Proposed

By Law Changes

To be voted on

January 24, 2017

Proposed Changes to the By Laws

1. While the intent of using a non-binary pronoun is recognized to be politically (and otherwise) correct, for a document of this nature it is awkward to be using a plural (they) to represent a singular individual. Instead, all singular pronouns (with the exception of when "He" is referring to God or to Jesus) have been eliminated by rewording those sections where those pronouns previously appeared.
2. Previously, there were term limits for boards and committees. While the term of position is still defined (usually, but not always, 3 years), there is no limit to how many times a member can be reelected to said position. While the rationale for term limits is valid, the size of our congregation makes it impossible to enforce those limits, and so it is proposed that the bylaws reflect that reality. Thus, the limits have been removed.
3. Certain UCC sub groups, such as the Connecticut Conference, no longer exist, so references to these organizations have been replaced by the current organizations (such as the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ), or removed altogether where appropriate.
4. The makeup of committees was made to be uniform throughout, except as noted.
5. All references to the “Trustees” have been removed. All duties of the former Trustees have been moved into the duties of the Administrative Council and, where appropriate, the word “Trustees” is replaced by “Administrative Council”.
6. All references to the “Christian Education Committee” have be replaced by the “Family Faith Committee”, as that is the new name for that committee.
7. Some wording for the position of Senior Minister has been changes for better clarity of the duties of that position.
8. Likewise, there were instances of improved clarity for other officers of the church, as well as some committees.
9. The position of Auditor has been removed, as we have not filled that position for the past 20 or so years. Wording has been added so that the Administrative Council can appoint or hire auditors if deemed appropriate.
10. The timing of the annual church meetings has been brought up to date to reflect our current calendar.
11. Clarification on membership of the church has been added.
12. Women’s Fellowship has been removed as an organization of the church. However, provisions have added for the Administrative Council to recognize any future organizations of the church it deems appropriate.
13. The number for a quorum for a church meeting was reduced to 20 voting members, reflecting our current reality.

There were other lessor changes, for syntax issues, etc., but these are the main proposed adjustments.

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ARTICLE I

This church shall be known as the "First Congregational Church" of Meriden Connecticut, gathered October 22, 1729, and incorporated January 18, 1894, under Chapter XLIV of the Connecticut Public Acts of 1893.

ARTICLE II

FAITH, POLITY AND FELLOWSHIP

We believe in God the Father, infinite in his wisdom, goodness and love; and in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord and Savior, who for us and our salvation lived and died and rose again and liveth evermore; and in the Holy Spirit, who taketh of the things of Christ and revealeth them to us, renewing, comforting and inspiring the souls of men. 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, made known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church of Christ to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind, exalting the worship of the one true God, and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice and reign of peace, and the realization of human brotherhood. Depending, as did our fathers, upon the continued transformation of the world into the kingdom of God; and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting.

The government of this church is vested exclusively in the body of believers who compose it. It is in fellowship with all churches which seek to promote the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, and acknowledges particular obligations of fellowship with the body of Congregational Christian Churches and to the United Church of Christ. It further pledges itself to share in their common work, especially as represented by the Connecticut Central Association, the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, and similar agencies in alignment with the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE III

We covenant with the Lord and with one another and doe bynd our selves in the presence of God, to walke together in all His waies, according as He is pleased to reveale himself unto us in His blessed word of truth.

ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Qualifications: Membership in this church shall be open to all persons who confess their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord, who desire to serve Him with sincere hearts, and purpose to live according to His law of love. We affirm that our membership is open to all persons who accept the obligations of membership in the Church of Jesus Christ without any restriction as to race, class or ethnic background.

Section 2 - Conditions: The membership of this church shall consist of those who:

a) Affirm, their Christian faith and receive Baptism where not previously baptized.

b) Present satisfactory letters of transfer from other churches, or

c) Reaffirm their faith, if their former church membership has lapsed or letters of transfer are not granted because of the policy of their former church; and having been accepted by vote of this church, publicly assent to its Covenant.

Section 3 - Classes of Members: The following classes of members shall be recognized:

a) Active Members - Those who regularly attend the services, share in the program, and support the work of this church.

b) Non-Resident Members - Those who permanently reside outside of the church attendance area but continue to support this church, and have been so classified by the Diaconate.

c)Associate Members - Those who are members of other churches and in good standing but who, for reasons of temporary residence in the Meriden area or for other reasons acceptable to the Diaconate, desire to unite with this church. Such persons may be received into this church as Associate Members while still retaining membership in their former churches.

