

St. Martin United Church of Christ
High Ridge
By-Laws
January, 2009

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this church shall be ST. MARTIN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, located in High Ridge, Missouri.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE, VISION, AND MISSION

Section 1 – 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 promote Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the church universal; to render loving service toward all people; and to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.

Section 2 – Vision – St. Martin UCC is to be a place where all people are loved, valued, and cared for; a place where we share regularly in celebrating God’s love for us and live out that love in responsible, inviting, and welcoming ways.

Section 3 – Mission – To be responsible and caring in reaching out to all people so that everyone may experience the unconditional love and grace of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

ARTICLE III – POLITY

Section 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 relating to local churches.

Section 2 – The government of St. Martin UCC is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs; subject, however, to the laws of the state of Missouri relating to Not-For-Profit Corporations.

ARTICLE IV – FAITH AND COVENANT

Section 1 – Faith – This church acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Savior of all. It acknowledges as brothers and sisters in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the scriptures for its authority, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world. It claims as its own the faith of the historic church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the church in each generation to make this faith its own. It subscribes to the Apostles’ Creed as its primary Statement of Faith.

Section 2 – Covenant – We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and the Will of God. We resolve to walk together in the ways of the Lord, known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshiping God, and striving for truth,

justice, and peace. As did our ancestors, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

ARTICLE V – OBLIGATION TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Section 1 - The congregation shall remit its designated benevolence offerings for Our Church's Wider Mission to the conference treasurer each month and shall make every effort to fulfill the annual budget request of the conference for Our Church's Wider Mission. The congregation, through the Council, shall consider all authorized financial requests of the organizations and institutions which are a part of or affiliated with the United Church of Christ.

Section 2 – The number of lay delegates and alternates designated by the Missouri Mid-South Conference shall be elected from the membership each year at the annual congregational meeting to represent the congregation at the conference meeting and at all other conference and/or association meetings throughout the year. The delegates will seek guidance from the majority of members on issues known. However, on issues not previously announced, delegates have the freedom to vote according to their understanding of the Christian gospel. A report of the action taken at such meetings shall be given as soon as practicable.

Section 3 – This congregation, either through its pastor or competent officers, shall make such reports to the Missouri Mid-South Conference as may be required of it, and in every way submit to just and lawful discipline.

Section 4 – The official and fiscal year of this congregation shall be from January 1 through December 31.

ARTICLE VI – SACRAMENTS AND RITES

Section 1 – This church recognizes the only two sacraments instituted by our Lord Himself: Baptism, and the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.

Section 2 – In accordance with the practice of traditional Protestant churches, this church recognizes four rites: Confirmation, Ordination or Consecration, Christian Marriage, and the Burial of the Dead.

Section 3 - The duly installed pastor of this church shall have the sole right and responsibility in this church to celebrate the sacraments and rites, except that in the case of illness or absence from the church for other special reasons, or in the event of failure to do so, the Church Council may temporarily delegate this responsibility to some other licensed or ordained minister of the United Church of Christ or its related denominations.

Section 4 – The Sacrament of Holy Baptism (anointing or immersion) shall be conferred in a service of public worship or in a setting previously approved by the Council, on those persons not previously baptized, who have completed the church

membership class and who correctly answer all appropriate questions in The Book of Worship. Only in emergency situations shall there be any deviations.

Section 5 – Baptism shall also be conferred in a service of worship on infant children at least one of whose parents shall be a member of a Christian congregation in full communion; otherwise sponsors who are members of a Christian congregation in full communion shall join in answering the baptismal questions in The Book of Worship. The pastor shall confer with the parents of infants who are to be baptized concerning the meaning of baptism. Only in an emergency or unusual situation shall there be any deviations.

Section 6 – The Sacrament of Holy Communion shall be celebrated on the following festival days and at such other times as the Pastor and Church Council shall deem appropriate: Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Easter, Pentecost, and World Wide Communion Sunday.

Section 7 – All confirmed members of St Martin UCC, and all members who come to St. Martin UCC as adults by Letter of Transfer from another Christian Church are entitled to participate in the Holy Communion.

Section 8 – The communion of this church shall also be open to any *person of any* Christian church who is entitled to receive the sacrament in his/her own church *or who professes his faith in Jesus Christ.*

Section 9 – The pastor may celebrate the Holy Communion privately whenever ill of infirm members are unable to come to the church. The pastor shall take care that all infirm members are offered the sacrament at least twice each year during Advent or Christmastide and during Lent or Eastertide. (Under unusual circumstances, trained lay persons may serve Holy Communion, that has been blessed by the pastor, to ill or infirm members.)

