

Northern Light United Church Bylaws & Theological Foundations

BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1. NAME

The name of the union Church is Northern Light United Church, hereafter referred to as "NLUC," a union of the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church (USA) denominations, located in Juneau, Alaska.

ARTICLE 2. FAITH AND WORSHIP

2.1 Statement of Faith

NLUC is guided in matters of faith by the creeds and confessions of the participating denominations.

2.2 Sacraments

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two recognized sacraments. No specific form of either is required. However, NLUC shall provide for a variety of viewpoints and experience regarding both the sacraments and NLUC's services of worship.

2.3 Worship

The NLUC is a worshipping community, living a robust life according to the example and teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ. The purpose of our worship is to express our love and praise to God and to witness to God's love for all people. To realize this expression for all who participate, a range of challenging worship services shall be provided that enhance growth in our faith journey.

ARTICLE 3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Denominational Membership. All members of NLUC are equally members of the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church (USA). New members may be received by confession of faith or reaffirmation of faith or by letter of transfer from another congregation.

3.2 Confession or Reaffirmation of Faith. New members received into NLUC by confession or reaffirmation of faith are asked to subscribe to the following questions:

- 3.2.1 In confirmation (or reaffirmation) of your baptismal vows (or vows made for you at your baptism), do you here in the presence of God and this congregation witness to your personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior?
- 3.2.2 Do you intend to seek a deeper faith in and understanding of God? Do you intend to seek a deeper faith in and understanding of Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, to trust Him, to follow Him as a faithful disciple with the aid of the Holy Spirit?
- 3.2.3 Will you study and seek to understand the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the unique and authoritative witness of Jesus Christ and God's Word to you?
- 3.2.4 Do you intend to be a faithful member of NLUC, as far as you are able, regularly attending its services of worship, observing its sacraments, keeping it in your prayers, offering your gifts, and participating in its mission and service in the church, the Juneau community and the world?

3.3 Active Members Roll. NLUC maintains an Active Members roll and an Inactive Members Roll. The count of members on the Active Members Roll must be used for all statistical reports relating to the membership of NLUC.

3.4. Inactive Members Roll.

3.4.1 Removal from Active Members Roll. An Inactive Members Roll shall list the names of those who have been removed from the Active Members Roll because, in the judgment of the Council, the member no longer participates in NLUC's work and worship through attendance and/or known contribution. Council shall make reasonable efforts to discover the cause of the member's nonparticipation and to restore the member to activity in the church's work and worship before placing a Member on the Inactive Members Roll. Any member whose name is transferred must be notified of this action.

3.4.2 Restoration to Active Status. An Inactive Member shall be restored to the Active Members Roll by action of Council upon the Inactive Member's resumption, in the judgment of Council, of activity in the church's work and worship.

3.4.3 Removal from all Rolls. An Active or Inactive Member shall be removed from the NLUC Membership Rolls upon

3.4.3.1 the member's request;

3.4.3.2 the member's transfer to membership in another church; or

3.4.3.3 the member's death.

ARTICLE 4. THE NLUC COUNCIL

4.1. Governance.

4.1.1 Generally. NLUC is governed by a representative body known as the Council, elected by the congregation from its own membership. The Council has the power of a Session of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and/or the Church Council and Board of Trustees of the United Methodist Church, the two denominations to which it belongs.

4.1.2 Officers. The Council shall elect by a majority vote a moderator and vice-moderator from the lay membership of the Council. Each year, the Council shall also elect a clerk, treasurer, and membership secretary who shall report to Council, but do not need to be members of the Council. The Council shall determine the duties of these positions.

4.2 Council Membership.

4.2.1 Voting and Non-Voting Members. The voting members of the Council consist of the duly designated pastor(s) of the congregation and twelve elected members. In addition, a nonvoting youth member (nonordained) may be selected by the youth for a one-year term and may serve subsequent terms.

4.2.2 Prerequisite for Membership on Council. To be eligible to be nominated and elected as a member of the Council, the individual must be

4.2.2.1 at least eighteen years of age; and

4.2.2.2 either (1) a lay member of NLUC, or (2) a Presbyterian Church (USA) or United Methodist Church clergy who actively participates at NLUC and is not a member of the staff.

