

1 **OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES**  
2 **EASTERN ASSOCIATION**  
3 **ILLINOIS CONFERENCE**  
4 **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

5  
6 **MISSION STATEMENT**  
7

8 We are called to love and serve God, to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, and to celebrate and  
9 embody the healing, reconciling ministry of Christ!

10  
11 **VALUE STATEMENTS**  
12

13 Our value statements are:

- 14 ❖ To develop stewards as supporting agents to enable congregations and communities to  
15 share their unique gifts.
- 16 ❖ By God’s grace to accept the responsibility to be in mission with each other, the wider  
17 church and the ecumenical community.
- 18 ❖ To nurture, equip and empower the church family through worship, education, fellowship  
19 and leadership development.
- 20 ❖ To understand the Oneness of Spirit by living in covenant with one another.
- 21 ❖ To challenge, call forth and/or affirm persons to be in ordained, licensed and  
22 commissioned ministry.

23  
24 **DEFINITIONS**  
25

26 Where used herein the following terms shall mean:

27 “Eastern Association”	Eastern Association of the Illinois Conference, 28 United Church of Christ
29 “Association”	Eastern Association
30 “Association Minister”	Eastern Association Minister
31 “Conference”	Illinois Conference, United Church of Christ
32 “Council”	Eastern Association Council
33 “Executive Committee”	Elected Officers of the Eastern Association Council

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35 **ARTICLE I NAME**  
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37 The name of this Association shall be Eastern Association.  
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39 **ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP**  
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41 The membership of the Association shall consist of all local congregations and all ordained,  
42 commissioned and licensed ministers who hold standing or recognition in the Association.  
43

44 The Association shall be comprised of all United Church of Christ congregations within  
45 geographical boundaries as outlined by the restructure of the Conference in 1992 and any future  
46 changes as approved by the Conference Council.

47  
48 All provisions of these Operational Guidelines shall be in accord with the Constitutions of the  
49 United Church of Christ and the Conference.

50  
51 **ARTICLE III GOVERNMENT**

52  
53 The government of the Association shall be vested in its members who exercise the right of  
54 control of its affairs under its head, Jesus Christ.

55  
56 Representation at regular and special meetings of the Association shall consist of one lay  
57 delegate from each local congregation and all ordained, licensed and commissioned ministers  
58 with standing in the Association. In addition, each church shall be entitled to representation by  
59 one voting youth delegate (a person at least 14 years of age, but not older than 22). A church of  
60 800 or more members shall have one additional delegate and one additional youth delegate.

61  
62 **ARTICLE IV ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP**

63  
64 A. Association

- 65  
66 1. Association Minister — there shall be an Association Minister called as  
67 determined by Conference Personnel Policy. The Association Minister has no  
68 stated term unless determined to the contrary by Conference Personnel Policy.  
69  
70 2. Staff — Association support staff shall be determined by Conference  
71 Personnel Policy.

72  
73 B. Council Membership

74  
75 Officers shall be: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Past Moderator and Secretary.

76  
77 Terms of Office

78  
79 The Vice Moderator shall be elected for a one-year term and will then succeed to  
80 the position of Moderator. If possible, this position should alternate between Lay  
81 and Clergy leadership.

82  
83 The Moderator shall serve for a one-year term and will succeed to the position of  
84 Past Moderator.

85  
86 The Past Moderator shall serve for a one-year term.

87  
88 The Secretary shall be elected for a one-year term and may serve up to a total of  
89 three consecutive terms.

90 In the event of a vacancy, the Executive Committee shall recommend to the  
91 Council a replacement for the open position.

93 At-Large Members

94  
95 In Addition, there shall be nine At-large members who serve on the Council.  
96 Terms of members shall be three years serving staggered terms. Three members  
97 shall retire each year and three new members shall be nominated and elected each  
98 year.

99  
100 Should a Council member be unable to attend three consecutive scheduled  
101 meetings, the Moderator shall be in consultation with such member to determine  
102 if a replacement is necessary.

