



First Congregational Church of Fair Haven, UCC
By-laws 2026

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF FAIR HAVEN UCC

Founded 1803 - By-laws Adopted October 16, 1939

Revised as of 10/2000, 6/2001, 11/2009, 11/2011, 11/2012, 11/2013, 2/2014,
11/5/17, 11/8/20, .11/13/22

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this church shall be the First Congregational Church of Fair Haven, United Church of Christ, Inc

ARTICLE II. COVENANT

The object of this church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of sharing in the worship of God, and in making God's will dominant in the lives of all people, individually and collectively, especially as that will is set forth in the life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE III. GOVERNMENT

The church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head, and finds in the Holy Scriptures, interpreted by the Holy Spirit through reason, faith and conscience, its guidance in matters of faith and discipline. The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject in legal matters to the Articles of Incorporation granted it by the State of Vermont. While the church is not subordinate to any ecclesiastical authority, it accepts the obligations of mutual ~~C~~council, and co-operation involved in the fellowship of the United Church of Christ, and pledges itself to share its common aims and work.

ARTICLE IV. FAITH

This church recognizes the Bible as the sufficient rule of faith and practice and holds that living in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ is the true test of fellowship. Each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of ~~his or her~~ **their** own conscience, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The following statement of faith, therefore, expresses the spirit in which the church interprets the Word of God.

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

Additions = **Bold & Underlined**

Deletions = ~~Strikethrough~~

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 Lord,
You have come to us and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.
You bestow upon us the Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ,

binding in faithful covenant people of all ages, tongues and races.
You call us into your church to accept the cost and joys 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 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 power, glory and honor be unto you.
AMEN.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

A. Membership

Members will be received into this Church when they publicly accept the Purpose (Article II) of this Church, through either:

- (1) Confirmation of faith or baptism
- (2) Letter of transfer from another Church
- (3) Reaffirmation of their faith

B. Associate Membership

A person who wishes to participate in the life of this Church while maintaining membership in another Church may be received as an associate member by the same process that regular active members are received. Associate members shall

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have all the rights and duties of regular members, except the right to a letter of transfer to another Church.

C. Responsibility

It shall be the continuing responsibility of all members to strive to uphold the Covenant of the Church, to help in the work of the Church, and to contribute to the Church through their time, talent, financial support, and attending business meetings.

D. Inactive Members

The Board of Deacons shall attempt to contact members who, for a period of one year have not attended Church services, **been part of a board, committee or church authorized group**, communicated with the Church, nor contributed to its support. ~~shall be contacted by a member of the Deacons Board and encouraged~~ **The Deacons will encourage them** to become active in the Church. ~~After an additional year, If there is no reply, or no participation~~ they shall be considered to be inactive **and have no voting rights.** ~~and will~~ **They will** have their names moved from the active **member** to the inactive membership list **inactive member** by the Deacons, after consultation with the Pastor and the Church Council. Inactive members may be restored to active status by request of the Deacons, Pastor **or Church Council.**

E. Friends of the Church

It is recognized that from time-to-time individuals may choose to become affiliated with the Church but for some reason may not wish to join. Such Friends of the Church who are active in the Church may **not** serve on any Board **nor as an Officer of the Church, as an Auditor, nor will they have voting powers.** ~~..but They shall not serve as the chair of on any of the Boards. Friends of the Church may participate in all aspects of the Church life, but may not serve as an Officer of the Church, as an Auditor, nor will they have voting powers. (and They shall not be counted as part of the quorum) at duly warned meetings of the Congregation.~~

F. Withdrawal of Membership

A member may be released from ~~his or her~~ **their** covenant with this Church by transfer to another Church or by written request to the Deacons or Pastor.