Section 10 – The Rite of Confirmation shall be conferred upon those persons who have successfully completed a course of instruction in the Christian faith; the content and duration of such course and the age at which such course shall be taken to be established by the Christian Education Committee and approved by the Church Council. Successful completion of such course shall be determined by the pastor. All candidates for confirmation must correctly answer the appropriate questions in The Book of Worship.

Section 11 – The Rite of Ordination or Consecration may be conferred only upon those members who have completed the course of theological education and/or specialized training prescribed in the Constitution of the United Church of Christ and who have been duly licensed for ordination or consecration by the Association and/or Conference of the United Church of Christ, of which this church is a member. The ordinand must correctly answer those questions prescribed by the above mentioned Association or Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Section 12 – The Rite of Christian Marriage may rightly be celebrated in the presence of God at His altar at the discretion of the pastor. In any event, the pastor must counsel with the couple concerning the meaning of Christian marriage; they must agree to covenant with each other according to the marriage vows; and satisfy the requirements for marriage prescribed by the laws of the State of Missouri.

Section 13 – The Rite for the Burial of the Dead may be celebrated for any person, including non-members, whose family shall make request for such service to the pastor, except that in all cases involving deceased persons who are not members of the church, the pastor shall have the right to refuse such service.

ARTICLE VII – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Persons of all ages, tongues, and races who have been instructed in the faith of this church, have been baptized and/or confirmed, and have made public confession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will be eligible for membership in this church.

Section 2 – To become members, persons must pledge themselves to regularly attend the scheduled worship services of the church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper; to live the Christian Life as taught and exemplified by our Lord Jesus Christ; to share in the life and work of the church; to contribute to its support and benevolence; and to seek diligently and actively the spiritual welfare of the membership, the community and the world at large.

Section 3 – It shall be the duty of members to lead a Christian life, to cultivate growth in Godliness, and to further the cause of God's kingdom on earth by heeding the message of the Gospel and accepting the helpful support of the church. To this end, it shall also be the duty of every member to: a) regularly attend divine services of worship, b) partake of the Holy Communion as often as possible, c) have their children baptized, enrolled in the church school, and confirmed, d) regularly contribute a portion of their income to sustain and support both the current expenses and the benevolent program of the church, e) submit to the discipline of the church, f) faithfully and conscientiously serve the church through the contribution of their time and talents.

Section 4 – Members may, at their own request, be granted a letter of transfer to another Christian church. If, because of change of faith or for other reasons not involving unchristian conduct, members may request in writing to be released from membership obligations, the church shall patiently endeavor to secure their continuance in its fellowship; but failing in such effort, the church may grant the request and terminate membership. Such a request shall be approved by the pastor and the Council. The president of the Council shall issue the appropriate letter of release.

Section 5 – A member whose address is unknown or who for a period of one year, in spite of spiritual care, has not attended the church's worship, participated in the Lord's Supper, or contributed to the support of the church may, by vote of the Council, be placed

under discipline. The Council shall make every effort to notify the member of this action and be encouraged to return to the fellowship. If, after the expiration of a second year, the relationship remains unchanged, a second letter will be sent. If, after the expiration of a third year, the relationship remains unchanged, the name may be removed from the membership roll by a further vote of the Council.

Section 6 – Members who persistently breach their covenant vows will be offered a hearing before the Council. Faithful efforts will be extended to bring them into accordance with the law of Christ. Failure to comply may result in the Church Council’s censure, or suspension or termination of their membership.

Section 7 – All members are entitled to share fully in the fellowship and the spiritual blessings of the church and in the services of its pastor(s) and officers, as well as to the prayers and concerns of its members.

Section 8 – All communicant members of this congregation are entitled to voice and vote at all regular and special meetings of the congregation, except that only those members who are *eighteen (18)* years of age or older shall be eligible to vote on any matter that shall cause the church in its corporate name to incur indebtedness.

