

Constitution and Bylaws

of the

Illinois South Conference

of the

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One In the Body of Christ

The following was adopted by the Illinois South Conference in 1978, and amended in 1979, 1983, 1984, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1996, 1997, 2001, 2005, 2008, 2009, 2011 and 2012.

CONSTITUTION

Illinois South Conference
of the
United Church of Christ

PREAMBLE

The Illinois South Conference, which was organized in January, 1965, is a part of the United Church of Christ formed June 25, 1957 by the union of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches of the United States, in order to express more fully the oneness in Christ of the churches composing it, to make more effective their common witness in him, and to serve his kingdom in the world.

The Conference joins with the United Church of Christ in acknowledging as its sole head Jesus Christ, Son of God and Savior. It acknowledges as kindred in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world. It 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. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own in reality of worship, in honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart before God. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, it recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.

The Conference also joins the United Church of Christ in embracing a theological heritage that affirms the Bible as the authoritative witness to the Word of God, the creeds of the ecumenical councils, and the confessions of the Reformation.

The Conference affirms that the settings of the church (local congregations, conferences and associations, and national ministries of the General Synod) are bound to one another in covenant by God's call to God's mission. In

covenant, the Conference shares responsibility for faithfulness to God's mission with local churches and the national ministries of the General Synod. In exercising that responsibility, each setting is guided by freedom of conscience and stewardship of the historic faith, and honors the advice and ministries of the others.

Now, therefore, the following provisions are adopted as the Constitution of the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this organization shall be the ILLINOIS SOUTH CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Conference shall be:

Section 1 To strengthen, support, and assist congregations in their life and mission and to develop their commitment, motivation, and skills to be the people of God locally and as a part of Illinois South Conference, the United Church of Christ, and the Church Universal;

Section 2 To own real property and/or hold title to the same for such religious, educational, philanthropic, and other related work as the Conference may undertake; and to purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for or transfer, rent, lease, mortgage, or otherwise encumber, sell, convey real property for investment and for general purposes of the Conference;

Section 3 To acquire by purchase, gift devise, bequest or otherwise, and to own, hold, invest, reinvest, or dispose of property both real and personal for such religious, educational, philanthropic, and other related work as the Conference may undertake; to receive and hold in trust both real and personal property for churches, boards, institutions, and agencies of the United Church of Christ or which are affiliated with the United Church of Christ, and to invest and reinvest the same; and to make any contracts for promoting the

objectives and purposes of the Conference which are consistent with the laws of the State of Illinois;

Section 4 To exercise any and every power as enumerated under the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of the State of Illinois and as the same may be amended;

Section 5 To be a Conference of the United Church of Christ, to continue without break, however, the legal and ecclesiastical functions of the South Illinois Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, and to perform such legal and ecclesiastical functions of the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ as may be transferred to it by said Conference with respect to those Congregational Christian Churches and ministers within the boundaries of this Conference, whose Conference membership may be transferred to it;

Section 6 To act as an Association as defined in Article VIII of the Constitution and Article II of the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE III AFFILIATION

Section 1 This Conference shall have affiliation with the General Synod of the United Church of Christ as described in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ adopted July 4, 1961, revised July 2001, and as subsequently amended by the General Synod.

Section 2 This Conference shall have the privilege of participating with other Christian fellowships and ecumenical bodies as an expression of unity and as a means of cooperation.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 The membership of the Illinois South Conference shall be composed of:

- A. All local churches holding standing in this Conference acting as an Association of the United Church of Christ.
- B. All ordained, commissioned and licensed ministers holding standing in

this Conference acting as an Association of the United Church of Christ.

Section 2 A church from another communion within the Conference boundary may be admitted to membership in this Conference acting as an Association when it has voted to join the United Church of Christ and to accept the Constitution of that body and the Constitution and Bylaws of the Conference; and when its petition for membership and its Constitution and Bylaws have been accepted by the Conference acting as an Association.