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ARTICLE VI - HIRING AND TERMINATION OF A PASTOR

A. Hiring

When the office of Pastor becomes vacant, the Church Council shall (1) arrange for an Interim Pastor to serve until a Settled Pastor is called, and (2) appoint a Pastoral Search Committee consisting of at least five, but not more than seven, members from a broad spectrum of the active Church membership. With the help of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ, the Pastoral Search Committee shall create a Church profile, review the profile of the possible candidates and interview them to determine their capacity to serve as Pastor of this Church. When the Committee has agreed on a single candidate, and outlined the terms of call with the candidate, the candidate must then be ratified by an affirmative two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Church membership which are in attendance at a duly warned special meeting of the Congregation. **(No absentee ballots will be taken on this matter.)**

B. Termination of Call Agreement

The relationship of the Pastor may be agreeably dissolved on 60 days' notice by either the Pastor's accepted written resignation or by mutual agreement. In the event of conflict or dissatisfaction on the part of either the Pastor or the Church membership, termination of the terms of call may be considered with consultation with an executive staff member of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ. Termination of call must be ratified by an affirmative two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Church membership in attendance at a warned special meeting of the Congregation. **(No absentee ballots will be taken on this matter.)**

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

A. Worship

Worship services shall be held at given hours as defined by the Church Council except when temporarily suspended by the Moderator or Deacons in consultation with the Pastor.

B. Meetings General Provisions

Robert's Rules of Order (latest addition) **or an alternative** shall govern all warned meetings of the congregation

Quorum Requirements

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~~Twenty active members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and a majority vote shall carry except when specified.~~

A. Congregational Meetings

1. Annual Meeting

A quorum for the Annual Meeting of the Church shall consist of no fewer than twenty (20) active voting members of the congregation.

The affirmative vote of a majority of members present/virtually at a meeting at which a quorum exists shall be required for the adoption of any motion, unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws.

2. Special Meetings

A quorum for any duly called Special Meeting of the congregation shall likewise consist of no fewer than twenty (20) active voting members.

No official business shall be conducted without a quorum present/virtual.

B. Board of Trustees

A quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Trustees shall consist of no fewer than three (3) duly elected and currently serving Trustees.

No official action shall be taken without a quorum present/virtually. The affirmative vote of a majority of those present at a meeting at which a quorum exists shall be required for the adoption of any motion, unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws.

B. Board of Deacons

A quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Deacons shall consist of no fewer than three (3) duly elected and currently serving Deacons.

No official action shall be taken without a quorum present/virtually. The affirmative vote of a majority of those present at a meeting at which a quorum

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exists shall be required for the adoption of any motion, unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws.

C. Missions Committee

A quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the Missions Committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) appointed members of the Committee.

Official action shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of members present/virtually at a meeting at which a quorum exists shall be required for the adoption of any motion, unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws.

D. Stewardship Committee

A quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the Stewardship Committee shall consist of no fewer than three (3) appointed members of the Committee.

Official action shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of members present/virtually at a meeting at which a quorum exists shall be required for the adoption of any motion, unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws.

E. Church Council

A quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the Church Council shall consist of no fewer than three (3) Council members, provided that at least one (1) member of the Board of Trustees or Board of Deacons is present.

The affirmative vote of a majority of those present at a meeting at which a quorum exists shall be required for the adoption of any motion unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws.

Warning

All meetings of the Church membership shall be warned in the following manner:

1. The Clerk and or Moderator shall write the meeting Warning
2. The Warning shall be read to the Church membership at Sunday worship by the Clerk, Moderator, or Pastor/Lay Pastor leading the worship service, and

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posted publicly at the Church, for two consecutive weeks prior to the proposed date of said meeting, The Warning shall also be mailed or e-mailed to active members at least five days before the meeting.

Right to Vote at Meetings.

Members and associate members of the Church who have been members/associated members for more than 60 days are eligible to vote at meetings. **An updated membership roster will be available where members and associate members will be able to register prior to the start of the meeting in order to be able to vote.** The Pastor and employees of the Church are not eligible to vote on financial issues that might affect their compensation from the Church, **but, if they are a member, they may vote on the overall budget of the church.**

Absentee Voting

If a member cannot attend a meeting, which may require ballot voting, they may request an absentee ballot from the Clerk or Moderator. Absentee votes shall be included in vote tallies for all elected positions and if there are no amendments to the article. **If there are amendments to an article, absentee ballots will be voided.** The Clerk will then see that such information is properly voted at the meeting, indicating the same to be an absentee ballot. **In order to be counted, absentee ballots must be returned prior to the start of a meeting. The ballots**

Absentee ballots may

(1) be returned by US Mail, placed in the white lock box at the entry to the Sanctuary, or

(2) emailed **to the Clerk or Moderator, or**

(3) **handed directly, in a sealed envelope,** to the Clerk or ~~Church Secretary~~ **Moderator.** ~~Absentee ballots must be returned prior to the start of the meeting in a sealed envelope and to be given only to the Clerk or Moderator to be included in the ballot count.~~ If a member who voted by absentee ballot decides to attend the meeting, they may **must** request that their absentee ballot be returned to them by the Clerk **or Moderator** prior to the start of the meeting and participate fully in the meeting.

