

CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS
of the
PILGRIM ASSOCIATION
of the
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
(Adopted April 24, 2016)

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ARTICLE I -NAME

A. NAME

The name of the Association shall be the Pilgrim Association of the United Church of Christ.

B. AFFILIATION AND LOCATION

The Pilgrim Association of the United Church of Christ is an Association of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ. It seeks to work in consultation and cooperation with the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ and with the Associate Conference Minister of the Massachusetts Conference assigned to the Pilgrim Association.

ARTICLE II -PURPOSE

A. The purpose of the Pilgrim Association of the United Church of Christ, through its member churches, laity, and ministers, is to express its oneness in Christ, to make a common witness to Christ, and to serve Christ's realm in this world.

B. The Association accepts the current edition of the *Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ* as a guide in matters concerning the nature and purposes of an Association within a United Church of Christ Conference.

C. To fulfill its purpose the Association shall:

1. Promote fellowship among the member churches of the Association.
2. Oversee ministerial concerns of the Association including, but not limited to, (a) the standing, recognition and discipline of persons authorized for ministry; and (b) the promotion of fellowship among ministers.
3. Address church concerns including, but not limited to, (a) the standing of churches; (b) the nurture of Christian faith, life, and witness among the adults, young people, and children of member churches; and (c) the development of leadership within member churches.
4. Encourage participation in and understanding of the wider mission and ministries of the United Church of Christ and the world-wide church of Jesus Christ.

D. To accomplish its purpose, the Association shall elect officers and committees to administer the program, business, financial, and ministerial concerns of the Association. These officers and committees shall also oversee the Association's denominational, ecumenical, and interfaith relationships.

ARTICLE III – GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. Whenever in these Bylaws, the term “the Association” is used, it refers to the Pilgrim Association of the United Church of Christ.
- B. Whenever in these Bylaws, the term “COM” is used, it refers to the Committee on Ministry of the Pilgrim Association of the United Church of Christ.
- C. Whenever in these Bylaws, the Board of Directors and Committees are required to hold their own meetings to carry out their responsibilities, such meetings shall be conducted in a manner that assures all available members may fully and equally participate in the discussions and decisions of the committee. The use of electronic means of communication shall be permitted in fulfilling these responsibilities so long as a quorum of the Board or Committee is participating. The Board of Directors and each Committee shall determine how such electronic means are to be used by it.

ARTICLE IV -MEMBERSHIP

A. CHURCH STANDING AND RELATIONSHIP

The Association accepts the current edition of the *Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ* as a guide in matters concerning a church's standing in the United Church of Christ and/or a church's membership in an Association within a United Church of Christ Conference.

B. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The membership of the Association shall consist of those churches and ordained ministers subscribing to its purposes, receiving standing by vote of the Association or the Association's COM, and faithfully fulfilling their responsibilities as members. An annual review shall be made of the standing of member churches and ordained ministers by the COM. Whenever the meaning and value of a member's standing comes into question, the COM shall give priority to careful consultation with the member.

C. CHURCHES

1. Member churches shall include those who have voted to join the United Church of Christ and have been accepted into membership in the Association.
2. Other member churches of the Association may include those which have not voted to join the United Church of Christ but have requested and been accepted into membership in the Association.

“No direct or indirect participation by any such Local Church in, or support of, the work of the United Church of Christ, or of any of its Covenanted Ministries, The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ, United Church Funds, or of any Conference or Association, shall be construed as making it a church of the United Church of Christ.” (From the *Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ*, July 2, 2013 Edition, Article V, Paragraph 16)
3. All churches which are members of the Association shall be considered members of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ.

D. ADMISSION, REMOVAL, AND DISMISSAL OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

1. United Church of Christ churches and other churches in the Association area which are not United

Church of Christ members but which subscribe to the purpose of the Association are eligible to apply for membership in the Association. Application must be made to the Association's COM. Upon the recommendation of the COM with ratification from the Association's Board of Directors, churches may become members of the Association by a majority vote of those present and voting at a duly called Ecclesiastical Council meeting to consider the matter. A quorum consisting of lay and/or ministerial delegates from 1/5 of the member churches is required.

2. Upon the recommendation of the Association's COM with ratification from the Association's Board of Directors, churches may be removed or dismissed from Association membership by a majority vote of those present and voting at a duly called Ecclesiastical Council meeting to consider the matter. A quorum consisting of lay and/or ministerial delegates from 1/5 of the member churches is required.
3. A church seeking to be removed from Association membership must request removal through the Association's COM. The COM shall consult with the church seeking removal. If it is not possible to maintain the church's relationship with the Association, the COM may recommend to the Board of Directors that the appropriate steps, as noted in Subsection 2 above, be taken to remove the church from Association membership.
4. The Association may dismiss a church from Association membership for any or all of the following causes: violation of the principles of the United Church of Christ, repeated failure to send Lay Delegates to meetings of the Association, and failure to pay dues for a period of two years without showing just cause. The COM shall consult with the church being considered for dismissal. If it is not possible to rectify the violation or failure and/or restore the church's relationship with the Association, the COM may recommend to the Board of Directors that the appropriate steps, as noted in Subsection 2 above, be taken to dismiss the church from Association membership.

ARTICLE V -LOCAL AUTONOMY

The autonomy of the local church is inherent and modifiable only by its own action. Nothing in this *Constitution and Bylaws* shall destroy or limit the right of each local church to continue to operate in the way customary to it; nor shall it be construed as giving the Association now, or at any future time, the power to abridge or impair the autonomy of any local church in the management of its own affairs.