Section 3 When this Conference meets, its voting membership shall consist of the lay delegates selected by and representing each local church which has membership in this Conference, the ordained, commissioned and licensed ministers who have membership in this Conference, and others as provided for in Article II of the Bylaws. The control of this Conference shall reside in its voting members and may be exercised directly at any annual or other duly called assembly of the Illinois South Conference or through and by a Conference Council elected by the Illinois South Conference as stated herein or in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE V MEETINGS

Section 1 An annual meeting shall be held at a time and place to be determined by the Conference Council and upon such notice as may be provided for in the Bylaws.

Section 2 Special meetings may be held as necessary in accordance with provisions in the Bylaws.

Section 3 Meetings of the Conference, acting as an association, shall be called as necessary to act as an ecclesiastical council in matters of ministerial authorization and membership of congregations.

Section 4 A quorum:

- A. Shall consist of one third of the voting membership when the membership meets in Conference meetings, Annual or Special.
- B. For the Illinois South Conference, meeting as an Association in an

Ecclesiastical Council to act on ecclesiastical matters, shall be those eligible delegates who attend the Ecclesiastical Council.

ARTICLE VI CONFERENCE COUNCIL

Section 1 When the Conference is not in session its affairs shall be administered by a Conference Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council. The number, duties, and manner of election of its members are set forth in the Bylaws. The Conference Minister and the Associate Conference Minister(s), if called, shall be ex officio members of the Council with voice but without vote.

Section 2 The Council shall have the powers and duties usually given to Boards of Directors of corporations organized under the laws of the State of Illinois, and as may be provided for in the Bylaws of the Conference.

Section 3 The Council shall have an Executive Committee comprised of the Moderator, the Vice Moderator, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.

ARTICLE VII OFFICERS

Officers of the Conference shall be the Moderator and Vice Moderator, the Secretary, and the Treasurer, each of whom shall be a member of a local church in full standing in the Conference. The powers and duties of the officers of the Conference and the manner of their election are set forth in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII CONFERENCE MINISTERS

Section 1 The Conference shall call a Conference Minister and may call Associate Conference Minister(s).

Section 2 The Conference Minister shall be an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ. Such person, whose term and election are defined in the Bylaws, shall be the spiritual leader and administrator of the Conference. The duties of the Conference Minister shall be defined by the Council in consultation with the Conference Minister.

Section 3 The Associate Conference Minister(s), if called, whose term and election are defined in the Bylaws, shall be an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ. The duties of the Associate Conference Minister(s) shall be defined by the Council in consultation with the Conference Minister and the Associate Conference Minister(s).

ARTICLE IX CORPORATE SEAL

The Conference shall have a corporate seal designed and adopted by the Council.

ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS

The Constitution may be amended at any annual meeting or special meeting of the Conference by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the voting members present, provided that:

- A. Notice of intention to submit such amendment, signed by the official boards of not less than ten churches in good standing in the Conference, has been presented to the Conference at the previous regularly called meeting of the Conference; or has been presented to the Council not less than ninety days prior to the meeting.
- B. A copy thereof has been mailed (by postal service or e-mail) to all churches of the Conference not less than sixty days prior to the meeting.

BYLAWS

Illinois South Conference
of the
United Church of Christ

ARTICLE I GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

Section 1 The Illinois South Conference recognizes the following geographical regions:

REGION 1

1. CARBONDALE, Church of the Good Shepherd
2. DUQUOIN, St. John's
3. MARION, Zion
4. METROPOLIS, Zion
5. MURPHYSBORO, St. Peter's
6. PINCKNEYVILLE, St. Paul

REGION 2

1. COLUMBIA, St. Paul
2. DUPO, Christ
3. EVANSVILLE, St. John
4. FLORAVILLE, St. Paul
5. HECKER, Friedens
6. MAEYSTOWN, St. John
7. NEW HANOVER, Zoar
8. RED BUD, St. Peter
9. VALMEYER, St. John
10. WATERLOO, St. Paul
11. WATERLOO, Zion

REGION 3

1. CAHOKIA, Bethel
2. COLLINSVILLE, St. John
3. DUPO, 1st. Congregational
4. EDWARDSVILLE, Eden
5. EDWARDSVILLE, St. Paul
6. GLEN CARBON, The Well
7. GRANITE CITY, St. John
8. GRANITE CITY, St. Peter

