

**INTERIM BYLAWS OF THE SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN NEWCASTLE, UCC
VOTED and APPROVED
February 24, 2019**

INTRODUCTION

These Interim Bylaws of the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle are complementary to the Interim Constitution. These Interim Bylaws specify how the Church shall conduct its business. The precedence of governing documents is this Interim Constitution, then the Interim Bylaws, and this Church's approved Policies. The governing body of this Church shall be the membership assembled in a duly called church meeting.

ARTICLE I - Membership

A. Active Members

1. Candidates for Membership may join the Church by Confession of Faith or by a letter of transfer from other Christian Churches. They will have been baptized and will enter into the Covenant of the Church, subscribing to its Interim Constitution and Interim Bylaws. Membership is open to all.

Qualified candidates will be formally received into Membership at a time approved by the Pastor.

2. Members are expected to be faithful to the Christian Faith; to follow the Word of God; and to attend the services, participate in the activities of the Church, and to support the Church and its benevolences as they are able.
3. Members may participate in all functions of the Church. They are eligible to hold any office, serve on the Spirit, Service, and Stewardship Teams and vote on any business brought before the Church.

B. Inactive Members

1. Members may request transfer to Inactive status and, with the agreement of the Spirit Team, the request will be granted and the Clerk so notified.
2. Church Member names on the Inactive List may be restored to Active Member status by appropriate action of the Spirit Team.

C. Termination of Membership

1. The Spirit Team may request the Clerk to issue a letter of transfer to another church upon receiving the written request from a Member.
2. The Spirit Team will accept a Member's written request to be released from membership.
3. The Spirit Team may terminate the membership of a Member for due cause, after good faith effort to communicate with the member.

D. Friends

People who participate in the life of the Church but who are not Members will be known as Friends.

ARTICLE II - MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The Pastor

1. The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the Church. Specific duties and responsibilities are defined in the Pastor's Call and the Pastor's current Position Description.

B. Music Ministry Responsibilities

1. The Music Ministry will be directed by a Minister of Music who will be a qualified musician approved by the Church on the recommendation of the Spirit Committee.
2. The Minister of Music will be an integral part of the life of the Church and will reach out to the staff, choir members, Members and Friends of the congregation and the community.
3. The Minister of Music will exemplify the religious spirit of the Church, leading and teaching music in support of the Church's teachings and its mission.
4. The Minister of Music will be diligent in preparation and performance, will cooperate with others to provide and enable the highest standard of worship in the Church, and will meet regularly with the Pastor, staff, Music Committee and others to facilitate that end.
5. The Minister of Music will provide a variety of traditions and styles in organ and choral music appropriate for the services, and the use of other instruments when appropriate.
6. Specific duties and responsibilities are defined in the Director's then current Position Description.

ARTICLE III - ADMINISTRATION

A. Officers of The Church

1. The **Moderator** will serve as head of the Church in legal matters, moderate all business meetings of the Church, be *ex officio* member of all Teams, chair the Church Assembly meetings, act as alternate for delegates and perform other appropriate duties.
2. The **Vice Moderator** will act as Moderator during any absence or incapacity of the Moderator, serve as a member of the Church Assembly and assist the Moderator as requested.
3. The **Clerk** will:
 - a. Issue calls for all Church meetings, record the minutes of all meetings of the Church and the Church Assembly, which shall become part of the official records of the Church.

- b. Prepare for the Annual Report a yearly summary of changes in membership and ceremonies performed. The summary will include names of people who have joined the Church, been baptized by a minister of the Church, been married by a minister of the Church, and had funerals performed by a minister of the Church. The report also will include membership statistics and average monthly attendance statistics.
 - c. Send letters of transfer to as directed by the designated Deacons of the Spirit Team.
4. The **Assistant Clerk** will perform the normal duties of the Clerk in the absence or incapacity of the Clerk, and assist the Clerk as requested.
 5. The **Treasurer** will:
 - a. Keep records of all financial matters of the Church and administer certain functions, including disbursement, payroll and investments.
 - b. Attend meetings of the Church Assembly and, when necessary, the Stewardship Team, and give monthly and annual reports.
 - c. Perform other tasks at the request of the Church Assembly.
 6. The **Assistant Treasurer** will perform the normal duties of the Treasurer in the absence or incapacity of the Treasurer, assist the Treasurer as needed and perform other tasks as requested by the Church Assembly.

