

**Certificate of Formation
of
Trinity Church of Austin
(A Congregation of the United Methodist Church
and the United Church of Christ)**

ARTICLE I CERTIFICATE OF FORMATION and CONSTITUTION

This Certificate of Formation of Trinity Church of Austin shall also be known as the Constitution of Trinity Church of Austin.

ARTICLE II NAME, TYPE & DURATION

- a. The name of this nonprofit religious corporation is “Trinity Church of Austin,” a Union congregation of the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ denominations, located in Austin, Texas. This congregation was originally formed as the “Ridgetop Methodist Church” in 1946 and was known from 1947 to 1968 as “Trinity Methodist Church” and from 1968 to the present as “Trinity United Methodist Church.” The congregation formed as a Texas nonprofit corporation on March 11, 1997 through the Articles of Incorporation of “Trinity United Methodist Church,” filed with the Texas Secretary of State on April 29, 1997. On July 12, 2015, the congregation of this church voted to enter into a covenant relationship with the United Church of Christ and pursue a path toward becoming a Union Church congregation affiliated with both the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ.
- b. The filing entity is a nonprofit corporation.
- c. The period of duration is perpetual.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

This religious nonprofit corporation is formed for the lawful purpose of being a religious organization under Chapter 2 of the Texas Business Organizations Code. The avowed purpose of this congregation is to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ; to celebrate the sacraments of baptism and communion; to provide a local expression of the ecumenical church; to be in relationship with other vibrant religious and non-religious groups outside our respective denominations and outside of Christianity; to render loving service toward all humanity and the earth itself; to uphold the principles of Creation-Centered Spirituality; to advocate for the full inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer persons in church and society by supporting the Reconciling Ministries Network within the United Methodist Church and the Open and Affirming movement within the United Church of Christ; to work for liberation, justice, and peace in all we do; and to remain prayerfully vigilant to the mission of realizing God’s domain on earth as it is in heaven. All of the activities are to be carried out solely for purposes that are within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code and not for profit.

ARTICLE III POLITY

- a. Trinity Church of Austin is a part of the United Methodist Church, and it shall sustain that relationship to the United Methodist Church described in those portions of the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church relating to local churches.
- b. Trinity Church of Austin is 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 as subsequently amended, relating to local churches.
- c. The management of Trinity Church of Austin is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject, however, to the laws of the State of Texas relating to churches and in accordance with the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church and the *Constitution and Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ.
- d. The congregation of Trinity Church of Austin shall elect from the congregation all appropriate delegates to the respective United Methodist Church and United Church of Christ annual conferences. These delegates and alternates shall receive the minutes of the Leadership Council meetings to represent this church at these annual conferences.

e. Trinity Church of Austin will strive to honor the apportioned connectional funds of the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, the membership assessment of the Heart of Texas Association, the support of the general United Church of Christ, and the Challenge Goal of the United Church of Christ. The annual budget of Trinity Church of Austin will be divided in half, and each judicatory—the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church and the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ—will receive a report that equals one half of the Church’s total operating budget.

f. In all of its actions, the Leadership Council of Trinity Church of Austin is subject to examination by and is accountable to the respective judicatories of each denomination.

g. Trinity Church of Austin is accountable to the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church and the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE IV ACTIONS & PROPERTY

a. Trinity Church of Austin may in its corporate name:

- (1) sue or be sued,
- (2) acquire by purchase, gift, devise, bequest, or otherwise and own, hold, invest, reinvest, or dispose of property both real and personal for such work as the church may undertake,
- (3) may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage, or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer, and convey such property for the general purpose of the church,
- (4) may receive and hold in trust both real and personal property and invest and reinvest the same and make any contracts for promoting the objectives and purposes of the church, subject to the provisions of the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church.

b. Presently, all of Trinity Church of Austin’s real and personal property is owned solely by the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church and is held in trust in accordance with the provisions of, and for the purposes set forth in, the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church.

c. Upon the dissolution of Trinity Church of Austin, all real and personal property purchased in the years the Church was Ridgetop Methodist, Trinity Methodist Church, Trinity United Methodist Church, and Trinity Church of Austin shall be transferred to the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, unless mutual arrangements are made between the Río Texas Conference and Trinity Church of Austin.

