

# BY-LAWS

OF

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
HANOVER, MASSACHUSETTS**

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**ARTICLE 1 NAME**

The name of this church shall be the First Congregational Church of Hanover, Massachusetts, Incorporated, "United Church of Christ."

**ARTICLE 2 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ in the worship of God, and in making His will dominant in the lives of His people, especially as that will is disclosed in the life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**ARTICLE 3 FELLOWSHIP**

While affirming the liberty of our churches and the validity of our ministry, we hold to the unity and catholicity of the church of Christ, and will earnestly seek as far as in us lies, to encourage an ecumenical fellowship with all established churches in Christ's name, that the prayer of our Lord for His disciples may be answered, that they may all be one. We will strive to encourage and develop and resolve areas of mutual concern with those of non-Christian faiths.

**ARTICLE 4 STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to His deeds we testify: He calls the worlds into being, creates man in his own image and sets before him the ways of life and death.

He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

He judges men and nations by his righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, he as come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to himself.

He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

He calls us into his Church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, 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.

He promises to all who trust him forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, his presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen

**ARTICLE 5 THE COVENANT**

*The Covenant of the Church shall be:*

- 1) We Covenant with the Lord and with one another, and do bind ourselves in the presence of God to walk together in His holy ways. We will strive to be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, to be firm in faith, quickened in hope, and constant in charity. And we will consecrate our time, talent, substance, and influence as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.
- 2) We acknowledge Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and accept the Holy Scriptures as our rule of faith and practice and we recognize the privilege and duty of uniting ourselves in Christian fellowship for the enjoyment of Christian ordinances, the public worship of God, and the advancement of His Kingdom in the world.

**ARTICLE 6 MEMBERSHIP**

- 1) Members may be admitted by:
  - a) profession of faith; or
  - b) letter certifying good standing in another church; or
  - c) reaffirmation of faith
- 2) Members of the church shall be designated as one of the following:
  - a) Covenant members -- Those persons who have been received by vote of the church and who have given public assent to its covenant, and who have received baptism.
  - b) Inactive members - Those members who have, for a period of two years, not attended services, not communicated with the church in writing, or not contributed to the support of the church.

- 3) Only covenant members shall:
  - a) be eligible to vote in church meetings
  - b) be eligible to hold office excepting as prohibited by law.
  - c) be eligible to hold office excepting the flower, usher, outreach and service, and greeting committees.
  - d) be eligible to enjoy the customary rights and privileges of membership.
- 4) Changes in membership may be made under the following conditions:
  - a) Death
  - b) Should a member request a letter of transfer of membership to another church, the church Clerk shall send the letter indicating membership status to said church. Membership in this church shall cease when the letter is sent.
  - c) A member joining another church with or without due notice to this church shall be dropped from membership.
  - d) Inactive members remaining on the inactive list for three (3) years may be dropped from membership if they do not respond to two written contacts by the church Clerk.
  - e) Should a member become an offense to the church and to its good name by immoral or unChristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his covenant vows, the church, upon recommendation by the church committee, and after due notice and hearing, may by a two-thirds vote of those covenant members present and voting by ballot, terminate membership of said person.

#### **ARTICLE 7 THE SENIOR PASTOR**

*The Senior Pastor shall:*

- 1) Be chosen at a meeting called for that purpose by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.
- 2) Hold office without limitation of term, but either church or pastor may terminate the relationship upon either a minimum of two months' notice, or a mutually agreed upon notice. In case of dismissal by the church, a two-thirds vote shall be required.
- 3) Hold ministerial standing in an Association of the United Church of Christ or other ecclesiastical body approved by the church. Should such standing be revoked, the pastoral relationship with this church shall be considered dissolved.
- 4) Have charge of the spiritual welfare and development of the church
- 5) Preach the Gospel, administer the Sacraments, have charge of services of public worship, and stimulate the activities of the church in cooperation with the various boards and committees.
- 6) Be an advisory member, ex officio without vote, of all boards and committees, except the Church Committee which he shall chair and be a voting member.
- 7) Be a member of this church.
- 8) In case of severely inclement weather, consult with the Chairperson of Diaconate as to whether scheduled service(s) of worship shall be held.
- 9) Administer the Deacons Fund with advice and consent of the Diaconate.
- 10) Be the on-site supervisor of church staff.

#### **ARTICLE 7A THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR (adopted January 26, 2003)**

*The Associate Pastor shall:*

- 1) Be chosen at a Church Meeting called for that purpose by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.
- 2) Hold office without limitation of term, but either the church or associate pastor may terminate the relationship upon either a minimum of two months notice, or a mutually agreed upon notice. In case of dismissal by the church, a two-thirds vote shall be required.
- 3) Hold ministerial standing in an Association of the United Church of Christ or other ecclesiastical body approved by the church. Should such standing be revoked, the pastoral relationship with this church shall be considered dissolved.
- 4) Assist the senior pastor in the spiritual welfare and development of the church.
- 5) Assist the senior pastor in preaching the Gospel, administering the Sacraments as needed, and stimulate the activities of the church in cooperation with the senior pastor and various boards and committees.
- 6) Have oversight of the ministry with and for youth.
- 7) Be an advisory member, ex officio without vote, of all boards and committees, except the Church Committee, of which he/she will be a voting member.

