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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 **ARTICLE V – GOVERNMENT, ORGANIZATION, AND OFFICERS**

155 156 157 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.

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 (10th) 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.

BYLAWS OF THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

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

Addendum 1

PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING BYLAW PROPOSALS

The Bylaw amendment process is managed by the Bylaws Team. The members of the Bylaws Team are appointed by and accountable to the Governing Board.

Criteria

In order for a Bylaw amendment proposal to be considered by the General Conference, the proposal must be sponsored by a member of the Lay House or of the Clergy House of General Conference.

- a. Members of the Lay House are Lay Delegates; the Interim Pastoral Leader of each affiliated church when that Interim Pastoral Leader is a member of UFMCC; and the members of the Council of Elders and of the Governing Board who are not clergy or Lay Delegates and are members of UFMCC.
- b. Members of the Clergy House are ordained clergy with a License to Practice and honorably retired clergy.

Procedure

1. A member of the Lay House or of the Clergy House should submit the Bylaw amendment proposal in writing to the Office of the Moderator by no later than six (6) months prior to the next General Conference. The written proposal needs to include at least the following information:
 - a. The name and contact information of the person submitting the proposal.
 - b. A statement of whether the person submitting the proposal is a member of the Lay House or of the Clergy House of General Conference. A member of the Lay House who is a Lay Delegate or Interim Pastoral Leader should indicate the name of his/her church; other members of the Lay House should indicate whether he/she is a member of the Governing Board or of the Council of Elders.
 - c. Citation of the particular Article to be amended (example: Article V.B.3(d)).
 - d. The current language of the Article to be amended.
 - e. The proposed language (how it is proposed that the Article would read after being amended).
2. In order for a member of the Lay House or of the Clergy House to submit a Bylaw amendment, the proposal must:
 - a. Have the written support of the sponsor's local church and
 - b. Have the written support of at least two (2) other churches from two (2) other countries.

3. The Office of the Moderator will send the proposal to the Bylaws Team within five (5) business days after it is received.
4. The Bylaws Team will review the proposal for its compatibility with MCC vision, mission, and values. Proposals that are not compatible with MCC vision, mission, and values will be returned to the originator.
5. The Bylaws Team will review compatible proposals for clarity. The Bylaws Team may consult with the person submitting the proposal in order to gain clarification, if needed.
6. No later than five (5) months prior to the next General Conference, the Bylaws Team will submit all compatible Bylaw amendment proposals for review and comment by:
 - a. All members of the Lay House and of the Clergy House;
 - b. The Governing Board; and
 - c. The Council of Elders.
7. Comments are to be submitted to the Chair of the Bylaws Team by the date indicated by the Bylaws Team, but no later than three (3) months prior to the next General Conference.
8. The Bylaws Team will share any comments received with the person who submitted the proposal. The person who submitted the proposal may then choose whether to withdraw or modify the proposal or to have the original proposal submitted to General Conference.
 - a. If the person who submitted the proposal chooses to modify the proposal, the modified proposal can be re-submitted to the Bylaws Team.
 - b. At its discretion, the Bylaws Team may choose to resubmit the modified proposal to all members of the Lay House and of the Clergy House, Governing Board, and Council of Elders for additional review and comment.
9. Bylaws amendment proposals that are (a) deemed to be inconsistent with MCC vision, mission, and values and/or (b) not financially viable will not be submitted for consideration by General Conference.
10. The Bylaws Team will ensure that any Bylaw amendment proposals that will be considered by the next General Conference, along with impact statements prepared by the Governing Board and Council of Elders, are made available to the members of the Lay House and of the Clergy House by no later than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the next General Conference.

BYLAWS OF THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

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

Addendum 2

CHARTER OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

Introduction

The purpose of this Charter of the Governing Board is to give clarity to board members and to assure transparency and accountability to those who have elected them.

