

**BY-LAWS OF THE GOLDEN GATE ASSOCIATION, U.C.C.
Northern California Nevada Conference**

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ARTICLE I. NAME AND BOUNDARIES

The name of this Association shall be the GOLDEN GATE ASSOCIATION (hereafter referred to as The Association) of churches and ministers of the Northern California Nevada Conference, United Church of Christ (hereafter referred to as NCNCUCC). The geographic boundaries of this Association are determined by The Association with the approval of the NCNCUCC or Conferences involved. (The Association includes churches in Northern California as listed for this Association in the current Conference directory.)

ARTICLE II. PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS

To the goal of furthering God's mission and the gospel of Jesus Christ in our world, the purposes and functions of this Association shall be to:

1. Unite in Christian fellowship all of the local UCC churches within the boundaries of the Association;
2. Care for member churches, ministers, and persons in care of NCNCUCC in mutual Christian concern and in dedication to Jesus Christ, head of the church;
3. Determine, confer and certify the standing of the UCC local churches and ministers of UCC within the geographical boundaries of the Association;
4. Provide a community of concern and growth within its group of churches;
5. Promote cooperation with the NCNCUCC and through the Conference, with the United Church of Christ and all its agencies and instrumentalities;
6. Encourage ecumenical involvement of its member churches;
7. Affirm always, the autonomy of the local churches in management of their own affairs;

8. Determine the appropriateness of, and review terms of, the call to ministry of candidates for ordination;
9. Hold Ecclesiastical Councils for Ordination (including final approval of candidates for ordination) and Reception of churches into the Association;
10. Preside at Services of Worship for Ordination, Commissioning, or Installation of an Authorized Minister;
11. Support the work and program of the NCNCUCC and UCC.

ARTICLE III. STRUCTURE

The Association is an integral part of United Church of Christ and as such it assumes all the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges placed upon it. The Association is related to the General Synod of UCC through NCNCUCC. The standing of the Association as a body of UCC is determined by the NCNCUCC.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Categories of Members

There shall be two categories of members of the Association, namely:

- A. Member Churches: churches within the boundaries of the Association that are affiliated with the UCC.
- B. Member Ministers: authorized ministers who currently hold standing in the Conference and who live or serve within the Association boundaries.

Section 2. Granting of Membership.

Qualification for membership or standing shall be in accordance with the constitution and by-laws of the UCC and procedure shall follow UCC policy.

Section 3. Affiliates of the Association

- A. Affiliates of the Association shall include the following:
 - 1) Authorized ministers of UCC holding standing in some other UCC Conference/Association;

- 2) An authorized minister of another denomination who is serving as minister in a local church of this Association;
 - 3) Members of local churches of this Association who are not acting as delegates to the meeting.
- B. Affiliates may attend meetings of the Association with voice but no vote. Persons-in-care, Authorized Ministers of other denominations serving Association churches, and non-delegate members of Association churches are particularly encouraged to attend. They may receive notices of meetings and activities at the discretion of the Association Board.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association holds three types of meetings:

Section 1. Regular Gatherings

- A. There shall be at least two (2) regular gatherings of the Association each calendar year.
- B. Notice of semi-annual gatherings shall be sent to all members at least forty-five (45) days before the date of such meeting.
- C. Location and date of gatherings shall be determined by the Board.

Section 2. Special Meetings

- A. Special meetings of the Association may be called by the moderator, the Board, or by any combination of members comprising one-fourth (1/4) of the membership of the Association (one-fourth of the ministers and one-fourth of the churches).
- B. Notice of special meetings shall be sent to all members at least ten (10) days before the date of such meeting.

Section 3. Ecclesiastical Councils

- A. Ecclesiastical Councils are held for Ordination, Commissioning or Church Reception into the Association.
- B. Members must be notified at least 30 days before the meeting.

C. Procedures include:

1) Approval of Ordination

When a candidate has received an ordainable call:

- a) The candidate will present his or her ordination paper;
- b) The Association will orally examine the candidate;
- c) A representative from Calling Body or Local Church will make a presentation;
- d) The Credentials Committee will submit its report.

