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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
UNITED EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN
ST. PETER'S CHURCH OF WEST SENECA
(a.k.a. St. Peter's United Church of Christ)
(Retyped with new line numbers February 8, 2012)
Amendments February 5, 2012

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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
UNITED EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN
ST. PETER’S CHURCH OF WEST SENECA
(a.k.a. St. Peter’s United Church of Christ)

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this Church shall be United Evangelical Christian St. Peter’s Church of West Seneca (a.k.a. St Peter’s United Church of Christ), located at 1475 Orchard Park Road, West Seneca, New York, as incorporated on April 11, 1853.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The avowed purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this Church and the Church Universal; to render loving service to humanity; and to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.

ARTICLE III. POLICY

This Church shall be a part of the United Church of Christ and it shall sustain that relationship to the United Church of Christ described in these portions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ adopted July 4, 1961 relating to local churches.

(See Article IV – United Church of Christ Constitution 1991 Edition.) (see attached copy)

The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject, however, to Laws of the State of New York relating to ecclesiastical corporations.

56 **ARTICLE IV. FAITH AND COVENANT**

57 FAITH – This Church acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus
58 Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of humanity. It acknowledges as
59 brothers in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word
60 of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy
61 Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world. It
62 claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the
63 ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the protestant
64 reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation
65 to make this faith its own. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord
66 and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, it recognizes
67 two Sacraments; Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion.

68 Our expression of faith is:

69 **“STATEMENT OF FAITH”**

70 “We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
71 and our Father, and to his deeds we testify:

72 He calls the worlds into being, creates man in his own image and sets
73 before him the ways of life and death.

74 He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

75 He judges men and nations by his righteous will declared through
76 prophets and apostles.

77 In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, he
78 has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death
79 and reconciling the world to himself.

80 He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church
81 of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages,
82 tongues, and races. He calls us into his church to accept the cost and
83 joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, to proclaim
84 the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in
85 Christ’s baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and
86 victory.

87 He promises to all who trust him forgiveness of sins and fullness of
88 grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, his presence in
89 trail and rejoicing, and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end.

90 Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen.”

91 (The statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ was approved
92 by the General Synod at Oberlin, Ohio, July 5-9, 1959)

93 Covenant – We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the
94 Word and the will of God. We propose to walk together in the ways of
95 the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be
96 the mission of the Church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all
97 the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice and
98 peace. As did our forbearers, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and
99 empower us. We Pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God, and we
100 look with faith towards the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

101

102 **ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP**

103 Membership in this Church shall be open to any person who has
104 been baptized, and has been confirmed, or who has been baptized and
105 has made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

106 Members shall pledge themselves to attend the regular worship
107 of the church and celebration of the Lord’s Supper; to live the Christian
108 life; to share in the life and work of the Church; to contribute to its
109 support and benevolence; and to seek diligently the spiritual welfare of
110 the membership and the community.

111 **VOTING MEMBERSHIP:** Members will be deemed to have
112 voting privileges upon satisfying three (3) of the following criteria
113 over the course of the church year:

- 114 1. Having a record of participation in the sacrament of holy
115 communion on at least three (3) occasions.
116 2. Having attended a minimum of six (6) Church worship
117 services.
118 3. Being involved in the life and work of the Church by
119 volunteering in at least one (1) Church sponsored event.
120 4. Having a record of financial contribution to help support
121 the church and/or it's benevolence.

122 Note: Special consideration will be granted to members not
123 fulfilling three of the four criteria based on unusual or special
124 circumstance; e.g. shut-in at the Elders' discretion.

125 Any member in good standing, shall, on his own request, be
126 granted a letter of transfer. If wishing to join a body not in fellowship
127 with this church, he shall be released with a certificate of church
128 membership.

129 If, because of a change in faith or for other reasons not involving
130 unchristian conduct, a member requests in writing to be released from
131 his membership obligations, the Church shall patiently endeavor to
132 secure his continuance in its fellowship; but failing such effort, the
133 Church may grant the request and terminate his membership. Such a
134 request shall be approved by the Elders and the Secretary shall issue
135 the appropriate letter of release. If any member shall unite with
136 another congregation without a letter of transfer, the Elders shall
137 likewise erase his name from the Church Register.

