

CONSTITUTION
&
BY-LAWS

of the

NORTH WINDHAM
UNION CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

723 Roosevelt Trail
Windham Maine 04062



*We covenant with God and with one another, that we may live together in
all God's ways, as revealed to us in Christ, in Spirit and words of truth.*

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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE NORTH WINDHAM UNION CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

adopted January 21, 2001 additions January 19, 2003 corrected numbering July 20, 2011

ARTICLE I- NAME

The name of this church shall be the *North Windham Union Church, United Church of Christ*, located on Route 302, Windham, in the State of Maine, henceforth referred to as *Church*.

ARTICLE II- PURPOSE

The avowed purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church Universal; to render loving service toward all and to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.

ARTICLE III- FAITH AND COVENANT

The church adopts the following principles as expressions of its faith:

Belief:

In God as Creator, Savior and Eternal Spirit, our Lord.

In God made known to us in Jesus Christ who reveals to us *the Way, the Truth, and the Light*.

In the Holy Spirit as the presence of God, our guide, and strength, and comfort.

In the Holy Bible as containing those principles from which come our inspiration and faith and practice.

In the freedoms of individual conscience and interpretation of religious truth.

In the church as both people and institution, enriching Christian life, promoting the ideals of Christ to serve justice, peace and love, and as the historic Church always reforming.

In the ancient creeds and the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ as guides in our pilgrimage of faith.

As a more formal expression of the faith of its members, the church adopts this Covenant:

We covenant with God and with one another, that we may live together in all God's ways, as revealed to us in Christ, in Spirit and words of truth.

We promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, **sharing (1) in the worship** of God, and enlisting in the work of this congregation as it serves the community and the world.

We promise as members of this church to walk together as Christians, obedient to the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and to submit to the government and disciplines of the church.

And, we do so sharing the hope and promises of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

ARTICLE IV- MEMBERSHIP

Membership in this church shall be open to any person without restriction, who has been: baptized AND who has been confirmed

OR any adult who has made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior AND who assents to its Covenant and subscribes to its Constitution and By-Laws. (2)

Members may also be received by letter of transfer from another church.

Persons approved for membership shall be received at a service of worship at a date designated by the Board of Deacons in counsel with the Minister. Any who are unable to attend in public may be received by the Board of Deacons acting in behalf of the Church.

Any member, upon written request and upon approval of the Board of Deacons in counsel with the Minister, may be granted a letter of transfer **or** dismissal. An appropriate letter of release shall be provided by the Church Clerk.

B. Active Member

Active members are expected to attend the services of worship of God and to participate in the celebration of the Sacraments; to endeavor to live as Christians; to share in the life and mission of the Church; to contribute to its support and benevolences and to seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and community.

C. Inactive Member

A member whose address has long been unknown or who for a period of two (2) years, in spite of spiritual care, has not attended the Church's worship or contributed to its support, may be removed from the active membership roll and placed on the inactive list **by the Board of Deacons (3)**. If the relationship changes, the member may be restored to the active list upon approval of the Board of Deacons in counsel with the Minister.

D. Associate Member

A person who has standing membership in another church may become an associate member of NWUC. Such status will allow said member to serve on boards and committees. That member will also have the right to vote on all church matters, with two exceptions. An associate member may not vote on motions to: a) sever the association and membership of the NWUC from the United Church of Christ; b) vote on dissolution of the NWUC. (accepted on 5/23/2004)

Prior to removing a member from the active list, a suitable letter shall be sent to the member **by the Board of Deacons (3)**, soliciting information regarding that members' interest in the Church. Thereafter, the Board of Deacons in counsel with the Minister, shall decide upon the proper action to be taken.

ARTICLE V- GOVERNING BODY

The Government of this church is vested in it's members who exercise the right of control in all it's affairs, subject to the laws of incorporation granted it by the State of Maine. While it is an autonomous, self governing body entirely free from the controls of dictates of any ecclesiastical body, it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel, support and cooperation which bind together local churches, associations, conferences and national bodies in the United Church of Christ.

A. The governing body of the Church shall be the membership assembled in a church meeting.

B. The members shall be permitted to vote provided a majority of those present are at least eighteen (18) years of age. A vote of a majority of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the Church shall be decisive except on a vote to call or dismiss a Minister, transactions involving mortgage of Church property or the borrowing of money, amending the Constitution and By-Laws, acquisition or disposal of property, or dissolution, in which cases a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present **and** voting will constitute a decisive vote.

C. Quorum

At all duly called meetings of the church, ten percent (10%) of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If there is a lesser number, the Moderator may adjourn the meeting to a later date. **If a quorum is not obtained, items may be discussed, however, no votes may be taken.**(4)

D. The **Annual Meeting** shall be held in (January), on a date to be established by the Executive Council, at which time all Officers and Committee Chairpersons shall present written reports.

