



CHARLESWOOD UNITED CHURCH

CONSTITUTION



CHARLESWOOD UNITED CHURCH

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Constitution of Charleswood United Church

Presented to the Congregation at its Annual General Meeting of March 5, 2006.
Amended February 22, 2015; March 8, 2020, and March 15, 2026.

Mission

In response to God's call, we the congregation of Charleswood United Church understands our mission is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by word and deed. This mission challenges us to accept God's grace, to celebrate God's love, to learn God's will, and to reach out in humble service to the world God loves; to live our faith.

Preamble

Founded on the first Sunday of April 1922, Charleswood United Church continues to commit itself to Christian witness in the community of Charleswood and beyond. We are proud of the membership Charleswood United Church holds within the collective witness of the United Church of Canada and abide both by the spirit of a living and renewing tradition as well as by the community and policies of our denomination. With confidence we affirm the mission statement of Charleswood United Church from an earlier generation.

We seek to structure and govern ourselves in a way that honestly reflects our experience that God invites people into faith and leads them to serve in ways that align with their gifts and interests. The following is an attempt to express this in the present moment knowing that Spirit may lead to amendments in the future.

General Statement of Policy

The Constitution of Charleswood United Church shall be consistent with the general guidelines and authority of the United Church of Canada Manual. The mission of administration of this church shall be carried out by three levels of responsibilities:

1. **The Congregation:** will elect a group of its people to Council and to Ministry Committee positions who shall be responsible for the administration and organization of the church.
2. **The Council:** has the powers of the Congregation vested in it and shall be responsible for managing the affairs and assets of the Congregation, through Ministry Committees.
3. **The Ministry Committees:** perform the functions as outlined under the general regulations in this Constitution and the defined functions of the committee. Functions of Ministry Committees may be altered by Council.

NOTE: There shall be a Board of Trustees which shall hold the church property in trust as outlined in the United Church of Canada Congregational Board of Trustees Handbook and assume responsibility for maintaining the Historic Roll.



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General Regulations

The Congregation

Membership

Members are those who have joined Charleswood United Church by Confirmation, Adult Baptism, Profession of Faith, or transfer. Adherents are those who support Charleswood United Church with their time, talent and resources but have not requested formal membership.

Annual General Meeting and Congregational Meetings

The members and adherents of the Congregation shall hold an Annual General Meeting of the Congregation each year, on a date set by Council. The Congregation shall be given a minimum of two weeks notice. The purpose of the Annual General Meeting is to receive and consider the Annual Reports of Council, to address Church finances, and to fill Council and Ministry Committee vacancies.

Members and adherents of the Congregation present at the Annual General Meeting shall:

- elect people to the Council, the Board of Trustees, and to Ministry Committees;
- receive the Annual Report of Council;
- receive the financial audit or review from a professional third party;
- set broad policy and;
- approve annual budget.

To be clear, only Members of Charleswood United Church are eligible to vote on:

- 1) matters related to call of Ministry personnel, and
- 2) matters of Church property.

Adherents are not eligible to vote on the two above-noted items.

Amendments to the Constitution shall be dealt with at a duly called Congregational meeting. Editorial changes, i.e. numbering, lettering, spelling and punctuation may be authorized by Council. Such changes shall be reported to the Congregation at the next Annual Meeting.

The Council may call special Congregational meetings as required.

A quorum at a Congregational meeting shall be a minimum of 50 Members and Adherents of Charleswood United Church. A member of the order of ministry who is appointed to the pastoral charge must be present.



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The Council

Council shall consist of:

- the Executive: Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary, and Treasurer
- Chair of Ministry and Personnel
- Chair of Ministry of Property and Resources
- Chair of Ministry of Care and Community
- Chair of Ministry of Mission and Social Action
- Chair of Ministry of Worship and Education

Membership

All members elected to Council must have full membership in Charleswood United Church.

If a layperson cannot be found to chair Council a Minister of the Church may serve as Chair, within the terms outlined below.

Term

Executive members of council (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer) shall be elected for a two-year term.

Executive members appointed by Council on an interim basis to fill a vacancy may hold office until the next Annual General Meeting. At that time the executive member shall be elected for their first two-year term.

Executive members shall serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Members of Council who are Chairs of Ministry Committees shall follow the term durations stipulated by their respective committee.

Retiring Council members shall stand down for a minimum of one year.

