

**First Parish Congregational Church United Church of Christ**

**P.O. Box 114, East Derry, New Hampshire 03041**

**47 East Derry Road, Derry, New Hampshire 03038**

**(603) 434-0628**



Church By-laws

ALL ARE WELCOME – Friend, you enter this church not as a stranger, but as a guest of God. Come, then, with joy in your heart and thanks upon your lips, and offer God today your love and your service.”

(Adapted from a 12th Century Church in Hampshire, England.)

Revised by committee in 2024; Approved at Congregational meeting January 2024

## **Mission Statement**

First Parish Congregational Church, UCC is a community of faith built upon a firm foundation of worship, prayer and education. In affirming diversity, we are dedicated to welcoming all people who seek the Word of God, Christian fellowship and service to others. In partnership with Christ and lead by the Holy Spirit, we reach out to the ever-widening community through active and loving ministry. (adopted April 2000)

## **OPEN & AFFIRMING STATEMENT**

“We affirm Christ’s call to love God and love our neighbors as ourselves. We therefore pledge ourselves to be open to and affirming of all people of every age, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, socioeconomic status, family configuration, or cultural background. All who affirm the love of Christ in their lives are welcome into this community and to share fully in its life and ministry.

We rejoice in the worth, gifts, and dignity of every person as a child of God.” (adopted January 2014)

## **VISION STATEMENT**

“To live our faith by being a compassionate, accepting, and generous presence in the community; a church where all people find purpose and belonging.” (adopted January 2024)

**FIRST PARISH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC BY-  
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## **ARTICLE I. NAME**

This Church shall be called the First Parish Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Incorporated, in Derry, New Hampshire.

## **ARTICLE II. CHARACTER**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the sacraments; to realize Christian community and unity within this church and the Church Universal; to render loving service toward humanity; and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace.

### **Polity**

This church shall be an independent body amenable to no other ecclesiastical authority, having within itself all necessary powers of government and discipline. The government of this church is vested in its members who shall exercise control of all its affairs, subject to the laws of the State of New Hampshire relating to religious, non-profit organizations. This church accepts the obligations of mutual counsel, comity, and cooperation involved in the free association of the United Church of Christ, and covenants to share the common aims and work of the United Church of Christ.

### **Covenant and Faith**

Covenant is an agreement which brings about a relationship of commitment between God and his people. We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and the will of God. We pledge to walk together in the way of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of this church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world while worshiping God and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As did our forebears, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming reign of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

### **“Statement of Faith”**

United Church of Christ Statement of Faith in the form of a doxology:

“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.

## **ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1. Qualification**

This Church will welcome all who seek the work of God and whose purposes are to live according to the spirit and principles of Jesus Christ.

### **Section 2. Classification of Membership**

A. COVENANT MEMBERS are those persons received into membership by (1) confession of faith, (2) presentation of satisfactory letters of transfer from other churches, or (3) reaffirmation of faith if such letters are not available.

Covenant membership confers both benefits and responsibilities. The responsibilities of covenant members shall include regular attendance at Sunday worship, financial support of this church as personal resources permit, and participation in the service life of this church.

Every covenant member of this church shall be entitled to vote in person at the congregational meetings of this church. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. Covenant members shall be eligible to serve as elected church officers and on any church ministry. A Covenant member can also have an affiliation with another church.

B. FRIENDS are those persons who wish affiliation with this church and we wish to recognize them as important members of our church community. Friends are encouraged to be faithful in all the spiritual duties essential to the Christian life and to be loyal to this church by supporting it with their prayers, their presence, their gifts and their services.

Friends may participate on committees but have no vote in the affairs of this church and cannot participate on boards or to serve as officers of the church.

Friends shall not be reported as members on the membership roll or in the vital statistics of this church. They are not entitled to letters of transfer.

C. INACTIVE MEMBERS are those covenant members whose addresses are unknown or who for a period of two years have not been in communication with this church or contributed to its support and have therefore been listed as inactive on the membership list.

### **Section 3. Review, Reclassification and Transfer of Membership**

An inactive member shall be restored to covenant membership when:

- 1) A written request to be restored is sent
- 2) The request is reviewed and recommended by the Board of Deacons
- 3) The Covenant Member participates in a consecration event.

