

BY-LAWS

of

**The United Church of Christ
First Congregational**

of

NORWICH, NEW YORK

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ARTICLE I — NAME

The name of this church shall be The United Church of Christ, First Congregational, Norwich, New York (hereinafter referred to as the Church).

ARTICLE II — PURPOSE

The purpose of the Church shall be to unite in covenant followers of Jesus, the Christ, to share in the worship of God, and to help the Divine Will have dominion in the lives of all persons, individually and collectively, especially as that Divine Will is revealed in the life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus, the Christ.

ARTICLE III — POLITY (GOVERNANCE)

The Church acknowledges Jesus, the Christ, as its head and accepts the Bible as its guide in matters of faith and discipline.

The government of the Church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject to legal requirements of the Articles of Incorporation granted under the laws of the State of New York.

While the Church is not bound to any ecclesiastical authority, it accepts the obligations of mutual council, harmony and cooperation involved in the free fellowship of churches affiliated with the United Church of Christ, and pledges itself to share in their common life and mission.

ARTICLE IV — DOCTRINE

The Church recognizes the Bible as the sufficient rule of faith and practice, and holds that living in accordance with the teachings of Jesus, the Christ, is the true test of fellowship. Members shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of their own conscience, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The following Statement of Faith, adopted by the United Church of Christ, therefore is not a test but an expression of the spirit in which the Church interprets the Word of God.

Faith—

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus, our brother, and to whose deeds we testify: God calls the world into being, creates humankind in the Divine image, and sets before us the ways of life and death. God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin. God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness

declared through prophets and apostles. In Jesus, the Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, God has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator. God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the Church of Jesus, the Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, 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. God promises to all who trust in the gospel, forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God.

(United Church of Christ Statement of Faith, adapted 1976 by Roger V. Moss, Jr., President of The United Church of Christ. Adapted slightly to be clear about the office Jesus holds as *The Christ*.)

Covenant—

We commit to creating and maintaining a Christ centered community that nurtures and values each member and fosters our spiritual growth. We assume personal responsibility to use our personal and collective talents and resources to reach out to each other, the wider community and the world.

ARTICLE V — MEMBERSHIP

The Church welcomes all persons into the fellowship of believers, and, when they take the appropriate vows, to be admitted into its membership.

Statement of Inclusion—

We, the members of the United Church of Christ, First Congregational of Norwich, New York, affirm our regard for the worth and dignity of all

persons. We recognize, celebrate, and give thanks for the many diverse gifts of God among us. We declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation, welcoming into the life of the church persons of every age, race, gender, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental ability, economic status and family structure.

We accept our sexuality as a gift of God which enriches our lives and deeply touches our humanity. We acknowledge that throughout history the Christian church has often condemned and excluded gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons from the community of faith, or has condoned such condemnation and exclusion by its silence. We hold that such discrimination is incompatible with the gospel of Jesus, the Christ. We commit ourselves to work to end all oppression and discrimination which afflict God's people. We affirm all relationships founded on the principles of God's love and justice.

We commit ourselves to insuring that our place of worship is a safe place where all people will feel comfortable and know that they are accepted and loved without the threat of judgment or condemnation. We pledge to come together in Christ's name to celebrate our diversity and discover our unity.

Statement affirmed by vote at Church Meeting, June 25, 2000 declaring the Church to be Open and Affirming

A. Covenant Members

1. Covenant (full) members of the Church shall be persons who have been welcomed into its fellowship following a public acceptance of its covenant. They shall enjoy all the rights, responsibilities, and privileges of membership, including the right to vote and hold elective office. They may be received by:
 - (a) Confession of Faith and Baptism if not previously baptized.
 - (b) Reaffirmation of Faith if previously a member of another church.
 - (c) Through presentation of a Letter of Transfer from another church.

B. Associate Members

1. An Associate Member is one who, desiring to maintain a membership in another church, regularly supports the Church's activities and programs, and has been welcomed publicly into this fellowship.
2. Such persons shall not be counted as full members on any rolls sent to denominational offices.
3. Such status shall terminate upon either becoming a Covenant Member or moving away from the area or at the Associate Member's request.