Functions of the Governing Board

1. **Policy Governance:** The primary function of the Governing Board is to establish broad policies that provide the basis for planning, implementation and evaluation of all efforts to fulfill MCC's purpose, vision and direction, consistent with MCC's core values. Further, it is a function of the Governing Board to assure accountability for the execution of such policies.
2. **Strategic Direction:** It is a function of the Governing Board to engage in processes of strategic planning based upon the statements of purpose, vision, direction and core values as affirmed by the General Conference. Such processes shall be conducted collaboratively with the Elders and senior staff and will result in the establishment of strategic priorities.
3. **Fiduciary Accountability:** In its fiduciary function the Governing Board is entrusted with the power and authority to act on behalf of the UFMCC, and is accountable for assuring that all policies, procedures and practices within its jurisdiction are in compliance with UFMCC Bylaws, all applicable laws, and high ethical standards. In all of its actions the Governing Board shall exercise the legal duties of loyalty, care and obedience.
4. **Management Oversight:** It is a function of the Governing Board to exercise oversight over all operations of the UFMCC including acquisition of its revenues, allocation of its resources, stewardship of its assets, management of its risks, and achievement of its purposes. In exercise of its management oversight the Governing Board will delegate management responsibilities to staff.

Responsibilities of the Governing Board

1. Ensure adequate resources
 - a. Review and assess current revenue streams and trends
 - b. Evaluate current fund development policies and practices
 - c. Approve new fund development policies
 - d. Participate in the mobilization of resources and fund development initiatives
2. Provide proper financial oversight
 - a. Approve an annual budget for all operations of the UFMCC
 - b. Review timely financial reports to assess both budget performance and the financial position of the UFMCC
 - c. Approve policies for the safety and growth of investment of UFMCC's assets

- d. Review the results of an annual independent audit of all funds controlled by the UFMCC
 - e. Evaluate current financial management policies
 - f. Approve new financial management policies
3. Engage and participate in effective organizational planning
 - a. Annually review and assess the results of the most recent strategic planning process
 - b. Initiate, if needed, a new strategic planning process which includes collaboration of Elders and senior staff along with the Governing Board
 - c. Select, as appropriate, up to three strategic priorities to be addressed in work plans
 - d. Review and approve an annual work plan as submitted by the Moderator
 - e. Participate with the Moderator in evaluation of the results of the annual work plan
 4. Ensure appropriate risk management
 - a. Conduct an annual risk management audit as recommended by legal counsel
 - b. Conduct an annual review of insurance coverage
 - c. Approve risk management policies
 5. Ensure effective management of human resources
 - a. Conduct an annual review of human resources policies and practices
 - b. Approve human resources policies
 6. Communicate with constituents and other stakeholders
 - a. Post approved minutes of meetings immediately on the UFMCC website
 - b. Develop a periodic communiqué from the Governing Board to constituents and stakeholders
 - c. Prepare an annual report from the Governing Board, including results of the independent audit, to be sent to constituents and stakeholders and posted on the UFMCC website
 7. Manage the board's internal processes
 - a. Develop policies and procedures for Governing Board meetings
 - b. Develop policies and processes for the orientation of new members of the Governing Board
 8. Fulfill the board's role in the UFMCC Bylaws processes
 - a. Establish and maintain a process for the interpretation of UFMCC Bylaws on request
 - b. Establish and maintain policies and processes for proposals from the Governing Board for amendments to UFMCC Bylaws
 9. Support, assess and provide feedback on the performance of the Moderator
 - a. Assure that the Moderator receives frequent and constructive feedback
 - b. In collaboration with the Moderator design a process for annual feedback and dialogue on the Moderator's performance, recognizing the multiple accountabilities of this position.
 10. Assess and evaluate board performance
 - a. Design a process to periodically evaluate the performance of the Governing Board
 - b. Implement a process to evaluate the performance of the Governing Board at least once before each General Conference.