Remote Attendance

Electronic voting and remote attendance are allowed. Remote participants shall be active members of the church and shall be included as members in attendance for determining a quorum. Remote participants are encouraged to participate using Zoom or whatever platform is designated by Council before the meeting. The Church is not responsible for providing electronic equipment for participants, dropped connections, or failed Internet services.

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Ballot Voting and Counting of Ballots

Section 1 – Method of Voting

When a vote by written ballot is required or authorized by these Bylaws (such as for the election of officers, major church decisions, or other specified matters), ballots shall be distributed by the Moderator to all members entitled to vote. Ballots may be cast by members present at the meeting or in such manner as provided in these Bylaws.

Section 2 – Counting of Ballots in View of the Membership

(a) The counting of ballots by the Moderator and Clerk shall take place in the presence of the membership at the designated business meeting, immediately following the close of voting. Ballots shall be opened and the votes counted openly and visibly in full view of members in attendance. This ensures transparency and trust in the election process.

(b) Ballots shall be counted by tallying the votes and recording totals on a tally sheet. The Moderator shall verify the number of ballots cast, the number of votes received, and ensure that only eligible ballots are counted. The results shall be announced to the membership before adjournment of the meeting.

(c) Ballots, tally sheets, and related records shall be retained by the Clerk or another designated officer, and shall be preserved with church records for such time as required by applicable law or church policy.

Section 3 – Dispute or Recount

In the event of a dispute regarding the tally, any member may request a recount before the adjournment of the meeting. Recounts shall be conducted under the supervision of the Moderator, and results recorded in the minutes.

Types of meetings

Annual Meeting

An Annual Meeting of the Church membership shall be held after proper warning on **the first** Sunday in ~~November~~ **October** of each year (set by the Church Council) to hear and act on all reports, to consider for election those brought forth by the Church Council, to adopt an annual operational budget for the Church, and to transact any regular or special business as may properly come before said annual meeting. **The budget shall be prepared by August 31st, and an informational budget meeting will take place the second Sunday in September in advance of the Annual Meeting.** The Church Council, working with the three Boards, shall

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propose a list of nominees for open Offices and Board positions at least 21 days before the annual meeting. When voting, a member may also write in the name of a person they would like to see elected to the position.

Congregational/Special Meetings

A Congregational Meeting of the Church membership may be held after proper warning. Congregational Meetings may be called by the Pastor, the Church Council, the Moderator, or seven (7) active Church members who have signed a written application for the same.

Emergency Meeting:

In matters of importance which require immediate action and where delay might work to the detriment of the Church, the waiting period of two Sundays may be suspended and an emergency meeting may be held within twenty-four hours provided such action has the majority approval of the following officers: Moderator, Clerk, and chairpersons of the Deacons, Trustees, and Missions ~~Boards~~ **Committee and Stewardship Committee**. It shall be the duty of the officers to notify all possible members, both active and associate, of the emergency meeting and request them to notify others. Action taken at such emergency meetings shall be binding upon the Church; such action must be ratified, within thirty days by a majority vote of the Church, except where a 2/3 vote is required by the By Laws, at a regularly warned meeting for that purpose.

ARTICLE VIII. - FINANCES

Everything we have and are has been entrusted to our use and care by God. Therefore, every decision about finances shall be guided by the Word of God to carry out God's will. In gratitude to God, we encourage generous and regular financial support of God's work.

A. Offerings. The church shall seek support by contributions of individuals and organizations. Opportunity shall be offered to members and friends of the church to make estimates of financial and time and talent giving. ~~The expenditure of money for current expenses, missions and specific projects shall be according to plans or budgets approved by vote of the church.~~ Auxiliary organizations are encouraged to make contributions of their choosing through the church treasury.