Reactivation will be effective upon consecration.

## **ARTICLE IV. ADMINISTRATION**

### **Section 1.**

The activities of this Church shall be under the care of such officers, boards, and committees as shall be named and enumerated in sections 2, 3, and 4 following. All officers and board members shall be Covenant Members of First Parish Church.

### **Section 2. Staff Positions**

A. The SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER (heretofore “Pastor”) shall have a central place of leadership in all the affairs of the Church. It shall be the Pastor’s duty to preach and teach the Word, to administer the Sacraments, to care for the stated services of public worship, and to promote in all ways the spiritual welfare of the Church. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio advisory member of all Boards and Standing Committees.

The Pastor is the executive head of the Church and shall oversee the work of the Church staff.

The Pastor shall be called by a two-thirds majority of the covenant members present and voting at a Congregational meeting called for that purpose. The call extended shall specify the obligations as to salary, allowances, pension privileges, and vacation which the church will assume in the event of acceptance of the call. An Addendum to the terms of call shall be prepared annually by the Moderator, with the Personnel Board, to document changes in salary and/or benefits. The Addendum will be shared with the Pastor before being finalized at the Annual Meeting.

### **MEDIATION PROCEDURES**

Our church acknowledges that even as we pledge our faithfulness to God and one another there may be times when there are difficulties within our relationships. In those instances, we covenant with the pastor to seek the support, advice, and wisdom of our Conference or the Rockingham Association Committee on Church and Ministry, in order that we actively work to maintain the goodness of our relationship and the goodness God has placed within it. Either the pastor or the Church Council, representing our congregation, can request such a consultation, if in the opinion of either, our relationships are becoming ineffective or unhealthy.

In the event that the members are unable to resolve their differences with a Pastor in the manner set forth in the preceding paragraph, the members may submit a Petition for Termination to the Clerk. The Petition for Termination must be signed by 20% of the covenant members of the Church. The specific number of required signatures is to be determined by reference to the membership figures contained in the most recent Annual Report. The Church Council shall then schedule a congregational meeting in accordance with Article V Section 2b.

At a congregational meeting called to consider a Petition for Termination, only covenant members shall be permitted to speak, unless otherwise voted by covenant members in attendance. The vote on a Petition for Termination shall be by secret ballot. Termination of the Pastor requires a two-thirds vote of covenant members present.

Either the pastor or the congregation can terminate this pastoral call agreement giving at least 90 days written notice to the other or upon other terms to which both agree.

B. Pastoral Staff - The Church, from time to time and at its discretion, may call Assistant or Associate Pastor(s). The Associate/Assistant Pastor(s) will assist the Senior Pastor in the Christian Ministry of the Church.

The job description of the Associate/Assistant Pastor shall be determined by consultation with the Senior Pastor, the Personnel Board, the Board of Deacons, and any other Church Board for whose program the Associate/Assistant Pastor(s) is primarily responsible. Such Associate/ Assistant Pastor(s) shall be called or dismissed in the same manner as the Senior Pastor.

Each Associate or Assistant Pastor shall be responsible to the Senior Pastor and shall share pastoral duties as assigned.

C. Affiliation and Installation - Each Pastor shall become a Covenant member of this Church as soon as practical after accepting the Church's call. He/ She shall also establish standing as an ordained minister in the Rockingham Association of the NH Conference, UCC. After fully meeting all criteria established by the Association's committee on church and ministry, each Pastor shall be installed at a formal installation service conducted by the Rockingham Association.

D. Affiliate Pastors - An ordained minister who is a member of the Church may request and, with the approval of the Senior Pastor, the Board of Deacons and the Congregation, be approved as an Affiliated Pastor. An Affiliated Pastor shall perform such pastoral duties as requested by the Senior Pastor.

E. Staff - The Church may, from time to time, establish or modify such additional staff positions as may be deemed necessary to fulfill its purpose. Such positions shall be proposed by the Personnel Board to the Church Council in the form of a written job description and proposed salary level and benefits. They shall take effect upon majority vote of the Church Council, unless said Council elects for the decision to go to the Congregation at a congregational meeting. Positions in existence at the time of adoption of this section shall be considered to have fulfilled their requirements.