Section 9 – *Associate Membership* – *Associate membership is for long-distance members and/or short-term members. The members are not eligible for full membership because of long distance restraints, military, schooling, or employment, but want to remain a member of St. Martin UCC. They cannot hold an office that controls finances or property. Associate members must meet with the pastor and discuss why they want to be a member, how they are going to continually support the church, and what their spiritual goals are. They must be accepted and approved by the pastor/Council. The associate member: a) is allowed to vote (no absentee vote), b) must agree with the By-Laws and Constitution, c) must be accepted in a worship service, d) can serve on a committee, but not hold an office, and e) must be eighteen (18) years of age. The associate membership is limited for a 2-year period, after which the status will be reviewed after two years by the pastor and Stewardship Committee.*

ARTICLE VIII – GOVERNING BODY

The governing body of this church shall be the membership assembled in a congregational meeting. The vote of the majority of the members present and voting at the meeting shall be the action of the congregation except as prescribed by Robert’s Rules of Order. A quorum shall consist of ten percent (10%) of the membership.

ARTICLE IX - COUNCIL

Section 1 – The Council shall be the executive body of this congregation. It shall be composed of the pastor(s), three (3) elders, six (6) deacons, the treasurer, the church school superintendent(s), and *when possible, a youth representative, under the age of eighteen (18)*. One half (1/2) of its members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2 – The Council shall organize itself each year, electing from its membership elders to serve as president and vice president, and deacons to serve as recording secretary and financial secretary. The Council shall appoint the following committees (listed alphabetically.)

1. Christian Education
2. Evangelism
3. Local Church Ministries
4. Pastoral Relations
5. Personnel
6. Physical Properties
7. Stewardship
8. Worship

and such other committees as will further the purpose of the Church.

Section 3 – One (1) elder and two (2) deacons shall be elected by a majority vote cast at each annual congregational meeting. Elders and deacons shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. They shall be eligible for one (1) additional term. After the lapse of one (1) year they shall again be eligible for election to the Council.

Section 4 – To be eligible for the office of elder, a person shall have served at least one full term as deacon. To be eligible for the office of deacon, a person shall be at least *eighteen (18)* years of age, a member of this congregation for at least one (1) year and an active participant in the worship life of the church.

Section 5 – CHURCH SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT(S) – The church school superintendent(s) shall be elected by a majority vote cast at the annual congregational meeting in even numbered years for a term of two (2) years. This person shall be eligible for an indefinite number of terms. To be eligible for the office of church school superintendent, a person shall be at least *eighteen (18)* years of age, a member of the congregation for at least one (1) year and an active participant in the worship life of the church. In selecting nominees for this office, the Personnel Committee shall give first consideration to persons with prior church school teaching experience. ***When there is more than one superintendent, only one vote will be accepted.***

Section 6 – TREASURER – The treasurer shall be elected by a majority vote cast at the annual congregational meeting in odd numbered years for a term of two (2) years. This person shall be eligible for an indefinite number of years. To be eligible for the office of treasurer, a person shall be at least *eighteen (18)* years of age, a member of the congregation for at least one (1) year and an active participant in the worship life of the Church. In selecting nominees for this office, the Personnel Committee shall give first consideration to persons with financial ability.

Section 7 – Nominations for all other offices to be filled at the annual congregational meeting shall be made by the Personnel Committee each year in the month of October. Public notice of such nominations shall be given from the pulpit or by bulletin

or letter at least two weeks before the election. Other nominations may be made from the floor at the meeting at which the election is held. The nominees must be present to accept the nomination.

Section 8 – When elected, the elders and deacons shall be publicly ordained to, or installed in their respective offices. When elected, the church school superintendent and treasurer shall be publicly installed in office.

Section 9 – Vacancy on the Council for an unexpired term shall be filled by the Council until the next annual meeting. If the unexpired period is for more than one year, the congregation shall elect a Council member for the remainder of that unexpired term.

Section 10 – The Council shall be: (1) the policy-making body, (2) shall transact the business of the congregation, (3) **approve the annual budget**, (4) provide for the annual auditing of financial accounts, (5) keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, (6) be custodian of all church records and other property, whether real or personal, and (7) report to the congregation at its regular and special meetings. All acts and deliberations of the Council are subject to the will of and revision by the Congregation.

Section 11 – The Council shall instruct the proper officers in all matters, including the payment of bills with monthly review by Council.

Section 12 – The Council may authorize any extraordinary expense if funds are available; but if borrowing **or expenditures** exceed **Five Thousand Dollars, (\$5,000.00)**, it must receive the approval of the congregation.

Section 13 – All committees and organizations are responsible to the Church Council, and shall make monthly reports to the Church Council. The Council shall have final authority in all matters concerning the committees and organizations.