2) A vote on approval for ordination is then taken on the basis of the following:

- a) Recommendation of the Conference Committee on Ministry, Section A;
- b) Ordination paper;
- c) Oral examination;
- d) Approved credentials for an ordainable call.

3) Approval of Commissioning or Ordination Pending Call when a candidate is applying for commissioning or approval for ordination contingent on receiving an ordainable call:

- a) The candidate will present his or her commissioning or ordination paper;
- b) The Association will orally examine the candidate.

4) A vote on approval for commissioning-or ordination pending call shall be taken on the basis of the following:

- a) Recommendation of Conference Committee on Ministry, Section A;
- b) Commissioning or Ordination paper and;
- c) Oral examination.

5) Final approval of ordination is then referred to the Association Credentials Committee and Association Board of Directors for their review and approval of a letter of call when received.

6) Reception of Church into Association

A vote on approval for reception is taken on the basis of the following:

- a) Presentation by members of church;

- b) Presentation by representatives of the Shepherding Church and the Conference Committee on Ministry, Section C.

Section 4. Voting at Meetings of the Association

A. Voting Body of the Association

At meetings of the Association, including ecclesiastical councils, the following members comprise the voting body and are entitled to one vote:

- 1) Delegates from member churches, with each church entitled to two lay delegates for the first 100 members or fraction thereof, plus one delegate for each 100 members over the first 100, except that no church shall be allowed more than five (5) lay delegates;
- 2) All member ministers as described in Article IV, Section 1 above.

B. Quorum For Meetings

The members necessary to be present at a legal meeting shall include all of the categories below:

- 1) Delegates from at least one-fourth (1/4) of the member churches;
- 2) At least one-sixth (1/6), or no less than six (6) of the Association's authorized member ministers;
- 3) At least one (1) member of the Association Board of Directors.

C. Passage of a Business Item

A majority of Association eligible voters present are needed for passage of any business item.

ARTICLE VI. SELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers

- A. Elected officers of the Association shall be the Board of Directors, which shall elect a Moderator and a Vice Moderator. There shall be twelve (12) directors selected so that they are as equally representative of northern and southern areas as is practicable, and as equally representative of the ministry and laity as is practicable.

- B. Appointed officers shall be a registrar-scribe and a treasurer.
- C. Deans shall be appointed by the Board, as needed. Deans are pastors to pastors.

Section 2. Eligibility

In order to serve as an officer of the Association, a person must be a member of a member church of the Association.

Section 3. Election and Terms

- A. Board Members shall be elected at the spring meeting for terms of four (4) years or until their successors are selected. Terms begin upon adjournment of the Association gathering at which they are elected.
- B. A majority vote of Association eligible voters present shall elect Board Members. A quorum as defined in Article V, Section 4 is required.
- C. Appointed officers shall be appointed annually by the Board of Directors.
- D. Board Members may serve no more than two (2) consecutive full terms in the same office.

Section 4. Duties

Officers shall serve on the Association Board and perform other such duties as the Board or the by-laws may direct.

Section 5. Nominations

A. Nominating Committee

The nominating committee will consist of four (4) members. These members shall be nominated by the Association Board and voted on by the Association at the annual meeting.

B. Term and Vacancies

- 1) Nominating committee members shall serve for one term of two (2) years, with two members elected each year.
- 2) Vacancies on the committee shall be filled by Board appointment.

C. Duties

The nominating committee shall:

- 1) At a regular Association meeting designated as the annual election meeting, submit to the gathered delegates a list of candidates for elective offices.
- 2) At the request of the moderator or the Board, act in a recommending capacity regarding filling Association vacancies.

Section 6. Vacancies

Vacancies shall be filled at the Board meeting following notification of the existence of a vacancy. In the event of a vacancy in the office of moderator, the registrar-scribe shall call a special meeting of the Board to select a successor.

Section 7. Duties of Officers

A. The Moderator shall:

- 1) Have general supervision of all Association business and shall coordinate Association activities;
- 2) Preside at meetings of the Association and of the Board;
- 3) Be the official representative of the Association to the churches, the conference and the community;
- 4) Serve on all committees as a non-voting ex-officio member.

B. The Vice-Moderators shall:

- 1) Under the general direction of the moderator, have supervision of Association activities occurring in an assigned area;
- 2) Upon Board decision, assume the duties of the moderator in the absence or inability of the moderator to serve.