### **Section 3: Selection and duties of officers and Council.**

A. The MODERATOR shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. A person who has served two full terms shall not be eligible for re-election to this position for a period of one year. The Moderator shall preside at all Congregational Meetings and Church Council.

B. The ASSISTANT MODERATOR - The Church shall elect an Assistant Moderator at the Annual Meeting to serve for a term of three (3) years, not to fall concurrently with that of the Moderator. A person who has served two full terms shall not be eligible for re-election to this position for a period of one year. He/ She shall preside at Congregational Meetings and Church Council meetings in the absence of or at the request of the Moderator.

C. The CLERK shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. A person who has served two full terms shall not be eligible for re-election to this position for a period of one year. The Clerk shall keep a complete record of all meetings of the Church and Church Council, and a record of any events in the life of the Church which are likely to prove of historic interest. The Clerk shall preserve on file, all documents and reports, give legal notice of all Congregational Meetings when such notice is necessary, and the Church's correspondence.

D. The RECORDS CLERK shall be elected for a term of three (3) years, not to fall concurrently with the Clerk. A person who has served two full terms shall not be eligible for re-election to this position for a period of



one year. The Records Clerk shall keep a register of all members of this Church with dates of admission and termination of membership, issue letters of transfers, record baptisms, marriages, and deaths, and make a full report to this Church at its annual meeting.

E. The TREASURER shall be elected for a term of 3 years. Renewal is by mutual agreement of the Treasurer, the Council and the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.

The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all monies received for the support of the Church or for the conduct of its organizations or committees, shall give bonds if required by the congregation for the faithful discharge of duties, and shall not disburse funds except on the authority of the appropriate board, committee or organization having authority over the respective accounts. At the Annual Meeting the Treasurer shall present a complete report of income and disbursement for the prior year. He/ She shall preside at Congregational Meetings and Church Council in the absence of the Moderator and the Assistant Moderator or at the request of the Moderator or the Assistant Moderator.

F. The FINANCIAL SECRETARY has no specified term limit and renewal is by mutual agreement of the Financial Secretary, the Council and the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.

The Financial Secretary shall not disburse funds except in the absence of the Treasurer and only upon approval of the appropriate board, committee, or organization having authority over the respective accounts. The Financial Secretary shall collect all monies due the Church and deposit them; deliver all deposit receipts to the Treasurer, transmit a monthly detailed deposit report to the Treasurer, keep an accurate record of all gifts, including payments on pledges and Church offerings, maintain confidentiality relative to an individual's level of giving to the Church; prepare and distribute such quarterly statement as may be necessary for the timely collection of pledge payments, and provide covenant members and friends of First Parish Church with an annual statement of their pledge account. The Financial Secretary shall assist the Records Clerk in the annual review and updating of the active membership roll and the parish list and prepare a report for the preceding fiscal year for publication in the annual report of the Church.

G. The Church Council, at its discretion, may appoint an ASSISTANT FINANCIAL SECRETARY for a term of up to three (3) years. Renewal is by mutual agreement of the Assistant Financial Secretary and the Council. The Assistant Financial Secretary shall share the same duties as the Financial Secretary when the Financial Secretary is not available to perform them in a timely manner.

H. CHURCH COUNCIL:

Number of Members: Thirteen (13) members consisting of:

- Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Pastor
- Duly appointed representative from each of the following Boards: Christian Education, Deacons, Facilities, Missions, Personnel;
- Three (3) at large members elected from the congregation.

: At large members shall be elected for a three (3) year term, with the term of one member expiring annually. An at large member who has served one full term shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of one year. At large members may serve on one Board, but may not serve as the Council representative of that Board.

The Council shall meet regularly, at least ten times annually, with the Moderator as its chair. Council meetings shall be open to all members of the Church for information or discussion.

