

**THE BYLAWS**  
**OF**  
**ARLINGTON UNITED CHURCH**

**A Local Congregation of the United Methodist Church**  
**A Local Church of the Evangelical Covenant Church**

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Arlington United Church was formed by the merger of the  
Arlington United Methodist Church and the First United Congregational Church  
of Arlington in the year of 1974.

**THE BYLAWS**

We, the members of the Arlington United Church, in order to promote the work of  
Christ and advance His Kingdom, do hereby adopt these Bylaws.

**ARTICLE ONE**  
**NAME AND PURPOSE**

The name of this organization shall be the **ARLINGTON UNITED CHURCH**, located in the City of Arlington in the State of Washington.

The purpose of Arlington United Church is to promote the work of Jesus Christ and advance His kingdom; to equip its members to help serve the spiritual, social, and practical needs of one another and of the community; to provide support and fellowship for all who seek to worship God and follow His will in their lives; and to reach outward to bring others into the Christian family by being faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ in word and deed.

## **ARTICLE TWO COVENANT**

We believe in God the Father, our Creator; in Jesus Christ, His Son, our risen Lord and Savior; and in the Holy Spirit, alive and at work in the world today. We seek to know the Will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures and revealed to us in prayer.

We believe in the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct. The Word of God is "spirit and life" and therefore requires of us a spiritual and living response. This response involves a commitment to the person of Jesus Christ and a dedication to follow him as Lord. Our church recognizes but transcends theological differences through sharing a common life in Christ. We hold to and observe the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe in the Gospel for the whole person and the whole world. The importance of our working and growing together toward that wholeness in Christ takes expression in our worship, stewardship, fellowship, evangelism, Christian education, and ministry to others.

We welcome into membership all who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

## **ARTICLE THREE STATEMENT OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES' CREED**

We believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

## **ARTICLE FOUR SACRAMENTS**

Two recognized sacraments are observed: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The administration of the sacraments may be according to the traditional practices of the Evangelical Covenant Church or of the United Methodist Church. Baptism administered by any Christian Church is recognized as valid. The Lord's Supper is publicly celebrated at least four times during each calendar year. We participate in an open Communion with all followers of Christ.

## **ARTICLE FIVE MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Arlington United Church is a fellowship of believers and a part of Christ's Church universal. All persons, without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, or economic condition, shall be eligible to attend its worship services, to participate in its programs, and, when they take the appropriate vows, to be admitted into membership.

Membership in this church is encouraged and shall be open to any person who has been baptized and who makes a public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; or transfers membership from a recognized Christian Church and publicly reaffirms faith in Jesus Christ.

Members shall pledge themselves to attend the regular worship of the church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper; to live the Christian life each day; to share in the life and work of the church; to contribute to its support and benevolences; and to persistently seek the spiritual welfare of the membership and the community.

Membership is on one roll and those admitted are recognized as full members of both denominations. For purposes of denominational statistical reporting of membership, one-half of the number of members are reported as members of the Evangelical Covenant Church and one-half as members of the United Methodist Church.

Section 2. Membership in Arlington United Church may be terminated by transfer, withdrawal, death, or by action of the Council as outlined below. If a member continually neglects membership vows despite care and counsel by the Pastor and any persons appointed by the Council for this task, the pastor and the appointed persons shall then report that member's name to the Council. The Council shall notify the member of this action and offer a hearing before the Council. If after faithful efforts have been made to bring this member into accordance with the spirit of Christ and the behavior continues, the Council may censure the person or terminate the membership.

A member not participating in the worship, activities, or financial support of the church shall receive encouragement to resume participation or to transfer to another church. If after three years the nonparticipating member has not complied, the member's name may be removed from the roll through Council action.

When a member of Arlington United Church desires to transfer to another church, the Pastor may send a letter of reference or transfer to the church with which the member would unite.

This section is guided by additional procedures specified in the current United Methodist Church Book of Discipline.