E. The **Fiscal Year** shall end on (December 31st.)

F. A (**May**) **Meeting** shall be held each year on a date to be established by the Executive Council for the purpose of hearing the Nominating Committee Report and electing Church Officers. Other business may also be conducted at this Meeting **only if an announcement concerning the nature of the additional business is made two (2) Sundays prior to the Meeting and posted on the Church Bulletin Board.** (5)

G. Special Meetings

A Special Church Meeting may be called at any time by **one of(6)** the Ministers, the Executive Council or any ten (10) members of the Church. Announcement and purpose of the Meeting should be given two (2) Sundays prior to the Meeting, and posted on the Church Bulletin Board.

H. Matters of special importance:

Meetings concerning(7) the call or dismissal of the Minister, the dismissal of a Church Officer, transactions involving the mortgage of Church property or the borrowing of money, amending the Constitution and By-Laws, acquisition or disposal of Church property, or dissolution shall require that the Clerk notify all resident members by mail at least fourteen (14) days prior to

the meeting and by posting notice on the Church Bulletin Board. The notice shall describe the agenda items to be acted upon. **Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws shall be printed and mailed to all members and inserted in all Church copies of the Constitution.(8)**

**ARTICLE VI
THE CALL AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTER(S)(9)**

MINISTER(s):

The Minister(s) shall be in charge of the spiritual welfare of the Church, with the assistance of the Board of Deacons. The Minister(s) shall seek to enlist men, women and children as followers of Christ, preach from the Scriptures, administer the Sacraments, be responsible for all services of public worship and administer the activities of the church in cooperation with, and as ex-officio member(s) of, the various Councils, Boards and Committees.

When a new Minister is sought, the Executive Council shall appoint a Search Committee representing a cross section of the total Church membership. The Search Committee shall select and recommend to the Church a candidate(s) for the position(s) of minister. The Minister(s) shall be called for an indefinite time at a special meeting of the Church called for that purpose. The call shall be by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at this meeting. The minister(s) shall become a member of the Church as soon as possible after beginning his/her ministry.

The Church may, at it's discretion, choose additional Ministers whose responsibilities and specific tasks will be determined by the Executive Council in consultation with the existing Ministerial Team.

Additional Ministers shall be selected in the same manner as the Minister.

Additional Terms of Call:

In the Call to Minister, the terms of the relationship shall be stated in a written agreement between the Church and Minister(s) and may include participation in a pension fund, health insurance program, etc. This agreement will be subject to review annually by the Board of Deacons in consultation with the Board of Trustees. The means to terminate this agreement shall be by a two (2) month written notice unless another time period is mutually agreed upon. The Minister(s), Church, Association and the Conference Executive shall receive a copy of the call.

Interim Minister:

An Interim Minister is needed for that critical period in the life of the Church between the time a Pastor leaves and another is called.

The Executive Council shall select an Interim Minister when necessary, following United Church of Christ guidelines.

Interim Ministers are not eligible as candidates for the long term pastorate.

**ARTICLE VII
CHURCH OFFICERS**

1. The most valuable asset of any congregation is it's people. To be called to serve as a Church Officer, Board or Committee Member is not only a unique privilege, but a distinct honor. It requires a commitment and dedication not found in the secular world. However, in the mutual striving to serve the Lord through the Church, there is a special satisfaction.

SEMIANNUAL

Church Officers, Board and Committee Members are elected at the (May) Meeting and will take office immediately after election.

No elected Officer, Board or Committee Member shall serve in the same office for a period of more than six (6) consecutive years. **Any such Officer, Board or Committee Member who wishes to be re-elected to that Office/Board/Committee after his/her term has terminated, must take a leave of absence from that Office, Board or Committee for at least one year before being re-elected.(10)**

2. The Corporate Officers of this Church shall be the Moderator, **Vice Moderator**, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary and the Chairpersons of the Board of Trustees, Board of Deacons, Board of Missions and the Board of Christian Education. They shall be authorized to sign documents on behalf of the Church provided a decision regarding such agreements has been reached as provided by the Constitution and By-Laws. A minimum of two (2) Officers shall sign such documents. **The Corporate Officers**

**must be active members of this Church and are elected to serve a term of three (3) years or until a successor is elected.(11)
except that the positions of Moderator and Vice-Moderator shall be for a period of two (2) years each.**

A. Moderator

The Moderator shall:

Be well acquainted with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church and see that its rules are followed.
Preside over all Church Meetings and Executive Council meetings and call for Reports from Officers and Chairpersons as required. Design an agenda with the Clerk for all Church Meetings and impartially conduct them in the spirit of harmony

B. Vice-Moderator

The Vice Moderator shall:

Be well acquainted with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church and see that its rules are followed.
Preside over all Church Meetings and Executive Council meetings and call for Reports from Officers and Chairpersons as required if the Moderator is not available.
Design an agenda with the Clerk for all Church Meetings and impartially conduct them in the spirit of harmony if the Moderator is not available.
Work in harmony with and assist the Moderator in the above duties.
The Vice Moderator will be elected with the understanding that he/she may be asked to be nominated for the position of Moderator after his/her term as Vice Moderator has expired. The position of Vice Moderator will be filled only by someone who in good faith at the time of his/her nomination believes they can, in the future, fulfill the position of Moderator. (11a)

C. Clerk

The Clerk shall:

Make necessary preparations and write the call for all Church business meetings in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution and By-Laws.
Advise respective committee chairpersons who will be expected to report at a meeting and provide copies of the agenda for all in attendance. The Clerk will take to each meeting records of any previous meetings for reference as well as a copy of the Church Constitution and By-Laws and be able to answer questions at meetings in regard to them.
Declare a quorum and assist the Moderator at meetings.
Keep clear and accurate records of all business meetings, date all records, record all motions verbatim, including the names and persons making and seconding motions and when a vote is taken, capitalize and underline VOTED.
Notify all Officers and Members of committees and Delegates of their election.
Keep accurate and up to date membership rolls, lists and categories of Church members, including:
New members, date received, and how received;
Removals by transfer, dismissal, or death, with dates;
Baptismal records;
Marriages.
Cooperate with the Deacons in matters of Church membership and keep a permanent record.
Make a statistical report for the Annual Meeting including changes for the past year as recorded in the membership rolls.
Notify Delegates of scheduled meetings which they are to attend.
Share with the Trustees and Treasurer custody of all deeds, documents, financial records, funds, monies and other valuables of the Church and see that they are clearly recorded and kept in a safe place.

D. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be bonded in the amount established by the Board of Trustees.

The Treasurer shall:

Share with Trustees and Clerk custody of all deeds, documents financial records, funds, monies, and other valuables of the Church and see that they are clearly recorded and kept in a safe place.
Keep an accurate and up to date record of all funds received and disbursed.

Make a written Annual Report in detail to the Church of receipts and disbursements, properly audited in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution and By-Laws.

Prepare a financial statement monthly for presentation to the Executive Council.

Pay all legitimate bills and secure proper authorization for payment of non-budgeted items (see Article VIII, section 4).

Meet with and advise the Board of Trustees.

Keep the records available at all times for examination and/or audit as required by the Board of Trustees.

In the absence of the Treasurer, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the Treasurer's functions.

E. Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall:

Keep confidential records concerning all pledges made to the Church and credit individual accounts.

Make quarterly and Annual Reports to individuals as to the status of their pledges.

Cooperate with the Treasurer in order that the above responsibilities can be accomplished in a satisfactory manner.

In the absence of the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, at the direction of the Trustees, shall pay all legitimate bills and secure proper authorization for payment of non-budgeted items (see Article VIII, section 4).

ARTICLE VIII BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

All Boards and Committees shall(12)

- 1. Select a chairperson or persons from among their membership who is an active member of the Church and who will represent that committee at the Executive Council. The Chairperson(s) may select a proxy to attend and report to the Executive Council if he/she is unable to attend. The Pastoral Relations Committee and Personnel Committee will be responsible to, but not represented on the Executive Council.**
- 2. Meet on a regular basis to be able to attend to their duties.**
- 3. Always function within the spirit of Articles II and III**
- 4. Keep accurate minutes of all meetings except those of a confidential nature by the Pastoral Relations Committee or when in Executive Session.**
- 5. Evoke Executive Session when discussing a sensitive/confidential issue. Non-members of the Board/Committee will not be permitted to attend a meeting in Executive Session unless invited by the Board/Committee to do so. Information discussed while in Executive Session is considered confidential. No votes can be taken when in Executive Session.**
- 6. To provide an Annual Report for the Annual Meeting in a timely manner.**
- 7. Work in harmony with all other Boards, Committees, Minister(s) and other Church organizations.**
- 8. Submit a budget to the Board of Trustees in a timely manner.**
- 9. Keep the Church membership at large informed as to their activities.**
- 10. Be familiar with the Constitution and By-Laws and follow the articles applicable to their respective Board/Committee.**

A Executive Council

The Executive Council shall, in accordance with the directives of the congregation, be a policy making body of the Church and shall have the general oversight of the Church in both its business and spiritual affairs.

The Executive Council shall consist of the Minister(s), Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, two (2) representatives from each permanent Board, the Chairperson from each permanent Committee and a representative from each of the other organizations, as provided in Article VIII of the Constitution and By-Laws.

The responsibilities of the Executive Council shall be to:

1. Cooperate with the Minister(s) in formulating Church programs.
2. Establish Ad Hoc Committees, as necessary, and discharge them when their task is completed.
3. Call the Annual Meeting, the (May) Meeting, and special meetings of the Church and recommend any action to be taken in matters of budget, programs and responses to specific needs.

