

1 The Bylaws
2 of
3 The Tulare United Church
4

5
6 Article 1 – Purpose

7 We are a united people of God, living with Jesus Christ at the cornerstone of our lives. By the
8 grace of God and faithful use of the resources the Lord has given us, the avowed purpose of
9 Tulare United Church, as it continues and fulfills the missions and ministries of the Salem
10 United Church of Christ, St. John’s United Church of Christ, and the Tulare United Methodist
11 Church, shall be to worship God, to preach and teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, to celebrate the
12 Sacraments, to realize Christian fellowship and unity within Tulare United Church and the
13 church universal; and to reach out in loving service to all humankind.
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16 Article II – Governing Body

17 A. The government of the Tulare United Church shall be vested in the congregation under
18 Christ, assembled in duly called meetings; and otherwise through the Tulare United Church
19 Board on behalf of the congregation. The vote of a majority of full members in good standing
20 present at duly called meetings shall be the action of the church, except where a greater majority
21 is required.

22 B. Reserved to the congregation shall be authority for the acquisition and disposal of real
23 property, building projects, changes in the constitution or bylaws, and the election of officers.
24

25
26 Article III – Denominational Relationships

27 A. The Tulare United Church shall be fully affiliated with both the United Church of Christ and
28 the United Methodist Church. The Tulare United Church shall send delegates to association,
29 district and conference events of both denominations, support local and extended ministries, and
30 join in any mutual efforts for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ.

31 B. The Tulare United Church shall report an equal part of the total membership (one-half) to
32 each denomination and such membership shall be reported with a note to the effect that the
33 report is that of a united church, which therefore has double membership listed.

34 C. Denominational apportionments or askings shall be divided equally.
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36
37 Article IV – Pastor

38 A. It shall be the duty of the Pastor with the congregation as appropriate, to attend to the
39 spiritual welfare of the congregation, preach the Word of God, have care of all services of
40 worship, administer the Sacraments, reach out to the unchurched of the community, instruct
41 youth in confirmation, direct Christian education, comfort the sick and distressed, direct the
42 activities of the congregation in cooperation with the Tulare United Church Board, committees
43 and organizations, set a good example to the people, keep records and prepare reports for the

44 congregation and as required by each denomination, and be an ex-officio member of the Tulare
 45 United Church Board, committees and organizations of the church.

46 B. The Pastor shall represent the congregation at denominational meetings.

47 C. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time. Either the congregation, Pastor, or
 48 denominational leadership may terminate the relationship by giving at least sixty day notice, or
 49 by mutual agreement. The pastoral relationship is terminated immediately if the Pastor's
 50 ministerial standing is revoked.

51 D. Pastoral leadership shall be either from the United Church of Christ or from the United
 52 Methodist Church in accordance with the discipline or polity of the respective denomination.
 53 Primary consideration shall be given to the qualities of the person needed for the ministry in the
 54 Tulare United Church. The Pastor shall be called or appointed with regard to sequence when
 55 possible. Both denominations shall be free to suggest qualified candidates. Terms of the
 56 call/appointment shall be negotiated by the Tulare United Church Board in consultation with
 57 the United Methodist District Superintendent or the United Church of Christ Conference
 58 Minister.

61 Article V – Members

62 A. All members are entitled to share in the fellowship and spiritual blessing of the church, to the
 63 services of the Pastor, and to Christian sympathy and support.

64 B. It is the responsibility of all members to take an active part in all functions of the Church for
 65 the glory of God and the building of Christian life and character to the best of their ability. This
 66 includes upholding the constitution and bylaws of the church, regular attendance at worship
 67 services, sharing in the financial support of the church, prayer, a spirit of Christian fellowship
 68 towards all, promoting and participating in the Christian Education programs of the church,
 69 obedience to the Word of God, and participation in the various activities and organizations of
 70 the church.

71 C. All members of the Tulare United Church shall be under the discipline of the governing body
 72 according to the rules agreed upon in harmony with the constitutions of the denominations.