ARTICLE VI --MEETINGS

A. REGULAR MEETINGS

1. The Association shall meet semi-annually. These meetings shall be held in Spring and Fall unless otherwise scheduled by the Board of Directors. The Spring meeting shall be the Annual Meeting of the Association.
2. Meetings shall usually be held at member churches of the Association, in rotation among the churches as much as possible. The time, place, and program of meetings shall be determined by the Board of Directors in consultation with host churches.
3. The agenda of the Spring Meeting of the Association may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (a) Receipt of Reports of Association Officers and Committees
 - (b) Adoption of a slate of officers, board and committee members for Terms of office that run from

September 1 to August 31

- (c) An Educational program or speaker
- (d) Conduct of General Business of the Association
- (e) Receipt of Report from the Associate Conference Minister
- (f) Other Business as deemed appropriate

1. The agenda of the Fall Meeting of the Association may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (a) Adoption of the Budget to begin January 1st of the following year
 - (b) Other Business as deemed appropriate

B. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of the Association shall be called by the Board of Directors Scribe upon the vote of the Board of Directors or upon the written request of five (5) member churches of the Association. The business of such meetings shall be limited to those issues which are stated in the call to the meeting.

C. ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

Ecclesiastical Council meetings of the Association may be held independently or in conjunction with other Association meetings. Ecclesiastical Council meetings are held by the Association as follows:

1. *To authorize an individual for ordination, commissioning, or privilege of call*
An Ecclesiastical Council meeting is scheduled after a candidate for ordination, commissioning, or privilege of call successfully completes their examination by the Association's COM (See Article XI, B, 7). The meeting will be scheduled by the COM in conjunction with the Board of Directors. A quorum consisting of lay and/or ministerial delegates from 1/5 of the member churches is required.
2. *To admit/remove/dismiss churches from Association membership*
An Ecclesiastical Council meeting of the Association shall be called by the Board Scribe upon the vote of the Board of Directors, following the recommendation of the COM, for the purpose of the admission, removal, or dismissal of churches from Association membership. A quorum consisting of lay and/or ministerial delegates from 1/5 of the member churches is required.

D. INSTALLATION AND RECOGNITION SERVICES

1. Installation Services are conducted for clergy with ordained ministerial standing in the Association who serve member churches of the Association or other ministries recognized by the Association. Such services are authorized by the Association's COM and scheduled by the COM in conjunction with the Association's Board of Directors. Ministers who serve Association churches are usually expected to become members of those churches before their Installation Service.

A meeting of the Association is usually held before the installation service of a minister whose ordained ministerial standing has been newly transferred into the Association. No quorum or vote is required at such meetings. The purpose of such meetings is to welcome and become acquainted with new ministers entering the Association. Such a meeting is optional for ministers who are already members of the Association, but who are being installed by the Association to serve a different church or ministry within the Association.

2. Recognition services may be conducted for clergy with ordained ministerial standing in the Association who are serving a ministry which is recognized by the Association, but not affiliated with the Association. Such services may also be conducted to affirm the ministry of a minister from another denomination who is both serving a member church of the Association and been granted

Dual Standing by the Association. Such services are authorized by the Association's COM and scheduled by the COM in conjunction with the Association's Board of Directors. A meeting of the Association may be held before such recognition services to affirm the minister in their new ministry, but no quorum or vote is required at such meetings.

E. NOTIFICATION AND QUORUMS

1. NOTIFICATION

At least three (3) weeks before each meeting, the COM Scribe shall notify the Association of all Ecclesiastical Council, Installation or Recognition Service meetings of the Association. Notification will be made to the following churches and persons:

All Lay Delegates

All Association member churches and ministries of the Association

All elected officers and committee members of the Association

All persons authorized by the Association for Ordained or Commissioned ministries

All persons granted Dual Standing in the Association

All persons granted Member in Discernment or Privilege of Call status, or who are authorized for Licensed ministry in the Association

2. QUORUMS

(a) At Regular and Special meetings of the Association, a quorum shall consist of lay and/or ministerial delegates from 1/3 of the member churches.

(b) At meetings when the Association sits as an Ecclesiastical Council, a quorum shall consist of lay and/or ministerial delegates from 1/5 of the member churches.

The Board of Directors Scribe shall read the membership roll and determine the quorum at the beginning of all Association meetings, except Installation or Recognition Service meetings which do not require a quorum.

F. VOTING

1. The following persons are entitled to one vote each at all meetings of the Association:

(a) Official delegates from member churches

(b) All elected officers and committee members of the Association

(c) All persons authorized by the Association for Ordained or Commissioned ministries in good standing and not on a Leave of Absence

(d) All persons granted Dual Standing in the Association in good standing

(e) No individual is entitled to more than one vote at Association meetings.

2. Persons granted Member in Discernment or Privilege of Call status by the Association, or who are authorized by the Association for Licensed ministry, are encouraged to attend Association meetings, but they may not vote at Association meetings. The exception to this is that Members in Discernment and persons authorized for Licensed ministry may vote at Association meetings, provided they are official Lay Delegates to those meetings and are members in good standing of the Association member churches they represent.

1. Persons on a Leave of Absence and persons whose authorization for ministry is under Suspension may not vote at Association meetings.

3. Other ministers and laypersons present at a meeting of the Association, may, by invitation of the Moderator of the Association or the Moderator's substitute, be invited to sit as honorary members of the Association for that meeting only. As honorary members they may speak at the meeting, but they may not vote.
4. All Association meeting issues shall be decided by majority vote, except where otherwise stipulated in these Bylaws or in the current *Manual on Ministry* of the United Church of Christ. Proxy votes shall not be considered valid at any Association meeting.

G. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1. Any member of a Board or Committee of the Association or participant in an oversight action of the Association who has a financial, personal, or official interest in, or conflict or appearance of a conflict with any matter pending, of such nature that it prevents or may prevent that member from acting in an impartial manner, will offer to voluntarily recuse him/herself and refrain from discussion of, participation in and/or voting in the activity where the conflict or appearance of a conflict exists.
2. If there is a conflict either real or perceived and the individual does not voluntarily recuse him/herself, the Association Board or Committee may, by a super majority vote of 2/3 of the members then present and voting, require involuntary recusal.

H. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

In all matters not otherwise provided for in the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and in these Bylaws, the Association shall use the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order as the parliamentary authority at all Regular and Special Meetings of the Association.

ARTICLE VII -- LAY DELEGATES

A. CHURCHES

Each member church is entitled to voting lay delegates according to the following table (it is recommended that representation of men, women and youth be considered in the selection of delegates):

Yearbook Membership: 0 – 299	Lay Delegates: 2
Yearbook Membership: 300 – 599	Lay Delegates: 3
Yearbook Membership: 600 – 899	Lay Delegates: 4
Yearbook Membership: 900 – 1199	Lay Delegates: 5
Yearbook Membership: 1200 and up	Lay Delegates: 6

- B. Lay Delegates must be members in good standing of the churches they represent. Individuals whose authorization for Ordained, Commissioned, or Licensed ministry has been suspended and not reinstated may not serve as Lay Delegates to the Association.
- C. The following persons, normally excluded from voting at Association meetings, may serve as Lay Delegates to the Association, provided they are members in good standing of the Association member church they represent: individuals on a Leave of Absence from Ordained or Commissioned ministries authorized by the Association, Members in Discernment, and persons authorized for Licensed ministry. As Lay Delegates, these persons may vote at Association meetings, but they may not serve as elected officers or Board or committee members of the Association.

ARTICLE VIII - FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Association shall be the “calendar year,” January 1 through December 31.

ARTICLE IX -- OFFICERS

The Officers of the Association shall be a Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Scribe, and Treasurer, all to be elected for a term of two (2) years:

A. MODERATOR

The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the Association and of the Board of Directors, and shall present an annual report from the Board of Directors to the Spring Meeting of the Association. The office of Moderator shall rotate between clergy and laity.

B. VICE-MODERATOR

The Vice-Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the Association and of the Board of Directors during the absence of the Moderator.

C. BOARD OF DIRECTORS SCRIBE

1. The Board Scribe shall make and preserve an accurate report of all meetings of the Association and of the Board of Directors.
2. The Board Scribe shall keep an accurate record of attendance, both for churches and ordained ministerial members, at all meetings of the Association. At the end of each year, the Scribe shall forward this report to the COM.
3. The Board Scribe shall keep accurate attendance at all Board of Directors meetings and shall notify the Moderator if a Board member has been absent for three (3) consecutive meetings without sufficient notice.
4. The Board Scribe shall send official notification of all Regular and Special meetings of the Association in accordance with Article VI, Sections A and B.
5. The Board Scribe shall publish and distribute the Annual Report of the Association, containing reports of all Officers and Committees, the budget, an up-to-date listing of member churches, pastors and other ministerial members, and a list of Officers and Committees.
6. The Board Scribe shall receive an annual stipend as determined by the Board of Directors and as voted by the Association.

D. TREASURER

1. The Treasurer shall collect from the member churches the annual “Fellowship Dues” of the Association and the Massachusetts Conference, and keep an accurate account thereof.
2. The Treasurer shall maintain the accounts of the Association, making payments as authorized by the Board of Directors.
3. The Treasurer shall present an annual report to the Association. The Treasurer shall present a report at each Board of Directors Meeting.

4. The Treasurer shall be bonded by the Association.
5. The Treasurer shall receive an annual stipend as determined by the Board of Directors and as voted by the Association.
6. The Treasurer shall report to the COM a list of all member churches that have not paid their full “Fellowship Dues” for a period of two or more years.
7. The Treasurer shall report annually the status of the member churches with regard to their payment of Fellowship Dues.

E. TERMS OF OFFICE

Only the Scribe and Treasurer may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms as officers of the Association.

ARTICLE X - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A. MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Directors shall consist of the following members: Officers of the Association, Chairpersons (or their designated representative) of all Committees, two (2) members-at-large, one to be elected each year for a two (2) year term, the Representative of the Pilgrim District Women, any Representative of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ Board of Directors (ex-officio) to the Pilgrim Association (if available), and the Associate Conference Minister (ex-officio). Ex-officio members shall have voice, but no vote on the Board.

B. ATTENDANCE

If a Board member has been absent for three (3) consecutive meetings without sufficient notice, the Moderator shall contact that person to ascertain their interest in continuing on the Board. If the Board member does not wish to continue, the Church and Leadership Committee will submit to the Board the name of a replacement.

C. DUTIES

1. The Board shall act as the Association between meetings of the Association.
2. The Board shall plan for the two (2) meetings of the Association, per Article VI, Section A.
3. The Board shall prepare an Annual Budget for the Association, and shall authorize the Treasurer to expend funds within that Budget as approved by the Association.
4. The Board shall serve as a liaison between the Massachusetts Conference and the local churches.
5. The Board shall monitor the work of the Committees, fill Committee vacancies on the recommendation of the Church and Leadership Committee, and appoint such ad hoc committees or task groups as deemed necessary. All committees, active ad hoc committees and task groups shall be self-governing per the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order and shall report frequently to the Board on progress made on the activity or task at hand.
6. The Board shall meet at least four times in a calendar year.

7. The Board shall act on the recommendations of the COM concerning the admission, removal or dismissal of churches from membership in the Association. (See Article IV, D.)
8. The Board shall report, through the Moderator, to the Association at the Spring Meeting.
9. The Board shall elect replacements for vacancies occurring among the Officers of the Association from nominations submitted by the Church and Leadership Committee.
10. The Board shall appoint members as representatives to the Southeast Area Council.
11. The Board shall, with the assistance of the COM, seek to promote fellowship, mutual understanding, and harmony in the relationships which involve member churches and/or those authorized for ministry by the Association.
12. The Board shall, with the assistance of the COM, seek to promote fellowship and professional collegiality among persons authorized for ministry by the Association.
13. The Board shall be responsible for ensuring that the financial records of the Association are audited annually. An audit report shall be presented at the annual Spring meeting of the Association.
14. The Board shall appoint one (1) member to the United Fitness Review Committee of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ in accordance with Article XII, Section D., 1.

