

***Constitution of
Rideau Park United Church
Ottawa, Ontario***

Table of Contents

1. Preamble	1
2. The Congregation	2
3. The Mission Statement of the Congregation	2
4. The Church Council	3
5. Church Committees	7
6. Courts of the Church	9
7. Quorum	10
8. Meetings of Council	10
9. Congregational Meetings	10
10. Amendment of the Constitution	10
11. Evaluation	11
12. United Church Manual	11
Organization Chart of Governing Bodies	12
Appendix: Constitution of Rideau Park United Church – Relationship to most Recent United Church Manual	13

Constitution

1. Preamble

It is the will of the Congregation of Rideau Park United Church as set forth in this Constitution to create a Church organizational structure designed to liberate and to enable the people of God to exercise their ministry effectively in building up the

body of Christ through worship, reconciliation, evangelism and outreach, service and the seeking of justice.

2. The Congregation

Rideau Park United Church is a pastoral charge in the Ottawa Presbytery of the Montreal-Ottawa Conference of the United Church of Canada.

The members of the congregation entitled to all church privileges are those persons who on a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to him, have been received into full membership. Persons are admitted to full membership by baptism and confirmation, or by certificate of membership in good standing from other United Church congregations or other communions, or by re-affirmation of Christian faith. With the consent of those in full membership, adherents who contribute regularly to the support of the Church may vote on temporal matters.

Together they shall form the congregation which is the major policy making body of Rideau Park United Church responsible for carrying out the mission of the church.

3. The Mission Statement of the Congregation

Rideau Park United Church is a family of people who joyfully proclaim a loving God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

As caring members of this church we seek to do this by:

- joining together in worship, prayer and music;
- reading and studying the Bible;
- living a Christian life;
- nurturing both young and old in Christian education programs;
- seeking justice for everyone; and
- continually sharing our faith, hope, talents and resources with our community, country and the world.

4. The Church Council

(1) Definition:

The Church Council is that body of persons elected either directly or indirectly by the congregation to be representative of it and to carry out the business of the congregation between congregational meetings.

(2) Functions:

(a) General

The Church Council shall have two primary functions: leadership and management to be exercised at a strategic overview level.

- (i) The leadership function shall encompass the identification of long-range plans that define the congregation's priorities.
- (ii) The management function shall provide strategic guidance for the volunteers, bodies, committees and church staff responsible for Church activities. Through this function, the Council is responsible for the general oversight of the bodies and committees of the Church, and as the senior policy and planning body of the Church, gives guidance to such bodies and committees in response to direction from the congregation. The Council shall make decisions on behalf of the congregation and ensure that the decisions are implemented. In the exercise of these functions, the Church Council shall not unduly restrict the other bodies and committees of the Church to manage their own affairs.

(b) Specific

The Council shall, on behalf of the congregation be responsible for:

- (i) long-range planning to ensure that the mission, vision, directions and goals reflect the priorities of the congregation;
- (ii) identifying priorities within the mission, vision, directions and goals;
- (iii) ensuring effective communication among committees, between the committees/church leadership and the congregation, between the congregation and the wider community;
- (iv) preparing policies and guidelines for use by staff, volunteers, committees and other organizations of the church in the planning and conduct of their programs and activities;

Constitution

- (v) reviewing the terms of reference for staff, volunteers, committees and other organizations to ensure they are consistent with the priorities of the Church, up-to-date, complete, clear and encourage a maximum degree of freedom of action;
 - (vi) evaluating progress and success of programs with reference to the mission, vision, broad directions, broad goals and priorities of the Church;
 - (vii) assessing and deciding which projects to support with funds available from the Rideau Park Foundation for Ministry, in accordance with the relevant guidelines;
 - (viii) addressing such other matters as may from time to time arise.
- (3) Membership

The Council shall be composed of persons who have been duly elected to office by the congregation, save and except the representative of the United Church Women. The Council shall consist of the following voting members who shall be known as Councillors:

Council Chair;
Council Vice-Chair;
Council Secretary;
Chair (or the Clerk) of Session;
2 representatives of Session nominated by Session;
Chair (or the Vice-Chair) of the Committee of Stewards;
3 representatives of the Committee of Stewards, two of which shall be the Treasurer and the Stewardship Coordinator and one of which shall be nominated by the Committee of Stewards;
Chair of the Ministry and Personnel Committee;
Chair of the Nominations Committee;
1 lay representative to Ottawa Presbytery;
1 lay representative of the Board of Trustees;
1 representative of the United Church Women elected by the United Church Women;
1 representative of the Administration and Communications Committee;
2 Members-at-large.

The Council shall also include the following ex-officio members:

Members of the Order of Ministry duly called or appointed and employed by Rideau Park United Church who may vote, except on matters brought forward by the Ministry and Personnel Committee, the Nominations Committee, a Joint Needs Assessment Committee or a Joint Search

Committee.

The Church Administrator, who is a non-voting member.

(4) Qualifications and Election of Council Members

- (a) Councillors shall be elected from among the members and adherents of the congregation. No less than two-thirds of those elected shall be members of Rideau Park United Church. It is intended that those who are Councillors reflect the diversity of the congregation.
- (b) Save and except the UCW Council representative, all Councillors shall be elected by the congregation at a duly constituted congregational meeting by a simple majority vote of those members present. The Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and members-at-large shall be elected to a position on Council. All other Councillors shall be elected to two positions, the first serving the congregation as the Treasurer, for example, and then as a Council member. Council members shall be identified by name and only the Chairs of Session and Stewards may be replaced at council meetings by a voting replacement. It is the intent that other Councillors may be replaced, but only in exceptional circumstances, and replacements would not have the right to vote unless such voting privileges are approved by a majority of Councillors present.

(5) Term of Office of Council Members

- (a) The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected for two-year terms. It is the intent that upon the expiration of the term of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall stand for election as Chair of Council.
- (b) The Chair of the Ministry and Personnel Committee shall be elected for a minimum of three and a maximum of five years. The Chair of Ministry and Personnel Committee shall not be eligible for re-election to Council until the expiry of one year after the end of the term of service.
- (c) All other Councillors shall be elected for three-year terms. Save and except the Vice-Chair, Councillors shall usually not be eligible for reelection to Council until the expiry of one year after the end of the term of service.
- (d) The initial terms of office and subsequent terms may be adjusted so that not more than one-third of the Council shall retire each year.
- (e) Nominations for election or appointment for the voting members of Council shall be made by the Nominations Committee after the nominees have been consulted. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the relevant congregational meeting.

Constitution

- (f) Vacancies in elected offices between congregational meetings may be filled through appointment by a two-thirds majority of members of Council present and voting and are subject to confirmation at the next congregational meeting.
- (6) Duties of Council Members
- (a) The duties of Council members shall be:
 - (i) to attend Council meetings;
 - (ii) to discern the needs and interests of the various constituencies within the congregation and bring these to Council meetings, contributing to the achievement of all the responsibilities of Council.
- (b) Councillors with committee responsibilities shall apportion their time so that council activities are given significant attention.
- (c) It shall be the duty of the Chair of Council to preside at meetings and to provide leadership to the Council and to facilitate the processes of Council.
- (d) It shall be the duty of the Vice-Chair to replace the Chair as required, and to be prepared upon the expiration of the term of the Chair to assume the position of Chair. In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, a Minister may chair the Council meeting.
- (e) It shall be the duty of the Secretary in consultation with the Church Administrator, to keep a record of the proceedings of Council, to conduct the correspondence of Council, to preserve all relevant documentation and to transmit necessary records annually to Presbytery.
- (f) It is the intent that Members-at-Large shall bring special expertise to Council that may be required from time to time.
- (g) The Vice-Chair and Members-at-Large may be tasked by Council to serve as chairs/members or liaise with task groups, working groups and special purpose teams established by Council, and to provide special assistance in assessing applications for funding from the Rideau Park Foundation for Ministry.
- (h) Representatives of Session are expected to take on a liaison role in relation to Committees of Session and to assist the Chair of Session in bringing matters of Session and its Committees to Council.

