

**Constitution and Bylaws of
The South Britain Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
South Britain, Connecticut**

(Adopted December 16, 2001)

Preamble

We, the members of the South Britain Congregational Church, with God's help will strive to be a dynamic community of Christian faith. Rooted in Congregationalism, and partnered with the United Church of Christ, we seek to celebrate and to bear witness in our rapidly changing world to the living God we know in Jesus Christ.

Our ministry is a shared ministry. While differently called and gifted as individuals, it is as a gathered body that our ministry is most faithfully discerned and lived out. Seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit as it speaks to us through scripture, tradition, reason, and our own experience, we commit ourselves:

To faithfully worship God, our Creator, our Redeemer and our Sustainer, in Word, in the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, in prayer and in music;

To proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, through whose death and resurrection we receive the gift of new life today and eternal life in the world to come;

To accept God's grace and forgiveness in our own lives, and to forgive each other;

To work and pray for peace, justice and equality and condemn the powers of evil and prejudice;

To strive for dignity, freedom from want, and wholeness of life for all people;

To reach out with understanding and compassion to those in need in our community, our nation and the world;

To be an oasis of spiritual renewal in an age of materialism and alienation;

To be a place of holy welcome to all and a place of comfort to those in pain;

To stand with each other in times of joy and of sorrow;

To teach and assist our children and each other in our spiritual growth;

To develop our own gifts for ministry;

To honor and respect the beauty of God's world;

To be a community of joy and love.

| With God's grace, we covenant to do these things in a manner ~~which~~that celebrates honesty, honors differences and encourages dialogue, so that through the Holy Spirit we might be a reflection of God's love as we walk together in the ways of the Lord.

Article I

NAME AND AFFILIATION

The name of this church is the South Britain Congregational Church, as incorporated and filed with the Secretary of State of Connecticut. The church is located in the South Britain district of the Town of Southbury, Connecticut.

This church is a member of the United Church of Christ (UCC) by vote on June 3, 1956; a member of the Connecticut Conference of the UCC and the Litchfield South Association.

Article II

GOVERNANCE

The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject to the laws of the State of Connecticut relating to ecclesiastical corporations. The church shall have all the rights, duties and responsibilities afforded such corporations including, but not limited to, the right to acquire and dispose of property; to make contracts; to be a party in legal action; to establish financial accounts; and to receive, invest or disburse funds in support of activities which promote the goals and objectives of the church. As defined in Article VII of these Bylaws, a Church Council shall be the representative governing body of the church in the absence of a meeting of the full membership.

Article III

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in this church shall be extended to any baptized person who professes faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Membership may be granted by confirmation in this church, by affirmation or reaffirmation of faith, or by Letter of Transfer from another church. Upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons, such candidates shall be presented for membership.

Accepting the freedom of conscience which has been central in the Congregational Church tradition, members shall pledge themselves, as they are able, to attend the regular worship services of the church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper; to live a Christian life; to share in the life and work of the church; to contribute to its support and benevolences; and to demonstrate concern for the spiritual welfare of its members and of the community.

Members shall be listed on the Membership Roll of this church. Members shall be eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting and special meetings of the membership and to serve as church officers, delegates, and members of boards, standing committees and the Church Council.

The Board of Deacons shall review the Membership Roll at least bi-annually and shall, in an effort to secure their continued participation in the fellowship of the church, contact those members who have not participated in the life of the church for a period of two years or who have requested to be released from membership. Members desiring to continue their church membership shall be retained on the Membership Roll of the church. Those members who do not desire to continue their membership shall be removed from the Membership Roll of the church on the recommendation of the Deacons, and the Clerk/Secretary of Church Council shall issue a Letter of Release to the individuals involved. If, at a later date, a former member requests to return to the Membership Roll, he or she may do so upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

The Clerk/Secretary of Church Council shall give a Letter of Transfer to another church for any member in good standing who requests it. Letters of Transfer shall be reported to the Board of Deacons at its next meeting.

Non-members are welcome at all church functions and events, and are encouraged to actively participate in the life of the church. Non-members who have been active participants in the life of the church may serve on Boards and Committees with full voting privileges, subject to the following restrictions: they shall not serve on the Church Council, the Board of Trustees, or Board of Deacons, ~~or the Personnel Committee~~, nor as chairperson or vice-chairperson of any Board or Committee which would lead to automatic membership in the above mentioned bodies.

