

CATHEDRAL ^{OF}
HOPE
HOUSTON
a place to belong

Constitution and Bylaws
Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC
November 2015

CONSTITUTION

Article I. Name

The name of this Church shall be Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC, located in Houston, Texas.

Article II. Structure

The Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church is composed of its members, whose organization includes officers, committees, ministries, councils, and other groupings as determined by the agreement of the members.

Article III. Covenantal Relationships

As a member of the United Church of Christ, Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church will relate to the various expressions of the church in a covenantal manner. The Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church will seek God's will and be faithful to God's mission, attending to its responsibilities in relation to all expressions of the church. Its decisions are made in consultation and collaboration with other parts of the structure, including its Association, Conference, and the General Synod. As a member of the Body of Christ, Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church is called to honor and respect the work and ministry of each other part. Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church listens, hears, and carefully considers the advice, counsel, and requests of others. In this covenant, Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church joins the various expressions of the United Church of Christ to seek to walk together in all God's ways.

Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church has, in fellowship, a God-given responsibility for the United Church of Christ, its labors and its extension, even as the United Church of Christ has, in fellowship, a God-given responsibility for the well-being and needs and aspirations of its Local Churches. In mutual Christian concern and in dedication to Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, the Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church shares with the entire United Church of Christ in common Christian experience and responsibility.

Article IV. Officers

The officers of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC shall consist of President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Financial Secretary. These officers are members of the Cathedral of Hope Houston Leadership Council. They shall be responsible to and called by the election of the membership of the church.

Article V. Membership

Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church is composed of its members, who, believing in God as Creator, and accepting Jesus Christ as Redeemer, and depending on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are organized for Christian worship, for the furtherance of Christian fellowship, and for the ongoing work of Christian witness. Persons become members of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church by: (a) baptism and either confirmation or profession of faith in Jesus Christ; (b) reaffirmation or re-profession of faith; or (c) letter of transfer or certification from other Christian churches. Persons who become members of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church have undertaken a period of preparation. All persons who are or shall become members

of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church are thereby members of the United Church of Christ.

Article VI. The Ministry

Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church recognizes that God calls the whole Church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the Gospel in church and society. Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church seeks to undergird the ministry of its members by nurturing faith, calling forth gifts, and equipping members for Christian service.

Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church recognizes that God calls certain individuals to forms of ministry in and on behalf of the church for which ecclesiastical authorization is required. The Call of an Ordained, Licensed or Commissioned Minister to Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church establishes a covenantal relationship with both the authorized minister and the United Church of Christ as represented by Houston Association.

Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church shall call as a Pastor only a pastor who has been given standing in an association of the United Church of Christ as an authorized minister. In the event of a pastoral vacancy a Search Committee shall be authorized to seek and present candidates to the congregation for approval.

Likewise, if members of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church are called to ministries by other bodies in cooperation with the United Church of Christ a covenantal relationship shall exist between Cathedral of Hope Houston Church, the member, the other calling body, and the United Church of Christ as represented by the Houston Association.

Article VII. Officers of the Church

The officers of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church shall include President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Financial Secretary. They shall be responsible to and called by the election of the membership of the church. Officers shall be members of Cathedral of Hope Houston Church.

President

The responsibilities include: helping all leaders focus on their primary task; lead the congregation in the process of strategic planning and developing vision; guiding the work of the Leadership Council throughout the year, planning agendas and presiding at meetings; organizing an annual Congregational – Leadership Council planning meeting; having an open working relationship with the pastor(s); recruiting others to help in the work of the church.

Treasurer

The responsibilities include: disbursing all money contributed to the local church budget, keeping accurate records of how money is spent; work according to the guidelines established by the Leadership Council; working with Financial Secretary to maintain records of all funds received; maintaining compliance with all applicable government tax guidelines; participating in and reporting regularly to the Leadership Council and the Congregation.

Secretary

The responsibilities include: working with pastor to keep accurate records for all membership rolls, people removed from rolls, reporting regularly to Leadership Council and the Congregation; maintaining a list of members received and those removed from the rolls; recording the minutes of the Leadership Council.