103  
104 Members of the Council may serve two consecutive terms and then may not be  
105 nominated for Council until one year has elapsed from the end of their last term in  
106 office.

107  
108 **ARTICLE V COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES**

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110 A. Committee on Ministry — A Committee on Church and Ministry, consisting of twelve  
111 members shall be elected. The term of office shall be three years serving staggered terms.  
112 Four members shall retire each year and four new members shall be nominated and  
113 elected each year.

114  
115 Members of the Committee on Ministry may serve two consecutive terms and then may  
116 not be nominated for Committee on Ministry until one year has elapsed from the end of  
117 their last term in office.

- 118  
119 B. Nominating Committee – A Nominating Committee, with membership consisting of  
120 three persons inclusive of the Past Moderator, shall be appointed annually by the  
121 Moderator with approval of the Council. The Past Moderator shall convene the  
122 committee.

- 123  
124 C. Budget Committee — Annually the Moderator and Association Minister shall prepare a  
125 budget for the Association in accordance with Conference guidelines and shall present  
126 such budget to the Council for approval.

127  
128 D. Task Force for Association Meeting Planning – A task force shall be appointed  
129 for each regularly scheduled meeting of the Association in order to plan and provide  
130 leadership for the meeting’s goals. The membership of each task force shall be  
131 recommended by the Moderator but shall be inclusive of the Vice-Moderator and the  
132 Pastor of the local church hosting the scheduled meeting. The Vice-Moderator shall  
133 convene the Task Force.

- 134  
135 E. Other Committees and task forces may be determined and appointed by the Moderator  
136 with Council approval. Committees shall be appointed for a specific term; task forces  
137 shall be appointed to function until the task is completed.

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**ARTICLE VI DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

A Association Minister — the Association Minister shall serve the Association in assisting congregations and clergy to engage in effective witness and mission and shall be an ex-officio member of the Council and all entities, including committees and task forces. The Association Minister is also a member of the Conference Staff Leadership Team. A job description is provided by the Conference Personnel Committee.

With the advice and counsel of the Council, the Association Minister shall supervise and evaluate all personnel compensated by the Association and/or Conference.

B Council

1. Moderator — the Moderator shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Association and the Council. The Moderator shall present an Annual Report of the Council to the Association at its Spring Annual meeting. The Moderator shall, with Council approval, appoint persons to fill any vacancies between Annual meetings of the Association.
2. Vice-Moderator — the Vice-Moderator shall assume the duties of the Moderator in the absence of the Moderator and shall perform such duties and special assignments as requested by the Moderator and/or Council.
3. Past-Moderator – the Past Moderator shall assume such duties as requested by the Moderator and the duties of the Vice-Moderator if a vacancy or absence occurs in that position.
4. Secretary — the Secretary shall keep records of all business meetings of the Association and the Council. Minutes and related correspondence, other documents pertinent to the business of the Association shall be kept in the Association Office.

C Committees

- 1 Committee on Church and Ministry — the Committee on Church and Ministry functions on behalf of the Association. It shall organize itself and report actions or recommendations to the Council. It will receive and support Students-In-Care of the Association from its churches. It shall schedule and moderate Ecclesiastical Councils for Students In-Care recommended for Ordination or for Ministers of other denominations seeking Privilege of Call in the United Church of Christ. When an Ordination or Privilege of Call candidate has successfully completed their examination by the Committee on Church and Ministry, the next step in the approval process is an Ecclesiastical Council. An Ecclesiastical Council is an officially called meeting of representatives (clergy and lay) of the Association churches gathered to determine a candidate’s readiness for ministry within the

185 United Church of Christ. Each local congregation shall have voting privileges for  
186 two lay delegates and all ministers serving in authorized ministry positions within  
187 the Association shall also have voting privileges. All persons (delegates,  
188 authorized ministers and visitors) shall have voice in the examination, but only  
189 delegates and authorized ministers may make motions and vote on such motions.  
190 All actions will be approved by a simple majority vote. The committee shall also  
191 recommend Local Church Standing, Ministerial Standing, and shall be  
192 responsible for determining fitness for ministry of authorized ministers.