D. QUORUM

The quorum for the Board of Directors shall consist of one-half of its members, excluding its ex-officio members who are not counted in the Board's quorum.

E. TERMS OF OFFICE

Apart from the Associate Conference Minister who serves as a continuing member (ex-officio) of the Board of Directors, only the Scribe, Treasurer, Representative of the Pilgrim District Women, and Representative of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ Board of Directors (ex-officio) to the Pilgrim Association may serve more than two consecutive terms on the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XI - COMMITTEES

A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Each Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members (unless otherwise noted in these Bylaws), representing laity and clergy, two (2) to be elected each year for a three (3) year term. Each Committee shall also have an additional member who is the designee of the Pilgrim District Women, as recommended and approved by the Church and Leadership Committee.

The Associate Conference Minister shall be an ex-officio member with voice, but no vote on all the Committees of the Association.

The quorum for each Committee shall consist of at least one-half of its members, unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws. Ex-officio members of Committees are not counted in their quorums.

Only the Associate Conference Minister may serve as a continuing member (ex-officio) on the

Association's COM, Church and Leadership Committee, and Missions and Community Concerns Committee. No designee of the Pilgrim District Women shall serve more than six consecutive years and no other elected member shall serve more than two consecutive terms on any of those committees.

2. All Committees shall be self-governing per the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.
3. Each Committee shall submit a monthly written or verbal report to the Board of Directors, and an annual report to the Scribe.
4. Each Committee Chairperson shall conduct regular meetings, attend the meetings of the Board of Directors, convene a meeting at which a new Chairperson will be elected during the month of January, and notify the Board of Directors of inactive Committee members.
5. Any Committee member who has missed three (3) or more consecutive meetings without sufficient reason shall be reported to the Board of Directors. The Church and Leadership Committee will then ascertain the intention of that member and, if the member is no longer interested in serving on that Committee, will submit the name of a replacement to the Board of Directors.

B. COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (COM)

1. The Committee on Ministry shall consist of:

(a) At least twelve elected members, of whom one-third shall be elected each year for terms of three (3) years each, plus an additional member who is the designee of the Pilgrim District Women, as recommended and approved by the Church and Leadership Committee. One more than half of those members must have Ordained Ministerial Standing in the Association. The balance of the members must be lay persons who are members in good standing of United Church of Christ member churches of the Association.

In addition, the Moderator and Associate Conference Minister shall be ex-officio members of this committee with voice but no vote. The Vice Moderator may attend the committee's meetings ex-officio with voice but no vote.

A quorum shall consist of one more than half the members, though ex-officio members shall not be counted in the quorum.

Only the Associate Conference Minister may serve as a continuing member (ex-officio) on the Association's COM. No designee of the Pilgrim District Women shall serve more than six consecutive years and no other elected members shall serve more than two consecutive terms on this committee.

(b) COM Scribe: The committee shall elect from its membership a scribe, who shall send official notification of all meetings of the Association in accordance with Article VI, Sections C, D and E.

2. Any of the elected members of the COM who are absent without valid reason from two (2) consecutive meetings of this committee may, by vote of this committee, be deemed to have resigned from the committee. The committee shall inform the Board of Directors and the Church and Leadership Committee of the resignation and vacancy to be filled.

3. The Church and Leadership Committee shall consult with the COM before proposing any candidate to fill an expired term or vacancy on this committee.
4. The COM shall meet monthly, unless otherwise determined by vote of this committee. The committee shall elect its own officers and organize its work using the current edition of the *Manual on Ministry* of the United Church of Christ as a guide. The committee shall be free to appoint ad hoc committees which shall be responsible to the COM for special assignments. Persons who are not members of the COM may serve on these ad hoc committees.
5. It shall be the responsibility of the COM to:
 - (a) counsel with and examine churches which seek to become member churches of the Association, also churches which seek to be removed from Association membership. After each examination, the committee shall report its recommendations to the Board of Directors.
 - (b) review the membership of churches in the Association on at least an annual basis, to identify any churches liable for dismissal from the Association based on the standards set in Article IV, Section D, Subsection 4 of these Bylaws. The committee shall seek to counsel with and examine such churches, with the hope of rectifying violations or failures of these churches and/or restoring their relationship with the Association. After each examination, the committee shall report its recommendations to the Board of Directors.
6. The COM shall, with the assistance of the Board of Directors, seek to promote fellowship, mutual understanding, and harmony in the relationships which involve member churches and/or those authorized for ministry by the Association. The committee shall seek to act as a reconciling force when there are disputes in those relationships. The COM may recommend that the Board of Directors adjudicate a dispute.
7. The COM shall counsel with individuals and their sponsoring churches who seek authorization for ministry from the Association. The committee shall examine and recommend to the Association individuals it deems prepared and fit to be authorized for ministry by the Association, including:
 - (a) Ordained
 - (b) Commissioned
 - (c) Privilege of Call

The committee shall examine and provide the Association's authorization for ministry to individuals it deems prepared and fit for:

- (a) Member in Discernment & Renewals
- (b) Dual Standing
- (c) Licensure & Renewals
- (d) Privilege of Call Renewals
- (e) Association services of Installation and Recognition
- (f) Transfer of authorization for Ordained and Commissioned ministry

The committee shall examine and provide the Association's authorization for the following changes in ministry status.