ARTICLE V SACRAMENTS

Trinity Church of Austin shall recognize Baptism and Holy Communion as its only sacraments.

ARTICLE VI BYLAWS

a. The congregation of this Church will have *Bylaws* that will address all matters not specifically set forth in this *Constitution*. These *Bylaws* shall not conflict with this *Constitution* and shall be in accordance with the requirements of the United Church of Christ’s *Constitution* and *Bylaws* and the United Methodist Church’s *Book of Discipline*.

b. In case of conflict between the denominations, the Leadership Council, in dialogue with representatives of the judicatory leaders of each denomination, will seek to resolve the conflict as it relates to the life of the congregation.

ARTICLE VII AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

a. Amendments to this *Constitution* may be initiated by a petition signed by at least ten percent of the Church members or by a two-thirds vote of the Leadership Council.

b. A distribution of the proposed changes to this *Constitution* shall be made to each church member not less than ten days prior to the duly called meeting of the congregation.

c. This *Constitution* may be amended by two-thirds vote of the members present at two consecutively and duly called congregational meetings and shall become effective with the approval of the

District Superintendent of the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church and the Heart of Texas Association Minister of the United Church of Christ.

d. Any amendment made that is in conflict with the provisions of the *Book of the Discipline* of the United Methodist Church or the *Constitution and Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ in effect at the time the proposed amendment is voted on will be void *ab initio*.

The above and foregoing *Constitution* was duly adopted at a congregational meeting/Church Conference held on July 12, 2015, but is effective only upon its approval by the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ and its filing with the Texas Secretary of State.

Attest:

Secretary

**Bylaws
of
Trinity Church of Austin
(A Congregation of the United Methodist Church
and the United Church of Christ)**

ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP

- a. The congregation consists of all members and associate members of Trinity Church of Austin. The congregation has the right and duty of oversight over the programs and activities of the Church.
- b. All members of Trinity Church of Austin shall be members of Trinity Church of Austin, but may self-identify as a member of the United Methodist Church or the United Church of Christ. Membership vows shall meet the standards and prescriptions of both denominations.
- c. A person who is a member of another congregation or other religious affiliation and who desires to maintain that relationship while also participating in the congregation of this Church may become an “Associate Member” of this Church. Associate members’ rights shall coincide with those designated in the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church.
- d. The Leadership Council is charged with keeping membership rolls of the Church. The Church’s annual meeting/Church Conference may make recommendations to the Leadership Council regarding the membership rolls.
- e. The Church will maintain a single roll of membership and annually report the number of member on this roll to each constituent denomination.
- f. All members, in good standing and otherwise qualified, shall be eligible for membership and office in higher judicatories of the participating denominations.

ARTICLE II AFFIRMATIONS

- a. Trinity Church of Austin affirms that it will remain accountable to the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church.
- b. Trinity Church of Austin affirms that it will remain accountable to the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ, adopted July 4, 1961 and as subsequently amended, relating to local churches.

ARTICLE III GOVERNANCE

- a. The Church will hold an annual meeting in cooperation with the authorities of its two judicatories and will be co-chaired by the leader of the Church’s Leadership Council and one or both of the United Methodist District Superintendent or her/his designee from the Capital District of the Río Texas Conference and a representative of the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ.
 - (1) At this meeting, the congregation shall receive reports of the Pastor(s), Leadership Council, officers, or bodies, according to either judicatory; receive and consider the proposed budget; adopting a budget for the year, and receive nominations for officers of the various offices of the Church. The congregation will also conduct such other business as may properly come before it.
 - (2) Nominations for elective office may be presented from the Nominating Team or from the floor at the annual meeting, subject to the consent of the nominee. The Church Conference shall then vote on the nominations presented.
 - (3) All members of Trinity Church of Austin are entitled to vote at a congregational meeting/Church Conference.

- b. The vote of a simple majority of members present at any congregational meeting/Church Conference will be the action of the Church, except when a larger majority is required by other provisions of the Church's *Constitution* or these *Bylaws*.
- c. At any congregational meeting/Church Conference, a quorum will consist of the members present.
- d. Special meetings of the congregation may be called at the initiative of the Leadership Council, official denominational representatives of the United Church of Christ or the United Methodist Church, a pastor, or the Trustees Team. At any special meetings, the congregation may consider only those agenda items that were identified in the official call to that particular special meeting.
- e. All congregational meetings/Church Conferences must be announced publicly and in writing at least ten days prior to the meeting.
- f. With the exception of Staff-Parish Relations and Nominating Teams or meetings approved by a two-thirds vote of the Administrative Council (in the case of administrative meetings) or the Community Life Council (in the case of program meetings), all committee meetings are open to the whole church.

