

INTERIM CONSTITUTION

Second Congregational Church in Newcastle, Maine 04553
Voted and Approved on February 24, 2019

Article I **Name**

The name of this Church shall be The Second Congregational Church in Newcastle, United Church of Christ, hereafter called The Church.

Article II **Purpose**

We welcome all into the fellowship of the beloved community of worshippers gathered by God in Christ, as we walk together, nurturing our inward spiritual journey of faith and our outward spiritual journey by practicing love and justice in our communities and the world.

Article III **Covenant**

We join in covenant as a faithful people of God, committed to the ways of life revealed by Jesus Christ our Lord, and open to the guidance and comfort of the Holy Spirit. We join together to worship God, to study the Holy Scriptures and learn of God's will for all of God's creation, to care for one another in Christian community, and to serve neighbors both near and far. Grateful for the heritage of faith and the institution of the church given to us by those who have gone before us, we dedicate our time, talent and treasure to the life and mission of the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle. We ask God to support us and inspire us as we seek to fulfill this covenant.

Article IV **Doctrine**

This Church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. It believes in the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul, and the right of private judgment. We hold to the autonomy of the local church and its independence of all ecclesiastical control.

Article V **Sacraments**

This Church recognizes two Sacramental acts as specifically commended by Jesus Christ. These are: 1. Baptism; 2. Communion.

Article VI **Polity**

This Church is composed of persons who, believing in the triune God, accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and depending on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are organized for Christian worship, to learn from the Holy Scriptures, for the furtherance of Christian fellowship, and for the ongoing work of Christian witness.

All persons who are or shall become members of this Church of the United Church of Christ are thereby members of the United Church of Christ.

The government of this Church is vested in the body of the believers who compose it. This body exercises its right of control in all its affairs, subject in legal matters to its Articles of Incorporation, and to laws pertaining to not-for-profit or ecclesiastical corporations. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body. We reach out in fellowship to all Christian churches and other faith communities.

It recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among United Church of Christ Churches. This Church makes a commitment to be in covenant with the United Church of Christ and does so, in part, through our Church Delegates.

This Church is represented in the General Synod of the United Church of Christ by the delegates from the Conference to which this Church belongs.

Article VII Governing Body

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. The vote of a majority of members present at the meeting shall be the action of the Church in all matters with the exceptions of Dissolution (see Article X) and of changing this Constitution (see Article XI). A quorum shall consist of 25% of the active members of the church at the time of the vote.

Article VIII Pastor, Officers, Spirit Team, Service Team, and Stewardship Team

The Pastor, Officers, Spirit Team, Service Team, and Stewardship Team of this Church shall be:

1. The Pastor to be chosen and called by the Church when a vacancy occurs. When necessary, the appointment of an Interim Pastor may be recommended by the Church Assembly and approved by a vote of the Congregation.
2. The following officers, who shall be church Members, to be chosen at each Annual Meeting to serve for one year (or as otherwise defined herein), or until a successor shall be elected: Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer.
3. A Church Assembly, consisting of: the Pastor or Interim Pastor; Moderator or in the absence of the Moderator, the Vice Moderator; Clerk or in the Clerk's absence, the Assistant Clerk; the Treasurer or in the absence of the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer; a representative of the Spirit Term; a representative of the Service Team; a representative of the Stewardship Team; and three Members-at-Large.
4. The Spirit Team will consist of two six-person Classes for a total of twelve Church Members with each member elected at an Annual Meeting for a two-year term. A member of the Spirit Team may be elected for a second consecutive two-year term. The person completing two consecutive terms will be ineligible to occupy a position on the Spirit Team for one full year. Except for the Spirit Team's first year, each six-person Class will serve staggered two-year terms thus ensuring continuity within the Spirit Team. Six members will be elected for a one-year term for FY 2019 without the ability to serve a second year unless an initial member with a two-year term is unable to fulfil the two-year term.

5. The Service Team will consist of two six-person Classes for a total of twelve Church Members with each member elected at an Annual Meeting for a two-year term. A member of the Service Team may be elected for a second consecutive two-year term. The person completing two consecutive terms will be ineligible to occupy a position on the Service Team for one full year. Except for the Service Team's first year, each six-person Class will serve staggered two-year terms thus ensuring continuity within the Service Team. Six members will be elected for a one-year term for FY 2019 without the ability to serve a second year unless an initial member with a two-year term is unable to fulfil the two-year term.
6. The Stewardship Team will consist of two six-person Classes for a total of twelve Church Members with each member elected at an Annual Meeting for a two-year term. A member of the Stewardship Team may be elected for a second consecutive two-year term. The person completing two consecutive terms will be ineligible to occupy a position on the Stewardship Team for one full year. Except for the Stewardship's Team's first year, each six-person Class will serve staggered two-year terms thus ensuring continuity within the Service Team. Six members will be elected for a one-year term for FY 2019 without the ability to serve a second year unless an initial member with a two-year term is unable to fulfil the two-year term.

Article IX Rules and Procedures

The Church may adopt a set of By Laws such as it may deem necessary for the conduct of its business, consistent with these Articles.

Article X Dissolution

This Church (i.e. Corporation) may be dissolved at any duly called meeting of Members of this Church (i.e. Corporation), or at any special meeting called for that purpose by an affirmative vote of three fourths (3/4) of the active members voting, such vote being by written ballot, including provisions for properly prepared absentee ballots. The proposed dissolution must be presented by the Clerk to the membership in writing at least two months in advance. Upon such dissolution, the assets of the Church (i.e. Corporation) shall be distributed to charitable organizations which would then qualify under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and its regulations as they now exist or as they may hereafter be amended. Further, such dissolution procedures shall be in conformity with the laws of the State of Maine.

Article XI Amendments

These Articles may be amended, by written ballot, at any duly called Church meeting by a two thirds affirmative vote of the active members voting in person. Any proposed amendments must be presented by the Clerk to the membership in writing at least one month in advance and be presented to the Congregation on the two Sundays preceding such a meeting.

This document is effective as of 24 February 2019.

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