Structures of the Governing Board

1. **Officers:** The officers of the Governing Board shall include a Chairperson, who is the Moderator elected by the General Conference of the UFMCC, plus a Vice Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer elected by the Governing Board.
2. **Chief Executive Officer:** The Moderator of the UFMCC elected by the General Conference and accountable to the General Conference shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the UFMCC, President of the corporation and Chairperson of the Governing Board. As head of staff the Moderator will be the individual accountable to the Governing Board for effective management of all operations of the UFMCC.
3. **Committees/Teams:** The Governing Board may create and empower committees or teams to which some of the responsibilities of the Board may be delegated. Every committee or team of the Governing Board shall have a written charter that includes a statement of the group's purpose, members, duration, expected outcomes, limitations, reporting accountability, and resources, such as funding and/or staff support.
4. **Delegation of Duties to Advisors:** From time to time the Governing Board may choose to enter into agreements with advisors, such as contractors or consultants, to work on behalf of the Governing Board. In such cases, the agreements shall be in writing with accountability solely to the Governing Board.
5. **Meetings:** The Governing Board will determine the frequency and locations of its meetings. Meetings may be conducted by electronic means which allow all directors participating to hear each other simultaneously. No less than a majority of the members of the Governing Board must be present in order to transact business. Members of the Governing Board are also considered present if they are participating by electronic means which allows all participants to hear each other simultaneously.

Conduct of Board Members

1. **Compensation:** No member of the Governing Board, including the Moderator, shall be compensated financially for his or her service as a member of the Governing Board. Members of the Governing Board may be reimbursed for necessary travel and/or other out-of-pocket expenses in accordance with the policies and budget approved by the Governing Board.
2. **Conflict of Interest:** The Governing Board shall develop a Conflict of Interest policy applicable to its members
3. The Governing Board shall develop a Code of Conduct applicable to its members

Reservation of Powers

Powers beyond those limited by the Bylaws of the UFMCC, applicable laws or this Charter shall be within the purview of the Governing Board.

BYLAWS OF THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

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

Addendum 3

CRITERIA FOR AFFILIATION OF LOCAL CHURCHES

(As approved by General Conference XX, Toronto 2001 and reflecting changes to UFMCC Bylaws adopted by General Conference XXIV, Acapulco 2010)

1 In order to gain recognition as a member congregation of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan
2 Community Churches, the following criteria must be met:

- 3
- 4 1. Demonstration of willingness to ascribe to the UFMCC core values, vision, and mission.
- 5
- 6 2. Demonstration of willingness to embrace UFMCC Bylaws as a covenantal relationship.
- 7
- 8 3. Pastoral leadership that meets the standards established by the UFMCC Bylaws.
- 9
- 10 4. Sustain a sufficient average worship attendance to make the church viable in:
 - 11 a. Meeting all other criteria, and
 - 12 b. Demonstrating a process of outreach and growth appropriate to the unique demographic and
 - 13 cultural context of the area where the church would be located, as determined by an Elder.
- 14
- 15 5. Be able to compensate a pastor, consistent with equitable local standards.
- 16
- 17 6. Achieve incorporation/registration status, as applicable by national and/or local law.
- 18
- 19 7. Governance structure that assures accountability to the congregation and to the UFMCC Bylaws.
- 20
- 21 8. Submission of an annual report to UFMCC.
- 22
- 23 9. Submission of local church Bylaws/Standard Operating Procedures to the UFMCC, following their
- 24 approval by an Elder.
- 25
- 26 10. Maintain minimum standards for risk management, as established by an Elder.

27
28 “Within the UFMCC, all churches that meet the criteria as established by the Council of Elders and
29 approved by the Governing Board qualify for affiliation and recognition as “church.” An Elder has the
30 authority to approve requests for affiliation. If a church ceases to meet the criteria for affiliation, an
31 Elder may take appropriate actions of intervention, which may include removal of the church’s affiliation
32 status. The decision of the Elder may be appealed to the Council of Elders.”