138 On a yearly basis (prior to the annual Congregational Meeting)
139 the Elders and necessary council members will assess the
140 membership roll of all church members. They will review the activity of
141 each member for compliance with the voting membership criteria.
142 Individual membership will then be classified in one of two possible
143 categories:

- 144 **1. VOTING MEMBERS:** Members having fulfilled requirements.

145 **2. NON-VOTING MEMBER:** Member not fulfilling voting criteria
146 since previous year's congregational meeting. Any member classified
147 as non-voting will be contacted by a Church Elder. They will be given
148 the opportunity to discuss their membership while being invited to take
149 a more active part of the Church fellowship in the future. Their status
150 will become NON-VOTING beginning with the following year's
151 Congregational meeting unless the voting criteria is satisfied. NON-
152 VOTING status will remain in effect until the voting criteria is met,
153 transfer to another Church is requested, a request is made to be
154 removed from the membership rolls, involuntary removal, or individual
155 passes on to their eternal reward.

156 **INVOLUNTARY REMOVAL:** A member can be involuntarily
157 removed from the membership roll should their specific conduct
158 warrant such extreme action. Such action could be limited to one (1)
159 of the following:

- 160 1. Desecration of the sacraments, sanctuary, or Church
161 property (building and grounds inclusive).
- 162 2. Deliberate attempt to undermine or jeopardize the
163 reputation of the Pastor(s) and/or any member of St.
164 Peter's Church.
- 165 3. Unethical or other such conduct unbecoming a Christian
166 meant to disrupt the ministry of the Church to the
167 congregation and/or community.
- 168 4. Deliberate attempt to circumvent the bylaws and
169 constitution of St. Peter's Church as to cause financial or
170 personal hardship to the institution and it's members.

171 Two-thirds majority vote of a specially formed committee would
172 be necessary based on indisputable documented evidence of
173 misdoing. This committee should consist of six (6) voting members,
174 three (3) of which will be council members and three (3) of which will
175 be active voting congregational members. Any individual who has
176 presented documentation pertaining to potential membership removal
177 cannot seat on such committee.

178 A member which has been involuntarily removed from the
179 membership roll may apply in writing for reinstatement after a one (1)
180 year period. Such a request must accompany an open letter of regret,
181 apology to the congregation and assurance that the circumstances
182 surrounding their initial removal will not be repeated or else permanent
183 membership removal will result.

184 **ARTICLE VI. GOVERNING BODY**

185 The governing body of this Church shall be the membership
186 assembled in a church meeting. The vote of the majority of members
187 present at the meeting shall be the action of the church. A quorum
188 shall consist of 25 of the voting members.

189 **ARTICLE VII, COUNCIL**

190 The Council shall be the executive body of this Church. It shall
191 be composed of the Pastor or Pastors, four (4) Elders and four (4)
192 Deacons. At least four (4) of its members shall constitute a quorum.

193 The Council shall organize itself each year, electing a President,
194 a Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Financial Secretary.

195 These officers together with the Pastor or Pastors shall constitute
196 the Executive Committee of the Council and shall form the following
197 standing committees to further the purpose of the Council and
198 designated by the Executive Committee.

- 199 1. Buildings
200 2. Grounds
201 3. Christian Education
202 4. Budget and Finance
203 5. Ushers
204 6. Communion
205

206 There shall be such other committees as Council may from time
207 to time determine.

208 All committees shall act in cooperation with the similar committee
209 or agency of the Association, Conference, and General Synod where
210 there are such.

211 New Council members shall be elected by a majority vote cast at
212 the annual church meeting. (See article X, Paragraph 1.) They shall
213 be elected for two (2) years.

214 Nominations shall be made for the offices of Elders and Deacons
215 by a committee appointed each year by the Council. Public notice of
216 such nominations shall be given from the pulpit and by bulletin or
217 letter at least two (2) weeks before the election. Other Nominations
218 may be made from the floor at the meeting at which the election is
219 held with the consent of the nominee.

220 When elected, the Elders and Deacons shall be publicly ordained
221 to or installed in their respective offices before the church at a public
222 service.

223 Vacancies on the Council shall be filled by the Council for the
224 unexpired terms and the appointees ordained and/or installed within
225 two (2) weeks.

