meetings as directed by the President or the Association Council. The secretary shall maintain a current list of the standing of the churches, ordained ministers and commissioned lay workers as certified by the Church and Ministry Commission and shall, with the head of the Church and Ministry Commission, review for accuracy and sign all correspondence relating to the transfer of standing of such persons.

Section 5. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be one of the fiscal officers of the Association. The treasurer shall keep full and accurate accounts of the receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the Association, and shall deposit all monies and other valuable effects in the name and to the credit of the Association in such depositories as may from time to time be designated by the Association Council. The treasurer is the primary check writer for Association funds. The treasurer is responsible to ensure that all disbursements have been properly approved by the council prior to authorizing any checks. The treasurer in cooperation with the comptroller may transfer funds from account to account when they feel it will benefit the Association, and the Association Council must be informed at the next available meeting.

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Section 6. Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall be a fiscal officer of the Association. The financial secretary is responsible for tracking the receipt of dues from churches in the Association. The financial secretary is responsible for ensuring that these dues are correctly deposited and accounted for by the treasurer. Notices must be sent to each member church annually to confirm the amount of the dues received and any outstanding amount.

Section 7. Comptroller

The Comptroller shall be a fiscal officer of the Association. The comptroller is responsible for tracking the Association assets and making investment recommendations to the Council as appropriate. The comptroller in cooperation with the treasurer may transfer funds from account to account when they feel it will benefit the association, and the Association Council must be informed at the next available meeting. The comptroller must audit the treasurer's records on at least a quarterly basis. The comptroller is authorized to be an alternate check writer if the treasure is not available. The Comptroller, in cooperation with the Treasurer & Financial Secretary, shall create the Association budget, to be approved by the Association Council.

Section 8. Terms of Office

The terms of office of all of the above shall be two years. To provide operational continuity and fiscal control, the President and Secretary shall take office in even years, and the Vice-President and Treasurer shall take office in odd years. No officer positions can be filled by succession; they must be elected. Officers elected by the Association shall begin their terms immediately following the close of the meeting at which they were elected. All officers shall serve until their successors have been elected and qualified. No person shall be eligible for office or service in an office of or commission within the Association Council for more than two consecutive terms (4 years). In any event, office holding or service on a commission or in an office of the Association shall be limited to four continuous years at which time at least one year break must precede a person's election to office or service in a commission.

Section 9. Removal from Office

The Association Council may declare a vacancy in any position of the Association for due cause.

Section 10. Delegation of Duties

In the case of the absence or inability to act of any officer of the Association, the Association Council may delegate the duties of such officer to any other officer for any period up to the duration of the absence or disability. Additionally the Council may appoint an interim officer to fulfill the term of an absent or disabled officer. When the term of the absent or disabled officer is up, the person filling in for that person's term shall have the right to be elected at the next spring meeting.

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Section 11. Composition

The nominating committee shall be sensitive to the mandate to prepare a recommended slate of officers as broadly and evenly representative of the total membership of the Association as possible.

Article VI. The Association Council

Section 1. Association Council Members

The Association Council voting members shall consist of the Executive Committee, Financial Secretary, Comptroller, the Chairpersons of the Commissions and Lay members At Large. The Associate Conference Minister for the Association, the United Ministries Representative, and any Task Force Representatives are non-voting members.

Section 2. Association Council Meetings

The Association Council shall meet at least quarterly. Notice of those meetings shall be sent to each member at least ten (10) days prior to each meeting.

Section 3. Association Council Duties

The Association Council shall:

- h) Act for the Association in all matters whenever the Association is not in session. Such actions shall be reported to the Association at its stated meetings.
- i) Plan and administer all meetings of the Association and publish an accurate account of these meetings for distribution to members of the Association.
- j) Coordinate the implementation of Association-wide programs.
- k) Be responsible for the overall planning, budgeting and evaluation of the use of Association resources.
- l) Function in the place of any Commission when it fails to function by not meeting; or, is not in conformity with duties described in these Bylaws; or, is not in compliance with the mandates properly assigned by the Association Council or the expressed will of the Association.
- m) Determine the personnel policy for Association employees.
- n) Carry out the requirements of these Bylaws.
- o) Unless otherwise provided herein, fill all vacancies in office or in the membership of the Association Council.