Exceptions to the stand-down time shall be permitted when the retiring member accepts the office of Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary, or Treasurer. Under such conditions the person(s) involved may remain as Council members for a period not exceeding a total of four consecutive terms.

Duties of Council

To act for the Congregation in all matters except those outlined as specified duties of the Congregation as a whole.

To co-ordinate work of Ministry Committees.

To receive Annual Reports and set agenda for the Annual General Meeting.

To appoint third party professional to provide an audit or a review of the financial statements and to receive the report.



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To receive and approve annual budget prior to submission to the Annual General Meeting for acceptance.

To act in Pastoral Relations in event of a change in Pastoral Relationships as per the United Church of Canada "The Manual".

To appoint people to fill Council and Committee vacancies on an interim basis.

To ensure the appointments of Heritage Fund Trustees according to the Heritage Fund Terms of Reference.

To ensure that the Board of Trustees is full and functioning.

To approve disbursements of the Heritage Fund in accordance with the Heritage Fund Terms of Reference.

Council shall be responsible for Church membership and conduct of members in the life of the Congregation and at Congregational meetings

To review the Church Constitution on a triennial basis and make changes or make recommendations for changes to be approved by the Congregation.

Council Meetings

The Council shall meet a minimum of five times per year on a day agreed upon by a majority of its members and shall have the authority to meet as necessary to deal with concerns that may arise between Council meetings.

A quorum of Council shall be a majority of Council members.

Council members are required to attend all Council meetings or appoint a designate from their elected committee members who shall have all the rights and privileges of the elected member of Council.

The Chair of Council shall be responsible for contacting any member who has not complied with above attendance requirement. Unless circumstances indicate otherwise, if any member has not complied three times in a twelve-month period, Council may interpret this as a desire to be removed from Council and shall request a resignation.

All Council meetings shall be open to all persons as observers. Observers may speak only at the invitation of Chair of Council. In-camera sessions may be called at the discretion of Council only with a two-thirds majority.

All activities of Council shall be reported by the Secretary, through minutes, which shall be distributed to all Council Members and available to the Congregation, as soon as possible.



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Duties of Executive Council Members

Chair

Election: The Congregation is responsible for electing a chair of Council.

Responsibilities: The Chair is responsible for:

- calling, presiding over and keeping order at meetings of Council;
- taking votes and announcing the results;
- voting only if there is a tie;
- calling special meetings as required upon reasonable notice to all members of Council.

Vice-chair

Election: The Congregation is responsible for electing a Vice-chair.

Responsibilities: The Vice-chair is responsible for:

- assuming Chair responsibilities in the event the Chair is unable to;
- forming a Nominating Committee and to lead recruitment and nomination of Council and Ministry Committee members;
- working collaboratively with Ministry and with Committee Chairs to identify the need for members and to seek out suitable recruits;
- communicating with the Congregation that nominations are open;
- ensuring nominees meet the eligibility requirements as set out in the Constitution;
- putting forth motions at Council meetings to approve new members;
- tracking changes on Committees and Council to include in the Annual General Meeting for Congregational approval;
- recommending candidates to Council to fill vacancies on an interim basis.

Secretary

Election: The Congregation is responsible for electing a Secretary. This person must be a member of Council.

Responsibilities: The Secretary is responsible for:

- taking minutes at all meetings of Council;
- distributing minutes to Council members in a timely fashion;
- ensuring the office administrator has copies of minutes;
- making changes to minutes as deemed necessary;
- receiving and sending correspondence on behalf of council;
- ensuring the minutes are kept safe and accessible;
- sending the minutes, and other records to the Regional Council annually for review, if required by the Regional Council.



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Treasurer

Election: The Congregation is responsible for electing a Treasurer.

Responsibilities: The Treasurer serves Council and the Congregation. The Treasurer's responsibilities are set out in detail in the United Church of Canada's Financial Handbook for Congregations. There may be more than one Treasurer within the church but only the Treasurer of Council is recognized by the Canada Revenue Agency. In general, the Treasurer provides oversight of all revenues and expenses of the church. This includes:

- overseeing of groups that may have their own bank accounts and reporting on these funds as required by Council or by Committee responsible;
- presenting of financial statements to Council;
- preparing annual budget in consultation with staff, Ministry Committees and Council;
- arranging annual review of financial results by independent professionals for presentation to the Congregation at the Annual General Meeting;
- providing oversight and support to the Financial Administrator for all accounting, auditing, investments, and banking services required by the church, such as:
 - receipt of all funds for the ministry of the Congregation from offerings and other sources;
 - disbursement of these funds under the direction of Council or appropriate Committee;
 - record keeping of all receipts and disbursements;
 - administration of staff payroll and benefits;
 - preparation of monthly statements of financial standing in relation to the budget to Council;
 - receipt of reports from the Heritage Fund Trustees and report same to Council.

