

# BYLAWS

## The Congregational Church of Hollis, New Hampshire (United Church of Christ)



Revised and accepted at the Annual Meeting of  
February 2019

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## ARTICLE I

### NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Congregational Church of Hollis, New Hampshire, (United Church of Christ).

## ARTICLE II

### STATEMENT OF FAITH

#### **Section 1: Covenant**

This church is a fellowship of people united by the acceptance of mutual covenant, which is as follows: We confess our faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and give ourselves to His service and take this to be His Church. Ever mindful of the welfare of our fellowship, we promise to walk in faithfulness and Christian love, and we promise insofar as we are able, that we will attend the services of this Church, observe its sacraments, share in its work, support its mission, and endeavor to be a fruitful body of Christians.

#### **Section 2: Personal Convictions**

This church recognizes and respects members seeking God in their own faith and experience.

#### **Section 3: Statement of Faith**

This church affirms the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith, not to be regarded as a test, but as a testimony of this church's faith. The Statement of Faith is as follows:

## Statement of Faith

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being,  
create persons in your own image,  
and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people  
from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will  
declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen  
Savior,  
you have come to us and shared our common lot,  
conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to  
yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,  
creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,  
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and  
races.

You call us into your church  
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,  
to be your servants in the service of others,  
to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers  
of evil,  
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,  
to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you  
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,  
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,  
your presence in trial and rejoicing,  
and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

The Statement of Faith in the Form of a Doxology was authorized by  
the Executive Council in 1981.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this church is to provide for the worship of God and the spiritual growth and Christian fellowship among its members and to promote, through its services and work, the applications of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **POLICY**

#### **Section 1: Incorporation**

This church is incorporated under the laws of the State of New Hampshire.

#### **Section 2: Government**

The government of this church is vested in its members.

#### **Section 3: Fellowship**

The church recognizes its fellowship with other churches of the United Church of Christ, which invests the church with the right and duty of mutual advice, counsel, and cooperation for the promotion of mutual purposes, and of the expression of this fellowship through organizations designed for these purposes. It acknowledges fellowship with all churches which accept Jesus Christ as their Lord.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Section 1: Qualifications**

The church welcomes all candidates for membership whose faith, desires, and character are such that they will covenant with the church and make public confession of their faith. Those who have not been baptized previously will be baptized at the time they join the church.

## **Section 2: Admission**

Candidates for admission to membership shall meet with the Pastor and Board of Deacons representatives. When recommended by the Board of Deacons, they may be received into membership at any service of the church. The mode for their admission shall be:

- (a) Confession of Faith if they have not joined a Christian church.
- (b) Letter of Transfer from another Christian church if they are in good standing.
- (c) Reaffirmation of Faith if they have an inactive membership in another Christian church.
- (d) Confirmation

## **Section 3: Duties and Membership Defined**

Members are expected to be faithful in all the spiritual duties essential to the Christian life, to attend regularly the services of this church, to contribute toward the support of this church and its missions at home and abroad; and to share in its organized work. A member not contributing toward the support of the church or not worshipping with this church for two years may, by review of the Board of Deacons, be considered for inactive member status.

## **Section 4: Membership Defined**

(a) Active members - Any member who attends this church; or supports the church financially; or shares in its organized activities; whether resident or non-resident, shall be an active member. All persons who were associate members at the time of the adoption of these by-laws shall remain the same until such time as they shall wish to alter this relation to the church.

(b) Inactive members - Any member who for a period of two years does not attend this church; and does not assist in any of the church activities; and according to the financial secretary's records, does not support the church financially may, upon a majority vote of the Board of Deacons, be placed on the inactive list. Inactive members will not be included in the annual membership count that is reported to the Conference Office (UCC). After being on the inactive list for a period of two years, voting privileges are withdrawn and the inactive member is

dropped from the church roll. Any former member who shows renewed interest in the church and desires to be reinstated as an active member may be so upon recommendation of the Pastor and a majority vote of the Board of Deacons.