## OFFICERS

### ARTICLE 8 THE MODERATOR

*The Moderator shall:*

- 1) Be a covenant member of the church.
- 2) Be elected for a two (2) year term and may not succeed himself/herself.
- 3) Call, prepare an agenda for, impartially preside over, and provide the opportunity for full discussion of meetings of the church body, the Church Cabinet, and the Pastoral Salary Review Committee.
- 4) Appoint two (2) members of the Cabinet to serve on the Pastoral Salary Review Committee (see Article 30).
- 5) Be empowered to appoint a sub-committee for the purpose of hiring part-time employees (See Article 32).
- 6) Appoint two (2) members of the Investment Committee (See Article 19).
- 7) Be a member of the Church Cabinet, Church Committee, the Staff Relations Committee, and the Pastoral Review Committee.
- 8) Be empowered to convene meetings of committees and boards when they have not done so within two weeks after election at the annual meeting (See Article 33c).
- 9) Assure that all newly elected officers and members of committees and boards are made aware of their responsibilities as outlined in these By-laws.
- 10) Review the By-laws at the end of his term and appoint a committee, if necessary, to make needed changes. A committee shall be appointed to do a complete review of the By-laws at least every ten years.

### ARTICLE 9 VICE MODERATOR

*The Vice-Moderator shall:*

- 1) Be a covenant member of this church.
- 2) Be elected for a two (2) year term and may not succeed himself/herself as Vice Moderator.
- 3) In the absence of the Moderator, fulfill the duties of the Moderator.
- 4) Call, prepare an agenda for, impartially preside over, and provide for full discussion of meetings of the Nominating Committee.
- 5) Be a voting member of the Church Cabinet, Church Committee, and the Nominating Committee.

### ARTICLE 10 THE CLERK

*The Clerk shall:*

- 1) Be a covenant member of this church.
- 2) Be elected for a one (1) year term and may hold successive terms without limitation.
- 3) Keep a faithful record of all proceedings of the church, Church Committee, and Cabinet meetings.
- 4) Keep a register with names and addresses of all members and methods of their reception and removal, and a record of all marriages, baptisms, and deaths, recording same in a suitable book to be the property of the church.
- 5) Attend to the correspondence relative to letters of transfer and termination of membership, church meetings, church cabinet meetings, church committee meetings, election of officers and appointments to boards and committees.
- 6) Shall collect and file all reports made to the church by its officers, boards, committees, and delegates.
- 7) Be a member of the Church Cabinet, Church Committee, and the Nominating Committee.
- 8) Post notices of meetings of the church (See Article 35, A & B).
- 9) Perform such other duties as pertain to the office.

### ARTICLE 11 FINANCIAL SECRETARY

*The Financial Secretary shall:*

- 1) Be a covenant member of this church.
- 2) Be elected for a one (1) year term and may hold successive terms without limitation.
- 3) Keep a record of all financial pledges toward the support of the church and its benevolences.
- 4) Receive and record all such payments, together with all other financial contributions and receipts.
- 5) Deposit all monies in checking accounts for disbursement by the Treasurers.
- 6) Issue a quarterly statement of account to each pledger.
- 7) Distribute envelopes to those who have made pledges.
- 8) Be a voting member of the Church Cabinet and the Ex Officio Finance Board.
- 9) Be at least 21 years of age.

**ARTICLE 11A ASSISTANT FINANCIAL SECRETARY** (adopted June 6, 1999)

*The Assistant Financial Secretary shall:*

- 1) be a covenant member of this Church
- 2) Be elected for a one (1) year term and may hold successive terms without limitation.
- 3) In the absence of the Financial Secretary, fulfill the duties of the Financial Secretary
- 4) Be at least 21 years old.

**ARTICLE 12 THE TREASURER**

*The Treasurer shall:*

- 1) Be a covenant member of this church.
- 2) Be elected for a one (1) year term and may hold successive terms without limitation.
- 3) Receive and hold all church money except the Deacons Fund or any special purpose fund where the vote of the church specifies that a special Treasurer be elected to receive, hold and disburse such special purpose funds.
- 4) Maintain monies pledged and collected for "The Building Fund" in a separate account and expend only as directed by the Trustees for repair and maintenance of church property. This fund is not intended to cover normal operating expenses for the property.
- 5) Maintain monies pledged and collected for "Benevolences" in a separate account and dispersed only as directed by the Outreach and Service Committee.
- 6) Disburse all other church money held by him/her as directed by the Finance Board except funds and permanent investments in the custody of the Board of Trustees.
- 7) Keep suitable books of account for all funds of church money held by *him/her*.
- 8) Keep the church funds in such banking institutions as determined by the Board of Trustees or Finance Board according to proper application of funds.
- 9) Render account annually and whenever the church shall so request.
- 10) Submit a monthly report to the Finance Board.
- 11) Be a voting member of the Church Cabinet and Ex Officio member of the Finance Board.
- 12) Be at least 21 years of age.

