

BYLAWS OF

THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF

THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA NEVADA CONFERENCE OF

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

I. NAME AND AFFILIATION

The name of this Association is The Southern Association of the Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ. It succeeds and continues without break portions of the former Orange Association, former San Bernardino Association, and former San Diego Association as determined by the Board of Directors, Southern California Nevada Conference.

II. PURPOSES AND POWERS

The purposes of this Association are:

1. To express the oneness in Christ of the churches composing the Association and to make more effective their Christian witness and service.
2. To stimulate the spiritual life and mission interests of the churches of the Association in cooperation with the Conference, and through the Conference with United Church of Christ and its Covenanted Ministries and Affiliated and Associated Ministries.
3. To provide avenues of Christian community and service among and between the members of the churches of the Association.
4. To enhance the effective ministry of the Association, the Conference and the United Church of Christ, and further the reign of God by choosing objectives and goals for Christian service and authorizing the proper organizations to accomplish these ends.
5. To determine, confer and certify the standing of local churches of the United Church of Christ within its boundaries.
6. To determine, confer, and certify the standing of authorized ministers of the United Church of Christ.
7. To exercise the power and perform the functions of an Ecclesiastical Council in such matters as ordination, installation, church recognition and adjudication of disputes.
8. Any adjustments of Association boundaries or transfer of membership of churches between Association shall be carried out by the Associations and churches involved, in consultation with the Conference Ministers and with the approval of the Board of Directors, of the Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ.

III. FAITH

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This Association claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers, particularly as that faith is expressed in the Preamble of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and in the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ

IV. MEMBERSHIP

The following are eligible for membership in the Southern Association of Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ:

1. Churches

(a) The United Churches of Christ located within the boundaries of the Southern Association as of October 1, 1995.

(b) Any local church within the boundaries of the Association whose articles or Statement of Faith are in essential agreement with that of this Association, and which, having covenanted with the Association to assume and fulfill faithfully the obligations of a member church as hereinafter set forth and having been recommended by the Church and Ministry Committee of the Association (as described in Article IX, Section 2), is received into membership by a majority vote of those present and voting at a duly called meeting of the Association.

2. Ministers

(a) Ordained United Church of Christ ministers, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ministers with ordained ministerial partnership standing, commissioned ministers and licensed ministers of the United Church of Christ within this Association.

(b) Any person upon whom full ordained ministerial standing is conferred through ordination by this Association in cooperation with a member church.

Membership

(c) Any ordained minister who presents to the Church and Ministry Committee evidence of membership in a church of the Association and a letter of transfer from an Association of the United Church of Christ or a Conference of that church exercising the function of an Association, has a call to a United Church of Christ setting or a four way covenant between the ordained minister, the calling body, the local church and the association, and is granted standing by a majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee, subject to confirmation by the Association.

(d) Any ordained minister of a denomination other than the United Church of Christ, who, having been examined by the Church and Ministry Committee; having been found to be qualified by virtue of education and theological attainments, knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ, and Christian faith and experience; having presented evidence of membership in a member church of the Southern Association; and having a call to a United Church of Christ setting or a four way covenant, and is

received into the Association by a majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee subject to confirmation by the Association.

(e) Any ordained minister of another denomination who wishes to retain ordained ministerial standing in that denomination and who has been called to a United Church of Christ ministry or responsibility recognized by this Association and requiring ministerial standing within the geographical boundaries of this Association; and having applied to the Church and Ministry Committee for dual ordained ministerial standing for the duration of that specific call or responsibility; and having been examined by the Church and Ministry Committee; and is received into the Association with dual standing by a majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee subject to confirmation by the Association, with all the rights of ministerial membership.

(f) Any ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who holds ordained ministerial standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and who has been called to a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ministry within the geographical boundaries of this Association, is accepted as an ordained ministerial partner in the Southern Association of United Church of Christ with voice but not vote in the Southern Association.

(g) Any ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who holds ordained ministerial standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); and who has been called to a United Church of Christ ministry or responsibility recognized by this Association and requiring ministerial standing within the geographical boundaries of this Association; and who, having applied to the Church and Ministry Committee for ordained ministerial partnership standing in the Southern Association of the United Church of Christ; and having been examined by the Church and Ministry Committee, having been found to be qualified by virtue of education and theological attainments, knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ, and Christian faith and experience; is received into the Association with ordained ministerial partnership standing in the Southern Association by a majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee subject to confirmation by the Association, with authorization to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ including voice and vote in the Southern Association.