C. Membership Training

1. It is strongly recommended that a class for prospective members be offered periodically, that they may be instructed in the meaning of the Christian faith as well as in the history and organization of The United Church of Christ. A confirmation class for youth and/or adults will be offered as needed.

2. Responsibility for such classes shall lie with the Pastor and the Deacons.

D. Reception

Persons approved by the Deacons shall be welcomed into membership at any regular service of worship. Prospective members shall be urged by the Pastor to meet with the Deacons prior to being welcomed into membership. If, for some reason deemed acceptable by the Deacons, a person wishes to join the church but not participate in a public ceremony, that person must meet with the Deacons before being accepted into membership in lieu of a public ceremony.

E. Termination of Membership

1. Any covenant member who requests a letter of transfer and recommendation to another church is entitled to receive it.

2. Upon receipt of notice that a covenant member has been received into another church without letter of transfer, that person's membership in the Church shall be terminated.

3. If a covenant member requests to be released from his or her covenant obligations, that request shall be granted and membership terminated.

4. A member whose address has long been unknown or who for a period of two years, in spite of friendly approaches, has not communicated with the Church or contributed to its support, may, by approval of the Deacons, be transferred to an Inactive list, at which time they are ineligible to vote. Such persons may be restored to Active membership through approval by the Deacons.

F. Voting

Any covenant member may vote on any matter before the Church, except that Covenant members under the legal age as set by the State of New York may not vote on legal matters of the Church.

ARTICLE VI— SERVICES AND MEETINGS

The services and meetings of the Church shall be as follows:

A. Worship

(1) Services of worship, introspection and prayer shall be held at times and dates designated by the Deacons in conjunction with the Pastor.

(2) The Sacraments— The sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at such times as the Deacons in conjunction with the Pastor may determine, which shall be not less than four times a year. Our Communion table is open to all who claim Jesus to be the Christ. In that welcome to the table we include children, who are invited to participate in the sacrament at the discretion of their parents or care givers. The baptism of adults and the baptism or consecration of children shall be administered at such time as the Pastor and/or the Deacons may determine.

B. Business — Meetings

1. Annual Meetings:

(a) The first annual meeting shall be held at the Church in January to receive the yearly reports of the treasurer and church clerk and to approve the budget. Notice of such meeting shall be presented at a regular worship service of the Church on the two successive Sundays immediately preceding the date of such meeting.

(b) The second annual meeting shall be held at the Church in June to receive the yearly reports of the officers and organizations and to elect officers, and transact business. Notice of such meeting shall state the names of the nominees for Church officers to be elected thereat and shall be presented at a regular worship service of the Church on the two successive Sundays immediately preceding the date of such meeting.

(c) A meeting for the proposal of a budget for the ensuing year shall be held at least three weeks before the Annual Financial Campaign. At this meeting the Church shall receive from the Board of Trustees and Church members, proposals for the budget for the ensuing year.

(d) The regular Sunday meeting of the Church shall be considered sufficient, in case of necessity, to transact business; except corporate action requiring legal notice and business specifically referred to other meetings.

(e) Special Meetings— Special meetings for business may be called by the Pastor, Executive Council, any board or may be called by the Clerk on written request of at least ten covenant members of the Church.

(f) Rules and regulations for the conduct of all of the above meetings:

(1) NOTICE — Notice of the meeting shall be read two successive

Sundays preceding the date of the meeting. The notice shall state the time and place and the business to be transacted.

(2) **QUORUM**— A quorum consists of those present for a meeting after proper notice. The Executive Council may set a specific number for a quorum if it deems the issue(s) to be presented justify such an action.

(3) **VOTING**— Elections shall be by vote of the membership present, except as otherwise provided in the by-laws. Unless otherwise required, a majority vote is decisive, and unless restricted by law all covenant members of the Church are entitled to vote.

(4) **FISCAL YEAR**— The fiscal year of the Church shall begin January 1.

(5) **OFFICIAL YEAR**— The official year of the Church shall begin July 1.

(6) **REPORTS**— All officers, boards, and committees shall submit a written report for the June meeting and at such other times as may be requested by the appropriate boards and committees of the Church.