ARTICLE IV CHURCH MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

- a. Trustees Team
 - (1) The real and personal property of Trinity Church of Austin shall be managed by a body of persons of not more than nine persons and not less than five persons, called the Trustees Team. The members of the Trustees Team are to be elected at the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference. The Trustees Team is empowered to execute all matters of property for the Church, subject to the restrictions and trust clause imposed by the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church. The Trustees Team shall adhere to the provisions of the *Book of Discipline* concerning the use and transfer of the property owned and held in trust for the United Methodist Church, the Capital District, and the Río Texas Annual Conference. Trinity Church of Austin affirms that it will remain in compliance with the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church regarding all personal and real property, including, but not limited to, endowments and foundation funds.
 - (2) A quorum of the Trustees Team shall consist of five members or half of the existing membership, whichever is less.
- b. Leadership Council
 - (1) Trinity Church of Austin shall be governed in matters of policy and program by a representative body called the Leadership Council. The election of members to this Council will occur at the annual congregational meeting/Charge Conference. The Leadership Council shall have the same powers and responsibilities as an Administrative and Program Council of a United Methodist Church and will follow the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ.
 - (2) The Leadership Council will be co-led by the team leader of the Administrative Council and the team leader of the Community Life Council. These leaders shall be elected at each annual congregational meeting/Church Conference.
 - (3) The Leadership Council is to consist of between seven and twenty members, composed of members of the Administrative Council and the Community Life Council, the exact number to be determined by the Leadership Council itself upon the recommendation of the Nominating Team.
 - (4) The Leadership Council may be composed of leaders of church teams as well as members-at-large.
 - (5) The voting members of the Leadership Council will consist of the elected lay persons. While paid clergy and staff members of the congregation will not have a vote on this Council, all paid clergy and the Director of Community Life of the congregation will have a voice in the Leadership Council meetings.
 - (6) A quorum of the Leadership Council will consist of five people or half the elected members, whichever number is less.
 - (7) The Leadership Council has the power to create and to dissolve management teams of the Church by a majority vote of its members. The Leadership Council will establish teams as it deems necessary for the governance of the congregation and the Church.
 - (8) The Leadership Council shall receive reports from the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, Teams, and others. It shall serve as a coordinating body for programs and policies of the Church.

- (9) In consultation with the Finance Team, the Leadership Council shall review and approve an annual budget to present to the congregation for approval. Trinity Church of Austin will strive to honor the apportioned connectional funds of the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, the membership assessment of the Heart of Texas Association, support for the general church, and the Challenge Goal of the United Church of Christ. The Church's annual budget will be divided in half and each judicatory—the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church and Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ—will receive a report that equals one half of the Church's total budget.
- (10) The Leadership Council shall initiate, recommend, and implement policy and is accountable for all of its decisions to the congregation. The agenda of the Leadership Council shall be open to any issue any member may wish to put forward.
- (11) The Leadership Council shall initiate annual and occasional visioning and strategic planning sessions for the Leadership Council or the whole congregation.