- (a) Removal of Ordained and Commissioned ministry due to death and resignation
- (b) Leave of Absence & Renewal for Ordained and Commissioned ministry

- (c) Censure, Suspension, Termination of Ordained, Commissioned, and Licensed ministry
- (d) Termination of Dual Standing and Privilege of Call
- (e) Termination and Renewal Refusal of Member in Discernment

8. It shall be the responsibility of the COM to review on at least an annual basis the status of those granted Member in Discernment, Licensed Ministry, Privilege of Call, and Leave of Absence from active Ordained or Commissioned ministry. After its review, the committee may renew, or refuse to renew, or terminate the status, as the committee deems appropriate, and in accordance with the current *Manual on Ministry* of the United Church of Christ. The committee shall communicate its decisions to the Board of Directors and to the Association at their next regular meetings.
9. The COM shall be responsible for the discipline of persons authorized for ministry by the Association and for the termination of their standing and membership in the Association, in accordance with Article XII, Section D of these Bylaws. The committee shall also receive and examine charges of improper or unethical conduct brought against any individuals authorized for ministry by the Association.
10. The COM shall, with the assistance of the Board of Directors, seek to promote fellowship and professional collegiality among persons authorized for ministry by the Association. The committee shall also seek to provide and/or communicate to such persons opportunities for their continued spiritual and professional growth.
11. The COM shall report to the Board of Directors all actions it has taken, exercising due regard not to disclose specific details of situations which the COM deems confidential. The committee shall submit a written annual report of its actions, activities, and plans for the coming year to the Spring Meeting of the Association, as well as a mid-year report to the regular Fall meeting of the Association.
12. In the case that one of its decisions is appealed to the Association's Board of Directors, the COM shall report to the Board of Directors, in a timely manner, the procedure followed in reaching its decision, as well as all specific information concerning the situation which the COM deems the Board of Directors should have in its review of the appeal.
13. The COM shall administer the Rev. M. Alicia Corea Scholarship Fund of the Association.

C. CHURCH AND LEADERSHIP

1. The Church and Leadership Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members, representing laity and clergy, two (2) to be elected each year for a three (3) year term, plus an additional member who is the designee of the Pilgrim District Women, as recommended and approved by the Church and Leadership Committee. In addition, the Associate Conference Minister shall be an ex-officio member of this committee with voice but no vote.

A quorum shall consist of half the members, excluding its ex-officio member who is not counted in the Committee's quorum.

Only the Associate Conference Minister may serve as a continuing member (ex-officio) on the Association's Church and Leadership Committee. No designee of the Pilgrim District Women shall serve more than six consecutive years and no other elected members shall serve more than two consecutive terms on this Committee.

2. The Church and Leadership Committee shall, in order to create a vigorous and representative leadership for the Association, compile a record of potential lay and ordained leadership within the Association, indicating the talents and interests of each person. The Committee shall provide a slate of nominees for election at the Spring Meeting, such slate insuring a reasonable balance between clergy, lay, male, female, age and youth in the nominees, and subject to the following provisions:

(a) Officers, Board and Committee members take office on September 1 following their election at the Spring Association meeting.

(b) No person may hold more than one elected position at any time.

(c) The Committee shall provide nominations for replacements, when vacancies occur, to the Board of Directors.

(d) The Committee shall consult with the COM before proposing any candidate to fill an expired term or vacancy on that committee.

(e) Officers: Only the Scribe and Treasurer may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms as officers of the Association.

(f) Board of Directors: Apart from the Associate Conference Minister who serves as a continuing member (ex-officio) of the Board of Directors, only the Scribe, Treasurer, Representative of the Pilgrim District Women, and Representative of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ Board of Directors (ex-officio) to the Pilgrim Association may serve more than two consecutive terms on the Board of Directors.

(g) Committees: Only the Associate Conference Minister may serve as a continuing member (ex-officio) on the Association's COM, Church and Leadership Committee, and Missions and Community Concerns Committee. No designee of the Pilgrim District Women shall serve more than six consecutive years and no other elected member shall serve more than two consecutive terms on any of those committees.

D. MISSION AND COMMUNITY CONCERNS

1. The Mission and Community Concerns Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members, representing laity and clergy, two (2) to be elected each year for a three (3) year term, plus an additional member who is the designee of the Pilgrim District Women, as recommended and approved by the Church and Leadership Committee. In addition, the Associate Conference Minister shall be an ex-officio member of this committee with voice but no vote.

A quorum shall consist of half the members, excluding its ex-officio member who is not counted in the Committee's quorum.

Only the Associate Conference Minister may serve as a continuing member (ex-officio) on the Association's Committee on Mission and Community Concerns. No designee of the Pilgrim District Women shall serve more than six consecutive years and no other elected members shall serve more than two consecutive terms on this Committee.

2. The Committee on Mission and Community Concerns shall be concerned with the mission of the churches of the Association as expressed in Massachusetts and in the Our Church's Wider Mission program of the United Church of Christ. The Committee shall promote the interest of the Association's churches and ministers in the work and financial support of Our Church's Wider Mission, in the mission of our Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ, and in other mission opportunities to which our Association's churches seek to respond. The Committee shall assist local churches and ministers in the promotion of Our Church's Wider Mission. The Committee shall have responsibility for the oversight, review and valuation of any mission project which receives funding from the Association. It shall recommend a liaison person for any Association supported mission project.

ARTICLE XII - GUIDELINES FOR THE AUTHORIZATION OF MINISTRY

A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The Association accepts the current editions of the *Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ*, the *Manual on Ministry* of the United Church of Christ, and the Massachusetts Conference's Guidelines for the Review of Ethical Misconduct by Ordained, Commissioned, and Licensed Church Professionals, as guides in matters concerning the standing, recognition, and discipline of persons authorized for ministry by the Association.

