

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS  
OF  
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN KEENE**

**Effective July 1, 2009**

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OF  
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SECTION I

A. PREAMBLE

The United Church of Christ in Keene, formed by the union of the Court Street Congregational Church of Keene, New Hampshire, and the First Congregational Church of Keene, New Hampshire, in order to express more fully the oneness in Christ of the churches composing it, to make more effective their common witness in Him, and to serve His kingdom in the world, hereby adopts this constitution and by-laws.

B. NAME

The name of this Church shall be: The United Church of Christ in Keene.

C. PURPOSE

The United Church of Christ in Keene acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of persons. It acknowledges as family in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in Scriptures and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to promote its creative and redemptive work in the community and the world. It claims as its own the faith of the historic church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each new generation to make this faith its own in reality of worship, in honesty of thought and expression, in purity of heart before God, and in its witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

D. SACRAMENTS

In accordance with the teachings of our Lord and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, this Church recognizes two Sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.

E. POLITY

We believe in the freedom and responsibility of the individual, and the right of common judgment. We hold to the autonomy of the local Church and the independence of its ecclesiastical control. Its government is vested in its membership as hereinafter defined, subject in legal matters to the articles of incorporation. We agree to maintain the institution of the Gospel, to conduct the orderly administration of the affairs of the Church and to walk together in Christian love.

F. COVENANT

We are united in striving to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures and in our purpose to walk in the ways of the Lord, known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the United Church of Christ to proclaim the Gospel to all humankind, exalting the worship of the one true God and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace and the realization of human fellowship. Depending, as did our forebears, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world into the Kingdom of God; and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting.

## G. FAITH

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and 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.

## H. FELLOWSHIP

The United Church of Christ in Keene affirms the principle of voluntary fellowship among Churches, recognizes its responsibility to the larger fellowship in which it stands, and acknowledges its obligation of mutual counsel, comity and cooperation resting upon Churches in which freedom-in-fellowship is cherished. The United Church of Christ in Keene shall be in direct fellowship with the Cheshire Association of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ, the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ, and the General Synod of the United Church of Christ; and shall continue such direct fellowship with the successor(s) of these bodies in the United Church of Christ. It shall also maintain a cooperative spirit and fellowship with the Cheshire Association of Churches, the New Hampshire Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the World Council of Churches, and other interdenominational organizations.

## I. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

### 1. Members

Unless otherwise specifically provided in these bylaws wherever the term member is used or referred to herein, the term will include Members as herein defined in paragraph I (a) and Associate Members as defined in paragraph I (b), below.

- a. Individuals may become members of this Church upon the confession or reaffirmation of faith, or upon presentation of letters of transfer from other Churches. Having been baptized, assenting to the Covenant of this Church, and having received orientation deemed appropriate by the Diaconate, they may be formally received into fellowship.

b. Associate Members shall be those people who are members of another church who are residents of the Keene area and are active in the worship life and ministry of this church, but who desire to retain membership in a former church. Individuals may become Associate Members by declaring their intentions, and by observing and fulfilling the protocol for membership. They will have all the privileges and responsibilities of members as defined in paragraph I (a) above, except that they may not serve on the Delegates Committee. In addition, they shall not be counted for purposes of reporting membership statistics.

2. The names of candidates for church membership will be presented by the Minister(s) to the Diaconate and then to the Church, in such manner and at such times as may be prescribed by the Diaconate.

3. In so far as possible, all Members of this Church are expected to be faithful to the spirituality essential to the Christian Life, to attend the services of the Church, to share in its organized activities and to make a personal contribution to the annual church budget.

4. Any member who does not comply even after counsel by the members of the Diaconate, with the stated expectations of membership of the United Church of Christ in Keene, may at the discretion of the Diaconate, and after due notice, have their name removed from the list of active church membership and have it placed on the list of inactive church members.

5. Any member whose name has been placed on the inactive list may have their name restored to the active list upon assuming a share in the activities of the Church as described in paragraph I.3. and approved by the Diaconate.

#### J. LETTERS OF TRANSFER

Letters of transfer will be provided by the Diaconate at the request of a member.