REGION 4

1. BRIGHTON, St. John
2. CARLINVILLE, St. Paul
3. FIELDON, Fieldon
4. GODFREY, Congregational
5. GODFREY, Evangelical
6. JERSEYVILLE, Peace
7. MORO, St. John's Church of Midway
8. WOOD RIVER, St. John

REGION 5

1. ALHAMBRA, Salem
2. BREESE, St. John's
3. GRANTFORK, Grantfork United Church of Christ
4. HAMEL, Immanuel
5. HIGHLAND, Evangelical
6. JAMESTOWN, St. Paul
7. MARINE, Marine United Church of Christ

8. ST. JACOB, St. Jacob United Church of Christ
9. STAUNTON, St. Paul
10. SUMMERFIELD, St. John's
11. TROY, Friedens

REGION 6

1. BIBLE GROVE, St. Paul's
2. CARLYLE, Immanuel
3. CENTRAL CITY, Zion
4. CENTRALIA, St. Peter
5. FARINA, Friedens
6. HOOKDALE, St. Peter's
7. OHLMAN, St. Pauls
8. PANA, United in Faith Church
9. TOWER HILL, St. Pauls

REGION 7

1. ADDIEVILLE, Zion
2. DUBOIS, St. Mark
3. HOYLETON, Zion
4. IRVINGTON, Friedens
5. JOHANNISBURG, St. John's
6. NASHVILLE, St. Paul
7. OKAWVILLE, St. Paul
8. OKAWVILLE, St. Peter's
9. PLUM HILL, St. John's
10. STONE CHURCH, St. Peter's

REGION 8

1. BIDDLEBORN, Trinity
2. DARMSTADT, Holy Ghost
3. FREEBURG, St. Paul's
4. LEBANON, St. Paul
5. LENZBURG, St. Peters
6. MARISSA, Friedens
7. MASCOUTAH, St. John
8. NEW ATHENS, St. John
9. NEW BADEN, Zion
10. TRENTON, St John

REGION 9

1. BELLEVILLE, Christ
2. BELLEVILLE, Concordia
3. BELLEVILLE, St. Paul
4. BELLEVILLE, Trinity
5. EAST ST. LOUIS, Good Shepherd of Faith
6. FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS, St. John
7. O'FALLON, O'Fallon United Church of Christ
8. SMITHTON, St. John's

Counties in which Illinois South Conference Churches are located:

1. Jersey
2. Macoupin
3. Christian
4. Shelby
5. Fayette
6. Clay
7. Washington
8. Perry
9. Jackson
10. Williamson
11. Massac
12. Alexander
13. Randolph
14. Monroe
15. St Clair
16. Madison
17. Bond
18. Clinton
19. Marion
20. Montgomery

Section 2 Congregations may change their participation from one region to another by mutual consent of the new region and the Conference Council. Such changes do not require a vote to amend this bylaw.

**ARTICLE II
VOTING MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1 Lay Delegates:

- A. Every local congregation holding membership in the Conference shall be entitled to representation at the annual meeting, special meetings of the Conference and Ecclesiastical Councils, based on membership at the end of the previous calendar year as follows:
 1. Up to 299, two lay delegates
 2. 300 to 599, three lay delegates
 3. 600 to 899, four lay delegates
 4. 900 to 1199, five lay delegates
 5. 1200 to 1499, six lay delegates
 6. For churches with larger membership, follow the pattern established above of one additional lay delegate for each additional 300 members.
- B. In designating delegates, local churches shall be aware of the composition of their membership so as to provide for broad representation.
- C. Each local church may appoint or elect alternate delegates who shall be designated by the church as its voting delegate(s) in the event the regular delegate(s) cannot be in attendance at the annual meeting, special meetings or Ecclesiastical Councils of the Conference.

Section 2 Ordained Ministers

- A. Ordained Ministers of the United Church of Christ and Ministerial Partners of the

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who hold membership in this Conference acting as an Association and who are in good standing shall be voting members of this Conference.

