

The First Church of Christ in Wethersfield

Bylaws July

1, 2017

Amended June 16, 2019

250 Main Street
Wethersfield, CT 06109

www.firstchurch.org

First Church of Christ in Wethersfield Bylaws

We, the Members of First Church of Christ in Wethersfield, are called into fellowship with each other and with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, using the Bible as our guide to strengthen our understanding and deepen our commitment to the Christian faith. We constantly strive to be in harmony with one another, recognizing that church membership requires faith in God, humility, honesty, compassion and understanding in dealing with one another. To help in achieving our goals, we establish these Bylaws, recognizing the Bible and the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—as our ultimate authority.

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Article I. Identity

Section 1.01 **Name** The First Church of Christ in Wethersfield (First Church) gathered initially in 1635. First Church is a prayerful Christian congregation called, enabled and guided by the Triune God through the Holy Spirit and by the Bible to follow Jesus Christ, worship God the Father, love all people and make disciples who seek the blessings of a personal relationship with God.

Section 1.02 **Denomination** Since 1635, First Church has participated in what has become known as the congregational tradition. It is not affiliated with any denominational organization. First Church joins with other churches and groups to take part in projects and activities of mutual interest.

Section 1.03 **Applicable Laws** First Church is organized under Connecticut law as a non-stock corporation to serve charitable, religious and educational purposes, and it is recognized as a charity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code. No part of First Church's net earnings shall inure to the benefit of its Members, employees, Officers or other private persons. No substantial part of First Church's activities shall involve influencing legislation or political campaigns for public office, nor shall First Church engage in any other activity prohibited by Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code for organizations qualified under it or any corresponding provision of future federal tax law.

Article II. Membership

Section 2.01 **Purpose** Membership in First Church involves relevance: regular worship and participation, covenanting with and joining with other believers in sharing time, talent, resources and prayers in support of God's Kingdom and to fulfill our Mission of being a community of Jesus followers who love God, love one another and make disciples. *From everyone who has been given much, much will be required, and from the one, who has been entrusted with much, even more, will be asked* (Luke 12:48 NEV).

Section 2.02 **Roles and Duties** The Members shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Joining in worship regularly and participating in the services and events of First Church;
- (b) Abiding in Christ through spiritual disciplines, such as praying, reading and meditating on the Bible;
- (c) Sharing time and talent in volunteer service with other Members;
- (d) Generously sharing financial resources in support of First Church and extending to the community it serves;
- (e) Fellowshiping with and supporting others in a smaller group setting;
- (f) Providing regular care for our surroundings;
- (g) Remaining knowledgeable regarding the activities and finances of First Church

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and attending Regular and Special Meetings of the Membership to vote and to share in the care and direction of First Church;

- (h) Keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace by taking personal responsibility for helping to preserve harmony.

Section 2.03 **Authority** Members have the authority to participate in the leadership of First Church and to vote with other Members on matters properly brought before the Membership for their consideration and determination. Friends of the Church, as described below, are not eligible to vote or to hold office.

Section 2.04 **Accountability** Members are accountable to God and to one another.

Section 2.05 **Membership** Any person wishing to unite with First Church shall do so by confession of faith, letter of transfer or reaffirmation of faith. Those uniting with First Church shall give public assent to its covenant. Baptism shall be a prerequisite of First Church Membership (Membership, Member).

Applications for membership shall be made to a pastor or a deacon and shall be subject to candidate interview, new member training, Pastoral Staff comment and approval by the Board of Deacons (BOD).

(a) Health Restricted Membership

Members whose health prevents them from regularly attending worship services or events

(b) Extended Membership

Members who have temporarily relocated due to schooling or a job assignment

The BOD shall regularly remove from the list of Members those who have requested their names be removed, as well as those who no longer satisfy a minimum of **Section 2.02 (a – h) Roles and Duties**. Those who believe they have been removed in error have 12 months from the time of removal to request reinstatement. Such reinstatement shall be subject to candidate interview, new member training, Pastoral Staff comment, and approval of the BOD.

Section 2.06 **Friends of the Church** Those who have not yet chosen to unite with First Church, but who are nevertheless active in its affairs.

Article III. Officers, Pastors and Administration

Section 3.01 The Officers of First Church shall be the Executive Board President, Senior Pastor, Clerk and Members-at-Large of the Board.

Section 3.02 Executive Board President

(a) **Purpose** The Executive Board President (President) has responsibility for the overall affairs of First Church and execution of policy and decisions of the Membership and the Board.