(7) **CONDUCTING MEETINGS**— All of these meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.

ARTICLE VII - EDUCATION

The purpose of Christian Education is:

1. To lead everyone, young and old, into an increasing experience of communion with God;
2. To foster a Christian ethic in all human relationships;
3. To develop interest in the Church;
4. To increase participation in the life and work of the Church.

Therefore, the Church shall conduct a Sunday Church School and provide other Christian Education opportunities.

ARTICLE VIII - OFFICERS

A. The officers of the Church shall be the following:

1. **Pastor:** The Pastor shall be called by a two-thirds vote of covenant members present at a meeting called for that purpose. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time. In regard to the Pastor, the Church shall honor the traditional title in the United Church of Christ of "Pastor and Teacher." At the first opportunity the Pastor shall become a member of the Church and of the Association of which the Church is a member.

The Pastor shall be the theological officer of the Church. In cooperation with the members, officers, boards and committees of the Church, the Pastor shall seek to preach and teach the Gospel of Jesus, the Christ; administer the two sacraments of the Church, Baptism and Communion; and provide pastoral counseling as requested. The Pastor shall give guidance on the liturgy and participate in the conduct of the liturgy for services of public worship. The Pastor shall be an *ex-officio* member of all Boards and Committees of the Church and shall provide theological guidance to them

Should the relationship between the Church and the Pastor become strained or in jeopardy, the Conference Minister and the Association Committee on the Ministry shall be consulted at the request of either the Pastor or the Church. The Church may at any time by a majority vote at a meeting called for the purpose, request the resignation of the Pastor. If either the Church or the Pastor feels there is unfairness in termination of the call, either party has the right to refer the matter for hearing to the Association Committee on the Ministry. When termination of the call is requested, notice shall be given according to the call.

VACANCY IN THE PASTORATE - When a vacancy occurs in the Pastorate, while being aware that circumstances and procedures do change, this church will take into consideration the guidance of the denomination known as the United Church of Christ and the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ current when the vacancy happens.

The search process is, normally, a two step process. This involves the establishment of a Transition Committee which will be followed by the establishment of a Search Committee. These Committees shall take into consideration the guidance of the denomination known as the United Church of Christ and the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ current when the vacancy happens. In so doing these committees shall seek the guidance and cooperation of the staff of the New York Conference of the

United Church of Christ.

These Committees shall be chosen in the following manner. For each of these committees at a time appropriate to the establishment of these committees, that time to be determined by the Executive Council, the Executive Council shall solicit names of prospective candidates for each committee. Also, the Executive Council is charged with approaching and recruiting prospective members for these committees whom the Executive Council collectively believes need to be considered but whose names have not been suggested.

Given that more names may be submitted than are required for these committees, the Executive Council shall internally create a system by which each of the persons to be considered is chosen. The process by which this happens shall be and shall remain confidential. The members of each of these Committees shall be installed at a regular service of worship of this church. When the members of each committee are chosen, those names shall be made known to the Church membership. There are aspects of this process which will fall under ethical boundaries and boundaries of confidentiality. Some of those ethical boundaries and boundaries of confidentiality are established by the aforementioned process recommended by the United Church of Christ and the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ. It is, therefore, both prudent and necessary that certain aspects of this process be and remain confidential. The members of the Executive Council and the members of these two committees shall pledge, as given grace from God, to maintain these boundaries.

Each of these committees shall have seven members. The Executive Council shall strive to attain a number of balances on each of these committees. These balances shall include but not be limited to gender balance, gender preference balance, age balance, a balance in terms of length of Covenant membership and balance among other aspects of church life which are to include but not be limited to Christian Education, outreach and music participation. Note: employees of the church may be considered for these committees. Since the Transition Committee and the Search Committee consists of seven members each, the Executive Council, in striving to maintain the aforementioned balances, may consider the membership on both committees as a whole in an attempt to achieve those balances. It is recommended that there be some overlap between these committees, i.e.: as many as two members may be on both committees in order to provide continuity.