Responsibilities:

- Act in the name of the Congregation between congregational meetings for the administration of the Church's business, including the employment and supervision of administrative staff approved under Article IV.
- Provide cross communication of all the work of the church and amongst boards, committees and the Pastor.
- Act as agent in the acquisition and disposition of any property authorized by a vote of the Church.
- Present the budget at the Annual Meeting and monitor the adopted budget throughout the ensuing year.
- Manage bequests in accordance with the conditions of such bequests and ensure that all bequests and memorial gifts are recorded and acknowledged.
- Develop and present to the Congregation short and long range goals on an annual basis.
- Review the Church's By-Laws and mission statement at least every three years.
- Report to the Congregation after each Council meeting and present a written report at the Annual Meeting.
- Seven (7) members present shall constitute a quorum.
- Rules of procedure shall be the same as those governing Congregational Meetings.

## Section 4: Boards of the Church

The number of members indicated for each Board is the suggested membership. The number of members participating on the Board may be increased to include more than the suggested number if there are a reasonable number of additional members displaying interest in that Board.

All Boards shall:

- Appoint a member as its chair and report that selection to the Church Clerk and Church office
- Appoint a clerk to record meeting minutes and a copy to be turned in to the Church office
- Present a written report to be included in the Annual Report of the Church
- Meet at least ten times a year (unless specified otherwise)
- A Covenant member shall serve on no more than two Boards at a time
- Allow all meetings to be open to all Covenant church members
- Consider any partial term that is filled with more than a year left on the term to be a full term
- To protect legitimate privacy interests of members, friends or employees of the church, any Board may, by majority agreement of the attending members of a meeting, temporarily enter into a period of executive session, which shall be open only to members of that Board. Because the Church desires that all Board meetings generally be open to all, executive sessions will end once the confidential subject at hand has been dealt with.

### A. BOARD OF DEACONS:

Ideal Minimum Number of members: 8

Length of term: 2 years

Term limit: 2 terms

Purpose: To care for the spiritual life of the Church and Community in cooperation with the Pastors.

Responsibilities:

- Prepare the sanctuary for worship and assist the Pastor(s) in the worship service.
- Establish a schedule of lay participation to include ushers, greeters, lay readers, acolytes, other.
- Prepare and assist in the administration of all the Sacraments and Rites of the Church.
- Maintain regular and reverent schedule of worship in the absence of a Pastor.
- Assist the Finance Committee in establishing an annual budget for the Board of Deacons.
- Provide input to the Personnel Board on annual performance appraisal of serving Clergy
- Actively welcome visitors and provide information about the Church.
- Participate in the reception of new members.
- Encourage active participation in the life of the Church
- \* Coordinate needs with the Ministry of Care (MOC).

Additional Information:

\* The Deacons along with the Ministry of Care shall be alert to special needs of the Church family by recording Sunday Joys and Concerns and follow-up with MOC volunteers.

- Designate a member, annually, as a Council representative.
- Designate a member, annually, as a Ministry of Care representative.
- Designate a member, annually, as a Safe Church representative.
- Designate a member, annually, as a Music Committee representative.

Reports to: Church Council

## B. BOARD OF FACILITIES:

Ideal Minimum Number of members: 5

Length of term: 2 years

Term limit: 2 terms

Conditions of term: 2 members elected each year; cannot be re-elected for 1 year after serving 2 full terms.

Purpose: To care for the facilities of the church.

Responsibilities:

- Be responsible for the maintenance, repair and upkeep of all the Church property within its authorized annual budget
- Provide input to the Personnel Board on annual performance evaluation, job descriptions and contract of any custodial staff
- Evaluate insurance needs
- Authorize building use
- Assist the Finance Committee in establishing an annual budget for the church facilities
- Follow Facilities Service Agreement and Contracts Procedure for all contracts that commit the church to pay for goods and services

Additional Information:

- Designate a member, annually, as a Council representative
- Designate a member, annually, as Safe Church representative
- Designate a member, annually, as a Finance committee representative

Reports to: Church Council

## C. BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Ideal Minimum Number of members: 7

Length of term: 3 years

Term limit: 2 terms

Purpose: Foster and promote the Christian Education of all ages through teaching, programs, and activities.