C. The Registrar-Scribe shall:

- 1) Be responsible for records, notices and all other official record functions related to holding and conducting ecclesiastical councils, ordinations, transfers and official recognition of ministers and churches, and cooperate with the Conference appropriately;
- 2) Keep an up-to-date roster of all members of the Association and notify the moderator and Conference of any changes therein;

- 3) Keep minutes of meetings of the Association and its Board;
- 4) Be responsible for mailings and correspondence of the Association as directed by the moderator and by the Board;
- 5) Report to the Association and the Board as appropriate or requested.

D. The Treasurer shall:

- 1) Keep account of Income and Disbursements;
- 2) Be responsible for handling income and disbursements of the Association as authorized by the moderator or the Board;
- 3) Report to the Association at each meeting and to the Board on request.

ARTICLE VII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS (herein called the Board)

Section 1. Composition

The Board shall be composed of the officers and directors of the Association and the chairs of standing committees as described in Article VIII of these by-laws.

Section 2. Meetings

- A. Meetings of the Board shall be held at least three (3) times each year at the call of the moderator or of any three other members of the Board.
- B. Notices of Board meetings shall be sent to all members of the Board and to the conference minister and shall be sent at least ten (10) days before such meeting, except that in emergencies a 24-hour notice is adequate.
- C. Courtesy seats without vote shall be granted at the discretion of the Board.
- D. A majority of currently elected Board members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3. Powers, Duties, and Limitations of the Board

- A. The Board shall have the power of control and management of the business of the Association and supervision of its activities, except that it may not:

- 1) Grant or terminate membership in the Association;
 - 2) Act as an ecclesiastical council;
 - 3) Amend or revise the by-laws;
 - 4) Appoint officers except as provided in these by-laws.
- B. It shall be responsible for ratification of receipts and expenditures and review supporting documents.
- C. It shall perform all duties as directed in these by-laws.
- D. It shall be accountable to the Association for its actions.

ARTICLE VIII. ASSOCIATION COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees

A. General Provisions for Standing Committees

- 1) The chair and four other members for each standing committee shall be selected by the Board and shall serve for two (2) years.
- 2) The moderator shall serve as an ex-officio member and shall receive notices of meetings and other mailings of the committee.
- 3) Each committee at its first meeting shall select a secretary who shall be responsible for minutes, notices, and other records and mailings of the committee.

B. Association Credentials Committee

1) Duties delegated to the Committee:

The committee shall be responsible for the examination of the letter of call of any applicant for membership in the Association by ordination or any other ecclesiastical procedure and shall make recommendation for action to the Board of Directors of the Association.

2) Duties delegated to the Conference:

- a) All matters relating to the standing of ministers applying for transfer;
- b) Preliminary examination of candidates for commissioning and ordination;
- c) Granting and renewal of In-Care status, Privilege of Call, Dual Standing, Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing (DOC) and ministerial standing for Licensed Ministry and in cases not requiring installation;

- d) Holding of Authorized Ministerial Standing;
 - e) Periodic and Situational Support Consultations-and Fitness for Ministry Reviews for Ordained and Commissioned Ministers.
- 3) The Association reserves to itself the right of final examination and ordination and commissioning of ministers.

Section 2. Special Committees

Special committees may be created by the Association or the Board. Such committees are accountable to the creating body and may be appointed by the creating body or this may be delegated to others. Notice of meetings shall be sent to the moderator, who shall be an ex-officio member of all such committees.

ARTICLE IX. REPRESENTATIVES TO NCNCUCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Association appoints two Representatives, each serving a four-year term on the Conference Board of Directors. Appointments are made alternately every two years. The Representatives report to the Association Board of Directors.

ARTICLE X. SYNOD DELEGATES

The Association nominates General Synod delegates, who then are elected by the Conference Annual Meeting. General Synod delegates represent the whole Conference. The Association may ask for reporting from the Delegates nominated by the Association and/or from the Delegates -at-large who live within the geographic boundaries of the Association.

ARTICLE XI. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these by-laws.

ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Association by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those eligible voters present and voting, provided all members were sent notice of the proposed changes in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the date the vote is to be taken.