The Ministry Committees

Ministry and Personnel Committee

The Ministry and Personnel Committee is the only mandatory Committee of the governing body of a Congregation or pastoral charge, according to the United Church of Canada document titled "The Manual".

Membership

Members of the Ministry and Personnel Committee including the Chair of the Committee shall be elected by the Congregation at the Annual General Meeting.

The Committee will be comprised of three to seven Congregational members.

The terms of the Committee members shall be three years or coinciding with their terms of office where applicable.



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Where possible, the members shall be appointed so that no more than half the Committee membership rotates in any one year.

Members shall serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Responsibilities of the Ministry and Personnel Committee include:

- provide a consultative and supportive environment for church staff members and for members and adherents of the Congregation;
- review working conditions and remuneration of Church staff members, and making recommendations to Council;
- recommend to Council the hiring and termination of paid staff (excluding members of the order of ministry) and consult the Minister(s) on such changes in staff;
- oversee the relationship of Church staff to members of the Congregation and others;
- oversee the relationship of Church staff to each other with respect to their responsibilities and authority;
- consult with staff members about their plans for Continuing Education and development; ensuring that those eligible avail themselves of the United Church's provisions for Continuing Education; ensuring that money and time are available to pursue Continuing Education which contributes to the mission goals of the Congregation and the United Church;
- conduct annual performance reviews and evaluation of the effectiveness of Church staff members as those persons and positions relate to the Congregation's program, as defined by Council.

Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least quarterly, more often if necessary and report to Council.

All Other Ministry Committees

This section governs the Ministry of Property and Resources, the Ministry of Care and Community, the Ministry of Mission and Social Action, and the Ministry of Worship and Education.

Membership of Ministry Committees

All Ministry Committee members must be participating members or adherents of Charleswood United Church.

The Committees shall consist of the Chair and no fewer than six members elected by the Congregation.

Each Ministry Committee shall have power to add to its membership. Members must be approved by Council and then by the Congregation at the Annual General Meeting.



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Each Ministry Committee shall have power to add corresponding members, as required. Corresponding members may be defined as those wishing to serve the Committee but do not wish to attend meetings. Corresponding members need not be elected by the Congregation. They are accountable to the Ministry Committee but would not be eligible to vote on Committee matters.

Each Ministry Committee may add corresponding subcommittees. These subcommittees may be defined as focused on work or projects closely related to the Committee's purpose. The corresponding subcommittee would be accountable to the Ministry Committee. Individuals comprising the corresponding subcommittee would not be elected by the Congregation, nor would they be eligible to vote on any Committee matter.

Elected members of a Ministry Committee shall not sit on any more than one Ministry Committee at one time. Elected members of one Ministry Committee may be a corresponding member or part of a corresponding subcommittee of another Ministry Committee.

Term(s) of Ministry Committee Members

Members of Ministry Committees shall be elected for a two-year term. Elected members shall serve up to three consecutive terms on any Committee. Exceptions to these term limits must be approved by the Congregation at the Annual General Meeting.

Committee Chair terms are determined by Council terms guidelines. Extension of a Ministry Committee Chair term may only be granted by the Congregation at the Annual General Meeting.

Members appointed by Council on an interim basis shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting. Interim terms shall not count toward term limits.

General Duties of Ministry Committees

Ministry Committees are established to carry out responsibilities and duties as outlined for their specific areas. Those definitions follow. They also shall hold accountable any ministry initiative, corresponding Committee member or corresponding subcommittee aligned to their Ministry Committee.

Committees are to bring recommendations to Council for action in their respective area or any other area of interest.

Committee Chairs shall provide onboarding to new members.



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Meetings of Ministry Committees

Ministry Committees shall meet a minimum of five times per year. Ministry Committees may meet additionally as required to fulfill their responsibilities.

A quorum shall be a majority of elected Committee members, including the Chair or their designate.