Article IV

MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP

The church body shall meet weekly on Sunday for worship, and at other times in accordance with the liturgical calendar. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated each month and at other times as determined by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

The Annual Meeting shall be held ~~on the last Sunday of January in May~~ to review the annual reports of officers, boards and committees; to elect officers, delegates and members of boards and standing committees; to approve the budget for the coming year; and to transact such other business as may be specified in the call or introduced at the meeting.

Special meetings may be called by the Church Council or by petition to the Church Council signed by no fewer than 25 percent of the membership. The Church Council shall call a special meeting within three weeks of receipt of a valid petition.

A minimum of two weeks written notice, which includes the purpose of the meeting, will be provided by the Clerk/Secretary of Church Council in advance of the Annual Meeting or any special meetings of the membership.

Robert's Rules of Order will be the parliamentary authority for the Annual Meeting and all special meetings of the membership. A quorum shall consist of 10 percent of the members of the church. The vote of a majority of members present shall be the action of the church except as specified in these Bylaws, or by adoption during the meeting of special rules requiring greater than a simple majority. Approval of special rules requires the same majority vote as is being requested in the special rules.

Article V

OFFICERS AND DELEGATES

The officers of the church shall include Moderator/Chair of Church Council, Clerk/Secretary of Church Council, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Historian. In addition, the church shall name a specified number of delegates to the Connecticut Conference (UCC) and the Litchfield South Association. The Nominating Committee will prepare a slate from among the membership to fill these offices and delegate positions for presentation at the Annual Meeting, where additional nominations will be accepted prior to election. Officers and delegates shall be elected for a three-year term, and may be elected to one successive three-year term after which an interval of one year will be required prior to election to the same position, except for the Moderator/Chair of Church Council and Vice Chair of Church Council who will serve for two (2) successive two-year terms. The officers and delegates will be elected on a rotating basis at successive Annual Meetings, in the following order: ~~Moderator~~, Financial Secretary and Historian; Clerk/Secretary of Church Council, Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Financial Secretary; Treasurer and Delegates. Should a vacancy occur prior to completion of a term, the Nominating Committee will propose a candidate to complete the current term for a vote by the Church Council. Newly elected officers and delegates shall be installed at ~~the next a~~ regular worship service of the church ~~following their election~~.

The Moderator/Chair of Church Council shall preside at the Annual Meeting and all special meetings of the membership ~~and shall chair the Personnel Committee~~. The Moderator/Chair of Church Council shall be a member of the Church Council, and shall advise the Church Council, officers, boards and standing committees on matters of procedure or interpretation of the Bylaws. Along with the Pastor, the Moderator/Chair of Church Council may also provide communication between the church and outside organizations or between organizations within the church.

The Clerk/Secretary of Church Council shall give notice of the Annual Meeting and all special meetings of the membership, and shall keep a complete record of the transactions which take place at these meetings. The Clerk/Secretary of Church Council shall oversee the register of membership, together with a record of baptisms, marriages, and deaths, and shall issue all Letters of Transfer or Release of membership; and shall make a report at the Annual Meeting. The Clerk shall be a member of the Church Council.

The Financial Secretary and the Assistant Financial Secretary shall collect and record pledges and other offerings, and shall transfer them weekly to the Treasurer, with information as to their designation. Records of amounts collected and their designation shall be reported to the Finance Committee at the close of each month. At the direction of the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary or Assistant Financial Secretary may make deposits of funds into the proper accounts. The Financial Secretary shall provide an annual statement to each pledging member and may provide interim reports as appropriate. The Financial Secretary shall be a member of the Board of Trustees. The Assistant Financial Secretary shall assist the Financial Secretary and shall assume the duties of that office in the absence of the Financial Secretary. The Financial Secretary and the Assistant Financial Secretary shall not be able to sign checks or otherwise disburse church funds.

The Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer, upon receipt of pledges, offerings and other income, shall assure that deposits are made to the proper accounts after these monies have been recorded by the Financial Secretary. The Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer shall secure proper spending authorizations and shall make payments for all necessary expenses of the church from accounts established by the Finance Committee. The Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all receipts, deposits, spending authorizations and disbursements, and shall report this information to the Finance Committee at the close of each month. The Treasurer shall ~~chair the~~ Investment Committee and be a member of the Board of Trustees. In the absence of the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer may represent the Treasurer at meetings of the ~~Investment Committee or~~ Board of Trustees.

The Historian shall record significant events in the life of the church, arrange for the preservation of church records of historical interest and shall ~~present~~prepare a report for the Annual Meeting.

Three (3) The Delegates (including Moderator/Chair of Church Council or his/her designee, plus two at-large members) shall represent the church at meetings of the Connecticut Conference (UCC), and at meetings of the Litchfield South Association. The Delegates shall report matters of importance from these meetings to the Church Council and to the membership of the Church.

Article VI

BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

The Boards of the church shall include the Board of Deacons, the Board of Christian Outreach, the Board of Christian Education, the Board of Christian Fellowship and the Board of Trustees. The Chair~~person~~ of each Board shall serve on the Church Council, with the Vice-Chair~~person~~ as backup.

The Standing Committees of the church shall include Music Committee, Flower Committee, Hospitality Committee, Finance Committee, Stewardship Committee, Property Committee, ~~Special Gifts & Endowments Committee, Investment Committee,~~ Nominating Committee, ~~Personnel Committee~~ and Scholarship Committee.

The Chair of each Board or Committee will report to the Nominating Committee as to the optimal number of the size of the Committee, but no less than the number specified in these Bylaws. The Nominating Committee will prepare a slate from among the membership and active non-members to fill Boards and Standing Committee positions and to assist such Boards and Standing Committees with the nomination of Chairs in coordination with the Pastor for presentation at the Annual Meeting, where additional nominations will be accepted prior to election. Except as provided in these Bylaws, members of Boards and Standing Committees shall be elected for a three-year term and may be elected to one successive three-year term, after which an interval of one year will be required prior to election to the same Board or Standing Committee. Positions shall be filled on a rotating basis so that approximately one-third are elected at each Annual Meeting. Should a vacancy occur prior to completion of a term, the Nominating Committee will propose a candidate to complete the current term for a vote by the Church Council. The person elected to complete a vacant term may be elected to one successive three-year term. ~~All Boards and Standing Committees shall elect their officers prior to the Annual Meeting.~~ Newly elected members of Boards and Standing Committees shall be installed at the next a regular worship service of the church ~~following their election.~~

Unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws, the Boards and Standing Committees should endeavor to meet monthly, or as required. The actions of Boards and Standing Committees are subject to the oversight of the Church Council.

All Boards and Committees shall meet prior to the Annual Meeting of the Church at the call of their out-going Chair. Each shall nominate its own Chair and shall otherwise organize itself as it deems appropriate. The out-going Chairs shall provide the new Chairs with all the information necessary for the work of the Boards or Standing Committees.

Boards

The Board of Deacons shall consist of twelve (12) members. It shall support and assist the Pastor in the spiritual welfare of the church and its members. It shall work closely with the Pastor in the areas of worship, membership, and bereavement. The Board of Deacons shall arrange for coverage in the absence of the Pastor. It shall be responsible for providing ushers and greeters, assisting with Baptisms and the Lord's Supper, ~~and with the assistance of the Mary Martha Circle, and~~ ~~and~~ preparing the meeting house for worship. The Board of Deacons shall recommend persons for membership in the church and shall be responsible for the removal of members who have not participated in the life of the church for a period of two years and who do not wish to continue in the fellowship of the church. It shall assist the Pastor ~~and the Parish Caregivers~~ in the aid and comfort of members in need. The Board of Deacons shall develop a list of candidates for the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee as provided in Article VIII of these Bylaws. ~~At their first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Church,~~ The Board of Deacons shall elect one of their members to serve as a member of the Music Committee.

The Board of Christian Outreach shall consist of nine (9) members. It shall be a focal point of the church around its mission priorities. It shall challenge church members to provide financial support, donations of food, clothing, and other items, as well as gifts of time and talent, to outreach activities both locally and worldwide. The Board of Christian Outreach shall coordinate support for missions activities of the Connecticut Conference and the United Church of Christ. It shall work to increase awareness of issues regarding social justice, prejudice, and equality in the world.

