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**BYLAWS OF  
THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF  
METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES**

As revised at General Conference XXIV, Acapulco, Mexico  
Effective 29 June 2010

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**ARTICLE I -- NAME**

- 12 A. The name of this Fellowship shall be the UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY  
13 CHURCHES (hereinafter referred to as UFMCC or Fellowship).  
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15 B. Each affiliated local church group will use the name METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH as part  
16 of its official title. The group may add either a prefix or suffix to distinguish it from other affiliated  
17 local church groups, such as: Grace Metropolitan Community Church, Metropolitan Community  
18 Church of Tallahassee, Metropolitan Community Church, Ashland, or Springfield Metropolitan  
19 Community Church.  
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**ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

23 The objectives of the UFMCC shall be:

- 24 A. To bind together churches for the purpose of sharing in the worship of God in the Christian  
25 tradition, and to make God's will dominant in the lives of all people, individually and collectively, as  
26 set forth in the Holy Scriptures.  
27  
28 B. To set up bodies for instruction in theology and in allied subjects for the propagation of the  
29 teachings of the Christian faith, as accepted by the General Conference of the Universal Fellowship  
30 of Metropolitan Community Churches.  
31  
32 C. To instruct and encourage those who offer themselves to the teaching and philosophy accepted by  
33 this body.  
34  
35 D. To do all things that are compatible with the work of a Christian Church.  
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**ARTICLE III -- DOCTRINE, SACRAMENTS AND RITES**

- 39 A. **DOCTRINE:** Christianity is the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and is the religion set forth in the  
40 Scriptures. Jesus Christ is foretold in the Old Testament, presented in the New Testament, and  
41 proclaimed by the Christian Church in every age and in every land.

42  
43 Founded in the interest of offering a church home to all who confess and believe, the Universal  
44 Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches moves in the mainstream of Christianity.  
45

46 Our faith is based upon the principles outlined in the historic creeds: Apostles and Nicene.  
47

- 48 We believe:
- 49 1. In one triune God, omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, of one substance and of three
- 50 persons: God, our Parent-Creator; Jesus Christ, the only begotten son of God, God in flesh,
- 51 human; and the Holy Spirit, God as our Sustainer.
- 52 2. That the Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God, showing forth God to every person through
- 53 the law and the prophets, and finally, completely and ultimately on earth in the being of Jesus
- 54 Christ.
- 55
- 56 3. That Jesus...the Christ...historically recorded as living some 2,000 years before this writing, is
- 57 God incarnate, of human birth, fully God and fully human, and that by being one with God, Jesus
- 58 has demonstrated once and forever that all people are likewise Children of God, being spiritually
- 59 made in God's image.
- 60
- 61 4. That the Holy Spirit is God making known God's love and interest to all people. The Holy Spirit is
- 62 God, available to and working through all who are willing to place their welfare in God's
- 63 keeping.
- 64
- 65 5. Every person is justified by grace to God through faith in Jesus Christ.
- 66
- 67 6. We are saved from loneliness, despair and degradation through God's gift of grace, as was
- 68 declared by our Savior. Such grace is not earned, but is a pure gift from a God of pure love. We
- 69 further commend the community of the faithful to a life of prayer; to seek genuine forgiveness
- 70 for unkind, thoughtless and unloving acts; and to a committed life of Christian service.
- 71
- 72 7. The Church serves to bring all people to God through Christ. To this end, it shall arrange for
- 73 regular services of worship, prayer, interpretation of the Scriptures, and edification through the
- 74 teaching and preaching of the Word.
- 75
- 76 B. SACRAMENTS: This Church embraces two holy Sacraments:
- 77 1. BAPTISM by water and the Spirit, as recorded in the Scriptures, shall be a sign of the dedication
- 78 of each life to God and God's service. Through the words and acts of this sacrament, the
- 79 recipient is identified as God's own Child.
- 80
- 81 2. HOLY COMMUNION is the partaking of blessed bread and fruit of the vine in accordance with
- 82 the words of Jesus, our Sovereign: This is my body...this is my blood. (Matthew 26:26-28). All
- 83 who believe, confess and repent and seek God's love through Christ, after examining their
- 84 consciences, may freely participate in the communal meal, signifying their desire to be received
- 85 into community with Jesus Christ, to be saved by Jesus Christ's sacrifice, to participate in Jesus
- 86 Christ's resurrection, and to commit their lives anew to the service of Jesus Christ.
- 87
- 88 C. RITES: The Rites of the Church as performed by its duly authorized ministers shall consist of the
- 89 following:
- 90 1. The RITE OF ORDINATION is the setting apart of duly qualified persons for the professional
- 91 ministry of this Church. It is evidenced by the laying on of hands by authorized ordained clergy
- 92 or UFMCC Elders, pursuant to these Bylaws.
- 93

