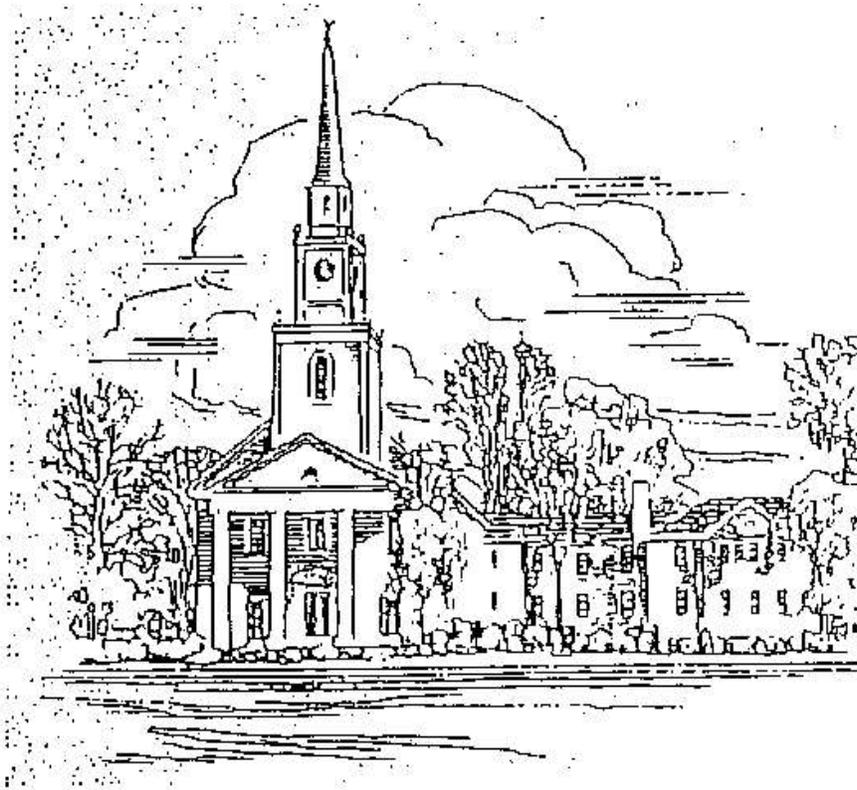


The First Church of Christ in Longmeadow

“Embraced by the love of God in Christ, our mission is to love and serve our world. We seek to grow in Christ’s family through our journey— inward toward faith and knowledge, outward toward love and justice— always rooted and nurtured in worship.”



BY-LAWS

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THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST IN LONGMEADOW

Adopted November 23, 1970. As amended January 28, 1976; March, 1979; January 28, 1981; January 25, 1984; January 27, 1988; January 22, 1989; January 21, 1990; March 3, 1991; March 11, 1992; March 2, 1994; March 4, 1998; February 8, 2015; May 22, 2016; and February 12, 2017.

ARTICLE I

Name

This Church shall be called “The First Church of Christ in Longmeadow” and shall be located in the Town of Longmeadow, County of Hampden and Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

The purpose of this Church is the maintenance of the public worship of God, the development of Christian character, the furtherance of the religious, moral and social interests of the community, and the advancement in the world of the Kingdom of God. It shall hold in the highest regard its relationship to the United Church of Christ, without modifying in any way its inherent autonomy as preserved in the Constitution thereof.

ARTICLE III

Faith and Covenant

(Amended February 12, 2017)

Section 1. All members shall have the right to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of their consciences, under the illumination of the Holy Spirit. The following statement of faith, therefore, is not a test but an expression of the spirit in which the Church interprets the Word of God.

Section 2. The Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ in Doxological Form.

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being,
create persons in your own image,
and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.
You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.
In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified
and risen Savior, You have come to us

and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the world to yourself.
You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be your servants in the service of others,
to proclaim the gospel to all the world
and resist the powers of evil,
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
your presence in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in your realm which has no end.
Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you.
Amen.

Section 3. We are united in striving to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures, and in our purpose to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known or to be made known to us.

We hold it to be the mission of the Church of Christ to proclaim the gospel to all people, exalting the worship of the one true God, and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and realization of one human family.

Depending, as did our parents, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world into the Kingdom of God; and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting.

ARTICLE IV

Membership

(Amended February 12, 2017)

Section 1. Any person desiring to unite with the Church may do so upon confession of Christian faith, having received baptism when not previously baptized.