4. Authorize non-budgeted items if funds are available, **in consultation with(13)** the Board of Trustees (Regarding transactions requiring a vote of the Church see Article V, Section H)
5. Two (2) months prior to the election of Officers at the (May) Meeting, prepare a list, with vacancies to be filled, for the Nominating Committee of all required Church Officers and members of Boards and Committees; such a list must indicate the term and expiration date of each office.
6. Submit nominations to the (May) Meeting of the Church for required candidates to serve on the Nominating Committee.
7. Interpret the Constitution and By-Laws and seek clarification at a Church meeting when necessary **in consultation with the Church Parliamentarian (if one has been appointed).(14)**
8. When a vacancy occurs in the Pastorate, appoint a Search Committee representing a cross section of the total Church membership, as provided in Article VI of this Constitution and By-Laws.
9. Defend and protect this Constitution and By-Laws which may be changed only by vote of the Church
10. Elect a person to fill the vacancy for any office, except the Minister(s), for the unexpired term of the office. Officers elected under the Constitution may not be removed from office by the Executive Council.

The Executive Council shall meet monthly except that a regular monthly meeting may be suspended if there is a Church meeting that month.

A special Executive Council meeting may be called at any time by one of the Ministers or any five (5) members of the Executive Council, provided all members are notified and notice of the meeting is posted at least one (1) week in advance. A quorum at any meeting shall be ten (10) **members of the Executive Council attending.(15)**

All Executive Council meetings are open unless otherwise designated and any Church member may attend with voice, but not vote.

B. Board of Deacons

Deacons are **active** members of the Church who share with the Minister(s) in helping the Church envision and achieve its spiritual potential. To be a Deacon means to be a “servant” or “minister”.

The Board of Deacons shall:

1. Be particularly concerned with the outreach of the Church toward the indifferent, the estranged, the delinquent or the alienated; engage in lay ministry to the sick, those shut in, and others; encourage youth to continue Church participation into adulthood; minister to the edification and comfort of all.
2. Provide Ushers and Greeters, assistance to the Minister(s) at times of Worship, in administering the Sacraments, and during the reception of new members. They shall provide flowers for the pulpit and see that the pulpit is filled in the absence of the Minister(s).
3. In counsel with the Minister(s), they shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to membership including an education program for prospective new members, an annual review and update of the membership list, and the authorization of letters of transfer.
4. Work with the Music Committee for an appropriate program of music, and in cooperation with the Executive Council and all other Boards and Committees of the Church.

Election:

There shall be a total of twelve (12) adult Church members (**over the age of 17 years) (16)** and one (1) youth member (under the age of 19 years) elected for a term of three years, except the youth Deacon who shall be for a term of one year. Terms shall be arranged for the election of four (4) adult Deacons and one youth Deacon each year. The Board shall elect a chairperson(s) annually from its membership.

Permanent Deacons:

Any person who has served on the Board of Deacons may continue to assist the Board of Deacons by requesting to become a Permanent Deacon. Permanent Deacons may be called upon from time to time to assist the Board of Deacons, serving Communion, helping with Baptisms, or any other duties normally required of Deacons. Permanent Deacons are welcome to attend

and to participate in meetings of the Board of Deacons. However, they will not be eligible to vote. **Permanent Deacons may be elected to serve on the Board of Deacons if they meet the requirements for membership on the Board.(17)**

The Board shall meet at least monthly and report pertinent information to the Executive Council. The Board shall cooperate and work in harmony with the Executive Council and other Boards and Committees of the Church.

C. Board of Trustees

Trustees are active members of the Church who not only have responsibilities for the care and custody of all Church property, but also have charge over the financial affairs of the Church. To be a Trustee is to be a “steward”. **An employee of the church shall not be a member of the Board of Trustees.(18)**

The Board of Trustees shall:

1. Be responsible for financial matters including, but not limited to, investments, insurances, preparation and supervision of the annual budget, salaries of employees, memorials, gifts and endowment funds as well as accounting and auditing functions (regarding transactions requiring a vote of the Church see Article V, Section H).
2. Be responsible for maintenance, care and yearly inspection of all Church properties including, but not limited to, the Church Parish Hall, and parsonage; and shall provide for an adequate insurance program.
3. Arrange, in **consultation(19)** with the minister(s), to employ personnel such as the organist, secretaries, custodian, and others, except the Minister(s), as needed. Candidates for any position should be carefully screened and interviewed to obtain the best possible person. A job description must be provided and each employee must be properly indoctrinated and trained.
4. Establish and maintain a good relationship with all employees and volunteers consistent with good business practices. Salaries and benefits shall be reviewed periodically and adjustments made within means.
5. Prior to the Annual Church Stewardship Drive, prepare the Annual Budget after conferring with the various chairpersons of Boards and Committees.
6. Guide the Treasurer in developing and maintaining proper financial records, and arrange for bonding or the Treasurer, and other Church Officers with access to all monies and safe deposit box(es).
7. Make timely recommendations to the Church through the Executive Council concerning necessary capital expenditures and financial needs.
8. Not expend or authorize expenditures of money in excess of that approved by the Church. In case of emergency, money may be borrowed without encumbering Church property.
9. Negotiate on behalf of the Church all bids and contracts and provide adequate supervision throughout such contracts.
10. Establish an equitable policy regarding the conservation of heat and utilities.
11. Authorize the use and establish rental fees for the Church buildings and property for both Church groups and outside activities in accordance with current policy.
12. Assume responsibility for and have custody of all deeds, documents, financial records, funds, monies and other valuables of the Church and see that they are kept in a safe place and an accurate inventory maintained and reported annually.