(c) Associate Member - A person who wishes to participate in the life of this church while maintaining membership in another Christian church may be received as an Associate Member by the same process as regular Active Members are received. Associate Members shall have all the rights and duties of regular members with the following exceptions: 1) voting for the call or dismissal of the minister; 2) voting for the acquisition or disposal of church property; 3) holding any of the elected offices listed in Article VII; 4) obtaining a letter of transfer.)

(d) Active non-member – a person who is not a member but has demonstrated commitment, and is an active participant in the life and ministry of our church community.

### **Section 5: Termination**

The Board of Deacons, upon request of a member or church, may send a letter of transfer. Such a letter will be addressed to the church and shall not be carried by a member. A member's name may be removed by request of that member as submitted to the Board of Deacons and shall be removed on death. Members who have been inactive for a period of two years may be removed from the church rolls by action of the Board of Deacons.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **MEETINGS**

#### **Section 1: For Worship**

(a) Public services shall be held regularly on Sundays and at such other times as may be determined by the Board of Deacons.

(b) The Sacrament of Holy Communion shall be celebrated on the first Sunday of each month, unless otherwise provided by the Board of Deacons.

(c) The Sacrament of Baptism shall be celebrated on such days as designated by the Pastor.

## **Section 2: For Business**

(a) The annual business meeting of the church shall be held on a date set by the Church Council as soon as is convenient after January 15, and before February 15. The annual business meeting shall concern itself with the presentation of and action on the budget proposed for the current fiscal year which shall also concern itself with the presentation of the final reports for the preceding year, and the election of officers, board and committee members for the ensuing year. There shall be full opportunity for consideration and action for any business which a member may wish to place before the meeting. A Warrant shall be issued by the Clerk of the church as posted on public display for the two successive Sundays immediately prior to the date of the meeting. The Warrant shall contain notice of business matters to be discussed at the meeting.

(b) Special meetings of the church may be called: 1) by the Church Council; 2) by the Church Clerk upon receiving a written request signed by ten percent of the active membership. This request shall be submitted to Church Council who shall then call the meeting not more than twenty-eight days from the time the request is received by the Clerk. The notice of all special meetings shall be announced at public services of worship on the two successive Sundays immediately prior to the date of the meeting. The Council may, by a majority vote, call for an emergency meeting. Special notices of an emergency meeting are to be mailed at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting. The actions of special meetings shall be limited to those stated in the notice.

(c) At all business meetings, the Moderator of the church shall preside. Voting shall be by ballot if so requested by five percent of the members present. Ten percent of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and action shall be by majority vote unless otherwise specifically provided herein.



## ARTICLE VII

### OFFICERS

#### **Section 1: Pastor and Teacher**

(a) The Pastor and Teacher shall be called by the church when a vacancy occurs and shall hold office without limitation of time. The Pastor and Teacher shall become a member of the church and shall have his/her standing as an Ordained Minister with the Hillsborough Association, United Church of Christ. When the Pastor and Teacher and the church shall so agree, the Pastor and Teacher shall be installed by the aforementioned association. The Pastor and Teacher may terminate her/his responsibilities to the church by giving sixty days' notice to the church. The church may also request the Pastor and Teacher's resignation with the same limitation of time of sixty days.

(b) The Pastor and other ordained, commissioned or licensed ministers are ex officio member(s) of all boards and committees without vote except for the Board of Deacons and Church Council where the Pastor shall have one vote.

(c) The Pastor, with the Board of Deacons, has charge of the spiritual life of the church. The Pastor is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in action and word, administer the sacraments, teach the ways of God as revealed to humanity, and visit the distressed, the sick, and the dying. The Pastor shall keep a record of all baptisms, marriages, and deaths that will become part of the Clerk's permanent record. The Pastor shall assist in the direction of the activities of the church in cooperation with the various boards and committees. In all, the Pastor shall endeavor to be a faithful servant of Jesus Christ and seek to lead the congregation to a deeper commitment to the will of God.