33 *Quoted from UFMCC Bylaws, Article V.B.2*

BYLAWS OF THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

Addendum 4

UFMCC CLERGY JUDICIARY PROCESS Effective 8 June 2005

The judicial process begins when a complaint is brought as defined in the Bylaws (Article IV, paragraph B.1.d.). A distinction is made between a “complaint” and “charges.”

A. THE INTERNATIONAL JUDICIAL POOL

The Board of Elders will appoint lay and clergy members of UFMCC to serve in an international judicial pool to serve the entire Fellowship. These persons must be members in good standing of UFMCC. The term of office for the International Judicial Pool shall be three (3) years. The Judicial Officer will provide training for the International Judicial Pool.

B. INVESTIGATORS, JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AND APPEALS PANEL MEMBERS

The Judicial Officer shall select investigators, Judiciary Committee members, and Appeals Panel members from among the members of the International Judicial Pool. If an appropriate person from the International Judicial Pool is not available or if, in the judgment of the Judicial Officer, particular skills and/or expertise are needed, the Judicial Officer may appoint another person who has no vested interest in the outcome of the proceedings to serve as an investigator, Judiciary Committee member, and/or Appeals Panel member in a temporary capacity. Professional investigators may be used, if deemed necessary by the Judicial Officer.

Members of the Board of Elders are not eligible to serve as members of the International Judicial Pool or to serve in a temporary capacity as an investigator, Judiciary Committee member, and/or Appeals Panel member. A member of the Board of Elders may serve as the Judicial Officer.

Special Note: Judiciary Process Transition Plan

- A new structure for MCC was adopted by General Conference XXIV and became effective on 29 June 2010.
 - The Governing Board became responsible for establishing the policies and processes for the clergy judiciary process
 - Management of the clergy judiciary process became the responsibility of the Office of Formation and Leadership Development
- To allow for transition:
 - Through February 2011, the former Judicial Officer will consult with the Director of Formation and Leadership Development on the management of any complaints that might be submitted
 - The Judiciary Review Team will revise its recommendations for changes in the judiciary process so that it will be congruent with the new structure and submit them to the Council of Elders
 - The Council of Elders will consider the revised recommendations from the Judiciary Review Team and submit the new process to the Governing Board for approval by the end of 2010
 - The Council of Elders will recommend volunteer judicial personnel for appointment by the Governing Board
 - The new judiciary process will be effective 1 March 2011
 - Until the new judiciary process becomes effective, judicial matters will be handled in accordance with the 8 June 2005 process.

C. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The clergy person, the complainant(s), the Moderator, the Executive Director, the Regional Elder(s) of the complainants(s) and of the clergy person, and the Judicial Officer shall be kept fully informed throughout the judiciary process.

D. SUBMISSION OF COMPLAINTS

1. An individual (complainant) who wishes to make a complaint of alleged misconduct by a clergy person shall either:
 - a. Submit a written complaint to the Regional Elder or to the Judicial Officer; or
 - b. Advise any church official (including but not limited to a clergy person, Lay Delegate, member of a local church administrative body, member of a fiduciary body, MCC Executive Director, etc.) of the complaint.
2. Any church official (including but not limited to a clergy person, Lay Delegate, member of a local church administrative body, member of a fiduciary body, MCC Executive Director, etc.) who receives a complaint shall immediately put the complaint in writing and shall forward the written complaint to the Regional Elder of the complainant, the Regional Elder of the clergy person, or the Judicial Officer within two (2) business days.
3. When a complaint is reported in writing to the Regional Elder, the Regional Elder shall notify the Judicial Officer within two (2) business days.
4. The Regional Elder(s) may recommend appropriate sources of pastoral care for the complainant(s), the clergy person, and the impacted congregation(s) or agency/agencies.