Elections:

There shall be a total of six (6) Board members elected for a term of three (3) years. Terms shall be arranged for election of two (2) members each year. The Board shall elect a chairperson(s) annually from its membership

The Board shall meet at least monthly and report pertinent information to the Executive Council.

The Board shall cooperate and work in harmony with the Executive Council and other Boards and Committees of the Church.

D. Board of Christian Education

The Board of Christian Education is made up of **active members of the Church** who work with the Minister to study, guide, advise, and supervise the Christian education Programs of the Church for all age groups in the spirit of Articles II and III of this constitution.

The Board of Christian Education shall:

1. Keep abreast of the best methods and concepts in Christian Education.
2. Shall appoint a Superintendent(s) of the Sunday School, from the Church membership, who will be a voting member(s) of the Board.
3. Assist the Superintendent(s) in securing the Sunday School staff.
4. Appoint leaders of all young people's groups and leaders of any other groups relating to Christian Education.
5. Together with the Minister, consider appointing a Director of Christian Education who will be an ex officio voting member of the Board.

Election:

There shall be a total of nine (9) Board members elected for a term of three (3) years. Terms shall be arranged for election of three (3) members each year. The Board shall elect a chairperson(s) annually from its membership.

The Board shall meet at least monthly and report pertinent information to the Executive Council. The Board shall cooperate and work in harmony with the Executive Council and other Boards and Committees of the Church.

E. Board of Missions

"Feed My Sheep"- John 21:17

The Board of Missions is made up of **active members of the Church** who express their faith by reaching out to others. **The Board's purpose is to develop a well- rounded Mission Program in cooperation with the Minister(s).(20)**

The Board of Missions shall:

1. Keep informed of world, national, and local needs which may include, but not be restricted to, Health, Human Rights, Housing, Education, and Energy.
2. Provide resources to help the congregation understand the scope and purpose of God's mission.
3. Encourage the congregation toward personal mission involvement.
4. Guide Mission activities of the Church.
5. Instruct the Church Treasurer how the mission and benevolence monies shall be allocated throughout the year.
6. Oversee management of the Thrift Shop.

Election:

There shall be a total of six (6) Board members elected for a term of three (3) years. Terms shall be arranged for election of two (2) members each year. The Board shall elect a chairperson(s) from its membership annually.

The Board shall meet at least monthly and report pertinent information to the Executive Council. The Board shall cooperate and work in harmony with the Executive Council and other Boards and Committees of the Church.

F. Stewardship Committee

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: Freely ye have received, freely give". Matthew: 10: 8.

The Stewardship Committee is made up of active members of the Church who express their faith by reaching out to others to encourage them to donate their time, talent and treasure to the Church. The Church legitimately claims part of us, our thoughts, our time and some part of the largess which God has bestowed upon us.(21)

The Stewardship Committee shall:

1. Be responsible for the Annual Stewardship Drive.
2. Endeavor to educate the Church in Stewardship: ie., time, talent, and treasure.
3. Distribute pledge envelopes.
4. Maintain a revised list of contributors.

5. **Provide communication to each board on a regular basis regarding the committee's work.**

Election:

There shall be a total of eight (8) committee members, six of who are elected for a term of three (3) years and whose terms shall be arranged so as to provide for the election of two (2) members each year. The remainder of the Committee shall include the Treasurer and the Church Financial Secretary.(22)

G. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is a key Committee; Church leaders must be carefully chosen. How well the Nominating Committee does its job, the seriousness with which it takes its task, and the philosophy with which it asks people to serve, determines the effectiveness of the Church.

The Nominating Committee, made up of active members of the Church, shall make nominations for all offices except the Minister or themselves, as provided in the Constitution and By-Laws. Committee chairpersons are urged to suggest names for filling vacancies, but contact with candidates must be made solely by the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee, together with the Minister(s), shall prepare and submit a list of candidates for all Church Officers and members of Boards and permanent Committees who are willing to serve and present it at the (May) Meeting, or to the Executive Council when vacancies occur, as provided in the Constitution and By-Laws.