5. Church Committees

The following shall be the Standing Committees of Council and all these Standing Committees shall have delegated to them by Council the responsibility and authority for the general and specific duties/functions set forth in the United Church Manual and/or in the Terms of Reference approved by the Rideau Park congregation for each Standing Committee. The pertinent sections of the current United Church Manual are listed in the Appendix to this Constitution and shall be updated as per section 12 of this Constitution.

Members of the Order of Ministry can be members of and have a vote on all Standing Committees, except the Ministry and Personnel Committee and the Nominating Committee. Members of the Order of Ministry can serve as advisors to the Nominating Committee.

(a) Session

The Session shall be responsible, on behalf of the Council, for exercising leadership in relation to the spiritual interests of Rideau Park United Church. This responsibility broadly encompasses worship and music, Christian education and development, pastoral care, social action and outreach, and other related spiritual interests. It shall keep the Roll, Register of the Congregation, and records in relation to its members and adherents as well as baptisms, marriages and burials. The Session shall serve as the lower court of the church as per section 6 of this Constitution. It shall have the authority to establish such sub-committees as it deems necessary.

(b) Stewards

The Stewards shall be responsible, on behalf of the Council and the Congregation, for the management of the temporal and financial affairs of Rideau Park United Church. This responsibility broadly encompasses (i) Stewardship: through the stewardship coordinator, securing financial contributions for the maintenance and work of the church through the annual campaign and other activities; (ii) Finance: through the Treasurer, preparing the annual budget, presenting financial status reports, and disbursing monies for the maintenance and work of the church in accordance with the United Church Manual; and (iii) Property: ensuring

the maintenance of church property, and developing, maintaining and implementing an annual property renewal plan and a multi-year property renewal plan.

(c) Ministry and Personnel Committee

The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall be responsible, on behalf of Council, for consulting with, providing support, and undertaking assessments of all staff members at Rideau Park, within a confidential setting. It is responsible for providing input, in consultation with Stewards, regarding salaries and other remuneration and for determining working conditions. The Committee does not have the authority to act on major personnel issues, but rather to make recommendations to Council.

(d) Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee shall be responsible, on behalf of Council, for proposing nominees annually, or more often as required, for the elected positions of the congregation, as terms of office expire or positions become vacant. Nominations are to be approved by the congregation at the Annual General Meeting or another congregational meeting, or by Council on an interim basis between congregational meetings. The Committee shall also facilitate/advise on the various processes for the identification, engagement and recognition of volunteers for committees, duty rosters, activities and events at Rideau Park.

(e) Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall, on behalf of Council and the Congregation, oversee the use and maintenance of the property of the Church and manage the investments of the named funds in its Terms of Reference. All property owned by Rideau Park United Church is held and administered by the Trustees for the benefit of the Congregation in accordance with the provisions of the United Church Manual.

(f) Administration and Communications Committee

The Administration and Communications Committee, on behalf of Council, shall (1) develop policy and provide support for an efficient and effective administration system at Rideau Park and (2) develop and facilitate a broad, systematic approach to Rideau park's communications and advertising to both active and non-active church households, and particularly to the wider community.

(g) Other Committees

The Congregation may at a congregational meeting establish such other standing committees as it deems necessary and the Council shall have the power to establish from time to time such ad hoc committees as it deems necessary.

(h) Terms of Reference

All Standing Committees will have Terms of Reference approved by Council and posted on the website of Rideau Park United Church. All ad hoc committees, working groups and task groups established by Council for a specific purpose and limited duration will have a written purpose and specific responsibilities approved by Council.