(h) Any retired United Church of Christ ordained ministers who wish to retain ministerial standing in the Southern Association or transfer ordained ministerial standing from a different association to the Southern Association and is received into membership by a majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee subject to confirmation by the Association.

V. PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBER CHURCHES

1. Since the member churches, ordained ministers, ordained ministerial partners with ordained ministerial partnership standing, commissioned ministers and licensed ministers of the United Church of Christ constitute the Association, the responsible participation of member churches, lay persons and authorized ministers is necessary to carry out the purposes of the Association.

2. The autonomy of the local church is inherent and modifiable only by its own action. Nothing in the Bylaws of the association shall nullify or limit the right of each local church to continue to

149 operate in the way customary to it; nor shall be construed as giving to the Association now, or at
150 any future time, the power to abridge or impair the autonomy of any local church in the
151 management of its own affairs or its right to withdraw from the Association at any time, but the
152 Association will refer the matter to the Southern California Nevada Conference.

153
154 3. A local church in this association shall have the responsibility of participating in meetings of the
155 Association; faithfully supporting Our Church's Wider Mission; paying of the Southern California
156 Nevada Conference per capita dues; paying the Southern Association per capita dues; supplying
157 information requested by the Conference or the Association; holding actions, decisions or advice
158 from General Synod, a Conference or Association in highest regard; recognizing the Association as
159 an instrumentality of all the churches in their common life and service; and using the staff and
160 facilities of the Association or Conference in order to strengthen the life and work of the churches
161 and the Association.

162
163 4. The standing and membership of a local church in this Association may be voluntarily terminated
164 at any meeting of this Association by a majority vote of delegates present and voting, provided
165 action to withdraw from the Association has been taken by the local church requesting voluntary
166 termination pursuant to its constitution; and further provided there are no loans, agreements for
167 disposition of property or other encumbrances between the local church and any conference, ~~board~~,
168 covenanted ministry or agency of the United Church of Christ; and further provided the Conference
169 Ministers and Conference Board of Directors have been consulted regarding such pending action;
170 and further provided certification of such action is delivered to the Association Registrar at least 90
171 days prior to the Association meeting at which such action is to be taken.

172
173 5. The standing and membership of a local church in this Association may be involuntarily
174 terminated at any meeting of this Association upon majority vote of the voting membership of this
175 Association provided the Conference Ministers and Conference Board of directors have been
176 consulted regarding such pending action; and further provided that notice of such proposed action is
177 delivered to the local church at least ninety (90) days prior to the Association meeting at which such
178 action is to be taken and is specified in the call to the meeting at which the action is taken.

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180 VI. PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBER MINISTERS

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182 1. Ministerial members of the Association are expected to attend its meetings and cooperate in its
183 work to the extent of their ability, and to maintain their memberships in the churches of the
184 Association. Each minister, as part of a periodic review, shall confirm to the Registrar of the
185 Southern Association annually in writing, his or her address, church membership, and status in
186 ministry or otherwise. Any ministerial member failing thus to report for two successive years, shall
187 be notified of such default. Notice shall be sent to the last known address of such a minister, and if
188 such notice remains unanswered for another year, the member shall be removed from membership
189 in the Association. A minister so dropped may be restored to membership if the application is
190 approved by majority vote of the Church and Ministry Committee subject to confirmation by the
191 Association.

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193 2. A minister retiring from the active ministry by reason of age or sickness shall not thereby forfeit
194 ministerial standing in this Association.

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196 3. Any ordained minister who is in good and regular standing in this Association may receive
197 transfer to the ecclesiastical body of his or her choice upon written request to the Chairperson of the

198 Church and Ministry Committee, providing that no disciplinary action or charges are pending
199 against the minister at the time of the request.

200
201 4. The Southern Association of the Southern California Nevada Conference shall require Boundary
202 Training for all active authorized ministers every five years. Each authorized minister must do this
203 in order to maintain their standing within the Southern Association. Ministers granted new standing
204 within the Association shall complete the training within 1 year.

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206 VII. MEETINGS

207
208 1. Regular meetings of the Association shall be held a minimum of two (2) times a year. The
209 Annual Meeting shall ordinarily be the first meeting of the calendar year at which time elections
210 shall be held. The term of all offices shall begin at the conclusion of the meeting at which they are
211 elected. The budget shall be adopted at the last meeting of the calendar year. Notice of any
212 Association meeting shall be given to each church and each ministerial member prior to the second
213 Sunday preceding the date of the meeting.