**ARTICLE 12A THE ASSISTANT TREASURER**

*The Assistant Treasurer shall:*

- 1) Be a covenant member of this church.
- 2) Be elected for a one (1) year term and may hold successive terms without limitation.
- 3) In the absence of a Treasurer, fulfill the duties of the Treasurer.
- 4) Be at least 21 years old.

**ARTICLE 13 THE CHURCH CABINET**

*The Church Cabinet shall:*

- 1) Consist of the Moderator who shall act as chairperson, Vice Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Chairpeople of all Boards and Committees, Delegates, Superintendent(s) and/or Directors of Church School, and Chairpersons of special committees.
- 2) Maintain a general oversight of the fellowship and work of the church.
- 3) Hear reports of officers, boards, committees and organizations.
- 4) Be empowered to appoint special committees as needed.
- 5) Meet at least four (4) times a year in open session.

**ARTICLE 14 THE CHURCH COMMITTEE**

*The Church Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of Co-Chairs of the Diaconate, the Senior Pastor who shall act at chairman, the Associate Pastor, the Moderator, Vice Moderator and Clerk,
- 2) Aid the Pastors in the care of the spiritual life of the church.
- 3) Meet with the candidates for church membership who will present themselves for examination as to their Christian experience and purpose or present satisfactory letters of transfer and recommendations from another Christian Church.

- 4) Vote to recommend to the church the advisability of accepting for membership those candidates who have appeared before the committee.
- 5) Shall annually review membership rolls yearly and make adjustment as to membership status as described in Article 6, entitled Membership.

#### **ARTICLE 15 THE DIACONATE**

*The Diaconate shall:*

- 1) Consist of sixteen (16) covenant members of this church, seeking a balance of men and women, such members to be elected for a term of three years, six to be elected at each annual meeting. Life Deacons shall be honorary members.
- 2) Assist the Pastors in the care of the spiritual life of the church.
- 3) Be advisors to the Youth Diaconate
- 4) Provide the elements and assist in the administration of the Sacraments, reception of new members, and other functions as requested by the Pastors.
- 5) With the consultation of the Pastors, offer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper a minimum of six (6) times per year.
- 6) Have custody of the Communion service ware and be responsible for the care of the alter ware.
- 7) Call on the sick, the aged, the home bound and new families in the community and may offer communion.
- 8) Counsel with the Pastors at regular intervals regarding the spiritual life of the church and the Pastor's problems and concerns.
- 9) Order and supervise the distribution of the "Upper Room" and/or other such devotional booklets.
- 10) Extend fellowship to strangers, visitors and church attendees.
- 11) Provide for pulpit supply in the temporary absence of the Pastors (vacation, sickness, or special leave).
- 12) Have charge of the guest book.
- 13) Maintain oversight of the Deacons Fund which the pastor may use for the needy at his discretion. Such funds shall consist of Communion offerings and special donations and shall be used for the needy.
- 14) Meet within two weeks after election and select co-chairpersons. The co-chairpersons shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Diaconate.
  - b) Be empowered to call a meeting of the Church Committee in the absence of the Pastors.
  - c) Be empowered to chair a meeting of the Church Committee in the absence of the Pastors.
  - d) Be a voting member of the Staff Relations Committee, Church Cabinet, Church Committee and the Nominating Committee.
  - e) Appoint two (2) members of the Diaconate to serve on the Memorial Fund Committee. (see Article 23)
  - f) Appoint and/or assign duties to the members of the Diaconate.
- 15) Initiate and preside over the review of Pastoral Employees.

#### **ARTICLE 16 THE YOUTH DIACONATE**

*The Youth Diaconate shall:*

- 1) Be composed of young people in Grade 10 or above who are members of the church. No member shall be appointed who has attained his/her 20th birthday.
- 2) Be appointed by the Diaconate for a term of one (1) year, beginning September 1. The appointment may be renewed annually.
- 3) Work with individual advisors appointed by the Diaconate.
- 4) Have duties which may include, but not be limited to:
  - a) Preparation for and the serving of Holy Communion.
  - b) Delivery of the Communion elements to the sick and aged.
  - c) If requested, record church services.
  - d) Ministry to other young people.
  - e) Serve as lay reader
  - f) Serve as acolyte
- 5) Meet at least four (4) times a year with the Pastors and representatives of the Diaconate.
- 6) Appoint two (2) members who will attend all scheduled adult diaconate meetings, a minimum of one (1) youth member to attend.