Section 2: Admission Membership is initiated when people comes forward to the Pastor(s) or Deacons and express their desire to become members. Members become accepted to the church

through conversations with the Pastor (s) and affirming their baptismal vows in a liturgy of membership from the United Church of Christ Book of Worship in a worship service.

Section 3. Duties and Obligations Members are encouraged to participate in worship and other church activities, to support financially and in other ways the ministries and mission of the Church, according to their abilities, and to notify the Church office promptly of any change of address or other contact information.

Section 4. Rights Any Active Member may vote at a general Church meeting or at a ministry team meeting of which he/she is a member.

Section 5. Termination The continuance of membership shall be subject to the following:

- (a) If a member wishes to end or change his/her membership status, the church office should be notified. A letter of dismissal or a letter of membership transfer will be provided, if so requested.
- (b) Any Active Member of the church who does not comply with the provisions of section 3 of this article IV for a continuous period of three years, may be placed upon an Inactive Members list. Such a member shall be given at least one month's notice of the proposed action by letter mailed to the address of such member on the church records. The voting rights of all such Inactive Members shall be suspended. Inactive Members may become active by informing a pastor of their intent to meet the active membership qualification. Inactive Members shall not be counted as church members. Inactive Members are considered part of the wider church community and are welcome at any time to worship and events, may contact the Pastor(s) and Deacons for pastoral visits, baptisms, funerals and weddings at any time.

ARTICLE V

Pastors

(Amended February 12, 2017)

Section 1. The Church shall have a pastor or pastors who shall have in their charge the spiritual welfare of the Church and its members. They shall preach the Christian gospel, administer the sacraments, have in their care the stated services of public worship, give proper supervision to the activities of the Church in cooperation with the leaders and teams of the Church, and be pastors and teachers of the members in matters of their Christian faith. They shall be members ex-officio of all teams.

Section 2. Whenever a vacancy shall occur in the pastorate or there is an expectation that it will occur within a reasonable time, the Church shall create a Pastoral Search Team of such a number as it may decide, of whom one or more shall be under twenty-one years of age when selected. The Pastoral Search Team shall select its own chair and scribe. It shall connect with staff from the local Conference of the United Church of Christ to become informed concerning the process of seeking available pastors in good standing to serve the Church as a pastor, and for assistance to enable it to accomplish its purpose.

Section 3. A new pastor may be called as recommended by the Pastoral Search Team or otherwise, by a two-thirds vote in favor of the members of the Church present and voting, at a church meeting duly called for the purpose. Thereupon a call shall be extended to the pastor to whom it is addressed, containing the complete terms of the pastoral relationship.

Section 4. The acceptance of the call shall constitute the minister thus called a pastor of the Church under the terms thereof. The Church may arrange for such service of installation as it may determine, to be conducted under the supervision of the Deacons, and conforming to the autonomous relationship of the Church to the United Church of Christ.

Section 5. The Church may, at any time, by majority vote in favor of the members, present and voting, at any meeting of the Church called for the purpose, request the resignation of a pastor, to be effective sixty days from such vote, or as otherwise agreed upon between a pastor and the Church and contained in his or her call or, some supplementary instrument. If the resignation is not received the Church may, at a meeting duly called for the purpose, by a majority vote as aforesaid, dismiss a pastor forthwith and declare the pulpit vacant.

Section 6. A pastor may resign voluntarily by letter to the Clerk of the Church, effective sixty days from receipt thereof by the Clerk, or as otherwise agreed upon between a pastor and the Church, and contained in his or her call, or in some supplementary instrument.

Section 7. The call of any person to be a pastor of the Church shall be for an indefinite term, subject to the prior provisions of the article.

Section 8. The Church may have one or more associate pastors. They shall share in the duties of the senior pastor as determined with the pastor and the Leadership of the Church. The associate(s) may assume all pastoral duties in the absence or disability of the pastor, until the Church may determine otherwise.

ARTICLE VI

Officers

(Amended February 8, 2015)

Section 1: Authority: The Church is composed of those persons who have become members by means specified in Article IV Membership. The government of the Church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject to the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Church shall elect a Leadership Team which shall be accountable to the Church to promote and coordinate the life and ministry of the Church, and for the execution of these bylaws.

Section 2: Duties of the Leadership Team: The Leadership Team shall coordinate and promote the entire program of the Church, clarify the overall mission of the Church, and endeavor to strengthen the covenantal relationship which unites the members of the Church. It shall be structured in such a way as to give proper attention to six central ministries of the Church:

worship, spiritual life, congregational life, mission in the world, community outreach, and stewardship of resources. It shall recommend an annual budget to the Church. The Leadership Team may act on behalf of the Church in any matter where the Church has taken no action to the contrary, and where there is no requirement in these bylaws that action shall be taken by the Church. The Leadership team shall make its work, plans, and meeting times known to the Church.