4.2.3 Elected Council Member Classes. There are three classes of elected members on the Council. Each term is three years and terms run concurrently with the church's fiscal year. An elected member may be nominated and elected to serve a second successive term. Re-election after a second consecutive term is possible only after rotation off the Council for at least one year. An elected Council member whose initial term was less than one year may serve continuously for a maximum period of seven years without rotating off Council.

4.2.4 Election. Election of Council members must be held at the Annual Congregational Meeting or at special meetings to fill vacancies that may occur.

4.2.5 Installation. Elected Council members, and, if selected, a non-voting youth member, shall be installed at a regular church service and directed to their responsibilities by prayers. Lay members who have not been ordained as lay elders may be so ordained.

4.3 Quorum. A quorum for the transaction of business is a staff pastor or designated appointee; a lay moderator, vice-moderator, or designee; and five of the elected members of the Council.

4.4 Meeting Schedule and Executive Session.

4.4.1 Schedule. The Council shall hold at least 10 meetings annually. Special meetings may be called by a staff pastor, the moderator, or any four Council members. Members and friends of NLUC are welcome to attend Council meetings.

4.4.2 Executive Sessions. The Council may have executive sessions to discuss personnel matters, receiving and considering legal advice, or considering the terms of financial commitments; however, all decisions must be made in an open meeting.

4.5 Responsibilities.

4.5.1 Generally. The Council shall carry out the responsibilities assigned to it in these Bylaws and determine and approve such policies as needed to carry out the programs of the church. Policies adopted by the Council must be consistent with these Bylaws. The Council may carry out its responsibilities and policies directly or through elected or appointed committees, subject to final oversight and decision-making by Council and as otherwise provided in these Bylaws. *See, § 4.5.4 [committees].*

4.5.2 Corporate Responsibility. The corporate responsibility of NLUC rests with the Council. The Council shall conduct the affairs of NLUC as they relate to administration of business and programs. The Council members are the legal trustees of the NLUC church corporation. The Council may buy, sell, or mortgage property or undertake construction only with a majority vote of those members present at a duly called congregational meeting and the concurrence of each denomination's applicable judicatory. If construction or remodeling costs less than 10% of the value of the building being replaced or remodeled, the Council may proceed without vote of the congregation and concurrence of both the denominations' judicatories, provided a loan is not necessary.

4.5.3 Ministry and Christian Education.

4.5.3.1 Membership Oversight. The Council shall oversee membership activities as provided in Article 3 [membership] and ensure that current rolls of members are kept. The Council shall provide for membership recruitment and orientation.

4.5.3.2 Ministry Oversight. The Council is responsible for oversight of the ministry of NLUC. It shall, in coordination with the pastor(s) with assigned worship responsibilities, provide for regular opportunities for worship, including celebration of the sacraments and special observances throughout the church year. As provided in § 4.5.1 [responsibilities; generally] and 4.5.4 [committees], Council may establish a worship committee to guide the congregation's worship life, including music and the arts.

4.5.3.3 Christian Education. Council shall provide for the spiritual guidance of NLUC through establishing a program of Christian Education for all ages based on Biblical teachings and the Theological Foundations of NLUC. Through an education committee or by other means, and in coordination with staff who might have education responsibilities, it shall provide for curriculum selection for various classes and educational opportunities, and it will identify teachers/leadership for the church's educational efforts.

4.5.3.4 Denominational Mission and Benevolence. *See*, § 7.11 [benevolent giving]. Nothing herein limits the NLUC and Council from establishing or supporting other service or benevolence activities. *See*, § 5.6 [SJSC].

4.5.4 Committees

4.5.4.1 Establishment. Those committees identified specifically in these Bylaws are Elected Committees (*see* Article 5) and they shall perform the responsibilities set forth in these Bylaws. With the concurrence of the applicable Elected Committee, the Council may modify, transfer, and create additional responsibilities for Elected Committees. Consistent with § 4.5.1 [responsibilities; generally], the Council may establish additional committees, teams, or workgroups as necessary to carry out program needs of NLUC, as determined by the Council, and appoint members or otherwise provide for membership on these Council established committees. The Council may designate decision making, within a set budget (if applicable), to these committees, teams, or work groups or to Elected Committees. All established and Elected

Committees shall provide the Council with minutes or other reports of committee meetings.