The Transition Committee shall be chosen and established and its work shall be satisfied or nearly satisfied before the Search Committee is chosen and established. The transition committee shall: create a profile of who, as a congregation, we currently are and define a vision for the future of our congregation. The Executive Council, in consultation with the Transition Committee and the Church, shall determine the time at which the work of the Transition Committee is satisfied. At that point the Search Committee shall be formed and empowered.

The Search Committee shall be charged with seeking a new Pastor. In that process the Search Committee shall survey available candidates under guidelines established by the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ. The Search Committee shall bring the names of up to 3 candidates to the Executive Council for review and approval, prior to making a final decision. Decisions made about candidates by the Search Committee shall remain confidential until the committee is ready to announce its decision about a new Pastor to the Church. The Search Committee shall, however and without disclosing information which should remain confidential, keep the Executive Council and the Church informed about progress. When the Search Committee selects the candidate who in their judgment should be called as the settled Pastor, they shall introduce the candidate to the Church. The covenant members shall vote on the individual presented by the Search Committee at a service of worship and meeting of the church called for that purpose. A quorum is required for that vote to take effect. A new Pastor shall be called by two-thirds vote of covenant members present.

As soon as possible after a new Pastor is chosen that Pastor shall meet with the Committee on Authorized Ministry (sometimes called the Church and Ministry Committee) of the Susquehanna Association. As soon as possible after a new Pastor is chosen that Pastor shall become a member of this church. As soon as possible after a new Pastor is chosen that Pastor shall be installed as Pastor and Teacher of the United Church of Christ, First Congregational, of Norwich and, following the polity of the United Church of Christ, the installation of a new Pastor shall include participation in that ceremony by members of the Susquehanna Association and by the Committee on Authorized Ministry (sometimes called the Church and Ministry Committee) of the Susquehanna Association. This ceremony shall also happen at the earliest possible time convenient to all.

2. Associate or Assistant Pastor: Candidates for Associate or Assistant Pastor shall be chosen in a manner established by the Executive Council if and when the Church and the Executive Council decide that such a position is needed. The Associate or Assistant Pastor shall be called by two-thirds vote of covenant members present at a meeting called for that purpose.

3. Moderator: A covenant member of the Church shall be elected annually for a one year term and shall be eligible for one additional consecutive one year term. Duties of the Moderator shall be to:

Preside at all meetings of the Church. In the absence of the Moderator the Vice-Moderator shall preside. In the absence of the Vice-Moderator the Immediate Past Moderator shall preside. If none of these officers are available, the meeting shall elect a Moderator pro-tem.

Preside at all meetings of the Executive Council. In the absence of the Moderator the Vice-Moderator shall preside. If neither officer is available, the Immediate Past Moderator shall preside.

Perform such other duties as are prescribed by law as usually pertain to the office of chairman of an assembly.

Serve as an *ex-officio* member of the Board of Deacons and the Board of Trustees and Special Committees.

Assume the duties of Immediate Past Moderator at the conclusion of term as Moderator.

4. Vice-Moderator: A covenant member of the Church shall be elected annually for a one year term, and shall be eligible for an additional consecutive one year term. It shall be considered a normal progression for an individual to become Vice-Moderator and then Moderator. Duties of the Vice-Moderator shall be to:

Assume the duties of the Moderator, in the absence of the Moderator.

Be the official Delegate to the Association of which the Church is a member and report back to the Church information about Association meetings; encourage other interested members of the Church to participate in Association activities; and provide a substitute who must be a covenant member of the Church in the event he/she is unable to attend an Association meeting. If the Church is entitled to more than one official delegate, the Executive Council shall appoint additional delegates each of whom must be

covenant members of the Church.

5. Immediate Past Moderator: The person who has most recently served as Moderator shall become the Immediate Past Moderator at the completion of his/her term(s). If this person is unable to assume the duties of Immediate Past Moderator another covenant member shall be elected to assume the duties. Duties of Immediate Past-Moderator shall be to:

Serve as a member of the Executive Council

Be the official delegate to the New York Conference Annual Meeting and report back to the Church about the Conference Meeting; encourage other interested members of the Church to participate in Conference activities; provide a substitute who must be a covenant member of the Church in the event he/she is unable to attend a Conference meeting. If the Church is entitled to more than one official delegate the Executive Council shall appoint additional delegates each of whom must be covenant members of the Church.