(d) When it becomes necessary to call a pastor, the board of Deacons shall prepare a slate of nominations of at least ten persons and not more than fourteen persons to be presented to the Church Council as nominations for a Search Committee. The nominations shall include at least five members drawn from the elected leadership of the church (defined as any elected officer or committee member) and at least one youth member. The Church Council can receive further nominations from its members. The

Church Council shall then recommend the membership of the Search Committee, consisting of ten to fourteen persons as defined above, to the church membership for approval at a special meeting of the membership of the church. The Search Committee, upon examination of candidates, will recommend a candidate for Pastor to the church membership for approval.

(e) Under the direction of the Church Council, the Pastor is responsible for effective administration of the church's daily activities. This shall include direct supervision and management of the church staff in a manner consistent with the policies and programs established by the various Boards and Committees.

(f) Additional ordained, commissioned and licensed ministers may be called by the church and assigned such duties as are deemed necessary by the Board of Deacons in cooperation with the Pastor.

(g) Retired Pastors of long service may be made Pastors Emeriti/ae by vote of the church.

(h) If it becomes necessary to call an interim Pastor, the Board of Deacons will prepare a slate of nominations of at least five persons to be selected from the lay leadership of the church (defined as any elected officer or committee member). The Church Council will review the slate of nominations proposed by the Board of Deacons and any other nominations proposed by its members and then appoint the membership of the Search Committee. The Search committee will, after examination of candidates, recommend a candidate to the Church Council for its approval.

## **Section 2: Moderator**

The Moderator shall be elected to serve a term of two years. The Moderator shall be expected to conduct the business meetings of the church. In the Moderator's absence, the church shall elect a chairperson to conduct its meetings.

## **Section 3: Clerk**

The Clerk shall be elected to serve a term of two years. The Clerk shall keep a complete record of all business meetings of the church, and is to be held responsible for the proper notification of all meetings. The Clerk shall keep a complete record of the membership and shall issue letters of transfer and dismissal by the direction of the

Board of Deacons. The Clerk shall notify all newly elected officers and members of boards and committees of their election and shall inform all delegates of their election and issue proper credentials.

#### **Section 4: Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer**

(a) The Treasurer shall be elected to serve a term of two years. The Treasurer shall receive and disburse all current moneys of the church and shall keep these accounts distinct from all other accounts. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of the same, and the Treasurer's actions shall be subject to the direction and control of the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer shall present at the annual meeting of the church a financial report properly certified by the Church Auditors, for the preceding fiscal year, which corresponds to the calendar year. The Treasurer shall be ex officio member of the Board of Trustees, without vote.

(b) The Assistant Treasurer shall be elected to serve a term of two years. The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in the duties and be charged with the same responsibilities and authority as vested in the Treasurer.

(c) The Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer shall be bonded or insured in the sum fixed by the Board of Trustees.

#### **Section 5: Financial Secretary and Assistant Financial Secretary**

(a) The Financial Secretary shall be elected to serve a term of two years and shall be accountable to the Board of Christian Stewardship. The Financial Secretary is responsible for the record keeping of all pledges, collections, and gifts received. All moneys shall be given into the Treasurer's care.

(b) The Assistant Financial Secretary shall be elected to serve a term of two years and shall assist the Financial Secretary with duties and be charged with the same responsibilities and authority as vested in the Financial Secretary.

(c) The Financial Secretary and the Assistant Financial Secretary shall be bonded or insured in the sum fixed by the Board of Trustees.

## **Section 6: Church Auditors**

Two Church Auditors shall be elected, one each year, to serve a term of two years. They shall audit the accounts of the Treasurer, Special Trustees, and other accounts as the Church Council or Board of Trustees shall specify. The auditors shall submit a written report to the Board of Trustees for inclusion in the annual report.

## **Section 7: Church Historian**

The Historian of the church shall be elected to serve a term of three years. The Historian shall represent the church on all historical affairs and shall keep a proper and complete record of all events and programs as would comprise a general history of the life of the church. A written report shall be made to the Annual Meeting.

## **Section 8: Trustees of the William C. Sipe Scholarship Fund**

There shall be three Trustees of the Scholarship Fund, one elected annually to serve a term of three years. They shall elect their own chairperson from their number. Duties of the Trustees shall be to receive all moneys directed to this Fund and to award scholarships, either annually or semiannually, from the accrued interest thereof. It shall be their duty to select recipients for these scholarships. If any other funds are provided for seminary scholarships, it shall be their duty to select recipients for these funds as well.