## **ARTICLE 17 THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

*The Board of Trustees shall:*

- 1) Consist of the investment coordinator, who shall serve Ex Officio and seven (7) covenant members of this church, and shall be elected for a term of three (3) years, three (3) to be elected at each annual meeting.
- 2) Furnish a bond for the Investment Coordinator, Treasurer and Financial Secretary
- 3) Be responsible for the care and custody of the property of the church, but shall not sell, mortgage, alter or encumber it except by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a church meeting called for that purpose.
- 4) Hold all property of the church and shall have authority concerning its use for other than church purposes. They shall not permit its use for any unworthy purposes, nor any that shall interfere with the plans of the Pastors, the Church committee, or the Church Cabinet. In all things, they shall be subject to the authority of the church body.
- 5) Consider the property of the church to be:
  - a) The Meeting house and all its content, except property and supplies of church sponsored organizations.
  - b) The Parish House and all its contents including the church school equipment and supplies, except property and supplies of church sponsored organizations and non-affiliated entities who use the building.
  - c) the Parsonage
  - d) All other real estate holdings owned by the church.
  - e) All endowments and permanently invested funds.
  - f) Any article which is given or purchased and is accepted by the church for church use.
- 6) Be responsible for the equipment, maintenance and housekeeping of the kitchens
- 7) Be empowered to make agreements and contracts on behalf of the church to provide custodial services or otherwise maintain the property of the church.
- 8) Annually update the inventory of the church; a copy of which shall be given to the Clerk at the annual meeting
- 9) Establish a regular meeting time; additional meetings to be held at the discretion of the Chairperson. Meetings may also be called by any three trustees.
- 10) Select one (1) members of the board to serve on the Investment Committee ~~one of whom~~ shall be the investment coordinator of the Board of Trustees.
- 11) Meet within two weeks after election and select a chairperson. The Chairperson shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Board of Trustees.
  - b) Be a voting member of the Church Cabinet and Nominating Committee.
  - c) Shall be a member of the Staff Relations Committee.

## **ARTICLE 18 THE FINANCE BOARD**

*The Finance Board shall:*

- 1) Consist of the Treasurer, and the Financial Secretary each being Ex Officio and six (6) covenant members of this church, the latter to be elected for a term of three (3) years, two (2) to be elected at each annual meeting. All members are voting members. A measure placed before the Finance Board is approved by a simple majority vote of at least 3 members.
- 2) Determine placement of holdings of savings and checking accounts excluding permanent investments and endowments.
- 3) Establish procedures for the Treasurer to follow in the payment of bills and review monthly financial reports prepared by the Treasurer.
- 4) Advise boards and committees as to the availability of funds prior to the execution of contracted services.
- 5) Be empowered to plan and conduct an "every member canvas", "Christian enlistment", or "Stewardship Campaign" program for the support of the church and its benevolences; such program to be held in the fall in consultation with the Pastor and the Stewardship Committee. The program will be implemented by the Stewardship Committee.
- 6) Establish a date to be the third Sunday of November each calendar year to be designated as Pledge Sunday to solicit monetary pledges.
- 7) Prepare and present to the church, prior to the first Sunday in December each year, an annual draft budget based on the estimated needs presented by the various boards, committees and officers. A final budget recommendation must be presented to the church two (2) weeks prior to the annual meeting. This final budget must be in the form of a written recommendation to be printed in the annual report. The final annual budget must be voted on and approved at the annual meeting.
- 8) Take appropriate action to assure availability of funds necessary to meet the church approved budgeted outlay.

- 9) Require any Board or Committee seeking approval of non-budgeted items to meet first with the Finance Board before calling a church meeting.
- 10) Provide the Financial Secretary with the necessary materials (books, envelopes, etc.) for the collection of the pledges. Ensure a robust e-giving platform is in place for the church.
- 11) Be responsible for the administration of counting the church offerings with the exception of the Diaconate Fund offering.
- 12) Arrange for an audit on odd numbered calendar year of all accounts of the church and submit a written report to the Moderator by March 31, for consideration at a church meeting.
- 13) Working with the Moderator, the Pastor, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, the Chair of the Stewardship Committee, the Chair of the Investment Committee and the Church Treasurer, assess the need for a Capital Campaign. Make recommendations to the church for approval of a Capital Campaign and conduct approved campaigns.
- 14) Select one (1) member of the Board to serve on the Investment Committee.
- 15) Meet within two (2) weeks after election and select a chairperson. The Chairperson shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Finance Board.
  - b) Be a voting member of the Staff Relations Committee, Church Cabinet and Nominating Committee.

#### **ARTICLE 18A THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

*The Stewardship Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of a member of the Finance Board appointed by the Finance Board and at least six (6) Covenant members of the church recommended by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Congregation, whose terms shall be for three years except for the initial class wherein two (2) shall be elected for one (1) year, two (2) for two (2) years and two (2) for three (3) years. Thereafter, two members shall be elected annually. Individuals may be reappointed to a successive 3-year term but must retire after 2 terms for at least a year thereafter before being eligible for reappointment.
- 2) Meet within two (2) weeks after election and shall elect a chair and vice chair who shall not be a member of the Finance Board.
- 3) Meet at regular intervals and encourage conversation with the congregation on how each individual and how the congregation as a whole can be better “stewards” of the word throughout the church year.
- 4) Meet at regular intervals and work with all in the church to encourage and facilitate the gifts of the members of the Congregation in terms of their time, talents, abilities and financial support.
- 5) Assist the Finance Board in the solicitation of pledges of financial support for the functioning of the Church, its Pastors, staff and programs during the yearly “Stewardship Campaign.”