Conditions of Associate Membership shall be the same as those outlined for Active Membership. Such Associate Member shall be expected to support this church, according to the Associate Member's means, and shall be eligible to serve as a member of any committee of this church and to vote in church meetings. However, an Associate Member shall not be eligible for the chairmanship of any committee, nor be elected as an officer of the church.

d) Inactive Members - Members whose addresses have been unknown for two years or who, for the same period, have not communicated with the church in any form will be transferred to inactive membership by a vote of the Deaconate. Inactive members have no vote in church matters. The Deacons may restore inactive members to active status, or remove them from the church roles altogether, at their discretion.

A person who participates in the life of the church sharing its values and ministry, but who for certain reasons does not wish to, or cannot take up the rights and duties of full or associate membership, shall be welcome in the total life of this church, with the exception of voting at church meetings, chairing a committee or serving as an officer of the church.

The Diaconate shall supervise the classification of members.

Section 4 - Reception: Names of persons seeking membership in the church will be presented to the Deaconate by the Pastor. After ensuring that prospective members have either (a) authorized letters of transfer, or (b) established that they have been baptized, the Deacons will then vote on receiving the prospects into membership by way of (a) a letter of transfer, or (b) Reaffirmation of Faith. Having received a favorable vote, candidates would then be recommended to the Administrative Council for acceptance as members of the church.

New members must be present at the service that officially receives them into membership.

Should infirmity or other cause, acceptable to the Minister and to the Diaconate, make church

attendance impossible for public acceptance of the Covenant by an applicant, membership shall become effective upon the person's acceptance of the Covenant in the presence of the Minister and one member of the Diaconate.

Section 5 - Duties: Members are expected to be faithful, in all the spiritual duties essential to the Christian life, to attend habitually the service of this church, to give regularly for its support and its benevolences, and to share in its organized work.

Section 6 - Rights: All members and Associate members of the church may vote on all matters pertaining to the business of the church. There shall be no proxy voting. Those voting members who cannot attend formally called Church Meetings called by the Clerk of the Church shall have the right to a controlled absentee ballot.

Section 7 - Termination: (a) A member in good standing, upon written request, may be dismissed from membership or given a letter of transfer to some other Christian body, without delay, by vote of the Diaconate. (b) Should a member become an offense to the church, and to its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his covenant vows, the church may terminate his membership, but only after due notice and after a hearing, if such hearing is requested by the offending member. This action shall originate with the Diaconate after patient and loving efforts by the Diaconate and the Minister to persuade the member to amend his life.

Section 8 - Restoration: Any name which has been removed from the role may be restored by vote of the church upon recommendation of the Diaconate.

ARTICLE V

OFFICERS, COMMITTES AND DELEGATES

A. OFFICERS

The officers of the church shall be a Minister, a Moderator, a Clerk, a Treasurer, an Assistant Treasurer, a Historian, a Registrar, and a Memorial Fund-Coordinator. All officers must be Active Members of this church. Unless otherwise stated, all officers are ex-officio members of the Administrative Council, with vote.

1) The Minister shall be ordained, with full and regular ministerial standing in the Association to which this church belongs. The congregation may call a Minister who is working toward, but not yet, fully ordained, if ordination is to be achievable within a period of time acceptable to the congregation. The Minister shall have charge of the worship service of the church, and shall carry on a ministry of preaching, pastoral care and leadership. In these functions, The Minister shall seek and cherish the advice of the Diaconate.

The Minister shall be responsible for administration of the church’s normal daily activities. However, the Minister shall consult with the Administrative Council on matters regarding hiring staff, and of overseeing staff who are not under the direction of a specific committee. The Minister shall consult with the Council on any issues regarding staff that are beyond the normal activities and, In the case of a major personnel issue, the Minister shall raise said issue with the Personnel Committee.

The Minister shall be a primary facilitator of communication in the life of the church. The Minister shall hold staff meetings as programming and scheduling require.

The Minister will be a member of the congregation and an ex-officio member, without vote, of all boards and committees. The Minister shall be entitled to be present at any meeting of any church-sanctioned group, except meetings of the congregation during the time when The Minister's tenure or salary is under discussion, if the church so votes.