E. INACTIVE STATUS

1. At the discretion of the Judicial Officer, the Judicial Officer may place the clergy person on inactive status. If placed on inactive status, the clergy person shall cease to function as a clergy person until a final judgment is reached.
 - a. The above notwithstanding, the clergy person must be placed on inactive status immediately if the allegations indicate the possibility of injury to persons or property.
 - b. The clergy person placed on inactive status shall continue to receive all compensation, insurance, and other benefits until a final judgment is reached.
2. Should secular criminal charges arise from substantially the same incident(s) giving rise to the complaint referenced to in Section D above, then:
 - a. The judiciary process shall be suspended until the resolution of the secular criminal charges.
 - b. The Judicial Officer shall decide whether to place the clergy person on inactive status, pending resolution of the secular criminal charges.
 - c. While on inactive status pending resolution of the secular criminal charges, continuation of any compensation to a clergy person who is employed by UFMCC shall be in the sole discretion of the Executive Director, in consultation with the Board of Administration.
 - d. While on inactive status pending resolution of the secular criminal charges, any compensation to a clergy person employed by a local church or other agency shall be in the sole discretion of the administrative body of that local church or agency.

F. PROCESSING OF COMPLAINTS

1. **Determination of Purview** - Upon receiving a complaint, the Judicial Officer shall first determine if the complaint falls within the purview of the MCC Judiciary Process. If the Judicial Officer determines that the complaint falls outside of the purview of the MCC Judiciary Process, the Judicial Officer shall notify the complainant(s) in writing within five (5) business days.

If the Judicial Officer finds that the complaint falls within the purview of the MCC Judiciary Process, then the Judicial Officer shall determine whether the allegations in the complaint are reasonably reliable. Reasonably reliable complaints are those that are based (a) on first-hand information or (b) on other information of such a nature as to indicate sufficient reliability to warrant further inquiry. If the Judicial Officer finds that the allegations are not sufficiently reliable so as to warrant further inquiry, the Judicial Officer shall notify the complainant(s) in writing within five (5) business days.

- a. **Notification to All Parties** – If the Judicial Officer finds that the complaint falls within the purview of the MCC Judiciary Process and that the complaint is reasonably reliable, the Judicial Officer shall notify all parties referred to in Section C within five (5) business days following determination of purview. Such notification shall include a copy of the MCC Judiciary Process, a copy of the written complaint, and the Judicial Officer’s determination of whether the complaint will first be referred to a conflict intervention process or be immediately investigated.
 - b. **Notification to the Affected Church/Agency** - In consultation with the Regional Elder(s) of the complainant and of the clergy person, the Judicial Officer shall determine whether the affected church/agency will be informed that a complaint has been received against the clergy person serving that church/agency. This notification will not include a copy of the written complaint.
2. **Conflict Intervention** - If the Judicial Officer finds that the complaint falls within the purview of the MCC Judiciary Process and that the complaint is reasonably reliable, the Judicial Officer may choose to initiate a process of conflict intervention rather than conducting an investigation.
 - a. **Conflict Intervention Process** - The Judicial Officer shall specify the process for conflict intervention in writing and shall send written notification, including a copy of the complaint, to all parties having access to information as specified in Section C above within five (5) business days following receipt of the complaint.
 - b. **Outcome of Conflict Intervention** - Within five (5) business days of completion of the conflict intervention process, the Judicial Officer shall determine whether (a) the matter has been satisfactorily resolved or (b) an investigation will be conducted in continuance of the judiciary process. The Judicial Officer shall advise all parties of the determination in writing. A summary of the outcome of the conflict intervention process shall be prepared by the Judicial Officer, placed in the clergy person’s UFMCC file, and provided to all parties referred to in Section C above.

3. **Investigation** - If the Judicial Officer finds that the complaint falls within the purview of the MCC Judiciary Process and that the complaint is reasonably reliable, the Judicial Officer may determine that an investigation should be conducted.
 - a. **Selection of Investigator** - Within five (5) business days of receiving a complaint or the conclusion of a conflict intervention process, the Judicial Officer shall select an investigator to conduct a preliminary investigation. The Judicial Officer shall provide the investigator with a copy of the written complaint.
 - b. **Time Period for the Investigation** - The investigation will be conducted within a time period to be determined by the Judicial Officer and may be extended, if necessary.
 - c. **Investigator's Report** - The investigator's written report will be submitted by the investigator to the Judicial Officer within five (5) business days of the conclusion of the investigation.
 - d. **Outcome of Investigation** - If the Judicial Officer determines that the complaint is not substantiated, the Judicial Officer prepare a written summary of the investigation's findings and provide the written summary to all parties referred to in Section C. The written summary of the findings will be placed in the clergy person's UFMCC file to identify possible patterns of misconduct.