- 94 2. The RITE OF ATTAINING MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH shall be conducted by the Pastor or  
95 Interim Pastoral Leader before a local congregation at any regular worship service. In  
96 accordance with criteria established by the local church, a baptized Christian may become a  
97 member in good standing of the local church group through a letter of transfer from a  
98 recognized Christian body or through affirmation of faith.  
99
- 100 3. The RITE OF HOLY UNION/RITE OF HOLY MATRIMONY is the spiritual joining of two persons in a  
101 manner fitting and proper by a duly authorized clergy, Interim Pastoral Leader of the church, or  
102 UFMCC Elders. After both persons have been counseled and apprised of their responsibilities  
103 one toward the other, this rite of conferring God's blessing may be performed.  
104
- 105 4. The RITE OF FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE is to be fittingly conducted by the ministers of the  
106 Church for the deceased.  
107
- 108 5. The RITE OF LAYING ON OF HANDS or prayer for the healing of the sick in mind, body or spirit is  
109 to be conducted by the ministers of the Church, at their discretion, upon request.  
110
- 111 6. The RITE OF BLESSING may be conducted by the ministers of the Church for persons, things and  
112 relationships, when deemed appropriate by the minister. This includes the dedication of a  
113 church building to the glory of God.  
114

## 115 **ARTICLE IV -- MINISTRY**

116  
117 The UFMCC affirms the universal priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:5-10). All members of the Church  
118 are called by God to a ministry of the Gospel of Christ in the Church and in the world.  
119

120 UFMCC decrees that all people shall have equality of access and opportunity which is free from  
121 discrimination on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, race, age, physical challenge, HIV status, health  
122 status, gender identification, nationality, or economic status in terms of: (1) Employment and personnel  
123 procedures and (2) Service delivery -- all that we do.  
124

### 125 A. MINISTRY OF THE LAITY

- 126 1. THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS: Lay people are the People of God, called by God and  
127 authorized by Scripture to respond to the Word, serving as Christ served, to the end that the  
128 Church may be edified and the world transformed. UFMCC affirms that this is the ministry of  
129 every lay person in the UFMCC.  
130
- 131 2. DEACONS: As outlined in the New Testament, their office is an historic ministry of service and  
132 aid within the Christian Church.  
133

### 134 B. MINISTRY OF THE CLERGY:

- 135 1. CLERGY: Clergy are members of the People of God, called by God, authorized and legally  
136 recognized by the UFMCC to serve among the people as professional ministers of the Word and  
137 Sacraments.  
138 a. RESPONSIBILITIES: In accordance with their call, clergy shall administer the Rites and  
139 Sacraments of the UFMCC and be teachers and preachers of the faith to the end that the

140 world may believe and the Church might be renewed, equipped, and strengthened in its  
141 ministry.

142  
143 b. QUALIFICATIONS: Clergy are those persons of professed and demonstrated call to be  
144 professional Christian ministers who meet the qualifications established by the Council of  
145 Elders.

146  
147 c. ORDINATION: Persons who have met the academic standards and qualifications as  
148 established by the Council of Elders may then be ordained. A person who is ordained  
149 cannot function as a UFMCC clergy person until he/she is licensed.

150  
151 d. DISCIPLINE: The UFMCC will not condone disloyalty, unbecoming conduct, or dereliction of  
152 duty. Procedures for discipline shall be developed by the Governing Board. These  
153 procedures shall be included as an addendum to the UFMCC Bylaws.

## 154 155 **ARTICLE V – GOVERNMENT, ORGANIZATION, AND OFFICERS**

### 156 157 A. GOVERNMENT:

158 1. The UFMCC acknowledges the Holy Scriptures interpreted by the Holy Spirit in conscience and  
159 faith as its guide in faith, discipline, and government.

160  
161 2. The government of the UFMCC is vested in the General Conference, subject to the provisions of  
162 the UFMCC Articles of Incorporation and its Bylaws, or documents of legal organization. The  
163 officials elected by the General Conference are subject to the direction and discipline of General  
164 Conference and are responsible to carry out its policies.

165  
166 3. When the Moderator desires more flexibility with respect to Articles IV through IX of these  
167 Bylaws, the Moderator can apply to the Governing Board, which may grant that flexibility.

168  
169 4. This Fellowship is accountable to no outside ecclesiastical jurisdiction, but accepts the obligation  
170 of mutual consent and cooperation involved in the free fellowship of other churches, and does  
171 pledge itself to share in their common aims and endeavors subject to the expressed approval of  
172 its membership.

173  
174 5. Local Churches and the General Conference as defined by these Bylaws are set forth for the  
175 purposes of Christian fellowship, worship, witness, and service, borne in the cooperation,  
176 program development, and implementation of their Bylaws, Procedures, and Policies.

177  
178 6. A local church of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches is that church  
179 which subscribes to the government and doctrine of the UFMCC, and has been authorized by  
180 the same.

### 181 182 B. LOCAL CHURCHES:

183 1. INTRODUCTION: The government of each local church is vested in its Congregational Meeting  
184 which exerts the right to control all of its affairs, subject to the provisions of the UFMCC Articles  
185 of Incorporation, Bylaws, or documents of legal organization, and the General Conference. The

186 Pastor and the local church administrative body are authorized to provide spiritual and  
187 administrative leadership in the local church. The officials elected by the Congregational  
188 Meeting are subject to the direction and discipline of the local church and are responsible to  
189 carry out the local church policies.  
190

191 2. AFFILIATION: Within the UFMCC, all churches that meet the criteria as established by the  
192 Council of Elders and approved by the Governing Board qualify for affiliation and recognition as  
193 "church." An Elder has the authority to approve requests for affiliation. If a church ceases to  
194 meet the criteria for affiliation, an Elder may take appropriate actions of intervention, which  
195 may include removal of the church's affiliation status. The decision of the Elder may be  
196 appealed to the Council of Elders.  
197

