

# The Constitution and By-Laws of the Chewelah United Church of Christ

## Mission Statement

“As children of God, united in our belief in Christ, we are called to love one another as God loves us: helping each other to live as givers; to be as doers; to pray as believers; and always to serve.”

**ARTICLE I Name and Location** The name of this church shall be United Church of Christ (Congregational-Methodist). The location is the corner of Park and Webster, Chewelah, Washington.

**ARTICLE II Purpose** The purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments, to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church Universal, to render loving service toward all mankind, and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace.

**ARTICLE III Policy** The governance of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right to control all of its affairs, subject in legal matters to the Articles of Incorporation granted by the Secretary of the State of Washington.

This church accepts the obligation of mutual cooperation involved in the free fellowship of the United Church of Christ and pledges itself to share the common aims and work.

**ARTICLE IV Faith and Covenant** This church acknowledges as its Head, Jesus Christ the Son of God and Savior of all people. It acknowledges as people in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the Scripture and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the World.

It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the practice prevailing among Christians, it recognizes two Sacraments: Baptism; and the Lord's Supper of Holy Communion.

In the spirit of non-creedal Christianity, this church holds it to be the responsibility of the individual member to interpret the basic Christian beliefs and teachings according to the light that God has given that person.

In this spirit we offer the following, not as a creed, but as a statement that is acceptable to most members of the United Church of Christ; here follows the Statement of Faith accepted in Oberlin, Ohio, July 5-9, 1959, as adapted by Robert V. Moss (inclusive language).

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our brother, and to whose deeds we testify:

God calls the world into being, creates humankind in the divine image, and sets before us the way of life and death; God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin;

God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness declared through prophets and apostles. In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord,

God has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table to join him in his passion and victory.

God promises to all who trust in the gospel the forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God. Amen.

## **COVENANT**

We covenant one with another to seek for and to respond to the Word and Will of God. We propose to walk together in the ways of the Lord, and to support the church with gifts of time, talents, and treasure. We hold it to be the mission of the church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice and peace. As did our ancestors, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting.

## **ARTICLE V Membership**

Membership in this Church shall be open to any person without regard to race or color, who has been baptized, has been confirmed, has made a public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, or (a) on presentation of satisfactory letters of transfer from other churches or (b) by reaffirmation of faith on approval of the Diaconate and/or Pastor. Members shall pledge themselves to attend regularly the worship of the church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper, to contribute to its support and benevolence, and to seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and the community.

Any member may, on request, be granted a letter of transfer. If wishing to join a body not in fellowship with this church s/he may be released.

If a member requests in writing to be released from membership obligations, the church shall patiently endeavor to secure continuance in its fellowship; but failing in such efforts, the church may grant the request and terminate membership. Such a request shall be approved by the Pastor and the Council, and the Secretary shall issue the appropriate letter of release.

A member whose address has long been unknown or who, for a period of two years, in spite of spiritual care, has not attended the church's worship or contributed to its support, may by recommendation of the Diaconate and approval of the Council, be removed from the membership roll and placed on an inactive list. If after the expiration of a year the relationship remains unchanged, the name may be dropped from the inactive roll by further approval of the Council.

## **ARTICLE VI Governing Body**

The governing body of this church shall be the voting membership (herein referred to as "the Church") assembled in a lawfully called meeting. The vote of a majority of voting members present at the meeting shall be the action of the church except in those cases where specific provisions to the contrary are made in this constitution.

A quorum shall consist of ten (10) percent of the voting members, but never less than twenty (20) voting members.

## **ARTICLE VII The Council**

The Council shall be the Executive/Policy making body of this Church.

**Section 1.** Its decisions shall supersede those of any other committee or board. It shall provide for the auditing of all financial affairs, always subject to the regulations prescribed by the law of the State. It shall make provision for the determinations and raising of the current expense budget as well as for Our Christian World Mission and

other benevolences. It shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, be the custodian of all Church records, and report to the Church at its regular and special meetings. The Council shall develop an annual budget which is made accessible to the congregation two weeks prior to the annual meeting along with other annual reports.

The Council shall normally meet at least once every month for the transaction of such business as may properly come before it. Special meetings are subject to the Chairperson's call.

The Council shall be composed of the following who shall be members of this Church, with exceptions as noted.