#### **ARTICLE 19 THE INVESTMENT COMMITTEE**

*The Investment Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of one (1) members of the Board of Trustees, one (1) member of the Finance Board and three (3) covenant members of the church, the latter to be appointed by the Moderator within two weeks after the annual meeting.
- 2) Review the endowments and permanent investment at least three times a year.
- 3) Advise the Board of Trustees as to financial institutions or programs as would be beneficial to the Church's endowments and permanent investments and act on such investments as are authorized by the Board of Trustees.
- 4) One of the covenant members appointed by the Moderator shall serve as the investment Coordinator and an Ex Officio member of the Board of Trustees.
- 5) A background check for the Investment Coordinator shall be conducted and initiated by the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- 6) If needed, back-up for the Investment Coordinator shall be provided by the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer.
- 7) Meet within two (2) weeks after election and select a chairperson. The Chairperson shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for and preside over all meetings of the Investment Committee.
  - b) Prepare a financial report of all endowment and permanent investment accounts for the annual report.

## **ARTICLE 20 THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

*The Christian Education Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of nine (9) covenant members of this church to be elected for a term of three (3) years, three (3) to be elected at each annual meeting, and the church school superintendent who shall be a member ex-officio without vote.
- 2) Have general direction of the educational work of the church school including the selection of curriculum materials.
- 3) Act as an advisory committee for all infant through senior high school Christian educational work in all church organizations.
- 4) Be responsible for securing the services of a paid or unpaid superintendent and/or educational director, the financial arrangements of which shall be made in consultation with the Finance Board.
- 5) Recruit staff for the church school, provide materials for instruction, and provide for adequate training for the church school staff.
- 6) Be responsible for the youth fellowships, and provide them with materials and paid or unpaid leadership, the financial arrangements of which shall be made in consultation with the Finance Board.
- 7) Meet within two weeks after election and select a chairperson. The Chairperson shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Christian Education Committee.
  - b) Be a member of the Church Cabinet and Nominating Committee.
  - c) Shall be a member of the Staff Relations Committee.

## **ARTICLE 21 THE OUTREACH AND SERVICE COMMITTEE**

*The Outreach and Service Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of six (6) members, four (4) of which shall be covenant-members of this church, to be elected for a term of two (2) years, renewable for one (1) additional term.
- 2) With the Pastor, administer the programs of missions and service.
- 3) Make a report of their programs in the form of a written statement to be printed in the annual report.
- 4) Direct the Treasurer in the disbursement of funds under the control of the committee
- 5) Meet within two (2) weeks after the annual meeting and select a chairperson. The Chairperson shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Outreach and Service Committee.
  - b) Be a member of the Church Cabinet and the Nominating Committee.
- 6) Schedule a February committee meeting prior to annual meeting, if the chairperson's term is expiring, with the purpose of securing a new Chairperson.

## **ARTICLE 22 THE MUSIC COMMITTEE**

*The Music Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of six (6) covenant members of this church to be elected for a term of three (3) years, two (2) to be elected at each annual meeting.
- 2) Be responsible for providing the services of worship with suitable music.
- 3) Be responsible for providing the choirs with materials.
- 4) Be responsible for securing the temporary services of paid or unpaid professional music staff, the financial arrangements of which shall be made in consultation with the Finance Board.
- 5) Meet within two weeks after election and select a chairperson. The Chairperson shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Music Committee.
  - b) Be a voting member of the Church Cabinet and Nominating Committee.
  - c) Shall be a member of the Staff Relations Committee.

## **ARTICLE 23 THE MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE**

*The Memorial Fund Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of two (2) members of the Diaconate (see Art. 15), and three (3) covenant members of this church, each to be elected for a term of three (3) years, one (1) to be elected at each annual meeting.
- 2) Administer the Memorial Fund.
- 3) Unless otherwise directed by the donor, a member of the Memorial Fund Committee will apprise a family member of those in whose name donations are given as to how the funds will be used.
- 4) Make recommendations to the church as to the advisability of acceptance of memorial gifts other than cash.

- 5) Keep an accurate record of all financial transactions and file a copy annually with the Investment Committee...
- 6) Have charge of the Memorial Book and be responsible for proper inscription.
- 7) Make a report to the church in the form of a written statement which shall be included in the annual report.
- 8) Meet within two weeks after election and select a Chairman and Secretary.
- 9) The Chairman shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Memorial Fund Committee.
  - b) Be a member of the Church Cabinet and Nominating Committee.
- 10) The Secretary shall:
  - a) Keep an accurate record of all meetings of the Committee.
  - b) See that a thank you note be sent for all memorial gifts and provide a list of the donors to the family of those in whose name the gifts are given.

**ARTICLE 24 DELEGATES** (changes to (a) adopted January 23, 2000)

*The Delegates shall:*

- 1) Consist of up to six (6) covenant members of this church, three of whom will
- 2) Represent this Church at meetings of the Massachusetts Conference of the U.C.C., and three of whom will represent this Church at meetings of the Pilgrim Association of the U.C.C., ordinations, installations and dismissal councils of the Pilgrim Association.
- 3) Be elected for a term of two (2) years at Annual Meetings of this Church held during even numbered years,
- 4) Make a report of said meetings in the form of a written statement to be included in the Annual Report,
- 5) Make a report of said meetings if so requested by the Pastor, Church or Church Cabinet.

