

**CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF BUENA VISTA
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
Including revisions as of January 19, 2022**

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

The incorporated name of this Church shall be “CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST of Buena Vista” located in Buena Vista, Chaffee County, State of Colorado.

**ARTICLE II
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The avowed purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the sacraments. As followers of Jesus, we are committed to exploring together Jesus’ teachings, his actions, and his justice, to better love, respect, and welcome all people.

**ARTICLE III
POLITY**

1. 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 those portions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ adopted July 4, 1961, and subsequently amended, relating to local churches.
2. The government of this Church is vested in its Members and Affiliates (the Congregation) who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject to the Laws of the State of Colorado relating to ecclesiastical and non-profit corporations.
3. This Church shall also be part of the Southeastern Association of the Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Church of Christ and shall act in ways consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Conference.

**ARTICLE IV
FAITH AND COVENANT**

We believe in the Holy Trinity:

In God, our Mother and Father, who created us and the world in which we live;

In Jesus who came as one of us to save us and show us the way of love and abundant life for all;

In the Holy Spirit, who lives within each of us to sustain, guide and comfort us.

We believe that the Holy Scriptures are our most sacred source for all understanding.

We believe in our historical faith and our relationship with God.

We believe we are called by Jesus to act in all relationships with compassion and justice.

We engage with scripture historically, sacramentally, and metaphorically so as to support all human lives.

We celebrate the love of God and all of God’s children and extend the Good News of Jesus Christ to all persons without exception.

We recognize and practice two Sacraments, Baptism and Communion.

In honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart, we profess our faith before God.

**ARTICLE V
MEMBERS AND AFFILIATES**

1. The Congregational United Church of Christ of Buena Vista welcomes all who accept the Statement of Faith and Covenant as their covenant with God and with the Church. They shall be received by confirmation, confession of faith, or letter of transfer from any other Christian church, or by reaffirmation of faith.
2. Letters of transfer to another church shall be granted by the Clerk to any member requesting same, with a copy provided to the Worship/Congregational Life Team and the Pastor.
3. Persons holding membership in other churches and who reside in this community for a portion of the year may, by affirmation of the Church's Statement of Faith, become Dual Members of this Congregation
 - a. Dual Members shall be accorded the same privileges and are expected to assume the same responsibilities as other Members.
 - b. Dual Members have voting privileges either in person or electronically.
 - c. For reporting purposes, the Church Clerk and Worship/Congregational Life Team shall make note of the dual membership on the Church rolls.
4. Affiliates are those who choose to play an active role in this church but do not wish to join as members. At any meetings of the Congregation they will have a voice but no vote. They may serve on a Team but not as the Chair. If designated by their Team, they may vote at a Council meeting to represent that Team.
5. Expectations of Members and Affiliates
 - a. Attend services
 - b. Contribute financially in support of the church
 - c. Share in the Church's ministry
 - d. Seek the spiritual and general wellbeing of others.

**ARTICLE VI
GOVERNING BODY**

The governing body of this Church shall be the Congregation assembled in Congregational Meeting. A vote of the majority, a quorum, of the Congregation physically or electronically present at a duly called meeting of the Congregation shall constitute the action of the Church. Between Congregational Meetings, authority is delegated to the Church Council, which will report at least annually to the Congregation.

**ARTICLE VII
CHURCH COUNCIL**

1. The voting members of the Church Council shall consist of the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Chairs of the Church Teams, up to two at-large members, and members from Affiliated Organizations (See Article XX). The ex officio non-voting members of the Council shall consist of the Pastor and delegates to the Rocky Mountain Conference and Southeastern Association.
 - a. All members of the Council, including ex officio members, must be Members of this Church.
 - b. Ex officio members do not have a vote and may not make motions for Council consideration.