B. The Church Assembly, the Spirit Team, the Service Team and the Stewardship Team.

1. The **Church Assembly** is the leadership body of the Church. It coordinates programs and may initiate programs. It has the authority to act on behalf of the Church and make and approve legal and Church-related decisions when meetings of the Congregation are not required as determined by a recorded vote of at least two-thirds of the total number of Church Assembly members.
 - a. The Church Assembly shall consist of: the Pastor or Interim Pastor, the Moderator, or in the absence of the Moderator, the Vice-Moderator; the Clerk or in the Clerk's absence, the Assistant Clerk; the Treasurer or in the absence of the Treasurer; the Assistant Treasurer; the Chair of the Spirit Term; the Chair of the Service Team; the Chair of the Stewardship Team; and three Members-at-Large, all three of which will be responsible for the Church's Personnel and Nominating functions of the church. Each Church Assembly member has one vote.
 - b. Any Member of the Congregation may attend and participate in Church Assembly meetings but may not vote at Church Assembly meetings.
 - c. The Church Assembly will meet regularly and as necessary. The Church Assembly will:
 1. coordinate with the respective Team or Teams to initiate programs for the Church;
 2. guide and sanction the actions of the Teams and, when necessary, make recommendations to be considered by the Church;

3. approve decisions when deemed necessary;
4. direct the Church Clerk to call Annual and Special Meetings of the Church.
5. The Members-At-Large of the Church Assembly will:
 - a. recruit and present nominees for all Church Assembly and Team vacancies that are required to be filled during the year and at the Annual Meeting of the Church;
 - b. provide personnel-related support and guidance to the Pastor and all the paid staff;
 - c. review annually updated job descriptions, performance evaluations and salary and benefits recommendations concerning the paid employees of the Church from those Teams that oversee their employment, and forward those documents to the designated Trustees of the Stewardship Team;
 - d. conduct annual performance reviews of the Community Outreach Director and submit salary and benefits recommendations to the designated Trustees of the Stewardship Team; and
 - e. solicit and interview qualified candidates for the positions of Custodian, Housekeeper, and Office Administrator, and forward its recommendations to the appropriate Church entity for decision.

2. **The Spirit Team**

The Spirit Team is primarily charged with supporting the religious mission of the church and in so doing, provide direct support to the Pastor. The Spirit Team is responsible for the spiritual health and faith development of the Members, Friends, and visitors of the Church. The Spirit Team will provide for pulpit supply during any absence of the Pastor. The services offered, the music provided, and the religious education made available are all part of this Team's purview.

The Spirit Team will include four Deacons at all times. At the beginning of each new year, two members of that year's current Class will be specifically nominated and subsequently elected by the members of the Church to be Deacons for the duration of each Member's Spirit Team term.

The Deacons, in addition to their duties and responsibilities as Spirit Team members, will:

- a. assist the Pastor in sustaining the spiritual welfare and conducting the services of public worship, in the administration of the Sacraments, in preparation for Church services, in calling on Members and prospective Members and in the orientation of candidates for membership;
- b. receive requests for letters of transfer and letters of resignation, review and update Member and Inactive Member lists annually;
- c. provide support and guidance to the Pastor, and provide for pulpit supply during any absence of the Pastor;

- d. administer the Deacon's Fund and the Memorial Fund; and
- e. conduct an annual performance review of the Pastor and submit salary and benefit recommendations to the designated Trustees of the Stewardship Team.

3. **The Service Team**

The Service Team is charged with establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with schools, community and non-profit organizations – religious and otherwise – that share a common vision and complementary purpose with Second Congregational Church. The Service Team will:

- a. inform the Congregation of the role of Christian outreach in the life of the Church and the need to fulfill Christ's commission by promoting mission giving and participate in local programs meeting the needs of others outside the Church family;
- b. The Outreach members will monitor the John Andrews Outreach Grant fund and administer and maintain a grant recipient selection process awarding one or more grants annually until the fund is depleted. The Outreach members will also administer the Outreach fund and report the yearly distributions from both sources in the Annual Report;
- c. in addition to their duties and responsibilities as Service Team members, monitor the John Andrews Outreach Grant fund, administer and maintain a grant recipient selection process, award one or more grants, and monitor grant recipients.

The Service Team will include four Outreach members at all times. Two members of each year's Class will be specifically nominated and subsequently elected by the members of the Church to be Outreach members.

The Service Team will include two Church Delegates at all times. One member of each year's Class will be specifically nominated and subsequently elected by the Members of the Church to be Church Delegates.

4. **The Stewardship Team**

The Stewardship Team provides the support and resources necessary for the Spirit Team and the Service Team to accomplish their responsibilities and for the Church to carry out its mission.

The Stewardship Team will include four Trustees at all times. At the beginning of each new year, two members of that year's Class will be specifically nominated and subsequently elected by the members of the Church to be Trustees.