4.5.4.2 Council Membership on Committees. A Council member shall serve as a member or chair of each Elected Committee and Council established committee. Voting or non-voting status of Council members is subject to the terms of these Bylaws or the conditions set by the Council when it establishes an additional committee. The Council member serving on each committee, including the Elected Committees, is responsible for reporting Council concerns and requests to the Committees. Each Council established committee shall select its own chair.

4.5.4.3 Review and Notice. The Council shall annually review the work of each committee, work group, or team, including Elected Committees. The Council shall publish annually, and update as necessary throughout the year, a list of all committees, workgroups, and teams, including Elected Committees. The list shall include for each such entity: (1) the names of the chair and membership; (2) the name of the Council representative (if any); (3) a brief summary of the responsibilities; (4) the schedule for and how to access minutes of meetings; and (5) such other information that may inform the congregation of the work of NLUC and opportunities to participate.

4.5.5. Denominational Representation.

4.5.5.1 Presbytery of the Northwest Coast. At the beginning of each year, the Council shall elect the number of lay ruling elders as commissioner(s) for which NLUC is eligible based on the standards of the Presbytery of the Northwest Coast. One of these commissioners must be currently serving on Council. The term, which is not set by the Presbytery, shall be two-years. The appointee from Council may serve one successive term.

4.5.5.2 Alaska United Methodist Conference. The NLUC representative(s) to the United Methodist Church, Alaska Conference, shall be elected as provided in § 5.5.3.1 [nominating committee; responsibilities; elections] and serve for a four-year term.

4.5.6 Native Ministries.

4.5.6.1 Methodist Conference, Committee on Native American Ministries.

The Alaska United Methodist Conference includes in its structure a Committee on Native American Ministries (CONAM) with the purpose of being “in ministry with Native American People, with an emphasis on Alaska’s Native peoples, to celebrate the enrichment Alaskans share as

we worship and minister together, and to maintain connectional relationships.” The membership of CONAM is selected by the Native Elders of the Alaska Conference.

4.5.6.2 NLUC, Native Ministries Committee. A Native Ministries Committee functions within NLUC. Its membership is principally comprised of Alaska Native members of NLUC, but also includes other members. The Chair of the Committee will be selected by the members and will report to Council. It is supported with designated financial resources managed by NLUC, but directed by the Native Ministries Committee, and is also eligible to receive budgeted funds from NLUC. The mission of the Native Ministries Committee is “celebrating and sharing the ministry, healing, unity, diversity, music, and languages of Alaska’s First People.”

ARTICLE 5. ELECTED COMMITTEES

5.1 General Provisions.

5.1.1 Elected Committee Membership. All Elected Committees shall be comprised of voting members, and ex officio voting and non-voting members, as provided in these Bylaws. Committee members must be (1) members of NLUC, or (2) PCUSA or UMC clergy who are not NLUC staff, but who actively participate at NLUC. Elected Committee members shall be installed at a regular church service and directed to their responsibilities by prayer. Deacons shall also be ordained at a regular church service. Nominations for election of voting members of Elected Committees shall occur as provided in § 5.5 [nominating committee] and elections shall occur each year at the annual congregational meeting. Vacancies shall be filled as provided in § 5.1.3 [mid-term vacancies].

5.1.2. Term and Classes. Non-ex officio voting members of Elected Committees shall be elected in three classes each for a three-year term. A voting member may be re-nominated to serve a second successive term. Reelection may thereafter occur only after at least a one-year period in which the voting member does not serve on the committee. A member whose initial term was less than one year may serve continuously for a maximum period of seven years without rotating off the committee.

5.1.3. Mid-Term Vacancies.

5.1.3.1 Notice. Whenever a mid-term vacancy in a voting position occurs on an Elected Committee, the Committee shall notify the Council and the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall notify the congregation of the vacancy and invite individuals to be considered for nomination for election to fill the remaining period of the term.

5.1.3.2 Nomination. Upon the close of the notice period, which shall not exceed two weeks, the Nominating Committee shall identify at least one (or more) individual who qualifies for voting membership on such Committee and is willing to complete the vacant term.