193  
194 All decisions by the Committee on Ministry on issues of ministerial or local  
195 church standing are considered final and not subject to appeal, with the exception  
196 of a decision by the Committee to revoke or to refuse to grant a person's  
197 authorized ministerial standing. In such a case, an appeal may be made to a  
198 Review Committee of the Association which includes members of the Executive  
199 Committee of the Association as well as three members from the Committee on  
200 Church and Ministry as selected by its membership. An appeal must be filed to  
201 the Review Committee within thirty days of the original decision. The appeal  
202 must be heard and decision made within thirty days of receipt of the appeal. Such  
203 an appeal may include both the process and the sufficiency of information used in  
204 the adjudication by the Committee on Church and Ministry as it deliberated its  
205 final decision. The Association Moderator will request that the Conference  
206 Minister appoint an individual, other than the Association Minister, to staff the  
207 process of the review. The outcome of the review may either affirm that process  
208 and procedures were followed correctly, and/or that the sufficiency of information  
209 gathered was appropriate. Should errors in process or lack of appropriate  
210 information be substantiated, the Review Committee will send the case to an  
211 Ecclesiastical Council for reconsideration of standing.

212  
213 The Committee functions under policies of the United Church of Christ as set forth  
214 in the MANUAL ON MINISTRY or other policies and guidelines as  
215 recommended by the Conference's Ottawa Table and approved for use by the  
216 Committee.

- 217
- 218 2 Nominating — the Nominating Committee shall secure a diversity of candidates,  
219 including geographical distribution, for the elective offices of the Council and its  
220 committees, and any other elective positions authorized by the Council and/or  
221 Conference. A list of nominees and ballot shall be presented to the delegates to  
222 the Annual Meeting of the Association. All nominees shall have membership and  
223 be in good standing of an Association church.

224  
225 D COUNCIL

226  
227 The Council shall oversee the programming of the Association including all meetings of  
228 the Association.

230 The Council shall provide advice and consent vis-à-vis budget, appointments, and any  
231 other business of the Association.

232  
233 It shall set dates and call for the Association regular and special meetings. Council  
234 meetings shall be open and persons other than members of the Council may be granted  
235 voice.

236  
237 Executive sessions may be held upon request for items regarding budget, personnel and  
238 discipline in areas under Council purview.

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240 **ARTICLE VII PROGRAMMING**

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242 Programming shall be designed to nurture and enhance the mission of the Association  
243 and its members.

244  
245 **ARTICLE VIII MEETINGS**

246  
247 Each year there shall be one or more meetings of the Association as determined by the  
248 Council. The meeting held in the Spring of each year shall be designated as the Annual  
249 Meeting of the Association. A quorum shall consist of a minimum of the delegates from  
250 one-third of the member churches.

251  
252 **ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS**

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254 Changes in the OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES may be made upon recommendation to  
255 or by the Council at least ninety days prior to the Annual Association Meeting. The  
256 Council will share recommended changes with congregations and clergy at least  
257 forty-five days prior to a regular or specially called meeting of the Association. Changes  
258 will be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present.

259  
260 **ARTICLE X PROCEDURES**

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263 The most recent edition of Roberts Rules of Order shall be followed unless suspended by  
264 vote of the delegation prior to discussion and action on any motion before the  
265 Association.

266  
267 In cases of policy and procedure not covered by this document, the Council can establish  
268 such policies and procedures by a simple majority vote at any of its meetings. If a  
269 situation arises requiring a decision before the Council can meet, a deliberated and  
270 unanimous decision of the Executive Committee will be considered official. A record of  
271 all policies shall be maintained with the Secretary's file and is open to the public.

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Approved at Spring Meeting, 2012