The Board of Christian Education shall consist of six (6) members. It shall, in association with the Pastor and the Director of Christian Education, supervise and promote the functioning of the church school and other educational activities within the church. It may also offer or support other programs such as pageants, workshops or guest speakers throughout the year. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Director of Christian Education, the Board of Christian Education shall recommend a candidate to the Church Council to fill the vacancy. It shall assist the Pastor and the Board of Deacons in curriculum development and the conduct of confirmation classes. It is responsible for the management of the library, and may appoint an ad hoc committee or individual to administer it.

The Board of Christian Fellowship shall consist of six (6) members, one of whom shall be the Chair ~~person~~ of the Hospitality Committee. It is responsible for the scheduling and coordination of dinners, fairs, picnics and other special events for the purpose of Christian fellowship. It shall serve as a sounding board for new ideas for promoting fellowship within the church and shall provide planning assistance or resources whenever possible. It maintains the Activities Calendar for church events in coordination with the Hospitality Committee, the Property Committee and the ~~e~~Church ~~o~~ffice ~~s~~ecretary.

The Board of Trustees shall be comprised of ~~nine (9)~~ eight (8) members including three (3) at-large members; the Chairpersons of the Finance, Stewardship, and Property Committees ~~and the Special Gifts & Endowments Committee~~; the Church Treasurer and the Financial Secretary. The at-large members shall each serve for three years, in overlapping terms, one new member added and one retired each year. These individuals shall serve as Secretary, Vice Chairperson, and Chairperson, in that order. Upon completion of the term as Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, there will be a one-year interval before an individual may be elected again as Secretary of the Board of Trustees. In the event of a vacancy, the remaining officers will advance and the vacancy to be filled will be Secretary. The Vice Chairpersons of the Committees shall attend the Board of Trustees' meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. No individual may concurrently hold more than one position comprising the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees shall have the care and custody of the real and personal property of the church, and with the oversight of the Church Council and the full membership, shall conduct the day-to-day property management and financial affairs of the church. This shall include preparing the church budget; reporting income and expenditures vs. the budget; ~~raising funds to carry on the work of the church~~; promoting on-going Stewardship through pledges and offerings, assuring the accuracy and integrity of financial transactions, systems and reports of the church; proposing ways of commemorating special gifts and endowments; and maintaining and caring for church property. ~~The Trustees may transfer funds within budget accounts not exceeding \$500 per request and \$5,000 annually for all such requests, with amounts exceeding these levels requiring Church Council or congregational approval. The Trustees may authorize spending in excess of budgeted amounts, not exceeding \$500 per incident or \$5,000 annually for all such requests.~~ The Board of Trustees shall not have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, or transfer real property without specific authority given by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a properly called meeting of the church membership.

Standing Committees

In the area of worship, the following committees function in cooperation with the Board of Deacons:

The Music Committee shall consist of six (6) members, one of whom shall be a member of the Board of Deacons. It shall, in association with the Pastor, the Board of Deacons, and the Director of Music/Organist develop and support the music programs of the church including music for worship and special services; ~~adult, youth and children's choir development~~ the development of music ministries that involve adults, youth and/or children and special musical performances. It shall recommend staff as well as budget and resources required. In the event of a vacancy in the position of Director of Music/Organist, the Committee shall recommend a candidate to the Church Council to fill the vacancy.

The Flower Committee shall consist of three (3) members. It shall ensure that flowers are provided for worship services and other church events, and that proper acknowledgment is given for flowers donated by individuals.

The following committee functions in cooperation with the Board of Christian Fellowship:

The Hospitality Committee shall consist of nine (9) members. It has primary responsibility for organizing and/or assisting with social functions and receptions at the church. It works closely with the Board of Christian Fellowship and the Property Committee to coordinate the Activities calendar for church events, and to assure that the kitchen and function areas are adequately maintained. The Chairperson of the Hospitality Committee shall also be a member of the Board of Christian Fellowship.