Responsibilities:

- Substitute in the absence of the Director of Christian Education
- Assist Director of Christian Education, as needed
- Recruit and train teachers
- Plan, develop, and facilitate educational programming for all ages
- Develop and facilitate the Sunday morning Christian Education programs - to include defining curriculum, planning and teacher recruitment unless otherwise defined by hired Director of Christian Education on staff
- Plan and provide child care for ages under 3
- Assist in the planning of specific educational programming such as Advent, Easter, Confirmation, Communion and summer Vacation Church Camp
- Provide input to Personnel Board as needed for annual performance appraisal of the Director of Christian Education
- Provide an annual budget to Finance Committee and manage said budget
- Provide information monthly to the office for the church newsletter

- Develop and execute a formal communication process to notify children, youth and parents of the Christian Education program
- Maintain Attendance for Nursery and Church School
- \* Support the Education Ministry to our Youth in providing activities for ages middle school, high school and young adults

Additional Information:

- Designate a member, annually, as a Council representative
- Designate a member, annually, as Safe Church representative.

Reports to: Church Council

D. BOARD OF MISSIONS:

Ideal Minimum Number of members: 7

Length of term: 2 years

Term limit: 2 terms

Purpose: To support the church's outreach plans and activities

Responsibilities:

- Work with the Pastor(s) in keeping before the Church the work of the Wider Church in the areas of relief, development, justice and peace
- Promote regular and special offerings throughout the year and encourage plans for systematic benevolent giving
- Distribute mission offerings in ways relevant to the Gospel of Jesus
- Provide an annual report

Additional Information:

- Designate a member, annually, as a Council representative

Reports to: Church Council

E. PERSONNEL BOARD:

Ideal Minimum Number of members: 3  
Length of term: 2 years  
Term limit: 2 terms

Purpose: To provide guidance and establish standards on personnel policies and procedures in accordance with state and federal laws.

To provide feedback and support to pastor and staff through annual performance reviews.

Responsibilities:

- Prepare and maintain job descriptions for all staff with input from the appropriate Boards and Committees
- Establish and oversee the evaluation process for all staff members
- \* Prepare annual review of pastor for discussion with pastor.
- \* Recommend or approve all hiring and firing of lay staff members
- Draft and present to the Church Council proposed salary and benefit packages for each employee yearly

Additional Information:

- Designate a member, annually, as a Council representative

Reports to: Church Council

**Section 5: Committees:**

The standing committees of this church are Nominating, Historical Preservation, Pastoral Search, Delegates, Pastor's Advisory, Safe Church, Finance, and Music. Community members are eligible to serve on committees.

The number of members indicated for each Committee is the suggested membership. The number of members participating on the Committee may be increased to include more than the suggested number if there are a reasonable number of additional members displaying interest in that Committee.

All Committees shall:

- Appoint a member as its chair and report that selection to the Church Clerk and Church office
- Appoint a clerk to record meeting minutes and a copy shall be turned in to the Church office
- Present a written report to be included in the Annual Report of the Church
- Meet as needed
- Allow all meetings to be open to all church members
- Consider any partial term that is filled with more than a year left on the term to be a full term
- To protect legitimate privacy interests of members, friends or employees of the church, any Committee may, by majority agreement of the attending members of a meeting, temporarily enter into a period of executive session, which shall be open only to members of that Committee. Because the Church desires that all Committee meetings generally be open to all, executive sessions will end once the confidential subject at hand has been dealt with.

A. NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Ideal Minimum Number of members: 5  
Length of term: 2 years Term limit: 2 terms

Purpose: To maintain the occupancy of all elected positions of the Church.

Responsibilities:

- Prepare a list of nominations of officers, boards and committees for the new year to be presented at the Annual Meeting
- Nominate persons to fill vacancies as they occur during the year for approval by the Church Council

Additional Information:

- Nominations prepared by this Committee shall no way limit the right of any member to make nominations from the floor
- Interim appointees from Council shall serve only until the next Annual Meeting

Reports to: Church Council

B. HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMITTEE:

Ideal Minimum Number of members: 3  
Length of term: 2 years Term limit: None

Purpose: To identify, accession, and preserve the artifacts and objects that best convey the history of First Parish Church and actively share this history with the congregation and the community.