- B. Ordained ministers of another denomination, other than the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), who have been granted dual ordained ministerial standing shall be voting members of this Conference during the period of pastorate or responsibility for which dual ordained ministerial standing was granted.

Section 3 Commissioned Ministers of the United Church of Christ certified by the Conference acting as an Association shall be voting members of this Conference.

Section 4 Licensed Ministers serving churches holding membership in the Conference shall be voting members of this Conference.

Section 5 Members of the Conference Council shall be voting members of the Conference during their terms of office.

**ARTICLE III
ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1 Associate members of the Conference shall include ordained ministers holding standing in other denominations but serving as pastors of churches which hold membership in this Conference.

Section 2 Associate members shall have the privilege of voice without vote at the meetings of the conference.

Section 3 Associate members shall not hold office in the Conference or be delegates to the General Synod.

**ARTICLE IV
MEETINGS**

Section 1 Meetings of the Conference

- A. The Annual Meeting shall be held at a time and place determined by the Council to establish goals, transact business, and hold elections.
- B. All meetings shall be conducted in a spirit of discernment and prayer. Decision-making by consensus is desirable. When voting is necessary, a simple majority vote is needed for prudential resolutions and other business, and a two-thirds majority vote is

needed for resolutions of witness. The former address Conference policy, program and practices; the latter address social issues of concern to the churches.

Section 2 Meetings of the Regions

- A. Region meetings shall be held regularly (never less than once each year) for the purposes of:
- mutual support and accountability for stewardship of the gospel and the wider mission of the Conference and United Church of Christ;
 - cooperative engagement in God's mission within the region;
 - encouragement of each congregation to assess its own strengths and readiness for growth and engagement in the mission;
 - worship, fellowship, and education concerning the total work of the Church.
 - identification of persons with gifts to offer leadership in Conference ministry teams and settings.
- B. Regions will be convened by their respective representatives to the Conference Council.

Section 3 Special Meetings of the Conference may be called by the Council or by petition of at least one third of the churches.

Section 4 Ecclesiastical Councils of the Conference acting as an Association shall be called by the Church and Ministry Committee or Conference Council.

Section 5 Notice of annual meeting, special meetings and Ecclesiastical Councils of the Conference shall be sent by postal service or e-mail to all ministers and churches of the Conference not later than thirty days prior to the date thereof. The purpose of each special meeting or Ecclesiastical Council shall be stated in the call, and only the business so stated may be transacted.

Section 6 Preparation of Agendas

- A. The Executive Committee of the Council shall prepare the agenda for all Conference meetings.
- B. The Church and Ministry Committee shall prepare the agenda for all Ecclesiastical Councils.

**ARTICLE V
CONFERENCE COUNCIL**

Section 1 The Conference Council shall consist of twelve members, approximately one half of whom shall be lay persons and approximately one half of whom shall be clergy, nominated and elected at the annual meeting of the Conference. Membership shall be comprised as follows:

- A. One person shall be elected by the Annual Meeting to represent each geographical region from nominees proposed by each region and selected by the Recruitment Committee. Each elected region representative shall serve as the convener of that region. Region conveners shall be ex officio members of Conference Council.
- B. The chairperson of each Conference Ministry Team shall serve for the duration of her/his term as chairperson. In the absence of the seated team chair, a designated team member may serve as a pro-tem chair at a team meeting and/or attend a Conference Council meeting with voice and vote, if such is determined by said team and recorded in prior minutes.
- C. The officers of the Conference shall be members of the Council.

Section 2 The terms of office for members of the Council shall be two years, beginning with the conclusion of the annual meeting or General Synod at which they have been elected. A member may serve two consecutive terms, after which one year shall have elapsed before that member is eligible for re-election. Council members shall be of two classes, one half to be elected each year.

Section 3 The officers of the Council shall be the Moderator, the Vice Moderator, the Secretary, and the Treasurer, all of whom shall be nominated and elected by the Conference. These officers shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Council. The Moderator shall be the President of the Corporation; the Vice Moderator shall be the Vice President; the Secretary and Treasurer shall be the Secretary and Treasurer of the Corporation, respectively. The Conference Minister shall be the Chief Administrative Officer of the Corporation.