c. Officers

- (1) All officers shall be members of Trinity Church of Austin.
- (2) Leadership Council Co-Leaders: Two persons shall serve as the co-leaders of the Leadership Council. The congregation will elect these two co-leaders annually at the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference. These Lay Leaders/Leadership Council Co-Leaders shall be sensitive to the needs of the congregation, especially those members who are sick, bereaved, distressed, and isolated. The Lay Leaders/Leadership Council Co-Leaders will be the sensitive sounding board for the congregation at large and for the Leadership Council. The Lay Leaders/Leadership Council Co-Leaders shall preside over Leadership Council meetings and shall assume the responsibilities as chief executive officers when so required by law. The Lay Leaders/Leadership Council Co-Leaders shall be the co-leaders, with the Pastor, of the Nominating Team as well as congregational meetings along with the Capital District Superintendent of the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church and a representative of the South Conference or Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ.
- (3) Finance Team Leader: The congregation will elect the Finance Team Leader annually at the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference. The Finance Team Leader shall preside over monthly Finance meetings, will oversee the financial health of the congregation and the Church, and will guide the Finance Team in developing an annual budget.
- (4) Secretary: The congregation will elect the Secretary annually at the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference. The Secretary shall take and report minutes of the annual congregational meeting/Charge Conference. The Secretary shall act as the Church's corporate secretary for all purposes required by law.
- (5) Recording Secretaries: At every Leadership Council Meeting, Administrative Council Meeting, Community Life Council Meeting, Trustees Team Meeting, Finance Team Meeting, and Staff-Parish Relations Team Meeting, the council or team shall designate a recording secretary for that meeting. That designated person will provide, by email, the minutes of that meeting to all council or team members and staff from that meeting within a week of the meeting.
- (6) Financial Secretary: The financial secretary shall be elected by the Nominating Team and shall:
 - (a) In consultation with the Pastor, Director of Community Life, Business Administrator, hired accountants, or other staff configurations, receive and record in a classified form all monies coming to the church and insure that deposits of such monies into one or more accounts established for such purpose(s) are made;
 - (b) Keep an accurate record for each individual non-anonymous contributor; and
 - (c) Serve on the Finance Team and report regularly to the Leadership Council.
- (7) Treasurer: The congregation will elect the Treasurer annually at the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference. The Treasurer shall serve as custodian of all of the Church's bank accounts. In consultation with the Pastor, Director of Community Life, Business Administrator, or other staff configurations, the Treasurer shall be responsible for overseeing the paying of all bills as directed by the Leadership Council and present a regular written report to the Finance Team and the Leadership Council. The Treasurer will serve on the Finance Team.
- (8) Additional Officers: The addition of any other permanent officers of the Church must be approved by a majority vote of a congregational meeting/Church Conference.

d. Emergency Executive Committee. In an emergency, an executive committee comprised of the Lay

Leaders/Leadership Council Co-Team Leaders, the Trustees Team Leader, the Staff-Parish Relations Team Leader, the Finance Team Leader, the Pastor(s), and the Director of Community Life may meet on behalf of the Leadership Council, the Administrative Council, or the Community Life Council. The results of any such emergency meeting shall be reported to the next regular meeting of the Leadership Council and shall be effective unless rejected by a majority of the Leadership Council at that meeting.

e. Remaining Teams.

- (1) All administrative teams shall report regularly to the Administrative Council and the congregation. All program teams shall report regularly to the Community Life Council and the congregation. If applicable, the teams shall present annually to the Finance Team a budget of their anticipated expenses for the coming year.
- (2) Nominating Team.
 - (a) A Nominating Team shall be elected at the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference.
 - (b) The highest-ranking pastor on staff shall co-lead the Nominating Team with the Lay Leaders/Leadership Team Co-Leaders. If the Church has a co-pastorate, both co-pastors will serve as co-team leaders. The Director of Community Life shall also serve on the Nominating Team.
 - (c) The Nominating Team will present to the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference a complete slate of officers for church leadership. If persons need to be elected for any church office between annual congregational meetings/Church Conferences, the Leadership Council, or when appropriate, the Administrative or Community Life Councils, will have the power to elect persons presented by the Nominating Team or nominate vacant positions themselves.
- (3) Staff-Parish Relations Team.
 - (a) The Staff-Parish Relations Team shall be elected at the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference. This team will consist of between four and ten persons, the number to be determined by the Leadership Council.
 - (b) No member of this team shall be either paid church staff or a relative of any pastor of the church.
 - (c) This team shall fulfill the role of Staff-Parish Relations Team as outlined in the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church while adhering to the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ.
 - (d) The Staff-Parish Relations Team will meet at least quarterly, including conducting the evaluation of the pastor(s) during the fourth quarter meeting.
 - (e) The Staff-Parish Relations Team shall meet periodically with denominational representatives and/or the pastor(s) at the request of either, or at the request of the team leader. This team will address the issues of professional personnel and staff, salaries, travel expenses, vacations, sabbatical leave, education, and housing matters. It shall notify the pastor(s) of all of its meetings, and the pastor(s) will be allowed to be present at all meetings. This team shall discuss with the pastor(s) the needs and wishes of the congregation.
 - (f) The Staff-Parish Relations Team shall make and receive recommendations on improving staff-parish relations and maintaining an up-to-date personnel policy.
 - (g) If the Staff-Parish Relations Team recommends a change in pastoral leadership, it shall meet with the Leadership Council and the pastor(s) in executive session to discuss the recommendation prior to forwarding the recommendation to the respective denominations. The Leadership Council shall then submit its recommendation in concurrence with the Staff-Parish Relations Team's recommendation to the respective denominations.
 - (h) The Administrative Council Leader will be an *ex officio* member of the Staff-Parish Relations Team.
- (4) Pastor Selection Team. The Leadership Council will name the members of the Pastor Selection Team, in consultation with the Staff-Parish Relations Team. The Pastor Selection Team shall choose its own Team Leader and follow the process outlined in the Pastoral Selection section below.
- (5) Finance Team. The Finance Team is responsible for financial oversight of the operating budget and regularly reviews all church financial assets. After receiving budget recommendations from all responsible teams, it shall prepare the annual budget to present to the congregation. The proposed budget will first be presented to the Administrative Council for approval and then presented to a duly called congregational meeting/Church Conference for final approval.
- (6) Administrative Council. The Administrative Council will be responsible for the ongoing