198 3. ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS: A local church shall have the authority to establish, authorize,  
199 and hold accountable special-purpose groups, ministries, and organizations. When the mission  
200 of the UFMCC would be best served by a special-purpose group, ministry, or organization being  
201 accountable to the denomination, the Governing Board shall have the authority to establish,  
202 authorize, and hold accountable such special-purpose group, ministry, or organization.  
203

204 4. PASTOR: The Pastor is a duly ordained clergy person who has been licensed to practice. Though  
205 there are a variety of pastoral roles, in a local congregation the Pastor is elected to be  
206 responsible for the duties of teacher, preacher, and spiritual leader. If no duly credentialed  
207 UFMCC clergy person is available, an Interim Pastoral Leader may be appointed annually by an  
208 Elder. All UFMCC churches are led by Pastors or Interim Pastoral Leaders.

209 a. QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES: Pastors must be credentialed clergy in the UFMCC. The  
210 Pastor of the church shall have the authority for ordering all worship services of the church.  
211 The Pastor is a voting member of the local church administrative body.  
212

213 Associate and/or Assistant Pastor(s) and other personnel, uncompensated or compensated,  
214 shall be appointed by the Pastor subject to the approval of the local church administrative  
215 body. The Pastor shall act as personnel director of the local church staff, shall have the  
216 authority to delegate such responsibilities and duties as seem wise, and shall, with the  
217 approval of the local church administrative body, determine compensation, vacation  
218 periods, and titles of office of the staff.  
219

220 b. CONFLICT RESOLUTION: When there are conflicts or difficulty within a local church,  
221 including apparent irreconcilable differences between the Pastor and congregation, an Elder  
222 shall have the authority to interface with that church, to take appropriate measures, to  
223 provide resources and support, and to attend and have voice at any meeting of the local  
224 church administrative body or Congregational Meeting. An Elder shall be required to  
225 intervene when invited (1) by the Pastor/Interim Pastoral Leader, (2) by majority vote of the  
226 local church administrative body, or (3) as a result of a petition signed by a minimum of one-  
227 third (33%) of the members of the church.  
228

229 Within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving the request for intervention, the Elder must  
230 officially notify all parties mentioned above. Within ten (10) days of the request, the Elder  
231 or the person appointed by the Elder will establish the time-lines and process for the

232 Ministry of Reconciliation, which must be implemented within thirty (30) days of the initial  
233 request.

- 234
- 235 c. REMOVING THE PASTOR FROM OFFICE: When irreconcilable differences exist between the  
236 Pastor and congregation, the Pastor and congregation may choose to terminate their  
237 relationship through mutual agreement. No petition for removal of the Pastor based on  
238 irreconcilable differences is valid unless preceded by the process of conflict resolution, as  
239 contained within the UFMCC Bylaws Article V.B.4.b. Unilateral failure to renew a pastoral  
240 contract does not constitute removal of the Pastor from office.

241

242 The process of removing the Pastor from office for disloyalty, unbecoming conduct,  
243 dereliction of duty or when irreconcilable differences arise between Pastor and  
244 congregation may be initiated by a petition submitted to the duly authorized church officer  
245 as designated by the local Bylaws/Standard Operating Procedures, or documents of legal  
246 organization, and signed by at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the members in good  
247 standing; or by a vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the full Board of Directors /local church  
248 administrative body. Within three (3) days, the Pastor and the Elder must be sent a copy of  
249 the completed petition or motion of the local church administrative body by the designated  
250 church officer. After the Elder and designated local church officer have validated the  
251 number of members who have signed the petition and the clarity of the petition or validated  
252 the votes of the members of the local church administrative body and the clarity of the  
253 motion, the Elder may place the Pastor on inactive status, but the Pastor remains fully  
254 compensated until the final action of the congregation. Upon validating the petition, the  
255 Elder and the local church administrative body will set the time and place of a special  
256 congregational meeting to determine whether the Pastor shall remain in office. The date of  
257 the meeting shall occur within thirty (30) days of the date the petition is submitted to the  
258 designated church officer or the date the motion of the local church administrative body is  
259 received by the Elder.

260

261 The Pastor has the right to appear on his/her own behalf before the congregational meeting  
262 and may have an advocate of his/her own choice present. The action of the congregation is  
263 final. If a special meeting is called to remove a Pastor, the Elder must be given notice that  
264 such action is being taken. The Elder shall attend or send a representative as an impartial  
265 observer who shall moderate the meeting. If the Pastor is removed, the local church  
266 administrative body will meet immediately after the meeting with the Elder or the  
267 representative to arrange for pastoral leadership until the pulpit is filled. The local church  
268 administrative body may confer with the Elder as to available candidates for the office of  
269 Pastor.

270

271 5. LOCAL CHURCH GOVERNANCE

- 272 a. The local church, in consultation with an Elder, shall determine an appropriate structure and  
273 systems for local church governance that is appropriate for the size of church and cultural  
274 context. The local church structure and systems shall include provision for (1) selection and  
275 discipline of the local church administrative body, (2) a pastoral search process, and (3)  
276 congregational meetings. It is incumbent upon the local church administrative body of each

277 local church to provide that church with a set of Bylaws or standard operating procedures,  
278 subject to approval by an Elder.