Responsibilities:

- Preserve church artifacts, memorabilia, documents, photographs, news articles, Annual Reports and older Church Registers.
- Advise and be a resource to the Facilities Board and other groups, to ensure that the Church remains on the National Register of Historical Places as part of the East Derry Historic District
- Review, accept and acknowledge gifts of historical nature that pertain to First Parish Church
- Maintain, preserve & change displays of historical church artifacts
- Educate church members and interested persons about Church history
- Assist genealogy seekers and maintain information on Forest Hill Cemetery.
- Recruit and manage volunteers to assist with the work of the Committee
- Attend workshops by the State Historical Society to update knowledge

Reports to: Facilities

C. PASTORAL SEARCH TASK FORCE:

Ideal Minimum Number of members: 9 Covenant Members including the Moderator  
Length of term: For that purpose  
Term limit: none

Purpose: To identify a pastoral candidate to present to the Congregation.

Responsibilities:

- Consult with the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Rockingham Association of the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ.
- Consult with appropriate officers and committees of the New Hampshire Conference with the view of presenting a candidate to this Church as a Pastor

Additional Information:

- Moderator shall be a member and its Chair
- Members are nominated from the floor and elected at a special meeting for that purpose
- This Committee shall be discharged of all its duties when a Pastor has been called and accepted through installation or through recognition of this call in a formal service of worship

Reports to: Congregation

D. DELEGATES

Number of members: At-large Council Members, one Officer and Covenant Member(s) of the Church, corresponding to the number to which the Church is entitled

Term limit: none

Purpose: To represent the Church at the Rockingham Association Meetings, as well as NH Conference UCC and related events

Responsibilities:

- Attend Rockingham Association meetings and vote on issues
- Attend the Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Conference and vote on issues
- Report to the Council and the Congregation on a regular basis

E. PASTOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Number of members: 4

Length of term: 2 years

Term limit: 2 terms

Purpose: The Pastor's Advisory Committee provides an interface between the Church and the Pastor. Each Pastor shall have a separate Pastor Advisory Committee.

Responsibilities:

- Support and maintain an open relationship between ordained Pastor and members of the Congregation
- Provide a place where personal and professional concerns and accountability of the Pastor can be discussed
- Provide a safe place where the Pastor and committee members may speak freely and confidently

Additional Information:

- Appointed by the Council from nominees approved by both the Moderator and the Pastor.

Reports to: Church Council



F. SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE:

Number of members: 7 (2 at large members, 1 Deacon representative, 1 Board of Christian Education representative, 1 Personnel Board representative, 1 Music Committee representative, and 1 Facilities Board representative)

Length of term: 2 years

Term limit: 2 terms

Purpose: To identify and implement ways in which we can best create a safe church culture through education and the implementation of new written policies when appropriate.

Responsibilities:

- Identify potential safety concerns and forward to appropriate committee or board
- Act as a sounding board for safe church issues
- Act as a resource for safe church information
- Ensure a consistency of approach to safe church issues
- Disseminate safe church information
- Provide safe church education

Additional Information: None

Reports to: Council

G. FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Number of members: 5 (2 at large members, Assistant Moderator, Treasurer, Financial Secretary)  
Other members shall serve based on the terms of their positions.

Length of term: 2-year term for At Large members.

Term limit: 2 terms

Purpose: To oversee the financial life of the church, organize and coordinate annual pledge drive, prepare and monitor approved annual budgets, audit the books of account of the church, and manage the investments of the church.

Responsibilities:

- Prepare a proposed budget for the church for presentation to the Council each year.
- \* Organize and coordinate annual pledge drive
- Prepare monthly financial statements of the financial condition of the church in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and submit same to the Council.
- Review and make recommendations for the investment of church funds to maximize the earnings thereof, in conformity with prudent investing practices as the Council may suggest. The Council shall confirm any change in the investments or investment strategy as presented to it by the Finance Committee.
- Provide quarterly investment reports to the Council and annually to the congregation.
- Provide recommendations to the Council for the disposition of monies acquired from bequests and memorial gifts.
- Perform the audit of the books of account of the church and report the results of such audit to the Council. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer will not perform audits of their own books of record.
- Develop and direct an ongoing long range financial plan for the church encompassing the needs of daily operations, facilities maintenance and enhancement, and any other matter the Finance Committee may deem prudent.

- Propose to the Council any items of financial policy as the Committee shall deem appropriate for the sound financial operation and health of the church.
- Perform any other duties the Council may suggest and/or the Finance Committee may propose to the Council and Council shall affirm.