Financial Secretary

The responsibilities include: working according to the guidelines established by the Leadership Council; receive funds from whatever source, record them, and report them to the Treasurer; collect offerings received during worship services, making certain that more than one person is involved in collecting and counting the money; deposit money in bank as soon as possible after received; check records, quarterly, against those of the treasurer; keep records, whenever possible, of how much money is given by whom to report amounts received to the appropriate people.

Article VIII. Organization and Governance

The ministry of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church is organized into committees, ministries, and councils that are appointed, elected and authorized by, and are responsible to, the Congregation. Committees, ministries, and councils may organize and delegate to other groups as needed to complete their work, under their supervision.

Article IX. Property

Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church, may in its corporate name, sue or be sued, hold, purchase and receive by gift, grant or other conveyance of and to any property, real or personal, with the power to lease, mortgage, sell or convey the same, providing the law permits.

Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church pledges all of its assets for use in performing its religious functions.

If Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church should dissolve for any reason whatsoever, dissolution shall be undertaken in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas as they pertain to non-profit corporations, and any applicable federal laws as pertain to 501(c)3 designation. All assets remaining after debt satisfaction shall be distributed to a qualified 501(c)3 organization as determined by the Leadership Council and affirmed by a vote of the congregation.

Article X. Church Meetings

Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church shall have an Annual Meeting and other such meetings as provided by in the Bylaws. Notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given of any and all meetings of the congregation. Notice shall be given of any and all congregational meetings no less than fourteen (14) days before the meeting is to be held. Notice shall be given in worship, via congregational electronic newsletter, and the Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC

Church web site. Reports that are given at any and all meetings of the congregation shall be made available in writing.

Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Leadership Council and such special meetings shall have no less than seven (7) days notice given in worship, via congregational newsletter, and the Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church web site.

Twenty percent (20%) of the active membership as of the previous December 31st shall constitute a quorum. Active membership is defined as a member who has participated in time, talent or treasure in the past year as determined by the Leadership Council.

Article XI. Rules of Order

Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church shall employ consensus decision-making in the deliberations of the Leadership Council. Consensus decision-making is a group decision making process that seeks the consent of all participants. Consensus may be defined as an acceptable resolution, one that can be supported, even if not the favorite of each individual.

Article XII. Amendments

The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any duly called meeting of the Congregation called for the purpose of amending the Constitution and/or Bylaws. Any amendment to the Constitution or Bylaws must be approved by two thirds majority vote of members present.

BYLAWS

Preamble

These Bylaws, consistent with the Constitution of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church, further define and/or regulate the officers, councils, committees, ministries, and membership. They also describe its free and voluntary relationship with the Houston Association and the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ, and with the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, its Executive Council, and the Covenanted. Affiliated and Associated Ministries.

Article I. The Ministry

The Search Committee of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church will be formed to fill pastoral or other ministerial vacancies. This search committee will be formed by the Leadership Council of the Cathedral of Hope Houston Church.

In filling a vacancy or securing pastoral services during the period of a vacancy, the Search Committee will report the vacancy, and seek the counsel of the Houston Association Committee on Ministry, through the Houston Association Minister and the South Central Conference Minister.

The Search Committee will request that the Conference (or Association) minister secure relevant information about any candidate whom it wishes to consider for the vacancy.

The Search Committee will present a candidate it recommends to the Cathedral of Hope Houston Church, which determines whether it wishes the call the candidate recommended.

The terms of the call will be presented to the Houston Association Committee on the Ministry, and the call format will be one agreed on by the Houston Association. The contents of the call will name the participation in the Pension fund. A copy of the call agreement will be given to the Leadership Council, the Conference Minister, and the minister called.

When an Ordained Minister accepts the call to Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church, the Minister and Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church will join in requesting the Houston Association arrange for a service of installation or recognition.

When a minister authorized by Houston Association, or Cathedral of Hope Houston Church, decide to terminate their relationship, notice of the decision is sent to the South Central Conference Minister and the Houston Association.

If Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church selects a ministerial leader who does not have standing in the United Church of Christ, the minister will be required to seek Dual Standing from the Houston Association.

If serious issues or divisive conflicts arise between the members of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church and its ministerial leadership, the Leadership Council will seek the assistance of the Houston Association Committee on Ministry.

Should the Houston Association have reason to question the fitness for ministry of any of the leaders of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church, every effort will be made to cooperate fully in the investigation, to remain in covenant with all parties, and to provide appropriate leadership and nurture for the congregation during and after the fitness review.