Preside at meetings of the Church and of the Executive Council in the absence of the Moderator and Vice-Moderator.

6. Clerk: A covenant member of the Church shall be elected for a three year term. Duties of the Clerk shall be to:

Keep a record of the meetings of the Church.

Keep a record of the meetings and conduct the correspondence of the Executive Council as an *ex-officio* member of the Executive Council.

Keep a register with addresses of the members of the Church, with dates and manner of their reception and removal, and a record of baptisms and marriages.

Issue letters of transfer.

Preserve on file all communications and official reports.

Notify all persons elected to offices and boards.

Give legal notices of all meetings when such notices are necessary.

Conduct all correspondence so far as this is not otherwise provided for.

Perform such other duties as are prescribed by law as usually pertain to the office of clerk or secretary of an assembly.

7. Financial Secretary: An officer of the Church selected by and directly responsible to the Board of Trustees. Duties of the Financial Secretary shall be to:

Receive all payments on current and back pledges.
Take charge of all offerings and special funds authorized by the Church
Keep an accurate account of each contributor.
Deposit all moneys received in such depository as the Trustees shall
order.
Shall submit a report of moneys collected and the deposit receipts to the
Treasurer.
Furnish contributors with statements of their account as requested or
as directed by the Trustees.
Furnish financial information to support financial enlistment.
Perform other duties as directed by the Board of Trustees.

8. Treasurer: An officer of the Church selected by and directly
responsible to the Board of Trustees. Duties of the Treasurer:

Receive all receipts and other records of the moneys of the Church from
the Financial Secretary.
Maintain custody and keep safe all papers and documents relating to
the property of the Church, under direction of the Trustees.
Pay the bills of the Church on order from the Trustees or their properly
appointed agent.
Keep accurate written account of all receipts and disbursements.
Furnish such bonds or other security as the Trustees prescribe.
Perform other duties as directed by the Board of Trustees.

9. Historian: A covenant member of the Church shall be elected
annually for a one year term who shall keep a record of all occurrences of
interest to the Church.

10. Other Officers: Other officers may be elected as need dictates.

B. Vacancies: Any vacancy which occurs in an elective office shall be filled
by the Executive Council. Such term shall be until the next annual election.

ARTICLE IX - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

A. The **Executive Council** shall act on behalf of the Church regarding matters of policy except for matters to be submitted to the membership at a Church meeting. The Executive Council shall be bound by any directives or decisions adopted by the Church at a regular or special meeting.

1. **Members:** The Executive Council shall consist of six members: the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Immediate Past Moderator, a Representative of and member of the Board of Deacons who will be an advocate for the Deacons on the Executive Council, a Representative of and member of the Board of Trustees who will be an advocate for the Trustees on the Executive Council, and one Member at Large who will be an advocate for the congregants. The Clerk of the Church and the Pastor shall be *ex-officio* members of the Executive Council. Members of the Executive Council serve for terms of one year and may succeed themselves subject to the limitations on the term of their other office. The Member at Large may not hold any other elected office nor serve more than three consecutive one year terms as Member at Large. The representatives to the Boards of Deacons and Trustees may not serve more than three consecutive one year terms as representative from that Board.

2. **Meetings:** The Executive Council shall meet upon the call of the Moderator, the Pastor or of any two members of the Council. Meetings shall be open to any covenant member of the Church.

3. **Quorum:** Four members shall constitute a quorum.

4. **Responsibilities and functions** include but are not limited to the following:

(a) Visualize and direct the general course of the Church.

(b) Collaborate with the Deacons, Trustees, Officers, Staff and Special Committees in program development to carry out the mission of the Church.

(c) Provide leadership in defining and achieving the objectives of the Church.

(d) Provide framework for decision making and conflict resolution.

(e) Facilitate communication between and among the various Boards, Committees, Groups and Individuals within the Church and between the Church and the wider community.

(f) Support and maintain open relations and communications between the Pastor and the members of the Church.

(g) Provide for a Nominating Committee to present a slate of nominees for all elective positions at the annual June meeting.