administrative tasks and committees of the church. It shall be comprised of the team leaders for Staff-Parish Relations, Trustees, Finance, and other administrative teams appointed by the Leadership Council. This Council will meet quarterly. When necessary, the Administrative Council may create additional administrative teams or action teams between sessions of the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference. The Administrative Council may also dissolve administrative teams, except those required by the United Methodist *Book of Discipline*, between sessions of the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference.

- (7) Community Life Council. The Community Life Council will be responsible for the ongoing program tasks and teams of the Church. It shall be comprised of the team leaders for Worship, Hospitality, Children's Nurture, Youth Nurture, Adult Education, Care of the Soul, Stewardship, Social Justice, and other program teams appointed by the Leadership Council. This Council will meet quarterly. When necessary, the Community Life Council may create additional program teams or action teams between annual congregational meeting/Church Conference. The Community Life Council may also dissolve program teams between sessions of the annual congregational meeting/Church Conference.

ARTICLE V PASTORAL STAFF

a. Standing.

- (1) Any pastor serving the congregation of this Church shall have ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ or the United Methodist Church or ordained ministerial partner standing in accordance with the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ or the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church.
- (2) Any Licensed and/or Commissioned Minister shall have standing in accordance with the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ and any policies of the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ.
- (3) Pastors may be granted dual standing upon call or appointment to this congregation, according to perimeters from the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church.
- (4) Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, a pastor whose licensing, ordination, or standing lies within the United Methodist Church shall comply with the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church regarding the responsibilities and authority of a United Methodist pastor and shall remain subject to discipline by the United Methodist Church for misconduct or violations of the sacred trust.
- (5) Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, a pastor whose licensing, ordination, or standing lies within the United Church of Christ shall comply with the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ regarding the responsibilities and authority of a United Church of Church pastor and shall remain subject to discipline by the United Church of Christ for misconduct or violations of the sacred trust.

b. Authorization and Discipline

- (1) The authorization and discipline of Pastors and Licensed and Commissioned Ministers of this Church shall be accomplished by the procedures and carried out by the duly authorized bodies of the judicatory to which the individual pastor is licensed or ordained.
- (2) The pastors of this congregation must relate to both sets of polities but are only accountable to the denomination under which they are licensed or ordained.

c. Pastoral Vacancy

- (1) Pastoral changes can be initiated in any one of the three following ways:
 - (a) By the congregation through the Staff-Parish Relations Team. In these cases, as designated in Article V.c.(4)(a), when pastoral selection is done within the United Methodist appointment system, the Staff-Parish Relations Team shall act in accordance with the procedures set forth in the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church.
 - (b) By desire of the pastor expressed to the Staff-Parish Relations Team. In these cases, as designated in Article V.c.(4)(a), when pastoral selection is done within the United Methodist appointment system, the Staff-Parish Relations Team shall act in accordance with the procedures set forth in the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church.
 - (c) By the denominational representatives as expressed to the Staff-Parish Relations Team.
- (2) To terminate the relationship of a United Church of Christ pastor, the Church or the pastor must provide at least 60 days notice to the other party in accordance with the procedures of the United Church of Christ, the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference. The

termination shall be by action of the Staff-Parish Relations Team. The Staff-Parish Relations Team Leader shall give notice of such termination to the Conference Minister and to the Association for appropriate action.