Section 3: Officers: The Leadership Team shall consist of the officers of the Church. The officers, all of whom shall be members of the Church, shall be a Moderator, a Clerk, a Treasurer, a Past Moderator, a Liaison for Worship, a Liaison for Spiritual Life, a Liaison for Congregational Life, a Liaison for Mission in the World, a Liaison for Community Outreach, a Liaison for Stewardship of Resources, and three Members-at-Large. A Vice Moderator may also be elected as an officer of the church. Two persons may be elected to share the responsibilities of one Liaison office, but such persons shall share one vote. The Pastor(s) shall be members of the Leadership Team, with voice but not vote.

Section 4: Organization of Teams and Ministries: In order to foster a strong culture of self-government, continuity of leadership, and development of discipleship among the members of the Church, the Leadership Team shall encourage members of the congregation to participate in the ministries of the Church through membership in teams.

Section 5: Elections: The Church shall elect the officers named in Section 3, an Assistant Treasurer, and at least nine stewards. They shall be chosen by ballot at each Annual Meeting to serve for one year and until their successors are elected and qualified by acceptance. There shall be a Leadership Development and Nomination Team, which shall prepare a report in the form of a printed ballot and submit the same to the Annual Meeting of the Church. It shall present to the Leadership Team nominees for the filling of vacancies between annual meetings in the elected positions of the Church. Persons so elected shall hold office until the close of the next Annual Meeting of the Church or until their successors are chosen at a prior meeting of the Church and have qualified by acceptance.

Section 6: Policies and Procedures: Policies and Procedures as stated in Appendix 1 to these bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Leadership Team. The Church shall be notified of any such amendments.

Section 7: Moderator: The Moderator shall preside at all annual and special meetings of the Church, oversee the annual implementation of the planning process, and perform such other duties as may be enumerated herein or voted by the Church.

Section 8: Clerk: The Clerk shall keep a complete record of all annual and special meetings of the Church and also of the Leadership Team. The Clerk shall cause to be kept a register of the names of the members of the Church with the date of their admission and dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. He or she shall cause all persons to be notified of their election or appointment. The Clerk shall give notice of all meetings where notice is required by the bylaws.

Section 9: Treasurer: The Treasurer shall have charge of all the monies belonging to the Church and shall perform all the duties usually incident to that office. He or she shall make disbursements

upon the approval of the Investment and Finance Team, except as is otherwise provided in these bylaws. The Treasurer shall keep separate accounts of monies received for benevolences, the support of public worship and from all church organizations, seeing to it that payments from such funds are properly made. The Treasurer shall make an annual report showing receipts and expenditures, duly reviewed, and such other reports as may be required of him or her from time to time by the Leadership Team or the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer shall give bond for the faithful performance of his duties in the amount and in the form required by the Church.

Section 10: Ministry Liaisons: The Ministry Liaisons named in Section 2 shall encourage communication and collaboration among teams in their ministry, communicate information and questions to the Leadership Team from their ministry, support new initiatives, and encourage development of leadership and gifts of the members of their ministry.

Section 11: Members-at-Large: The Members-At-Large shall represent the Church membership as a whole.

Section 12: Past Moderator: The Past Moderator shall be elected from those persons who have previously served as Moderator of the Church.

Section 13: Assistant Treasurer: The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in such manner as the Treasurer may direct and shall perform the duties of the Treasurer in the absence of the latter. The Assistant Treasurer shall give bond for the faithful performance of his or her duties in the amount and in the form required by the Church.

Section 14: Vice Moderator: The Church may elect a Vice Moderator who shall be available to consult with the Moderator on all church issues, and shall engage in preparation to become the next Moderator.

Section 15: Church Council: References throughout these bylaws to the Church Council shall be deemed to refer to the Leadership Team.

ARTICLE VII

Duties and Organization of Ministries

(Amended February 8, 2015)

Section 1: Stewardship of Resources Ministry: There shall be a Stewardship of Resources Ministry, the members of which shall be empowered, entrusted, and authorized to collaborate with the Pastor(s) to manage the property and financial assets of the Church, encourage the development of gifts, leadership, and stewardship within the Church and the congregation, and prepare an Annual Budget based upon the recommendations of the Leadership Team. It shall include members of the Investment and Finance Team, the Personnel Team, and the Property Team, who shall be stewards of the Church's property and funds, and of the welfare and just relationship of the Church with its Pastor(s) and staff. Therefore they shall be elected as stewards for one year terms by the Church. The Stewardship of Resources Ministry shall designate a Stewardship Team and a Leadership Development and Nominations Team, and Financial Secretaries.