Guidelines to be followed in awarding this scholarship are:

(a) Student must be preparing for service in the United Church of Christ; i.e. parish ministry, mission field, Christian education, pastoral counseling, or other related field.

(b) First preference given a member of our church in seminary study; second to a seminarian from the New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ; third on the basis of need, with preference given to a student at Andover Newton Theological School.

(c) Scholarship(s) to be awarded December 1 and May 1, to coincide with college billing dates.

(d) All interest accrued annually and all other seminary scholarship funds provided in the general budget in a year must be disbursed by December 31. In the event that no recipient is found before this deadline, Trustees may send a check for this total amount to the New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ, to be added to their funds for scholarship assistance.

Chairperson of the Trustees of the Scholarship Fund shall make a written report to the church annual meeting.

## ARTICLE VIII

### BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND FELLOWSHIPS

#### **Section 1: Board of Deacons**

(a) The Board of Deacons shall consist of not more than 12 deacons, with a goal of gender parity, in addition to the Pastor; each shall serve a term of three years, four members to be elected annually.

Each newly elected deacon shall be installed to the office by formal installation at a public service of worship at the earliest opportunity following his or her election. The board shall elect its own chairperson.

(b) The Board of Deacons with the Pastor shall direct the ministry of the church and promote the spiritual life of the church through its worship, faith, and outreach. They shall determine the order of worship and provide the necessary pulpit supply in the absence of the Pastor. They shall participate in the administration of the sacraments.

(c) The Deacons' Fund, administered by the Deacons' Fund Committee of the Board, shall receive the loose offering at four Sunday services each year (the first Sunday of January, the first Sunday of Lent, the first Sunday of July, and the first Sunday of October) and from designated gifts to assist the Board in performing their duties.

(d) The Board of Deacons shall receive and examine all requests for admission to church membership and accept into membership of the church persons they deem to be prepared for membership. The Board of Deacons shall also be in charge of

maintaining the church roll and determining which members are to be placed on the inactive list or dropped from the church rolls.

(e) The Board of Deacons shall visit at the homes of new families in the community, the elderly, the sick, and the bereaved. They shall minister to the needs of the parish families and inform administrators of the Deacons Fund, other board committees, and the Pastor when their services are required.

(f) The Board of Deacons shall in some way express the concern of the church for those who are shut-in or hospitalized, either through correspondence, flowers, or personal calls.

(g) The Board of Deacons shall have responsibility for the provision and care of all appointments to worship such as flowers for the altar at each service, preparation of communion elements, care of the communion service and care of the communion linens.

(h) The Board of Deacons shall assign to committees different areas of responsibility such as Worship, Membership and Evangelism, Home Ministry, Pastoral Relations, and administration of the Deacons Fund. Chairpersons and some or all members of these committees shall be members of the Board. The Board of Deacons shall have the power to appoint persons to these committees who are not members of the Board. The Board of Deacons shall appoint one of their members to serve on the Board of Music, Board of Christian Education, Fellowship & Hospitality Committee, and Church Council.

(i) All policy, major actions, programs and decisions of all committees of the Board must be submitted to and be approved by the Board of Deacons before they are executed.

(j) A written report shall be given at the Annual Meeting.

(k) All business of the Board shall be conducted at scheduled meetings with a quorum of at least six members present.

## **Section 2: Board of Trustees**

(a) The Board of Trustees shall consist of a minimum of seven with a maximum goal of nine members; three members shall be elected annually. The Treasurer shall serve as ex officio member without a vote. The Board shall elect its own chairperson.

(b) The Board of Trustees shall manage the financial affairs of the church. The Board shall have entire charge of all property,

reserve funds and current moneys of the church. They shall consult with the Board of Deacons as to policies and changes to the sanctuary and its appointments. They shall work in cooperation and in an advisory capacity with those organizations which assume financial obligations with respect to the church's real estate. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the church without the specific vote of the church.