The call of a Minister shall be by the affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church. The call shall state the specific terms of the relationship between the Minister and the church including the amounts and forms of initial compensation, a clearly defined job description, and the formal relationship with the church staff, officers, Boards, and Committees. These terms shall be drafted by the Pastoral Search Committee in consultation with the Diaconate and the Administrative Council.

DISMISSAL OF A MINISTER

a) By Resignation: In the case of a resignation, the Administrative Council shall call a special meeting of the church to act upon such resignation. Resignation of a Minister shall be with sixty (60) days-notice or according to the terms of the contract.

b) For Cause: In the case of a proposed dismissal for cause, the Administrative Council, upon recommendation of the Diaconate, shall consider the case at a meeting called specifically for that purpose, but the Minister shall have been given at least ten (10) days-notice in writing of such pending action. The Minister may attend such meeting and shall be given full opportunity for a hearing at which time the Minister may be represented by counsel. Then the Minister shall leave such meeting and the Administrative Council shall consider the subject in executive session. If the majority of the Administrative Council votes for the dismissal of the Minister, a special meeting of the church shall be convened. At the special meeting of the church, if a majority of eligible voting members vote in favor of such dismissal, the relationship of the church and its Minister will cease. Sixty (60) days-notice will be required unless voted otherwise.

2) The Moderator shall be elected at each Annual Meeting of the church to serve for one year, and shall be eligible for re-election. The Moderator shall be the chairperson of the Administrative Council, with vote, and shall preside at all business meetings of the church and the Administrative Council. In the event of the Moderator's absence at a meeting, the Moderator may appoint a temporary Moderator to run the meeting. Otherwise, the Minister or Clerk may call the meeting to order and a Moderator pro-tempore shall be elected for that meeting.

3) The Clerk shall be elected at each Annual Meeting of the church, to serve for one year, and. shall be eligible for re-election. The Clerk shall keep a complete record of the transactions of all business meetings of the church and the Administrative Council. The Clerk shall preserve on file all official written reports, and shall give legal notice of the Annual Meeting of the church and all other business meetings of the church.

4) The Treasurer shall be elected at each Annual Meeting of the church for one year, and shall be eligible for re-election.

The Treasurer shall have charge of the funds of the church, receiving all offerings, paying all bills, and keeping open and true accounts of all fiscal transactions of the church under policies set by the Administrative Council with the approval of the church. The Treasurer shall keep separate accounts as follows:

a) of all monies raised for missionary purposes, from which payments are made per order of the Christian Outreach Committee to the organizations entitled thereto.

b) of all monies raised for the support of the church, from which payments are made per order of the Administrative Council.

c) of all income from trust funds, from which disbursements are made as provided under the terms of the instruments creating the individual trusts.

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep a written, permanent record of the amount and terms of all gifts, bequests, and devices which by their terms are restricted as to the use of principle and/or income. The Treasurer shall also keep a record of unrestricted gifts and their expenditures.

If the church has duly approved an action requiring, or if these by-laws require, the execution of a deed, note, contract, instrument of transfer or other instrument of writing by an officer of the church, then the Treasurer shall have the power to execute such writing on behalf of the church. The Treasurer, at the direction of the Administrative Council, shall be authorized and empowered to borrow in the name and on behalf of the church, either from the church's trust funds or from a commercial lender, sums not to exceed in the aggregate ten thousand ($10,000) in any fiscal year and to sign a note or notes for the sum borrowed and to pledge the assets of the church as collateral for the sums. To borrow a sum larger than ten thousand ($10,000) dollars the vote of the church will be necessary, which vote shall set forth the purpose, amount, and terms of the loan.

5) The Assistant Treasurer shall be elected at each Annual Meeting of the church for one year, and shall be eligible for reelection. The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in the performance of the duties of the office, and, in the absence of the Treasurer~~,~~ shall perform all the duties and exercise all the powers of the office under the same restrictions and regulations that apply to the Treasurer.

6) The Historian shall be a well vetted, Active Member, in good standing, of the First Congregational Church, Meriden. The Historian shall be elected at each annual meeting for one year, with eligibility for re-election. The Historian shall oversee and record a faithful accounting of important events in the life of the church via membership records, photographs, newspaper articles, internet presence, etc.