5.1.3.3 Election. The name(s) of those identified by the Nominating Committee shall be presented for election at a special Congregational Meeting called for the purpose of filling the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

5.1.4. Leadership. The voting members of each Elected Committee shall elect the committee chairperson at the annual organizing meeting of the committee.

5.1.5 Relationship with Council. The chairperson (or designee) shall submit a written report of Committee activities and concerns to the Council at least one week prior to each regularly scheduled Council meeting. This report may be in whatever form is determined by the Elected Committee to be most appropriate, including sending the committee's regular minutes.

5.1.5. Quorum. The quorum at all Elected Committee meetings shall be a majority of voting members of the Committee.

5.2 Deacons Committee

5.2.1 Membership. The Deacons Committee consists of nine non-ex officio voting members. The staff pastor(s) and a member of the Council are ex officio nonvoting members of the Deacons.

5.2.2 Meetings. The Deacons Committee shall hold at least 10 meetings annually.

5.2.3 Congregational Responsibilities. The Deacons shall minister to those in need, to those who are sick, to the friendless, and to anyone in distress. The Deacons are also responsible for administering the Deacons' Fund, assuring communion preparation, and performing other duties as assigned.

5.3 Committee on Property Management

5.3.1 Membership. The Committee on Property Management (CPM) consists of six voting members. A staff pastor and a member of the Council are ex officio nonvoting members of the CPM.

5.3.2 Meetings. The CPM shall hold at least 10 meetings annually.

5.3.3 Responsibilities. The CPM is responsible for the following:

5.3.3.1 the ongoing maintenance of buildings and grounds, including yard care and snow removal as funded, and as a consultative body on building renovations;

5.3.3.2 preparing the budget request for its areas of responsibility; and

5.3.3.3 under the general oversight of the Council, maintaining adequate insurance protection for the church building and all properties, and advising the Council to act upon any changes that might be required.

5.4 Staff-Parish Relations Committee

5.4.1 Membership. The Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) consists of six elected voting lay members and two ex officio voting members: (1) the lay delegate elected to the Alaska Conference of the United Methodist Church, and (2) a lay ruling elder commissioner to Presbytery who is also a member of Council. The staff pastor(s) shall also serve on SPRC as an ex officio non-voting member. A staff member or immediate family member of a pastor or staff member may not serve on the SPRC.

5.4.2 Responsibilities. The SPRC responsibilities shall be guided by the relevant sections of the current edition of the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, as modified by the NLUC governance structure, and will function in a manner similar to a personnel committee in a Presbyterian Church (USA) congregation. The functions and responsibilities of the SPRC are to:

5.4.2.1 Confer and counsel with the pastor(s) and staff on matters pertaining to their relationship with the congregation including priorities to be given in the use of their time and skill in relation to the goals and objectives set for the congregation's mission and the demands of the ministry.

5.4.2.2 Keep the pastor(s) and staff advised concerning conditions within the congregation as they affect relations between the pastor(s)/staff and the people.

5.4.2.3 Maximize effectiveness in ministry and identify continuing education needs of staff, the SPRC shall annually evaluate the pastor(s) and ensure that the annual evaluation of the other church staff occurs. The Committee shall furnish the completed evaluation(s) for staff pastor(s) to the pastor(s), Council, and relevant judicatory of each denomination to which NLUC belongs.

- 5.4.2.4 Annually recommend to the denominational leadership not later than the first week of January the continuation or change of each staff pastor. If SPRC recommends a change in a pastor, it shall do so in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article 6 [ministerial staff].
- 5.4.2.5 Consult on matters pertaining to pulpit supply and to ensure that the pulpit is appropriately staffed each Sunday.
- 5.4.2.6 Enlist, interview, evaluate, review, and recommend persons for candidacy for ordained and diaconal ministries, and persons for missionary service. To make opportunities for ordained ministry known to the congregation.
- 5.4.2.7 Prepare and present to Council the budget needs for staff salaries, allowances, and fringe benefits.