(c) The Board of Trustees shall prepare a budget for the ensuing fiscal year based on requests submitted by the church-sponsored organizations, boards and committees, the closing date for receiving requests to be established by the Trustees. The working budget is to be presented to the Church Council at their January meeting. The Trustees shall coordinate and present a complete church budget at the annual meeting.

(d) They shall authorize and direct the treasurer as to the payments of moneys under their control. They shall provide a complete report at the annual meeting of business and proceedings and the condition of the church's property. The Board shall anticipate major capital outlays and plan them over a period of years.

(e) All business of the Board shall be conducted at scheduled meetings with a quorum of at least half the members present, or between meetings via email for urgent matters that cannot wait, with any motion by email approved by at least half the members and recorded in the minutes of the subsequent meeting.

(f) The Board of Trustees shall appoint a minimum of one and not more than three active members to serve as Special Trustees, who may or may not be members of the Board of Trustees. The Church Treasurer may not serve as a Special Trustee. The Special Trustees shall be limited to three consecutive full three-year terms. The Board of Trustees shall fill vacancies when they occur. The duties of the Special Trustees shall (subject to guidelines and policies established by the Board of Trustees) include full charge and custody of 1) all legacies and gifts that are bequeathed to the Church for permanent endowment and 2) special funds that may be entrusted to them by the Board of Trustees or the Church Council with full power to invest the same and to collect and distribute all profits and income. Such income or profits shall be distributed in

accordance with the terms of the bequest or as directed by the Board of Trustees and the Church Council.

Quarterly reports shall be submitted to the Board of Trustees; an annual report shall be made to the Annual Meeting and audited by the Church Auditors.

The Special Trustees shall be bonded or insured as the Trustees may determine.

(g) The Memorial Committee may allocate monies from the Memorial Gift Funds to pay for projects or items as the opportunity arises.

- All Memorial Gift monies received shall be put into a Memorial Gift Fund
- The Memorial Committee, which consists of three members appointed by the Board of Trustees, shall have the authorization to spend such funds.
- The Memorial Committee shall furnish a report on their activities during the year in the annual report.

When possible, the family of the person being honored would be consulted concerning the use of the funds.

### **Section 3: Board of Christian Education**

(a) The Board of Christian Education shall consist of a minimum of eight members. One member shall be high school student serving for one year. The remaining adult members shall each serve a two year term. These terms shall be staggered so that four (or more) members are elected each year. A Christian Education Board member may be re-elected to serve two more successive terms. The Board shall elect its own chairperson. The Pastor shall be an ex officio member of this board without a vote. The Christian Education staff shall be an ex officio member of this Board with a vote.

(b) The Board of Christian Education is responsible for the total educational ministry of the church. It should assess the educational needs of all persons in the church, and design a program of Christian education which meets these needs. It should enable each person and organization of the church to participate as fully as possible in the church's teaching/learning/witnessing ministry. The board initiates, offers guidance and implements the



various educational functions of the church. The chairperson shall make a written report to the church at the annual meeting.

(c) The Board shall supervise the Christian Education program of the church. The Christian Education staff shall be directly responsible to the Board.

(d) All business of the Board shall be conducted at scheduled meetings with a quorum of at least half the members present, including either the Pastor or the Christian Education staff member.

#### **Section 4: Board of Mission and Action**

(a) The Board of Mission and Action shall consist of a minimum of eight adults each to serve term of three years and one youth member who shall be a high school student serving for one year. The Board shall elect its own chairperson or co-chairpersons and be empowered to appoint as many additional persons (church members and/or non-members) as needed.

(b) The Board of Mission and Action shall be responsible for providing for outreach and education in the area of social concern. They shall recommend a missions budget to the Trustees each year and shall administer the mission focus of the congregation. They shall make a written report to the church at the annual meeting.

(c) All business of the Board shall be conducted at scheduled meetings with a quorum of at least five members present.

#### **Section 5: The Board of Music**

(a) The Board of Music shall consist of six members who shall serve a term of three years each, with two members being elected annually. In addition, a member of the Board of Deacons shall serve on this Board. The Board shall elect its own chairperson. The Choir Director(s) and Organist(s) shall be members ex officio and without vote.