The following committees function in cooperation with the Board of Trustees to handle the business and financial affairs of the church:

The Finance Committee shall consist of six (6) members. It shall exercise oversight on the financial affairs of the church. The Finance Committee shall prepare and provide the Stewardship Committee with a preliminary budget for the purposes of establishing annual enlistment of pledges. ~~The Finance Committee and~~ shall be responsible for preparation of the annual operating budget and the capital spending budget, including approvals by the Board of Trustees, the Church Council and by the church membership in turn. It shall schedule budget submittals from all Church organizations ~~in~~ October before the Annual Meeting.

It shall establish bank accounts for the general expenses of the church under the signatures of the Church Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer or designated backup. Except for the Scholarship Fund and the Mitchell Major Maintenance Fund, it shall establish investment accounts as needed for special or restricted funds of the church, and shall be responsible for their management and investment decisions.

Disbursements from special or restricted accounts shall be made by the Church Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer upon ~~written~~ authorization of the Finance Committee, and in accordance with any policies, restrictions, or authorizations covering such accounts. It shall reconcile monthly collections, deposits, spending authorizations, disbursements and bank balances from records provided by the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer, and shall provide a summary of income and spending vs. budget and balances in restricted accounts to the Board of Trustees and to the Church Council on a monthly-quarterly basis. ~~When appropriate, it may provide for a financial audit of church accounts.~~ The Finance Committee is responsible for internal review of accounts and possible retention of a third party audit company as necessary. It shall record and acknowledge all special and memorial gifts to the church and may propose, for action by the Board of Trustees, ways of commemorating or listing donors as appropriate.

Gifts of cash or other financial assets shall be reported to the Finance Committee and turned over to the Financial Secretary for deposit into general or restricted accounts of the church as directed by the Finance Committee. It shall gather and communicate information on charitable and planned giving programs including their advantages for tax and estate planning.

In the absence of the Financial Secretary, the Assistant Financial Secretary, the Treasurer or the Assistant Treasurer, the Finance Committee may assume their duties on a temporary basis, assuring that valid approvals are obtained prior to the disbursement of funds. The Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer, the Financial Secretary and the Assistant Financial Secretary shall not serve on the Finance Committee.

The Stewardship Committee shall consist of six (6) members. It shall continually encourage the congregation to use their time and talents as well as monetary contributions for the support of the church. In consultation with the Finance Committee, it shall plan and conduct the annual enlistment of pledges and provide the Finance Committee with pledge results for preparation of the annual budget.

The Property Committee shall consist of nine (9) members. It shall be responsible for maintenance, repairs, improvements, safety and protection of all church properties. The Property Committee is responsible for use of the facilities by outside groups and shall advise the ~~Board of Christian Fellowship~~ Church Office Secretary of such use for the Activities Calendar. It shall arrange for and supervise the custodial staff. It shall prepare both short- and long-term capital budgets for the improvement of church properties, and will work closely with the Mitchell Major Maintenance Fund, a self-governing restricted fund established for the benefit of the church, to identify and secure capital project funding.

~~The Special Gifts & Endowments Committee shall consist of three (3) members. It shall record and acknowledge all special and memorial gifts to the church and may propose, for action by the Board of Trustees, ways of commemorating or listing donors as appropriate. Gifts of cash or other financial assets shall be reported to the Finance Committee and turned over to the Treasurer for deposit into general or restricted accounts of the church as directed by the Finance Committee. The Special Gifts & Endowments Committee shall gather and communicate information on charitable and planned giving programs including their advantages for tax and estate planning.~~

~~The Investment Committee shall be chaired by the Treasurer and shall consist of one (1) member from each of the following groups: the Finance Committee, the Special Gifts & Endowments Committee, the Scholarship Committee, and the Mitchell Major Maintenance Fund. Its purpose is to share information on investment policy, economic and financial issues, and providers of financial services. The Investment Committee shall have no authority to change or otherwise direct the investments or set investment policies of any of the groups responsible for invested funds. It shall meet at~~

~~least twice per year.~~

The following committees function in cooperation with the Church Council:

The Nominating Committee shall consist of six (6) members. It shall put forward a slate of candidates appropriately qualified for offices, delegates, boards, standing committees, and the at-large members/Vice Chair of Church Council for consideration at the Annual Meeting. The names of all candidates recommended by the Nominating Committee shall be included in the Annual Meeting Report that is made available prior to the Annual Meeting. For vacancies that occur in elected positions during the year, the Nominating Committee will propose candidates to complete the current term for vote by the Church Council. ~~The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall be a member of the Church Council, with the Vice Chairperson as backup.~~