5.5 Nominating Committee

5.5.1 Membership and Selection. The Nominating Committee consists of eight voting members: (1) two lay members of the Council selected by the Council; (2) the staff pastor; and (3) five elected lay members, who must be nominated and elected by the Congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

5.5.2 Meetings. The Nominating Committee shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill its responsibilities.

5.5.3 Responsibilities.

5.5.3.1 Elections. The Nominating Committee shall provide at least one eligible nominee for each elective position to be filled giving consideration to persons representative of the congregation's diverse membership. Elective positions include, but are not limited to, the elected members of Council, SPRC, CPM, Deacons, Pastor Nominating Committee (*see*, § 6.1.1 [pastor selection; pastor nominating committee]), SJSC, and the representative(s) to the Alaska Conference of the United Methodist Church. (Lay ruling elder commissioners to the Northwest Coast Presbytery are selected annually by the Council.) The names of the nominees for congregational election must be published at least 14 days prior to the congregational meeting.

5.5.3.2 Vacancies. In the event of a vacancy occurring in an elected position, including those on the Nominating Committee, the Nominating Committee shall perform the responsibilities set out in § 5.1.3 [mid-term vacancies].

5.6 Social Justice and Service Committee.

5.6.1 Membership. The Social Justice and Service Committee (SJSC) shall have no fewer than seven elected voting members. The pastor(s) and a member of Council designated by Council shall be ex officio voting members. Other congregation members are welcome and encouraged to take part and may take part in decisions the Committee chooses to make by consensus.

5.6.2 Responsibilities. The SJSC is responsible for overseeing the congregation's social justice and community service ministries and acting as the Council's liaison to encourage involvement and support of the members of the congregation through promotion, encouragement, support, education, and participation in projects to help people and communities in need. SJSC exists to demonstrate our caring through our willingness to serve. These responsibilities will be carried out with a sensitivity to the people and communities we may serve that reflects our willingness to learn from those with whom we have contact about how their lives can best be improved. SJSC's work includes:

- 5.6.2.1 cataloging the service activities of NLUC, including identification of individuals taking leadership roles and opportunities for others to participate meaningfully and helpfully;
- 5.6.2.2 recognizing and identifying unmet, or inadequately met, needs at the community, state, denominational, national, and international level to improve the well-being of individuals, families, and communities in a spirit of caring;
- 5.6.2.3 creating meaningful, recognizable opportunities for those in need to know of our willingness to serve and to be led in the process of identifying the best form of contribution and our capacity to provide the service;
- 5.6.2.4 encouraging hands-on participation by members of the congregation, including support for more participation in current activities of the congregation;
- 5.6.2.5 providing mentorship and training opportunities to members and friends of the congregation who wish to share in these activities;
- 5.6.2.6 working to improve our ability to meet others in need where they are and respond with honesty and respect to find the most appropriate contribution we can make;

5.6.2.7 proposing budgets to the Council for projects or programs to which NLUC should contribute on a one-time only or continuing basis, including the officially approved causes of each denomination, and coordinating fund raising for projects undertaken by NLUC or to which NLUC wishes to contribute; and

5.6.2.8 providing reports to the Congregation verbally and in writing (through newsletters, bulletins, and special communications), and through forming partnerships with others to achieve the same objectives.

ARTICLE 6. MINISTERIAL STAFF

6.1 Pastor Selection

6.1.1 Pastor Nominating Committee.

6.1.1.1 Membership. When the congregation is seeking a pastor or an associate pastor, a Pastor Nominating Committee, which shall have a total of nine voting members, must be elected at a duly called congregational meeting. Of the slate presented by the Nominating Committee for election by the Congregation, at least two shall be Council members and two SPRC members selected by the respective body. The pastor and paid staff may not be elected to the Committee.

6.1.1.2 Meetings. The Pastor Nominating Committee shall meet as often and frequently as needed to fulfill its responsibilities.

6.1.1.2 Investigation. The Pastor Nominating Committee, in consultation with the ministerial relations bodies of the Presbytery of the Northwest Coast and the Alaska Conference of the United Methodist Church, shall then thoroughly investigate the personal qualifications of several candidates. The Committee must take this step before approval of the relevant judicatories of the two denominations is sought.

6.1.2 Denominational Approval. The United Methodist Bishop and the Presbytery of the Northwest Coast must approve a candidate's call before the name is presented to the congregation.