In addition, the Historian will be the contact person in regard to older and/or deceased memberships, past clergy, past policies, defunct church organizations, and other historical data related to the church organization, lands, and building. The Historian will also be directly included in all activities related to historical anniversaries, celebrations, etc.

Physical, and digital documents, as well as items kept within the church vault shall be managed, and maintained by the Historian. No physical documents, nor item, shall be removed from the vault & leave church property, or be discarded, without consultation and approval by the Historian and

Administrative Council. Unaccompanied access to the vault shall be limited to the Historian, and to the Moderator.

7) The Memorial Fund Coordinator shall be elected at each Annual Meeting of the church for one year with eligibility for re-election. The Coordinator should report on and acknowledge gifts and bequests and cause a record of such activities to be recorded in the Memorial Fund Book at appropriate times. A yearly report of the status of the fund should be filed in the Annual Report.

8) The Registrar shall be elected for a one (1) year term at each Annual Meeting of the church, and shall be eligible for re-election. The Registrar shall keep a record of the membership of the church divided into active, inactive, non-resident, and associate members including the date of change of status and the date of transfer, dismissal, or death. The Registrar shall file letters of transfer and certificates of membership, shall record baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and deaths, and, under the direction of the Diaconate, update the church rolls on a regular basis. The Registrar shall make an annual report to the church.

B. COMMITTEES

Except as noted, all committees will be comprised of up to six members. Each member shall serve for three years, with term expirations spread out over 3 years as equally as practical. The Nominating Committee will be responsible for spreading out the term expirations. There will be no restriction of re-election of committee members.

Except as otherwise provided, all committees and boards shall meet monthly from September to June and at such other times as determined by its chairperson.

Three (3) members of any committee are empowered to call a meeting of the committee as need arises, provided timely notice of purpose is sent to each member.

Except as otherwise provided, each committee shall elect its own chairperson.

Unless otherwise noted, with all committees, including the Diaconate and Administrative Council, a simple majority of the respective committee's current active membership is required for a quorum.

The meetings of all committees and boards, and those of the Administrative Council, are open to all church people except when in executive session. Church people are urged to attend, and are welcome to speak, but may not make motions or vote. Executive session may only be called for sensitive issues, primarily personnel matters.

All committees, as well as all officers and departments of the church, shall make regular reports of their activities and shall present their plans to the Administrative Council, and shall make full reports to the Annual Meeting of the church.

Any committee member who has three consecutive, unexcused absences will automatically be dropped from the committee, and the vacancy shall be filled by the Nominating Committee.

No church staff person shall hold the position of chairperson of a board or committee whose function that staff person serves, while in the employ of the church.

Emeritus Status: For members with long standing service to the church, the nominating committee may present said members to Administrative Council to be considered for emeritus status on any board or committee, with vote.

1) The Diaconate shall be composed of up to six elected members. They shall elect their own chairperson, secretary and treasurer. The secretary shall keep written record of all meetings. The Diaconate shall meet at the call of the chairperson.

The Diaconate shall have charge of the spiritual life and well-being of the church including, but not restricted to, the following:

a) The Diaconate shall assist in the preparation and administration of the Sacraments, and in the care of the sick and sorrowing, in welcoming strangers, and in assisting the Minister(s) in their labors for the welfare of the church. The Diaconate shall involve the total congregation in its evangelistic endeavors.

b) The Diaconate shall promote the Christian life of the church by visitation and counsel and shall arrange for special services of worship.

c) The Diaconate shall pass on all applicants for church membership, including Confirmands, before presenting them for admission to the church. It shall authorize the Registrar to issue letters of dismission or transfer. It shall have regard for discipline as provided in Article IV sections 6, 7a and 7b.

d) It shall be the duty of the Diaconate to make provision for an Interim or Supply Minister whenever a vacancy in the office of Minister occurs.

e) The Diaconate shall present, for vote of the church, a proposed Pastoral Search Committee of no less than six (6) nor more than nine (9) members. This proposed committee shall reflect a broad cross section of the church's membership.

f) It shall be the duty of the Diaconate to consult with the Minister about the Minister's duties, to interpret special concerns of the Minister to the congregation and to relay back those of the congregation. It shall also be the duty of the Diaconate to consult with the Minister regarding personal needs and to make recommendations to the Administrative Council regarding the Minister's salary, fringe benefits, vacation, sabbatical leave and other professional matters.

g) The Diaconate shall care for the needy, calling upon the Treasurer, at their discretion, for any funds held for these purposes.