**ARTICLE 25 THE FLOWER COMMITTEE**

*The Flower Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of five (5) members to be elected for a term of two (2) years, two (2) or three (3) to be elected at each annual meeting.
- 2) Be responsible for providing flowers for the services of public worship and for distributing them following the services.
- 3) Approve all expenditures of the various flower funds for payment by the treasurer.
- 4) Meet within two weeks after election and select a chairperson. The Chairperson shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Flower Committee.
  - b) Be a member of the Church Cabinet.

**ARTICLE 26 THE USHER COMMITTEE**

*The Usher Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of three (3) members each to be elected for a term of three (3) years, one (1) to be elected at each annual meeting.
- 2) Be responsible for providing ushers for the services of worship.
- 3) Provide ushers with sufficient training relative to their duties.
- 4) Meet within two (2) weeks after election and select a chairperson. The Chairperson shall;
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Usher Committee.
  - b) Be a voting member of the Church Cabinet and the Nominating Committee.

**ARTICLE 27 THE GREETING COMMITTEE**

*The Greeting Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of four (4) members each to be elected for a term of two (2) years, two (2) to be elected at each annual meeting.
- 2) Be responsible for providing greeters for the services of worship, and maintain an up-to-date list of persons available for greeting.
- 3) Meet within two weeks after election and select a chairperson. The Chairperson shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Greeting Committee.
  - b) Be a voting member of the Church Cabinet and the Nominating Committee.

**ARTICLE 28 THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

*The Nominating Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of the Vice Moderator who shall act as Chairman, the Pastors who shall be a member's ex-officio, the Clerk, Delegates, and Chairmen of the following boards and committees: Diaconate, Trustees, Finance, Christian Education, Outreach and Service, Music, Flower, Usher, Greeting and Memorial fund.
- 2) Solicit through Spire and Sunday bulletins members of the congregation willing to serve on any committee to communicate with committee members.
- 3) Recommend persons to fill vacancies of Officers, Delegates, Boards and Committees as they are scheduled to exist according to the by-laws herein.
- 4) Recommend persons to fill mid-term vacancies of Officers and Delegates.
- 5) Receive and act upon recommendations for life Deacons and Deaconesses.

**ARTICLE 29 THE PASTORS-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE (adopted 2/21/04)**

*Pastors-Parish Relations Committee shall:*

- 1) Be a committee to support the needs of the Pastor and Associate Pastor and provide a group in which the Pastor or Associate Pastor can discuss any Church, personal, community of other issues in a confidential setting;
- 2) Consist of seven (7) covenant members of this church, who shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. There shall be two subcommittees, each of three members: one working with the Pastor, the other with the Associate Pastor. The seventh member shall be the Chairperson of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee as well as Chair of each subcommittee. If there is only one Pastor, the committee shall contain four (4) covenant members of the Church. The members shall not be representative of particular organizations within the Church, but are to be chosen on the basis of involvement in, understanding of and commitment to the workings of the Church. Terms of office shall be three years with a second term possible. The initial class will consist of 1 member for 1 year, 1 member for 2 years and 1 member for three years. After that all terms will be for three years. Candidates for election to the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall be selected as follows:
  - a) For a vacancy to either subcommittee, the affected pastor will submit a name to the Nominating Committee.
  - b) The Chair of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall be chosen by agreement of the pastors and submitted to the Nominating Committee. The chair will serve for a period of three years. At the end of the three year period, the chair may be reappointed for an additional three year term on the recommendation of both the Pastor and Associate Pastor, or a list of new names may be submitted by the Pastor and Associate pastor for selection by the Church Officers. No one may serve as chair more than two consecutive terms on the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. When a new Pastor or Associate Pastor is chosen for the Church, three (3) new members may be chosen by the new Pastor or Associate pastor, and a new Chair will be appointed unless both pastors agree on the present Chair.
- 3) Subcommittees shall:
  - a) Meet with their Pastor or Associate Pastor at least four times a year.
  - b) Meet with the Pastor or Associate Pastor each of the first three (3) months and at least six (6) times total the first year after said Pastor assumes his/her duties with the church. During this initial period, the subcommittees will meet jointly on a quarterly basis with both Pastors.
  - c) Meet without their Pastor, if requested by one of the subcommittee members, following their respective meetings with the Pastor or Associate pastor to discuss any issues that arise in the subcommittee meetings.
  - d) Follow up on issues that come to the attention of the subcommittees and, if necessary, contact the appropriate Church group.
  - e) Provide feedback from the various Committees, Boards and the Members of the congregation to the Pastor and/or Associate Pastor regarding performance of duties.
  - f) Provide feedback from the Pastor and/or Associate Pastor to the Congregation regarding his/her satisfaction and expectations.
- 4) The Chairperson shall:
  - a) call, prepare agendas for and preside over all meetings of the Pastor-Parish Relations Subcommittees.
  - b) call, prepare agendas for and preside over all meetings of the full Pastor-Parish Relations Committee.
  - c) Be a member of the Church Cabinet and Nominating Committee.