~~The Personnel Committee shall be chaired by the Moderator and shall consist of chairpersons of Church Council, the Board of Trustees, Christian Education and Deacons, and the Finance, property and Music Committees. The Personnel Committee will meet at least twice annually to review and evaluate the performance of the church staff, to discuss staffing requirements, and to make specific salary recommendations. It will also be available as needed to hear concerns of the staff or to address grievances. Following consultation with the Pastor and the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, the Personnel Committee shall make salary recommendations for the Pastor.~~

The Scholarship Committee shall consist of six (6) persons. It shall administer the scholarship fund, a restricted fund of the church that is used solely to provide educational assistance to persons actively affiliated with the church. Contributions to the scholarship fund received through special or memorial gifts, endowments or other means shall be directed to the Scholarship Committee for investment. The Scholarship Committee shall make awards and recognize recipients during a regular worship service of the church. It shall report fund balances to the Finance Committee at the end of each monthquarter.

Article VII

CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council shall be comprised of ~~twelve (12)~~ nine (9) members including ~~three (3)~~ one (1) at-large members/Vice Chair; the Pastor; the Moderator/Chair of Church Council; the Clerk/Secretary of Church Council; the chairpersons of the five (5) Boards (Deacons, Christian Outreach, Christian Education, Christian Fellowship, and Trustees); ~~and the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee. The at-large members shall each serve for three years on overlapping terms, one new member added and one retired each year. These individual shall serve as Secretary, Vice Chairperson and the~~

~~Chairperson of Church Council, in that order. The nominating Committee will present one or more nominees for Secretary of the Church Council to the Annual Meeting, where other nominations will be accepted prior to election. Upon completion of the term as Chairperson of Church Council there will be a one-year interval before an individual may be elected again as Secretary of the Church Council. In the event of a vacancy, the remaining Church Council officers will advance and the position to be filled will be Secretary. Members shall be elected for a three-year term, and may be elected to one successive three-year term after which an interval of one year will be required prior to election to the same position, except for the Moderator/Chair of Church Council and Vice Chair of Church Council who will serve for two (2) successive two-year terms. The Vice Chair shall succeed the Moderator/Chair of Church Council when that person's term expires.~~ The Vice Chairpersons of the Boards ~~and the Nominating Committee~~ shall attend Church Council meetings in the absence of the Chairperson. A quorum will consist of two-thirds (86 members) of Church Council. No individual may concurrently hold more than one position comprising the Church Council. Newly elected Officers of Church Council shall be installed at ~~the next a~~ regular worship service of the Church ~~following their election.~~

The Church Council shall attend to personnel matters, including the review and evaluation of the performance of the Church staff annually, staffing requirements and specific salary recommendations for the staff and for the Pastor. It will also be available as needed to hear concerns of the staff or to address grievances.

The Church Council is the representative governing body of the Church and is empowered by the full membership to act on its behalf outside of a duly called congregational meeting. The Church Council shall meet monthly and shall keep an accurate record of its proceedings. The Church Council shall be responsible for approving the budget to be presented at the Annual Meeting; for approving candidates presented by the Nominating Committee to fill vacancies in offices, delegates, boards, and standing committees; for ~~approving-making~~ personnel decisions; for appointing ad hoc committees, and receiving and acting upon their recommendations; for appointing a Pastoral Search Committee when a pastoral vacancy occurs; for calling special meetings of the membership; for receiving reports and exercising oversight as needed on all Boards and Standing Committees including scheduling of major events; and for transacting any other business that shall properly come before it. The Church Council may authorize ~~unbudgeted spending, not to exceed \$2,000 per request and \$10,000 annually for all such requests spending in excess of budgeted amounts, not exceeding \$1,000 per incident and \$10,000 annually for all such requests,~~ with amounts exceeding these levels requiring congregational approval. All decisions of the Church Council are subject to oversight by the full church membership.