214
215 2. Special meetings, including Ecclesiastical Councils, shall be called by the Registrar upon request
216 of the Executive Committee, or Church and Ministry Committee, or upon written request of the
217 official boards of five member churches, which request shall contain a clear statement of the reason
218 for the meeting. Any call for a special meeting shall also include a statement of the reasons for the
219 call.

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221 3. Voting rights of members

222
223 (a) Each member church is entitled to be represented at meetings of the Association by two
224 lay delegates plus one additional delegate for each 50 members over 200 who are entitled to
225 voice and vote.

226
227 (b) Every ministerial member (as provided in Article IV, Section 2) of the Association is
228 entitled to voice and vote.

229
230 (c) Lay officers of the Association who are not delegates of their local churches are entitled
231 to voice and vote.

232
233 (d) The Conference Ministers, other members of the Conference Ministry Ordained Staff
234 (when not ministerial members of the Association), delegates to General Synod, persons
235 serving on national covenanted ministry boards, or affiliated or associated ministries of the
236 United Church of Christ who are members of churches in the Association (when not lay
237 delegates to or ministerial members of the Association) and professional staff persons of
238 judicatories, covenanted ministries, or agencies of the United Church of Christ in attendance
239 at an Association meeting shall have voice but not vote.

240
241 4. Twenty (20) voting members, representing at least one third (1/3) of the churches of the
242 Association shall constitute a quorum.

243
244 5. The Association as Ecclesiastical Council:
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246 (a) An Ecclesiastical Council is a meeting of the Association for the purpose of considering
247 the standing of local churches, authorizing ministry and acting on questions of discipline.
248 The Executive Committee or Church and Ministry Committee shall invite all the churches
249 and ministers of the Association, together with its officers, to act as an Ecclesiastical
250 Council, whose findings shall become the findings of the Association. Twenty (20) voting
251 members, representing at least one third (1/3) of the churches of the Association shall
252 constitute a quorum at such a Council.

253
254 (b) A church or an individual who wishes to invoke the services of the Association as
255 Council shall request the Church and Ministry Committee to call an Ecclesiastical Council
256 and shall confer with that committee. If the Church and Ministry Committee declines the
257 request an appeal may be made to the Executive Committee. The Church and Ministry
258 Committee or Executive Committee may instruct the Registrar to issue the call.

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260 6. The presiding officer at all association and/or committee meetings shall appoint a person to take
261 minutes as needed.

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263 VIII. OFFICERS

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265 1. The offices of this Association shall be a Past Moderator, a Moderator, a Vice
266 Moderator/Moderator Elect, a Treasurer, a Registrar, and such other officers as the Association may
267 deem advisable. All officers shall be members of member churches in the Association.

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269 2. The duties of the Moderator, the Vice Moderator/Moderator Elect, the Past Moderator, and the
270 Treasurer shall be as stated below.

271 (a) Moderator

272 1. To chair the Executive Committee meetings.

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274 2. To schedule all Association meetings and celebrations in coordination with the
275 Association Administrator, the Executive Committee, and the Church and Ministry
276 Committee,

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278 3. To officiate (or designate a substitute to officiate) at all Association meetings and
279 celebrations

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281 4. To work collaboratively with the Chair of Church and Ministry Committee and be
282 available for consult

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284 5. To attend the Church and Ministry Committee meetings.

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286 6. The Moderator shall serve one 1 year term as Moderator and one 1year term as
287 Past Moderator

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289 (b) Vice Moderator/Moderator Elect

290 1. To be available to officiate at Association meetings and celebrations as needed.

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292 2. To consult w/Past Moderator and Moderator to ensure a smooth transition from
293 one year to the next.

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295 3. To attend the Church and Ministry Committee meetings.

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4. The Vice Moderator/Moderator Elect shall serve one 1 year term as Vice Moderator/Moderator-elect.

(c) Past Moderator

1. To mentor the Moderator and Vice Moderator/Moderator Elect.
2. To be available to officiate at Association meetings and celebrations as needed.
3. To attend the Church and Ministry Committee meetings.
4. To initiate the nomination process of officers and members of the Executive Committee and the Church and Ministry Committee by consulting with members of the Association committees and with member churches for suggested names for candidates. A slate of proposed candidates shall be available for discussion by the October meeting of the Executive Committee with a vote taken by the January meeting of the Executive Committee.
5. The Past Moderator shall serve one 1 year term as Past Moderator.