2) The Music Committee shall be composed of up to six elected members. In addition, there will be a Diaconate member with right to vote. The Minister of Music will be a member of this committee without vote. The Music Committee shall elect its own chairperson. The committee will meet at the call of its chairperson.

It is the responsibility of the Music Committee to consult with and supervise the Minister of Music. The committee shall coordinate with the Minister and the Minister of Music in fostering and promoting the musical interests of the church. It shall present the budget for the music program of the church to the Administrative Council. The committee shall be responsible for musical

equipment, robe care, and the scheduling of all sacred musical and other special church sponsored musical events. It shall also share responsibility with the Minister of Music for recruiting new members for the choir and performing other such duties as may be necessary.

3) The Christian Outreach Committee shall be composed of up to six elected members.

This committee shall be responsible for Christian Outreach, which will include both local and global mission concerns. It is the committee's purpose to glorify God by living out Jesus' words, when He said, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." The committee will present an annual budget proposal to the Administrative Council for review and presentation to the church for approval.

The Christian Outreach Committee will speak publicly only for itself. The committee will speak for the church only after the church has approved of such communication. The committee will meet at the call of its chairperson.

4) The Family Faith Committee shall be composed of up to six elected members from the congregation. In addition, the Minister and the Director of Music shall be members of this committee without vote. Also, one member of the Diaconate shall be a member of the Family Faith Committee without vote.

The Family Faith Committee shall be responsible for all the educational needs of the church, and shall provide resources as needed to accomplish that ministry. In addition, the committee will consult with the Minister and the Diaconate in the planning of the Confirmation process each year.

If and when it is decided that a Family Faith Director is needed it will be the responsibility of the committee, in consultation with the Minister, to present that need to the Administrative Council for discussion and approval.

5) The Nominating Committee shall be composed of up to six elected members. The committee shall elect its own officers.

The committee will commence meeting in early Spring, and will meet as frequently as necessary to prepare a slate for the Annual Meeting. The committee will also meet at other times of the year when necessary to fill vacancies.

The Nominating Committee shall submit to the Annual Meeting of the church a list of nominees for all offices and committees, to be voted on at that meeting. Nominations for members of the Nominating Committee shall be submitted by the Administrative Council. The Nominating Committee shall make nominations to fill all vacancies that may occur in the elective offices during the year. These nominations shall be acted upon and the vacancies for the unexpired terms of such office shall be filled by vote of the Administrative Council. The Nominating Committee shall submit to the Annual Meeting of the church a list of nominees for all offices, committees and delegates to the Central Association and the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, to be voted upon at that meeting.

6) The Pastoral Search Committee. When a vacancy in the office of Minister shall occur, the Diaconate shall present for vote of the church a proposed Pastoral Search Committee of no less than six (6) nor more than nine (9) members, who, after seeking the advice of the Connecticut Conference, shall hear ministers and investigate their qualifications, and shall nominate a

successor at a meeting of the church called for the purpose of acting upon such nomination. At this meeting the terms of a contract shall be stated. This committee shall elect its own officers, and should represent a cross-section of the church. The Pastoral Search Committee shall meet as needed, and will make monthly reports, and a final written report including terms of the call, to the Administrative Council. The Diaconate may fill vacancies in the membership of this committee.

7) The Administrative Council shall be composed of the all officers of the church, including the Minister (without vote), and the chairperson or alternate of the all present and future permanent committees and organizations.

All members of the Administrative Council must be Active Members of the church in good standing. The Moderator shall serve as chairperson, with vote.

The Administrative Council shall have responsibility for general coordination of the activities of this church. It shall endeavor to promote the general efficiency and to unify the work of the church, counseling and helping to coordinate programs, and making such adjustments as may seem wise. It shall report its activities at the Annual Meeting of the church, and monthly summarize its major decisions in the parish publication.

The Administrative Council may hold monthly meetings at which all council members are expected to be present. Minutes of all committee meetings will be available to Administrative Council members in the church office. Special meetings may be called by the Minister, the Moderator, the Clerk, or any three (3) members, provided reasonable notice, including the nature of the business to be transacted, shall be sent to each member.