- c. The Council may meet in executive session at the discretion of the Moderator. Executive sessions include only elected members of Council.
- 2. The Church Council shall be the policy making body of the Church and shall transact the business of the Church in the interim between Annual and Special Meetings of the Congregation.
 - a. The Moderator of the Church shall serve as the chair of the Council.
 - b. The Clerk shall serve as secretary of the Council.
- 3. Members-at-Large shall act as the liaison from the Congregation to the Council. They will be elected annually by the Congregation to serve not more than three consecutive terms. Candidates will be either self-nominated or nominated by the Congregation. Those interested will need to contact the Nominating Committee for addition to the slate. Should an at-large representative leave before the end of the term the vacancy will be filled as per 5d of this article.
- 4. There shall be an Executive Committee of Council consisting solely of the Moderator, Vice Moderator, and the Chairs of each Team. The Executive Committee of Council shall be convened by the Moderator as needed. As an ex officio member, the Pastor will be invited to attend these meetings.
- 5. In addition to other functions and duties of the Council contained elsewhere in these Bylaws, the Council shall:
 - a. Continually review the activities of the Church to ensure compliance with the Statement of Purpose.
 - b. Present to the Congregation at the annual meeting a report summarizing the previous year's activities.
 - c. Annually appoint a Nominating Committee, of at least three Members of the Church, for the purpose of identifying Officer and Team candidates to the Annual Meeting, and establish guidelines for voting representation by Affiliated Organizations (See Article XX).
 - d. Appoint interim Council and Team members in the event of vacancies between regular Congregational Meetings. At the next Congregational Meeting, those appointees will be voted upon by the Members. An appointee will be eligible to begin a new term at the next Annual Congregational Meeting following completion of the appointed term.
 - e. Appoint the Church delegates to the Rocky Mountain Conference and Southeastern Association for an annual term with reappointment allowed.
 - f. In the event of a Pastoral vacancy, a Search Committee will be formed by the Church Council and elected by the members at a Special Congregational Meeting.
 - g. Approve the Annual Church Budget for submission to the Congregation.
 - h. Appoint Council committees as appropriate.
 - i. Be responsible for assigning oversight of Restricted Funds.
 - j. Review and recommend necessary changes to the Bylaws on a regular basis and present those changes to the Congregation.
 - k. Recommend to the Congregation the creation or elimination of any paid staff position. Council will have the authority to hire or terminate staff members, except the Pastor, working in conjunction with the evaluating Team.
 - l. Meet at least monthly, or as otherwise determined by the Council, to conduct its duties.

- m. Establish Policies and Procedures deemed necessary to carry out its functions and duties.
6. The Council shall have authority over each Team as follows:
- a. A Team which is operating within the parameters of its Council approved budget does not require Council approval to make expenditures as its budget specifies, provided the purpose is within the mission of that Team. This guidance relating to the budget in this Section of the Bylaws applies to both the general fund and restricted fund portions of the budget.
 - b. A Team which has unexpended restricted funds that do not have a specific designated purpose may spend those funds provided the purpose is within the mission of that Team. However, funds donated for a specific purpose may not be expended for a different purpose without the permission of the donor(s), if it is still possible to contact those donors.
 - c. A Team which wishes to make expenditures toward a project not contained in its budget must receive prior Council approval.
 - d. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the actions and proposed actions of Teams are subject to review and approval by the Council.

ARTICLE VIII TEAMS

1. There shall be six Teams: Faith Education, Worship/Congregational Life, Outreach, Facilities, Finance and Budget, and Stewardship/Visioning.
2. Each Team shall consist of three to five elected members who are either Members of the Church or Affiliates and who agree to serve a two-year term.
3. At the Annual Meeting, two to three members of each Team shall be elected each year.
4. Each Team may meet in executive session at the discretion of its Chair. Executive sessions will include only elected members of the Team.
5. Team members may serve more than two consecutive elected terms on a single Team if there are not persons to replace them.
6. Elected members of the various Teams and Church officers will be installed by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.
7. Each Team is encouraged to carry out its mission on its own initiative so long as funds are spent within budget limitations, in consultation with Council, and within our Statement of Purpose. Each Team is expected, however, to consult with the Moderator or the Council if its actions or proposed actions will result in a significant change in established Church practice or an infringement upon the mission of another Team.
8. Teams are encouraged to work collaboratively with other Teams
9. Teams will communicate regularly with the Congregation.
10. Each Team shall:
 - a. Annually elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.
 - b. Develop and review written Policies and Procedures designed to affect its assigned duties and submit these to the Council for approval.
 - c. Recommend its annual budget to the Finance and Budget Team in a timely manner.
 - d. Appoint Team committees as needed.
 - e. Present to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting a report summarizing the previous year's activities, together with planned activities for the coming year.

**ARTICLE IX
FAITH EDUCATION TEAM**

The Faith Education Team shall:

1. Support and manage all aspects of Faith Education and provide spiritual growth opportunities for all ages within the Church.
2. Designate with the Pastor the educational curriculum to be used.
3. Follow Policy and Procedure for staffing.
4. Identify, manage, and be accountable for the physical and financial needs of the Faith Education Department.
5. Include as ex officio non-voting member the Director of Faith Education, as applicable.