(3) Termination of the relationship of a United Methodist pastor to this Church may be implemented only through the action of the presiding bishop of the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

(4) Pastoral Selection.

(a) The Church's process of the call/appointment of a pastor will have the goal of alternating between the United Church of Christ search and call system and the United Methodist pastoral appointment system, but will always act in the best interest of the congregation to select or have appointed the most qualified pastor. This criterion means that the congregation could have consecutive United Methodist clergy or consecutive United Church of Christ clergy.

(i) In the event of the appointment of a United Methodist pastor, the new pastor will be appointed by the bishop of the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

(ii) In the event of the selection of a United Church of Christ pastor, the following process will be observed:

1. After notice of a pastoral vacancy, the Staff-Parish Relations Team will notify the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ of the vacancy.
2. Thereafter, the Leadership Council, in consultation with the Staff-Parish Relations Team, shall name a Search Team composed of not fewer than nine, nor more than thirteen, members of the congregation. Due consideration shall be given to the constituent denominations, the Leadership Council and Staff-Parish Relations Team, and groups active in congregational life.
3. At its first meeting, the Search Team will select its Team Leader, who shall preside at meetings and liaise with the Leadership Council and the congregation. The Team Leader may designate another person to preside or liaise in the absence of the Team Leader. A quorum of this Team will consist of half of the members of the Team.
4. The Team shall first perform a congregational assessment and from that assessment create a profile of the congregation of Trinity Church of Austin.
5. The Team will then submit the congregational profile to the United Church of Christ.
6. The Search Team will work in cooperation with the South Central Conference to identify appropriate candidates.
7. The Search Team shall then follow United Church of Christ protocol for interviewing and, when possible, observing candidates.
8. Thereafter, the Search Team will, by three-fourths vote, recommend a candidate to the congregation to the Church's pastor.
9. Thereafter, the congregation will meet, discuss, and vote upon the recommended candidate. The Team Leader of the Team shall preside at this congregational meeting. A three-fourths vote of members present will be required to approve the candidate and cause the congregation to call that candidate to become a pastor of Trinity Church of Austin.

(iii) Installation and dismissal of pastors shall involve not only the congregation but also the judicatories of the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ.

(iv) If the congregation selects a United Church of Christ pastor, the Church and the pastor will execute a contract that delineates the conditions of employment, including a job description, salary and benefits, performance, and conditions of termination. The Leadership Council must approve this contract after its preparation by the Search Team and consultation with the Staff-Parish Relations Team. If the pastor for the Church will be a United Methodist pastor, the conditions of the pastor's employment shall be governed by the *Book of Discipline* and the bishop and cabinet of the Río Texas Conference.

(b) For positions other than Senior Pastor or Co-Pastors, the Church will fill the position through a "hire" process, as opposed to a call or appointment.

(c) An ordained person of any denomination for any position other than Senior or Co-Pastor would be considered a "hire." However, the proposed hire of a United Methodist clergy would require the bishop's approval in the form of a formal appointment.

(d) The congregation has the option of recommending a person to the position of Senior or Co-Pastor from within current staff, contingent on approval of the bishop in the case of a United

Methodist candidate and following the outlined procedures of the United Church of Christ in the case of a United Church of Christ candidate. When a United Methodist staff person is recommended for a Senior or Co-Pastor position, the Staff-Parish Relations Team will make such a recommendation to the Río Texas Conference bishop. When a United Church of Christ staff person is recommended, the Staff-Parish Relations Team will make such a recommendation to an already established Search Team pursuant to these *Bylaws*. This Search Team then may make the recommendations directly to a congregational vote without a full search for other candidates or may require a larger search before considering such a recommendation. In any case, the congregational vote pursuant to these *Bylaws* is the final decision, but a decision cannot be made concerning someone from within the current staff without the prior steps of recommendation from both and respectively the Staff-Parish Relations Team and the Search Team.