Election:

Candidates to serve on the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the (May) Meeting by the Executive Council. The Nominating Committee will represent the total Church membership. It will consist of three (3) members, and term of office shall be for three (3) years; the terms shall be arranged so as to provide for the election of one (1) member each year.

The Committee shall elect a chairperson annually from its membership.

H. Music Committee

The Music Committee is made up of those who wish to help the Church express its faith through a ministry of music. The Music Committee's purpose is to assist the Board of Deacons and the Minister in providing a well rounded music program.(23) Meeting regularly, the Committee shall cooperate and work in harmony with the Executive Council and other Boards and Committees.

The Music Committee shall:

1. Be responsible for recommending to the Board of Trustees a qualified candidate for the position of Organist and/or Senior Choir Director, and any other employed Choir Directors.
2. **Assist the Board of Deacons and the Minister(s) in providing and supervising, the musical programs of the Church.**
3. **Assist the Board of Deacons and the Minister(s) in developing the interest of the entire congregation in the music program of the Church.**(24)
4. Provide and maintain choir robes, choir music, hymn books, and other necessary items.
5. Ensure that the musical equipment is properly cared for.
6. Provide Guest Musicians when needed.
7. Provide publicity for special musical programs.

Election:

There shall be five (5) Music Committee members, with three (3) year terms each, arranged so that no more than two (2) will be elected in one year. At least one (1) member of the Committee shall be a member of the Senior Choir, and at least one (1) shall be from the church at large. **The Organist and Choir Director(s) shall be non-voting members of the Committee.**(25)

The Committee shall elect a Chair person(s) from its membership who will be a member of the Executive Council.

I. Pastoral Relations Committee

The primary responsibility of the Pastoral Relations Committee is to maintain an open channel of communication for the congregation and the Minister(s).

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall:

1. Hold at least six (6) regular meetings with the Minister(s) annually.
2. Be available to both the Minister(s) and members of the congregation at any time.
3. Maintain an open channel of communication for the congregation and the Minister(s) in an open and non-threatening atmosphere of confidence and respect.
4. Hold concerns entrusted to them in confidence and be the communication vehicle for dealing with both the concerns and solutions by working with and through existing Boards, Committees and Organizations.
5. Be responsible to, but not represented on the Executive Council.

Election:

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall consist of three (3) **active members of the Church**, and they shall be chosen as follows: One to be chosen by the Board of Deacons and one to be chosen by the Minister(s) and a third member to be selected by the existing two (2) members and the Minister(s). **Neither the Board of Deacons nor the Minister may choose another one of the Ministers of this Church as a member.**(26) The term of this Committee shall be three (3) years to run concurrently with terms of other Officers of the Church. The Committee in no way usurps the duties of the Executive Council or any other Board or Committee.

J. First Years Preschool Committee

The primary responsibility of the First Years Preschool Committee is to assist the program "Director", maintain an open channel of communication for the Preschool Program and the Executive Council, and to provide a Preschool Program that is harmonious with Church policy and philosophy.

The Preschool Committee shall:

1. Meet at least once per month and shall report to the Executive Council
2. Be responsible to the Executive Council and supply the Executive Council monthly reports of the financial condition and performance of the Preschool Program.
3. Confirm all staff additions and deletions as recommended by the Program Director.
4. Be responsible for the hiring and/or removal of the Program Director.
5. Approve all staff compensation changes.
6. Prepare and supply to the Executive Council the Annual Budget for the First Years Preschool Program.

Election

The First Years Preschool Committee consist of three (3) **active members of the Church** and the Program Director; members, except the Director, will be chosen as follows: One (1) to be chosen by the Executive Council, two (2) to be chosen by the Nominating Committee and confirmed by Church votes at the Semi-Annual Meeting of the Church or by the Executive Council. The term for this Committee shall be for three (3) years; the terms shall be arranged so as to provide for the election of one (1) member each year. Only one (1) member of the Preschool Committee may be from the Preschool staff.

K. Personnel Committee

The primary responsibilities of the Personnel Committee are to:

1. Establish and update job descriptions of employees of the Church;
2. Conduct yearly performance evaluations for all employees of the church;
3. Make salary and benefit recommendations for all employees to the Board of Trustees prior to preparation of the annual Church budget; and
4. Insure that all personnel matters are dealt with in accordance with accepted labor relations procedures.

The Personnel Committee shall:

1. Hold at least four (4) regular meetings annually.
2. Be responsible to, but not represented on, the Executive Council.

Election:

The Personnel Committee shall consist of three (3) **active** Church members having skills/experience in the personnel field. The term for this Committee shall be for three (3) years; the terms shall be arranged so as to provide for the election of one (1) member each year. **An employee of the church shall not be a member of this committee.(26a)**

L. Public Relations Committee

The primary responsibility of the Public Relations Committee is to be constantly looking for ways and means to enhance the visibility, outreach, and meaning of the Church.