(a) **The Personnel Team** shall have responsibility for negotiation of contracts with the Pastor(s) and all persons hired or engaged as staff by the Church, in the absence of any specific vote to the contrary by the Church. The Pastor(s) shall be called in accordance with Article V of these bylaws. It shall include at least three members of the Church elected as stewards.

(b) **The Investment and Finance Team** shall have responsibility for managing the investments of the Church, selection of investment managers, and preparation of the annual budget based upon recommendations from the Leadership Team. Said budget, following approval by the Leadership Team, shall be presented to the Annual Meeting of the Church for vote by the Church. The Investment and Finance Team shall have the power to incur temporary indebtedness to a reasonable amount for the purpose of taking care of current expenses, with approval from the Leadership Team. It shall include the Treasurer and at least three members of the Church elected as stewards.

(c) **The Property Team** shall have responsibility for the proper care of all property of the Church. It shall include at least three members of the Church elected as stewards.

(d) **The Stewardship Team** shall carry on a program to raise funds to meet the current and benevolent expenses of the church and to strengthen the stewardship of members.

(e) **The Leadership Development and Nomination Team** shall encourage members of the Church and the congregation to develop their gifts for leadership and shall prepare for elections as required in Article VI Section 5.

(f) **Financial Secretaries:** The Stewardship of Resources Ministry shall designate at least two Financial Secretaries who shall cause all offerings taken at services of worship to be deposited as the Investment and Finance Team may direct.

(g) **Board of Trustees:** Where these bylaws require action by the Board of Trustees, a joint meeting of the Treasurer, the Property Team, the Personnel Team, and the Finance and Investment Team shall constitute a meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2: Worship Ministry: There shall be a Worship Ministry, including at least nine Deacons. The Worship Ministry shall be empowered, entrusted and authorized to advise, assist, and collaborate with the Pastor(s) in establishing the form and structure of services of worship and to take charge of the religious services of the Church in the absence of the Pastor(s). Deacons, in addition, will prepare, serve and assist with communion and baptism, and greet and welcome people to services. The Worship Ministry may designate ministry teams to encourage the development and use of music and other liturgical arts, to adorn the sanctuary, to provide for the presentation and distribution of flowers, and such other teams as may support worship. It shall cause to be scheduled Ushers, Liturgists and other persons necessary for the conduct of worship, and inform such persons of their responsibilities.

Section 3: Spiritual Life Ministry: There shall be a Spiritual Life Ministry, the members of which shall be empowered, entrusted and authorized to collaborate with the Pastor(s) to encourage

and develop the spiritual life of the Church and the congregation. The Spiritual Life Ministry may designate teams to encourage prayer and spiritual growth, such as prayer circles, Bible study, children's ministries, confirmation, youth ministries, women's ministries, intergenerational ministries, internet ministries, adult education, use of the church library, and such other teams as may support spiritual life.

Section 4: Congregational Life Ministry: There shall be a Congregational Life Ministry, the members of which shall be empowered, entrusted, and authorized to collaborate with the Pastor(s) to encourage hospitality, fellowship, and the giving of care and comfort among members of the Church and the congregation. It may designate ministry teams to plan and carry out fellowship programs and special events, new member welcoming and inclusion programs, visitation of the sick and homebound, encouragement of covenant within the congregation, the preparation of meals of fellowship, the welfare of pastors, and such other teams as shall support congregational life.

(a) **Women's Benevolent Society:** There shall be a Women's Benevolent Society, the leaders of which shall be members of the Congregational Life Ministry. The Society shall promote the missionary activities and the social and spiritual life of women of the Church. It may maintain its own officers and governing documents.

(b) **Pastoral Relations Team:** The Congregational Life Ministry shall designate, with the consent of the Pastor(s), a Pastoral Relations Team to care for the welfare of the Pastor(s) and the covenantal relationships of the congregation.

Section 5: Mission in the World Ministry: There shall be a Mission in the World Ministry, the members of which shall be empowered, entrusted, and authorized to collaborate with the Pastor(s) in the development of programs of service, compassion, justice, and financial assistance for the wider community and the world. The Mission in the World Ministry may designate teams to raise funds for donation to other organizations, to raise awareness of justice issues and other social concerns, to work alongside other organizations, and such other teams as shall encourage mission in the world.