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- (b) Roles and Duties** The President shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:
- (i) Serving as President of the Board and the Council and having general supervision over the activities of these bodies, except as otherwise provided by these Bylaws or prescribed by authorized action of the Board;
 - (ii) Conducting the annual performance review of the Senior Pastor.
- (c) Authority** The President shall have the authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in addition:
- (i) Sign bonds, contracts, deeds, mortgages or other instruments that the Board has authorized to be executed, except documents the execution of which is expressly delegated to some other Officer or agent of First Church by (1) law; (2) the Articles of Incorporation; (3) these Bylaws or (4) the Board.
 - (ii) Sign, endorse or accept negotiable paper.
 - (iii) Appoint a vice president from among the Members-at-Large to preside at Meetings when the President is unavailable.
- (d) Accountability** The President is accountable to the Membership.
- (e) Membership** The President shall be a Member who is nominated by the Leadership Committee to serve for a term of three years. The Membership shall elect the President during its Annual Meeting. The President, upon nomination, shall be eligible to serve a second consecutive term. After serving two consecutive full or partial terms, the President shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of one year.

Section 3.03 Senior Pastor

- (a) Purpose** The Senior Pastor serves as the spiritual leader of First Church, sharing the Scriptures and working with First Church groups and committees.
- (b) Roles and Duties** The Senior Pastor shall have the following responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:
- (i) Supervising all services of worship;
 - (ii) Administering the sacraments;
 - (iii) Ensuring pastoral care, particularly for the sick and troubled;
 - (iv) Sharing with the Membership a growing understanding of the Christian faith and its relevance to life situations;
 - (v) Modeling a godly life;
 - (vi) Overseeing the Pastoral Staff;
- (c) Authority** The Senior Pastor shall have authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in addition:

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- (i) Delegate oversight of daily operations to a church administrator or administrative pastor (Administrator) or other supporting staff.
- (ii) Hire, supervise and terminate the employment of administrative, facilities, ministry and preschool staff.

(d) Accountability The Senior Pastor reports to the President.

(e) Membership The Membership calls the Senior Pastor.

Section 3.04 Clerk

(a) Purpose The Clerk records minutes and ensures appropriate retention of the records, artifacts, documents, drawings, photographs, books, articles, and the oral and written stories of First Church by physical or electronic means.

(b) Roles and Duties The Clerk shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Recording and retaining minutes for Board meetings—including executive sessions—Council meetings and all called Meetings of the Membership;
- (ii) Filing any document required by any federal, state or local law;
- (iii) Providing notices to the Membership;
- (iv) Serving as the official custodian of the records—physical or electronic—seal and artifacts of First Church;
- (v) Signing checks and drafts of First Church, as authorized;
- (vi) Presenting to the Executive Board any communication addressed to the Clerk;
- (vii) Attending to official correspondence of First Church;
- (viii) Directing and monitoring the activities of the Historic Resources Committee (HRC).

(c) Authority The Clerk shall have the authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in addition:

- (i) Call Meetings per Section 14.03.
- (ii) Countersign negotiable paper, if authorized by the Board.

(d) Accountability The Clerk is accountable to the President.

(e) Membership The Clerk shall be a Member who is nominated by the Leadership Committee to serve for a term of three years. The Membership shall elect the Clerk during its Annual Meeting. The Clerk, upon nomination, shall be eligible to serve a second consecutive term. After serving two consecutive full or partial terms, the Clerk shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of one year.

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Article IV. Executive Board

Section 4.01 **Purpose** The Executive Board (Board) provides strategic and organizational leadership for First Church, nurturing its overall life and spiritual health, including its overall wellbeing.

Section 4.02 **Roles and Duties** The Board shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Embracing the First Church Vision and Mission and encouraging others to live them out;
- (b) Formulating and monitoring the implementation of First Church policies;
- (c) Periodically reviewing all First Church activities, functions and staffing, ensuring that all necessary roles and duties are identified, properly assigned and carried out by those responsible and that all unnecessary activities, functions and staffing—including the Ministries and Standing Committees—are retired;
- (d) Participating in the development and review of the annual budget (Budget) for presentation to the Membership at the Financial Meeting;
- (e) Conducting comprehensive short- and long-range planning, including financial, organizational and strategic planning;
- (f) Recommending to the Membership persons to be called as members of the Pastoral Staff;
- (g) Making all contracts and agreements on behalf of First Church;
- (h) Preparing and maintaining the Manual as described in Section 15.05.

Section 4.03 **Authority** The Board shall have the authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in addition:

- (a) Act on behalf of the Membership in all matters of First Church except those matters on which a direct vote by the Membership is required.
- (b) Upon the recommendation of the Finance Subcommittee, borrow an amount not to exceed ten percent of the current unrestricted Endowment balance.
- (c) Create or disband committees, including Pastoral Search Committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties. Members-at-Large may serve as members of these committees.
- (d) Designate the person or persons, in addition to the President, who shall execute on behalf of First Church bonds, contracts, deeds, mortgages or other written instruments.
- (e) Designate any person, in addition to the President, who shall be eligible to sign, endorse or accept negotiable paper. Such negotiable paper shall be countersigned if and as the Board determines.
- (f) Oversee the appropriate usage of campus facilities and grounds.

Section 4.04 **Accountability** The Board is accountable to the Membership.

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Section 4.05 **Membership** The Board shall be composed of the President, Clerk, Senior Pastor, and not fewer than five, or more than 11, Members-at-Large, who must be Members.