#### K. OFFICERS, CHURCH COUNCIL, MINISTRIES AND COMMITTEES (See Appendix A)

The Officers, Ministries and Committees of this Church shall consist of:

##### 1. Officers:

- a. Moderator
- b. Clerk and Assistant Clerk
- c. Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer

##### 2. Church Council including the Coordinators:

##### 3. Ministries:

- a. Spiritual Life and Formation:
  - Diaconate
  - Music and Arts
  - Youth Ministry
  - Church School
  - Adult Spiritual Formation
  - Family and Intergenerational
- b. Outreach and Mission:
  - Outreach and Mission
  - Social Action
  - Communications and Membership Development
  - Hospitality and Caring
- c. Stewardship and Resources:
  - Finance
  - Stewardship and Planned Giving
  - Property
  - Personnel
  - Pastor-Parish Relations

Leadership Development and Nominating  
Delegates  
By-laws

#### L. ELECTION

All Officers of the Church will be elected annually at the Annual Meeting. Coordinators and Committee Members, as prescribed by the section on Committees shall be elected at the Annual Meeting. All Officers, Coordinators, Council Members, and Diaconate, Finance, Personnel, Delegates and Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Members shall be Members or Associate Members of the Church. Associate Members may not serve on the Delegates Committee. All other Committees may include non Church members for up to one half of the Committee Membership. An Auditor will be elected annually at the Annual Meeting. See Section IV B. Annual Meeting.

#### M. ORGANIZATIONS

Inasmuch as this Church is united in purpose, it welcomes the creation of organizations which will assist in the accomplishment of its purpose including fellowship groups for youth and adults, circles, societies, and associations. Each organization, which derives its principal membership from the Members, Associate Members, and all others of the congregation of this Church shall be regarded as an integral part of the Church and shall receive general oversight from the Ministers and the Church Council. All such organizations shall be expected to: cooperate fully in the realization of the Church's purpose; adhere to all provisions of these By-laws; and coordinate their activities through the church office and the Church Council.

### SECTION II

#### A. OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

##### 1. Moderator

The Moderator will be elected annually by the Members, and conduct the business of the Annual Meeting and any Special Meetings in accordance with appropriate Parliamentary Procedure. The Moderator may not be an Officer, Coordinator or chairperson of any Committee.

- a. If for any reason the Moderator is unable to perform prescribed duties the Church Council will appoint an interim Moderator.

##### 2. Clerk

The Clerk will keep an accurate record of the meetings of the congregation and Church Council, and delegate to or perform in conjunction with the Church Administrator the following:

- a. Keep a register with the addresses of the members of the Church, with dates and modes of their reception and removal; and a record of baptisms, marriages and funerals.
- b. Issue Letters of Transfer of Members as directed by the Diaconate.
- c. Keep an accurate list of all active and inactive members and report in writing at the Annual Meeting all changes in membership.
- d. Preserve on file all communications and written reports and gives legal notice of all meetings where notice is required by this Constitution and By-Laws.

##### 3. Assistant Clerk

The Assistant Clerk will assume the responsibilities of the Clerk when so designated by the Clerk. If in the judgment of the Church Council the Clerk is unable to perform prescribed duties, then the Chair of the Church Council will designate an Assistant Clerk to serve until the next Annual Meeting or until the Clerk is able to resume the duties, whichever comes first.

#### 4. Treasurer

The Treasurer will:

- a. Be responsible for all receipts and disbursements of the Church, subject to the direction and control of the Finance Committee, and will keep an accurate record thereof.
- b. Submit a detailed written report of all receipts and disbursements at meetings of the Finance Committee and Church Council.
- c. Maintain, at the expense of the Church, a safe deposit box wherein shall be kept all papers of value belonging to the Church, access to which will be designated by the Church Council.
- d. Be bonded, at the expense of the Church, in such amount as the Finance Committee shall designate.
- e. Submit statements of Financial Position, Income and Expenses, Changes in Fund Balances and other appropriate schedules to the Church Council for approval within 45 days of the fiscal year end. These statements shall be made available to the congregation thereafter.

#### 5. Assistant Treasurer

The Assistant Treasurer will:

- a. Assume responsibility of the Treasurer when so designated by the Treasurer or when the Treasurer is unable to perform prescribed duties.
- b. Be bonded, at the expense of the Church, in such amount as the Finance Committee shall designate.

### B. CHURCH STAFF

#### 1. Senior Minister

- a. The Senior Minister will serve as head of the entire Church Staff.
- b. A job description will be prepared by the Personnel Committee and shall be approved by the Church Council.