6.1.3 Congregational Approval. The name of one candidate for each pastoral office must be presented at a congregational meeting duly called for the purpose of electing a pastor and/or an associate pastor. A two-thirds majority of those present is required to elect.

6.1.4 Installation and Dismissal. Installation and dismissal of a staff pastor must involve not only the congregation but also the judicatories of the two denominations.

6.1.5 Contract. A contract must be executed between the Church and the pastor delineating conditions of employment including job description, salary and benefits, performance, and conditions for termination. This contract must be prepared by the Pastor Nominating Committee in consultation with SPRC, and approved by the Council.

6.2 Review of Pastoral Responsibilities. Pastoral responsibilities are determined by the Council and reviewed annually.

6.3 Pastoral Change

6.3.1. A change in appointment may be initiated by the pastor, the SPRC, or by either of the appropriate judicatory of the two denominations to which NLUC belongs.

6.3.2. In the event the pastor initiates a change, the pastor is requested to give three months' notice to the SPRC and the Council prior to vacating the pulpit.

6.3.3. If the SPRC recommends a change in pastoral leadership, the SPRC shall meet with the Council and pastor in executive session to discuss the recommendation prior to forwarding the recommendation to the judicatories. The Council shall then submit its recommendation, either concurring or disagreeing, to the judicatories.

6.3.4. If either denomination's judicatory wishes to initiate a change in pastoral leadership, the judicatory shall notify the Council, the SPRC, the pastor, and the other judicatory prior to a final decision.

6.4 Other. *Also see, §§ 7.9 [pastor pension plan] and 7.10 [pastor discipline process].*

ARTICLE 7. THE UNITED CHURCH

7.1 Union Church. NLUC is a union church of the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church (USA) incorporated under the laws of the State of Alaska.

7.2 Responsibility to the Denominations. In all of its actions, the Council of NLUC is subject to examination by and is accountable to the respective judicatories of each denomination.

7.3 Denominational Discipline. All members of NLUC are under the discipline of the Council according to the rules agreed upon in harmony with the governing articles of

the two denominations when they coincide, in harmony with the mandatory provisions of the governing articles of any one denomination where the other is permissive, and at the choice of the Council where they are contradictory.

- 7.4 Membership Complaints Against Council.** Appeals or complaints against the action of the Council of NLUC may be made to only one judicatory at the choice of the member or members, and all subsequent appeals and complaints must be in the courts of the member(s)'s original choice, and decisions so finally made are binding on the Council and on the members.
- 7.5 Administrative Complaints Against Council.** Complaints against the administrative acts of the Council may be taken under the constitutional provisions of either denomination, but not to more than one, according to the choice of the complainant, and once being complained to one judicatory, the other judicatory may not accept jurisdiction in the same matter.
- 7.6 Applicability of Denominational Rules.** Except as otherwise addressed in these Bylaws, wherever the governing articles of the two denominations differ, the mandatory provisions of one applies in all cases when the other is permissive. Whenever there are conflicting mandatory provisions, except as provided in § 7.3 [denominational discipline], the Council shall petition both judicatories of immediate jurisdiction to overturn their respective highest courts to resolve the conflict either by authoritative interpretation or by constitutional amendment.
- 7.7 Pastor Denominational Membership.** The staff pastors of NLUC are, to the extent permitted and in accordance with the Rules of Order of each judicatory, full and responsible members of the judicatory of immediate jurisdiction.
- 7.8 Membership Reporting.** The Council of NLUC shall report an equal share of the total active membership to each judicatory of jurisdiction, and such membership shall be published in the minutes of each denomination involved with a note to the effect that the report is that of a union church, and with an indication of the total actual membership. A similar report of church school members, baptisms, etc., and the financial expenditures, shall be made by the Council and noted by each denomination involved in its minutes.
- 7.9 Pastor Pension Plan.** The staff pastor(s) shall participate in the pension plan of one of the denominations. If he or she is already participating in one plan, he or she shall remain in that plan. If he or she is not a member of any, he or she shall choose between them.
- 7.10 Pastor Discipline Process.** The staff pastor(s) of NLUC are full and responsible members of each judicatory or judicatories of immediate jurisdiction as appropriate, and are subject to discipline provided as follows: when one begins an action it shall invite a committee from the others to join the commissioner, prosecutor, or prosecuting committee in formulating and pressing charges. In the event of appeal, the

case must be finally decided by the highest court to which the appeal is taken in the judicatory which commenced the action and that decision is equally binding on the judicatories of jurisdiction.