B. ORDAINED MINISTRIES

1. ORDAINED MINISTERIAL STANDING --United Church of Christ Clergy who have Ordained Ministerial Standing in the Association are members of the Association. They are entitled to vote and to serve as elected officers and committee members of the Association, unless they are on Leave of Absence status. Those whose ordained ministerial standing is held in the Association include United Church of Christ ministers:
 - (a) who serve member churches of the Association or other ministries recognized by the Association;
 - (b) who are on a Leave of Absence granted by the Association; or
 - (c) who are retired. Most retired United Church of Christ ministers with standing in the Association hold membership in a UCC member church of the Association.

Ordained ministerial standing is granted, upon the recommendation of the Association's COM, by a majority vote of those present and voting at an Ecclesiastical Council meeting of the Association duly called to consider the matter.

Transfer of ordained ministerial standing is accepted by a majority vote of the Association's COM. The Committee shall communicate its decision to accept such a transfer to the Board of Directors and to the Association at their next regular meetings.

A Service of Installation or a Service of Recognition is conducted at a meeting of the Association duly called for the purpose, by a majority vote of the Association's COM. A quorum and vote shall not be required at such Association meetings. The COM Scribe shall, in a timely manner, inform the Board of Directors, as well as all Association members, of all Association meetings called for the purpose of conducting services of Installation or Recognition.

Services of Installation are conducted for clergy with ordained ministerial standing in the Association, who serve member churches of the Association or other ministries recognized by the Association.

Services of Recognition are conducted for clergy with ordained ministerial standing in the Association who are serving a ministry which is recognized by the Association, but not affiliated with the Association. Such services may also be conducted to affirm the ministry of a minister from another denomination who is both serving a member church of the Association and been granted Dual Standing by the Association.

2. DUAL STANDING

Ordained clergy from denominations other than the United Church of Christ who have Dual Standing in the Association are members of the Association.

Dual Standing clergy do not have Ordained Ministerial Standing in the Association. They are not reported as ordained United Church of Christ ministers to the Secretary of the United Church of Christ. Dual Standing clergy serve a member church within the Association or another ministry recognized by the Association. Dual Standing cannot be transferred from one Association to another. Dual Standing ends when the minister leaves the ministerial position for which Dual Standing was granted by the Association.

Dual Standing is granted by a majority vote of the Association's COM. The Committee shall communicate its decision to grant Dual Standing to the Board of Directors and to the Association at their next regular meetings.

Dual Standing Members are entitled to vote at Association meetings and may serve as Lay Delegates to the Association, provided they are full members or associate members of the Association member church they are representing. Dual Standing Members may not serve as Moderator, Vice Moderator, or Scribe of the Association. They may not serve on the Association's Board of Directors, COM, or Church and Leadership Committees. They are eligible to serve on the ad hoc committees of the Association.

3. PRIVILEGE OF CALL

Ordained clergy from denominations other than the United Church of Christ who are granted Privilege of Call by the Association are encouraged to participate in the Association, but they are not members of the Association. They are not entitled to vote at Association meetings or to serve as elected officers or committee members of the Association, except they may serve as Lay Delegates to the Association, provided they are full members or associate members of the Association member church they are representing.

Ordained clergy granted Privilege of Call normally reside in the Association area. They seek to enter the ordained ministry of the United Church of Christ. Privilege of Call authorizes a minister ordained in another denomination to seek a call to a ministry within the United Church of Christ.

Ordained clergy are granted Privilege of Call, upon the recommendation of the Association's COM, by a majority vote of those present and voting at an Ecclesiastical Council meeting of the Association duly called to consider the matter. Privilege of Call is granted for one year, but may be renewed by the Association's COM.

4. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Persons authorized by the Association for Ordained Ministry or Commissioned Ministry who are granted a Leave of Absence from active ministry by the Association continue to hold their membership in the Association. However, during their Leave of Absence they may not vote at Association meetings or serve as elected officers or committee members of the Association, except they may serve as Lay Delegates to the Association, provided they are members in good standing of the Association member church they represent.

A Leave of Absence is granted by majority vote of the Association's COM. The Committee shall communicate its decision to grant such a Leave to the Board of Directors and to the Association at their next regular meetings.

A Leave of Absence is granted for one year, but may be renewed by the Association's COM. In the case of ordained ministry, it is not granted for more than five successive years, except in special cases. In the case of commissioned ministry, it is not granted for more than three successive years.

C. LAY MINISTRIES

1. COMMISSIONED MINISTRY

Lay persons who are authorized for Commissioned Ministry by the Association are members of the Association. They are entitled to vote and to serve as elected officers and committee members of the Association.

Lay persons authorized for Commissioned Ministry serve in a church-related ministry which is recognized by the Association. They also hold membership in a member church of the Association. Authorization for Commissioned Ministry can be transferred from one Association to another, provided the individual continues to serve in the same specific church-related ministry.

Authorization for Commissioned Ministry is granted, upon the recommendation of the Association's COM, by a majority vote of those present and voting at an Ecclesiastical Council meeting of the Association duly called to consider the matter. Persons authorized by the Association for Commissioned Ministry may be granted a Leave of Absence from active ministry by majority vote of the Association's COM. (See Article XII, B, 4)

2. MEMBER IN DISCERNMENT

Lay persons granted the status of Member in Discernment (MID) of the Association are encouraged to participate in the Association, but they are not members of the Association. They are not entitled to vote at Association meetings or to serve as elected officers. They may serve as committee members of the Association except they may not serve on the COM, Board of Directors, and Church and Leadership Committee. They may serve as Lay Delegates to the Association, provided they are members in good standing of the Association member church they represent.

Members in Discernment of the Association are lay persons who are preparing for ordained United

Church of Christ ministry under the supervision of the COM. Each Member in Discernment is sponsored by a member church of the Association.

Lay persons are granted Member in Discernment status by the Association's COM. Member in Discernment status is granted for a period of one year, but may be renewed by the Association's COM.