Effort will be made to alternate the position of Moderator between ordained minister and lay, and also between female and male persons.

(d) Treasurer

1. To oversee the finances of the Association.
2. To write checks as needed.
3. To do payroll and pay appropriate taxes for all Association employees and to ensure the disbursement of a W-2.
4. To prepare reports for quarterly Executive Committee meetings.
5. To prepare the budget for Association approval at the Fall meeting

3. The Registrar shall be responsible for preserving records of all proceedings of the Association, for issuing calls for all meetings, for making an annual report to the Association, for conducting correspondence, for effecting and maintaining the minutes of the Executive Committee, and the Church and Ministry Committee and shall be an ex-officio member with vote on the Church and Ministry Committee. A record of Association membership, church and ministerial, shall be maintained by the Registrar who shall submit reports to the Association and Conference regarding church and ministerial standing.

4. Terms of office for the Past Moderator, Moderator, and Vice Moderator/Moderator Elect shall be for one (1) year beginning at the conclusion of the meeting at which they were elected. After one (1) full term in their respective offices, the Past Moderator, Moderator and Vice Moderator/Moderator Elect shall be ineligible for reelection to the same office for a period of one (1) year. The Treasurer and Registrar shall be elected to a three (3) year term. After two (2) full

345 terms in their respective offices, the Treasurer and Registrar shall be ineligible for reelection to the
346 same office for a period of one (1) year.

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348 IX. COMMITTEES

349 1. The Executive Committee

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351 (a) There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the Officers of the Association, the
352 chairpersons of the Association committees, and such other representatives of United
353 Church of Christ organizations at the Association level recognized by the Association and
354 two (2) members-at-large elected by the Association, for a two (2) year term, so arranged
355 that one (1) member-at-large shall be elected annually.
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358 (b) The Executive Committee shall schedule, plan, convene, and a representative designated
359 by the Moderator shall officiate at all Association Meetings and celebrations, i.e. The Fall
360 and Spring Association Meetings, Ecclesiastical Councils, Ordinations, Installations, etc.
361 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for implementing all programs voted by the
362 Association. It shall be responsible for creating various programs designed to enable local
363 churches and ministers to know and to discharge their mission more effectively.
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365 (c) The Committee shall meet every three (3) months. Special meetings of the Committee
366 may be called by the Moderator or the Vice Moderator/Moderator Elect. A quorum shall
367 consist of one half its members.
368

369 (d) The Executive Committee shall present a budget to be voted on at the fall meeting of the
370 Association and recommend procedures for securing funds. The fiscal year shall be the
371 calendar year (January 1 – December 31).
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373 (e) The Executive Committee shall have power to fill all vacancies in elected offices until
374 the next Association Annual Meeting.
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376 (f) The Executive Committee shall select an internal audit committee to audit the financial
377 procedures and records of the Association at least every three (3) years at the end of each
378 term of the Treasurer.
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380 2. Church and Ministry Committee

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382 5. (a) There shall be a Church and Ministry Committee consisting of eighteen
383 (18) persons elected for a term of three (3) years and so arranged that six (6) shall be elected
384 annually; three (3) of whom shall be ordained ministers and three (3) of whom shall be lay
385 persons; and further, three (3) of whom shall be men and three (3) of whom shall be women.
386 The term of office shall begin at the conclusion of the meeting at which they were elected.

387 The Registrar shall convene the first meeting at which the Committee of the Whole shall
388 elect its chairperson from among its elected members. The Committee shall select a vice
389 chairperson from among its elected members. The term of the vice chairperson shall expire
390 annually at the same time as that of the chairperson The Committee shall divide itself into
391 three subcommittees, Section A and Section B, and Section C; and each Section shall elect a
392 Section chairperson from among its elected members. Having served one full three (3) year
393 term, a member of this Committee may be eligible for one (1) additional three (3) year term

394 after which that member shall not be eligible for re-election for one (1) year. No one may
395 serve more than six consecutive years.

396
397 (b) The Registrar shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee of the Whole with voice
398 and vote and be the secretary to the Committee of the Whole.

399
400 (c) The Moderator, Past Moderator and Vice Moderator/Moderator Elect shall be Ex-officio
401 members of the Committee of the Whole with voice and vote.