All Ministry Committees shall record their business and activities in minutes submitted to the Church office and may be made available for Council use.

The Chair (or designate) of each Committee shall report to Council as requested.

If an elected Committee member has been absent from three Committee meetings in a twelve-month period, the Committee Chair shall be responsible for contacting the member. Unless circumstances indicate otherwise, the absences may be interpreted as a desire to be removed from the Committee, and the Chair may request the member's resignation.

Specific Responsibilities of Other Ministry Committees

Ministry of Worship and Education

Membership: In addition to elected members of this Committee the Director of Children's Ministry, the Senior Choir Director, the Youth Convenor, and the Nursery Coordinator shall be corresponding members.

The Worship and Education Committee responsibilities include:

- supporting the worship life of the Congregation including celebration of the sacraments, the orderly conduct of Sunday worship, the look of the sanctuary, inter-church worship events, and special services in the life of the Congregation as they arise;
- overseeing the musical ministry of the church including choirs, instruments, guest artists, and budgets for the purchasing of music;
- encouraging lay participation in the worship life of the Church (i.e. ushers, greeters, readers, servers, offering takers) and to assess the worship needs of the Congregation on a regular basis including the provision of alternative forms of worship;
- supervising the Sunday Church School Program including the recruitment and training of teachers and helpers, oversight and approval of curricula, oversight of the Director of Children's Ministry and Youth Convenor, and administration of the Church School budget;
- supporting and encouraging Youth Ministry and programming;
- overseeing for midweek groups for children and youth, including summer programs, confirmation classes, faith development, and Adult Education opportunities;
- providing resources for development of candidates for the ministry and other church vocations;



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- maintaining the Church library;
- managing the budget of the Ministries of Worship and Education;
- recommending policies to Council on baptism, transfers, marriages and funerals, and to administer such policies. To ensure the reception, recording, preparation of candidates for membership by baptism, transfer, and profession of faith;
- identifying and welcome newcomers to the church.

Ministry of Property and Resources

Membership of this Committee shall include the elected members.

Responsibilities of the Property and Resources Committee include:

- maintain all church property, including the Church building, furnishings, sound systems, office equipment, and grounds, and maintain guidelines for the use of Church property;
- be responsible for loans and/or rentals of Church property. Establish policies for loans and rentals;
- set and maintain a schedule of fees for rentals of furnishings, rooms and other services;
- provide guidance and oversee all services provided to the Church – including the review of new contracts and renewal of existing contracts;
- manage the budget assigned to Property and Resources for the maintenance of and improvement to the facility;
- advise Council of upcoming projects and proposed expenses.

Ministry of Care and Community

Membership shall include the elected members.

The purpose of this Committee shall be:

- to serve the fellowship needs of the Congregation by providing receptions/refreshments etc., in conjunction with Congregational activities such as meetings, fellowship, and funerals;
- to exercise responsibility for the kitchen housekeeping, supplies, and supervising use of equipment in the kitchen such as the commercial dishwasher;
- to connect with the sick and shut-ins via a visit, a call, a card, and/or, when appropriate, communication with family or caregivers. To coordinate this contact with lay Pastoral Care Programs.



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Ministry of Mission and Social Action

Membership shall include the elected members.

The Mission and Social Action committee's responsibilities are to:

- promote the Mission and Service Fund;
- encourage Church involvement in community needs;
- be responsible for special projects related to Outreach;
- relate to United Church Community and Outreach Ministries and social service agencies;
- administer the Outreach budget;
- offer, on behalf of the Congregation, social assistance to the community through the Benevolent Fund;
- raise awareness of Outreach issues – local, national and global;
- be the place of accountability for Outreach initiatives and to encourage the Congregation to participate in such initiatives. (i.e. Christmas Cheer Board Hampers).

Ministerial Staff

The Ministerial Staff: will be members of the Council and ex officio members of all Committees except the Ministry and Personnel Committee and the Nominating Committee.

ATTACHED TO THE CONSTITUTION OF CHARLESWOOD UNITED CHURCH
MARCH 1990 AS REQUESTED BY CANADA REVENUE AGENCY.

“THE ORGANIZATION SHALL BE CARRIED ON WITHOUT PURPOSES OF
GAIN FOR ITS MEMBERS AND ANY PROFITS OR OTHER GAINS TO THE
ORGANIZATION SHALL BE USED IN PROMOTING ITS OBJECTIVES.”