Reports to: Council

## H. MUSIC COMMITTEE

Ideal Minimum Number of members: 3

Length of term: 2 years

Term limit: 2 terms

Purpose: To lead the Church's music program.

### Responsibilities

- Establish the direction and goals of and make policies for the music program in conjunction with the Choir Director and/or the Senior Pastor and Teacher
- Coordinate the music program in conjunction with the Choir Director and/or the Senior Pastor and Teacher
- Evaluate the music program annually
- Assist the Finance Committee in establishing an annual budget for the church music program in conjunction with the Choir Director and/or the Senior Pastor and Teacher
- Provide input to the Personnel Board on annual performance evaluation, job descriptions and contract of the accompanist and Choir Director

### Additional Information

- Only one (1) choir member may serve on the Committee at any one time
- 
- Other members include Choir Director and a representative from the Diaconate

Reports to: Board of Deacons

## I. MINISTRY OF CARE

Purpose: The Ministry of Care seeks to identify needs in order to provide care to individuals and families as needed in the First Parish Church Family.

### Responsibilities:

Shall be alert to special needs of the Church Family by providing meals, visits, cards, calls, or emails.

### Additional information:

The Ministry of Care works in close communication with the Pastor and the Deacons.

The Ministry of Care self-organizes, selecting but not limited to an Intake Coordinator, an On-line scheduler and a Card coordinator.

Reports to: Deacons

## **ARTICLE V. GATHERINGS**

### **Section 1. Worship**

- A. Public worship shall be scheduled each week, on Sunday and at other times that may be appropriate.
- B. The Lord's Supper or Holy Communion shall be celebrated ordinarily on the first Sunday of each month and at such other times as the Senior Pastor and Board of Deacons determine.

### **Section 2. Business**

- A. The Annual Meeting shall be held when the Church Council determines, to elect officers for the ensuing year; to hear and act on the yearly reports of officers, boards and committees; to adopt a budget; to transact business and to adopt plans for the upcoming year.
- B. Special meetings of the Congregation shall be called by the Clerk specifying the purpose thereof. The request for a special meeting may be made by (a) any Pastor, (b) the Church Council, (c) any Board or Standing Committee, or (d) on the written request of any ten (10) Covenant members of the Church.

### **Section 3. Procedures for all Annual and Special meetings**

- A. The notice of the above meetings (A&B) shall be read at the public worship service the 2 Sunday services preceding and the day of the meeting (total of 3 times). In addition, the notice will be transmitted electronically and/or available in print in the building. For any action involving property interest the notice shall be given on two successive Sundays.
- B. A quorum at any meeting of the Church shall consist of ten percent (10%) of the Covenant members of the Congregation as determined by the membership figures contained in the most recent Annual Report.
- C. Upon recommendation of the Pastoral Search Committee, the calling of a Pastor necessitates two-thirds vote of the Covenant members.
- D. Meetings shall be conducted under parliamentary procedure. Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be the final authority on procedural questions. The Moderator shall appoint a parliamentarian at each congregational meeting.
- E. A majority vote of the Covenant members present shall ordinarily be decisive. The Moderator shall vote only in case of a tie vote. There will be no absentee voting.
- F. Any ruling of the Moderator may be challenged by any Covenant member of the congregation. With the support of two other Covenant members, said challenge shall be brought to a vote. Two-thirds of Covenant members present and voting shall set aside the ruling of the Moderator.

## **ARTICLE VI. DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY**

1. In the event that a bequest of money or property is made to the Church, the Church Council will consider the offer and the conditions surrounding it, and vote to accept or refuse the offer.

2. In the event that the Church ceases to exist, or does not function as an active Church in its services of worship and general activities for a period of three years, all real property rights shall be vested to the town of Derry, New Hampshire. All monies and investments shall be vested to that wider church organization of which the Church may be a member at the time of dissolution, or any other non-profit organizations as may be determined.

## **ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS**

These BY-LAWS may be amended by a two thirds (2/3) vote of Covenant members and voting at any Annual Meeting of the Church, or at a meeting especially called for that purpose, the proposed amendment shall be available electronically and in print two weeks prior to the meeting.