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B. Mission Support. The church will support missions through offerings and projects and will cooperate with the Southwest Association and the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ in financial support of ~~the~~ Our Church's Wider Mission. ~~Wider Mission of the Church.~~

C. Per Capita Contribution

The church will contribute, based on the level set by the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Southwest Association of the United Church of Christ, annually. Active members and associate members shall be included in the count and asked to contribute annually. **Inability to pay will not impact membership.**

D. Expenditures

The expenditure of money for current expenses, missions and specific projects shall be according to plans or budgets approved by vote of the church.

Article IX - OFFICERS, BOARDS, OFFICIALS, COMMITTEES & COUNCIL

Section I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The following provisions shall apply to all officers, officials, and board members of this church, ~~except the Pastor~~. They shall be active members, associate members, or willing **to** join the Church at the next new members' class. No person shall hold more than two offices or board memberships, at one time. A person having been elected to an office who becomes unable to serve shall present **their** resignation in writing to the Council which will act upon the same at their next meeting. They may fill the vacancy by appointment until the next Annual meeting. **Boards shall reserve the right to remove/replace persons for failure to perform the duties of the office, after a discussion with said individual.**

Robert's Rules of Order (latest addition) or **A Consensus Building Approach (CBA)** shall govern all Board and Committee meetings **of the** congregation unless Church By Laws specifically superseded Robert's Rules or **Consensus Building Approach (CBA)**.

An Officer, Board member, or elected Official may be removed from office for misconduct ~~or failure to perform the duties of the office~~ by a 2/3 vote of the Congregation at a duly warned meeting.

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Committees may be formed by one of the Boards at the Board's discretion. ~~The committees must be renewed annually.~~ **Seats on the Council must be requested.**

All officers elected at the Annual Meeting of this Church shall assume office on the second day following their election.

Section II. OFFICERS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

Officers: The officers of this church shall be Pastor-ex-officio, Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Delegates.

1. All officers shall be elected every ~~two~~ **three years**. Moderator, Clerk, and Assistant Treasurer will be elected on even number years. Vice Moderator, Treasurer and Delegates will be elected in odd number years.
2. The Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer shall be permanent members of the Church Council.
3. No person shall hold the same office for more ~~than three~~ **two consecutive** ~~two (2)~~ **three** year terms, unless there is no other member to fill the office. After a lapse of one year, he/she is again eligible for that office position.

Duties of Elected Officers and Officials

A. Pastor:

1. **Calling & Installing:** The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by a two-thirds vote of the members voting at a meeting called for that purpose. The pastor shall be a minister in good standing. If the Pastor does not have standing in the United Church of Christ, ~~he/she~~ **they** shall request dual standing with the Southwest Association of the United Church of Christ within sixty (60) days of appointment. The church may request an Ecclesiastical Council to install the Pastor.

2. **Pastor-Congregation Roles & Duties:** It shall be the Pastor's duty to preach the word, to care for the stated service of public worship, to administer the ordinances and promote the spiritual welfare of the Church and those whom it serves. ~~He~~ **They** shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees.

The Council shall seek and respond to positive and negative feedback about the performance of the Pastor and of the Congregation annually. Each year, **before**

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budget planning, the Council shall conduct an evaluation of the performance of the Pastor and of the Congregation.

B. Moderator and Vice-Moderator: The Moderator or Vice-Moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the church and shall be Chairperson of the Council. **These are the highest elected officers of the Church.**

C. Clerk: The Clerk shall (1) issue the call for all business meetings of the church; (2) keep a complete record of all proceedings of the church, including **but not limited to baptisms, funerals, weddings, and membership**; (3) serve as secretary of the Council; and (4) perform such other duties as usually pertain to the office of clerk or secretary.

D. Treasurer The Treasurer shall be the ~~principal~~ **chief** financial officer. The Treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting from the active Church membership. ~~for a term of two three years.~~ The Treasurer shall pay bills of the Church on orders drawn by the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer shall have a working knowledge of all disbursements of the Church, and be the primary signer of checks issued on behalf of the Church. The Treasurer is to ensure that appropriate and accurate financial records are kept by the Church and working collaboratively with the Board of Trustees and Church Council will prepare and present a budget for the annual meeting.

