

- A. A church of this Presbytery may unite to form a union church with one or more particular churches with the approval of the Presbytery. The union is effective as of the date when each of the churches have approved the plan by a two-thirds majority of those present at a regularly called congregational meeting with such notice and quorum as is required by the Constitution of each church, and when the Presbytery and the governing body of each church has approved the particular union.
- B. The union church will share the property, real and personal, of the uniting churches and provide for the services of a minister or ministers for the union church.
- C. The union church shall be subject to the Constitution of each church involved as set forth below. At inception, the union church shall join Ecumenical Ministries, Inc. (EMI) which will serve as the middle governing body for the union church. EMI shall provide governance, as defined by its bylaws, and agreed to by Denver Presbytery. EMI shall serve as a liaison between the union church and representative governing bodies of jurisdiction, and will assist in the appointment of ministers.
- D. The union church shall be governed by a council elected by the congregation from among its members. This council shall have the powers of the session. The members of the council shall be ordained according to the Directory of Worship to the office of Ruling Elder consistent with the definitions, requirements, and procedures provided in the Book of Order. Members of the council of the union church shall be eligible to membership and office in the higher governing bodies of jurisdiction.
- E. The council shall submit its records annually and whenever requested, to each governing body of jurisdiction.
- F. The membership of the union church shall consist of those who were members of the uniting churches, plus those received by the council of the union church.
- G. The council of the union church shall report an equal share of the total membership to each governing body of jurisdiction and such membership shall be published in the *Minutes* of the General Assembly (or comparable governing body) with a note to the effect that the report is that of a union church, and with an indication of the total actual membership. A similar report of church school members, baptisms, etc., and financial

expenditures shall be made by the council and noted by each General Assembly in its *Minutes*.

- H. The minister or ministers of the union church shall be full and responsible members of each governing body of jurisdiction and shall be subject to the discipline of each, provided that when one of the governing bodies of jurisdiction shall begin an action, it shall inform the Board of EMI of the action. In the event of an appeal, the case shall be finally decided by the denomination in which the complaint or appeal originated. (*This is a slightly modified version of the former G-16.0201s.*)
- I. The union church shall cause a corporation to be formed under the appropriate laws of the state where permissible.
- J. All property of the uniting churches, real and personal, shall be transferred to the corporation formed. The new corporation shall be the legal successor of the corporations, if any, of the uniting churches, and it shall be bound to administer any trust, property, or moneys received in accordance with the provisions of the original establishment of the trust. All liabilities of the uniting churches shall be liabilities of the union church.
- K. Trustees of the corporation shall be elected in harmony with civil law according to constitutional provisions outlined above.
- L. While recognizing the basic right of any giver to designate the cause or causes to which a personal gift shall go, the council of the union church shall annually propose to the congregation a general mission or benevolence program which shall be divided equitably among the officially approved causes of each denomination. The proportions shall be set by the council in response to the requests of the higher governing bodies.
- M. Per capita apportionments or assessments shall be paid to each governing body of jurisdiction on the basis of the total active membership of the union church, equally divided among the denominations involved.
- N. All members of the union church shall be under the discipline of the council according to rules agreed upon in harmony with the Constitution of each denomination where they coincide, and in harmony with the mandatory provisions of the Constitution of one denomination where the others are permissive, and at the choice of the council where they may be contradictory.

- O. The minister or ministers shall participate in the denominational pension plan of one of the several churches. If the minister is already participating in one plan, membership in that plan shall be retained. If the minister is not a member of any plan, one or the other of the churches' plans shall be chosen.
- P. Complaints against the administrative acts of the council shall be taken to EMI. Appeals or complaints against the actions of EMI shall be made to one denomination at the choice of the complainant.
- Q. Wherever the constitutions of the denominations differ, the mandatory provisions of one shall apply in all cases when the others are permissive. Wherever there are conflicting mandatory provisions (except as provided in paragraph N above), the council of the union church shall petition EMI to resolve the conflict.
- R. A union church may be dissolved by a two-thirds vote of a duly called congregational meeting subject to the concurrence of the governing bodies involved. In case of dissolution of the union church, all property of the union church, real and personal, shall be held, used, applied, transferred, or sold as provided by the Board of Trustees of EMI, which holds the property in trust equally for the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the other participating governing bodies. The property shall be returned equally to the denominations.
- S. After consultation with the union congregation and EMI, the presbytery may dismiss the congregation from membership in the presbytery. All property, real or personal, of the congregation may be retained by the congregation or divided between the congregation and the presbytery by agreement among the parties involved, subject to any restrictions on transfer of ownership that may exist in deeds.