226 The Council shall be the policy-making body and shall transact
227 the business of the Church, make provisions for the determining and
228 raising of the current expense budget as well as for our Christian
229 World Mission and benevolence, and provide for the auditing of
230 financial accounts and for the adequate support of the staff. It shall
231 keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, be the
232 custodian of all church records, and report to the Church at its regular
233 and special meetings. All acts and deliberations of the Council are
234 subject to the will of and revision by the governing body.

235 The Council shall instruct the proper officers on all fiscal matters,
236 including the payment of bills, with monthly review and approval.

237 The Council may authorize any extraordinary expenditure if funds
238 are available; but if such expenditure exceeds Two Thousand Dollars
239 (\$2,000.00) it must receive the approval of the Church unless it may
240 be a dire emergency which requires immediate action.

241 The Council shall meet at least once a month for ten (10) months
242 annually, for the transaction of such business as may properly come
243 before it. Meetings normally should include prayer and should
244 emphasize policy deliberations. Special meetings are subject to the
245 Presidents' call.

246 ELDERS are members of the Church elected by the Church and
247 ordained to or installed in their office. They shall assist and support
248 the Pastor in the spiritual affairs of the Church. The Elders shall have
249 jurisdiction in matters of discipline. Elders shall take heed to the high
250 calling of their office, guarding faithfully all the spiritual interests of the
251 Church, maintaining order in the house of God, visiting the sick,
252 ministering to the edification and comfort of all and assisting the
253 Christian Education Committee.

254 DEACONS are members of the Church elected by the Church
255 and ordained to or installed in their office. They shall have the care and
256 custody of the property of the Church as a sacred trust, whether real or
257 personal, in accordance with the provisions of the Articles of
258 Incorporation and this Constitution and By-Laws and under the direction
259 of the Council. They shall aid in securing the necessary funds for
260 support of the Church in its various activities and to foster the principles
261 of stewardship. All are on the Budget and Finance Committee. ***The***
262 ***Deacons may appoint two (2) Trustees from outside Council to***
263 ***assist them with issues related to the financial business of the***
264 ***Church. The Duties of the Trustees will vary based on the needs of***
265 ***the church and the specific duties will be assigned to the Trustees***
266 ***by the President of the Council.***

267

268 **ARTICLE VIII. PASTOR**

269 It shall be the responsibility of the Pulpit Committee, appointed by
270 the Council, to seek a candidate for vacancy in the office of the
271 Pastor.

272 As soon as a pastoral vacancy is known officially it shall be
273 reported to the Conference Minister.

274 In filling a vacancy or in securing supply ministers for the period
275 of vacancy, the Pulpit Committee may seek the counsel of the
276 Conference Placement Committee.

277 The Pulpit Committee may request the Conference Executive to
278 secure relevant information about any minister whom it wishes to
279 consider for the vacancy.

280 Any minister may confer with the Conference Executive
281 concerning a pastoral vacancy. At the minister's request, his name
282 shall be submitted by the Conference Executive for consideration by
283 the local Church Pulpit Committee.

284 The Pulpit Committee shall present to the Church the name of
285 the candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy. A favorable vote of
286 the Church constitutes a call. The Church shall consider only one (1)
287 candidate at a time and vote by written ballot for or against his
288 election.

289 In the call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated, including
290 the agreement of the Church to participate in the Pension Fund of the
291 United Church of Christ, the Ministers' Health Insurance Program,
292 and other terms agreed between the candidate and the Pulpit
293 Committee. The minister, the Church, the Association, and the
294 Conference Executive shall each receive a copy of the call.

295 When a minister accepts a call to this Church, the Church and he
296 shall join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of
297 installation or recognition. A report of this service shall be signed by
298 the proper officer of the Association and by the Conference
299 Executive, and copies shall be sent to the Secretary of the United
300 Church of Christ and to the council for Church and Ministry.

301 Any Pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period. When either
302 party decides to terminate the relationship, three (3) month's notice
303 shall be given by either the Pastor or the congregation unless by
304 mutual consent an earlier date is agreed upon. This relationship may
305 be terminated by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a
306 duly called Annual or Special Meeting.

307 (See Article I-Section 116-125 of By-Laws of United Church of Christ
308 1991 Edition copy is attached)

309 Christian discipline of the Pastor shall be in conformity with the
310 Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ, the current
311 job description for the pastor(s) of St. Peter's United Church of Christ
312 and in compliance with the United Church of Christ Manual on
313 Ministry, 1986 Edition Section on "REVIEW AND DISCIPLINE OF
314 PERSON AUTHORIZED FOR MINISTRY PAGES 184-205.