The Administrative Council may appoint special committees of the church for which other provisions have not been made. The Council may also appoint or hire auditors if it is deemed prudent to do so. The Council shall act upon resignations from any church office during the year between Annual Meetings, and shall be empowered to elect a successor who has been nominated by the Nominating Committee, to hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the church.

The Administrative Council (herein referred to as the Council) shall have charge of the financial affairs of the church, other than Christian Outreach and Diaconate funds. The Council shall authorize the Treasurer to make prompt payment of salaries and current expenses, and shall make a full report at the Annual Meeting of the church. The Council shall hold all church property in the name of the First Congregational Church of Meriden, Connecticut, and shall have responsibility of all church property, repairs, supplies and custodial service.

The Council shall have supervision of bequests and trust funds, and shall appoint, as trustee of these funds, a Professional Fiduciary Management entity, licensed by the State of Connecticut and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). This appointed trustee of funds will, upon order of the Treasurer of the church, pay the income from all or part of said trust funds to the Treasurer of the church, as well as any other portion of the funds as may be authorized by the Council (within the limits previously approved by the congregation at the Annual Fiscal Meeting).

The Council shall not have the power to buy, sell, mortgage or borrow from any source, in excess of $10,000, without authorization from the congregation. Nor will the Council lease or transfer any real estate, or alter the salary of the Minister, without a specific vote of the congregation authorizing such actions. The Council shall keep a permanent record of all its transactions.

The Council may appoint from its members such committees as may be needed to perform its duties. Such committees would include (but are not limited to) the following:

a. Finance Committee
b. Facilities Committee
c. Stewardship Committee
d. Fund Raising Committee

The Council shall review all salary arrangements and contracts of salaried personnel.

The Minister will consult with the Council on all personnel matters that are not addressed by other committees, and Council will have the final say on all personnel matters that are beyond the normal routine.

8) The Scholarship Committee shall be composed of up to six elected members This committee shall elect its own officers. The Minister or Ministers shall be ex officio members without vote. This committee shall be responsible for establishing guidelines and screening applications for scholarships and camperships.

The Scholarship Committee shall administer the dispensation of the available scholarship funds. It will also be responsible for disseminating information on the availability of scholarships and promoting the scholarship and campership programs. The committee will meet at the call of its chairperson.

9) The Personnel Committee shall be composed of the Moderator, as chairperson, the Senior Minister, without vote, the chairperson of the Diaconate and the Clerk. This committee will be empowered to handle any major staff problems which otherwise have not been resolved by normal procedures. It shall review and recommend to the Administrative Council such action, dismissal or otherwise, if the work of any staff member, other than the Senior Minister, shall come under strong criticism of the parish. If the situation warrants, the committee may invite present or former committee members, related to the specific program area. Recommendations of this committee must have a simple majority vote of the committee and also of the Administrative Council to take effect.

The Personnel Committee will meet at the call of the Moderator or the Senior Minister.

10) The Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) shall be composed of up to six (6) members. At least one member shall be drawn from recommendations by the Pastor and the remaining members shall be selected by the Nominating Committee. This committee shall elect its own officers, one of whom shall be its representative to Administrative Council. Members of the PPRC may serve concurrently on other committees as they choose.

The ministry of the PPRC will be to improve or maintain the relationship between the Pastor(s) and the congregation to enhance their mutual ministry, to resolve unfruitful conflict, and to assist the church in its mission and ministry. The PPRC will meet at the call of the Senior Minister.

C. DELEGATES

In addition to the Minister, delegates to the Central Association of the United Church of Christ and to the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Annual Meeting of the church for a term of one year, in the numbers specified by the by-laws of those bodies, and are eligible for re-election. These delegates are expected to represent the church at regular and special meetings. Alternates may also be elected at this Meeting, to serve in place of a delegate who is unable to do so. An elected alternate may serve without additional action on the part of the church.

In the event that no elected delegate or alternate is able to represent the church at a meeting, the Nominating Committee may nominate an acting delegate, or such an acting delegate may be nominated from the floor at an Administrative Council meeting, to be approved by the Administrative Council. Acting delegates will serve only for the meetings to which they are elected.

If the Administrative Council or a meeting of the church decides to join a body which requests delegates, these delegates may be nominated by the Nominating Committee for approval by the Administrative Council or by a meeting of the church.