- 7.11 Benevolent Giving.** The Council, in consultation with the SJSC, shall annually propose to the congregation a general mission or benevolence program response to the officially approved causes of each denomination. When related to denominational division, the proportions will be as the Council decides in consideration of the requests of the higher judicatories. The mandatory apportionments or per capita obligations of the two denominations will be honored. The responsibilities to support denomination benevolence do not limit the authority of NLUC and the Council to support other programs. *See*, § 5.6 [SJSC].

**ARTICLE 8.
CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS
AND GENERAL RULES OF ORDER**

8.1 Congregational Meetings

- 8.1.1 Annual Meeting.** The Annual Congregational Meeting must be held in the month of January. At this meeting all reports of ministerial staff, Council, and organizations and committees must be made in writing. Election of officers must also be held. The Council shall determine the date and time of the Annual Congregational Meeting at its regular session in October. The Annual Meeting packet must be printed and made available at the church at least 14 days prior to the Annual Meeting. The packet must include reports from the pastor, treasurer, Council moderator, all elected bodies, and any applicable Council committees. The pastor's report must include membership statistics and the treasurer's report must include the actual expenses of the prior fiscal year and the budget for the new fiscal year. The packet must also include minutes of the prior Annual Meeting, minutes of any other duly called congregational meetings held since the prior Annual Meeting, a list of the church officers from the prior fiscal year, the report of the Nominating Committee for vacancies for the new fiscal year, and any proposed changes to these Bylaws.
- 8.1.2 Moderator.** The Moderator or his/her appointee from the Council shall chair all congregational meetings except the Annual Congregational Meeting at which the denominational official, the United Methodist District Superintendent or designee, or an official designated by Presbytery, shall preside.
- 8.1.3 Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the Council or by a petition to the Council signed by not less than 10% of the members of NLUC. The Council shall call petitioned meetings within three weeks of the receipt of

petition. At special meetings only those items may be brought up that were designated in the call for the meeting.

8.1.4 Voting. All active members of NLUC are entitled to vote at a congregational meeting.

8.1.4 Quorum. A quorum consists of 10% of the active members of NLUC.

8.1.5 Elections. In addition to the nominations provided by the Nominating Committee, nominations for Elected Committees and elective offices may be presented from the floor, subject to the consent of the nominee.

8.1.6 Notice. Written notice must be provided to each active member of the congregation at least 14 days in advance of any congregational meetings and orally announced during worship service(s). The notice must include the date, time, location, and purpose of the meeting, including names of any nominees to elected positions and any proposed changes to these Bylaws.

8.2 General Rules of Order

8.2.1 Robert's Rules of Order. Robert's Rules of Order are parliamentary authority for all matters not specifically covered by these Bylaws and may be relied upon when necessary or helpful to facilitating good order.

8.2.2 Agenda. An agenda must be adopted at the beginning of each meeting.

8.2.3 Ex Officio Members. The ex officio members of all groups are non-voting except as otherwise specified in these Bylaws.

8.2.4 Committee Unexcused Absences. An elected member of the Council, Deacons, Staff-Parish Relations Committee, Committee on Property Management, Nominating Committee, or SJSC who has three unexcused absences in any year may be considered eligible for removal. The chair shall rule on absences.

8.2.5 Quorum Compliance. Elected bodies may take actions at scheduled meetings only where a quorum is present. Committee members are encouraged to attend meetings in person, however members may attend telephonically. Any actions taken using electronic tools such as by polling members through phone or email between scheduled meetings must be re-affirmed at the next meeting where a quorum is present. Documentation of any emails or minutes of phone conversations should be kept in hard copy to document the decision.

8.2.6 Service on More Than One Committee. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, an elected member may not serve as a voting member of both Council

and more than one of the following elected bodies at the same time: Council, Deacons, SPRC, SJSC, and CPM.