3. LICENSED MINISTRY

Lay persons who are authorized for Licensed Ministry by the Association are encouraged to participate in the Association, but they are not members of the Association. However, they are entitled to vote at Association meetings provided they are Lay Delegates from a member church of the Association. They are not entitled to serve as elected officers of the Association. They may serve as committee members of the Association except they may not serve on the COM, Board of Directors, and Church and Leadership Committee. They may serve as Lay Delegates to the Association, provided they are members in good standing of the Association member church they represent.

Licensed Ministers are authorized to conduct ministry, including the Sacraments, in designated member churches of the Association, and only in those designated churches.

Authorization for Licensed Ministry is granted for a designated ministry by the Association's COM. The COM shall report its decision to the Board of Directors. Authorization for Licensed Ministry is granted for a period of one year, but may be renewed by the Association's COM. Such authorization is not transferable and ends at the conclusion of the designated ministry.

D. DISCIPLINE OF PERSONS AUTHORIZED FOR MINISTRY AND TERMINATION OF STANDING AND ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

1. ORDAINED MINISTRY, COMMISSIONED MINISTRY, LICENSED MINISTRY

Persons authorized by the Association for Ordained Ministry, Commissioned Ministry, or Licensed Ministry may be censured or have their authorization for ministry and membership in the Association suspended or terminated by a majority vote of the Association's COM for any or all of the following causes: violation of ethical or moral codes; violation of the principles of the United Church of Christ; failure to participate in meetings and programs of the Association for a period of two years without showing just cause; and failure to communicate with the Association for two years. The Association's COM shall attempt to consult with the individual involved, before reaching a decision of Censure, Suspension, or Termination.

- (a) Censure is a warning of a violation or failure, which if continued could lead to the suspension or termination of an individual's authorization for ministry and membership in the Association.
- (b) Suspension has censure inherent within it, and removes the individual for a specific period of time from the functions of ministry. While their authorization for ministry is under Suspension, individuals may not vote at Association meetings, serve as elected officers or committee members of the Association, or serve as Lay Delegates to the Association.
- (c) Termination removes the individual from the functions of ministry. Individuals whose authorization for ministry in the Association is terminated may serve as Lay Delegates to the Association. They may not serve as Moderator, Vice Moderator, Treasurer or Scribe of the

Association. They may not serve on the Board of Directors or any Association Committees.

The following provisions will apply only in matters involving the Fitness Review process as detailed in the *Manual on Ministry* of the United Church of Christ. In case of conflict between these provisions and other provisions of this Section D, these provisions will prevail.

When a complaint is brought against an authorized minister with standing in the Association, it is the COM that is responsible for determining whether the complaint raises the question of ministerial fitness in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ. Upon voting in the affirmative to initiate a Fitness Review for an authorized minister, the COM will refer such review (except those where the subject is a Conference Minister, Associate Conference Minister, or their family members) to the Unified Fitness Review Committee of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The Unified Fitness Review Committee will follow the process for conducting a Fitness Review as described in the then current *Manual on Ministry* of the United Church of Christ. The Unified Fitness Review Committee will also follow any additional processes agreed upon by all of the participating Associations so long as those processes do not conflict with the then current *Manual on Ministry* of the United Church of Christ.

The COM will accept the outcome of the Unified Fitness Review Committee as its own and report the same to the appropriate settings of the United Church of Christ.

Any appeal of the process by the subject of the review must be filed with the Moderator within ten (10) days of receipt of notification of the outcome of the Fitness Review.

When an oversight decision of the Unified Fitness Review Committee is appealed, the Board of Directors shall be convened as a Board of Appeal. The grounds for appeal of oversight decisions shall be limited to questions of process. The appeal will determine whether the approved process of the COM and Unified Fitness Review Committee were adhered to. The outcomes of an appeal are:

- (a) Affirmation that the process used was consistent with the Unified Fitness Review Committee's process and with the COM's process – in which case the decision of the Unified Fitness Review Committee stands.
- (b) Recognition that the process used was not consistent with the Unified Fitness Review Committee process and the COM process. The Board of Directors will refer the case back to the Unified Fitness Review Committee

The Board of Directors will appoint one (1) member to the Unified Fitness Review Committee. The appointee must have been a member of an Association's COM within the last 6 years. The term of service for each member will be three years. The Board of Directors may choose to renew the appointee for up to two more terms of service. Prior to doing so, the Board of Directors must confirm the appointee's willingness to continue to serve on the Unified Fitness Review Committee and must consult with Conference staff. Attention to the importance of balancing gender, clergy, lay and the needed skills and experience on the Unified Fitness Review Committee shall be considered by the Board of Directors in making or renewing its appointments.

1. DUAL STANDING, PRIVILEGE OF CALL, MEMBER IN DISCERNMENT

Ordained clergy who have been granted Dual Standing or Privilege of Call in the Association and

lay persons who have been granted the status of Member in Discernment of the Association, may have their authorization for ministry terminated by majority vote of the Association's COM for any or all of the following causes: violation of ethical or moral codes; violation of the principles of the United Church of Christ; failure to participate in meetings and programs of the Association for a period of two years without showing just cause; and failure to communicate with the Association for two years. The COM shall attempt to consult with the individuals involved, before reaching a decision to terminate.

Dual Standing termination includes termination of the individual's membership in the Association, unless their authorization for ministry is reinstated.

Individuals whose Dual Standing, Privilege of Call, or Member in Discernment status has been terminated or refused renewal may serve as Lay Delegates to the Association, provided they are members in good standing of the Association member church they are representing. They may not serve as Moderator, Vice Moderator, Treasurer or Scribe of the Association. They may not serve on the Board of Directors or any Association Committees.