If the Judicial Officer determines that the complaint has been substantiated and the clergy person does not admit to the allegations in the complaint in writing, the Judicial Officer shall bring charges against the clergy person.

4. **Admission of the Allegations** - In the event the clergy person admits to the allegations in writing, within ten (10) business day of receipt of the written admission, the Judicial Officer may either:
 - a. Determine resolution of the matter with the clergy person and the complainant(s); or
 - b. Appoint a Judiciary Committee to convene a meeting with the clergy person to determine resolution of the matter. The meeting will occur within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt by the Judiciary Committee of the clergy person's written admission of the allegations.

A written copy of the determination will be provided to all parties referred to in Section C within five (5) business days following determination of the resolution and will be placed in the clergy person's UFMCC file.

G. CHARGES

1. If the Judicial Officer determines that the complaint has been substantiated and the clergy person does not admit to the allegations contained in the complaint in writing, the Judicial Officer shall bring charges against the clergy person.
2. Within five (5) business days of receiving the report of the investigator the Judicial Officer shall provide the following to all parties referred to in Section C:
 - a. A formal statement of charges, prepared by the Judicial Officer;

- b. A complete copy of the investigation records, including all documentation or other information that had been submitted to the investigator; and
- c. A summary of the investigation, prepared by the Judicial Officer.

The Judicial Officer shall simultaneously notify the affected church/agency by sending them a copy of the formal statement of charges.

3. Within five (5) business days of issuing the statement of charges, the Judicial Officer shall select three (3) persons from the International Judicial Pool to form the Judiciary Committee.
4. Within three (3) business days following the selection of the Judiciary Committee, the Judicial Officer shall provide the Judiciary Committee with all materials referred to in Section G.2 above.

H. THE HEARING

The Judiciary Committee will convene a hearing within forty-five (45) calendar days from the date of receiving the formal statement of charges. The Judicial Officer is not required to be present at the judiciary hearing. Further investigation may be conducted during this interval, if deemed necessary by the Judiciary Committee and the Judicial Officer.

The hearing shall be conducted according to the following guidelines:

1. The location of the hearing shall be in the Region in which the charges are brought against a clergy person or in another venue deemed more appropriate by the Judiciary Committee and the Judicial Officer.
2. Both the complainant and the person being charged shall be permitted to have an advocate present at the hearing. Advocates are not legal counsel but are present to provide support and may speak on behalf of the person they represent.
3. Any audio, video, or written material that is to be considered at the hearing must be submitted to the Judiciary Committee, the clergy person charged, the complainant, and the Judicial Officer no later than ten (10) business days prior to the hearing.
4. Both parties may present witnesses and have an opportunity to question witnesses.
5. Aside from the statement of charges, a complete copy of the investigation records, and the Judicial Officer's reports summarizing the charges and investigator's report, only first-hand information will be considered by the Judiciary Committee.
6. If the complainant and/or the clergy person who has been charged does not attend the hearing, the Judiciary Committee shall hear the evidence of the complainant and/or clergy person who does attend and of any witnesses for either party who do appear, and shall consider a copy of the charges, the investigation records, and the Judicial Officer's reports summarizing the charges and investigator's report. Thereafter, the Judiciary Committee shall render a decision and determine resolution.
7. A unanimous decision is required in order to determine that the charges are valid.

