

Church Council - Guidelines

from *The Constitution of the United Church of Christ, New Brighton, Minnesota* ARTICLE VII.
COUNCIL

1. Composition of the Council.

The Council shall be composed of members in the following categories:

- A. Officers elected by the governing body for one year: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary.

They may succeed themselves as officers, but they ordinarily do not serve on another elected board or standing committee.

- B. The Lead Minister and Associate Minister, and the immediate Past Chairperson who acts as advisor to the current Chairperson.

- C. One representative from each elected board and committee.

The representative should be the chairperson; and they may succeed themselves. When the duly selected representative to the Council is unable to attend a Council meeting, he or she shall send an active member as an alternate representative, with full voting power, from the board or committee to the Council meeting. (See Article V.5.)

- D. One-half of the membership of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

- E. Visitors to the Council. Any member, staff member, or employee of the congregation is encouraged and entitled to attend any Council meeting with the right to speak, but without vote. Other interested parties may be invited to attend at the discretion of the Council, and they will have the right to speak but not to vote.

2. Duties and Authority of the Council

- A. The Council shall be the executive, policy-making body of the congregation and shall transact the business of the church.

- B. The Council shall coordinate the activities and programs of the church and of its boards, committees, and groups. The Council shall ensure that the guidelines in the Resource Notebook are reviewed at least annually. The Council has the responsibility to propose and approve any necessary or desired changes in those guidelines.

- C. The Council shall be the legal representative of the church.

- D. The Council shall have the fiduciary responsibility and shall recommend a financial budget to the governing body each year.

- E. The Council may authorize any non-budgeted expense if funds are available. The Council may borrow up to and including \$10,000. Borrowing over \$10,000 must receive the approval of the governing body.

Article VII. Council. 2. Duties and Authority of the Council, continued

- F. The Council shall fill vacancies in the unexpired terms of officers, board members, and standing committee members elected by the congregation.
- G. Normally the Council shall meet monthly, and in no case shall it go more than two months without a meeting. The newly elected Council shall meet prior to May 30.
- H. The Council may appoint special committees, and may delegate specific tasks to the boards and committees of the congregation.
- I. The Council shall appoint, in April of each year, the:
 - Members of the Ministerial Relations Committee
 - Members of the Personnel Committee
 - At-large member of the Finance Committee
 - Members of the Planned Giving Committee
 - Church historian
- J. All acts and deliberations of the Council are subject to revision by the governing body.
- K. The Council shall appoint official delegates to represent the church at meetings of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ, the Eastern Association of the UCC, the St. Paul Area Council of Churches, and any other representational bodies as approved by the Council. The delegates selected shall report back to the Council.
- L. The Council shall make preparations for the two regular Congregational Meetings in January and May and for any other properly called Congregational Meetings. (See Article XIII.) Preparations should include a proposed agenda and any materials needed to support the matters to be considered at the meeting. The Council may also arrange for other support for the meetings such as a meal, child care, etc.
- M. The Council shall annually consider the church in terms of its Purposes (Article II) and may adopt one or more objectives by which the Council and the church can serve those purposes more fully and effectively.
- N. The Council shall ensure that the Constitution is reviewed at least every two years.

Article VII. Council, continued

3. Duties of Elected Officers.

A. Chairperson: The Chairperson shall:

- Preside at all meetings of the Council and at all Congregational Meetings.
- Have the usual powers pertaining to the presiding officer.
- Call special meetings of the Council when necessary.
- Execute and sign approved documents on behalf of the Council except as otherwise provided in the Constitution or by state or federal law.
- Appoint such committees as the Council may authorize him or her to create.
- Serve on the Finance Committee.

B. Vice Chairperson: The Vice Chairperson shall:

- Act in the position of the Chairperson in the absence of that officer or in case of the incapacity of the Chairperson to carry out the duties of his or her office, or upon the Chairperson's resignation or death.
- Be appointed to chair any such committees the Council may deem it advisable for him or her to head.
- Serve on the Personnel Committee.

C. Secretary: The Secretary shall:

- Act as clerk of the Council in all its deliberations and actions.
- Keep the minutes of all meetings of the Council and also of Congregational Meetings.
- Submit the minutes of each meeting for Council approval at the subsequent meeting, which approval shall be recorded and shall make the approved minutes official and legal.
- Have authorization to sign checks in the absence of the Treasurer.

D. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall:

- Report to the Council.
- Be responsible for all monies of the church deposited by the Financial Secretary.
- Disburse the money on budget authority when the annual budget has been officially adopted by the governing body.
- Disburse any other monies specifically authorized by the Council.
- Make regular reports to the Council and make records available for audits as requested.
- Serve on the Finance Committee.

Article VII. Council. 3. Duties of Elected Officers, continued

E. Financial Secretary: The Financial Secretary shall:

- Report to Council.
- Collect and record all receipts and make timely deposits.
- Record and separate into accounts the monies designated for specific items, such as special offerings for Deacons funds, Church School, etc. and include these separate accounts in the Financial Secretary's report.
- Report to Council, as necessary, the status of pledges, and budgeted and non-budgeted incomes.
- Serve on the Finance Committee.