Section 4. Association Council Functional Organizations

The Association Council shall create additional committees, task forces or ad hoc groups as needed to carry on the work of the Association. It shall establish a statement of purpose for these groups; designate chairpersons, appoint members and specified terms. The Association Council is responsible to appoint Association representatives to external groups and organizations. The Association Council, empowered by the Association Meeting, may hire personnel on a contract basis for

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special ministries or special projects.

ARTICLE VII. COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES, TASK FORCES

Section 1. Commissions

The Commissions of the Chesapeake Association shall be:

- Church and Ministry Commission
- Nominating Commission
- Church Vitality Commission
- Stewardship Commission

And such other Commissions as the Association may establish.

Each Commission shall perform the duties assigned to it, as well as supply needed expertise in its own area for the functioning of the Association Council. Each Commission's elected Chair shall promptly organize the Commission following the election. All Commissions shall act in cooperation with similar Commissions or agencies of the Central Atlantic Conference and General Synod and other national bodies in order that the program of the United Church of Christ may have effective expression in this Association. Each Commission shall make an annual written report for distribution with the call to the Annual Meeting of the Association. The Association Conference Minister and the President of the Association shall be members ex-officio of all Commissions without vote.

Section 2. Term of Office

Commission members shall be elected by the Association to serve a two year term with the option of one successive term. After completing two terms, members are ineligible for reelection for a period of one year.

Section 3. Church and Ministry Commission

The Church and Ministry Commission shall function in those areas of concern outlined in the current Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ, and is

empowered to grant membership standing to ministers and local churches, subject to ratification by the Association. The guidelines for the Commission are outlined in Appendix A and Appendix B.

Section 4. Nominating Commission

The Nominating Commission shall consist of more than one person and hold responsibility for the nomination process within the Association. It shall present a slate of nominees for Officers, Commission Chairs and Commission members to the Association Council at their last meeting before each Spring meeting. At which time the slate of nominees will be approved, before it is sent to the Spring meeting.

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Section 5. Church Vitality Commission

The Church Vitality Commission shall work in coordination with the Conference Committees on Church Vitality in the selection and Vitality of new church starts and in revitalization of established churches. These duties may include resourcing Christian education, evangelism and outreach programs in and for Association churches.

Section 6. Stewardship Commission

The Stewardship Commission shall seek to maintain and improve the support of local ministries, our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and special All-Church offerings in the Association churches. In cooperation with the Conference Stewardship Commission, it shall provide resources and training experiences in the area of stewardship for the churches and Association.

Section 7. Committees

Committees are program units formed by the Association Council or Commission(s) for a particular function. The membership of the Committees and the length of service shall be determined by the establishing body.

Section 8. Task Force

Task Forces are also formed by the Association Council or Commission(s) for a specified task and period of time. The membership of the Task Forces and the length of service shall be determined by the establishing body.

ARTICLE VIII. Other Positions

Section 1. Associate Conference Minister

The Associate Conference Minister shall be elected by the Board of Directors of the Conference. The duties of the Associate Conference Minister shall be determined in conjunction with the Association Council, the Conference Minister & the Board of Directors of the Conference In accordance with the conditions of call, separation and functions stated in the Conference Bylaws. In addition to the above, the Associate Conference Minister shall be accountable to the Association Council of the Association.

Section 2. Association Representatives to Conference Board of Directors

The Association shall certify, by election, three Association representatives to be elected to the Conference Board of Directors, in accordance with the Bylaws of the Central Atlantic Conference.

Section 3. Delegates to General Synod

The Association shall elect, for certification to the Conference nominating committee, such Association nominees and at-large nominees as are permitted by the Conference Bylaws

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Section 4. Key Liaison Member

One of the Association representatives on the Conference Board of Directors shall be selected by the Association Council to serve as the Association's key liaison member on the Conference Board of Directors. This Key Liaison shall report to the Association Council after each Board of Directors meeting, in order to facilitate communication between the two bodies.