E. Assistant Treasurer The Assistant Treasurer shall be a financial officer of the Church. The Assistant Treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting from the active Church membership. ~~for a term of two three years.~~ The Assistant Treasurer shall be responsible for handling incoming funds, making bank deposits, recording monies from collection plates, special offerings, gifts, and fees received. The Assistant Treasurer shall be assisted by two (2) or three (3) Collection Counters appointed by the Board of Trustees.

F. Delegates Three Delegates will be elected at the annual meeting ~~for a two year term~~ to attend meetings of **the Southwest Association** and Vermont Conference UCC if it is reasonably possible for them to do so. Delegates shall cast their vote at such meetings, in the name of the Church as it seems best to them at that time. In case the required number of delegates is unavailable, the pastor is hereby authorized to appoint or secure other members to serve and act for the Church.

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~~Up to Four Delegates shall attend meetings of the Southwest Association of the Vermont UCC. Delegates shall cast their vote at such meetings, in the name of the Church as it seems best to them at that time.~~

Elected Officials:

A. ~~One person~~ **Two people** shall be elected as ~~an~~ at large members to Council.

Section III. CHURCH COUNCIL

Council shall be the overall governing body of the Church. The Council has final decision-making authority in matters between two or more Boards. The Church Council acts on behalf of the congregation between meetings of the congregation. The Church Council is the coordinating body for all Ministries in the Church. It is the primary source for leadership and guidance in all issues that pertain to policies and procedures. The Church Council is responsible for approving decisions on matters not expressly delegated to one of the three Boards, the Ministries or covered by each Ministry's annual budget. The Church Council is ~~not~~ responsible for ~~writing~~ **approving** policies or procedures. The Church Council works closely with the Boards in envisioning and goal setting for the good of the broader Church.

The Moderator or Vice-Moderator will be the Chief Lay Officer and Chairperson of the Church Council.

The Church Council will consist of the following Church members: The Pastor, Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer. It shall also include a designated member of each Board **and Committee** and ~~one~~ **two** representatives of the Congregation for a total of no more than ~~nine (9)~~ **eleven (11)** members.

A quorum shall consist of a majority of the sitting Church Council members. The Council will meet **monthly** ~~a minimum of once per calendar quarter (4x a year)~~ and is accountable to the congregation. The Council may call additional meetings as needed.

The Church Council is responsible for appointing a Pastoral Search Team, when necessary. ~~The Church Council will also appoint a Personnel Relations Team that will deal with any personnel issues that arise and any other circumstances which may require a change in employee status.~~

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Section IV. BOARDS

The Boards shall be: Deacons, Trustees, and Missions.

The following policy regarding serving on a Board applies to all three Boards.

A Board must have a minimum of three (3) members. There is no limit to the maximum number of Members who can serve on a Board at one time.

Any member or Associate member can offer to serve on a Board. Members interested in serving should be prepared to make a commitment to the Board of a minimum of one year. Members stepping forward to serve shall attend a Board and express their interest in serving on the Board, and notify the Pastor, Moderator, or Clerk before ~~October 15~~ **August 31** to be included in the approval by the congregation at Annual Meeting. Members stepping forward to serve at other times of the year shall be approved by Church Council. No member can serve as the Chairperson of a Board for more than 2 consecutive **three** ~~one~~-year terms.

Each Board shall elect a representative to Church Council. In the event that the elected representative can not attend, they will send a proxy.

- A. **The Board of Deacons** shall cooperate with the Pastor in ministering to the spiritual interest of the church and the community. They shall work with the Pastor in planning and coordinating worship services. They shall assist in the administration of the sacraments of the Church preparing for communion and cleaning up afterward. **The Board of Deacons shall meet monthly.**

The Deacons Board members shall provide for the orientation and assimilation of new members in the church. It shall be their duty to decide upon letters of transfer and to pass upon the fitness of all applicants for membership in accordance with Articles II, IV and V.