(a) **Mission Team:** The Mission in the World Ministry shall designate a Mission Team which shall seek to identify mission needs and social concerns with which the Church can engage, and to support organizations which strive to meet these needs with talents, time, and treasure.

Section 6: Community Outreach Ministry: There shall be a Community Outreach Ministry, the members of which shall be empowered, entrusted, and authorized to collaborate with the Pastor(s) to partner with the wider community for ecumenical and interfaith connections, internet information distribution, development of programs to inform the community about the programs of the Church, programs to meet needs of the community, and programs to educate the Church about the community. It may designate a Church Historian or Church History Team. It may designate such other teams as will fulfill the mission of community outreach.

(a) **Delegates:** The Community Outreach Ministry shall designate Delegates to represent the Church in other settings of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE VIII

Permanent Funds

(Amended May 22, 2016)

Five Permanent Funds: The Church, in its endeavors to carry out its purposes in the spirit of its Faith and Covenant, shall seek to establish and maintain one permanent unrestricted fund for general operating budgeted purposes, three permanent restricted funds for building maintenance, mission outreach and First Church programming, and one unrestricted permanent fund for the receipt and disbursement of memorial contributions, more fully described in Articles VIII A, VIII B, VIII C, VIII D, and VIII E. There may be established other special endowment funds as may be required by will or gift, or as designated by the Leadership Team or Church membership. Appropriate funds may be combined into one endowment account for investment purposes as determined by the Investment and Finance Team and the Treasurer, but records and accountings of such merged funds, and all funds, must be available for the Treasurer, the Investment and Finance and Leadership teams, the church membership and accountant review.

Article VIII A: Unrestricted Permanent Endowment Fund: It is the primary purpose of this fund to provide cash flow for general operating expenses as voted on at the Church Annual Meeting when the budget is passed. No payment of principal from this unrestricted fund may be made except upon two-thirds vote in favor thereof by the members present and voting at a meeting of the Church, duly called and held under the provisions of these By-laws. The Church Annual Meeting, at which a quorum is present and voting and accepting the annual budget as presented, shall constitute the meeting for the two-thirds vote requirement as it relates to the budget. Further payments above that voted budget amount from principal will require a separate meeting and two-thirds vote by the members present.

Article VIII B: Restricted Permanent Building and Maintenance Fund: It is the primary purpose of this fund to provide money for expenditures which do not recur annually, or to meet emergencies having to do with the Church buildings, their improvement, preservation and maintenance in ways not provided for in the Annual Budget or otherwise. No payment of principal from this restricted fund may be made except upon two-thirds vote in favor thereof by the members present and voting at a meeting of the Church, duly called and held under the provisions of these By-laws. Income earned and accumulated from this fund may be used in its entirety for off-budget contingencies or building projects upon a two-thirds favorable vote by the members of the Leadership Team present and voting and with the approval of the Investment and Finance Team.

Article VIII C: Restricted Permanent Mission Fund: It is the primary purpose of this fund to provide money for home and/or foreign mission projects as understood historically, or to meet human catastrophic needs wherever such needs be found, above the mission funds typically provided for in the Annual Budget or otherwise. No payment of principal from this restricted fund may be made except upon two-thirds vote in favor thereof by the members present and voting at a meeting of the Church, duly called and held under the provisions of these By-laws. Income earned and accumulated from this fund may be used in its entirety for off-budget mission projects by a two-thirds favorable vote of the Mission and Leadership Teams, or the Church membership.

Article VIII D: Restricted Permanent People and Programs Fund: It is the primary purpose of this fund to promote the programs of the Church in service of its members and the First Church of Christ in Longmeadow community. The Leadership Team shall make recommendations from time to time concerning the use of this fund most likely after review of applications arising from the ministry circles or teams within. Payments from the accumulated income of this fund may be made upon the vote in favor of two-thirds of the members of the Leadership Team present at a meeting duly held, or upon vote in favor of a majority of the members of the Church, present and voting, at a meeting duly held. No payment of principal from this restricted fund may be made except upon two-thirds vote in favor thereof by the members present and voting at a meeting of the Church, duly called and held under the provisions of these By-laws.

Article VIII E: Unrestricted Permanent Memorial Fund: It is the purpose of this fund to provide a vehicle to receive smaller contributions from the Church membership and the wider community made in memory of a friend or loved one at the time of a recognition ceremony or funeral. The fund is not to be added to any merged investment account as both principal and income in its entirety are to be used, from time to time, for the purchase or some specific article or to finance some specific project of the Church, perhaps in the name of the friend or loved one, that is off budget, as determined by the Memorial Committee. The fund must be accounted for separately for audit and membership review at least annually. The Memorial Committee shall be comprised of a Pastor, who would be Chairperson, plus the Liaison or a representative from the Stewardship of Resources Ministry and the Congregational Life Ministry circles.