Section 14 – The Council shall meet at least once every month for the transaction of such business as may properly come before it. Special meetings are subject to the call of the president or the pastor.

Section 15- Elders are members of the congregation elected by the congregation; and ordained to and installed in their offices. They shall assist and support the pastor in the spiritual affairs of the church. They shall have jurisdiction in all matters of discipline, except in the case of the pastor. Elders shall take heed to the high calling of their office, guarding faithfully all spiritual interests of the church, maintaining order in the house of God, visiting the sick, and ministering to the edification and comfort of all. **Concerns from the pastor and/or members of the congregation should be referred to the monthly Council meetings.**

Section 16 – Deacons are members of the congregation, elected by the congregation and ordained to or installed in their offices. They shall aid in carrying on the temporal business of the congregation, including the maintenance of properties and in

overseeing the spiritual affairs. They shall aid in overseeing the securing of funds necessary for the support of the church, foster principles of stewardship, and dispense the charity of the church.

Section 17 – PRESIDENT – The president shall call and preside at all meetings of the Church Council and at all congregational meetings; be ex-officio member of all standing as well as all special committees, whether these are elected or appointed; present an annual report to the congregation showing the principle activities and transactions of the Church Council; and be responsible in seeing that the expressed will of the congregation and of the Church Council is implemented. The president is empowered with the recording secretary of the Council to sign all contracts, loans, deeds, and other documents in the name of the congregation.

Section 18 – VICE PRESIDENT – The vice president shall preside at all meetings of the Church Council and at all congregational meetings when the president is absent and also when business pertaining to the president or administration is before the meeting; and perform all the duties pertaining to the office of the president in the absence of the president.

Section 19 – RECORDING SECRETARY – The recording secretary shall keep and attend to all corporate records and shall keep a complete and accurate record of all transactions at meetings of the Church Council and the congregation; shall attend to all correspondence and shall keep a copy of the By-Laws available for ready reference at all meetings of the Church Council and congregation. The recording secretary shall, with the president, sign all contracts, loans, deeds, and other documents in the name of the congregation and attest the same with the corporate seal.

Section 20 – FINANCIAL SECRETARY – The financial secretary shall receive all offering envelopes including church school envelopes; credit the receipts to the appropriate contributor; send an annual statement to each contributor indicating that individual's contributions; receive all other monies; deposit all monies received and make an accurate record of same and report to the treasurer all funds and accounts to be credited; together with the treasurer, submit a written report at all regular meetings of the Church Council and the congregation and prepare annual financial statements for the congregation.

Section 21 – TREASURER – The treasurer shall have charge of all monies received from the financial secretary; make all disbursements authorized by the Church Council; together with the financial secretary, make a written report at all regular meetings of the Church Council and *assist in the preparation of the annual budget.*

ARTICLE X – STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1 – All members of standing committees shall be appointed by the Church Council from among the members of the congregation for terms of two (2) years. Each committee shall have at least one (1) but not more than three (3) Council persons serving on it who shall be appointed for terms of one (1) year. As nearly as possible, appointments

shall be made in such a manner that not more than two-thirds of the membership of any committee is replaced in the same year. The pastor and president of the Church Council are ex-officio members of all standing committees. The Church Council shall also designate the chairperson of each committee.

All standing committees are responsible for their activities and decisions to the Church Council and shall submit a written report of such activities and decisions to the Council at its regular monthly meetings.

Section 2 – PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE – The Pastoral Relations Committee shall be composed of one (1) elder and at least three (3) other persons; with no more than two (2) Council members and no more than five (5) people, excluding the Pastor. The responsibilities of this committee are stipulated within the Policy Manual.

Section 3 – CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE – The Christian Education Committee shall be composed of the church school superintendent, one (1) other member of the Church Council (an elder), a representative from each department (children's, youth, adult), and two (2) other persons. It shall be responsible to (1) appoint the staff and choose the curriculum for the regular church school and the Vacation Bible School, (2) appoint sponsors for and have charge over the Youth Fellowship. (3) carry on the business and decide matters of policy for the church school, (4) care for the staffing and facilities of the church nursery, and (5) organize and promote such other programs of adult Christian education as shall be deemed desirable or necessary. The Christian Education Committee shall, with the Pastor, oversee the course of instruction in the Christian faith in preparation for the Rite of Confirmation.