315 The Church may at its discretion choose an Associate or
316 Assistant Pastor(s).

317 **ARTICLE IX. PROPERTY**

318 The church in its corporate name may sue or be sued, acquire by
319 purchase, gift, devise, bequest or otherwise and own, hold, invest, re-
320 invest or dispose of property both real and personal for such work as
321 the Church may undertake and may purchase, own, receive, hold,
322 manage, care for and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise

323 encumber, sell, assign, transfer and convey such property for the
324 general purpose of the Church; it may receive and hold in trust both
325 real and personal property and invest and re-invest the same and
326 make any contracts for promoting the objects and purposes of the
327 Church.

328 Upon dissolution of the Church, its assets and all property and
329 interests of which it shall be possessed, including any devise, bequest,
330 gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or
331 otherwise, made before or after such dissolution, shall be transferred as
332 follows:

- 333 **1) in the event of a merger with another church: to the church with**
334 **which the dissolved St. Peter's church merges;**
- 335 **2) in the event of complete dissolution: to the United Church Home**
336 **Society, Inc., One Fox Run Lane, Orchard Park, New York 14127;**
- 337 **3) in the event that any asset is not so disposed of as set forth in**
338 **paragraphs 1 or 2: to an organization chosen by Council and**
339 **dedicated to charitable and/or religious purposes and which has**
340 **been recognized as a 501(c)(3) organization by the Internal**
341 **Revenue Service.**

342

343 **ARTICLE X. CHURCH MEETINGS**

344 The Annual Meeting of the Church for the Purpose of transacting
345 all business concerning the general welfare of the Church which is
346 properly brought before it shall be held on the first Sunday in
347 February. At this meeting the Council, the offices of the Church, the
348 Pastor(s), and all church organizations shall submit their annual
349 reports in writing.

350 Special Church meetings may be called by the Council or by a
351 petition to the Council signed by not less than 25 of the voting
352 members. Meeting may be called by a written request of the
353 Pastor(s) to the Church Council or directly to the congregation. The
354 Council shall call such meetings within six (6) weeks from receipts of

355 the petition, and publish three (3) public notices within this time frame
356 in the weekly bulletins and/or in the church newsletter.

357 Only such business as has been mentioned in the notice may be
358 transacted at such special meetings.

359

360 **ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS**

361 Amendments to this Constitution may be made at any duly called
362 Church meeting by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members
363 present, public announcement of the text of the proposed
364 amendment(s) having been made three (3) weeks prior to the
365 meeting.

366 Amendments approved by Council, January 8, 2003 and included in
367 revision dated June 30, 2010.

368 **Constitution Line 185 (old wording)**

369 "The council shall be the executive body of the Church. It shall be
370 composed of the Pastor or Pastors, six (6) Elders and six (6)
371 deacons. At least six (6) of its members shall constitute a quorum.

372 **Constitution Line 185 (new wording)**

373 *"The Council shall be the executive body of the Church. It shall be*
374 *composed of the Pastor or Pastors, four (4) Elders and four (4)*
375 *Deacons. At least four (4) of its members shall constitute a quorum."*

376 **Constitution Line 204 (old wording)**

377 "Two (2) Elders and Two (2) deacons shall be elected by a majority
378 vote cast at the annual church meeting. (See Article X, Paragraph 1.)
379 They shall be elected for three (3) years.

380

381 **Constitution Line 204 (new wording)**

382 *“New Council members shall be elected by a majority vote cast at the*
383 *annual church meeting. (See Article X, Paragraph 1.) They shall be*
384 *elected for a two (2) year term.*

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387

BY-LAWS

388

UNITED EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN

389

ST. PETER’S CHURCH OF WEST SENECA

390

(a.k.a. ST. PETER’S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST)

391

Printed on February 18, 1993

392

OBLIGATION TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Delegates and alternates, preferably Elders, from this Church shall be elected each year by the Council to attend all meetings of the Western Association of the New York Conference and The New York Conference of the United Church of Christ. The portion of traveling expenses prorated by the Western Association and the New York Conference as well as the registration fees of the Pastor and delegates shall be paid by the Church.

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The Church shall regularly contribute, to the best of its ability, toward the support of all branches of the Western Association of the New York Conference, the New York Conference and the United Church of Christ.