ARTICLE IX. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall be the calendar year.

Section 2. Actions Affecting Association Finances

The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of income and disbursements. Disbursements shall be at the order of the Association Council in accordance with the budget.

Section 3. Payment Procedures

The Association Council shall provide for an annual internal audit.

Section 4. Safeguarding Valuables

The securities of the Association and other evidences of property shall be deposited under such safeguards as the Association Council shall from time to time designate.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended at any meeting of the Association, or at any special meeting called for that purpose, by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting, provided that

1. Said amendment has been previously
 - a. proposed by the Association Council or
 - b. proposed in writing, to the Association Council at least 60 days prior to the meeting at which it is to be considered, by at least 5 of the local churches of this Association, and Copies of the proposed amendment have been dispatched to each Congregation and Ministerial member of the Association at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered.

By-laws and Appendixes were Revised on April 25 ,2009

**By-Laws were approved and ratified at the
Association Spring Meeting on April 25, 2009.**

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APPENDIX A – THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY COMMISSION
GUIDELINES FOR MINISTERIAL STUDY

The Chesapeake Association shall have a Church and Ministry Commission to provide leadership and to administer a program of preparation, certification and oversight of all students in care, and of all ordained, licensed and commissioned ministers recognized by the Chesapeake Association. These duties shall be undertaken with the advice and counsel of an Associate Conference Minister of the Central Atlantic Conference designated for this purpose.

1. The current edition of the Manual on Ministry (MoM) of the United Church of Christ shall be the standard by which the Church and Ministry Commission will undertake these duties.

a. The Commission is granted permission to develop its own consistent rules of practice in matters which the MoM designates to the discretion of such committees.

b. In discretionary matters for which the Commission does not develop its own consistent rules of practice, the Commission shall follow the advice of the MoM.

2. The Chesapeake Association grants to the Church and Ministry Commission, with the advice and counsel of a duly assigned Associate Conference Minister of the Central Atlantic Conference, wide latitude in responsible administration of its duties.

a. The Commission is granted authority to organize itself in such a way as to fulfill its mission and is authorized to act on the behalf of the Association regarding oversight proceedings.

b. The Commission is granted authority to require students and ministers of the Chesapeake Association to participate in educational or training events of less than two days' duration, for the retention of ministerial authorization, provided: **(1)** the Commission can demonstrate to the Executive Council of the Association that such a requirement is useful to the well-being of the ministry or of the churches, and **(2)** the Church and Ministry Commission members themselves approve the requirement by at least a 2/3 vote of all Commission members, and **(3)** personal exceptions to participation may be handled administratively.

3. The Chesapeake Association retains to itself in official meeting the duties of the Ecclesiastical Council for candidates (MoM "Section #3 Ordained Ministers Steps 8&9")

4. The right of appeal of decisions concerning authorization for ministry may be exercised by any of the covenantal partners in a ministerial relationship: the minister, the Association (represented by the Church and Ministry Commission or the Association Council), the calling body (church, hospital, agency, etc.), and also by any principal participant in a Fitness Review (i.e., a disciplinary review).