The designated Trustees of the Stewardship Team will be responsible for the care and maintenance of all property owned by the Church, including the general supervision of outside maintenance and repair contractors. The Trustees, with the oversight of the Treasurer, will have the authority to:

- a. buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any financial assets or real property having a value of less than \$10,000 (one exception: this restriction does not apply to the internal equity management of the investment portfolios, which will be managed by the prudent investor rule) and to accept, hold in trust and administer for the Church any funds or property that may be conveyed to the Church, acknowledging such in writing;
- b. hire qualified candidates for the position of Sexton and Office Administrator upon recommendation of the Members-at-Large, prepare and revise their job descriptions annually, conduct annual reviews of the performance of persons holding these positions and implement the recommendations of the Members-at-Large concerning salary and benefit provisions;
- c. manage the finances of the Church, with the exception of the Memorial Fund, the Deacons Fund, the John Andrews Fund, the Christian Outreach budget and designated special offerings;
- d. authorize the Treasurer to pay invoices, payrolls and other expenses;
- e. review and approve the budgets of the Teams, Assembly, and Church Office;
- f. prepare an annual budget for the Church, and submit it to the Church Assembly for review not less than two months prior to its scheduled approval at the Annual Meeting;
- g. arrange for an independent audit of the Treasurer's accounts at the end of each fiscal year; and
- h. when appropriate, plan and conduct a Capital Fund Campaign; and notify the Church Assembly of appointees to that activity.

The Stewardship Team will include one Financial Secretary at all times. At the beginning of each new year, one member of that year's Class will be specifically nominated and subsequently elected by the members of the Church to be the Financial Secretary.

The Financial Secretary will:

- a. Keep a permanent, confidential record of pledge payments and any special gifts from Members and Friends of the Church and issue quarterly statements to each pledged contributor.
- b. Take charge of all offerings and special collections, disburse them as directed by the Treasurer, provide the Treasurer with bank-deposit receipts, a list of the monies received each week and the purpose for which they were given; and give the Communion Envelopes to the Deacons and Special Collection Envelopes to the designated Service Team member responsible for Outreach.
- c. Assist the Treasurer in the preparation of the annual Stewardship Program.

At the beginning of each new year, one member of that year's Class will be specifically nominated and subsequently elected by the Members of the Church to be the Assistant Financial Secretary.

The Assistant Financial Secretary will perform the normal duties of the Financial Secretary in the absence or incapacity of the Financial Secretary.

The Stewardship Team will include four Pastoral Relations members at all times. At the beginning of each new year, two members of that year's Class will be specifically nominated and subsequently elected by the members of the Church to be Pastoral Relations members.

Two Stewardship members are selected by the Pastor for Pastoral Relations and two are appointed by the Church Assembly. The Pastoral Relations members seek to support the Pastor and maintain an open and healthy relationship between the Pastor and Members and Friends of the congregation. The Pastoral Relations members should be representative of the different demographic groups within the church. The Pastoral Relations members shall meet at least quarterly.

Article IV - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Operating Procedures for the Spirit Team, the Service Team and the Stewardship team

1. By no later than March 24, 2019 the Moderator will call and preside at one-time meetings of each Team to elect a chairperson and, if the Team so decides, other leaders for each Team. Thereafter, no later than thirty days after an Annual Meeting the incumbent chairperson of each Team will call and preside at a meeting to elect or re-elect officers. The newly designated chairpersons will provide the Office Administrator with the names of the current officers.
2. The Spirit Team, the Service Team, and the Stewardship Team will meet monthly at the same time with each Team meeting separately and then meeting jointly in a common meeting.

B. Church Services and Meetings

1. Worship

Worship services will be held on days and at times determined by the Pastor and the Spirit Team.

2. Meetings

- a. Special meetings of the Church will be called by the Clerk upon the Church Assembly receiving a written request from any five active Church Members who are not members of the Church Assembly. The Call will be read at the worship service on the Sunday before the day set for the meeting unless the purpose of the meeting is Dissolution or the Amending the Interim Constitution and / or Interim Bylaws, in which case Articles X and XI of the Interim Constitution and Article VI of the Interim Bylaws will determine the proper procedure for calling the meeting.
- b. The Annual Meeting of the Church will be held following the Church Service on the last Sunday in February, at which time annual reports will be presented, officers and members will be elected, and the operating budget will be approved. The business of the Meeting will be limited to what is specified in the Call.

- c. A quorum will consist of twenty-five percent of the Active Members of the Church at the time of the meeting.
- d. The vote of the majority of the Members present at any meeting of the Church will rule in all matters except when voting dissolution or amendments to the Interim Constitution.