Section 4 The Conference Council as a whole is charged with:

- acting as the corporate entity by conducting the business affairs for the Illinois South

Conference between official meetings of the Conference;

- planning, evaluating, and guiding the mission priorities and implementing the actions of the official meetings of the Conference;
- assuring the functioning of the regions;
- coordinating the networking of congregations for shared programs of growth and mission;
- filling vacancies in elected positions of the Conference.

Section 5 Meetings:

- A. The Council shall meet every other month.
- B. A quorum shall consist of fifty per cent of the voting members of the Council.

Section 6 The Executive Committee of the Council

- A. The Executive Committee of the Council shall be comprised of the Officers of the Council.
- B. The functions of the Executive Committee of the Council shall be:
 - 1. to manage Council policy and planning;
 - 2. to act for the Council as interim and be accountable to the Council;
 - 3. to deal with sensitive issues and report findings to the Council if further action is indicated;
 - 4. to plan the agendas of Council meetings as well as Annual and Special Conference meetings.
- C. The Executive Committee shall meet on call.

ARTICLE VI

COMMITTEES AND MINISTRIES OF THE CONFERENCE COUNCIL

Section 1 The Council shall have standing committees to fulfill on-going responsibilities of the Conference. Each Committee shall be comprised of six to twelve members. Members shall be elected to serve two year terms, and are eligible to serve two terms, for a total of four years, after which one year must elapse before they are eligible for election to the same committee. The standing committees are:

- A. The Personnel Committee:
 - 1. The Personnel Committee shall be comprised of a chairperson and six members nominated by the Recruitment Committee and elected by the Annual Meeting Delegates, three

of whom shall be clergy and three of whom shall be lay.

- 2. It shall be the responsibility of the Committee to:
 - a. Review, recommend and update personnel policies for the Conference staff, including DuBois Center staff, and recommend those policies to the Conference Council for adoption.
 - b. Define, review and update job descriptions for all program and administrative staff.
 - c. Ensure that job performance review procedures are in place and implemented annually.
 - d. Review annually staff salaries and recommend to the Budget Committee compensation, including salary and benefits, for the coming year.
 - e. Consult with the Conference Minister or Director of Outdoor Ministries regarding the calling, hiring or dismissal of staff.

B. The Property Committee:

- 1. The Property Committee shall be comprised of a chairperson and six (6) to twelve (12) members nominated by the Recruitment Committee and elected by the Annual Meeting Delegates.
- 2. It shall have stewardship of all Conference properties and equipment, including DuBois Center.
 - a. It shall develop a plan for the maintenance of all Conference properties.
 - b. It shall work closely with the Outdoor Ministries Team to assure the maintenance and safety of the site and facilities for their intended usage. It shall appoint one of its members to serve on the Outdoor Ministry Team, voice without vote.
 - c. It shall receive a minimum of 2 bids or proposals for contracted construction or maintenance of facilities with an estimated cost greater than \$5,000 for recommendation to the Conference Council.

C. The Recruitment Committee:

1. The Recruitment Committee shall be comprised of a Chairperson, chosen by the Conference Council, and representatives of the regions who are elected by the Annual Meeting Delegates.
2. The Recruitment Committee shall:
 - a. prepare a slate of nominees for all elected offices of the Conference, including delegates to General Synod, according to the terms specified in the bylaws;
 - b. identify persons, in collaboration with the regions, with gifts and calling to serve as members of all standing committees;
 - c. identify persons, in collaboration with the regions, who have the gifts and calling to be considered for election to the Conference Ministry Teams;
 - d. seek representation on each standing committee and ministry team that is inclusive of laity, clergy, males, females, racial and ethnic minorities and age diversity.

Section 2 The Conference Council may establish additional standing committees as it deems necessary.