73 D. All full members in good standing are entitled to voice, vote and office.

76 Article VI – Meetings

77 A. Annual Meetings - The congregation shall hold an annual meeting in January of each year to
 78 conduct business and hold elections, with the exact date being determined by the Tulare United
 79 Church Board, and with invitations to attend sent to the District Superintendent and the
 80 Conference Minister.

81 B. Special Meetings – A special meeting of the congregation may be called by the Pastor, the
 82 Tulare United Church Board, or upon written request of five percent of the full members in
 83 good standing.

84 C. The time, place and purpose of all congregational meetings shall be announced publicly from
 85 the pulpit for at least two Sundays prior to the meeting.

86 D. Full members in good standing shall be entitled to cast one vote, which vote must be in
87 person.
88

89 Article VII – Elections

90 A. Members of the Tulare United Church Board shall be elected by vote of the congregation at
91 the annual meeting. The Tulare United Church Board at its meeting immediately following the
92 annual meeting shall organize itself.

93 B. Members of the Tulare United Church Board shall be elected for a three year term of office,
94 with terms arranged so that one-third are elected each year. No person may hold office for more
95 than two terms in succession. Elected members shall assume their duties following the annual
96 meeting.

97 C. When vacancies occur during the year, the chairperson shall have the authority to appoint a
98 person to fill the position for the remainder of the term, upon approval of the Tulare United
99 Church Board.

100 Article VIII – The Tulare United Church Board

101 The Tulare United Church Board shall be directly responsible to the congregation as a whole,
102 under Jesus Christ. The Tulare United Church Board shall have the responsibility for directing
103 the activities, life and ministry of the Church; evaluating programs and policies; preparing short
104 and long term goals; directing and transacting the business of the church other than that which
105 must be brought before the congregation in duly called meetings; appointing committees
106 necessary to perform the ministry of the church, including but not limited to: Christian
107 Education, Denominational Relations, Pastor-Parish Relations, Missions, Stewardship,
108 Worship, and Nominating; determining the size and appointing members to standing and
109 special committees; appointing a church historian, approving and authorizing the payment of
110 bills, and ensuring that decisions of the congregation are carried out. The Tulare United Church
111 Board shall be the Trustees and the Finance Committee for the Tulare United Church.

112 B. The Tulare United Church Board shall meet monthly or at the call of the Pastor or
113 chairperson.
114

115 C. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum for Tulare United Church Board meetings.

116 D. Organization:

117 1. At the first meeting immediately following the annual meeting, the Tulare United Church
118 Board shall elect or appoint officers.

119 a. Chairperson – The chairperson shall conduct meetings of the Tulare United Church Board
120 and all congregational meetings, may serve as an ex-officio member of all boards and
121 committees, and in cooperation with the Pastor, shall have the responsibility to organize and
122 schedule the use of the church facilities.

123 b. Vice Chairperson – The Vice Chairperson shall perform the Chairperson's duties when
124 the Chairperson is absent, and shall serve as a member of the Pastor-Parish Relations
125 Committee.

126 c. Secretary – The Secretary shall keep minutes of all congregational business meetings and
127 all Tulare United Church Board meetings. The Secretary shall also keep a complete roll of the
128 members of the church and their addresses; keep a record of all baptisms, confirmations,

129 marriages, and funerals, reception of new members, transfers, dismissals and deaths occurring
 130 within the Tulare United Church.

131 d. Treasurer – The treasurer shall receive a record of all deposits from the Financial
 132 Secretary; be responsible for paying, as authorized, from the church treasury all local church
 133 expense payments, including mission contributions; submitting reports to the Tulare United
 134 Church Board and congregational business meetings; presenting books to be audited at the end
 135 of the year; shall function as a member of the Finance and Stewardship Committees; shall keep
 136 all records of any Memorial Funds, and/or Building Funds.