The number of Members-at-Large will be determined from time to time in coordination with the Leadership Committee based on the average weekly worship attendance during the most recently completed fiscal¹ year. One Member-at-Large shall be elected for every 65 attendees such that fractional results are rounded up to the next higher whole number.

The Membership shall elect the Members-at-Large during its Annual Meeting for terms of three years. Service shall be for staggered three-year terms, with no more than one-half of the members plus midterm vacancies, if any,² replaced in any given year. Members-at-Large shall be eligible to serve a second consecutive term. After serving two consecutive full or partial terms, a Member-at-Large shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of one year.

Only the Members-at-Large shall vote on matters considered by the Board. The President, or the vice president when presiding in lieu of the President, may vote to break ties but are not required to do so. The Clerk and Senior Pastor serve as non-voting, ex officio members.

The Board shall choose from among its Members-at-Large chairpersons for Finance, Human Resources (HR), and ~~the~~ Research & Long Range Planning (R&LRP) Subcommittees. Each Member-at-Large shall serve on at least one, but no more than two of these three subcommittees.

Section 4.06 **Finance Subcommittee of the Board**

- (a) **Purpose** The Finance Subcommittee (Finance) is responsible for the overall financial policy and practices of First Church, its Endowment and Property.
- (b) **Roles and Duties** Finance shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:
 - (i) Overseeing accounting and budgeting controls, systems and tools;
 - (ii) Ensuring the annual external review of all financial records and accounts;
 - (iii) Preparing the initial draft of the Budget, with assistance from the Administrator or the finance office, for consideration by the Board;
 - (iv) Modifying of the Budget as requested by the Board during their review;
 - (v) Presenting the Budget to the Membership at informational sessions and at the Financial Meeting;
 - (vi) Reviewing finance office records for revenue, expense and financial performance relative to the Budget, including regular reports to the Board and, as necessary or prudent, to the Membership;
 - (vii) Providing information and insight to the Trustees;
 - (viii) Providing information and insight to Campus Stewardship.

¹ Amended 6-16-2019 – fiscal replaced calendar

² Amended 6-16-2019 – underlined text inserted

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- (c) **Authority** Finance has the authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in addition:
 - (i) Create and disband committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties.
- (d) **Accountability** Finance is accountable to the Board.
- (e) **Membership** Finance is composed of not fewer than three Members-at-Large plus the Chairperson of the Trustees and the Chairperson of the Campus Stewardship. The Administrator and finance office personnel support Finance.

Section 4.07 Human Resources Subcommittee of the Board

- (a) **Purpose** The Human Resources Subcommittee (HR) ensures the development, maintenance and periodic review of personnel policies for all employees.
- (b) **Roles & Duties** HR shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:
 - (i) Providing, maintaining and reviewing the Employee Handbook;
 - (ii) Providing, monitoring and reviewing hiring and employment practices and policies;
 - (iii) Reviewing relevant compensation surveys and monitoring salary administration;
 - (iv) Monitoring and reviewing benefit plans.
- (c) **Authority** HR has the authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in addition:
 - (i) Create and disband committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties.
- (d) **Accountability** HR is accountable to the Board.
- (e) **Membership** HR is composed of not fewer than two Members-at-Large plus one additional Member nominated by the Members-at-Large and appointed by the Board. The Administrator supports HR.

Section 4.08 Research and Long-Range Planning Subcommittee of the Board

- (a) **Purpose** The Research and Long-Range Planning Subcommittee (R&LRP) is responsible for studying the life and affairs of First Church and recommending changes when appropriate.
- (b) **Roles and Duties** R&LRP shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:
 - (i) Regularly reviewing and monitoring the affairs, organization and ministries of First Church;
 - (ii) Identifying deficiencies or potential improvements for consideration by R&LRP;
 - (iii) Developing responses to deficiencies or potential improvements identified by the Board or Members.
- (c) **Authority** R&LRP has the authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties

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and in addition:

- (i) Create and disband committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties.
- (d) **Accountability** R&LRP is accountable to the Board.
- (e) **Membership** R&LRP is composed of at least two Members-at-Large plus additional members as may be required from time-to-time for specific projects and studies. Additional members for specific projects shall be nominated by the Members-at-Large and appointed by the Board.

Article V. Church Council

Section 5.01 **Purpose** The Church Council (Council) exists to share operational and tactical communication and insights with the Board and the leadership of the BOD, Ministries and Standing Committees of First Church.

Section 5.02 **Roles and Duties** The Council shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Remaining current on Board actions and activities;
- (b) Updating its members on current activities, results, ongoing issues and near-term future activities or events;
- (c) Preparing and maintaining the Manual as described in Section 15.05.

In addition,

- (d) The Chairperson of the BOD and each of the Ministries and Standing Committees shall meet collectively with the Board not less than twice per year, but the Council may meet as often as the Board deems useful.
- (e) The Chairperson of the BOD and each of the Ministries and Standing Committees shall meet with the Board individually not less than once each Fiscal Year to:
 - (i) Review its charter and update its content as may be appropriate;
 - (ii) Share requested updates to its Manual;
 - (iii) Review its activities and accomplishments for the most recent 12 months;
 - (iv) Present its plans for the next 12 months.