**ARTICLE X
WORSHIP/CONGREGATIONAL LIFE TEAM**

The Worship/Congregational Life Team shall:

1. Be responsible with the Pastor for the Spiritual Programs of the Church including:
 - a. Worship
 - b. The provision of music for worship services
 - c. The Sacraments
 - d. Pulpit supply
 - e. Maintaining contact with congregants.
2. Provide for Pastoral care in the absence of a Pastor.
3. Periodically review the membership roll of the Church.
4. Include, either as a regular or ex officio member of the Worship/Congregational Life Team, a representative of the music programs of the Church.
5. Be responsible for appointments such as Acolyte Chair, Flower Chair, Nursery Chair, Usher and Communion Chair, and any others as necessary.

**ARTICLE XI
OUTREACH TEAM**

The Outreach Team shall:

1. Be responsible with the Pastor for the coordination of the Church's mission, including outreach in the local community and beyond.
2. Coordinate special mission offerings.
3. Seek out opportunities for mission service.

**ARTICLE XII
FACILITIES TEAM**

The Facilities Team shall:

1. Be responsible for the care and custody of the Church property.
2. Be responsible for the assignment of Church space.

**ARTICLE XIII
FINANCE AND BUDGET TEAM**

The Finance and Budget Team shall:

1. Be responsible for the Church's financial affairs, deeds, and insurance.
2. Be responsible for the preparation of the Annual Church Budget for submission to Council for its approval and submission to the Congregation.
3. Include as ex officio non-voting members the Treasurer and Financial Secretary.
4. Be responsible for ensuring that an annual financial audit of the Church is conducted.
5. Annually appoint, upon approval of the Congregation, one person to serve as Treasurer and one person to serve as Financial Secretary, both of whom shall be bonded.
6. Designate the Financial Secretary as one of two tabulators whose responsibility is to count, categorize, and deposit the weekly offering and to appoint the second tabulator and his/her alternate. Both shall be Members of the Congregation.
7. Should the budget not be approved at the Annual Meeting, within 90 days the budget shall be revised, approved by Council, and presented for a vote by the Congregation. In the interim, the previous year's budget will remain in place.

**ARTICLE XIV
STEWARDSHIP/VISIONING TEAM**

The Stewardship/Visioning Team shall:

1. Help all of us focus on what we have and what we can give as we seek to honor God for all that has been given to us.
2. Develop ideas to assist the Church in moving forward in its vision and purpose.
3. Work to increase and strengthen participation and engagement in the life of our church family.
4. Be responsible for educating the Congregation in ways they can support our church:
 - a. Operational support giving
 - b. Designated giving
 - c. Endowments
 - d. Volunteer mission opportunities

**ARTICLE XV
NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The Nominating Committee shall:

1. Make necessary nominations for the positions of Church Teams and offices of Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Clerk for submission to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.
2. Recognize the diversity of the Congregation and, to the extent possible, reflect this diversity in its nominations.
3. Recognize individuals who have a particular interest in the work of given Teams and, to the extent possible, include such individuals in the nominations for those Teams.
4. Contact potential nominees and ascertain their willingness to serve before presenting candidates to the Congregation.

5. Submit the names to be placed in nomination to the Congregation through the Church Clerk.
6. Publish the Slate of Nominees in the monthly Newsletter no less than 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE XVI PASTOR

1. The Pastor shall:
 - a. Have charge over the spiritual welfare of the Church with the assistance of the Worship Team.
 - b. Seek to enlist persons as followers of Christ.
 - c. Preach the Gospel.
 - d. Administer the Sacraments.
 - e. Have under their care all services of public worship.
 - f. Be an ex officio member of the Council and all the Teams and Committees except as otherwise provided.
2. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite time by a three-quarter (75%) vote of the Congregation present at a meeting called for that purpose. An Interim Pastor shall be called by the Church Council for a period to be determined by the Council.
3. In the Pastoral Call Agreement, the terms of the relationship shall be stated.
4. The Pastoral Candidate, the Church, the Southeastern Association, and the Conference Minister shall each receive a copy of the Call Agreement.
5. When a Pastoral Candidate accepts a call to this Church, and has become a Member of this Church, the Church and they shall join in requesting the Southeastern Association to arrange for a service of installation or recognition. A report of this service shall be signed by the proper officer of the Southeastern Association and by the Conference Minister. For the Church to terminate the pastoral relationship, a Special Meeting of the Congregation must be called and a majority of the Congregation present must approve the termination at that meeting. Further, a ninety (90) day notice must be given to the Pastor. A ninety (90) day notice must also be given if the Pastor wishes to terminate the pastoral relationship. The ninety (90) day notice requirement may be modified by mutual agreement. When either the Pastor or the Church decides to terminate the pastoral relationship, notice of the decision is sent to the Conference Minister and the Southeastern Association.