Section 4 – EVANGELISM COMMITTEE – The Evangelism Committee shall be composed of one (1) deacon and at least four (4) other people. They shall be responsible for all matters concerning community outreach, church growth, new member programs, and overall, the spiritual growth of members of the congregation.

Section 5 – LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRIES COMMITTEE – The Local Church Ministries shall be composed of one (1) deacon, and at least six (6) other persons. It shall be responsible to oversee all programs of social action and fellowship within the church; maintain contact with students, persons serving in the armed services, and any other persons away from home; establish and maintain ecumenical contacts and joint ministries with neighboring churches. Responsibilities include visitation, administering the sacraments, interfacing with families and caregiver in the promotion of long-term care.

Section 6 – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – The Personnel Committee shall be composed of one (1) deacon, the senior pastor and at least three (3) other persons. This committee is responsible for conducting and/or coordinating search processes for staff persons, making recommendations to Council regarding the church's hiring and firing practices. The Personnel Committee will also conduct an annual review and evaluation of all staff persons, excluding pastor, before October of each year. This committee shall act as

the nominating committee, securing nominations for the offices of deacon, elder, treasurer, and church school superintendent, as necessary.

Section 7 – PHYSICAL PROPERTIES COMMITTEE – The Physical Properties Committee shall be composed of at least one (1) deacon and at least four (4) other persons. It shall be responsible to plan for the maintenance and improvement of all existing church properties and to oversee the execution of such plans.

Section 8 – STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE – The Stewardship Committee shall be composed of the financial secretary, the treasurer, pastor and three (3) other persons. It shall be responsible to: (1) assist the financial officers in preparing their reports, (2) prepare an annual budget, and (3) oversee and promote all such projects and activities designed to increase the practice of total stewardship to include time, talent, and treasure.

Section 9 – WORSHIP COMMITTEE – The Worship Committee shall be composed of one (1) elder, one (1) deacon, the minister of music, usher coordinator, wedding coordinator, and three (3) other people. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to oversee, suggest, and initiate change, schedule ushers, oversee the music program, and the proper preparation of flowers, paraments, baptism and communion elements.

ARTICLE XI – PASTOR

Section 1 – It shall be the responsibility of a Pastoral Search Committee, appointed by the Council to seek a candidate for a vacancy in the office of pastor and to secure supply ministers *or an interim minister* for the period of the vacancy.

Section 2 – As soon as a pastoral vacancy occurs, it shall be reported to the Conference Minister by the Council.

Section 3 – In filling a vacancy or in securing supply ministers for the period of the vacancy, the Pastoral Search Committee shall seek the counsel of the Parish Life and Leadership Committee.

Section 4 – The Pastoral Search Committee may request the Conference Minister to secure relevant information about any minister whom it wishes to consider for the vacancy.

Section 5 – Any *authorized* minister meeting the theological and ordination requirements of the United Church of Christ may confer with the Conference Minister about a pastoral vacancy and at personal request, the minister's name shall be submitted by the Conference Minister for consideration by the local church committee.

Section 6 – The Pastoral Search Committee shall present to the congregation the name of the candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy. A *majority* vote of the members present, at a called congregational meeting, constitutes a call.

Section 7 – In the call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated, including the agreement of the church to participate in the Pension Fund of the United Church of Christ, the Minister’s Health Insurance Program, Disability Insurance Program, and other terms agreed upon between the candidate and the congregation. The minister, the church, the Association and the Conference Minister shall each receive a copy of the call.

Section 8 – When a minister accepts a call to this church, the church and the minister shall request the Association to arrange a service of installation. A report of this service shall be signed by the proper officer of the Association and/or by the Conference Minister, and copies shall be sent to the Secretary of the United Church of Christ and to the Parish Life and Leadership Committee.

Section 9 – The pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period. In order to terminate this relationship, three month’s notice shall be given by either party. The procedure shall be in accordance with the Conference and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.

Section 10 – The congregation may terminate the relationship by a *two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present at a called congregational meeting*. A notice of such termination shall be sent by the president of the Council to the Conference Minister and to the Association for appropriate action.

Section 11 – Congregational discipline of the pastor shall be in conformity with the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.

Section 12 – The congregation may, with the support of the pastor, choose an associate or assistant pastor(s).