Section 5.03 **Authority** The Council shall have authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in addition:

- (a) Provide coordination and communication for Church events.
- (b) Create and disband committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties. Members-at-Large may serve as members of these committees.

Section 5.04 **Accountability** The Leadership Committee and the Trustees report to the Membership. The Christian Development Ministry (CDM) reports to the BOD. The

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HRC reports to the Clerk. The remaining non-Board members of the Council report to the Board.

Section 5.05 **Membership** The Council shall consist of the Board, Chairperson of the BOD and Chairpersons of each of the Ministries and Standing Committees as described in Articles VII through XIII.

Only the Members-at-Large shall vote on issues considered by the Council. The President, or the vice president when presiding in lieu of the President, may but is not required to vote to break ties.

Article VI. Deacons

Section 6.01 **Purpose** The Board of Deacons (BOD) works with and closely supports the Pastoral Staff, serving and leading First Church in worship, spiritual care and Membership.

Section 6.02 **Roles and Duties** The BOD shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Embracing the First Church Vision and Mission and encouraging others to live them out;
- (b) Leading and serving First Church in worship, in concert with the Pastoral Staff, to help make worship services meaningful, orderly, reverent and joyful occasions of fellowship and communion with the Lord;
- (c) Preparing and administering the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, in support of the Pastoral Staff;
- (d) Supporting those gathered by encouraging individuals spiritually and ensuring that aid and comfort are given in times of need;
- (e) Providing a committee of deacons and deacons emeriti to administer the *Good Samaritan Fund* or its equivalent;
- (f) Appointing the CDM Chairperson;
- (g) Interviewing, approving, welcoming and encouraging assimilation of new Members into the church body;
- (h) Managing the roster of Members;
- (i) Coordinating with, and regularly reporting to, the Board.
- (j) Preparing and maintaining the Manual as described in Section 15.05;

Section 6.03 **Authority** The BOD shall have authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in addition:

- (a) Create and disband committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties. Deacons may serve as members of these committees.
- (b) Include and remove individuals from Membership.

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- (c) Determine worship service times, structure and format.
- (d) Temporarily fill BOD vacancies between Annual Meetings.
- (e) Administer the *Good Samaritan Fund* in a financially prudent way to address emergency or short-term financial needs of Members and regular attendees of First Church and may address such needs of the wider community.

Section 6.04 **Accountability** The BOD reports to the Board.

Section 6.05 **Membership** Deacons shall be elected from among the Members whose character is in accord with biblical standards for deacons. The BOD shall be composed of at least 15 members, excluding the Senior Pastor, who shall serve as a non-voting, ex officio member. The number of deacons will be determined in coordination with the Leadership Committee. The BOD shall elect from among its members a Chairperson, and the two positions described in Section 15.07.

The Membership shall elect deacons during its Annual Meeting for terms of three years. Service shall be for staggered three-year terms with no more than one-half of the members plus midterm vacancies, if any,³ replaced in any given year. Deacons shall be eligible to serve a second consecutive term. After serving two consecutive full or partial terms, a deacon shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of one year. Upon completion of the service term, a deacon moves to emeriti status and is eligible to substitute for an active deacon in all respects.

Ministries & Standing Committees

Article VII. Leadership Committee

Section 7.01 **Purpose** The Leadership Committee reviews Member interests, skills, gifts, and talents to identify and nominate leaders for all offices and positions that shall be filled by a vote of the Membership.

Section 7.02 **Roles and Duties** The Leadership Committee shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Developing, and then modifying as needed, the Leadership Committee Charter to define the responsibilities of its members to fulfill the First Church Vision and Mission, and the Manual as described in Section 15.05;
- (b) Posting its nominees for election at the Annual Meeting in a highly visible location within the church, in First Church print and electronic publications, and on the First Church website, starting at least 21 days prior to the Annual Meeting;
- (c) Managing records of the particular interests and skills of Members;
- (d) Promoting the use of each Member's gifts and talents within First Church;
- (e) Continually soliciting from the Membership names of Members who may be actively recruited into the work of First Church;
- (f) Presenting nominations for election or appointment to any office, or other vacant position at the request of the Board, BOD, Council, or any Ministry or Standing Committee;

³ Amended 6-16-2019 – underlined text inserted
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Section 7.03 **Authority** The Leadership Committee shall have authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties and in addition:

- (a) Consider organizational changes and bylaws amendments in concert with the Board, staff and other committees.

Section 7.04 **Accountability** The Leadership Committee is accountable to the Membership.

Section 7.05 **Membership** The Leadership Committee shall be composed of not fewer than nine members, including the Chairperson, who shall be Members nominated by the Board and elected by the Members at its Annual Meeting. Service shall be for staggered three-year terms with no more than one-half of the members replaced in any given year. The committee shall elect from among its members a Chairperson and the two positions described in Section 15.07. After serving two consecutive full or partial three-year terms, members are ineligible, for three full years, to serve again.