(1) For vacancies that occur between annual meetings, the Executive Council will coordinate with the affected Board and Pastor to fill such vacancy or otherwise provide for the specific responsibilities.

(h) Provide for the annual performance review of clergy

(i) Appoint special committees as needed

(j) Perform such other duties as described in these Bylaws or as directed by a Church meeting.

ARTICLE X - BOARDS

A. General:

1. **Members:** Members of the Boards shall be elected for three year terms. Membership shall be divided as nearly as possible into three equal classes of terms so that approximately one third of the Board shall be elected each year. Only covenant members are eligible for election. After serving two full consecutive terms, no member shall be eligible to serve on the same board until after the lapse of one year. A member appointed or elected to fill an unexpired term shall be eligible thereafter for election to two consecutive full terms. The Moderator and the Pastor shall be *ex-officio* members of the Boards.

2. **Individual areas of Responsibility:** Each Board Member is elected by the Church with the intent to assume accountability for specific areas of responsibility which are listed for each Board. These areas correspond to the Responsibilities and Functions of the Board on which he/she serves. Individual Board Members are expected to provide organization in and advocacy for their area. Once elected, Members within a single Board, by mutual agreement with the Pastor and the Executive Committee may trade areas of responsibilities. The Church will be kept apprised of any such changes. The purpose of electing individual Board Members to specific areas of responsibility is to ensure accountability for these areas.

3. **Action Committees:** To facilitate the work in the assigned area, the Board Members are encouraged to gather action committees for specific assignments or tasks as appropriate. Action committees may be made up of one or more persons. There is no membership requirement imposed by the

Church on persons serving on an action committee. The whole Board may provide guidance in delegating tasks to action committees. It is understood that the Board Member elected for a specific area may not necessarily be the one who does the work in the area, but that Board Member pledges by his/her election to be responsible for seeing that the work in that area is accomplished.

4. Meetings: Regular meetings of the Boards shall be held according to a schedule established by the Board and shall be open to any covenant member of the Church. Special meetings of the Boards may be called by the Chair, the Moderator or the Pastor.

5. Quorum: One-half of the total number of Board members holding office at the time of a meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

6. Vacancies: Any vacancy in Board positions will be provided for in accordance with Article IX A. 4 (g) of these Bylaws.

B. The Board of Deacons shall consist of not less than 7 and not more than 9 members, including a Chair of the Board, a Clerk of the Board, one of whom is also elected to be a member of the Executive Council charged with representing the interests of the Deacons on the Executive Council. The Deacons shall assume responsibility and provide leadership for matters concerned with the spiritual life of the Church and its relationship to the wider community.

1. Responsibilities and functions of the Board include but are not limited to the following:

(a) Coordination of Liturgy and Services of Worship: Assist the Pastor in the planning and coordination of worship services and special activities and celebrations.

(b) Communion coordination: Prepare and assist in serving communion.

(c) Membership: Introduce new members into the life of the Church. Receive, examine and act on applications for admission to Church membership. Review the Church roll as needed to keep it current.

(d) Lay visitation: Call upon members and friends, and care for those in need.

(e) Deacon's Fund: Administer the Deacon's Fund in cooperation with the Pastor.

(f) Ushers: Assist the Pastor with these aspects of services.

(g) Coffee Hour and receptions.

(h) Representation to the Executive Council.

(i) Provide for supply of pulpit and pastoral care in the absence of the Pastor. When a Pastor resigns, the Board is responsible for finding an interim Pastor in cooperation with the Conference and Association within any guidelines established by the Church or the Executive Council.

(j) Christian Education: Oversee the Christian education program

(k) Music: Oversee the musical aspects of Church life and worship

(l) Spiritual Life: Facilitate sharing of ideas, hopes, dreams and interpretations of the Church's mission within the Community of faith

(m) Areas of responsibility and interest not provided for herein shall be decided upon by mutual agreement of the Board and the Executive Council or by directive from a Church meeting.

C. The Board of Trustees shall consist of not less than 7 and not more than 9 members including a Chair of the Board, a Clerk of the Board, one of whom is also elected to be a member of the Executive Council charged with representing the interests of the Trustees on the Executive Council. The Trustees shall assume responsibility for the stewardship of Church property and finances.