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **ARTICLE 30 THE STAFF RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

*The Staff Relations Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of the Moderator, who shall act as chairperson, one chairperson from the Diaconate, Chairperson of the Finance Board, Chairperson of the Trustees, Chairperson of the Music Committee and Chairperson of the Christian Education Committee.
- 2) Meet at least annually to discuss and set policy regarding the Human Resources aspects of the church including but not limited to the staffing plan and compensation packages.

### **ARTICLE 30A STAFF REVIEW OF NON-PASTORAL EMPLOYEES**

*The staff review of non-pastoral employees shall:*

- 1) Be conducted with the church employee, the pastor, and a representative of the committee the employee reports to.
- 2) In the case of the Office Administrator or similar employee who does not report to a committee, the Pastor will conduct the review.
- 3) The Pastor and representative from the relevant committee, if one, will discuss and submit salary recommendations to the Finance Board prior to the review to receive approval for a salary increase, if any.
- 4) The Pastor will initiate the review of each employee by contacting the chair or appropriate representative of the committee the employees reports to, and schedule a meeting to evaluate the employee. A meeting will then be scheduled with the employee to conduct the evaluation.
- 5) Reviews should be conducted annually, prior to November 1.
- 6) Part of the evaluation process will be to develop written guidelines for each review and may include a discussion of the following:
  - a) nature and scope of contractual duties
  - b) individuals perspective on ability to perform duties
  - c) expectations of the Church
  - d) communications skills
  - e) goal setting and achievement
  - f) time management
  - g) salary and benefits for the coming year
  - h) any other matter of relevance or concern
- 7) Discuss the evaluation with the affected individuals, who will sign off on the evaluation. This will then be given to the committee to which the individual is directly responsible, or if no committee is involved, to the Pastor.

### **ARTICLE 30B STAFF REVIEW OF PASTORAL EMPLOYEES**

*The staff review of pastoral employees shall:*

- 1) Be conducted with the Pastor(s), the Moderator (who shall seek input from the Staff Relations Committee), the chair of the Diaconate, and at the discretion of the Pastor(s), a representative of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. (The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee representative would only be present to facilitate future communications between the committee and the Pastor.)
- 2) The chair of the Diaconate shall initiate the review of the pastor(s) by contacting the Moderator and the Pastor(s) to schedule a meeting.
- 3) The reviews should be done annually, prior to November 1.
- 4) Part of the evaluation process will be to develop written guidelines for each review and may include a discussion of the following:
  - a) nature and scope of contractual duties
  - b) individuals perspective on ability to perform duties
  - c) expectations of the Church
  - d) communications skills
  - e) goal setting and achievement
  - f) time management
  - g) salary and benefits for the coming year

- h) any other matter of relevance or concern
- 5) The chair of the Diaconate and the Moderator will discuss and submit salary recommendations to the Finance Board prior to the review to receive approval for a salary increase, if one.
- 6) Discuss the evaluation with the affected individuals, who will sign off on the evaluation. This will then be given to the Diaconate and the Pastor-Parish Relations committee.

**ARTICLE 31 THE PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE**

*The Pastoral Search Committee shall:*

- 1) Consist of nine (9) covenant members of this church, whose names shall be submitted by the Nominating committee to a meeting of the church which shall be called for the purpose of approval of such names.
- 2) Exist only in the event that the church shall desire to obtain the services of a Pastor/Associate Pastor. Upon completion of such actions as are necessary to secure the services of a Pastor/Associate Pastor, the committee shall cease to exist.
- 3) be responsible for recommending a Pastor/Associate Pastor to the church, the expenses of such
- 4) Duties to be reimbursed by a vote of the church.
- 5) Meet within two weeks after election and select a chairperson. The Chairperson shall:
  - a) Call, prepare an agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Pastoral Search Committee.

**ARTICLE 32 PART-TIME EMPLOYEES**

*Part-time employees of the church not covered under other sections of these by-laws shall be hired and governed by the following procedures:*

- 1) The Moderator shall appoint a sub-committee of three (3) covenant members who shall write a job description, interview, screen, and hire personnel for the position to be filled.
- 2) The sub-committee shall consult with the Finance Board concerning the availability of budgeted funds.
- 3) Upon direction of the Finance Committee, the subcommittee shall be empowered to hire personnel for the position.

**ARTICLE 33 GENERAL POLICIES**

**A. AUTONOMY**

All boards and committees shall be empowered to provide their group with self-governing principles, rules, jobs, and procedures provided they are consistent with the by-laws herein and in Christian spirit.

**B. MID-TERM VACANCIES**

All Boards and committees shall recommend to the church persons to fill mid-term vacancies on their own board or committee.

The Nominating committee shall recommend to the church such persons to fill mid-term vacancies of officers and delegates or alternates.

Formal election by the church of said personnel changes may be held at special business meeting of the church.

**C. POST ELECTION MEETINGS**

Within two (2) weeks after election at the Annual Meeting, all boards and committees shall meet and review pertinent by-laws and select a chairperson. The chairperson shall advise the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Church Clerk and church secretary of the name of the newly elected chair person.

When possible the immediate past chairman shall be the convener. In all other cases, the senior duly elected member as it appears on the Nominating Committee's Report of the annual Report shall be the convener.