6. Courts of the Church

(1) Definition

The Council and the Session shall be the Courts of Rideau Park United Church, with Council being recognized as the Higher Court and Session as the Lower Court.

(2) Council

As a Court of the Church, the Council shall be ultimately responsible for exercising leadership in the care and oversight of the spiritual life and temporal interests of the congregation. In addition to the specific duties set forth in the United Church Manual, Council shall retain the following duties in relation to the spiritual and temporal life of the congregation:

- (a) Liaison with the Presbytery;
- (b) Reporting at least annually to the Congregation;
- (c) Giving direction to the Board of Trustees;
- (d) Matters of pastoral relations when appropriately directed by the Congregation.

(3) Session

Council delegates to the Session the following duties:

- (a) the general responsibility for the spiritual interests of the Congregation;
- (b) the discipline of members;

Constitution

- (c) the receipt and transmission of Petitions and Appeals;
- (d) the ordering of Informal Hearings or Formal Hearings.

7. Quorum

The quorum for meetings of Council shall be 11 members entitled to vote, of whom one shall be a Member of the Order of Ministry.

8. Meetings of Council

The Council shall meet at least four times during a calendar year at the call of the Chair, or at the call of a Minister. Special meetings of Council may be called by four members of Council signing a request to convene a Council meeting and having it published in the Church Bulletin at least 14 days prior to the date appointed for a special meeting.

9. Congregational Meetings

There shall be at least one congregational meeting annually, which shall be held at the beginning of the calendar year and shall primarily be for the submission of financial statements, annual budget and nominations for office-holders for approval of the congregation, and to review progress on priorities and directions. One or more additional congregational meetings may be called by Council at any time in the calendar year.

10. Amendment of the Constitution

An amendment to the Constitution of Rideau Park United Church may be made when it is authorized by:

- (a) A two-third majority of the votes cast at a Council meeting; and
- (b) A simple majority vote of those members present at a duly constituted congregational meeting.

11. Evaluation

This Constitution and the Terms of Reference of Standing Committees shall be evaluated at regular intervals (every 6-8 years) by a group of congregational members drawn from outside the Council.