ARTICLE IX

Meetings

(Amended February 12, 2017)

Section 1. The services of worship shall be held at stated times on Sunday and at such other times as determined by the pastor(s) with the Worship Team, in consultation and knowledge of the Deacons and Leadership Team.

Communion shall be celebrated as often as determined by the above groups, at least monthly.

Section 2. The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held on the Second Sunday of February unless otherwise determined by the Church Leadership Team, at which time the annual reports shall be presented, officers and Leadership Team members elected, and such other business transacted as specified in these By-Laws.

Section 4. Annual and any special meetings shall be called with prior notice through all the standard communications of the church, such as monthly newsletter, electronic messaging, and announcements at church worship, making best effort to reach all members. The call to the Annual Meeting shall be read at worship by the Clerk with at least two weeks' notice, and special meetings with at least one weeks' notice.

Section 5. At any annual or special meeting, ten percent of Active Members, as determined by the Clerk, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of church business and voting.

Section 6. At annual or special meetings in the absence of the Moderator, any member of the church Leadership Team or, if none present, any voting member of the church shall call the meeting to order and preside until a moderator pro-tem is chosen.

ARTICLE X

Section 1. The fiscal year of the Church shall run from January 1 through December 31 of each year.

ARTICLE XI

Actions Requiring More Than A Majority Vote

Section 1. In addition to other requirements set forth in these By-Laws, no real property owned by the Church, or interest therein, shall be conveyed, transferred, or released except upon a two-thirds vote in favor thereof of the members, present and voting, adopted at a meeting of the Church, duly called and held under the provisions of these By-Laws. This section shall apply to the giving of a mortgage to secure sums borrowed by the Church, or other obligation thereof.

Section 2. The Church shall not join in any union with any other church or group of churches upon a local, district, state, national, or international basis; or waive, release or modify in any particular its autonomy and the rights enumerated in Section 21 of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ, as now provided therein, whether enjoyed under said constitution or otherwise, nor convey, transfer, or release its interest in the real property located on Longmeadow and Williams Streets, and including the old parsonage property, owned by the Church at the adoption of this section, except upon a two-thirds vote in favor thereof of the members, present and voting, adopted at a meeting of the Church, duly called and held under the provisions of these By-Laws; and, provided further, any such affirmative vote shall be ratified by a similar two-thirds vote at a succeeding meeting of the Church duly called, and held at least two months after the final adjournment of the prior meeting, notice of such succeeding meeting, in addition to other requirements of these By-Laws, being sent to all members of the Church, whether or not eligible to vote, at the last address of such members on the records of the clerk, at least two weeks prior to the holding of such meeting, with at least one publication thereof in the public press at least two weeks prior to the holding of such meeting. This section shall not apply to the giving of a mortgage to secure sums borrowed for operating expenses, to erect new buildings, to add to, alter, or repair existing buildings, but shall apply to the giving of a mortgage for any other purpose.

ARTICLE XII

Section 1. These By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any annual or special meeting of the Church provided notice of the proposed amendment is stated in the call of meeting.

Section 2. The provisions of Section 2 of Article XI, and of this Section 2, may be amended only by a two-thirds vote of the members, present and voting, at two successive meetings of the Church, duly called and held as provided in said Section 2 of Article XI for action under said Section 2.

Appendix 1: Policies and Procedures (Added February 8, 2015)

Section 1: Duties and Organizations of Teams and Ministries:

(a) Membership of Teams: “Team” shall refer to any ministry team, organization, board, committee, society, or fellowship authorized to conduct activity on behalf of the Church. Teams whose purpose is closely related to a particular mission shall collaborate and communicate regularly. A Ministry Liaison, as enumerated in Article VI Section 2, shall be a resource for teams in each Ministry. Any person who wishes to act in covenant with the members of the Church may be a member of a team. Any person or member may be a member of multiple teams and multiple ministries. Team members shall invite and encourage new membership in their teams, in order to promote the development of discipleship, fellowship, service, and spiritual growth. They may request the assistance of the Leadership Development and Nomination Team and the church staff in order to identify persons who might feel called to participate in their team.