Article VIII. Missions and Outreach Ministry

Section 8.01 **Purpose** The Missions and Outreach Ministry (M&O Ministry) provides management and direction for First Church's participation in, and fulfillment of, our Lord's Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) to reach out both near and far with the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

Section 8.02 **Roles and Duties** The M&O Ministry shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Developing, and then modifying as needed, the M&O Ministry Charter to define the responsibilities of its members to fulfill the First Church Vision and Mission, and the Manual as described in Section 15.05;
- (b) Recommending, sponsoring and supporting missions and outreach activities;
- (c) Carrying out the direction of the Board and keeping the Council informed of the activities and progress of the M&O Ministry;
- (d) Apportioning a tithe of First Church's annual offerings to support local, national, and international programs.

Section 8.03 **Authority** The M&O Ministry shall have authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in addition:

- (a) Create and disband committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties.

Section 8.04 **Accountability** The M&O Ministry is accountable to the Board.

Section 8.05 **Membership** The M&O Ministry leadership shall be composed of not fewer than three, nor more than five Members with a passion for fulfilling our Lord's Great Commission. The Membership, at its Annual Meeting, shall elect the M&O Ministry Chairperson. The committee shall elect from its members the two additional positions described in Section 15.07. The M&O Ministry Chairperson shall serve for two years and may serve for two consecutive full or partial two-year terms, after which the M&O Ministry Chairperson is ineligible, for two full years, to serve again.

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Article IX. Board of Trustees

Section 9.01 **Purpose** The Board of Trustees (Trustees) provides oversight of the First Church endowment (Endowment) with the goal of utilizing the funds in the best interest of First Church and in accordance with a donor's written intentions (Donor's Intentions).

Section 9.02 **Roles and Duties** The Trustees shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Developing, and then modifying as needed, a Trustees' Charter to define the responsibilities of its members to fulfill their purpose and the First Church Vision and Mission, and the Manual as described in Section 15.05;
- (b) Developing, and then modifying as needed, an Investment Policy Statement (IPS) to establish investment guidelines that balance preservation of capital with investment growth in support of the needs and goals of First Church;
- (c) Ensuring investment of the Endowment in a fashion consistent with the IPS, Donor's Intentions, and the goals of First Church;
- (d) Overseeing receipt of all suitable endowment gifts, bequests and the like—whether designated or undesignated, restricted or unrestricted—given to First Church, and deciding whether such funds should be added to the Endowment or accounted for separately, in accordance with the Donor's Intentions;
- (e) Overseeing disbursement of monies from the Endowment in accordance with these Bylaws and an affirmative vote of the majority of the Trustees pursuant to the Donor's Intentions, a request from the finance office, or the Board.
- (f) Reporting to the Membership each Fiscal Year in the annual report and at its Financial Meeting.

Section 9.03 **Authority** The Trustees have authority over the receipt, acceptance, investment and dispersal of the Endowment, acting in accordance with the best interest and goals of First Church. In the event that the finance office, the Board and the Trustees do not all agree with a decision of the Trustees, a vote of the Membership can be taken to determine how to proceed.

Section 9.04 **Accountability** The Trustees are accountable to the Membership.

Section 9.05 **Membership** The Trustees shall be composed of not fewer than five members, including the Chairperson. The Membership at its Annual Meeting shall elect the Chairperson for a five-year term.

The Finance Subcommittee shall nominate, and the Board shall appoint, the remaining members. Service shall be in staggered five-year terms with no more than one-third of the members plus midterm vacancies, if any,⁴ replaced in any given year. The Trustees shall elect the additional positions described in Section 15.07. The Chairperson and committee members may serve two (2) consecutive full or partial five-year terms, after which they are ineligible, for one full year, to serve again.

⁴ Amended 6-16-2019 – underlined text inserted

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Article X. Campus Stewardship Committee

Section 10.01 **Purpose** The Campus Stewardship Committee (Campus Stewardship) provides oversight of the First Church campus—including buildings, furnishings and equipment—with respect to insurance, maintenance, safety and security.

Section 10.02 **Roles and Duties** Campus Stewardship shall have responsibilities in conjunction with the Administrator and the Property Manager that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Developing, and then modifying as needed, a Campus Stewardship Charter to define the responsibilities of its members to fulfill its duties and the First Church Vision and Mission, and the Manual as described in Section 15.05;
- (b) Monitoring campus maintenance and capital expenses;
- (c) Initiating and monitoring ongoing projects;
- (d) Identifying and reporting future campus needs;
- (e) Conducting bid openings with the Administrator and the Property Manager for projects of \$5,000 or more;
- (f) Considering and, if appropriate, applying other capital project management best practices.

Section 10.03 **Authority** Campus Stewardship shall have authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in addition:

- (a) Identify and present capital projects at the annual Financial Meeting for consideration by the Membership;
- (b) Create and disband committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties.