279  
280 b. ACCOUNTABILITY: The local church administrative body shall be subject to these Bylaws,  
281 local Articles of Incorporation, local Bylaws/Standard Operating Procedures, any other  
282 documents of legal organization, and to the approval or disapproval by action of their local  
283 congregation as provided for in any of the above.

284  
285 6. LAY DELEGATE: Each affiliated church shall have one (1) vote for every one hundred (100)  
286 members in good standing or portion thereof and shall elect one (1) Lay Delegate for each vote.  
287 Each Lay Delegate shall carry one (1) vote. Each Lay Delegate shall be a member in good  
288 standing of the congregation that he/she represents, should be elected at the first  
289 congregational meeting following each General Conference and shall serve a term of three (3)  
290 years. The duties of the Lay Delegate shall include, but not be limited to, representation of the  
291 congregation at General Conferences and to be informed of the UFMCC concerns and policies.

292  
293 Each voting church may, in accordance with that local church's Bylaws or Standard Operating  
294 Procedures, elect at least one (1) Alternate Lay Delegate for each Lay Delegate elected. The  
295 Alternate Delegate(s) so elected shall, in accordance with procedures set forth in the local  
296 church Bylaws or Standard Operating Procedures, be empowered to assume the duties of any  
297 Lay Delegate who is unable or unwilling to perform the duties of Lay Delegate, including but not  
298 limited to representation of the congregation at General Conferences.

299  
300 7. DISCIPLINE OF CHURCHES: If any affiliated church shall fail to abide by the Articles of  
301 Incorporation of the UFMCC, these Bylaws, or documents of legal organization, the Moderator  
302 or a representative of the Moderator shall take appropriate action to require compliance. The  
303 Moderator shall report any such action to the church involved and to the Governing Board.

304  
305 8. CHURCH PROPERTY: The local church administrative body will name the fiduciary body for any  
306 property acquired by that church. The local church administrative body and the members of  
307 each local congregation will have sole control of said property except under the following  
308 circumstances: (1) if the property is abandoned; (2) if the local church is disbanded; or (3) if the  
309 local church disaffiliates from UFMCC.

310  
311 In every nation where UFMCC comes to exist and where permitted by local or national laws, the  
312 local church's documents of legal organization must name the UFMCC as the successor 501(c)(3)  
313 corporation designated to receive the church's property in the event of (1) the dissolution or  
314 abandonment of the church, or (2) failure to abide by the process for disaffiliation from the  
315 UFMCC by the local church as contained in the UFMCC Bylaws.

316  
317 9. DISAFFILIATION: Disaffiliated congregations may not continue to use the name Metropolitan  
318 Community Church (MCC) or in any manner hold themselves out as being associated with  
319 UFMCC or as being an MCC church. .

320  
321 a. DISAFFILIATION BY A LOCAL CHURCH: Should a local church desire to disaffiliate from the  
322 UFMCC, a representative or representatives appointed by the Moderator must be allowed

323 to meet with the congregation and shall have voice at the Congregational Meeting called for  
324 the purpose of disaffiliating. The decision to disaffiliate must receive a two-thirds (2/3) vote  
325 of the Members present at a duly called Congregational Meeting called for the purpose of  
326 disaffiliating.

327  
328 (1) NOTIFICATION TO UFMCC: At least sixty (60) calendar days prior to a Congregational  
329 Meeting called for the purpose of disaffiliating, the local church shall notify the  
330 Moderator in writing that such a Congregational Meeting will be held. The written  
331 notification to the Moderator shall include (a) the date, time, and place of the  
332 Congregational Meeting; and (b) a copy of the local church membership list. Except in  
333 the event of the death or resignation of a listed Member, no Members may thereafter  
334 be removed from membership in the local church and no Members may be added to the  
335 membership in the local church until after the Congregational Meeting called for the  
336 purpose of disaffiliating.

337  
338 (2) NOTIFICATION TO MEMBERS: At least thirty (30) calendar days prior to a  
339 Congregational Meeting called for the purpose of disaffiliating, all Members of the local  
340 church must be notified in writing at their last known address on the membership list of  
341 the date, time, place, and purpose of the Congregational Meeting called for the purpose  
342 of disaffiliating. A copy of the notification to members shall be simultaneously  
343 submitted to the Moderator.

344  
345 (3) VOTING PROCESS: Voting at the Congregational Meeting called for the purpose of  
346 disaffiliating shall be done by secret ballot.

347  
348 (4) CONTINUING AFFILIATION: In the event that a congregation votes to disaffiliate, those  
349 members of the congregation wishing to continue affiliation with UFMCC may be  
350 designated by the Moderator as the continuing Metropolitan Community Church  
351 affiliated with the UFMCC.

352  
353 (5) DISPOSITION OF ASSETS: After existing financial obligations to the UFMCC are met, the  
354 disaffiliating local church has the right to net assets.

355  
356 (6) NOTIFICATION TO AFFECTED THIRD PARTIES: In the event that a congregation votes to  
357 disaffiliate, the UFMCC shall notify affected third parties that the disaffiliated  
358 congregation is no longer associated with the UFMCC and that the disaffiliated  
359 congregation may not hold itself out as being an MCC church. Affected third parties  
360 include, but are not limited to, banks, creditors, and government agencies that issued  
361 corporation/registration status to the disaffiliated church.