138 Article IX – Financial Secretary

139 The Financial Secretary shall be elected at the annual meeting by the congregation for a term of
 140 one year. The Financial Secretary shall receive and record all church receipts, including all
 141 individual gifts; deposit money in the bank and make deposits known to the Treasurer; submit
 142 reports to the Tulare United Church Board and at congregational business meetings; provide
 143 offering envelopes to members upon request; and provide periodic individual statements of
 144 giving to members.
 145

146 Article X –Committees

147 A. The Christian Education Committee – This committee shall determine policy for all
 148 educational work of the church; coordinate Sunday School activities, appoint teachers and
 149 approve curricula; direct and advise youth educational and recreational activities and programs,
 150 encourage development of Bible study groups, oversee Vacation Bible School; consult with the
 151 Pastor on Confirmation studies; and promote leadership training for members.

152 The Sunday School Superintendent shall oversee Sunday School activities and programs,
 153 serve as the Chairperson of the Christian education Committee; shall recommend appointments
 154 of Sunday School teachers and aides, shall recommend materials for use, and organize
 155 programs.
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157 B. The Denominational Relations Committee – This committee shall be composed of the
 158 delegates to the United Church of Christ Conference and Association meetings, the Annual
 159 Conference of the United Methodist Church, and the person elected as Lay Leader by the
 160 annual meeting of the congregation. The Denominational Relations Committee shall be
 161 responsible for representing the Tulare United Church at all denominational meetings beyond
 162 the local church, and communicating denominational concerns to the local church.

163 C. The Missions Committee – This committee shall be responsible for promoting and
 164 interpreting the United Methodist and United Church of Christ apportionments and askings, as
 165 they support mission beyond our locality, to the congregation. The committee will also be
 166 responsible for local, homeland and global mission projects, and setting goals for project
 167 support.

168 D. The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee – This committee shall be chaired by the Lay
 169 Leader. The committee shall be responsible for working with the United Church of Christ and
 170 the United Methodist Conferences in securing pastoral leadership make annual
 171 recommendations for salary and other expenses for the Pastor (and other persons employed by

the Tulare United Church); annually evaluate the membership rolls and make recommendations concerning the assignment of members to active, inactive, or constituent listings; and provide for pulpit supply during the absence of the Pastor. The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall represent and interpret the parish to the Pastor, and represent and interpret the Pastor to the parish.

E. The Stewardship Committee – The committee shall be in charge of promoting and publicizing financial matters; determining the need and proposed methods for all-member stewardship programs; oversee giving and tithing programs and pledge drives; and report to the annual meeting.

F. The Worship Committee – This committee shall assist the Pastor in preparing for communion, special worship services, music, and in evangelism and the care of member. The Worship Committee shall also be responsible for the care of the chancel, including flowers, candles, and paraments, and securing organists and pianists, ushers, acolytes, and greeters.

G. The Nominating Committee – This committee shall be responsible for nominating for all positions elected by the congregations, recommendations for other positions upon request by the Tulare United Church Board. This committee shall strive to identify talent of those in fellowship with the Tulare United Church, especially youth members, and encourage participation in church programs and activities. Additional nominations shall be accepted from the floor from members of the congregation at any called meeting.

Article XI – Auxiliary Organizations

With the exception of the Sunday School, all auxiliary organizations shall effect their own organization and elect their own officers, making regulations in so far as these do not conflict with the constitution of the Tulare United Church. Every auxiliary organization shall give its annual report to the church at the annual meeting, listing officers, funds collected and disbursed, and aims achieved. Organizations may include persons who are not members of the church, but the President or Chairperson must be a church member. The creation of new auxiliary organizations shall be approved by the Tulare United Church Board.

Article XII – Parliamentary Procedure

The Spirit of Christ shall be observed in all discussions and meetings of the Church, the Tulare United Church Board, and all other committees, boards and organizations. The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern on questions of procedure not covered by these Bylaws.

Article XIII – Amendments to the Bylaws

A. Amendments to the Bylaws may be made at any duly called congregational meeting by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present and voting.

B. Public notice of the proposal to amend the Bylaws shall be posted in the hall of entrance to the church at least ten days prior to the meeting.