Section 13 – It shall be the duty of the pastor to be a role model to the congregation; conduct all services of Divine Worship on Sundays, Festival Days, and any such other days as the congregation may desire; direct the work of religious education; administer the Holy Sacraments; visit the sick, comfort the distressed; and perform all such duties as belong to the office of pastor in the United Church of Christ. The pastor shall keep a record of all services performed and make an annual report to the congregation. ***The Book of Life should be regularly updated by the pastor to reflect all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and deaths.***

Section 14 – By virtue of the office, the pastor is a voting member of the Church Council and of all committees, and organizations of the congregation. No other ordained clergy or any other person shall perform any religious ceremony or function in this church without his/her consent.

Section 15 – The pastor’s salary shall be paid promptly in monthly/bimonthly installments from non-designated funds. All other compensations which accrue to the

pastor by virtue of pastoral call shall be promptly provided. When a pastor comes to this congregation, moving expenses shall be borne in full by the congregation.

ARTICLE XII – THE CHURCH SCHOOL

Section 1 – The church school superintendent(s) shall be the executive officer(s) of the church school and vice chairperson(s) of the Christian Education Committee. The superintendent(s) shall be responsible to nominate persons for the positions of teachers; teachers are to be approved by the Church Council. The Superintendent(s) shall oversee the ordering and distribution of all church school literature; and see that an adequate staff is present for each session of the church school.

Section 2 – All appointments in the church school shall be for a period of one year. Persons may be reappointed to the same position for indefinite number of terms.

Section 3 – All teachers of the church school, except the superintendent(s) shall be installed in their respective positions at the beginning of the church school *year, preferably on Rally Day.*

Section 4 – The church school year shall be from September 1 to August 31.

Section 5 – The church school superintendent(s) shall keep an accurate record of membership and attendance and shall also keep a record of all transactions at meetings of the church school teachers.

Section 6 – The teachers shall meet quarterly to plan and correlate the work of the church school and to engage in programs of study and renewal.

Section 7 – A person's name shall be added to the active church school membership card file after attendance of four consecutive Sundays. A person's name shall be removed from the active file if absent more than 26 consecutive Sundays. When a person's card has been removed from the active file, it shall be retained by the superintendent for one year only in an inactive file, unless and until that person shall have returned to the active file.

Section 8 – Award policies shall be made and reviewed by the Christian Education Committee.

Section 9 – To be eligible for the position of teacher or substitute teacher, a person shall have attained the age of eighteen (18) years or have completed high school, and shall be a member of the congregation. Teachers who do not have these qualifications may be appointed at the discretion of the Christian Education Committee only for the purpose of assisting the regular teachers.

ARTICLE XIII – LAY ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1 – The lay organizations recognized as being affiliated with St. Martin UCC are the Women’s Fellowship, the Mary Martha Circle, the Youth Fellowship, Men’s Fellowship, Promise Keepers, and Pairs ‘N Spares.

Section 2 – These organizations shall be responsible to provide members of the church and guests with greater opportunities for education, witness, service and fellowship, and to support and assist the church in its mission to the world.

Section 3 – The lay organizations may organize and govern themselves consistent with Christian principles and with the advice and consent of the Church Council.

ARTICLE XIV – CHURCH FUNDS

Section 1 - Funds to underwrite the expenses and the benevolence of the congregation shall be raised by the direct contributions of the members through the weekly envelope system, loose cash offerings, special envelope offerings, gifts, endowments, donations, and revenues from fund raising activities.

Section 2 – An annual budget of anticipated current and benevolent expenditures together with an estimate of income shall be set forth in the annual reports and presented at the annual meeting of the congregation for approval.

Section 3 – An audit shall be conducted annually to examine the books and records of the financial secretary and the treasurer. When necessary, special audits may be requested by the Church Council.

Section 4 – The Church Council shall have the power to approve or disapprove memorials and gifts to the church.

ARTICLE XV – ENDOWMENT FUND

Section 1 – An Endowment Fund, whose purpose, governance, and operational procedures shall be defined by special resolution adopted by the congregation has been established.

Section 2 – Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all the gifts God has given to humankind—time, talents, the created world and money, including accumulated inherited and appreciated resources.

Section 3 – Christians can give to the work of the church through bequests in wills, charitable remainder and other trusts, assignment of life insurance, transfers of property (cash, stocks, bonds, real estate) and similar means. It is the desire of the congregation to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion to their Lord expressed by the grantors and in accord with the policies of this congregation.

Section 4 – The congregation, at the annual meeting held on January 17, 1999, approved and established a separate fund to be known as the St. Martin United Church of Christ Endowment Fund.