The Public Relations Committee shall:

1. Promote the activities of the Church through the Church newsletter, local newspapers, radio, television, the internet, etc. as directed by the various Boards and Committees.
2. Attend and report pertinent information to the Executive Council.

Election:

There shall be three (3) Public Relations Committee members, with three (3) year terms each, arranged so that no more than one (1) will be elected in one year. Additional members to the Public Relations Committee may be appointed by the Executive Council from existing Board and Committee members. These appointments will be done in cooperation with the applicable Boards and Committees.(26b)

K. Additional Committees/Offices(27)

Special Committees/**Offices** such as Hospitality, Social Activities, **Parliamentarian**, or others may be established by the Church or Executive Council. Sub-Committees may be established by all permanent Boards/**Committees(28)**.

Additional permanent Boards/Committees/Offices may be established as needed. **Such additions would require an amendment to this Constitution and By-Laws (see Article V).(29)**

When any Committee/office has fulfilled its purpose and is not longer needed, said committee/office shall be dissolved.

L. Other Organizations

All Organizations, such as the Women's Guild, the Adult Christian Activities Club, or representatives of other organizations such as the Lakes Region Ecumenical Council, shall be regarded as integral parts of the Church, and shall be under the general oversight of the Church. Each shall submit a written report for presentation at the Annual Meeting.

**ARTICLE IX
DELEGATES**

Delegates are **active** members of the Church. Three (3) Delegates, and three (3) Alternates, shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. A Youth Delegate (when applicable) shall be elected for a term of one (1) year **from the active members who are less than 19 years of age.(30)**

Delegates shall:

1. Represent the Church and participate in decision making at the Cumberland Association, United Church of Christ; Maine Conference, United Church of Christ; or, any other local or state, **national or international(31)** association, council or fellowship of churches as voted by the Church.
2. Study pre-meeting materials to understand the issues which will be discussed.
3. When necessary, consult with Church membership through the Executive Council on specific issues which will be acted upon at the meetings.
4. Submit a report to the Church through the Executive Council of any action taken at meetings attended.

**ARTICLE X
DISSOLUTION**

If by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the remaining members of the Church, this Church shall be dissolved, all assets, property, and interests of which it shall be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift, or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise made before or after such dissolution shall be disposed of in a manner consistent with good Christian practice which the remaining members shall choose by two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting.

Under the Internal Revenue Service regulations and the Statutes of the State of Maine, if there is not a specific disavowal that assets on dissolution will be distributed to the remaining membership, the Church will not qualify as an exempt organization (See Internal Revenue Code, Section 501 (c) (3) and the Regulations they are under and current Maine State Statutes).

NOTES ON CHANGES:

Changes are noted in **BOLD**, excepting titles and a few other places where bold type was used in the existing Constitution and By-Laws. Changes made at 2003 meeting are in **bold and underlined**.

Article III- the word “regularly” has been deleted as its definition is very subjective.

Article IV- the section on membership has been reworded for clarity. The words “of race, color or ethnic background” have been omitted not because of any negative reason, but to be more inclusive and not limit discrimination for those reasons only.

Article IV- this has been added for clarity as it was not stated who would be performing these duties.

Article V- this is added for additional emphasis/clarity.

Article V.- section F.- this is added to maintain consistency with section G.

Article V- also others- this reflects the fact that we have more than one minister, numerous changes reflecting this will be found throughout this document.

Article V- section H.- change in format, not content to maintain consistency in the document.

Article V- section H.- section I “Amendments” was deleted as it was redundant for the most part, except for the sentence which was then added at the end of section H.

Article VI- this article has been almost completely reworded to accommodate more than one minister in our church as well as to give us the flexibility to have “Senior”, “Associate”, “Assistant” or “Co-Ministers” to make up our Ministerial team. It also reflects the change in Article VIII, item 8. It also changes the “Additional Terms of Call” to give the Church flexibility in what benefits it provides its ministers (the current wording could be misinterpreted).

(1) Article VII- This is provided for clarity.

(2) Article VII- This statement was moved here as it is common to all Officers. The term “active” has been added Throughout for clarity as a distinction is made in Article IV among member classifications.

Article VII section B- Numerous discussions have taken place concerning adding this position to give the Moderator some assistance in his/her job. One question is the length of term for both of these positions... should they stay 3 years each as are the other offices or would it make more sense to have two year terms for each of these... two years as Vice Moderator and two years as Moderator????

Article VIII- There are responsibilities that all boards and committees are required to do, therefore this section was added to clarify that all these items are shared by all committees.

1. The current Constitution only mentions “chairperson”, not “persons”. Also, the practice has been for the chair to occasionally send a proxy to the EC, however, this is not specifically sanctioned.