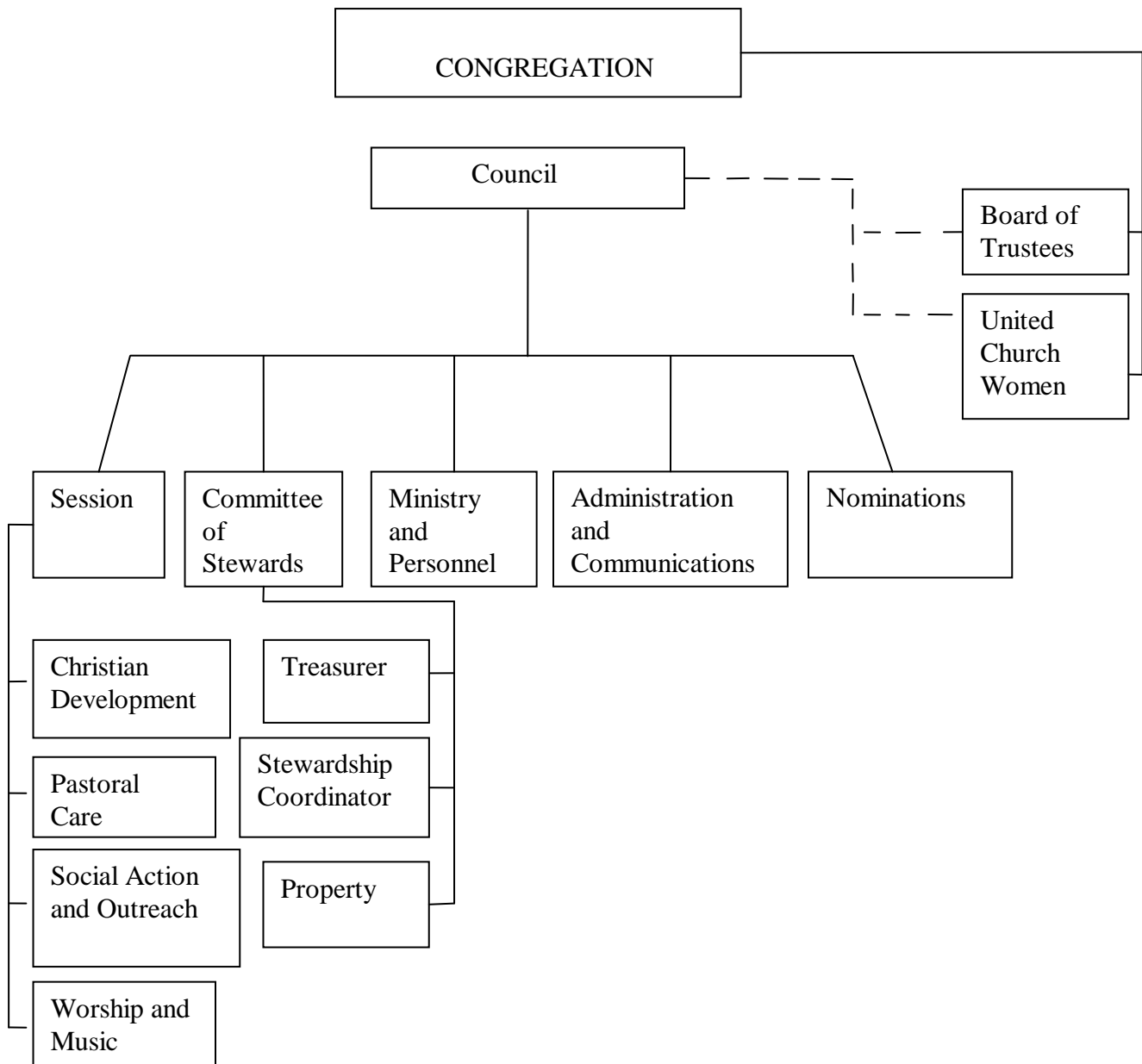
12. United Church Manual

References to the most recent United Church Manual in this Constitution are provided in the Appendix as an information item and shall be updated whenever the UCC Manual is revised. Council shall ensure that this Appendix is regularly updated. The update of this Appendix is considered routine and not as an amendment to this Constitution.

February 2015

**RIDEAU PARK UNITED CHURCH
ORGANIZATION CHART OF GOVERNING BODIES**

Constitution



Constitution

Church Body or Function	committees	B7.9	
Council, Meetings of Congregation Session	UCC Manual By-Laws: Sections B5, B6, B7.1-B7.9, G2.3, G4	Comment re. 2013 Manual Governing Body, Oversight for Spiritual & Temporal Resp	
Stewards & Treasurer,	B7.3.1-2, 7.4.1, 7.4.5, 7.4.9-12, B7.6.1 & 7.6.2, B7.7.4, 7.8.6a	Spiritual Resp. Membership, Court of Church No ref to Elders	
Stewardship	B7.4.2 & 7.4.8, B7.6.3, G4	Treasurer, Finance, Audit/Review	Source:2013 UCC Manual By-Laws:
Ministry & Personnel	B7.8.6c, G4.2.2a & 4.5	Fundraising, Stewardship education	Sect. B: Local Ministry Unit pp 61- 70
Trustees	B7.4.3. B7.8.5	Consults, Reviews	
Nominations	G2.3, G3	Not changed, Legislated.	Sect. G: Congregational Life pp134 -147
Set up	B7.8.3, B7.8.6d	Recommends	
	B7.8.1 & 7.8.2,	Very open, Empowering	