#### 2. Associate Minister(s)

- a. The Church may call one or more Ordained Associate Ministers. Designation and duties shall be as agreed upon by the Church and the Senior Minister. The Church Council will be responsible for making recommendations to the Church for action.
- b. A job description for the Associate Minister will be prepared by the Personnel Committee and shall be approved by the Church Council.

#### 3. Assistant Minister(s)

The Senior Minister and Church Council may choose one or more Assistant Ministers who may or may not be ordained. Duties shall be agreed upon by the Senior Minister and Church Council and documented in consultation with the Personnel Committee.

#### 4. Director of Christian Education or Church School Director

- a. A Director of Christian Education or Church School Director may be recommended by the Senior Minister in consultation with the appropriate Committees of the Spiritual Life and Formation Ministry and approved by the Church Council.
- b. The Director of Christian Education will, under the guidance and direction of the Senior Minister and in coordination with the Spiritual Life and Formation Ministry, initiate and supervise plans for the Christian Education program of the Church. The Church School Director will, under the guidance and direction of the Senior Minister and in coordination with the Church School Committee, initiate and supervise plans for the Church School of the Church.
- c. This position may be filled by an Associate or Assistant Minister.

## 5. Director of Music

- a. The Director of Music will, under the guidance and direction of the Senior Minister and in coordination with the Music and Arts Committee, initiate and supervise the music program of the Church. The Director of Music will be recommended by the Senior Minister in consultation with the Music & Arts Committee and hired with the approval of the Church Council.
- b. This position may be filled by an Associate or Assistant Minister.

## 6. Church Administrator

The Church Administrator will, under the guidance and direction of the Senior Minister, be responsible for the general administrative functions of the Church and provide secretarial services to the Ministers. The Church Administrator may be assigned by the Senior Minister as staff representative to committees as appropriate. See also Financial Secretary.

## 7. Financial Secretary

- a. The Financial Secretary will, under the guidance and direction of the Senior Minister and Church Treasurer, receive and account for all pledges and collections of the Church and shall accurately post all payments by members. Additional duties may be assigned by the Church Treasurer.
- b. The Financial Secretary shall be bonded, at the expense of the Church, in such amounts as the Finance Committee shall designate.
- c. This position may be filled by the Church Administrator.

## 8. Other Staff

The Church Administrator, the Financial Secretary and other staff members shall be appointed by the Senior Minister in consultation with the Personnel Committee and after approval of the Church Council.

## SECTION III

### A. COUNCIL, MINISTRIES and COMMITTEES

1. The governance of the Church shall be vested in its members and carried out through its Council, Ministries and Committees, structured as provided in Appendix A.
2. The Church Council will be the chief governing body of the Church.
3. Committee members shall be elected by the Members at the annual meeting for a term of two years each. Any committee member may be re-elected for two additional two-year terms, but no member may serve more than three consecutive two-year terms (six consecutive years) on any committee. After six years, committee members must have a one year break in service prior to reelection or reappointment to the same committee. The Council may appoint persons to fill vacancies on committees. Persons appointed to fill vacancies may be elected for two additional full two-year terms but no one may serve more than six consecutive years on the same committee. Elections to committees shall be held annually and be so arranged that the terms of the committee members shall expire on a staggered basis.
4. Committees will elect their own officers, keep accurate records of their proceedings, develop their own written procedures in accordance with the by-laws, and report regularly to the Church Council through their Ministry Coordinator. Each committee shall develop and monitor a committee budget and shall submit an annual reporting to the congregation through their Ministry Coordinator.
5. A quorum for the Council and the Diaconate will consist of a majority of their voting membership; for all other Committees a quorum will be at least half of their voting membership.

6. The Senior Minister will assign staff resources to committees as appropriate.
7. Committees will be encouraged to form Ad hoc Teams and Interest Groups from the congregation and the community for help and expertise to carry out responsibilities.

## B. THE CHURCH COUNCIL

### 1. Membership

The Church Council will consist of nine (9) members of the Church. Six (6) will be elected by the members of the Church and three (3) will be the Ministry Coordinators. The Ministers, Director of Music, Treasurer and Church Clerk will be members ex officio without vote.