## **Section 2. Officers**

- 1) Pastor(s), (ex-officio, non-voting)
- 2) Moderator
- 3) Assistant Moderator
- 4) Treasurer
- 5) Financial Secretary
- 6) Clerk
- 7) Director of Music
- 8) Historian
- 9) Three (3) at-large representatives, one of whom may be a non-member of this Church
- 10) Chairperson or representative of the Diaconate
- 11) Chairperson or representative of the Trustees
- 12) Chairperson or representative of Christian Education
- 13) Chairperson or representative of Mission & Stewardship
- 14) Chairperson or representative of the House Committee
- 15) Chairperson or representative of the Pastoral Relations Committee

## **Section 3. Council Quorum**

Seven of the voting Council members shall represent a quorum and a simple majority of those present shall prevail. Each member of the Council, or in his/her absence his/her delegated alternate, shall have one vote only, regardless of offices, committees or organizations he/she may represent. The Council meetings are open to all.

## **Section 4. Church Corporation**

The Moderator, the Assistant Moderator, the Treasurer, and the Clerk, shall be the officers of the Church Corporation in the State of Washington.

## **Section 5. Board of Directors**

The Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, Pastor, and the Chairperson of the Diaconate shall constitute the Board of Directors of the Church.

## **Section 6. Council Appointed Standing Committees**

The Council may, at its discretion, recommend to the Church that a standing committee be formed. The number and manner of selection of the members of such committee, its duties, responsibilities, and functions shall be included in the recommendation. Following a favorable vote by the Church, the chairperson of such standing committee, so formed, shall become a member of the Council and description of its membership and duties shall become a part of Article IX of this Constitution.

## **Section 7. Council Appointed Ad Hoc Committees**

The Council may, at its discretion, appoint a temporary/Ad Hoc committee for a stated purpose, to assist the Council in the discharge of its obligations. The tenure of all appointed committees, except the Pastoral Search Committee, shall terminate on the day prior to each annual meeting. Each committee must be re-appointed at the first Council meeting following the annual meeting if it is to continue to function.

## **Section 8. Vacancies**

Vacancies of all offices of the Church may be appointed by the Council for the unexpired terms or filled at the next regular election.

## **ARTICLE VIII Officers**

### Pastor

The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by 80 percent vote of the Church. In order to terminate this relationship, two (2) months' notice shall be given by either party, unless a shorter period is agreed upon by mutual consent. The procedure shall be in accordance with the Constitution and By Laws of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ. The Pastor shall be in charge of the spiritual welfare of the Church with the assistance of the Diaconate. The Pastor shall seek to enlist people as followers of Christ, preach the Gospel, administer the Sacraments, has consultation on all related services of public worship, and administers the activities of the Church in cooperation with the various committees. The pastor shall be ex-officio member of all committees.

### Moderator

The Moderator shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a two (2) year term as lay leader of the Church. After serving two (2) full terms s/he shall be one (1) year ineligible for reelection as Moderator. Duties shall include: presiding at Council and all business sessions of the congregation. The Moderator shall be an ex-officio member of committees. The Moderator with the assistance of the Pastor will evaluate the secretary on an annual basis.

### Assistant Moderator

The Assistant Moderator shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Moderator and perform any duties designated by the Moderator. The Assistant Moderator shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a two (2) year term as lay leader of the Church. After serving two (2) full terms s/he shall be for one (1) year ineligible for reelection as Assistant Moderator. The Assistant Moderator is charged with oversight of hiring and personnel practices in collaboration with the Church Moderator and Church Council.

It shall be the duty of the Assistant Moderator, with guidance of the Council and Moderator, to oversee the supervision and annual evaluation processes of paid church employees - the Pastor, Secretary, Custodian, and Child Care provider - including complete job descriptions, annual evaluation processes and evaluation tools, ensuring training for the persons conducting staff evaluations, reporting evaluations to the Church Moderator, and maintaining confidential personnel files.

Duties include:

- 1) Developing, reviewing and recommending for approval by the Council, policies and procedures dealing with church employment practices, including hiring and staffing, job descriptions; evaluation tools and processes;
- 2) Recommendations in employee compensation; and
- 3) Developing and recommending to the Council, grievance processes, hearing and responding as appropriate to concerns about employees, work places, and personnel issues.
- 4) The Council shall be the final arbitrator in grievances or personnel issues.

### Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a one (1) year term subject to reelection. S/he shall receive from the Financial Secretary receipts of all money deposited in the Church bank account. The Treasurer shall pay the bills of the Church on order from the Council. S/he shall keep accurate account of all receipts and disbursements. The books of the Treasurer shall be audited annually on the last day of the Church fiscal year.

### Financial Secretary

A financial Secretary shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a one (1) year term subject to reelection. S/he shall: take charge of all offerings and special collections to the general fund and savings; keep an accurate account of all monies; deposit all monies received to the proper church bank account taking receipts for same; and furnish contributors with statements of their accounts on an annual basis or upon request.