ARTICLE VII CONFERENCE MINISTRY TEAMS

Section 1 The Conference shall engage in its ministries and functions through the efforts of eight ministry teams. Each team shall be comprised of a chairperson nominated by the Recruitment Committee and elected by the Annual Meeting, and nine to twelve members nominated by regions and elected by the Conference. All elected and appointed team members shall serve for two year terms, and may serve one additional term, after which one year will have to elapse before they are eligible for appointment or election to the same team.

Section 2 Conference Ministry Teams may co-opt as temporary members persons with the specific skills and/or resources who are able to assist in meeting the Team's specific responsibilities, and may create task forces to accomplish specific tasks.

Section 3 The Conference Ministry Teams are:

A. The Church and Ministry Team

1. The Church and Ministry Team shall deal with all matters relating to the preparation, authorization and standing of ordained, commissioned and licensed ministers, and the standing and welfare of congregations in the Conference.
2. It shall adopt a procedure for regular review of authorized ministers for the purpose of providing needed support and accountability.
3. It shall report regularly to the Conference Council.
4. It shall assure that an accurate record is kept of all actions taken.
5. The Church and Ministry Team shall be comprised of three (3) Committees: the Church Committee; the Preparation Committee; and the Authorization Committee. Each shall have nine (9) elected persons, including the Chairperson.
6. The Church Committee will be composed of five (5) lay members and four (4) authorized ministers, representing each of the nine regions.
7. Each person will be elected for a three (3) year term, renewable once before going off the Team for at least a year.
8. The three (3) Chairpersons will together serve as an Executive Committee for the Church and Ministry Team.
9. Of the three (3) Chairpersons, one will serve on the Conference Council. The seat on the Conference Council will be on a rotating basis.
10. Conference Staff will provide presence and support for each Committee, voice without vote.
11. Each Committee will meet as it determines is necessary to fulfill its responsibilities.
12. The Executive Committee of the Church and Ministry Team will meet prior to each Illinois South Conference Council meeting.
13. The entire Church and Ministry Team will gather no less than annually for purposes of training, continuity, and addressing issues of common concern.
14. It shall relate to the national ministries to avail the Conference resources to most effectively achieve its mission.

B. The Church Development Team

1. The Church Development Team shall serve to discern, propose and promote:
 - a. the starting of new congregation;
 - b. the renewal of congregations with significant new opportunities for growth and mission;
 - c. the relocation of congregations whose context for mission has changed significantly;
 - d. the welcoming of established congregations that seek to join the United Church of Christ;
 - e. evangelism
 2. It shall propose to the Conference those projects for which Conference funds are requested, and those projects for which national partnership is to be sought;
 3. It shall explore ministry and possible new church starts with unserved populations and constituencies in southern Illinois that will increase the racial and cultural diversity of the Conference.
 4. It shall relate to the national ministries to avail itself and the Conference resources to most effectively achieve its mission.
- C. The Conference Gatherings Team
1. It shall assist regions, as necessary and able, to gather in order to achieve their purposes.
 2. It shall publicize and promote participation of all congregations in their regions as well as in the Conference gatherings.
 3. It shall plan all meetings of the Conference at the direction of the Conference Council.
 4. It shall take its direction from the Conference Council as to the purposes, times, and duration of the gatherings it is asked to plan.
- D. The Finance Ministry Team:
1. Shall be comprised of eight (8) persons elected at Annual Meeting.
 2. Ex-officio members of the Finance Ministry Team will include: The Conference Minister, Conference Treasurer, Director of Outdoor Ministries, a representative of the Outdoor Ministries Team and Conference Staff financial person.
 3. The Finance Ministry shall be responsible for: budget, investment, financial development, Council for Health & Human Services Ministry (CHHSM) interface, Chicago United Eden (CUE), and Our Church's Wider Mission .
 4. The Finance Ministry will develop working groups to address these responsibilities.
 5. The Finance Ministry may co-opt as temporary members persons with the specific skills and/or resources who are able to assist in meeting the Ministry's specific responsibilities.
 6. It shall relate to the national ministries to avail the Conference resources to assist in its work with congregations.
- E. The Justice and Witness Team
1. The Justice and Witness Team shall serve to discern, propose, and promote those social and public policy concerns that present opportunities for the local congregations and Conference to witness to God's call for justice, peace and well-being of all persons and all God's creation.
 2. It shall assist local congregations to discern issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation in their own communities and regions that present opportunities for their own witness.
 3. It shall assist congregations in networking and resourcing one another for effective cooperative work.
 4. It shall relate to the - national ministries to inform and promote Conference participation in ministries of national importance, and to avail itself and the Conference resources to most effectively do its mission.
- F. The Local Church Empowerment Team
1. The Local Church Empowerment Team shall serve to strengthen the life, ministries and mission of the local congregations for all age groups.
 2. It shall network congregations across the regions of the Conference who have similar development aims, suggest or provide resources and/or programs for their mutual development, including persons and/ particular expertise in the area of their opportunity.
 3. The Team, in order to respond to specific needs of congregations, may