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405

This Church, either through its Pastor or authorized officer shall make such reports to Western Association of the New York

406 Conference and the New York Conference as may be required of it.
407 The Fiscal year of the Church shall be from January 1 to
408 December 31.

409 **ADMISSION, PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF**

410 **MEMBERS ADMISSION**

411 Admission of communicant members takes place by
412 recommendation of the Pastor and the Council in one of the following
413 ways:

414 Confirmation: The rite of confirmation shall be
415 administered to all baptized young people who have either
416 reached the age of 14 years or are at least in the 8th grade, and
417 to all adults who were never received into communicant
418 membership in any Church. In each instance the applicant shall
419 be instructed in the doctrines and responsibilities of the Christian
420 life as taught and practiced by the United Church of Christ
421 before confirmation shall take place. Every catechumen shall
422 receive a certificate of confirmation from the Church at the time
423 of his confirmation.

424 Certificate of Transfer: Member of other Christian
425 Churches shall be received on the presentation of a certificate of
426 honorable release from the church of which they have been a
427 member.

428 Re-profession: All other applicants for communicant
429 membership in the Church are received by renewal of
430 profession. They are required to declare before the Pastor and
431 Council and before the Church at a public service that they
432 desire to renew their vows of loyalty to Jesus Christ and promise
433 to take an active part in the worship and responsibilities of the
434 Church.

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PRIVILEGES

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All members (voting and non-voting) are entitled to a full share in the fellowship and the spiritual blessings of the Church, and to the service of its Pastor, officials and other workers, as well as the Christian sympathy and support of all other members.

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All voting members of this church are entitled to voice and vote. Any members in order to hold office and/or vote on matters relating to real estate or money matters must have reached the age of eighteen (18) years.

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

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1. Regular attendance at divine worship and study services.
2. Fervent prayer for the welfare of the Church.
3. Daily devotions in the home.
4. Careful attention to the religious training of children and youth.
5. Liberal financial and moral support towards the maintenance and benevolence of the Church.
6. Obedience to established church law and authority.
7. Untiring zeal in bringing the unchurched under Her influence.
8. Maintain a spirit of Christian fellowship toward all members.
9. Membership in the organizations of the Church wherever possible.

459

CHURCH MEETINGS

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In order to sustain the peace of the Church no one shall be permitted to present any matter of a private or personal nature and no questions of a divisive nature may be brought up except that they were first presented to and approved by the Council.

464

465 **ELECTIONS**

466 Elders and Deacons. In order to be eligible for election to either of
467 these offices the nominee must be at least eighteen (18) years of age
468 and a communicant member of the Church for six months or more and
469 have fulfilled his church obligations as set forth in the by-law,
470 "Responsibilities of Members". Persons serving three (3) terms shall not
471 be eligible for re-election for one year after the expiration of the second
472 term.

473 **COUNCIL**

474 The Council shall direct the keeping of a complete record of baptisms,
475 confirmations, communicants, reception of new members, transfer,
476 erasure of names, suspensions, marriages and deaths. All records shall
477 be the property of the St. Peter's United Church of Christ. However,
478 upon dissolution of St. Peter's United Church of Christ its original records
479 shall become the property of the archives of Evangelical & Reformed
480 Historical Society United Church of Christ at Lancaster Seminary located
481 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and copies to the Western Association of the
482 New York Conference.

483 If a member of the Council absents himself from three (3) consecutive
484 meetings without excuse, and when visited by a member of the Council
485 does not indicate his readiness to take an active part in its work, he shall
486 be considered to have resigned from the body and his successor shall be
487 selected in a manner provided by the Constitution, Article VII, Section 6.

488 The Council shall engage all full and part-time employees of the
489 Church required to operate Her program effectively, except the Pastor or
490 Pastors; prescribe their duties in a current job description and set their

491 Salaries. They shall make such changes in personnel from time to time
492 as circumstances may require.

493 Council will be responsible for all money to be counted after each
494 Sunday and weekday services. Money is to be deposited after each
495 accounting following Church Service. (For insurance purposes.)

496 **MEETINGS**

497 The Council shall organize immediately after it has been formed and,
498 thereafter, hold monthly meetings for at least ten (10) months annually at
499 a time and place convenient to the members for the transaction of such
500 business as may properly come before it. Special meetings are subject
501 to the call of the President upon the advice of the Executive Committee.