### 2. Duties

- a. The Council will be the chief governing body of the Church to which the Ministry Coordinators and Committees are responsible, and will be subject to the direction of and responsible to the members of the Church.
- b. The Council will meet as soon as is practicable following the annual meeting to elect a chairperson from the 6 at-large members.
- c. The Council may delegate duties to Committees and will have the power to establish Committees, Ad hoc Teams and Interest Groups to assist in carrying forward the integrated program for the whole Church.
- d. The Council will receive from the Ministry of Stewardship Resources Coordinator, review and approve, a recommended budget for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Church.
- e. Subject to the prior approval of the Church Membership, the Council will have the power to borrow funds and to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer real property.
- f. The Council will be responsible for the current and future memorial funds and gifts to the Church, will develop and maintain a policy defining the procedures by which such funds and gifts are received, recorded and expended.
- g. The Council will fill vacancies in Officers of the Church and Committees. Persons to be considered to fill vacancies should be recommended by the applicable Committee.
- h. The Council will appoint an Historian who shall serve until the appointment of a successor. The Historian will keep accurate records of Church events, and supervise the accumulation, preservation, presentation, and display of historic memorabilia. The Historian will bring significant anniversaries to the attention of the Church.
- i. The Council will make Committee minutes available to the Congregation.
- j. The Council will oversee the Safe Church Policy.
- k. The Council will appoint one of its members to the Delegates.

## C. COORDINATORS:

### 1. Membership

Each Ministry shall have a Coordinator nominated by the Minister(s) and Council and elected by the members at the annual meeting. Each Coordinator will be a member of the Council.

2. Duties. The Coordinators shall work with their Ministry Committees to develop goals and objectives for the Ministry and advise on their implementation. The Coordinators shall be the primary liaison for their Ministry with the Council, Staff and Congregation.

## D. MINISTRIES:

### 1. MINISTRY OF SPIRITUAL LIFE AND FORMATION

This ministry team will partner with church staff to ensure that this church is a place of spiritual sustenance and growth for all who are on a faith journey, seeking meaning and purpose in life. It will focus on worship and spiritual formation (Christian Education) for all ages. This ministry team will support worship and spiritual formation opportunities that are accessible in all senses to all;



intellectually, spiritually, physically and emotionally. This ministry will include the committees listed below along with Interest Groups and Ad hoc Teams involved in worship planning, prayer, and spiritual formation, Diaconate, Music and Arts, Drama, Youth Ministry, Church School, Adult Spiritual Formation, Prayer Ministry, Stephen Ministry and others as created.

a. **DIACONATE**

(1). **Membership**

The Diaconate will consist of twelve (12) members of the Church elected by the members of the Church.

(2). **Duties**

- a. Cooperate with the Minister(s) in promoting the spiritual life of the Church and community.
- b. Act upon applications for transfers and terminations of membership in the Church and report to the Church Clerk all action taken in connection with Church Membership.
- c. Assist the Minister(s) in administering the Sacraments.
- d. Provide greeters and ushers.
- e. Review regularly, with the Minister(s), the contents of the Order of Worship.
- f. Be responsible for maintaining adequate pulpit supply in the absence of the Minister(s).
- g. Oversee and support Stephen Ministry.

b. **MUSIC AND ARTS**

(1). **Membership**

This committee will consist of four (4) persons elected by the members of the Church.

(2). **Duties**

- a. It will be responsible for the Ministry of Music and Art Programs, consulting with the Director of Music, the Minister(s), and other Committees of their Ministry for guidance and suggestions.
- b. It will coordinate programming through its Ministry Coordinator with other committees.
- c. Be responsible for the maintenance of the musical instruments, equipment and library.

c. **YOUTH MINISTRY**

(1). **Membership**

This committee will consist of four (4) persons elected by the members of the Church and up to a total of four(4) youth of middle and high school ages appointed by the elected members of the committee to serve on the committee with vote.

(2). **Duties**

- a. It will be in charge of programming for middle and high school youth. This programming may also include older elementary age and young adult activities when appropriate.
- b. Programs may include but are not limited to: faith journeys, retreats, fund raising, service projects, mission trips and Church camp activities and joint programs with local, Conference and national youth ministries.

d. **CHURCH SCHOOL**

(1). **Membership**

This committee will consist of four (4) persons elected by the members of the Church.