(b) The Board shall supervise the music program of the church. The organist(s) and choir director(s) shall be directly responsible to the Board. The Board shall be responsible for administering the purchase of music and shall recommend a budget for music to the Trustees each year. The Board shall be responsible for recruiting

choir members and recommending organists and choir directors when vacancies shall occur.

(c) The Board shall consult with the Board of Trustees and the Board of Deacons for guidelines concerning the musical portion of the worship service.

(d) The Board shall be responsible for assuring that the use of music for all choirs and for congregational participation is in accordance with the current copyright laws.

(e) The Board shall make a written report to the church at the annual meeting.

(f) All business of the Board shall be conducted at scheduled meetings with a quorum of at least three members present.

### **Section 6: The Board of Christian Stewardship**

(a) The Board of Christian Stewardship shall consist of a minimum of six with a maximum goal of eight members; each to serve a term of three years. The membership of the Board of Christian Stewardship will include the Financial Secretary and the Assistant Financial Secretary. The Financial Secretary and Assistant Financial Secretary shall be ex officio members with a vote. This Board shall elect its own chairperson. The Board shall confer with the Board of Trustees (and the Church Council) to ascertain the financial needs of the church and shall prepare and conduct a Christian Stewardship drive on an annual basis.

(b) The Board of Christian Stewardship shall place in the hands of the Financial Secretary the records of all pledges, collections, and gifts given during the year.

(c) The Board of Christian Stewardship will meet on a regular basis or as necessary and is expected to enlist new members in the financial support of the church.

(d) All business of the Board shall be conducted at scheduled meetings with a quorum of at least four members present.

(e) A written report shall be made at the Annual Meeting.

### **Section 7: The Nominating Committee**

(a) The Nominating Committee shall consist of a minimum of five members with a maximum goal of six members proposed by the Church Council, each to serve a term of three years, with two

members being elected annually. The Nominating Committee shall confer with the Boards and standing Committees to ascertain their needs and shall place in nomination at least one name for each office to be filled at the annual meeting. This committee shall elect its own chairperson.

(b) All business of the Board shall be conducted at scheduled meetings with a quorum of at least three members present.

(c) A written report shall be made at the Annual Meeting.

### **Section 8: Fellowships**

The fellowship for women, under the name Congregational Church Women's Fellowship, shall be open to all women. It shall elect its own officers and have jurisdiction over its finances. The Congregational Church Women's Fellowship shall have representation on the Church Council. Said representative must be a member of the church. It shall make a written report including a financial statement to the church at the annual meeting.

### **Section 9: Delegates**

Delegates shall be elected as provided by the by-laws of the Hillsborough Association United Church of Christ, and the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ. This committee shall elect its own chairperson. The chairperson would be responsible for informing the Committee of Delegates and the church of issues being considered by the larger church and shall make a written report to the church and/or the council, stating actions taken at Association meetings. Delegates shall be elected to serve a term of three years with at least two members elected annually.

### **Section 10: Fellowship & Hospitality Committee**

(a) The Fellowship & Hospitality Committee shall consist of at least three members who shall be elected annually. A member of the Board of Deacons shall also serve on the Committee. The Fellowship & Hospitality Committee may designate its own structure and leadership positions and be empowered to appoint as many additional persons (church members and/or non-members) to the Committee as needed.

(b) The Fellowship & Hospitality Committee shall be responsible for promoting Christian Fellowship within the congregation through

social gatherings and will provide hospitality services for special events.

(c) They shall recommend a fellowship and hospitality budget to the Trustees each year and provide a written report for the Annual Meeting.

(d) All business of the Committee shall be conducted at meetings with a quorum of at least three members or via email for non-critical items.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **CHURCH COUNCIL**

#### **Section 1: Membership**

The Church Council shall consist of the Pastors or Ministers (with one vote), Clerk, Treasurer, a representative from the Board of Deacons, Board of Trustees, Board of Christian Education, Board of Mission and Action, Board of Music, Board of Christian Stewardship, Nominating Committee, Fellowship & Hospitality Committee, Congregational Church Women’s Fellowship, and three members of the church-at-large who shall not hold any other elective office, and from any committee of the church that the Council may designate. Each member of the Council must be an active member of the church and represent only one of the above positions.