## **ARTICLE SIX DENOMINATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Arlington United Church is a member of the North Pacific Conference of the Evangelical Covenant Church and the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Methodist Church. It has the encouragement and moral support of these two denominations.

Arlington United Church, in consultation with the denominational leadership, is equally responsible to the Evangelical Covenant Church and the United Methodist Church regarding the support of denominational programs, agencies, financial and administrative obligations. Arlington United Church solicits and expects from the conference personnel such assistance as is necessary.

## **ARTICLE SEVEN THE PASTORATE**

Section 1. The Pastor shall be in good standing in one of the two denominations. The Pastor should be chosen from each denomination alternately according to that denomination's methods. The congregation must approve any variance from the procedures in this section.

Section 2. The Pastor shall preach and teach the Word of God, minister to the people of Arlington United Church, and encourage active participation by members and friends. The Pastor shall educate the members as to the ways and methods of each of the two denominations.

It is the responsibility of the Pastor to keep current a printed roll of members and to report any changes to the Council.

The Pastor shall maintain routine correspondence with and complete any required reports for both denominations and shall advise the Council on denominational matters.

The Pastor shall monitor the functioning of church programs, inform the Moderator of matters important to the church, advise the Council on areas of need, and help facilitate the overall operation of the church. The Pastor may attend committee meetings acting in an advisory capacity.

Section 3. The request for termination of a Pastor's services may be initiated by the Pastor, the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, or the majority vote at a Congregational Meeting. In the case of a United Methodist Pastor a change in appointment may also be initiated by a district superintendent or a bishop.

Unless the Pastor has made the request, termination of services of an Evangelical Covenant Church Minister requires the majority vote of a Congregational Meeting, and at least two months notice must be given to the Pastor. The advance notice requirement does not apply to circumstances of clergy misconduct, whereby discipline or termination would be guided by the rules of the applicable denomination.

In the event of an anticipated move of a United Methodist Pastor, it is understood that moves are usually made at the time of the United Methodist

Annual Conference. Arlington United Church expects two months notice from the United Methodist Church before removing a Methodist Pastor.

With all changes of pastoral service, there shall be close cooperation between the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, the Moderator, the appropriate denominational executives, and the Pastors.

## **ARTICLE EIGHT GOVERNING BODY**

Section 1. The governing body of Arlington United Church is the membership present at a Congregational Meeting. In the spirit of Jesus Christ the membership shall consider all matters of importance to the church. The vote of a majority of the members of Arlington United Church present at the Congregational Meeting is the action of the church.

Through the Congregational Meeting, members exercise the right of control in all local church affairs, subject to the laws of the State of Washington and the United States. The church recognizes and sustains mutual counsel and cooperation with the Evangelical Covenant Church and the United Methodist Church.

The Congregational Meeting shall consist of a moderator, recording secretary, and the assembled members of the local congregation. A quorum shall consist of 15% of the members, but no fewer than 30 members.

There shall be one Annual Congregational Meeting held on the first Sunday in May unless otherwise ordered by the Council. At this meeting, annual reports are presented and any business properly coming before the entire congregation is transacted. Church officers and committee members are to be elected, the annual budget adopted, and the Pastor's compensation approved at this meeting.

Additional Congregational Meetings may be called at any time by action of the Council, the Moderator, the Pastor, or upon written request of 20 or more members of the church. Either of the two denominations may request a Congregational Meeting according to their normal method of operation.

Notice of holding each Congregational Meeting shall be given to the membership at the regular Sunday worship services for two successive Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting, and by mail postmarked at least 12 days prior to the meeting. Notices must include the significant matters to be considered.

The United Methodist Church district superintendent and Evangelical Covenant Church representative shall be notified of and invited to all Congregational Meetings.

Copies of the reports and minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting shall be made, one to be kept by the church and one forwarded to each denominational conference office.

At the request of two members, paper ballots shall be the method of casting a vote.

Section 2. The Council shall be the administrative body of the church. It shall be composed of the Executive Committee, one representative from each of the designated committees, and the Pastor or Pastors. At least three-fourths of the Council must be members of Arlington United Church. With the spirit of Jesus Christ the Council shall consider all matters of church operation brought before it.