(2). **Duties**

- a. It will be in charge of the Church School program for infants through Confirmation.
- b. Responsibilities may include but are not limited to: Selection of curriculum, recruit and train Church School teachers, arrange for child care and plan for Vacation Bible School.
- c. Oversee relations with the United Church of Christ Cooperative Nursery School.

## e. ADULT SPIRITUAL FORMATION

### (1). Membership

This committee will consist of four (4) persons elected by the members of the Church.

### (2). Duties

- a. It will be responsible for providing the programming that facilitates and enhances faith development across a wide spectrum of topics, including Bible study. Programming may include young adults, when appropriate.
- b. Responsibilities may include but are not limited to: Choosing appropriate topics for attention, recruiting faculty for programming and advertising of programs.

## f. FAMILY AND INTERGENERATIONAL

### (1). Membership

This committee will consist of four (4) persons elected by the members of the Church.

### (2). Duties

- a. It will coordinate the planning and organizing of intergenerational worship, fellowship, drama, educational and mission opportunities and work to meet the needs of all types of families and family structures in the congregation.

## 2. MINISTRY OF MISSION AND OUTREACH

This ministry team will partner with church staff to lead this Church's efforts to be a community of service where all are in mission; to be a welcoming, inclusive congregation that actively seeks diversity in its membership; and to coordinate this Church's activities to enrich the Church's fellowship life. It will include Interest Groups and Ad hoc Teams involved in Social Action, Mission and Outreach, Hospitality and Caring, Communication and Membership Development, Visitation, and others as created.

### a. COMMUNICATION AND MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

#### (1). Membership

This committee will consist of four (4) persons elected by the members of the Church.

#### (2). Duties

- a. It will explore and implement ways to make our Church and its mission and activities visible to its members and the community. In conjunction with the Diaconate, it will encourage new member development and keep the rosters of active adult and youth and potential members current.
- b. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to: Utilization of expert resources for multi-media advertising, oversee the radio ministry, provide welcome packets for visitors, provide new member classes and follow-up with visitor to encourage participation in the activities of the Church

### b. HOSPITALITY AND CARING

#### (1). Membership

This committee will consist of four (4) persons elected by the members of the Church.

#### (2). Duties

- a. It will be responsible for the development and implementation of activities that encourage a Church-wide culture of welcome and nurture.
- b. Activities may include, but are not limited to: Prayer chain, welcome, fellowship hour and fellowship groups.
- c. Oversee the Visitation interest group.
- d. Develop support ministries for congregants with crisis or short term needs.

- e. Work to insure that all programs and activities of our church life are accessible and welcoming.

### c. SOCIAL ACTION

#### (1). Membership

This committee will consist of four (4) persons elected by the members of the Church.

#### (2). Duties

- a. It will be responsible for the development and implementation of activities that help the congregation understand Christian ethical positions on issues of local, national and worldwide injustice to encourage a stronger faith community that stands for peace, justice, equality and diversity. It may be a source of information on how members of the congregation can take steps to support or protest various social issues in conjunction with Association, Conference and national settings.

### d. OUTREACH AND MISSION

#### (1). Membership

This committee will consist of four (4) persons elected by the members of the Church.

#### (2). Duties

- a. It will be responsible for promoting the Church's awareness and involvement in local, regional, national and international mission opportunities. To this end, it will explore issues of civic, economic, cultural, racial, familial, and educational concerns as they are related to Christian principles.
- b. It will promote mission education by seeking to help all members find ways to be involved in mission work.
- c. It will, subject to the approval of the Church Council, direct the distribution of funds budgeted for mission and engage in fund-raising activities for mission.

### 3. MINISTRY OF STEWARDSHIP AND RESOURCES

This ministry team will partner with church staff to exercise good stewardship over the human, physical and financial resources of this Church, minimizing the energy and resources expended on administrative work and maximizing the energy and resources available for other ministries. It will include Interest Groups and Ad hoc Teams: Leadership Development and Nominating, Stewardship and Planned Giving, Personnel, Finance, Property, Pastor-Parish Relations, By-Laws, Historians, Delegates to The Cheshire Association and to the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ, and others as created.

#### a. FINANCE

##### (1). Membership

The Finance Committee will consist of four (4) Members elected by members of the Church and the Church Treasurer will be a member ex officio with vote.