Members of the Board **asked to do pastoral care** will be ~~required to have~~ **offered** training in pastoral care.

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The Board of Deacons responsibilities include:

Planning and sustaining programs of educational, spiritual and emotional development for all ages

Preparing and serving sacraments,

Assisting Pastor as needed with funerals and baptisms.

Pastoral care, calling on sick and grieving members and people in the community. As needed.

Maintain a list of the members and associate members of the church, together with the date of the reception or removal, telephone number, email, and mailing address, quarterly and coordinate with the Administrative Assistant.

Issue letters of transfer voted by the Deacons Board and notify the church to which they are addressed;

Keep a record of all baptisms, marriages, and deaths, **working together with the Clerk.**

Report all changes in the church rolls during the preceding year at Annual Meeting.

Coordinating service assistants, **including, but not limited to:** ushers, lay readers, media ministers, Praise (music).

Prayer chain

Orienting new members. Shepherding members.

Determining the use and placement of all furniture, fixtures, audio video equipment, hymnals, Bibles, and other resources used in worship services.

Maintaining a checking account, separate from the church budget.

~~Appoint individuals to serve in specific areas.~~

~~Appoint committees as needed~~

B. The **Board of Trustees** is the business head of the Church. They shall have the responsibility for the care and custody of the property of the Church and its financial affairs, unless otherwise provided for; but they shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer property without the specific vote of the Church members. Furthermore, The Trustees are not authorized to borrow money, make major changes to the investment policy, or change investment advisors without the specific vote of the Church members. In an emergency, Council can vote to authorize the Trustees to borrow money, change investment policy or change investment advisors. The Trustees shall also perform any other duties that may be necessary in the proper conduct of the business of the Church and not otherwise provided for. All outstanding bills shall be approved by a majority of the Board of Trustees before orders are drawn for their payment by the Treasurer. Purchase orders are required in advance of any purchase in excess of ~~\$50.00~~ **\$300.00. Receipts are**

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required for all purchases made on behalf of the Church. The Trustees shall meet monthly.

The Board of Trustees responsibilities include:

Oversee the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Counters

Maintain the physical aspects of the Church (Buildings), including upkeep and maintenance of buildings, furniture, fixtures and grounds.

Oversee finances

Develop annual budget

Track expenses

Develop and implement investment policy. Present investment policy at a meeting of the congregation for approval by the Congregation.

Maintain financial records.

Coordinate annual financial review by an individual or business not associated with the Church

~~Conduct an audit of financial records every five years~~

Comply with local, state, and federal regulations (zoning, wages, hours, personnel, taxes, and subsequent reports required by each agency)

Appoint committees as needed

Set Ministerial Compensation recommendations

Manage Endowment fund as defined in the “Endowment and Trust Fund Policy” (attached) as approved by Members. Manage Housing Fund.

~~The Church Council will also appoint a Personnel Relations Team that will~~ **The Board of Trustees will** deal with any personnel issues that arise and any other circumstances which may require a change in employee status.

C. The Board of Missions The Board shall be responsible for all Missions and Christian outreach programs. The Board shall prepare an annual budget for programs and submit the budget to the Board of Trustees by dates set by the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Missions shall have no direct control over non budgeted items and self-funded projects and programs.

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The Board of Missions responsibilities include:

Establish and promote local missions.

Keep funds local in the community when possible.

Oversee and coordinate church activity in UCC Missions and other special projects and offerings in response to local or wider needs.

~~Appoint committees as needed~~

Receptions, meals and other activities designed to promote Missions.

ARTICLE XI COMMITTEES

A. STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship shall coordinate with Our Church's Wider Mission and UCC Mission commitments. It shall be in charge of running a campaign to fund the church's budget, including Time, Talent and Treasure.

B. PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

This committee acts as a vital bridge for shared ministry, focusing on mutual support, open communication, and conflict resolution between the pastor and the congregation. It facilitates healthy, open dialogue between the congregation and the leadership, addressing conflicts with Christian integrity. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall be appointed by the Moderator, and consist of three or four church members who are emotionally mature and active in the church. Appointed members shall serve for three years. The Committee will meet with the Pastor at least once per quarter.