Section 10.04 **Accountability** Campus Stewardship reports to the Board via the Finance Subcommittee.

Section 10.05 **Membership** Campus Stewardship shall consist of a Chairperson nominated by the Finance Subcommittee and appointed by the Board. The Chairperson serves at the pleasure of the Board and may serve until resignation or replacement.

In addition, the Chairperson shall nominate—and the Finance Subcommittee shall appoint—three or more persons to serve on Campus Stewardship. These additions serve at the pleasure of the Board and may serve until resignation or replacement. The committee shall elect the additional positions described in Section 15.07.

Article XI. Hospitality Ministry

Section 11.01 **Purpose** The Hospitality Ministry (Hospitality) helps connect the Members, Friends of the Church and guests of First Church with one another and with church leadership, strengthening the church family and helping each individual to feel valued within the community.

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Section 11.02 **Roles and Duties** Hospitality shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Developing, and then modifying as needed, a Hospitality Charter to define the responsibilities of its members to provide individuals and families with a sense of value within the First Church community, and the Manual as described in Section 15.05;
- (b) Embracing the First Church Vision and Mission and encouraging others to live them out;
- (c) Leading and serving First Church by creating a welcoming setting for those gathered before and after services;
- (d) Leading and serving First Church by providing a welcoming setting and refreshments for those gathered at funerals and memorial services;
- (e) Coordinating with the Board and Pastoral Staff in planning events to connect the community with one another and with First Church;
- (f) Encouraging participation in smaller groups to develop spiritual growth and build community;
- (g) Connecting Friends of the Church and guests with the First Church community, ensuring that they feel valued and encouraged to become members.

Section 11.03 **Authority** Hospitality shall have authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties and in addition:

- (a) Create and disband committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties.

Section 11.04 **Accountability** Hospitality reports to the Board.

Section 11.05 **Membership** Hospitality shall be formed by a Chairperson, who is a Member appointed by the Board. The Chairperson may add as many other members as necessary or useful to achieve Hospitality's purpose and to accomplish its duties. The committee may elect the additional positions described in Section 15.07. The Chairperson serves at the pleasure of the Board and may serve until resignation or replacement.

Article XII. Christian Development Ministry

Section 12.01 **Purpose** The Christian Development Ministry (CDM) shall provide education, training and opportunities to help Members achieve the roles and duties of Membership and grow and mature in their relationship with Christ and with First Church. CDM also provides orientation in Christian leadership for those who shall serve on and lead boards, Ministries and Standing Committees.

Section 12.02 **Roles and Duties** The CDM shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Developing, and then modifying as needed, a CDM Charter to define the responsibilities of its members to provide individuals and families with education,

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training and opportunities to grow and mature in their relationship with Christ and with the First Church community, and the Manual as described in Section 15.05;

- (b) Partnering with the BOD to achieve the active involvement of new Members in the life and activities of First Church;
- (c) Embracing the First Church Vision and Mission, and encouraging others to live them out;
- (d) Identifying Members' talents and skills and encouraging them to actively and creatively serve God in the work and activities of First Church;
- (e) Cultivating among our leaders a culture by which our work is bathed in prayer and informed by Christian reflection;
- (f) Encouraging Members to use their God-given intellect and creativity to protect both their surroundings and other human beings;
- (g) Encouraging Members to respond with discernment and compassion to those in need, ensuring that the assistance does no harm;
- (h) Encouraging Members to support and strengthen relationships with their family and with their First Church family;
- (i) Encouraging Members to regularly and generously support First Church financially;
- (j) Encouraging Members to manage wisely the wealth with which God entrusts them and to share it ably and well;

Section 12.03 **Authority** The CDM shall have authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties, and in so doing, shall coordinate and regularly communicate with the BOD, and in addition:

- (a) Provide activities, classes and other opportunities to educate, encourage and promote the roles and duties of leaders and Members.
- (b) Create and disband committees, as it deems necessary to carry out its duties.

Section 12.04 **Accountability** The CDM reports to the BOD.

Section 12.05 **Membership** The CDM shall be formed by a Chairperson, who is a Member appointed by the BOD. The Chairperson may nominate as many other members as may be necessary or useful to achieve the CDM's purpose and to accomplish its duties. Additional members are to be appointed by the BOD. The Chairperson shall serve for two years and may serve for two consecutive full or partial two-year terms. After serving two consecutive terms as Chairperson, the Chairperson will be ineligible, for a period of two years, to serve as the Chairperson. The committee shall elect the additional positions described in Section 15.07.

Article XIII. Historic Resources Committee

Section 13.01 **Purpose** The Historic Resources Committee (HRC) exists to help preserve and record the story of God's work involving First Church. Its goal is to pass on

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the life-changing work of Christ to subsequent generations. It shall work to conserve, preserve, promote, protect and support the history of First Church, including the history of its congregations and its historic Meetinghouse. In addition, it supports the conservation, preservation and protection of the Meetinghouse.