502 **ORGANIZATION**

503 The Council shall organize itself by electing a President, Vice
504 President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary, and appoint
505 such committee(s) as needed in order that the program of the United
506 Church of Christ may have effective expression in this Church. The term
507 of the office for these offices shall be for one year with the privilege of re-
508 election for not more than three (3) total consecutive years.

509 The Executive Committee shall consist of all elected officers and the
510 Pastor. The President shall act as Chairman.

511 The Deacons and Elders shall organize by electing a Chairman each
512 year who may not succeed himself.

513 **MEMORIAL FUNDS**

514 Memorial Fund donations are to be credited to the account of the
515 Donee. The family of the donee has one year limit after being notified by
516 the Financial Secretary, of the list of donors and the total amount
517 contributed, in which to designate with the approval of the Church

518 Council what memorial item the account should be used for. A family
519 may have the opportunity to make up the difference in the cost if there is
520 insufficient monies in the donee's account.

521 After one (1) year undesignated monies in any particular donee's
522 account that has not been designated for an item will become part of the
523 General Memorial Fund. The General Memorial Fund may be spent by
524 the Church Council with the approval of the congregation as appropriate
525 needs arise. They are to be special projects of lasting value to the
526 Church. Memorial Funds can not be used for the daily operations of the
527 Church such as regularly budgeted items or maintenance.

528 **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

529 **PRESIDENT**

530 It shall be the duty of the President to see that all meetings of the
531 Council and the Church are regularly called by the Council Secretary, to
532 open and conduct such meetings, and to see to the execution of all
533 Resolutions. The President shall see that all regular and special
534 meetings of the Council and the Church are properly called either at the
535 Sunday service or mail notices sent to all members. The President shall
536 sign all securities, contracts, loans and deeds. The President shall be a
537 member ex-officio with vote of all committees of the Council.

538 **VICE PRESIDENT**

539 The Vice President shall take the place of and perform the duties of the
540 President when he is not available and when business pertaining to the
541 President and his administration is before the meeting. This person shall
542 do all in their power to help the President and make that administration
543 effective.

544

545 **SECRETARY**

546 The Secretary shall keep a record of all transactions of the meeting of
547 the Church and the Council, issue the call to all regular meetings at the
548 request of the President and attend to all Council correspondence. The
549 Secretary shall sign, with the President, all securities, contracts, loans
550 and deeds.

551 **TREASURER**

552 The treasurer shall have charge of all monies for church support and
553 benevolence purposes, and make all payments by check drawn by order
554 of the Council. This person shall render a monthly report to the Council
555 and an annual report to the Church. The Executive Committee shall give
556 authority to three members of the Council to sign all checks. Any two (2)
557 of the authorized signatures are required when issuing checks.

558 **FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

- 559
- 560 A. Send semi-annual statements to members stating amount paid.
561 (On contributions)
 - 562 B. Keep records of all contributions.
 - 563 C. Provide collection system (i.e. Envelopes)
 - 564 D. Keep records of memorial funds and send notes of
565 acknowledgements to giver and recipients.
 - 566 E. Assist the Treasurer in preparing annual report.
 - 567 F. Establish counting schedule

568 **APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES**

569 All standing committees shall be nominated by the President and
570 approved by the Council and shall consist of as many members the
571 Council deems necessary. Members at large may also be appointed
572 where necessary and duties defined.

573 **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

574 Committee to consist of the Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday
575 School Teachers, Pastor and Council Representative and youth
576 representative. The Superintendent and registrar will assume each
577 others duties in the event one is ill or unable to continue in his capacity.
578 The committee shall concern itself with the total program of Christian
579 education of the Church.

580 **STEWARDSHIP, BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

581 G. The Committee shall consist of three (3) or more Deacons.

582 H. The duties of this Committee are:

583

- 584 1. Recommend specific objectives for the Church to help meet
585 the budget.
- 586 2. Secure support for the Western Association, the New York
587 Conference budgets, the United Church of Christ budget for
588 our world mission and the Council of Churches.
- 589 3. Function as an informative and interpretative agent in the
590 development and distribution of missionary edition.
- 591 4. Assess the value and need of all special fund drives of the
592 Western Association, New York Conference, General
593 Synod, agencies and institutions to correlate time
594 schedules and implement participation by the Church.
- 595 5. Encourage our people to study the missionary needs of the
596 world and promote interest in our own mission fields.
- 597 6. The Committee shall also encourage our people to share
598 their plenty with the needy brethren of the Church and the
599 world.
- 600 7. This Committee shall also be responsible to the Council for
601 the financial affairs of the Church. It shall engage in budget
602 planning for Conference administration, program and
603 services, including budget requests for programs within the
604 Church. The budget shall be approved by the Council and
605 presented at a special Church meeting or at the regular
606 Annual Meeting.