In cases when a board or committee has not met within two weeks, the Moderator shall be empowered to convene the meeting.

**D. SUCCESSION OF SERVICE**

No member of a board or committee having served two (2) successive terms of office, shall be immediately eligible for re-election to the same board or committee.

Persons serving more than one-half of an unexpired term shall be considered as having served a full term.

A person may be so eligible after a period of one (1) year has elapsed since previous service on the board or committee.

**E. CONTINUATION OF SERVICE**

All officers, delegates, alternates, and members of all boards and committees shall continue service in their elected capacity until a successor is elected, even if an extension of normal full term is required.

**F. TERM OF OFFICE**

Excepting the Church Cabinet, Church Committee and Nominating Committee, the chairmanship of all other boards and standing committees shall expire upon the election of board and committee members at the Annual Meeting.

**G. GAMBLING**

It shall be the policy of this church to discourage fund raising by raffles or other games of chance. Any consideration of exceptions to this policy shall be made by a vote of the covenant members of the Church Cabinet.

Should such exception be allowed, proper legal forms must be obtained from state and local authorities and the requirements thereof fulfilled.

**H. COMMITTEE VOTING POWER**

The business of each Board or Committee named herein shall be decided by a majority of those present and voting.

**GOVERNMENT**

**ARTICLE 34 GOVERNMENT**

**A. GOVERNMENT**

The government of this church shall be vested in its covenant members. It shall be subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel, cooperation and fellowship which are common among Congregational Christian churches, now in the United Church of Christ.

**B. THE SEAL**

The seal of this church shall be circular, with a diameter about one and on-half inches, having, in an outer ring, the words, "First Congregational Church of Hanover, Massachusetts, Incorporated June 8, 1920." and within the ring, beneath a Christian Cross, the words, "Organized December 5, 1728." The seal shall be in the custody of the Clerk of the church and/or the Senior Pastor's office.

**C. PROCEDURE**

In all matters of procedure not provided for in these by-laws, the church shall be governed by established Congregational usage and by procedures of the United Church of Christ.

**ARTICLE 35 MEETINGS**

**A. THE ANNUAL MEETING**

*The Annual Meeting shall:*

- 1) Be held no later than the sixth Sunday of the calendar year. In case of emergency, the date may be changed by a unanimous decision of the Moderator, Senior Pastor, and Clerk.
- 2) Require a quorum of 25 covenant members.
- 3) Consider and act on reports of the church's Pastors, officers, boards, committees, organizations, and delegates and alternates.
- 4) Take action of the proposed budget for the ensuing year.
- 5) Elect officers, board members, committee members, and delegates as prescribed herein.
- 6) Transact any other business which may legally come before the annual meeting.
- 7) Be announced to the parish by an official "call." Such call shall be in the form of a written statement prepared and displayed in the church at least seven (7) days before the meeting by the Clerk and stating the purpose(s) of the meeting. The call shall also be read during the church service on the Sunday preceding the meeting.

## B. BUSINESS MEETINGS

*Business meetings of the church shall:*

- 1) Be held at such times as directed by the Moderator; as requested by any church board or committee, or upon written request of ten (10) covenant members.
- 2) Require a quorum of 25 covenant members.
- 3) Act on such matters as may be included in the "call" and any other business which may legally come before the meeting.
- 4) Be announced to the parish by an official "call". Such call shall be in the form of a written statement prepared and displayed in the church at least seven (7) days before the meeting by the Clerk and stating the purpose(s) of the meeting. The call shall also be read during the church service on the Sunday preceding the meeting.
- 5) Be required for the following business matters:
  - a) Call of a Pastor
  - b) Dismissal of a Pastor
  - c) Change in the doctrinal basis of the church.
  - d) Change affecting the property of the church as defined in Article 16 entitled "Board of Trustees".
  - e) Expenditures that shall exceed the approved budget. Such matters shall be specified in the call.

## C. SPECIAL MEETINGS

*Special meetings shall:*

- 1) Be permitted without prior notice.
- 2) Require a quorum of 25 covenant members.
- 3) Be empowered to act on matters of:
  - a) Approval of new members.
  - b) Election of persons to fill unexpired terms.
  - c) Transact any other business that might legally come before the meeting.

## OTHER

### ARTICLE 36 ORGANIZATIONS

*The church shall be empowered to sponsor organizations. Such organizations shall:*

- 1) Have their affiliation approved by the church.
- 2) Be under the general supervision of the church.
- 3) Have their work counted and is considered as a part of the total work of the church.
- 4) Submit a report to the church in the form of a written statement to be included in the annual report.
- 5) Not be required to fulfill paragraph (a) of this article if established prior to the adoption of these by-laws.

### ARTICLE 37 BY-LAWS TRANSITION

No person serving as an officer, delegate, alternate, or board or committee person at the time when these by-laws become effective shall be disqualified by them from continuation of service under the terms of the previous by-laws unless said office, delegation or board of committee is abolished.

### ARTICLE 38 AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

Amendments to these by-laws may be made by a 2/3 vote of the covenant members present and voting at any annual or special meeting, providing the proposed amendments are given in the call and the full text of which is published for members' examination.