Article II. Leadership Council

The Leadership Council of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church is its primary governing body, accountable directly to the membership.

The Leadership Council will have a minimum of six voting members, which will include: the President (who shall also convene the Leadership Council); a Treasurer, Financial Secretary, the Secretary of the Church, and two at-large members. All members of the Leadership Council must be members of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church.

Members of the Leadership Council will be elected for a two year term and will service no more than three consecutive terms. Each year the congregation will elect three members of the Leadership Council in order to provide adequate leadership and transition. In the event that a member of the Leadership Council resigns before the completion of their term, more than three members of the Leadership Council may be elected in a given year.

Vacancies may be filled by appointment by the Leadership Council until the next scheduled meeting of the Congregation.

The Pastor(s) will serve as ex-officio members of the Council and may not vote.

The Leadership Council will meet monthly as needed and no less than 7 times each year. A quorum will consist of 60% of its voting members. Leadership Council meetings conducted via telephone or video conferencing are permissible as needed.

The Council's work will include: reviewing, modifying and approving the budget of the church; setting annual mission direction and goals for the congregation; reviewing the work of all Committees through the Coordinator's report; approving new initiatives of Committees and Coordinators; and taking such action as it deems necessary to promote the mission of the Church.

Spouses or partners of pastoral staff, who are also members of Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church, may serve on the leadership Council in an At-Large position. They may not serve as officers of the Leadership Council.

The Leadership Council shall appoint a nominating committee for the selection of candidates for the annual election of Leadership Council vacancies. As the nominating committee they are responsible for reviewing and vetting all possible candidates and for prayerfully discerning what names to put forward for consideration to the congregation. At the annual meeting, after the slate of candidates for the Leadership Council are presented to the congregation, additional nominations can be put forth for consideration. If necessary, election by position(s) will be held.

The Council shall, from time to time, convene additional work groups to assist in attaining its goals. It will specify the purpose of these groups and oversee their work.

The Leadership Council shall report on its work to the Congregation quarterly.

The Leadership Council will be responsible for coordinating congregational review and response to General Synod proposals and actions.

Article III. Officers

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Article IV. Ministry Committees

Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church shall have ministry committees that execute the ministries of the church. Committee members are selected by the pastor(s) and/or members of the Leadership Council. The ministry committees will change as the needs of the congregation change. Special ministry committees, called to accomplish a specific goal or conduct a specific event, may be established for the life of the event or the completion of the goal. The ministry committees shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

Worship

The primary task of the Worship Ministry Committee is to work with the pastor and minister of music to ensure that the congregation provides opportunities for worship that will help people develop and strengthen their relationship with God and will help them live more faithfully as Christian disciples.

Outreach

The primary task of the Outreach Ministry Committee is to address the concerns and conditions of people in our own community and across the world so that the quality of life may be improved for all. The Outreach Ministry will be responsible for keeping informed about the resources provided by Justice and Witness Ministries and incorporating them when appropriate.

Communication

The primary task of the Communications Ministry Committee is to develop and carry out a communications program so that members and others in the community will understand and become interested in participating in Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church.

Congregational Care

The primary task of the Congregational Care Ministry Committee is to address the concerns and conditions of people in the congregation so that they may feel safe and that they belong at Cathedral of Hope Houston UCC Church, which as a result, they may grow in their spiritual life and become better equipped for life as Christian disciples.

Facilities

The primary task of Facilities Ministry Committee is to supervise and maintain all property belonging to the congregation so that the ministries of the congregation can be effective.

Hospitality

The primary task of the Hospitality Ministry Committee is to bring the community together after Sunday services for refreshments and fellowship, and to bring the community together for events such as the monthly potluck meal, holiday meals, and other special events.

Education

The primary task of the Education Ministry Committee is to provide learning experiences for people of all ages so that they may grow in understanding the gospel and become better equipped for daily living as Christians.

Music

The primary task of the Music Ministry is to ensure that the music, in all its forms, enhances and support the worship of the congregation. In addition, the Music Ministry provides opportunities for members of the congregation to grow and develop their musical talents and abilities.

Community Life

The primary task of the Community Life Ministry is to coordinate and offer opportunities for the community to come together, interact, and socialize in non-church settings.