ARTICLE XVII PASTOR/CONGREGATION RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. Consists of up to 5 (five) members of the Church chosen for their character, skills, and attributes that will contribute to a building of trust and maintaining relationships between the Pastor, the Congregation, and the Congregation Members.
2. For the first six months after a new pastor assumes duties, the Pastor/Congregation Relations Committee shall be comprised of members from the Search Committee, chosen by the Pastor and Council. After that time, a new Committee shall be appointed following the procedures in Section 4 below to serve at most a three-year term.
3. Duties will include: Reviewing the Call Agreement annually; clarifying the Pastor's position description and mutual expectations with direction from the Council; supporting

the Pastor's ministry at CUCC, in the community and denomination; working for improved communication between the Pastor and Congregation; providing input to the persons conducting the annual evaluation of the Pastor and that of the Church's ministry; and listening to individuals and groups regarding the relationship between the Pastor and the Congregation and between Members of the Congregation.

4. The Pastor and the Council will work together to select the PCRC members from the Congregation by mutual agreement. All members will be approved by a majority of Council.
5. Members of this Committee will always act within an atmosphere of confidentiality.

ARTICLE XVIII OFFICERS

THE MODERATOR OF THE CHURCH

1. The Moderator of the Church shall be elected by the Congregation to a one-year term.
2. The Moderator may serve in office a maximum of two consecutive years.
3. The Moderator shall:
 - a. Serve as Chair of the Church Council, and preside at all meetings of the Church Council and at the Annual and Special Meetings of the Congregation.
 - b. Be responsible for carrying out the wishes of the Council.
 - c. Share with the Pastor the general supervision of the welfare of the Congregation.
 - d. Be an ex officio member of all Teams and Committees.
 - e. Act as the Registered Agent of the Church.

VICE MODERATOR

1. The Vice Moderator shall be elected by the Congregation to a one-year term.
2. The Vice Moderator may serve in office a maximum of two consecutive years.
3. The Vice Moderator shall be the first person considered by the Nominating Committee for the office of Moderator or for a subsequent one-year term as Vice Moderator in the event that the current Moderator is approved for an additional one-year term.
4. The Vice Moderator shall:
 - a. Perform the duties of the Moderator in their absence.
 - b. Be an ex officio member of all Teams and Committees.

CLERK

1. The Clerk shall be elected annually.
2. The Clerk shall be responsible for:
 - a. Keeping a faithful record of the proceedings of the Church and of the Church Council of which they shall be a member.
 - b. Preserving on file all communications and written official reports.
 - c. Notifying all persons elected to offices and committees.
 - d. Giving legal notice to all Members, when such notice is necessary.
 - e. Performing such other duties as prescribed by law or as usually pertain to the office of clerk or secretary of an assembly.
 - f. Keeping a register with addresses of Members of the Church, with dates and modes of their reception and removal.
 - g. Keeping a record of baptisms and marriages.

- h. Issuing Letters of Transfer when they are requested with copies to the Worship Team and the Pastor.
- i. Issuing written notice to the Worship Team and to the Pastor of any changes in membership status (i.e. acceptance of new Members, resignation of Members, deaths of Members)
- j. Submitting to the Congregation the Nominating Committee's slate of officers and Church Team members.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

- 1. The Financial Secretary, as appointed by the Finance and Budget Team and approved by the Council, shall be ratified at each Annual Meeting, and shall be bonded.
- 2. The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for:
 - a. The deposit of all incoming monies.
 - b. Maintaining an up-to-date accounting of all funds given to the Financial Secretary for deposit.
 - c. Providing identifiable donors with annual reports of their giving.
 - d. Presenting an annual report to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.

TREASURER

- 1. The Treasurer, as appointed by the Finance and Budget Team and approved by the Council, shall be ratified at each Annual Congregational Meeting, and shall be bonded.
- 2. The Treasurer shall be responsible for:
 - a. Payment of all bills, within budget limitations, on order from the Finance and Budget Team or their designees.
 - b. Maintaining an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements designated by category and including separate ledgers as deemed appropriate by the Finance and Budget Team.
 - c. Providing monthly reports of Church income and expenses to the Finance and Budget Team and Church Council.
 - d. Providing an annual report to the Annual Congregational Meeting.
 - e. Providing requested documents to the auditor(s) in a timely manner.