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5. A student in-care may also bring an appeal regarding the student's own process.
- a. The appeal must be filed with the Association Council within 30 days from the date of notification of the Church and Ministry Commission's decision to which the party seeks appeal.
 - b. The grounds on which an appeal may be filed shall be limited to a review of the process used: whether the Church and Ministry Commission has properly followed the procedures of its own standards of the Manual on Ministry and of the Chesapeake Association.
 - (1) The decision of initial authorization for ministry, or its denial, shall not be grounds for an appeal.
 - (2) Persons may appeal the Church and Ministry Commission's failure to act upon an authorization concern within a reasonable time.
 - c. The Association Council shall sit as the appeal body and shall review the procedures employed by the Church and Ministry Commission in its decision.
 - (1) If the process and procedures are found to be appropriate to the standards as stated above, the Church and Ministry Commission's decision shall be confirmed.
 - (a) In this event, the confidential and personal matters which are the subject of the Church and Ministry Commission's action shall not be required to be shared.
 - (2) If the process and procedures are found to be significantly faulty in relation to the standards as stated above, the Association Council may either:
 - (a) Return the complaint to the Church and Ministry Commission with instructions to re-hear the issue according to proper procedures; or
 - (b) Re-hear the complaint in confidentiality in plenary session of the Association Council; or
 - (c) Appoint a special review board composed of both clergy and laity within the Chesapeake Association, to re-hear the complaint in confidentiality. Such special review board shall consist of no more than five members, at least one of whom shall be a member of the Church and Ministry Commission.
 - (d) The body re-hearing the procedure shall follow the procedures and standards of the Chesapeake Association and the Manual on Ministry.
 - d. If the minister or the principal party bringing a complaint against a minister in a Fitness Review should disagree with the decision of the Association Council or its appointed special review board, final appeal may be made to a regular or special-called Ecclesiastical Council of the Chesapeake Association.
 - (1) The grounds of appeal to the Ecclesiastical Council shall be limited to proper procedural matters: the Ecclesiastical Council shall not re-hear the matter itself.
 - (2) There is no appeal to the Central Atlantic Conference.

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5. The Church and Ministry Commission shall have a designated Commission member to sit on the Chesapeake Association Executive Council.
 - a. The Commission's representative to the Executive Council shall present reports of the Commission's work on a regular basis.
 - b. The members of the Church and Ministry Commission of the Chesapeake Association, United Church of Christ, shall be considered as acting for and in behalf of the Chesapeake Association when they conduct Commission business in accordance to the By-Laws.

APPENDIX B – GUIDELINES FOR CHURCHES

Guidelines for use by the Church and Ministry Commission Chesapeake Association of the Central Atlantic Conference, United Church of Christ for churches:

The Church and Ministry Commission shall be responsible for nurturing a covenantal relationship for churches with standing in the Chesapeake Association and extending "Church in Care" status to new or existing congregations seeking membership in the United Church of Christ.

Churches with standing: The Church and Ministry Commission shall recognize the basic unit of the local church as outlines in Article V, The Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

Church in Care: As the Chesapeake Association and the Conference consider starting new churches and taking new Congregations into membership in the United Church of Christ it is necessary that all participants:

1. understand each other's role, and
2. follow a prescribed set of guidelines.

Section 1 : Role of United Church of Christ Participants:

The Chesapeake Association:

1. per the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ "An Association is that body which determines, confers, and certifies standing of the Local Churches of the United Church of Christ within its area." (The Constitution and Bylaws, Article VIII, para. 40)
2. per Central Atlantic Bylaws (Article 8 Section 1)
3. normally it is expected that the Chesapeake Association through its Church Vitality Commission will actively seek promising church vitality activities.

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4. The Church and Ministry Commission is responsible for recommending to the Association Council "Church in Care" status, for monitoring the status of the "Church in Care" status with the sponsoring organization, and recommending to the association the granting of "Church in Full Standing."
 - a. A sponsoring organization for "Church in Care" status can be a local church, a special task force within the association, or the Church Vitality Commission.

The Central Atlantic Conference:

1. The Conference is the liaison between the Chesapeake Association and United Church of Christ instrumentalities, e.g. Local Church Ministries.
2. The Conference is the legal entity for the Chesapeake Association and is incorporated in Maryland. Churches or affiliated churches (including "Churches in Care") may utilize the UCC/Conference's IRS identification numbers and are eligible to participate in the UCC Insurance Program.
3. The Conference establishes guidelines and procedures for the administration of funds used to support church Vitality.
4. The Conference is responsible for putting together long-range church Vitality plans.

Local Church Ministries, United Church of Christ:

1. Will relate with the church Vitality activities of the conference.

Section 2 : Meaning of "Church in Care"

An existing congregation, with or without a minister(s), a group of people, or a minister/ministerial team called by an the Association to start a new church are considered a "Church in Care" once the Association has approved a request from them and their sponsoring organization to seek standing in the United Church of Christ. "Church in Care" status is granted for two years and is renewable.

A "Church in Care" can indicate to the general public that it is affiliated with the United Church of Christ and may use the United Church of Christ name in its title.