362  
363 10. CLOSURE: When a church disbands or ceases to operate, the net assets of the church will revert  
364 to the use of the General Conference of the UFMCC. The Governing Board will decide the  
365 disposition of said property.  
366



367 11. RESERVATION OF POWERS: Any specific matters of congregational approval not covered herein  
368 are left to local church option.

369  
370 C. FELLOWSHIP:

371 1. INTRODUCTION: Internationally, the government of the UFMCC is vested in the General  
372 Conference, subject to the provisions of the Fellowship Articles of Incorporation, its Bylaws, or  
373 documents of legal organization. Between General Conferences, the Council of Elders is  
374 authorized to provide spiritual and pastoral leadership and the Governing Board is authorized to  
375 provide administrative leadership on the international Fellowship level.

376  
377 2. MODERATOR: The Moderator is elected by General Conference to serve as the primary  
378 visionary and futurist in order to advance the mission and vision of UFMCC worldwide through  
379 the exercise of prophetic challenge, creativity, spiritual and pastoral authority, and leadership.  
380 As the primary UFMCC spokesperson, an Elder, and the Chief Executive Officer, the Moderator is  
381 a voting member and moderates meetings of the Governing Board and of the Council of Elders;  
382 moderates General Conference; appoints Elders; and supervises UFMCC senior staff. The  
383 Moderator shall be responsible for leading the visioning process for the Fellowship, having a  
384 presence at global events, teaching and training, engaging in continuous learning, community  
385 relations, visitation and assistance in churches, ecumenical relations, and global social justice.  
386 The term of office of the Moderator shall be six (6) years.

387 a. MODERATOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE: The Governing Board shall appoint a  
388 Moderator Nominating Committee of three (3) persons. The responsibility of the  
389 Moderator's Nominating Committee is to actively solicit candidates for the position,  
390 review any and all applications, and select up to five (5) qualified candidates. The  
391 qualified candidates shall be presented by the Governing Board to the General  
392 Conference for election.

393 b. VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF MODERATOR: In the event of a vacancy in the office of  
394 Moderator, the Governing Board shall elect an Interim Moderator to fill the vacancy  
395 until the next General Conference, when an election shall be held to fill the vacancy. The  
396 term of office of the Moderator elected by General Conference to fill the vacancy shall  
397 be six (6) years.

398  
399 3. COUNCIL OF ELDERS: The Council of Elders of the UFMCC is that body authorized by the General  
400 Conference to serve in a pastoral role and direct the spiritual life of the Fellowship. This Council  
401 shall consist of a Moderator and Elders appointed by the Moderator, subject to approval by the  
402 Governing Board and affirmation by General Conference. All UFMCC Elders are deemed  
403 professional ministers and are authorized to perform all of the Rites and Sacraments of the  
404 church.

405 a. QUALIFICATIONS: Elders must be those individuals of obvious spiritual quality and  
406 leadership who are mature, have sound judgment, have a proven record of accomplishment  
407 as lay or clergy members within the Fellowship, and have successful experience in  
408 envisioning and strategic planning for the future. Elders must be excellent communicators,  
409 skilled motivators and teachers, self-motivated and devoted to continuous learning.  
410 Further, Elders must be capable of understanding and working within sound fiscal  
411 guidelines, be sensitive to cultural differences, and be able and willing to embrace diversity.  
412 It is desirable that the Council of Elders reflect the diversity of the Fellowship.

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- b. DUTIES: The primary responsibility of Elders shall be to give pastoral leadership and care to enable the Fellowship in our spiritual journey. The Elders shall exercise spiritual and pastoral authority to build a shared vision for the UFMCC, prepare UFMCC for the future, and support UFMCC’s strategic direction. The Elders serve as official representatives of the Fellowship in the areas of public and community relations; provide oversight of and support to congregations; consult with churches on issues related to church development; and fulfill other ecclesial and ceremonial duties.

Other than the Moderator, a member of the Council of Elders shall not serve simultaneously as a member of the Governing Board.

- c. ACCOUNTABILITY, DISCIPLINE, AND REMOVAL: The UFMCC cannot condone disloyalty, unbecoming conduct, or dereliction of duty on the part of its Elders and, therefore, makes the following provisions for accountability, discipline, or removal:

- (1) ACCOUNTABILITY: All Elders shall be accountable to the Moderator, the Council of Elders, the UFMCC Bylaws, the UFMCC Code of Conduct, personnel policies as established by the Governing Board, and General Conference.

- (2) DISCIPLINE: The Elder must be given written notice of a complaint and shall remain in position until final disposition of the complaint.

- (a) DISCIPLINE OF THE MODERATOR: Complaints about the Moderator must be submitted to the Governing Board in written form and must be signed by a minimum of one (1) member of the clergy from each of ten (10) different churches and by the Lay Delegates representing the majority of the Lay Delegate votes from each of ten (10) different churches, and may be initiated by either the clergy or Lay Delegates. The Governing Board shall establish and publish its procedure for considering complaints about the Moderator.

- (b) DISCIPLINE OF AN ELDER: Complaints about an Elder other than the Moderator must be submitted to the Moderator in written form and be signed by a member of UFMCC. The Moderator shall determine whether to refer the complaint to the Council of Elders for resolution or to seek resolution of the matter in another appropriate way. The Council of Elders shall establish and publish its procedure for considering complaints about an Elder.