##### (2). Duties

- a. It will act as the Budget Committee of the Church. It will receive all Committee budget requests and prepare a recommended budget for presentation to the Church Council at a time designated by the Council.
- b. It will act as the Investment Committee and will, in coordination with a professional trust organization to be selected by the Committee, manage all Trust and Investment Funds of the Church. It will prepare an Annual Report to be presented at the Annual Meeting.

c. It will monitor the church finances including all expenditures and income, keeping the Church Council through its Coordinator apprised of the financial condition of the church. It will have oversight responsibility over Committee expenditures.

b. PERSONNEL

(1). Membership

This Committee will consist of four (4) Members elected by the members of the church.

(2). Duties

a. It will be responsible for reviewing and recommending to the Church Council, Personnel Policies of the Church, except where such provisions are included in the Call or employment agreement of professional staff.

b. It will assist the Senior Minister in all matters relating to hiring or termination of all staff reporting to the Senior Minister.

c. It will be responsible for seeing that for each employee there is an up to date job description and an annual performance and salary review.

c. PROPERTY

(1). Membership

This Committee will consist of four (4) persons elected by the members of the church.

(2). Duties

a. Be responsible for the care, custody and maintenance of all real and tangible personal property of the Church and coordinate the same with the Church Administrator. It will recommend to the Finance Committee an annual budget for maintenance and improvement of real and tangible personal property of the Church.

b. Be responsible for determining the uses of the Church property which are consistent with policies established by the Church Council.

c. Evaluate the adequacy of the Church Property and Casualty Insurance Program and recommend improvements to the Church Council.

d. Be responsible for training in emergency and safety plans, drills and equipment.

d. STEWARDSHIP AND PLANNED GIVING

(1). Membership

This Committee will consist of six (6) persons elected by the members of the Church.

(2). Duties

a. It will be responsible for the development and implementation of strategies to generate revenues for funding the Church's annual and long term needs.

b. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to: Organizing annual stewardship drives, develop a planned giving program and support year-round stewardship awareness.

e. BY-LAWS

(1). Membership

The By-laws Committee will consist of up to four (4) people who will be appointed by the Church Council on an as needed basis.

(2). Duties

a. It will provide to the Church Council opinions relative to the interpretation or meaning of any part of the Church Constitution and By-laws.

b. At the request of the Church Council, it will present to the Council a draft of any proposed change in, or additions to, the Constitution and By-laws to be submitted by the Council for consideration and action at a business meeting of the Church.

## f. DELEGATES

### (1). Membership

Membership in this Committee will be consistent with the Charter and By-laws of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ. Four (4) will be elected for the first one hundred (100) members of the Church, one of whom shall be under 25 years of age at the time of election, and one (1) additional delegate for each one hundred (100) additional members or major fraction thereof. One (1) delegate will be appointed annually from and by the Church Council. All other delegates will be elected for a period of three (3) years. Associate Members may not serve on this Committee.

### (2). Duties

The delegates will represent the Church at meetings of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ and The Cheshire Association. Unless instructed otherwise by the Church Council or by the membership of the Church at a duly called meeting, delegates may vote their conscience.

## g. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND NOMINATING

### (1). Membership

This committee will consist of seven (7): four (4) persons elected by members of the Church and one appointed from each Ministry Team by its Coordinator.

### (2). Duties

- a. The Committee will recruit members of the congregation, as prescribed in Section I Par. L Election, to serve in committee and leadership positions and will make nominations for all offices and committees required by this Constitution and By-laws.
- b. The Committee will post the complete list of all nominations in a prominent place within the Church at least fourteen (14) days before the Annual Meeting of the Church.
- c. Keep data on talents and interests of the congregation and match them with Church needs.
- d. Anticipate long term leadership needs and be a resource for leadership training and committee effectiveness.

## h. PASTOR-PARISH RELATIONS

### (1). Membership

- a. This Committee will consist of four (4) members of the Church. The Minister(s) and Council each submit names to the Nominating Committee. All names must be acceptable to both Council and Minister(s). The Nominating Committee then selects names from each list and recommends the slate for election by the congregation at the Annual Meeting.
- b. This Committee will elect its own chairperson from its membership and will schedule its own meetings at least quarterly, and as needed. It is at the discretion of the members to meet separately with any or all of the Ministers or by itself without Ministers present when necessary.
- c. At the calling of a new Ordained Minister two (2) members from the search committee will be appointed as addition members to the PPRC until the first anniversary of the Minister's call.