8.2.7 Family Members. Two or more members from the same immediate family or from the same household may not serve on the same elected body of NLUC at the same time. For purposes of this provision, “immediate family” means spouse, mother, father, sister, brother, son, daughter, grandmother, or grandfather.

8.2.8 Terms of Office. Terms of office of elected bodies run concurrently with the church’s fiscal year, with the terms of retiring members ending at the next regularly scheduled meeting following the election of new officers. The four-year term of the representative and alternate to the Alaska Conference of the United Methodist Church runs from January of the year in which the General Conference is held to December four years later.

ARTICLE 9. THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH

9.1 Dissolution. NLUC may be dissolved by a two-thirds vote of two congregational meetings held not less than two months apart and not more than one year apart, subject to the concurrence of the immediate judicatories.

9.2 Denominational Relationship. If it seems wise to dissolve the relationship or if one of the denominations wishes to withdraw, this must be done in the following manner:

9.2.1 A consultation among the Council and responsible officers or committees of participating denominations must arrive at an equitable plan involving property.

9.2.2 Such a plan must be approved by the congregation and the judicatories involved.

9.2.3 The actual dissolution must take place at a meeting of the congregation with representatives of both denominations in a worship service.

9.3 Property Division. In the event of dissolution, all property must be equitably divided between the two denominations, subject to the approval of the higher judicatories.

ARTICLE 10. FISCAL YEAR

The church fiscal year runs from January 1 through December 31 of each year.

ARTICLE 11. AMENDMENTS

- 11.1 Amendments.** Amendments to these Bylaws may be initiated by a petition signed by at least 10% of the church members or by the Council, by a two-thirds vote of the Council membership.
- 11.2 Notice.** Distribution of the proposed changes to these Bylaws must be made to each church member no less than 14 days prior to the duly called meeting of the congregation.
- 11.3 Voting.** These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a duly called congregational meeting and shall become effective with the approval of each judicatory.

Revised - March, 1986

Amended - January, 1993; May 22, 1995; September 24, 1995; May 15, 1997; May 14, 2001; May 8, 2006; January 4, 2009; December 30, 2018.

Northern Light United Church

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Northern Light United Church (NLUC) was founded through the union of the Northern Light Presbyterian Church and the Juneau United Methodist Church on September 15, 1974. The union church included members from the former Memorial Presbyterian Church.

As a united church our theological foundational documents come from the theological traditions of the two denominations, Presbyterian (USA) and United Methodist. Both churches honor and recognize the traditional confessions of faith and the creeds of The Church, including but not exclusively those listed in the Book of Confessions of the Presbyterian Church and the Book of Worship and Book of Hymns of the United Methodist Church. The following creeds are representative of those listed:

- The Apostle's Creed
- The Nicene Creed
- A Modern Affirmation of Faith (UMC)
- A Creed from the United Church of Canada (UMC)
- A Brief Statement of Faith (PCUSA)
- The Confession of 1967 (PCUSA)

At the time of the church union, the men and women who drafted the original bylaws for Northern Light United Church included in that document this statement of faith which still serves as one of our foundational documents.

A. Theological Assumptions

1. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. There is one calling to which we advance, the kingdom of God.
2. There is one body of Christ and we are made members of his body regardless of our station, race, or location. We are brothers and sisters in Christ and thus brothers and sisters to each other. In Christ we are the family of God and joint heirs of his riches.
3. God, through grace has manifested love by providing redemption for all through Jesus Christ. Such graciousness on God's part calls forth from those who accept God's gifts of reconciliation, appropriate responses of mission and ministry.

4. A critical factor of that human response has to do with our being responsible stewards of our time, of our talents and our resources.
5. We confess that our attempts to live out this mandate of responsible stewardship have been feeble and inadequate. However, in the light of our rapidly changing society, we see the need for a renewed effort to strengthen the church of Jesus Christ.

B. Statement of Faith

NLUC shall be guided in matters of faith by the creeds and confessions of the participating denominations, and the following statement of faith: *

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

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

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

You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you.

Amen.

*United Church of Christ (UCC) Statement of Faith, authorized by UCC Executive Council, 1981.