Section 5 – The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to enhance the mission outreach of the church and provide for capital improvement to its facilities apart from the general operation of the congregation; that only in particular, temporary, difficult circumstances, and where integrity of gift restriction permit, may this congregation, by action in meeting assembled, use a portion of the Endowment Fund income for its own operating budget; that, except where authorized otherwise in the terms of the gift, all principal amount will be retained and only the income expended.

Section 6 – The Endowment Fund Committee shall be the custodian of the Endowment Fund.

Section 7 – The committee shall consist of five (5) members, all of whom shall be active voting members of St. Martin UCC for at least one (1) year. The congregation shall elect three (3) members of the Committee; one (1) each year for a term of three (3) years. No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. After a lapse of one (1) year, former Committee members may be re-elected. The pastor and the president of the Church Council shall be advisory members of the Committee. The Personnel Committee shall nominate the member and report at the annual congregational meeting in the same manner as for other offices and committees. In the event of a vacancy on the Endowment Fund Committee, the Church Council shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting of the congregation.

Section 8 – The Committee shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently as deemed by it, in the best interest of the Endowment Fund. A quorum shall consist of three (3) members. A majority present and voting shall carry any motion or resolution. The Committee shall elect from its membership a chairperson, financial secretary, and recording secretary. The chairperson, or member designated by the chairperson, shall preside at all Committee meetings. The recording secretary shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all meetings and supply a copy to each member of the Committee and to the Church Council. The financial secretary shall assist the congregation's treasurer in maintaining complete and accurate books of accounts for the Endowment Fund and shall sign checks and all other necessary documents on behalf of the congregation. The books shall be audited annually by an appropriate person who is not a member of the Committee. The Endowment Committee shall report on a quarterly basis to the Church Council and at each annual meeting of the congregation.

Section 9 – The Endowment Committee may request other members of the Congregation to serve as advisory members and, at the expense of the Endowment Fund income, may provide for such professional counseling on investments or legal matters as it deems to be in the best interest of the Endowment Fund.

Section 10 – Members of the Endowment Committee shall not be liable for any losses which may be incurred upon the investments of the assets of the Endowment Fund except to the extent such losses shall have been caused by bad faith or gross negligence. No member shall be personally liable as long as he/she acts in good faith and with ordinary prudence. Each member shall be liable only for his/her own willful misconduct of omissions and shall not be liable for the acts of omissions of any other member. No member shall engage in any self dealing or transactions with the Endowment Fund in which the member has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with his interest in the Endowment Fund.

Section 11 – All assets of the Fund are to be held in the name of the St. Martin United Church of Christ Endowment Fund.

Section 12 – The Committee shall have the power and authority to manage and control the Fund and to insure proper administration and protection of the Fund, including those powers necessary to invest and re-invest the funds, in whole or in part, in the interest of maximizing a return on the principal funds, while at the same time, exercising prudence in relation to soundness of the investment. The Committee may, with approval of the congregation upon recommendation of the Church Council, assign the management of the Fund to a financial institution or a professionally managed trust fund.

Section 13 – The Committee shall determine what is principal and income according to accepted accounting procedures. Gifts and bequests to the Fund shall accumulate until principal amount of \$10,000 is achieved, after which the income generated from the investment of the principal may be expended. Income from the fund may be distributed annually and such other times as deemed necessary and/or feasible to accomplish the following purposes:

One-half (1/2) for capital improvements, debt reduction, or building program of St. Martin UCC.

One-fourth (1/4) for outreach into the community including but not limited to, social service agencies, institutions and agencies to which this congregation relates, and to special programs designed for those persons in our parish area who are in spiritual and/or economic need.

One-fourth (1/4) for a Christian mission in the USA or overseas acceptable to the Church Council. The Church Council shall determine specific projects which shall receive funds.

Section 14 – Any amendment to this resolution, which will change, alter, or amend the purpose for which the Fund is established shall be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at an annual meeting called specifically for the purpose of amending this resolution. In the event that St. Martin UCC ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, title to assets will be disposed of in accord with the By-laws at that time. In the event St. Martin UCC is merged into or with another body, the assets of the Fund shall be transferred to such successor organization.

ARTICLE XVI – CEMETERY CORPORATION

Section 1 – The Board of Directors of the St. Martin Cemetery Corporation, a Not-For-Profit corporation, shall consist of three (3) members, one (1) to be elected each year for a term of three (3) years by a majority vote cast by those present and voting at the annual congregational meeting.