1. Responsibilities and functions include but are not limited to the following:

(a) Care and charge of financial affairs and Church property, subject to directives of the Church, laws and regulations of the state and the following specific limitations:

(1) The Board shall have no power to buy, sell, lease or transfer real property valued in excess of \$1,000 without a majority vote at a Church meeting called for the purpose

(2) After adoption of the annual budget by the Church, the Board may make adjustments of individual amounts except that no changes in excess of \$1,000 per category shall be made in the amounts allotted to Our Church's Wider Mission, our obligations as a corporate body or our salaried obligations without a two-thirds vote of members present at a special Church meeting called for the purpose

- (b) Submit an annual budget and financial report for Church review and adoption
- (c) Provide leadership for annual financial enlistment
- (d) Oversee the personnel policy and its administration including providing for the annual salary review of employed staff. Coordinate with the Executive Council in the salary review of the Pastor.
- (e) Preserve and maintain decorative integrity of Church property
- (f) Develop programs of education, involvement and financial support for local mission.
- (g) Develop programs of education, involvement and financial support for wider mission.
- (h) Administer the Memorial gifts fund and determine acceptance and use of gifts or bequests of furniture, fixtures, art works, etc.
- (i) Provide for audit of the accounts of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary.
- (j) Provide for appropriate Insurance and legal consultation.
- (k) Representation to the Executive Council.
- (l) Areas of responsibility and interest not provided for here in shall be decided upon by mutual agreement of the Board and the Executive Council or by directive from a Church meeting.

ARTICLE XI — FINANCES

A. Offerings — The Church shall seek support by contributions of individuals and organizations. Opportunity shall be offered to all members of the Church and congregants to make written pledges at the time of the Annual Financial Campaign or otherwise. Opportunities may be offered according to policy set for solicitation and distribution by individual boards to contribute to the Deacons' Fund and other special funds.

B. Apportionment — The Church will cooperate with the Churches in the Susquehanna Association and the New York Conference under what is known as the apportionment plan. Likewise the Trustees shall include in the budget of expenses of the Church the per capita contribution for the expenses of the Susquehanna Association, the New York Conference and the General Synod of The United Church of Christ.

C. Permanent Funds — All legacies not specifically appropriated by the donors to some other purpose, shall be set aside in a permanent fund, the

income only of which is to be used for routine operational expenses. To this fund shall be added temporarily any special endowment contributions and gifts in the form of memorials, “Conditional gifts” and endowment gifts for special projects. The permanent funds shall be placed in trust by the treasurer, under order of the Trustees, with a trust company or National Bank having trust powers.

The object of the permanent funds shall be to supplement pledges rather than to supplant them. Principal may be withdrawn for special needs by approval of two-thirds vote of covenant members present at a regular or special meeting. However, principal may be withdrawn from the UCC General Fund #4027 upon a majority vote of the elected UCC Board of Trustees present at a regular or special meeting.

ARTICLE XII — AMENDMENTS

A) Articles I through VII of these by-laws may be amended only by a two-thirds vote of the Church, there being a quorum present as specified in Article VI B. 1 (f) (2) of these By-laws. The proposed changes must have been made known to all members by providing them the complete by-laws in both the current version and the proposed version not less than two months prior to the vote. And such proposed changes shall be announced from the pulpit on three consecutive Sundays immediately preceding such a Church meeting. Printed copies must be made available to the members of the Church on those three Sundays and at the meeting. The meeting at which this action takes place may be either a regular meeting or a special meeting.

B) The remaining articles of these by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of covenant members present, there being a quorum present as specified in Article VI B. 1 (f) (2) of these by-laws, at any regular or special meeting of the Church. The notice for such meeting shall be read from the pulpit for three successive Sundays preceding the meeting. The proposed amendments will also be made available to the Church in writing, on the same three successive Sundays and at the meeting.

**BY-LAWS
of The United Church of Christ,
First Congregational
of Norwich, NY**

Adopted March 7, 1995

Revised May 2, 1999

Amended and Approved June 25, 2006

Amended and Approved January 27, 2013

Amended and Approved October 22, 2017

Moderator

Pastor and Teacher