(b) Authorization of Teams: The Leadership Team shall receive and act upon requests for authorization of teams and assign each team to a Ministry. The Leadership Team may designate and authorize special teams to carry out specific tasks relevant to the overall mission of the Church. The Pastor(s) may also request special teams to be authorized and recognized by the Leadership Team. Said special teams shall collaborate directly with the Pastor(s) and/or the Leadership Team. Any group of persons within the Church which shall desire to be recognized as a team shall apply for approval and recognition as such by the Leadership Team. Each team shall choose its own leadership. Any team may speak or act in its own name and behalf provided it shall not purport to bind the Church or to reflect its position unless authorized by the Church to do so. The Leadership Team may remove authorization from a team which is inactive or which does not work to promote the overall mission of the Church.

(c) Accountability of Teams: Each team shall collaborate with the Leadership Team or with the Ministry to which it has been assigned. Each team shall designate a contact person, who shall inform the Ministry Liaison concerning the time and place of planned meetings, plans for activities, results of meetings and activities, and current membership. Each team shall collaborate with other teams in its ministry and other ministries as appropriate, work for a purpose in keeping with the overall vision of the church, and support its members on their spiritual journeys. The Liaisons shall be accountable to the teams within their ministry as described in Article VI Section 13.

(d) Accountability of Ministries: Each Ministry shall prepare a list of all teams and members to be recognized and authorized at the Annual Meeting of the Church and shall prepare a report of its activities and programs during the previous year. Each ministry may develop such teams as will fulfill its mission.

(e) Use and Acquisition of Funds by Teams: With the exception of the Mission Team, teams receiving funds allocated from the annual budget have authority to spend the funds in accord with the purpose of the team. Teams may request additional funds from established funds of the church through their Liaison. Said request shall be subject to the approval of the Leadership Team and to availability of funds as determined by the Investment and Finance Team. Actions of the Leadership Team which involve the expenditure of non-budgeted money shall require the assent of the Investment and Finance Team. Teams which raise their own money, and/or have their own accounts, may spend that money at their own discretion, being mindful of the church's guiding principles, and shall inform the Treasurer of the existence and amounts of such accounts and funds. The scheduling of team fundraising initiatives must be approved by the Leadership Team in order to avoid excessive overlap of such efforts. The expenditure of any substantial non-budgeted bequest by any church organization shall require the approval of the Leadership Team before expenditure of the funds.

(f) Mission Team financial procedures: The Mission Team shall be authorized to recommend disbursement of the funds allocated for mission in the annual budget to organizations and special projects which extend the Church's ministry to the wider community. Said disbursements shall require a majority vote of those Mission Team members who are members of the Church, and shall be forwarded to the Liaison for Mission in the World for payment approval. The Mission Team may also recommend use of Mission Endowment funds to be allocated to special projects. Such recommendations shall require approval by the Investment and Finance Team to ensure that adequate funds exist and that the request represents an appropriate use of Mission Endowment funds. Final approval of such requests shall be made by the Leadership Team.

Section 2: Procedures of the Leadership Team

(a) Communication: The Leadership Team shall frequently offer meetings at a time convenient for the congregation at which matters under consideration are discussed, information is shared, and the opinions of members are heard. The Leadership Team shall also make information about its work and plans available through the church website and through print media.

(b) Meetings of the Leadership Team: At all meetings of the Leadership Team, seven members shall constitute a quorum. The Moderator shall preside at meetings of the Leadership team. The Clerk of the Church shall be Clerk of the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team shall meet no fewer than ten times each year and at times determined by vote of the Leadership Team or by the Moderator. Special meeting shall be called upon request of the Pastor(s), the Moderator, or any three members of the Leadership Team. The time and place of regularly scheduled meetings shall be published. Special meetings may be called with 24 hours notice. In the absence of the Moderator some member of the Leadership Team shall call a meeting to order and preside until a Moderator Pro-Tem is chosen. Any member of the Church may attend a meeting of the Leadership Team, with voice but not vote. The Leadership Team may meet in executive session when confidentiality is appropriate.

(c) Liaisons: Each Liaison shall conduct a meeting of all persons in their ministry at least twice a year for the purpose of sharing each team's plans and examining how the ministry collectively can maximize its positive impact on the Church's overall vision. The Liaisons shall receive reports from teams in their ministry and communicate said reports to the Leadership Team.

They shall prepare a report for the Annual Meeting of the Church summarizing the membership, programs, activities, and plans undertaken by teams in their ministry.

Section 3: Investment and Finance Procedures

(a) Accounting Review: The Investment and Finance Team including the Treasurer shall hire or appoint a Certified Public Accountant to review the financial procedures and accounts of the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer prior to the Annual Meeting of the Church.