- (3) REMOVAL:

- (a) REMOVAL OF THE MODERATOR: If the Governing Board determines that the Moderator is unable to unwilling to fulfill the responsibilities of the position, the Governing Board may, by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the full Governing Board, remove the Moderator from the position. Such action shall be reported to the General Conference within five (5) business days. The Governing Board may elect someone who meets the qualifications to serve as Interim Moderator until the next General Conference, when an election shall be conducted to fill the vacancy.

- 459 (b) REMOVAL OF AN ELDER:  
460 (i) The Moderator may remove an Elder at any time, with or without cause.  
461  
462 (ii) If the Council of Elders determines that an Elder is unable or unwilling to fulfill  
463 the responsibilities of the position, the Council of Elders may, by a vote of two-  
464 thirds (2/3) of the full Council of Elders, recommend that the Moderator remove  
465 that Elder from the position.  
466  
467 (iii) Such action shall be reported to the Governing Board.  
468  
469 d. VACANCIES: In the event of a vacancy, the Moderator may appoint someone who meets the  
470 qualifications to fill the vacancy, subject to the approval of the Governing Board.  
471  
472 3. GOVERNING BOARD: The Governing Board is that body authorized by the General Conference to  
473 carry on the governance of the UFMCC between General Conferences in an orderly manner. The  
474 Governing Board is composed of nine (9) persons, four (4) of whom shall be lay persons and four  
475 (4) of whom shall be clergypersons plus the Moderator, elected by the General Conference to be  
476 responsible for the governance of UFMCC finances and operations and to serve as the  
477 corporation's Board of Directors, having charge of all matters pertaining to Articles of  
478 Incorporation, all documents of legal organization, property, and finances of the UFMCC. The  
479 Governing Board shall exercise all corporate powers subject to the provisions and limitations of  
480 these bylaws and any other applicable laws.  
481  
482 a. QUALIFICATIONS: Members of the Governing Board must be members in good standing  
483 within the Fellowship who, in the sole discretion of the UFMCC, have spiritual quality and  
484 leadership, are mature, have sound judgment, and have a proven record of  
485 accomplishment. Consideration will be given to elect members with diverse perspectives,  
486 core competencies, and complementary skills consistent with the required functions and  
487 responsibilities of the Governing Board.  
488  
489 b. GOVERNING BOARD CHARTER: A Charter of the Governing Board shall define the functions,  
490 responsibilities and structures of the Governing Board. The Charter shall be affirmed by a  
491 majority vote of the General Conference and included as an addendum to UFMCC Bylaws.  
492  
493 c. TERM OF OFFICE: The term of office for members of the Governing Board shall be six years,  
494 with the exception that General Conference XXIV shall elect two (2) lay persons and two (2)  
495 clergy persons to three-year terms until the next General Conference, when two (2) lay  
496 persons and two (2) clergy persons shall be elected to six-year terms.  
497  
498 d. GOVERNING BOARD NOMINATING COMMITTEE: The Governing Board shall appoint a  
499 Governing Board Nominating Committee of three (3) persons. The Moderator shall serve as  
500 a consultant to the Governing Board Nominating Committee. The responsibility of the  
501 Governing Board Nominating Committee is to actively solicit candidates for the position,  
502 review any and all applications, and select qualified candidates. The qualified candidates  
503 shall be presented to the General Conference for election.  
504

- 505 e. VACANCIES: In the event of a vacancy on the Governing Board, the Governing Board may  
506 appoint someone who meets the qualifications to fill the vacancy until the next General  
507 Conference, when an election shall be held to fill the unexpired term.  
508
- 509 f. DISCIPLINE: The UFMCC cannot condone disloyalty, unbecoming conduct, or dereliction of  
510 duty on the part of any member of the Governing Board and, therefore, makes the following  
511 provisions for discipline or removal:  
512
- 513 (1) If the Governing Board determines that one of its members is unable or unwilling to  
514 fulfill the responsibilities of the position, the Governing Board may, by a majority vote of  
515 the full Board, remove that member from the Board. The member must be given written  
516 notice of the charges and, at that time, becomes inactive. The member has the right to  
517 appear and present his/her own defense before the Governing Board on his/her own  
518 behalf. The Governing Board will then review the charges and, upon majority vote of the  
519 members of the Governing Board not including the member charged, may remove the  
520 member of the of the Governing Board or take such other action as it may deem  
521 appropriate. The decision of the Governing Board shall be final.  
522

## 523 **ARTICLE VI -- CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

- 524
- 525 A. MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING: Any baptized Christian may become a member in good standing of  
526 the local church. A local church has the authority to determine any additional criteria for gaining  
527 and retaining membership in that local church. Any additional criteria shall be in accordance with  
528 UFMCC Bylaws and be compatible with UFMCC core values.  
529
- 530 B. FRIENDS OF THE CHURCH: A local church body may, if it desires, accept into the Church person(s)  
531 who, for one reason or another, feel that they cannot become regular members of the Church but  
532 who support the goals of the Church and want to be part of the work of the church. Such people  
533 shall be designated as "Friends of the Church." Friends may serve on appointed committees and  
534 may participate in all activities of the Church. Friends may not, however, serve on the local church  
535 administrative body and may not vote at congregational meetings. Friends shall not be considered  
536 in determining the number of Lay Delegates that a local church body may send to meetings of the  
537 General Conference Conferences.  
538
- 539 C. DISCIPLINE: The UFMCC cannot condone disloyalty or unbecoming conduct on the part of any of its  
540 members and friends; therefore, the local church administrative body shall develop and implement  
541 a procedure for taking appropriate disciplinary action, as it deems necessary.  
542