607 **THE PASTOR**

608 Duties of the Pastor: It shall be the duty of the pastor to set a good
609 example to his Church and to conduct all services on Sundays, Holidays,
610 and such other days as the Church may desire, participate and offer
611 leadership to the Christian Education Committee, administer the Holy
612 Sacraments, visit the sick, comfort the distressed, and to perform all such
613 duties as belong to the Pastor's office in the United Church of Christ. He
614 shall make a report to the regular meetings of the Council and an annual
615 report to the Church.

616 Rights of the Pastor: The pastor is an ex-officio member of the Council
617 and all other organizations and committees within the Church. As long
618 as he is the Pastor, no other minister shall perform any religious
619 ceremony in the Church without his consent. To invite a speaker either
620 during a temporary absence of the Pastor or for special occasions shall
621 require the consent of both the Pastor(s) and the Council. The Pastor(s)
622 shall be paid promptly in Bi-weekly installments and shall be sufficient to
623 relieve him of temporal cares as far as possible and to preserve the
624 dignity of his calling, subject, however, to the provisions of the contract
625 between him and the Church. His moving expenses, when he assumes
626 charge, shall be borne in full by the Church. In case the Pastor is
627 incapacitated through sickness or absent on business of the Church, the
628 supply shall be paid out of the treasury of the Church.

629 **rites and sacraments**

630 Rites. The rites of confirmation, ordination, marriage, and burial shall
631 be performed by the Pastor at such time as necessity requires.

632 Sacraments. Baptism of children shall not be delayed unnecessarily,
633 and whenever possible, shall take place in the worship service. Adult
634 Baptism and Confirmation shall take place in the worship service unless
635 otherwise requested.

636 The Lords Supper shall be celebrated usually the first Sunday of the
637 month and during Holy Week, Christmas Eve and on special occasions
638 as deemed appropriate by the Pastor(s) and Council.

639 **CHURCH SERVICES**

640 Public worship and teaching services shall be conducted every
641 Sunday. The seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week and
642 Thanksgiving days should be observed with public service if at all
643 possible. Special seasons of Bible study and prayer should be observed.
644 The Organist-Choir Director(s) shall be appointed by the Council.

645 **USE OF THE CHURCH**

646 The Sanctuary is open without charge to members for all occasions of
647 weddings and funerals. Those who are not members must make
648 application to Council and if their request is granted, a donation, amount
649 to be determined by the Council, shall be made to the Church. Use of
650 the Education Building for any purpose must be approved in advance by
651 the Council and donation for non-members to be decided by same.

652 **VACATIONS**

653 The Pastor is entitled to four (4) weeks vacation.

654 All other full time employees of the Church are entitled to at least two
655 (2) weeks annual vacation.

656

657 **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

658 Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed in conducting business and
659 shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not
660 specifically covered by this Constitution and/or By-Laws.
661

662 **ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ANNUAL MEETING**

- 663 8. Calling of the meeting to order.
664 9. Opening with prayer.
665 10. Adopting agenda.
666 11. Reading of last years minutes (Annual & special meetings).
667 12. Reports
668 Council
669 President
670 Treasurer
671 Buildings and Grounds
672 Deacons
673 Elders
674 Committees
675 United Church Home
676 Junior Aid
677 Ministry of Music
678 Christian Education
679 Youth Activities
680 Western Area Delegates
681 Pastoral Relations
682 Adult Fellowship
683 13. Unfinished Business
684 14. New Business
685 Election of new Council Members
686 Appointment of Sunday School officers
687 Appointment of Communion Stewards
688 Appointment of Representatives to United Church Home
689 Election of Delegates to the Western Area
690 Election of Delegates to the New York Conference
691 15. Good and Betterment of the Church
692 16. Adjournment with Lords Prayer

693 **AMENDMENTS**

694 Amendments to these By-Laws may be made at any duly called
695 Church meeting by a majority affirmative vote of the members present,
696 public announcement of the text of the proposed amendment(s) having
697 been made three (3) weeks prior to the meeting.