The Council shall be the policy-making body and shall transact the business of the church between Congregational Meetings. It shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, be the custodian of church records, and report to the church at the Congregational Meetings. A quorum for any regularly scheduled or properly notified meeting of the Council shall be those present.

The Council shall refer matters of major significance to the Congregational Meeting for discussion and approval.

All meetings of the Council are open for attendance by members of the committees, the congregation, and invited guests. Only Council members may cast votes.

Special meetings can be called by the Moderator, by the Executive Committee, Pastor, or upon request of seven members of the church. Except in cases of emergency, at least three days notice shall be given.

The Council may fill any interim vacancy for officers, committees, and delegates until the next Annual Congregational Meeting. The Council may appoint standing committees, task forces, and temporary committees as it deems necessary to conduct the program and business of the local church. Terms of task forces and temporary committees should be limited to less than one year, but may be renewed by the Council. The Council shall maintain a working book describing any additional committees and the term. The working book shall also describe, in detail, the responsibilities of officers and committees as needed and the number of members on each committee. Committees with membership on the Council shall be designated by action at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Section 3. The Executive Committee has the authority to meet and make decisions on urgent matters that must be handled before the next Council meeting. The Executive Committee is composed of the officers of the church who shall be active members of the church at the time of election. Each officer, except for the Staff-Parish Relations Chair and the Trustee Chair, shall be elected for a term of one year at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

All notes, mortgages, deeds, and other contractual documents, after proper approval by the Council, shall be signed in the name of Arlington United Church by two officers. The officers are:

(a) **Moderator.** It is the duty of the Moderator to preside over all Congregational Meetings and Council meetings. The Moderator is an ex-officio member of all committees and is President of the Arlington United Church.

(b) **Vice Moderator.** The Vice Moderator serves to assist the Moderator. In the Moderator's absence he or she performs the duties of the Moderator.

(c) **Secretary.** The Secretary is responsible for recording the minutes of the Congregational Meetings and Council meetings. The Secretary conducts correspondence as needed and directed by the Council.

(d) **Financial Director.** The Financial Director oversees the bookkeeper and the financial operations of the church. He or she reports to the Council at each regular meeting.

(e) **Treasurer.** The Treasurer is responsible for the receipt, recording, and deposit of all funds. He or she must furnish quarterly and annual statements to persons donating to the church.

(f) **Trustee.** The Chairperson of the Trustees advises the Executive Committee on matters relating to the church properties and other responsibilities of the Trustees.

(g) **Staff-Parish Relations.** The Chairperson of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee advises the Executive Committee on matters of personnel and their relationships to the congregation.

Section 4. Denominational delegates, elected by the congregation, shall be knowledgeable of the current affairs of Arlington United Church and their respective denominations. They may attend any meetings or receive committee reports to increase their knowledge. Delegates shall consult with committees on denominational issues. They shall represent Arlington United Church at the annual conferences held by the two denominations and report to the congregation.

## **ARTICLE NINE THE COMMITTEES**

Section 1. Committees with the spirit of Jesus Christ, carry out the program of the church, subject to the authority of the Council and the Congregational Meeting. At least two-thirds of each committee must be members of Arlington United Church and except as noted are elected to serve a term of one year. To better focus and direct the function of this church, the committees are categorized into two broad areas. It is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that these areas are being properly represented throughout the year:

(a) **Ministries and Missions.** These committees take responsibility for the work of the church to minister and care for its own members, as well as those outside the church, to see that the needs of worship and praise are fulfilled, to ensure that Christian education classes are available to all members and children, and to see that the church's congregational family has ample opportunity for fellowship and spiritual uplifting. They oversee Christian outreach, evangelism, and mission activities of the church, both global and local, and help raise the consciousness of the congregation towards issues of social concern. Membership Rolls are reviewed with the Pastor on an annual basis.

The exact number of Ministries and Missions committees and their specific duties shall be determined by the Council, and are subject to change as the needs of the church change.