402
403 (d) The Committee of the Whole shall be responsible for matters pertaining to policy and
404 matters other than those specifically designated to Sections A, B, and C (Article 2d, 2e, and
405 2f). The Committee shall be responsible for implementing and interpreting the Bylaws of
406 the United Church of Christ relating to the Ministry (Article I, 101 through 156 inclusive)
407 and shall be guided by the Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ.

408
409 (e) Section A shall be responsible for persons seeking standing in the Association while
410 having active membership in a church that has standing within the Association. This shall
411 include the nurture, support and examination of Candidates/Members in Discernment,
412 Commissioning, Licensing, granting of scholarships, and review of letters of call of
413 authorized ministers in the United Church of Christ. This Section shall be empowered to
414 take provisional action on behalf of the Association with regard to these matters subject to
415 confirmation by the Committee of the Whole.

416
417 (f) Section B shall be responsible for persons who have ordained ministerial standing and
418 the churches holding standing in the Association. This shall include periodic review of
419 authorized ministers and local churches, continuing education, facilitation of collegiality,
420 transfers of standing out of the Association, financial aid and continual up-dating of criteria
421 for evaluation. Section B shall be responsible for the discipline of ministers through Special
422 or Disciplinary Review as stated in the Manual on Ministry, except that any member who is
423 a complainant shall be excluded from participation in the Committee until the Review is
424 adjudicated. As guidelines the Committee shall use the Manual on Ministry, Section 8, "The
425 Oversight of Ministries Authorized by the United Church of Christ, Nurture and Accountability for
426 Authorized Ministry" and "Guidelines for Resourcing Committees on the Ministry: A Resource for
427 Response Teams, Conference Staff Persons, and Others Assisting Association Committees on the
428 Ministry in the United Church of Christ during Fitness Reviews". The Section shall be
429 empowered to take provisional action on behalf of the Association on matters dealing with
430 ministerial standing subject to confirmation by the Committee of the Whole on matters
431 dealing with local church standing. The process of any action or discipline may be appealed
432 to an Ecclesiastical Council.

433
434 (g) Section C shall be responsible for persons who hold or seek partnership, dual standing or
435 Privilege of Call within the Association and those desiring to transfer standing from another
436 Association of the United Church of Christ; they shall be responsible for churches seeking
437 membership within the Association. This Section shall be empowered to take provisional
438 action on behalf of the Association on matters dealing with ministerial standing subject to
439 confirmation by the Committee of the Whole. They shall provide nurture, support,
440 examination and discipline of those persons who hold dual or partnership standing, subject
441 to the approval of the Committee of the Whole. The process of any action or discipline may
442 be appealed to Ecclesiastical Council.

444 (h) Sections may reassign the above responsibilities to accommodate the needs of the
445 Association.

446
447 (i) The Committee of the Whole or any Sections will consult with the staff of the Southern
448 California Nevada Conference on credentialing matters relating to those who have or had
449 ministerial authorization from another judicatory or ministerial standing in the United
450 Church of Christ beyond the jurisdiction of the Southern Association.

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452 3. Special committees may be appointed as needed by the Moderator or the Executive Committee.
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457 458 X. DISSOLUTION

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460 If the Southern Association of the Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of
461 Christ elects to dissolve, a two-thirds (2/3) vote is required plus the approval of the Southern
462 California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ or their successors. If dissolution
463 shall occur, after payment or provision for payment of all debts and liabilities, all property which it
464 shall then possess, including any devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other
465 instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after dissolution, shall be distributed to the
466 Southern California Nevada Conference. This Article (X) may be amended only with the approval
467 of the Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ or their successors.
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469 XI. AMENDMENTS

470
471 These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any regular
472 meeting of the Association, or at a special meeting called for that purpose, provided that notice
473 thereof and a copy of such proposed amendment or amendments is sent in writing to the member
474 churches and ministers at least thirty (30) days before the proposed amendment or amendments are
475 acted upon.
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477 XII. PROCEDURES

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479 1. Business shall be transacted by a majority of those present and voting at any duly called meeting,
480 except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws.
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482 2. The Constitution of the United Church of Christ and the Manual on Ministry of the United
483 Church of Christ shall provide standards for all ecclesiastical procedures. The most recent edition
484 of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all parliamentary procedures unless otherwise provided for
485 in this document.
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487 3. These Bylaws shall be in force when adopted by two-thirds vote of those lay delegates and
488 ministerial members present and voting at a meeting of Southern Association called for that
489 purpose.
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491 End