organize itself into two sub-groups, to which additional members may be co-opted, as follows:

- worship and education
 - youth ministry
4. It shall encourage each congregation, especially as gathered in regions, to assess their strengths and readiness to engage in particular developmental work in: worship and education; evangelism; stewardship and planned giving, youth ministry, leadership training and community-building.
 5. It shall relate to the national ministries to avail the Conference resources to assist in its work with congregations.

G. The Mission and Ecumenism Team

1. The Mission and Ecumenism Team shall serve to discern, propose and promote the mission of the Conference to southern Illinois; enter, promote and sustain ecumenical relationships that further that mission; promote Conference participation and support of the wider mission of the United Church of Christ, and propose, implement and guide Conference engagement in international partnerships.
2. It shall assist local congregations and regions to discern opportunities for serving God's mission in their own communities and regions.
3. It shall assist local congregations to interpret, promote and support the wider mission of the Conference and the United Church of Christ.
4. It shall relate to the national ministries to avail itself and the Conference resources to most effectively accomplish its mission.

H. The Outdoor Ministries Team

1. The Outdoor Ministries Team will work with the Director of Outdoor Ministries and DuBois Center Program Director to pursue the vision and achieve the mission of DuBois Center.
2. It shall assist in designing and promoting outdoor ministries as an extension of the local congregations' own educational ministries.
3. It shall work closely with the Property Committee of the Conference Council to assure the safety, security and

maintenance of the DuBois Center site and facilities. One member of the Property Committee shall be appointed by the Property Committee to serve on the Outdoor Ministries Team, voice without vote.

4. It shall organize itself into such subcommittees as it deems appropriate and necessary to achieve its mission and work in collaboration with local congregations.
5. It may appoint additional members to subcommittees so as to engage the persons with skills needed for effective work in the various programs it conducts.

Section 4 The Conference Council may propose to the Annual Meeting the establishment of new ministry teams.

Section 5 The Program Staff are ex-officio members of all Ministry Teams and the Conference Council with voice but without vote.

ARTICLE VIII DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 The Moderator of the Council shall preside at all meetings of the Council and the Conference and report findings and acts of the Council to the Conference. He/she shall execute all deeds, contracts, and other documents requiring an official signature and shall perform all the duties which usually pertain to this office.

Section 2 The Vice-moderator of the Council shall perform the duties of the Moderator in his/her absence, inability or refusal to act, or by the request of the Moderator. In case both presiding officers are absent or unable or refuse to act, the Council shall appoint a presiding officer pro tem.

Section 3 The Secretary shall keep a permanent, accurate, and legible record of all meetings and transactions of the Conference Council and the Executive Committee. He/she shall perform such other duties as usually pertain to this office.

Section 4 The Treasurer shall also be a member of the Finance Ministry Team of the Council. He/she shall recommend and monitor financial policy to the Council, provide accurate financial reports to the Council, and oversee funds as directed by the Council. He/she shall provide

Annual Reports to the Conference. The Treasurer shall receive assistance from the staff. The Conference Minister and other staff members as deemed appropriate shall be authorized by the Council to receive, invest, and disburse the monies of the Conference according to the policies of the Conference and the Council.