ARTICLE XII. DISSOLVING OR CLOSING THE CHURCH

The Church may be dissolved by a vote of 2/3 of the members in attendance at a duly warned meeting. In the event the Church is dissolved, all assets (financial, real estate, and personal property) shall be liquidated and donated to programs to benefit the people of Fair Haven **the local community, in accordance with the rules of the United Church of Christ and the laws of the State of Vermont.**

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these by-laws must be warned in writing prior to a regular or special meeting of the Congregation for ~~two (2)~~ **three (3)** weeks in advance of said meeting. All amendments require a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting to be adopted.

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF FAIR HAVEN UCC
ENDOWMENT AND TRUST FUND POLICY
11/17 Revised 10/20

ENDOWMENTS:

A: Trust and Endowment Funds. The investment of all Trusts and the Endowment Fund Shall be under the supervision of the ~~Endowment Committee~~ **Trustees**.

1. ~~Funds received after May 24, 1992, and~~ **All** monies left to the First Congregational Church of Fair Haven, Vt, in the form of a bequest (monies left by virtue of a will) shall be considered left to the church Endowment Fund, unless such bequest or will specifies otherwise.

2. At the end of each fiscal year, the growth of the fund will be calculated including dividends, interest and capital gains. At the recommendation of the Board of Trustees, every October 1st ~~4.5%~~ **up to 10%** of the total Endowment Fund growth ~~over a 5-year rating average~~ will be dispersed. as follows: 50% of the average may ~~shall~~ **shall** be used ~~by the congregation in any way they see fit.~~ **As needed for the general operational budget of the church.** This will be voted upon at the annual meeting, with the remaining 50% of the average may be used by the Trustees deemed necessary by guidelines detailed below in numbers 3 and 4.

3. In any given year under special circumstances and with approval by the Congregation, the ~~Stewardship Board~~ **Trustees** can access up to ~~5%~~ **10%** of the preceding year end value of the endowment. ~~These special circumstances shall not include the day-to-day operations of the church, but rather heating, plumbing, electrical and structural concerns along with large maintenance projects for the church properties.~~ It is our intent that the Endowment continue to grow and that the Endowment principle only be utilized under these special circumstances, ~~and further that the endowment principle never be reduced below a basis of \$500,000 by these actions, except for a temporary reduction in the basis to \$375,000, voted by the Congregation to supplement the salary of the pastor for five years, beginning in December 2019.~~

4. Principle from the Endowment Fund may also be used **for catastrophic loss not covered by insurance.** ~~to repair fire damage, structural repairs required by a structural engineer to maintain the safety of the Church building(s), Acts of God as defined by our insurance policy or policies or accepted by them as an Act of God, in the case of any of the above occurrences not covered by insurance may be used. Endowment funds may also be used for other purposes as voted by a meeting of members of the Church. A seventy-five (75%) majority vote by ballot by members and associate members of our Church present at warned meetings shall also be required to make withdrawals from the Endowment Fund for purposes as specified in paragraph three.~~

5. As of March, 2014, the funds remaining from the sale of the Maynard House (approximately \$75,000) were put into a separate account in the Endowment Fund called the "Maynard Family Fund". Every October ~~1st,~~ **of the earnings** ~~4.5%~~ **5%** will be distributed as follows: 67% for the church's General Fund and 33% will be available to help with housing projects as recommended by the church for other agencies at the discretion of the ~~(2% of the distribution can be used for the General Fund)~~ **Missions Board** **Trustees**. They shall secure and

Additions = **Bold & Underlined**

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keep on file all records pertaining to any bequest, trust fund or legacy such as copies of wills, court decrees, etc. Due to the importance of these records, they shall be so kept that a succeeding committee or church official can obtain complete information pertaining thereto at any time. The ~~Missions Board~~ **Trustees Board** shall make a full report at each annual meeting. ~~Page 1 of 2~~

6. A separate fund from the sale of the Church parsonage has been invested. Annual withdrawals of \$3,000 shall be made available to provide for a portion of the Pastor's Housing Allowance. The ~~Treasurer and investment companies~~ **administrative/financial secretary** will provide an itemized income and expense report to the Trustees ~~quarterly~~.

Revised 11/17 11/8/20 **11/8/26**

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