3. Voting Procedures

- a. In preparation for voting at each meeting of the Church, the Moderator will appoint three tellers.
- b. The Church shall reach its decisions by vote of those Members on the Church's active membership roll present and voting. Unless otherwise required by these Interim By-Laws or otherwise voted at another authorized meeting, a majority of the votes cast is decisive.
- c. Voting on Dissolution or dismissal of the Pastor requires a written ballot.
- d. Voting at Spirit Team, Service Team and Stewardship Team meetings requires that fifty percent of the respective Teams' members be present.

C. Property and Financial Policies

1. Property

- a. The Church may, in its corporate name, sue or be sued. It may acquire by purchase, gift, bequest or other means, and own, hold, invest, re-invest or dispose of financial assets and property, real or personal, for such activities that the Church may undertake. It may also encumber, sell, assign, transfer and convey property for the general purposes of the Church. It may receive and hold in trust financial assets and both real and personal property, and invest and re-invest the same, and make any contracts for promoting the objects and purposes of the Church.
- b. Financial assets and property, real or personal, that are to be conveyed to the Church to be held in trust for permanent possession, whether by gift, bequest or grant, must first be accepted by the Trustees. Such gifts, bequests or grants will be acknowledged in writing to the giver.
- c. The Trustees, with the oversight of the Treasurer, will manage all financial assets and property, both real and personal, owned or held in trust by the Church.

2. Offerings and Donations

- a. The Church may accept contributions from individuals and organizations.
- b. A Stewardship Program will be offered to the Congregation annually for the support of the operating and outreach budgets of the Church.
- c. Designated special offerings may be requested for supporting of identified programs.
- d. Unless specifically restricted by a vote of the Church, loose offerings will be designated for use in the operating budget.

3. General and Special Funds

- a. The General Fund will be the fund into which all offerings and unrestricted contributions are deposited. The Treasurer will draw against this fund and, under the direction of the designated Trustees of the Stewardship Team, pay expenses and transfer monies to the Teams, Church Assembly, and Church Office according to their respective budgets.
- b. All disbursements made by the Treasurer or others will be paid with the purpose of the disbursement clearly indicated on the payment document. The document's information will be captured in the Treasurer's records. Records and bank statements must be audited prior to each annual meeting.
- c. Up to five percent (5%) of the three-year moving average of the December 31st investment account balances may be distributed for the support of Church operations and up to five percent (5%) of that value may be disbursed for support of the Outreach budget. Unused distributions remain in the investment account.
- d. The designated Trustees of the Stewardship Team will manage distributions from all funds formed from Restricted Bequests. The percentage of money to be made available annually from each of these funds will be recommended annually by the Trustees and approved at the Annual Meeting.
- e. The designated Trustees of the Stewardship Team administer the Deacons Fund and the Memorial Fund and submit, in summary, receipts and disbursements to the Annual Report.

4. Budget Restrictions

Total spending may not exceed the budget by more than five percent (5%) without the approval of the Members of the Church. The Trustees may move expenditures between line items, subject to the above limitation.

5. Debts

No loans may be contracted on behalf of the Church without the approval of the Members of the Church.

6. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Church will be the calendar year.

D. Calling a Pastor

1. When there is a vacancy in the pastorate, a Pastoral Search Committee will be formed, consisting of at least seven Members and two alternates. The Church Assembly will present a list of Search Committee candidates to the Congregation. The Members of the Church will elect members for the Pastoral Search Committee.
2. The Search Committee will act for the Church to seek and select a candidate for Pastor. The Committee will present to the membership the candidate it recommends. A favorable vote of the membership constitutes a Call.

Official Records

The official records of the Church will include the following:

1. A bound book to be kept by the Clerk in which are recorded baptisms, marriages, confirmations, and funerals conducted by ministers of the Church.

The book will be turned over to the Church Office Administrator when it is filled. An electronic database in which are recorded baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and funerals conducted by ministers of the Church will be maintained by the Office Administrator.

2. Minutes of official meetings of the Church and the Annual Meeting will be kept by the Office Administrator in open files.

Article V - Parliamentary Authority

The current edition of **Robert's Rules of Order** will govern procedures at all meetings of the Church and its Teams, except as they conflict with the Church's Interim Constitution or these Interim Bylaws or with any special Rules of Order that the Church may adopt.

Article VI - Amendments

These Interim Bylaws may be amended by a majority of the Members present at a meeting called for that purpose, the proposed amendment(s) being inserted in the Call of the meeting. No amendments may be proposed that conflict with the Interim Constitution. Proposed amendments to these By Laws must be presented in writing to the Church Members at least one month before the time of the meeting and announced by the Clerk on the two Sundays preceding the meeting.

Article VII - Effective Date

These Interim Bylaws are effective as of February 24, 2019.

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