In addition to the Minister, delegates to the Central Association of the United Church of Christ and to the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Annual Meeting of the church for a term of one year, in the numbers specified by the by-laws of those bodies, and are eligible for re-election. These delegates are expected to represent the church at regular and special meetings. Alternates may also be elected at this Meeting, to serve in place of a delegate who is unable to do so. An elected alternate may serve without additional action on the part of the church.

In the event that no elected delegate or alternate is able to represent the church at a meeting, the Nominating Committee may nominate an acting delegate, or such an acting delegate may be nominated from the floor at a Administrative Council meeting, to be approved by the Administrative Council. Acting delegates will serve only for the meetings to which they are elected.

If the Administrative Council or a meeting of the church decides to join a body which requests delegates, these delegates may be nominated by the Nominating Committee for approval by the Administrative Council or by a meeting of the church.

ARTICLE VI

FINANCES

Not later than October 15th, the Minister, officers, and committees shall present to the Administrative Council their itemized proposed budgets for the coming year. The Administrative Council’s Finance Committee shall review these requests, along with the results of the Fall Stewardship campaign, and shall then prepare a draft budget for review by the entire Administrative Council at its November meeting. Upon review, the Administrative Council may make adjustments and shall finalize the budget prior to the coming year.

This budget, when adopted by the Administrative Council, shall be the working budget for the new year, subject to ratification by the church at the Annual Fiscal Meeting, usually in January. No obligations above the amounts thus apportioned shall be incurred by any officers or committees unless authorized by the Administrative Council. The Administrative Council may meet emergency needs as they arise, or make other necessary expenditures, not provided for in the budget, for the proper maintenance of the church property, including necessary equipment, as funds are available.

ARTICLE VII

ORGANIZATIONS

The church regards as integral parts of itself all organizations formed for the purpose of implementing the ministry of the church and which use the facilities of the church property.

Any committee or group which the Administrative Council recognizes as being an integral part of the church shall be entitled to representation on the Administrative Council, with vote.

ARTICLE VIII

MEETINGS

Section 1. For Worship.

a) Regular meetings for worship shall be held on each Sunday of the year, except when such services may be suspended temporarily by vote of the church, by severe weather or other emergency conditions. Special services may also be held as the Diaconate and the Minister shall direct.

b) The Sacraments of the Lord' s Supper and Baptism shall be observed at regular intervals, as the Diaconate and the Minister shall order

Section 2. For Business.

a) At any of the regular meetings for worship, without special notice, the church may act upon reception of members recommended by the Diaconate, and appointment of delegates to councils and conferences of churches, for which a simple majority vote is required. No other business may be raised except in emergency, but even then, not if objection is raised.

b) Special meetings of the church shall be called by the Clerk upon request of the Minister or upon written application of any five (5) voting members, specifying the object thereof, which notice shall be read at the regular meeting for worship or published in the church calendar on the Sunday next preceding the day fixed for such meeting. No special meeting shall be held on the same day on which the notice is given.

c) The Annual Meeting of the church shall be held on or near the 3rd Sunday in May at the call of the Clerk, at which time annual reports from the officers and organizations shall be presented and officers elected and such other business transacted as may be specified in the call, or authorized in the by-laws.

d) The fiscal year of the church shall end on the thirty-first day of December. A meeting of the church shall be held on or near the fourth Sunday in January at the Call of the Clerk, at which time the operating budget shall be ratified, and such other business transacted as may be specified in the call, or authorized in the by-laws.

e) At all meetings for business the Moderator shall preside. If the Moderator is not able to attend a meeting, the Moderator may appoint a temporary moderator in advance of the meeting. Otherwise, a temporary moderator may be elected from among the members present.

f) At the Annual Meeting of the church, and at all special meetings of the congregation, twenty (20) qualified voting members shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE IX

CHURCH SCHOOL

The church shall maintain and support a Church School. Under the direction of the Family Faith Committee, in consultation with the Senior Minister, courses shall be offered to all in the teachings of the Christian faith.

ARTICLE X

AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present and voting at any Annual Meeting of the church, or at a meeting specially called for that purpose, the proposed amendment having been inserted in the call. No change shall be made in Article II entitled, "Faith, Polity and Fellowship” unless said proposed change has been laid before the church in writing, at a business meeting not less than one month before the time of the proposed action, and read from the pulpit on the Sunday next succeeding such proposal.

ARTICLE XI

RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by these by-laws.