### (2). Duties

- a. To provide a place for dialogue and to maintain an open and healthy relationship between Minister(s), and Congregation.
- b. To address the well-being and growth of the Minister(s), by promoting constructive and caring communication in an atmosphere of confidentiality and trust.
- c. To serve as advisors for the well-being of the Minister(s).
- d. To support the leadership of the Minister(s).
- e. To keep minutes of each meeting, but not share such minutes beyond the Committee.
- f. To keep accurate records of its proceedings and make periodic reports of its activities to the Church Council through its Coordinator.

## SECTION IV

### A. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Church will be July 1 to June 30.

### B. THE ANNUAL MEETING

1. The Annual Meeting of the Church will be held in June each year upon the call of the Church Council.

2. Purpose:

- a. The presentation by the Treasurer of the projected income and expenses of the Church for the current year.
- b. The presentation of, and action on, the Budget proposed for the next year.
- c. The presentation of reports by Officers, Council and Committees of the Church.
- d. Consideration of any other business, which any member may wish to place before the Church.
- e. Election of Officers, Council, Coordinators and Committee Members. The terms of office for newly elected Officers, Council and Coordinators and Committee Members will begin on the July 1.
- f. The Auditor, will be elected by the members of the congregation at a duly called meeting, and will review the financial records of the Church, the reports of the Treasurer and report the same to the Church Council.

### C. SPECIAL MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

Special Meetings of the Church shall be called by the Clerk at the request of the Minister(s), or by a majority vote of the Church Council, or upon written request of twenty-five (25) members of the Church.

### D. NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS

The Annual Meeting and any Special Meeting of the Church requiring a vote of the congregation shall be called by a warrant. The warrant will be signed by the Clerk of the Church and posted at the main entrances of the Church at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the meeting. The warrant will include, but is not limited to: the date of the meeting, the time of the meeting, the place of the meeting, and the purpose for which the meeting is being called.

No action shall be taken to call or dismiss an Ordained Minister, or to sell, mortgage or lease real property of the Church, or to purchase or lease additional real property, or to borrow, unless a copy of the warrant shall have been mailed in the Church publication, or by separate letter, to the last known address of all members eligible to vote at least ten (10) days before the time of the meeting.

### E. VOTING

All members of the Church who are present at a meeting, shall be entitled to vote upon any question before such meeting.

Action to call or dismiss an Ordained Minister, to sell, mortgage or lease real property of the Church, to purchase or lease additional real property, or to borrow, shall require a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

## F. QUORUM

At all meetings of the Church, as specified in the Constitution and By-laws, seventy-five (75) members shall constitute a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, those present may vote to adjourn to a fixed date, time and place.

## G. SEARCH AND CALL PROCEDURE

1. When it becomes necessary to choose an Ordained Senior or Associate Minister for the Church, the Church Council will nominate a Ministerial Search Committee for election by the Church at a Special Meeting of the members of the Church called for that purpose. The Ministerial Search Committee after a suitable search, will recommend the Senior or Associate Minister to the Church at a Special Meeting of the members of the Church called for that purpose. A two-thirds vote of members present is required to extend a Call to the recommended Minister. Ordained Ministers will be called in accordance with procedures designated by the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ.

2. The Senior or Associate Minister, as soon as practical after acceptance of a Call, will become a member of the Church and have their standing transferred to the Cheshire Association, New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ.

## H. RESIGNATION & DISCHARGE

1. An Ordained Minister may resign from his/her Call by giving 60 days written notice to the Church Council.

2. The Church may discharge an Ordained Minister from their Call upon a vote of two-thirds of the Members present at a duly called Special Meeting of the Congregation, said discharge to become effective 60 days following such vote.

3. Assistant Ministers may terminate their employment by giving at least 30 days written notice to the Senior Minister. Their employment may be terminated for cause by the Senior Minister or a majority vote of the Church Council, in accordance with Church Personnel Policy.

## I. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution and By-laws may be amended by a vote of at least two-thirds of those members who are present and voting at any regular or special meeting, provided that the substance of the proposed amendment is stated in the warrant for the meeting.