Article VIII

PASTOR

The Pastor is the spiritual leader of the church. The Pastor shall be responsible for the conduct of all worship services; shall administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; shall preach and interpret the Holy Scriptures; shall minister to those in need; and shall encourage and participate in the spiritual growth, education, outreach and fellowship of the church and its members. The Pastor shall be a member of the church, with all the rights, privileges and duties of its members. The Pastor shall have general direct supervision of the church staff and shall be attentive to staff concerns. The Pastor shall be a voting member of the Church Council and shall be an ex officio, non-voting member of all boards and standing committees of the church. The Pastor shall be assisted by the Board of Deacons in matters of worship, care of the needy and in recommending persons for church membership.

The Pastor's compensation and benefits shall be reviewed at least annually by the ~~Personnel Committee~~ Church Council with recommendations to the Finance Committee for action by the ~~Church Council and the~~ full membership.

There shall be a Pastor-Parish Relations Committee consisting of three (3) members of the congregation selected unanimously by the Pastor and, ~~the Moderator~~ /Chair of Church Council, ~~and the Chairperson of the Church Council~~, from a list of candidates presented by the Board of Deacons. The Moderator /Chair of Church Council, ~~Chairperson of the Church Council~~, and the Chairperson of the Board of Deacons shall not serve on the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. ~~Members shall serve for an indefinite term, but may step down voluntarily at any time, be asked to step down if requested by the Pastor and the Chairperson of Church Council or upon termination of the Pastor. The Committee's purpose shall be to maintain an open and healthy relationship between the Pastor and the congregation; to provide a communication link from members of the congregation with concerns about the Pastor but who are unwilling to come forward; to provide pastoral support by initiating dialogue with the congregation in areas where the Pastor has found a lack of support or confusion over pastoral roles, functions or actions; to work with the Pastor and organizations or individual members in areas of concern; and to be a sounding board of both concerns and celebrations with the Church. Members shall serve for a three-year term and may serve one successive three-year term after which an interval of one year will be required. The purpose of the Pastor-Parish Relations committee is to serve as a source of information and support for both the Pastor and members of the congregation in order to promote a positive and healthy relationship and to facilitate communications between individuals or groups with the Pastor when traditional channels have not been as effective as desired.~~

The Pastor may terminate his or her relationship with the church upon 90-days written notice ~~to the Chairperson of the Church Council or as mutually agreed to the Moderator/Chair of the Church Council~~. Termination of the Pastor by the church shall be by the action of the members at a special congregational meeting, called in accordance with the provisions of Article IV of these Bylaws. A two-thirds majority vote of the members present shall be necessary for termination. Should the church vote to terminate the relationship with the Pastor, the date of termination and/or severance arrangements shall be determined by the circumstances, and in consultation with the Connecticut Conference (UCC) executive staff.

When a pastoral vacancy occurs, the Church Council shall notify the Connecticut Conference (UCC) ~~and shall appoint a Pastoral Search Committee to identify and evaluate potential candidates~~. The Board of Deacons shall provide interim or supply ministers for the period of the vacancy. At the appropriate time, a Pastoral Search Committee shall be appointed. The Pastoral Search Committee shall work with the Church Council with input from the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees, and the Finance Committee to develop the terms of the call, including pastoral duties and responsibilities, salary, housing, benefits, vacations, sabbatical arrangements, education, and other matters. With approval of the Church Council, the Pastoral Search Committee shall recommend a candidate and present the terms of the call at a special congregational meeting, called in accordance with the provisions of Article IV of these Bylaws. A two-thirds majority vote of the members present shall be necessary to extend the call.

Upon acceptance of the call, the church and the Pastor-elect shall work with the Litchfield South Association to arrange a service of installation. A Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, as previously defined, shall be formed as soon as is appropriate but not more than six (6) months following installation. The Pastor shall serve for an indefinite period, in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

Article IX

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws may be made by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a duly called congregational meeting. The written text of the proposed amendment(s) shall be made available to the membership at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

This Constitution and Bylaws originally approved on: December 16, 2001

Revised: January 20, 2005 (Article V... increase number of terms for Officers & Delegates to two).

Revised: January 29, 2006 (Article VI... increase voting members to (9) on he Board of Christian Outreach).

Revised: January 28, 2007 (Article III & Article VI...to allow active non-church members to serve as voting members on specific Boards & Committees).

Revised: January 27, 2008 (Articles V & VI...to create the Assistant Treasurer position).

RevisedProposed Revisions: January 29, 2011 (substantial revisions).