698 This was adopted at a duly called congregational meeting on
699 February 7, 1993

700 Amendment approved by Council, January 8, 2003 and included in
701 revision dated June 30, 2010.

702 **By-Laws Line 426 (old wording)**

703 Persons serving two (2) terms shall not be eligible for re-election for one
704 year after the expiration of the second term.

705

706 **By-Laws Line 426 (new wording)**

707 *Persons serving three (3) two (2)-year terms shall not eligible for re-*
708 *election for one year after the expiration of the third term.*

709 **Article VII COUNCIL (old wording) (old lines 193-195)**

710 The Council shall organize itself each year, electing a President, a
711 Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, a Financial Secretary and two (2)
712 Trustees from the Deacons.

713 **Article VII COUNCIL (new wording) (new lines 193-194)**

714 The Council shall organize itself each year, electing a President, a
715 Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, **and** a Financial Secretary.

716 Amendment approved by congregation at Annual Meeting Feb. 5, 2012.

717 **Article VII COUNCIL (old wording) (old lines 255-263)**

718 The Council shall organize itself each year, electing a President, a
719 Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Financial Secretary.

720 **Article VII COUNCIL (new wording) (new lines 254-266)**

721 DEACONS are members of the Church elected by the Church and
722 ordained to or installed in their office. They shall have the care and
723 custody of the property of the Church as a sacred trust, whether real or
724 personal, in accordance with the provisions of the Articles of
725 Incorporation and this Constitution and By-Laws and under the direction
726 of the Council. They shall aid in securing the necessary funds for
727 support of the Church in its various activities and to foster the principles
728 of stewardship. All are on the Budget and Finance Committee. *The*
729 Deacons may appoint two (2) Trustees from outside Council to assist
730 them with issues related to the financial business of the Church. The
731 Duties of the Trustees will vary based on the needs of the church and the
732 specific duties will be assigned to the Trustees by the President of the
733 Council.

734 Amendment approved by congregation at Annual Meeting Feb. 5, 2012.

735 **BY-LAWS**

736 **ORGANIZATION (old wording) (old lines 487-492)**

737 The Council shall organize itself by electing a President, Vice
738 President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, two (2) trustees
739 (Deacons) and appoint such committee(s) as needed in order that the
740 program of the United Church of Christ may have effective expression in
741 this Church. The term of the office for these offices shall be for one year
742 with the privilege of re-election for not more than three (3) total
743 consecutive years.

744 **ORGANIZATION (new wording) (new lines 504-509)**

745 The Council shall organize itself by electing a President, Vice
746 President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary, and appoint
747 such committee(s) as needed in order that the program of the United
748 Church of Christ may have effective expression in this Church. The term

749 of the office for these offices shall be for one year with the privilege of re-
750 election for not more than three (3) total consecutive years.

751 Amendment approved by congregation at Annual Meeting Feb. 5, 2012.

752 **DISSOLUTION CLAUSE (old wording) (old lines 326-331)**

753 Upon dissolution of the Church, its assets and all property and interests
754 of which it shall be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift or
755 grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made
756 before or after such dissolution, shall be transferred to another church (in
757 the case of merger affiliation, etc.) or United Church Home Inc., 1190
758 Amherst Street Buffalo NY 14216.

759 **DISSOLUTION CLAUSE (new wording) (new lines 328-342)**

760 Upon dissolution of the Church, its assets and all property and interests
761 of which it shall be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift or
762 grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made
763 before or after such dissolution, shall be transferred *as follows*:

- 764 1) in the event of a merger with another church: to the church with which
765 the dissolved St. Peter's church merges;
- 766 2) in the event of complete dissolution: to the United Church Home
767 Society, Inc., One Fox Run Lane, Orchard Park, New York 14127;
- 768 3) in the event that any asset is not so disposed of as set forth in
769 paragraphs 1 or 2: to an organization chosen by Council and dedicated
770 to charitable and/or religious purposes and which has been recognized
771 as a 501(c)(3) organization by the Internal Revenue Service.

772

773 Amendment approved by congregation at Annual Meeting Feb. 5, 2012.

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