(b) **Administration.** These committees take charge of the areas of general finance, stewardship, property management, and personnel. These committees shall work together to see that all areas of administration are being addressed.

(1) Trustees: The Trustees shall care for all church property. Trustees serve a two year term with half elected each year so as to rotate the membership.

(2) Stewardship and Finance: The Financial Director and Treasurer are ex-officio members of this committee in addition to the members who are elected annually. They promote the stewardship of church members to provide the resources necessary to support the program of the church. This committee encourages giving of one's self as well as financial giving. In addition, the committee reviews the financial position of the church and generates and proposes a budget to be adopted by the Annual Congregational Meeting.

(3) Staff-Parish Relations: The committee is composed of at least six members, one-third of whom shall be elected annually to serve a term of three years. The members counsel with the Pastor and staff regarding effective ministry, relationships with the congregation, and priorities for use of time. Conflicts which are unresolved after 3 months of effort must be taken to the Congregation for consideration. The members also interpret to the congregation the nature and function of the Pastoral office. The committee shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of the Pastor and staff. It shall consider matters such as salary, vacation, and insurance and make appropriate recommendations for approval by the Council.

Section 2. The Nominating Committee is composed of six members. Each year two members are nominated from the floor and elected by the Annual Congregational Meeting for a three year term. The Council shall fill any interim vacancy until the next Annual Congregational Meeting.

Nominations shall be made for the officers, committee members, committee chairs, and denominational delegates by the Nominating Committee. Additional nominations may be made by members of Arlington United Church at the Annual Meeting from the general membership. Committees with members that serve more than a one year term may choose to elect their own chair prior to the Annual Meeting.

## **ARTICLE TEN PROPERTIES**

Section 1. Titles to all properties shall be held by the local church. Any reverter or trust clauses in favor of either parent denomination shall remain in effect.

Section 2. In the event of the dissolution of Arlington United Church as a corporation, whereby it ceases to exist as a worshipping community, and upon agreement of the two conferences, all assets will be equally divided between the two conferences in keeping with the policy of each denomination.

**ARTICLE ELEVEN  
FINANCIAL PROCEDURES**

Section 1. There shall be one unified general budget underwritten by Arlington United Church.

Section 2. The church will divide funds for denominational support equitably between the two denominations. The Stewardship and Finance Committee will review the recommended benevolence goals from both denominations for Arlington United Church and make a recommendation to the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Section 3. If subsidies are needed for local expenses, it is suggested that they be worked out cooperatively with the conference offices of both denominations. Contributions from either of the cooperating denominations, although used for local expenses, shall not be included in determining the benevolence funds given to the denominations.

**ARTICLE TWELVE  
PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern business meetings in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order the Congregational Meeting may adopt.

**ARTICLE THIRTEEN  
AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

Section 1. A request for a proposed amendment must be signed by at least one-tenth of the membership of the local church. It shall then be distributed by mail to the membership and to the denominational conference offices postmarked at least 30 days in advance of the date of the Congregational Meeting.

Amendments must be approved by the District Superintendent of the United Methodist Church and a written notice of such approval must be in the hands of the Moderator prior to ratification. Because of the difference in polity, a copy of proposed changes shall be submitted to the Evangelical Covenant Church Conference for review and comments. Proposed amendments may not conflict with the ECC Constitution.

Amendments must be ratified by a two-thirds vote of members present and voting at the Congregational Meeting.

Section 2. Amendments to these Bylaws may not replace any part of the Restated Articles of Incorporation of Arlington United Church. Portions of Articles One, Five, Six, Eight, and Ten of the Bylaws are subject to the Restated Articles of Incorporation.

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**BYLAWS REVISION HISTORY:**

Adopted: April 28, 1974

Amended: 1981

Amended: June 5, 1988

Amended: November 6, 1988

Amended: February 1, 2004

(Changes regarding ECC affiliation become effective upon AUC acceptance into the ECC. First May Annual Meeting is in 2005)

Amended: May 1, 2005