## 543 **ARTICLE VII – CHURCH SERVICES**

544

545 Each local church body shall hold services of public worship every week. Other worship services may be  
546 held as determined by the Pastor with the approval of the local church administrative body. In regard to  
547 the worship services of local church bodies, the Sacrament of Holy Communion shall be offered at  
548 weekly worship, as well as at other worship services at the discretion of the Pastor. Holy Baptism may be

549 administered at any appropriate service of the local church body or at any other time, at the Pastor's  
550 discretion.

551

552

## ARTICLE VIII -- CHURCH MEETINGS

553

554 A. GENERAL CONFERENCE: For the purpose of the transaction of business, the UFMCC will hold a  
555 General Conference every third year, commencing 2007.

556

557 1. TIME, PLACE, AND NATURE: The time and place of the General Conference will be announced at  
558 the previous General Conference. Notice of the time, place, and nature of the General  
559 Conference must be given in writing to all church bodies ninety (90) days prior to the upcoming  
560 General Conference.

561

562 a. NATURE: The Governing Board is authorized to determine the means by which members of  
563 the Lay House and of the Clergy House may participate virtually in a General Conference.

564

565 2. COMPOSITION: The General Conference of the UFMCC is that body consisting of a Clergy House  
566 and a Lay House.

567

568 a. CLERGY HOUSE: Members of the Clergy House are ordained clergy with a License to Practice  
569 and honorably retired clergy.

570

571 b. LAY HOUSE: Members of the Lay House are Lay Delegates; the Interim Pastoral Leader of  
572 each affiliated church when that Interim Pastoral Leader is a member of UFMCC; and the  
573 members of the Council of Elders and of the Governing Board who are not clergy or Lay  
574 Delegates and are members of UFMCC.

575

576 3. VOTING IN SEPARATE HOUSES: The transaction of all business except procedural matters must  
577 be approved by a separate majority vote of the votes carried by the Lay House and a separate  
578 majority vote of the votes carried by the Clergy House.

579

580 4. QUORUM: A quorum shall consist of twenty percent (20%) of the number of lay people eligible  
581 to vote at General Conference and twenty percent (20%) of the number of licensed credentialed  
582 clergy eligible to vote at General Conference.

583

584 5. SPECIAL GENERAL CONFERENCE: A special General Conference of the UFMCC can be called by  
585 the Governing Board or by a petition submitted to the Governing Board by fifty percent (50%) of  
586 all those persons eligible to vote at General Conference. Initiation of this petition may be by  
587 either clergy or laity. A special General Conference shall be governed by the same rules as those  
588 pertaining to the General Conference except when the purpose of the special General  
589 Conference is to consider affirmation of the appointment of an Elder. When the purpose of a  
590 special General Conference is to affirm the appointment of an Elder, notice of the time, place,  
591 and nature of the special General Conference must be given in writing to all members of the Lay  
592 House and of the Clergy House at least thirty (30) days in advance of the special General  
593 Conference.

594

595 a. PURPOSE: The purpose of a special General Conference must be stated in the petition. The  
596 nature and purpose of a special General Conference must be stated in the notices and  
597 written into the agenda of the special General Conference.  
598

599 b. NOTICE: The written notice must be sent to all credentialed clergy and to all voting church  
600 bodies at least thirty (30) days prior to the special General Conference.  
601

602 B. LOCAL: Each local church shall establish the percentage of members required for the transaction of  
603 business, the process for notifying members of the meeting, and the process for calling special  
604 meetings, unless otherwise indicated in UFMCC Bylaws.  
605

606 C. PROXY VOTING: No proxy and/or absentee ballots shall be allowed in any business meeting of this  
607 Fellowship, except where specifically provided for in these Bylaws.  
608

## 609 **ARTICLE IX – CHURCH FINANCES**

610  
611 A. FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP: The UFMCC adopts and teaches tithing as the scripturally affirmed means  
612 of supporting the church and its ministries, and as the expression of good stewardship of time, skills,  
613 and money by individuals and church bodies. Therefore, it shall be the responsibility of both the  
614 clergy and the lay leadership of local churches to plan and implement programs of stewardship both  
615 to help persons grow in the grace of giving and to fund the church's ministries. An offering shall be  
616 received at each service of public worship in the local church and at conferences sponsored by  
617 UFMCC.  
618

619 B. REPORTING: As of January 1, 2003, the local church administrative body shall report all Church  
620 receipts each month to the UFMCC and with that report shall remit fifteen percent (15%) of the  
621 funds reported. As of January 1, 2004, the amount to be remitted shall be fourteen and one-half  
622 percent (14-1/2%). Beginning in 2005, the amount to be remitted shall be fourteen percent (14%)  
623 and then decrease by one percent (1%) per biennium until the amount to be remitted is reduced to  
624 ten percent (10%), unless the reduction is delayed or accelerated by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the  
625 General Conference.  
626

627 Funds bequeathed and money collected for the following purposes must be reported, but may be  
628 deducted from the total receipts before calculating the percentages due the UFMCC:

629 1. FUNDS TO MEET THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF PERSONS IN DISTRESS: This money may only be  
630 used to cover direct services without which the recipient would be destitute or in personal  
631 danger.  
632

633 2. BUILDING FUND: This is money set aside to construct or purchase a church facility which may  
634 include worship space, meeting space, office space, kitchen facilities, classroom space, non-  
635 revenue parking facilities, furniture and major equipment for these facilities. It may also be  
636 used for major renovation costs of purchased or leased/rented facilities and the payment of the  
637 principle on a building loan. Funds raised specifically to reduce the principle on a building loan  
638 are tithe exempt as part of the building fund. Rent, mortgage interest payments, utilities, minor  
639 equipment, and routine maintenance are not exempt.  
640

641 3. DELEGATES FUND: Expenses of sending the church's delegate(s) and clergy to General  
642 Conference.

643  
644 Any money transferred permanently or for a long term from any of the above exempt funds into the  
645 General Fund must be added to the income figures for that month, and tithes paid on them. Report  
646 and remittance are due to the UFMCC on or before the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of the month following the  
647 month being reported.

648  
649 Wherever possible and desirable as determined by the Governing Board, churches shall send their  
650 tithe directly to the UFMCC Headquarters. However, the Governing Board may choose, in certain  
651 circumstances, to authorize special accounts in nations other than the United States to hold in trust  
652 the ten percent (10%) UFMCC tithe within that nation. The Governing Board, upon the  
653 recommendation of the Moderator, will name the signatories on said accounts and will approve a  
654 budget for use of those monies for UFMCC purposes and programs within the respective nation.  
655 The Governing Board shall establish appropriate policies and procedures concerning the care of  
656 funds held in trust for UFMCC. Whenever funds are transmitted internationally to UFMCC,  
657 Fellowship Offices shall provide documentation satisfactory to national/regional government  
658 authorities in the sending countries.

659  
660 C. FIDUCIARY BODIES: Whenever the Governing Board chooses to authorize special accounts to hold  
661 UFMCC funds in trust, the Governing Board may appoint a fiduciary body to have charge of all  
662 matters pertaining to the Articles of Incorporation, all documents of legal organization, real  
663 property, and finances held in trust, as legally permitted and appropriate. The Governing Board, in  
664 its discretion, shall determine the number of members of any fiduciary body. All actions of the  
665 fiduciary bodies must be reported to and approved by the Governing Board, except where  
666 specifically provided for in these Bylaws.

- 667  
668 1. QUALIFICATIONS: Members of a fiduciary body must be members in good standing within the  
669 Fellowship who, in the sole discretion of the Governing Board, have spiritual quality and  
670 leadership, are mature, have sound judgment and a proven record of accomplishment. The  
671 term of office shall be two years.
- 672 2. ACCOUNTABILITY: The fiduciary body shall be subject to these Bylaws, the fiduciary body's  
673 Articles of Incorporation, the fiduciary body's Bylaws, and the policies and procedures of the  
674 Governing Board.
- 675 3. DISCIPLINE: The UFMCC will not condone conduct which is, in its sole discretion, disloyal or  
676 unbecoming or a dereliction of duty on the part of members of a fiduciary body. Therefore, the  
677 Governing Board shall develop and implement a procedure for taking appropriate disciplinary  
678 action, as it deems necessary.

679  
680 D. BOARD OF PENSION ASSESSMENTS: Each local church administrative body in the USA shall report  
681 quarterly the number of members in good standing for each month within every quarter and shall  
682 remit the Board of Pensions assessment as set by General Conference. Report and remittance are  
683 due to the Board of Pensions on or before the tenth (10th) day of the month following the quarter  
684 reported.

685

- 686 E.. SIGNATURES: Any bank or financial account in the name of any church body, the UFMCC, or of any  
687 subordinate group or body, must require two signatures for withdrawals, one of which must be that  
688 of an officer elected or a person appointed under UFMCC Bylaws, the authorizing documents of the  
689 subordinate group or body, or the authorizing documents of the local church.  
690
- 691 F. FORGIVENESS OF TITHES: The Governing Board may grant forgiveness of late tithes and  
692 assessments.  
693

## 694 **ARTICLE X -- RESERVATION OF POWERS**

695  
696 All powers not delegated by these Bylaws are reserved to the local church bodies.  
697

## 698 **ARTICLE XI – ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS**

- 699
- 700 A. ADOPTION: These Bylaws shall become effective immediately upon adoption by the General  
701 Conference of the UFMCC and shall become binding upon all members and church bodies within the  
702 Fellowship.  
703
- 704 B. AMENDMENTS: These Bylaws may be amended or repealed at any duly convened meeting of the  
705 General Conference according to the procedures adopted by the General Conference. Such  
706 amendments or repeals can only be effective if two-thirds (2/3) of the duly authorized Lay Delegates  
707 and two-thirds (2/3) of the duly authorized clergy attending vote in favor of such amendments or  
708 repeals.  
709
- 710 C. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL LAWS: If UFMCC Bylaws are inconsistent with laws of any nation or  
711 other jurisdiction in which a local church body is organized, the Governing Board may allow the  
712 Bylaws or other organizational documents to contain variances with these Bylaws to facilitate  
713 compliance of the local church body with such laws.