### Clerk

The Clerk shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a one (1) year term subject to reelection. S/he shall keep a record of the proceedings of the following meetings: Council; semi-annual; and annual.

### Director of Music

The Director of Music shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a one (1) year term subject to reelection. S/he shall be responsible for the Church music program with the guidance of the pastor. This includes the appointment of the choir directors, selection of organists and purchase of supplies needed in the music department.

### Historian

The Historian shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a one (1) year term subject to reelection. S/he shall keep a journal of all occurrences of interest to the Church and obtain and preserve all past records available.

### Members-at-Large

Up to two Members-at-Large are representatives of the congregation on the Council, elected by a majority vote cast at the annual church meeting. They should be persons that will assume leadership in the various committees of the Council. Their term of office shall be two years. In order to provide continuity, their tenure shall be such that one-half of these offices must be vacant each year.

## **ARTICLE IX Committees**

### Diaconate

The Diaconate shall be members of the Church. They shall assist and support the Pastor in the spiritual interests of the Church; prepare the elements for Communion and, when invited by the Pastor, shall aid in their distribution; have jurisdiction to address matters of concern with members of the congregation or the Pastor not covered in Pastoral Relations Committee. Diaconate members shall take heed of the high calling of their office, safeguarding all spiritual interests of the Congregation, maintaining order in the House of God, visiting the sick, and ministering to the Spiritual needs of the Congregation and the greater community.

The Diaconate shall be responsible for: accepting and expending of memorial gifts; conducting an annual survey of the Church roll and submitting recommended changes at the annual meeting; and providing for pulpit supply in case of a vacancy or the absence of the pastor.

The Diaconate shall consist of up to six members and name its own chairperson.

Members shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of three (3) years and their tenure shall be such that approximately one-third of such offices shall become vacant annually. Members whose terms expire shall not be eligible for reelection to this committee for one year.

### Trustees

The Trustees shall have the care and custody of the property and all papers relating to the property of the Church whether real or personal, under direction of the Council. Whenever possible Trustees shall be members of the Church. The Trustees with the guidance of the Assistant Moderator will evaluate the custodian on an annual basis.

The Trustees Committee shall consist of up to six (6) members, one-half of whom shall be elected at each annual church meeting for a term of two years.

The Trustees Committee shall elect its own officers and committees and determine its own agenda. A quorum shall consist of the majority of the committee.

The Trustees Committee shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer property without specific authority of the Church.

### Christian Education Committee

The Christian Education (CE) Committee shall determine educational objectives for the Church and engage in study, long-range planning, and evaluation of goals and activities. The Christian Education Committee with the guidance of the Assistant Moderator will evaluate the child care provider on an annual basis.

Specific responsibilities of the Committee shall include:

- a. Appointment of all teachers and provision for their training.
- b. Selection and acquisition of curriculum material for the church school and other educational programs for the church.

The Christian Education Committee shall consist of up to six (6) members, one half of whom shall be elected annually. When possible, one youth representative shall also be on the Committee, having a term of one (1) year. After serving one (1) full term of two (2) years, a CE Committee member shall be ineligible for reelection to this Committee for one year. The Committee shall elect a chairperson who shall be responsible for arranging and presiding at meetings, and a secretary who shall be responsible for recording the objectives, decisions, and activities of the Committee.

#### House Committee

The House Committee shall define and enforce all regulations regarding the use of Church facilities. Rules and regulations shall be approved by the Council and posted in the Fellowship Hall.

The House Committee shall consist of up to three (3) members elected at the Annual Meeting. It shall elect its own chairperson who shall call meetings of the group for action as necessary. The term of office of the elected members shall be two (2) years, one-half of whom shall be elected at each annual meeting.

#### Mission & Stewardship Committee

The Mission and Stewardship Committee shall provide leadership concerning the generous and responsible use of God's gifts in the mission and outreach of the congregation.

Specific responsibilities of the Committee shall include:

- a. Educating members and friends of the church about the importance of good stewardship as a faithful way of life;
- b. Participating in the development of the yearly budget for the congregation;
- c. Conducting the annual Stewardship (pledge) Drive;
- d. Recommending and setting goals for basic support of Our Church's Wider Mission, special appeals and promoting participation; and
- e. Choosing local, national, and international mission projects, and assisting church members in supporting those projects.

The Mission and Stewardship Committee shall consist of up to six (6) members, serving a term of two years, one-half of whom shall be elected annually. The Committee shall elect a chair who shall be responsible for arranging and presiding at meetings, and a secretary who shall be responsible for recording the objectives, decisions, and activities of the Committee.

#### Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of up to five (5) members elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of two years, one-half of whom are elected annually. Duties of the committee are to secure nominations for the following offices: Moderator; Assistant Moderator; Treasurer; Financial Secretary; Clerk; Music Director; Historian; and Members-at-Large of the Council; and Standing Committees: Diaconate; Trustees; Christian Education; Mission & Stewardship; House Committee; Nominating Committee; Tech/Communications and Pastoral Relations Committee.

Other nominations may be made from the floor with the consent of the nominee. All who are elected shall be publicly installed in their respective offices.

### Pastoral Search Committee

It shall be the responsibility of the Pastoral Search Committee, appointed by the Council, to seek a candidate for a vacancy in the office of Pastor. Its duties terminate when the Pastor has accepted the call and has been accepted by the members of the Church. The procedure shall be in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

### Pastoral Relations Committee

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall meet regularly with the Pastor to address his/her concerns and to provide guidance regarding the performance of ministerial duties as designated by the Pastor's contract. In addition, this Committee shall be responsible for completing the annual evaluation of the Pastor.

The Committee will also provide a liaison function with the purpose of confidential communications between the congregation and the Pastor. If a member(s) of the Congregation has concerns related to the Pastor's duties or functions, the member can bring his/her concern to this committee for consideration and or resolution.

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall consist of up to six (6) members. At least two members from the Pastoral Search Committee will serve on this committee for the first year after the Pastor's Call. The other members will be elected for a two-year term with one-half of the committee elected annually.

### Communications/Technology Committee

The Communications/ Technology Committee is dedicated to promoting: 1) understanding of Chewelah UCC, its vision, mission/purposes and priorities; 2) communications within Chewelah UCC audiences and to external audiences. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to ensure policies and procedures for administration of data are representative of Chewelah UCC's values; are timely and accurate; and feedback is shared. Members contribute expertise to assist in 1) establishing organizational marketing/ branding; 2) developing communication plans and initiatives/ outreach that engages new members and friends through various marketing communication channels and web presences including, electronic/social media (e.g. Facebook, newsletter, website and printed material; 3) maintaining and building relationships with key members of the press in conjunction with church initiatives; and 4) identifying and marketing key events for church to community.

This committee has a minimum membership of three members, serving two-years terms. There is no term limit to service on this committee.

### **ARTICLE X Annual Delegates to the Conference**

The Church's quota of delegates shall be elected by the Church Council to represent the Church at the Conference and the Area organization meetings of the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ.

### **ARTICLE XI Auxiliary Organizations**

All organizations connected with the Church and using its equipment are regarded as integral parts of the Church and under its general jurisdiction.

### **ARTICLE XII Property**

The Church may in its corporate name sue or be sued; acquire by purchase, gift, devise, bequest or otherwise; and own, hold, invest, reinvest or dispose of property both real and personal, for such work as the Church may undertake, and may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for and transfer rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer and convey such property for the general purpose of the Church. It may receive and hold in trust both real and personal property and invest and reinvest the same and make any contracts for promoting the objects and purposes of the Church.

### **DISSOLUTION**

If dissolution of the Chewelah UCC were to be considered, guidance from the Pacific Northwest Conference would be sought.

If there is not a specific disavowal that the assets on dissolution will be distributed to the membership, the Church will not qualify as an exempt organization. See Internal Revenue Code Sec. 501 C (3) and the regulations thereunder.

### **ARTICLE XIII Meetings**

The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held the first Sunday in February. Such date is to be published in the Church bulletin and/or announced from the pulpit at least one month prior to the Annual Meeting. The Council, the officers of the Church, the Pastor, and all church committees/organizations shall submit their annual reports and budget in writing to the Congregation two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. New officers and committee members shall be elected at this meeting.

A Semi-Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held in the late summer. Such date is to be published in the Church bulletin and/or announced from the pulpit at least one month prior to the Semi- Annual Meeting. At this meeting reports of the important activities of the Church shall be presented by the various officers, committees and organizations.

Special meetings of the Church may be called by:

- a. The Council
- b. The Moderator
- c. Special meetings of the Church may be called by a petition to the council signed by not less than ten (10) percent, but never fewer than twenty (20) members. The Council shall call such meetings within three weeks from the receipt of the petitions.

All members of the Church shall be duly notified via mail by the Church Secretary prior to all specially called meetings two weeks prior to the meeting.

### **ARTICLE XIV Rules of Order**

*Robert's Rules of Order* shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by this constitution. Ex-officio members of all committees shall have the right of voice and vote.

### **ARTICLE XV Amendments**

Amendments to this Constitution and By-Laws may be made at any duly called meeting of the Church by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the voting members present, public announcement of the text of the proposed amendment(s) having been made in writing and mailed/e-mailed/made accessible to each member two weeks prior to the meeting.