**ARTICLE XIX
STAFF**

- 1. Written job descriptions will be developed for any and all staff positions by the designated evaluation group and written performance review of each will be completed annually, prior to the creation of the Team budgets by the October Council meeting. Written evaluations will be filed in the employee's folder in the office. Evaluating groups will send a recommendation of any compensation adjustment to the Finance and Budget Team.
- 2. Evaluation groups will recommend to Council the hiring and termination of employees under its responsibility.
- 3. Staff positions and their evaluation group:
 - a. Pastor - Moderator, Vice Moderator, Worship Team Representative, Chair of Finance, with feedback from PCRC chair
 - b. Office Communications Administrator - Pastor and Moderator
 - c. Pianist - Music Director, Pastor, Worship Team Chair

- d. Custodian - Facilities Team members
- e. Director of Faith Education - Faith Education Chair and Pastor
- f. Nursery Attendant - Worship Team

ARTICLE XX
AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

1. Organizations whose goals and programs are compatible with those of the Church Bylaws may be established and granted recognition as Affiliated Organizations.
2. Granting Affiliated Organization (AO) status shall be reviewed and recommended by the Council and approved by the Congregation.
3. Affiliated Organizations shall be granted:
 - a. Access to Church facilities.
 - b. Use of the Church name for their activities.
 - c. Voting representation on the Church Council under certain guidelines to be established by the Council or by amendments to these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XXI
ANNUAL AND SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

1. The Annual Congregational Meeting shall be held on a Sunday in February to allow for the closing of the books from the previous year and shall be presided over by the Moderator. Adequate notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given as described in Section 4 of this Article.
2. Special Congregational Meetings may be called by the Church Council or by petition signed by not less than one-third of the Members of the Church.
 - a. In the case of a Special Meeting called by petition from the Members, the Council shall set the meeting date to fall within forty (40) days of receipt of the petition.
 - b. All Special Meetings of the Congregation of this Church shall occur only after adequate notice is given as described in Section 4 of this Article.
3. The Members shall at the Annual Meeting have the right to make additional nominations to the slate presented by the Nominating Committee.
4. Adequate notice, specifying the time and substance of any Congregational Meeting, shall be given in the Newsletter or by special mailing at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting date. The notice shall also be printed in the worship bulletins on at least two Sundays preceding any such meeting with copies of any necessary documents being available to the Congregation.
5. Voting electronically via Skype, Zoom, or other platform may be utilized for Congregational Meetings, using all due diligence that each person can hear and be heard.

ARTICLE XXII
RULES OF ORDER

1. Robert's Rules of Order online edition shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by these Bylaws.
2. The Moderator shall appoint a parliamentarian for Congregational meetings.

3. Council and Teams will use a Consensus Model for conducting their meetings; that is, discuss the topic, hear each person's thoughts and ideas, and come to a decision based on the agreement of the majority.

ARTICLE XXIII CHURCH PROPERTY

1. The Church may in its corporate name:
 - a. Sue or be sued.
 - b. Acquire by purchase, bequest, gift, or otherwise and own, hold, invest, or dispose of such property, both real and personal, for such works as the Church may undertake.
 - c. Purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for, and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage, or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer, and convey property for the general purposes of the Church.
 - d. Receive and hold in trust both real and personal property and invest and reinvest the same.
 - e. Make any contracts for promoting the objectives and purposes of the Church.
2. In the unlikely event that this Church shall cease operation as a United Church of Christ congregation, all of the Church's property, both real and personal, shall be transferred and conveyed to the Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Church of Christ or its successor for the purpose of furthering the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE XXIV MISCONDUCT

The Church recognizes that all clergy, staff, officers and volunteers have obligations to fulfill their responsibilities in an exemplary manner. Alleged moral, ethical, or sexual misconduct shall be reported to a member of the Executive Committee of the Church Council. The Executive Committee shall deal with all such reports in accordance with legal requirements and the CUCC of Buena Vista "Policies and Procedures for Misconduct."

ARTICLE XXV AMENDMENTS

As stated in Article VII, CHURCH COUNCIL, number 5j, these Bylaws will be reviewed regularly by Council and may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of those Members physically or electronically present at any Annual or Special Meeting provided that notice specifying the time of the meeting and the substance of the proposed amendment(s) be given in the Newsletter, electronically, or by special mailing, and printed in the worship bulletins on at least two Sundays preceding any proposed amendment(s), with copies of the amendment(s) being available to the Congregation.

This document was reviewed in full and is intended to replace the Bylaws approved by the Congregation on August 26, 2007, and further revisions as of April 2015.