Section 13.02 **Roles and Duties** The HRC shall have responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Collecting, maintaining and making available historical records, artifacts, documents, drawings, photographs, books, articles and oral and written stories, by physical or electronic means, which relate to the work of God among those gathered, the pastors and staff, as well as any that mention the Meetinghouse;
- (b) Ensuring the custody and care of any antiquities belonging to First Church;
- (c) Keeping a record of all significant events in the history of First Church and its Meetinghouses;
- (d) Notifying the Clerk of any significant anniversaries in the church's history;
- (e) Making recommendations to the Clerk on issues affecting the history, antiquities and structures of First Church.

Section 13.03 **Authority** The HRC shall have authority to meet the foregoing enumerated duties and, in so doing, shall coordinate and regularly communicate with the Clerk.

Section 13.04 **Accountability** The HRC reports to the Clerk.

Section 13.05 **Membership** The HRC shall consist of a Chairperson, who shall be a Member nominated by the Clerk and appointed by the Board, and as many other members as may be necessary or useful to achieve its purpose and accomplish its duties. The Chairperson serves at the pleasure of the Board and may serve until resignation or replacement. The committee may elect the additional positions described in Section 15.07.

Article XIV. Meetings

Section 14.01 **Regular Meetings** The Annual Meeting of the Membership shall be held in the month of April, followed in the month of June by the Financial Meeting to consider and adopt the Budget on a date and at a time designated by the Board.

Meetings of the Board, BOD, and Trustees shall be held not less than four times per year at the time and place designated by the President or Chairperson of each. The Council shall meet not less than twice per year. All meetings, other than meetings in executive session, shall be open to observation.

Section 14.02 **Special Meetings** Special meetings of the Membership may be called by the President, one-third of the members of the Board, or upon written application to the Clerk of not fewer than 40 Members. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President or upon written application of three or more members of the Board to the Clerk. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the President or upon

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written application to the Clerk of seven or more members of the Council. Special meetings of the BOD may be called by the Chairperson or upon the written application to the Chairperson of three or more members of the BOD. Special meetings of any Ministry or Standing Committee may be called by its Chairperson or upon the written application to its Chairperson of two members of the Ministry or Standing Committee.

Section 14.03 **Notice of Meetings**

- (a) **Membership** A notice of every meeting of the Membership stating the place, day, hour and the purpose for which the meeting is called shall be given by the Clerk or other person calling the meeting to each Member by publication in the bulletin and at least one other publication and electronic communication circulated among the Members, and by posting the notice in a highly visible location within the First Church campus at least ten days before the meeting.
- (b) **Board, BOD, Council, Ministry or Standing Committee** Notice of all Regular or Special Meetings of these groups may be given orally, telephonically, electronically or in writing. Notice shall be given in time to enable the members to attend, but in no event later than 2 days prior to the time of such Regular or Special Meeting.

Section 14.04 **Moderator** The Moderator shall be a Member who is nominated by the Leadership Committee to serve for a term of three years. The Membership shall elect the Moderator during its Annual Meeting. The Moderator serves at the pleasure of the Membership and may serve until resignation or replacement. The Moderator shall preside at Meetings of First Church. The Moderator shall not be a member of the Board. In the absence of the Moderator, the Members who are present shall elect an individual as moderator for the meeting.

Section 14.05 **Quorum Requirements** At all meetings of the Membership, 50 of the Members entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum. A smaller number may adjourn the meeting to a later date. At all meetings of the Board, BOD, Council, or Trustees, one-half of the members entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum.

Section 14.06 **Voting** Each Member present at meetings of the Membership shall have the right to vote. Voting for members of the Pastoral Staff, a capital campaign, acquisition or divestiture of real property, or to change the covenant affiliation of First Church shall be by written ballot and require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Members voting.

Section 14.07 **Proxies** Vote by proxy shall not be permitted.

Section 14.08 **Written Consent** Any action required to be taken at a meeting of the Board may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken is signed by all of the members of the Board entitled to vote.

Section 14.09 **Robert's Rules** *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern all meetings of the Membership, Board, BOD, Council, Ministries, and Standing Committees, insofar as the Rules are not in conflict with these Bylaws or with any special parliamentary rules adopted by the above groups.

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Article XV. Miscellaneous Provisions

Section 15.01 **Fiscal Year** Unless otherwise determined by the Board, the Fiscal Year of First Church shall be the 12-month period ending June 30.

Section 15.02 **Pastoral Staff** The Pastoral Staff would include the Senior Pastor, Administrative Pastor, Associate or Assistant Pastors, and the Director of Music. The foregoing list will not be construed to define or limit the number of positions on the Pastoral Staff.

Section 15.03 **Vacancies** Vacancies in any Officer, Chairperson of any Ministry or Standing Committee, except the Pastoral Staff, shall be filled by appointment by the Board until the next Annual Meeting, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws. The Membership, upon the recommendation of the Board, shall fill vacancies in the Pastoral Staff, except that the Board may fill vacancies in the Pastoral Staff on an interim basis until a permanent appointment is made at a Special Meeting or the next Annual Meeting.