- (e) Trinity Church of Austin shall have the option—especially in the cases at the end of a long pastoral tenure and of traumatic circumstances of the congregation—to select an interim pastor (via the United Church of Christ) or request an interim appointment (via the United Methodist Church). The selection of an interim pastor will be done in joint process among the bishop of the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, the officials of the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ, and a pastoral Search Team as described in Article V.c.(4)(a)(ii)2.
- d. Pastoral Pension and Health Benefits. The pastor’s health and pension benefits would be paid into the denomination in which the pastor is ordained.
- e. Supervision.
 - (1) The Staff-Parish Relations Team will provide all supervision of ministerial and non-ministerial staff.
 - (a) In the case of a United Church of Christ pastor, the Leadership Council will determine pastoral responsibilities and review pastoral performance annually in consultation with the Staff-Parish Relations Team.
 - (b) In the case of a United Methodist pastor, the *United Methodist Book of Discipline* will be determinative of pastoral responsibilities, and the particular evaluative procedures in place by the Río Texas Conference will be used for evaluation of pastoral performance.
 - (2) With respect to any United Methodist pastor, the rights of the bishop of the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church are fully guaranteed. A United Methodist pastor of Trinity Church of Austin does not have the right to remove herself/himself from the duty to follow the United Methodist itinerancy.
 - (3) With respect to any United Church of Christ pastor, the pastor is required to uphold the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ and abide by the policies and procedures of the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference.
 - (4) The pastor(s) of Trinity Church of Austin shall be full and responsible members of their respective denomination’s judicatories as outlined by the regulations and guidelines of each judicatory.

ARTICLE VI POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR MINISTRY

- a. Members of this congregation desiring to prepare for the ordained ministry may seek ordination from either the United Church of Christ or the United Methodist Church.
- b. A person desiring to prepare for the ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ will apply to be received as a Student in Care of Association. These applications are made to the Heart of Texas Association through the pastor and the congregation of Trinity Church of Austin.
 - (1) The Committees on the Ministry of the the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference will cooperate in examining the applicant, determining fitness for ministry, and if found to be qualified, the student would be received into the care of the Heart of Texas Association.
 - (2) The student would then follow the processes set out by the Heart of Texas Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ for preparation, examination, and ordination.
- c. A person desiring to prepare for the ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church must follow the respective requirements of the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church and the Board of Ministry of the Río Texas Conference.

ARTICLE VII RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered in this *Constitution* or in the *Bylaws*.

ARTICLE VIII THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH

- a. Trinity Church of Austin may be dissolved by a two-thirds vote of two congregational meetings held not less than two months apart and not more than one year apart, subject to the concurrence of the immediate judicatories, the provisions of the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church, and the *Bylaws* and *Constitution* of the United Church of Christ.
- b. The relationship with one of the denominations may be dissolved in the following manner:
 - (1) With the United Methodist Church, only in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*.
 - (2) With the United Church of Christ, only in accordance with the *Bylaws* and *Constitution* of the United Church of Christ.
 - (3) To be effective, such a plan of dissolution must be approved by the congregation by a two-thirds majority vote and with the agreement of the judicatories involved.
 - (4) The actual dissolution shall take place at a meeting of the congregation with representatives of both denominations.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS

These *Bylaws* may be amended in the following manner:

- 1. A motion may be made at any congregational meeting stated for that purpose.
- 2. A majority vote of those members present at the congregational meeting is required to approve an amendment to these *Bylaws*.
- 3. The exact same amendment must be passed by a majority of members present at a subsequent congregational meeting not less than two months after the vote and not more than one year after the vote.
- 4. Such amendments shall become effective with the approval of the District Superintendent of the Capital District of the Río Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church.
- 5. Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, any amendment made to these bylaws that violates the United Methodist *Book of Discipline* or the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of the United Church of Christ in effect at the time the proposed amendment is presented for a vote is void *ab initio*.

ARTICLE X SAVINGS

The adoption of these bylaws will not affect abridge or diminish any existing contracts, legal arrangements, or agreements in the name of the church in affect of the date of the adoption of these bylaws and will not supersede, affect or change any church policies or procedures unless specifically addressed in these bylaws.

The above and foregoing *Bylaws* were duly adopted at a congregational meeting/Church Conference held on July 12, 2015.

Attest:

(Secretary)