Section 2 – To be eligible for membership on the Board of Directors, a person shall be at least *eighteen (18)* years of age and shall have been a member of this congregation for at least five (5) years.

Section 3 – The Board of Directors shall have such powers and duties as are set forth in the laws of the State of Missouri relating to Not-For-Profit Corporations.

Section 4 – *The pastor and Council president shall meet with the Board of Directors not less than twice a year. The meeting will be called by the Council President.*

ARTICLE XVII – PROPERTY

Section 1 – The congregation may, in its corporate name, sue, and be sued, hold, purchase, and receive title by gift, grant or other conveyance of and to any property, real or personal, with power to mortgage, sell or convey the same, providing the State Laws permit.

The autonomy of this local church is inherent and modifiable only by its own action. Nothing in the By-laws and the Constitution of the United Church of Christ shall destroy or limit the right of St. Martin UCC, High Ridge to continue to operate in the way customary to it; nor shall be construed as giving the General Synod, or to any Conference or Association now, or at any time in the future, the power to abridge or impair the autonomy of any local church in the management of its own affairs, which affairs include, but are not limited to, the right to attain or adopt its own methods of organization, worship, and education; to retain or secure its own charter and name; to adopt its own constitution and by-laws; to formulate its own covenants and confessions of faith; to admit members in its own way and to provide for the discipline or dismissal; to call or dismiss its pastor or pastors by such procedure as it shall determine; to acquire, own, manage and dispose of property and funds; to control its own benevolence; and to withdraw by its own decision from the United Church of Christ at any time without forfeiture of ownership or control of any real or personal property owned by it.

In the event that Article IV, paragraph 21 of the Constitution of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ (as recorded in the minutes of General Synod 1), is ever deleted or modified or amended so as to limit or restrict the complete autonomy of this church in any way, such an act shall, forthwith, at the option of St. Martin UCC, High Ridge membership, terminate the membership of this Church with the St. Louis Association of the Missouri Mid-South Conference, and the Missouri Mid-South Conference of the United Church of Christ, and with the General Synod, United Church of Christ.

Further, in the event that the General Synod of the United Church of Christ or the Missouri Mid-South Conference of the United Church of Christ or the St. Louis Association of the Missouri Mid-South Conference of the United Church of Christ merges with another religious body or church group, and such merger changes the autonomy of this church as defined in Article IV, paragraph 21 of the Constitution of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ (as recorded in the minutes of General Synod 1), such merger may, at the option of St. Martin UCC's, High Ridge membership, terminate this church's affiliation with the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, and with the St. Louis Association of the Missouri Mid-South Conference, and/or with the newly united or merged church which succeeds the former United Church of Christ.

Section 2 – Upon the dissolution of the St. Martin United Church of Christ, High Ridge, Missouri, its assets and all property and interests of which it shall then be possessed, including and devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after such dissolution, shall be left to the discretion of the congregation *by a 2/3 majority vote*.

Section 3 – The use of the church property and the equipment of the church shall be subject to the decision of the Church Council

Section 4 – Fees for the use of all buildings, facilities, and premises may be established by the Church Council, unless such fees would make the congregation liable for taxes on the church property.

ARTICLE XVIII- CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1 – The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held sometime during the first three weeks of January. In the event of inclement weather, the meeting may be postponed to a later date. Public notice of such annual meeting will be made from the pulpit, or by bulletins, or a letter, two weeks prior to the meeting. At this meeting, the Council, the officers of the church, the pastor, and all church organizations shall submit their annual reports in writing.

Section 2 – Special congregational meetings may be called by the Council, the pastor, or by a petition to the Council signed by not less than ten percent (10%) of the membership. The Council shall call such meetings to be held within one (1) month from the receipt of such petition, or from such call by the Council or pastor. Notice of such meetings shall be sent by to the membership by the secretary not less than two (2) weeks prior to the meeting. Notice of such meetings shall also be announced on the two (2) Sundays immediately preceding such meetings. Only the business which has been mentioned in the call for such special meeting may be transacted.

ARTICLE XIX- RULES OF ORDER

Roberts Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by these By-laws.

ARTICLE XX – AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these By-laws may be made at any duly called congregational meeting by two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting. Notice of the proposed amendments and the text thereof shall be sent to the membership by the secretary not less than two (2) weeks prior to the meeting. Notice of such proposed amendments shall also be announced on the two (2) Sundays immediately preceding such meeting.