2. APPEAL

The decision of the Association's COM to Censure, Suspend, or Terminate an individual's authorization for Ordained, Commissioned, or Licensed ministry, may be appealed to the Association's Board of Directors by the individual involved, or by any party who has been adversely affected by the decision. The decision of the Association's COM to Terminate or Refuse Renewal of an individual's authorization for Dual Standing, Privilege of Call, or Member in Discernment status may be appealed to the Association's Board of Directors by the individual involved, or by any party who has been adversely affected by the decision. In all cases the individual appealing the decision must submit a written request within 30 days to the Board of Directors requesting that it review the COM's process in reaching its finding of Censure, Suspension, Termination, or Refusal of Renewal. The request must also cite or identify the individual's specific disagreement with the process followed by the COM.

Upon receiving this written request, the Board of Directors may in writing, (1) confirm that the process followed by the COM in reaching its finding was fair, or (2) ask the COM to reconsider its process, or (3) set into motion another process which the Board of Directors deems is warranted.

ARTICLE XIII -AMENDMENTS

This *Constitution and Bylaws* may be amended by a two-thirds vote of any Regular or Special meeting of the Association, provided such proposed amendment has been approved by the Board of Directors and a copy sent to each member church and minister at least three (3) weeks prior to the meeting at which action on such proposed amendment is to be taken.

ARTICLE XIV --AFFILIATED GROUPS

A. Organizations whose programs and activities represent an extension of the purpose and fellowship of the Association may be granted the status of an Affiliated Group of the Association. Such

organizations have their own officers and draw their memberships primarily from the member churches of the Association.

- B. The President of each Affiliated Group of the Association is entitled to be a member of the Association's Board of Directors. If the President of an Affiliated Group is not a member in good standing of a member church of the Association, the group shall appoint one of its members who is a member in good standing of a member church of the Association to serve as the committee's representative to the Board of Directors.
- C. Organizations may only be granted the status of an Affiliated Group of the Association, by vote of the Association, upon the recommendation of the Board of Directors.
- D. The Pilgrim Women's Fellowship is an Affiliated Group of the Association.

APPENDICES

For informational purposes, guides to the contents of the *Constitution and Bylaws of the Pilgrim Association of the United Church of Christ* are included here as appendices to that *Constitution and Bylaws*. However, those appendices themselves are not a part of the *Constitution and Bylaws* of the Pilgrim Association.

Appendix A – Categories of Action

Appendix B – Status & Eligibility

Appendix A -- Categories of Action
Pilgrim Association of the United Church of Christ (Massachusetts Conference)

Category of Action	Initiated By (usually)	Committee on Ministry	Board of Directors	Association Meeting
Member Church Admission	Applying Church	Review/Recommend	Ratify	Ecclesiastical Council VOTE
Member Church Dismissal	Committee on Ministry	Review/Recommend	Ratify	Ecclesiastical Council VOTE
Member Church Removal	Member Church	Review/Recommend	Ratify	Ecclesiastical Council VOTE
Ordain, Commission	Sponsoring UCC Assoc. Church	Review/Recommend	Informed of Assoc. Meeting	Ecclesiastical Council VOTE
Privilege of Call	Non-UCC Minister	Review/Recommend	Informed of Assoc. Meeting	Ecclesiastical Council VOTE
Privilege of Call Renewal	Non-UCC Minister/COM	Review/ VOTE	Informed of COM Vote	Informed of COM Vote
Dual Standing	Sponsoring Assoc. Church	Review/ VOTE	Informed of COM Vote	Informed of COM Vote
Member in Discernment & Renewals	Sponsoring Assoc. Church	Review/ VOTE	Informed of COM Vote	Informed of COM Vote
Licensure & Renewals	Assoc. Church To Be Served	Review/ VOTE	Informed of COM Vote	Informed of COM Vote
Installation, Recognition Services	Sponsoring Assoc. Church	Review/ VOTE	Informed of Service	Celebrate Church, Minister, Assoc. Covenant – no quorum, no vote
Ordained, Commissioned Ministers -- Transfer, Death, Resignation, Leave of Absence & Its Renewal	Ordained or Commissioned Minister	Review/ VOTE	Informed of COM Vote	Informed of COM Vote
Ordained, Commissioned, Licensed Ministers – Censure, Suspension, Termination	Committee on Ministry or other	Review/ VOTE -- Fitness Review Process May Be Initiated With COM Accepting Its RESULT	Informed of COM Vote -- Informed of Fitness Review & Result	Informed of COM Vote -- Informed of Fitness Review & Result
Dual Standing, Member in Disc., Privilege of Call - Termination, Renewal Refusal	Committee on Ministry or other	Review/ VOTE	Informed of COM Vote	Informed of COM Vote
Appeals – Limited To Process	Person subject to review	Informed of Board of Directors' Vote	Review/ VOTE	Informed of Board of Directors' Vote

Appendix B -- Status & Eligibility

Pilgrim Association of the United Church of Christ (Massachusetts Conference)

Status & Eligibility	Under Review	Transferable	Member Of Assoc.	Can Vote At Assoc.	Can Serve as Church Delegate to Assoc	Can Serve as Mod., V-Mod., Scribe	Can Serve on Board of Directors	Can Serve on COM	Can Serve on Church & Leadership	Can Serve on Missions & Comm. Concerns	Can Serve on Ad Hoc Committees
Ordained		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Commissioned		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dual Standing			X	X	X						X
Privilege of Call	X				X						
Member in Discernment	X				X					X	X
Licensed	X				X					X	X
Ordained & Commissioned Leave of Absence	X		X		X						
Members of Assoc. Churches			Through their churches		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ord. & Comm. Censured	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ord. & Comm. Suspended	X		Possible Suspen								
Ord. & Comm. Termination	X		Possible Termin		X						
Licensed Censured	X				X					X	X
Licensed Suspended, Terminated	X										
Dual Standing, Priv. Of Call, MID Termination	X				X						