2. Some Boards/committees have specific meeting requirements written into their section of the Constitution, some are more specific than necessary for a Constitution and By-Laws.

3. AMEN!

4. This is not required of any Board/Committee in the current C&B-L, however, most organizations have such a requirement for their committees to keep records of their proceedings. In my opinion it is only “good business” and should be in the C&B-L.

5. This is a new topic for discussion for our church... should we allow Executive Sessions to occur. When dealing with sensitive issues it seems only fair to the parties involved that Executive Session be invoked at these times. I can think of examples of sensitive issues being discussed when I was on the Board of Deacons... and I can only imagine some of the issues being dealt with by the Missions Committee. Organizations which use Executive Session make it VERY CLEAR that NO votes can take place while in Executive Session... thus avoiding decisions being made in secret... a disaster for any organization. At this point only the Pastoral Relations Committee can function in confidence.

6. Can't stress this one enough ;)

7. This one either ;)

8. Ditto

9. Goes back to communication which will, hopefully, avoid any misunderstandings when actions are taken by any Board or Committee... this is done by everyone at this point, however, seems like it is an important enough point to be in the C&B-L.

10. Already a requirement of all Boards/Committees.

Article VIII- A., item 4- In practice it seems as though the “recommendation” to spend funds on non-budgeted items comes from

the Board/Committee which deals with the issue in question... the Trustees need to be consulted, however, I doubt they are the ones doing the “recommending” for all such items.

Article VIII, A, item 7- just a plug for the Parliamentarian to keep you guys out of trouble ;)

Article VIII, A- This addition needed for clarity.

Article VIII, B- election- “Adult” and “Youth” needed to be defined. The overlap comes from the fact that a HS senior may be 18 yrs. old and a “youth deacon”. The “four” was added in line 4 as it had been omitted in error in the printed edition of the C&B-L.

The current C&B-L does not state how one becomes a Permanent Deacon... as I recall I just requested to become a PD before I left the Board. The last sentence was added for clarification as it could be misinterpreted that once made a PD you could never be on the Board in the future.

Article VIII, C- The issue of church members who are employees of the church serving on committees came up a few years ago. In most organizations it is not allowed to be in a position which could cause a conflict of interest... as the Trustees are involved in dealing with the church’s employees it makes sense that employees should not be part of that Board. The current C&B-L says “cooperation”, however, I could envision situations where there could be disagreements with a minister concerning one of the church’s employees. The minister(s) should be “consulted” but not require cooperation (implying agreement) in regards to dealings with employees.

The current version states that the Board will assist the minister... in our form of church polity (and in practice) the Board functions “in cooperation with the Minister(s)”.

The Stewardship Committee was the only committee in the current C&B-L that did not have an introductory statement... if any committee should have one, the Stewardship Committee should because without this committee none of us would be having these discussions ;).

This paragraph was re-worded for clarity.

Article VIII, H.- No purpose is stated in the current version, neither is there a statement as to who can be a member (I am of the understanding that this is one of the few church committees that a non-member can join).

H- items 2,3- These are to conform with items under Section B, Board of Deacons. Part of item 3 was previously given in the introductory statement, however, it seems to be more appropriate to place it here.

H, election- Now I’m probably going to get some flak over this, however, I feel strongly that an employee of the church should not be a voting member of any committee that has “jurisdiction” over that person’s office... again, conflict of interest. The Choir Director should be involved, however, should be non-voting.

Article VIII, I, election- again, conflict of interest.

(26a) Article VIII, K, election- conflict of interest.

(26b) Article VIII, L, election- The positions in this committee are currently set at 2 years... should be changed to 3 years to keep it in line with all other positions in the church. As in the Stewardship Committee, each Board/Committee should have an existing member of their respective Board/Committee (the secretaries would be appropriate) to be a member of this committee. Since the sole purpose is to keep the membership and community informed and the Boards/Committees are where the business and “news” of the church originates it seems appropriate and most efficient to have somebody from each Board/Committee involved to insure proper flow of information to the public.

Article VIII, K- As with my position as Parliamentarian... some “jobs” in the church do not need a committee... only an individual... a committee of one???

The current version does not allow Committees to form sub-committees... if the committee is permanent, it should have the ability to form its own sub-committees.

The current version states that they may be established if confirmed at a Church Meeting... the last sentence is added for clarity.

Article IX- As with the Youth Deacon, the term “Youth Delegate” needs to be clarified.

IX, item 1- In the current C&B-L the Delegates do not have any authority to represent the church at a national or international event... seems like we should have the flexibility to send our delegates a bit further afield if needed... or should we leave this out and let the Executive Council appoint somebody for such events??? I could see this as a problem if something came up at the last minute and our church needed representation (last minute meeting with the United Church of Canada in St. Stephen???)