A "Church in Care" can participate in the UCC Insurance Plan Program through the Conference and can use the UCC/Conference IRS Tax numbers.

Being a "Church in Care" does not mean that the church is automatically eligible for leadership aid and loans to purchase land, build or acquire property. To obtain funding requires following procedures for such funds as established by the United Church of Christ Local Church Ministries and by the Conference.

In cases where a proposal for a new church start has been approved by the Association Church Vitality Committee, the Conference and the United Church of

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Christ Local Church Ministries, the core congregation and/or new church start minister would at the time of approval be considered a "Church in Care."

Members of a "Church in Care", shall be granted all the privileges of a Church in Full Standing within the Association. This includes membership on various committees and commissions and delegate privileges at Association meetings.

Section 3: Process for becoming a "Church in Care"

1. To become a "Church in Care" the organization requesting "Church in Care" status must have a sponsoring organization. As indicated previously, this can be a local church, task group within the association, or the Association Church Vitality Commission.

2. The sponsor and group seeking affiliation as "Church in Care" petition the Association Church Vitality Commission.. If the petition meets the Church Vitality Commission's approval reflecting an understanding of the faith, order, and polity of the United Church of Christ, the Church Vitality Commission will recommend the petition to the Conference Church Vitality Committee. If the petition is in order and has the approval of the Conference Church Vitality Committee, the Association Church Vitality Commission presents the petition to the Church and Ministry Commission for its approval of the petition. The Church and Ministry Commission recommends the granting of "Church in Care Status" to the Association Council.

3. The Association Council may then grant the "Church in Care" Status.

Section 4 : Process for becoming a "Church in Full Standing"

1. A Support Committee will be created by the Association Church Vitality Committee comprised of representatives of the sponsoring organization, the Association, the "Church in Care" and the Conference. This committee will acquaint the "Church in Care" more fully with the United Church of Christ and will work with the church to ensure that the process is accomplished to Full Standing.

2. The Support Committee will transmit to the "Church in Care" copies of the Association, the Conference, and the United Church of Christ Constitutions and Bylaws for its review and affirmation. The committee will forward other information it deems necessary to further acquaint the Church in Care with the history and polity of the United Church of Christ.

3. The Support Committee should receive from the "Church in Care:"
- a. A resolution adopted by the "church in care" formally requesting membership in the United Church of Christ, signed by the Secretary of the Corporation, clerk or other appropriate officer.
 - b. A statement of faith and/or covenant of the "church in care."

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- c. Time/date/place of worship and meeting.
- d. A list of members.
- e. Names, address, phone numbers of officers.

- f. Credentials and name/address/phone of pastoral leadership.
- g. Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws as filed with the State. These documents are to be reviewed by the Budget and Finance Working Group of the Board of Directors and the association Church Vitality Commission. These documents should include "reversionary language".
- h. A budget.
- i. A financial statement showing assets and liabilities.
- j. Financial commitment to Our Church's Wider Mission. This should be included in the budget.
- k. A commitment to participate in the life of the United Church of Christ by such means as:
 - electing and sending delegates to meetings of the association and conference.
 - suggesting persons from the "church in care" who might serve on boards and committees of the wider church.
 - publicity designating the "church in-care's" affiliation with the United Church of Christ.
- l. A commitment to use the United Church of Christ placement process and procedures to call pastoral leadership persons who have ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ or current Privilege of Call within an association of the United Church of Christ.
- m. Evidence of insurance with coverage that is at least equal to that provided by the Conferences of the United Church of Christ Insurance Advisory Board.

4. After the documents have been received, the Church Vitality Commission upon approval will forward them to the Church and Ministry Commission. The Church and Ministry Commission upon its approval shall call for an Ecclesiastical Council of the Association for the purpose of granting "Church in Full Standing." Together the Church Vitality Commission and the Church and Ministry Commission with the Support Committee will present to the Ecclesiastical Council their recommendation for the association's approval for "Church in Full Standing."

By-laws and Appendixes were Revised on April 25 ,2009

**By-Laws were approved and ratified at the
Association Spring Meeting on April 25, 2009.**