#### **Section 2: Election**

Those members representing the Boards and the Congregational Church Women’s Fellowship and other designated committees shall be appointed by their respective groups to serve a term of one year. One member-at-large shall be elected annually to serve a term of three years. The Church Council shall elect its own chairperson or chairpersons from one of the members-at-large. Church Council members shall serve until a replacement is duly appointed.

### **Section 3: Duties and Responsibilities**

The Church Council shall try to interpret the will of the congregation in its function as the executive committee of the church. Its action may be subject to review, appeal, and change at any meeting of the church. It cannot veto the decisions of the standing boards and committees elected by the church, but it may counsel aforesaid boards and committees. All organizations within the church or organizations that are church-sponsored shall be expected to confer with the Church Council either through their representative or by report to the church. The activity of such organizations shall be subject to the direction and approval of the Church Council.

The Church Council shall be responsible for coordinating the various aspects of the church's life. Toward this end, the Church Council shall submit to the church an annual report outlining its activities and objectives.

Further, the Church Council shall be responsible:

(a) To fill until the next annual meeting of the church, vacancies occurring in the elective offices of the church, with the exception of the pastorate. Upon request of a Board or Committee Chairperson, a Board/Committee member may be removed by vote of the Council (see Qualifications for Office, Article X).

(b) To elect all representatives and delegates of the church unless specifically provided for in these by-laws, and to instruct them that they have no power to bind the church to financial obligations or to any definite course of action unless such power is expressly given in the action of their appointment.

(c) To appoint any committees it deems necessary to carry out specific functions in the church's work and ministry. These committees shall serve on an annual basis and are subject only to the Church Council.

(d) To direct the use of church facilities and equipment as it shall determine, and set a scale of rentals for their use. At no time may an individual or organization without affiliation to the church use the same without permission of the Church Council

(e) To propose for election to the Nominating Committee two names annually, each to serve a term of three years.

(f) To establish and effectively administer personnel policy and procedures through the Council sub-committee known as the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee shall comprise the following active members of the church: The Chairperson of the Church Council, the Pastor, a church member appointed by each of the following: the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees, the Board of Music, and the Board of Christian Education; and such other church members as deemed appropriate by the vote of the Church Council.

#### **Section 4: Meetings**

The Church Council shall hold its meetings at such times to be decided by the chairperson or by request of three members. Six members shall represent a quorum.

### **ARTICLE X**

#### **QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE**

All officers of the church must be active members of the church. No person may hold more than one officer position at a time.

Members of the Board of Deacons and Board of Trustees shall be active members of the church. Elected members of other church boards and committees shall be either active members of the church or active non-members if approved by the Church Council, unless otherwise specified in these bylaws. Board members may be elected to serve no more than two complete successive terms (excluding the Fellowship & Hospitality Committee), unless otherwise specified in these bylaws. They are invited to consider renewing their participation but are encouraged to reflect on where their gifts and time might be best used by God in our church's wider ministry. After completing the maximum successive terms, the person may not serve on the same committee for at least one year.

It is the duty of all officers and board members to be regular and faithful in the discharge of all authority and duties assigned to them. The Church Council may request the resignation of officers

or board members negligent or inactive in respect to the obligations of their office and to declare it vacant and proceed to fill the vacancy in the manner herein provided. Negligent or inactive officers and board members who refuse to resign can be dismissed by the vote of two thirds of the Church Council members present and voting. Letters of resignation by Board members shall be directed to the chairperson of that Board and to the chairperson of Church Council. In the case of the dismissal of board members by the Church Council, this action is to be taken only upon recommendation of the board concerned.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **AMENDMENTS**

These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote of those present at any business meeting of the church, provided that the notice of the meeting clearly states the nature and detail of the proposed action.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH**

In the event of dissolution of the church, all assets will become the property of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ or such group or organization as may legally succeed the aforementioned.

Revised and accepted at the Annual Meeting of February 2019.