To facilitate votes to fill vacancies on the BOD, a Ministry, or Standing Committee between Annual Meetings electronic voting by e-mail to the Chairperson responsible for filling the vacancy is permitted, provided that candidates to fill such vacancy have been nominated and their nomination made known to the voting group at least ten days prior to the electronic vote.

Section 15.04 **Headings for Convenience** The division of these Bylaws into articles and sections is for ease of reference only and shall not affect the interpretation or construction of these Bylaws.

Section 15.05 **Policies and Procedures Manual** First Church shall adopt, and then amend as needed, a Policies and Procedures Manual (Manual) by a two-thirds vote of the Board, provided that the text in whole or in part was introduced at the preceding meeting of the Board. The Manual shall contain standard operating procedures for the Board, BOD, Council, Ministries, and Standing Committees.

Section 15.06 **Check Signing**

- (a) All checks shall be signed by two persons, at least one of whom shall be bonded, and who shall be the President, Clerk, Administrator or such other persons as may be determined by the Board.
- (b) Any other person designated by the Board is authorized and empowered to sign proxies, and upon approval of the Trustees to sell, assign, transfer or exchange stocks, bonds or other securities belonging to First Church, and to execute and deliver any assignments, powers of attorney and other instruments necessary or convenient to effectuate any such sale, purchase, assignment, transfer or exchange.

Section 15.07 **Organization** Each committee, Subcommittee, Ministry or Standing Committee should elect from its membership a vice chairperson, who shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chairperson, and a secretary, who shall keep the minutes of their meetings. A copy of the minutes shall be furnished promptly to the members of the entity.

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Section 15.08 **Removal** After complying with Matthew 18: 15-17, any two unrelated Members may advise the Board of offenses they believe warrant the Board's consideration. The Board may remove any Officer, Pastor, deacon, Ministry or Standing Committee Chairperson, trustee, employee or committee member with or without cause by two-thirds vote of the Board. A statement of the reason and a notice of the time and place the Board is to take action shall be mailed by Registered Mail to the individual proposed for removal at least thirty days before any final action is taken by the Board. The individual shall be given an opportunity to be heard and the matter considered by the Board at the time and place mentioned in the notice. The removal of the Senior Pastor shall also require a confirming written two-thirds vote of the Members voting at a Special Meeting called for that purpose.

Article XVI. Amendments

The Board or not fewer than 40 Members may propose amendments to the Bylaws. These Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the Members voting at a Special Meeting of the Membership called for that purpose, provided: (1) the text of the proposed amendment shall be introduced without necessity of approval at a meeting of the Board held no less than thirty days prior to the vote of the Membership, and (2) the text of the proposed amendment shall be included in a notice that is mailed or delivered physically or electronically to Members at least ten days prior to the meeting.

Article XVII. Dissolution of First Church

Upon the adoption of a plan of dissolution of First Church, the Board shall determine by two-thirds vote which group(s) shall be the recipient(s) of the remaining assets. Such groups shall be a Christian Church or a Christian faith-based organization, which is tax exempt and under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. Any assets not so disposed shall be disposed by order of a Court of Competent Jurisdiction.

Article XVIII. Definitions

Administrator – Section 3.03(c)(i)

Annual Budget – Budget Section 4.02(d)

Annual Meeting – Section 14.01

Board of Deacons – BOD Section 6.01

Board of Trustees – Trustees Section 9.01

Campus Stewardship Committee – Campus Stewardship Section 10.01

Christian Development Ministry – CDM Section 12.01

Church Council – Council Section 5.01

Donor's Intentions – Section 9.01

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Employee Handbook – First Church Employee Handbook

Endowment – Section 9.01

Executive Board – Board Section 4.01

Executive Board President – President Section 3.02(a)

Finance Subcommittee – Finance Section 4.06(a)

Financial Meeting – Section 14.01

First Church of Christ in Wethersfield, The – First Church Section 1.01

Fiscal Year – Section 15.01

Friend of the Church – Section 2.06

Historic Resources Committee – HRC Section 13.01

Human Resources Subcommittee – HR Section 4.07

Investment Policy Statement – IPS Section 9.02(b)

Member, Membership – Section 2.05

Mission – Section 2.01

Missions and Outreach Ministry – M&O Ministry Section 8.01

Notice of Meetings – Section 14.03

Officers – Section 3.01

Pastoral Search Committee – Section 4.03(c)

Pastoral Staff – Section 15.02

Policy and Procedures Manual – Manual Section 15.05

Property – Section 4.06(a)

Quorum Requirements – Section 14.05

Regular Meetings – Section 14.01

Research and Long Range Planning Subcommittee – R&LRP Section 4.08(a)

Senior Pastor – Section 3.03

Special Meeting – Section 14.02

Vision – First Church Vision Statement

Voting – Section 14.06

We are a community of Jesus followers
Who love God, love one another
And make disciples.

First  Church

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN WETHERSFIELD

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