ARTICLE IX CONFERENCE MINISTERS

Section 1 The Conference Minister and/or the Associate Conference Minister(s), if called, shall be issued a call by the Conference at the annual meeting or at a special meeting properly called for that purpose. The Council shall appoint a committee to secure a candidate for each office and shall submit one name for each office with its recommendation to the Conference for consideration. The voting members of the Conference shall vote by ballot for or against his/her election and the terms of his/her Call as shall have been suggested by the Council. An affirmative vote of at least seventy-five per cent of the number voting shall be required to issue a call.

Section 2 The Call shall be for an indefinite time. There shall be an annual performance evaluation of the Conference Minister and Associate(s), if called, administered by the Executive Committee of the Conference Council.

Section 3 In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Conference Minister, the Conference Council shall immediately notify the Office of the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. The Council shall provide for administering the affairs of the office until a successor shall have been elected and installed.

Section 4 The Conference Minister or Associate(s), if called, shall give or receive ninety days' notice in the event of a resignation or dismissal from that office. Action for dismissal may be taken at a regular or specially called meeting of the Conference upon recommendation of the Council or by presentation by the Council of a petition from at least ten per cent of the churches of the Conference. A majority is required to act on dismissal.

ARTICLE X NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1 The Recruitment Committee shall mail (by postal service or e-mail) to each church, at least six months prior to the annual meeting, listing of opportunities for service in the Conference for which appointments and elections are pending, and requesting nominees. The churches, separately and gathering as regions, shall identify appropriately gifted and called persons and return the names of nominees with their qualifications for each vacancy by a date to be determined by the Recruitment Committee. They shall submit names of laity and clergy, women and men, racial and ethnic minorities, persons of diverse ages and physical abilities to assure inclusive, balanced participation. Names of potential appointees shall be presented to the Council at a meeting prior to the Conference annual meeting.

Section 2 The slate presented by the Recruitment Committee needs only one name per position to be appointed or elected.

Section 3 At the first business session of the Annual Meeting of the Conference, the Recruitment Committee shall present its report and the slate of nominees for acceptance and further nominations. Elections shall take place at a subsequent business meeting.

- A. Delegates to the annual Conference Meeting shall be instructed as to the procedure for making further nominations from the floor.
- B. Persons named on the Recruitment Committee's slate or nominated from the floor shall have been contacted in advance and shall have indicated their willingness to serve.

ARTICLE XI GENERAL SYNOD DELEGATES

Section 1

- A. Delegates and alternates shall be chosen from among the Conference's ordained ministers and the lay members of its local churches.
 - 1. The delegation, whose number is determined by the United Church of Christ Board, shall adhere to the by-laws of the United Church of Christ: At least 50% of the delegation shall be lay persons.

2. The delegation shall be representative of racial and ethnic persons, women, youth and young adults.
 3. At least 20% of the delegation shall be under 30 years of age at the time of commencing their terms.
- C. One nominee shall be presented for each vacancy.
 - D. The Slate of nominees shall be presented in even-numbered years.
 - E. Nominees to be presented in specific categories shall be so identified on the ballot.
 - F. Six alternate delegates, divided equally for male/female, lay/clergy, and under 30 male/female, shall be nominated on the ballot. These nominees shall reflect the same categories as the delegates.

Section 2 Unless chosen as a Conference delegate, the Moderator of the Council shall be an Associate Delegate, voice without vote.

ARTICLE XII AUDIT

There shall be an annual audit of the Conference books and records by a Certified Public Accountant having no official connection with the Conference, who shall be appointed by the Council.

ARTICLE XIII RULES OF ORDER

All proceedings of the Conference and its Council shall be conducted in a spirit of discernment and prayer. A process for decision-making by consensus may be defined in rules of procedure and followed if adopted by a majority of the delegates. Where the adopted rules are silent, Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be followed.

ARTICLE XIV AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended only at any Annual or Special Meeting by a majority vote of the members present and voting, provided that all proposed amendments have been mailed (by postal service or by e-mail) to the churches at least fifteen days prior to the meeting at which the vote is to be taken.

This Constitution and these Bylaws replace and supersede all previous documents.