8. The Judiciary Committee shall immediately inform the Judicial Officer of the outcome of the hearing, including their decision and resolution. The Judiciary Committee shall submit its written decision and resolution to the Judicial Officer within three (3) days following the conclusion of the hearing.
9. A complete and accurate record of the hearing, including a complete audio record of the proceedings, shall be prepared by the Judiciary Committee and retained by the Judicial Officer.
10. A copy of the Judiciary Committee's written decision shall be sent by the Judicial Officer to all parties referred to in Section C within three (3) business days following receipt of the written decision by the Judicial Officer.

I. RESOLUTION

1. In the event that the charges have been substantiated, the Judiciary Committee shall determine the resolution, which may include removal of credentials or other measures, and shall inform the Judicial Officer. The terms of the resolution shall be invoked immediately.
2. The Judicial Officer shall immediately notify the Board of Elders and shall appropriately publicize the results of the hearing.
 - a. Upon conclusion of the hearing and appeals process, the Judicial Officer shall immediately provide the administrative body of the affected local church(es) or agency/agencies with a brief written statement approved by legal counsel which can be read only to members of the congregation(s) and with a more detailed confidential summary of the decision pursuant to the provisions of the confidentiality agreement which would be available only to the members of the local church's or agency's administrative body.
3. Audio and written records of the hearing and all evidence will be retained by the Judicial Officer and a copy of the charges and final decision will be placed in the clergy person's UFMCC file.
4. The Regional Elder(s) may recommend appropriate sources of pastoral care for the complainant(s), the clergy person charged, and the impacted congregation(s) or agency/agencies.

J. APPEAL PROCESS

1. Either the complainant or the clergy person charged may appeal the decision of the Judiciary Committee.
2. Appeals must be made in writing to the Judicial Officer within seven (7) business days from the date that the clergy person/complainant receives a copy of the final decision.
3. Within three (3) business days of receiving the request for an appeal, the Judicial Officer shall select three (3) impartial members of the International Judicial Pool to serve on the Appeals Panel. Their decision must be determined within seven (7) business days and shall be made by no fewer than two (2) of the three (3) members of the Appeal Panel. The Appeals Panel shall immediately send written notification of their decision to the Judicial Officer. The Judicial

Officer shall notify all parties referred to in Section C of the decision of the Appeals Panel within three (3) business days.

- a. The Appeals Panel shall uphold the decision of the Judiciary Committee if the Appeals Panel finds that the decision of the Judiciary Committee was based on any substantial evidence.
 - b. Should the Appeals Panel determine that the Judiciary Committee's decision is not based on any substantial evidence, then the Appeals Panel shall issue its own decision and resolution.
 - c. Except in the event that the judiciary process results in revocation of clergy credentials, the determination of the Appeals Panel shall be final.
4. In the event that the determination of the Appeals Panel results in revocation of clergy credentials, an automatic review of the proceedings and appeals process will be conducted by the Board of Elders within ten (10) business days of the determination of the Appeals Panel.
- a. The Board of Elders shall uphold the decision of the Appeals Panel if the Board of Elders finds that the decision of the Appeals Panel is based on any substantial evidence.
 - b. Should the Board of Elders determine that the Judiciary Committee's decision is not based on any substantial evidence, then the Board of Elders shall issue its own decision and resolution.
 - c. The determination of the Board of Elders is final.
5. Copies of the decision of the Appeal Panel and of any review by the Board of Elders will be sent to all parties referred to in Section C. A copy shall also be placed in the UFMCC file of the person charged.

K. COSTS OF THE JUDICIAL PROCESS

1. The costs of the judicial process shall be the responsibility of the UFMCC. However, the UFMCC reserves the right to seek restitution from the complainant(s) for expenses if the complaint is found to be frivolous or malicious.
2. The costs of bringing and defending a complaint shall be borne by the complainant.
3. The costs for defending against a complaint shall be the responsibility of the person against whom the charges were brought.

If either the complainant(s) or clergy person is financially unable to bear the costs of the process, a request for assistance may be made to the Executive Director, who will make a decision.