(b) Proper Allocation of Funds: The Investment and Finance Team shall assure that restrictions on the use of restricted funds and the intended use restrictions of the unrestricted funds of the Church are monitored, accounted for, maintained and reported to the Church annually. The Team shall monitor and oversee the allocation of all funds to ensure that they will be allocated based on intent and restrictions, and shall provide the Church an overview of all funds in order to encourage the most effective collaborative and holistic use of those funds to meet the missional needs of the Church.

(c) Investment of Funds: The Investment and Finance Team shall have full power to invest, reinvest, and change the form of investment of the permanent and special funds of the Church, whether the same be acquired by will, gift, vote of the Church, or otherwise, except to the extent that such will, gift, vote, or other manner of acquisition may provide otherwise. Said Investment and Finance Team, with the approval of the Leadership Team, may execute an agency agreement or a revocable trust agreement with any bank in the city of Springfield, Massachusetts, having a trust department, for the purpose of assisting in the investment of the permanent funds of the Church, the right to withdraw any of said principal and to the income, less the expenses incurred in the maintenance of said trust, being included therein, and deposit any of said funds with said bank under said agency or revocable trust agreement.

(d) Revocation of agency agreements: Said agency agreement and said trust agreement may be revoked by the Investment and Finance Team, or by the Leadership Team, or by vote of the Church adopted at a meeting duly called and held under the provisions of these bylaws. Such funds and any securities purchased therewith, subject to the provisions of the two next preceding sentences, shall remain in the hands of the Treasurer, subject to the direction of said Investment and Finance Team, and payments from income shall be made therefrom as is provided in these bylaws and procedures, or in the terms of the will, gift, vote, or other provision made in connection with the acquisition of the Fund. No payment from principal shall be made except upon vote of the Church as provided in Article VIII-A and Article VIII-B or as authorized by the terms of the will, gift, vote, or other provision made in connection with the acquisition of the fund.

Section 4: Personnel Procedures: In order to hire or engage staff, the Personnel Team shall receive a recommendation from a Search Committee appointed by the Moderator with the consent of the Leadership Team. Contracts with Pastors or staff shall be executed on behalf of the Church jointly by the Moderator and the Liaison for Stewardship of Resources. The Personnel Team shall maintain personnel policies, and shall publish said policies. The Team shall also develop and execute an annual evaluation process for the Pastor(s) and shall ensure that the Senior Pastor conducts evaluations of the staff.

Section 5: Covenantal Relationships Procedures: The Pastoral Relations Teams shall meet at least quarterly with the Pastor(s). Should a matter of discord arise between a Church member and a Pastor or between Pastors, the member and/or Pastor(s) shall meet with the Pastoral Relations Team to prayerfully discuss and discern the issue. If further discernment is required, the matter shall be brought to the Leadership Team. Consultation with the Hampden Association of the United Church of Christ may be undertaken at any time.

Section 6: Delegates Procedures: The Delegates Team shall represent the Church at meetings of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ, the Hampden Association of the United Church of Christ, and the Greater Springfield Council of Churches. The Delegates shall inform the Church concerning the matters expected to be acted upon at the meetings at which they intend to represent the Church, and shall report the action taken at such meetings. Any delegate may speak or act in his or her own name and behalf provided he or she shall not purport to bind the Church or to reflect its position unless authorized by the Church to do so. Delegates shall vote as the Church shall have directed them on any matter on which the Church has taken a vote at a duly called annual or special meeting.

Appendix 2: Behavioral Covenant (Added May 22, 2016)

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, UCC, LONGMEADOW, MA BEHAVIORAL COVENANT

*“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.
Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another” (John 13:34 NRSV)*

We covenant to use the teachings of Christ as our model in our relationships with one another, aspiring to emulate Him in order to create a respectful, compassionate and prayerful church community.

With the help of God, we affirm our commitment to the following behaviors:

- To treat all people as we wish to be treated ourselves.
- To honor the differences of opinions, and encourage the thoughtful expression of concerns and questions, as we celebrate the diversity of our spiritual family.
- To create a safe environment by upholding the dignity of each person.
- To communicate with others in a direct, honest, timely and sensitive manner even though we may have different understandings and views.
- To listen respectfully with the goal of deep understanding.
- To seek God’s guidance, grace and direction through self-reflection and prayer.

- To create a community of reconciliation through forgiveness of others and ourselves.
- To honor this covenant, we are accountable to God, each other, and ourselves.

(Approved by church council and congregation members on November 2, 2014)