

# CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS OF TEWKSBURY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

*Wee (whose names are underwritten) sensibly acknowledge our unworthiness of such a favour, and unfitnes for such a Business, jet apprehending ourselves to be called to God, to put ourselves in the way of Chh Communion, and seek the settlement of all the Gospel institutions amongst us; do therefore in order thereunto, and for the better promoting therof, as such in us lies, knowing how prone we are to Backslide, adjuring all Confidence in ourselves and relying on the Lord Jesus Christ, alone for help, do Covenant as follows;-*

*Imprimis. As to the Confession of Faith put forth by the Last Synod of Churches held in Boston, in New England. Wee do heartily Close with it so far as we are, or may be acquainted with it, and find it agreeable to the holy Scriptures and wee promise to stand by, maintain, and if need be, Contend for the faith therein delivered to the people of God; and if any among us go about to undermine it, we will bear due Testimony against them.*

*Wee-Also Combine together to walk as a particular C-of Christ according to all these holy rules of the Gospel, prescribed to such a Society, so far as God has revealed, or shall reveal his mind to us in that respect.*

*Wee-do accordingly recognize the Covenant of Grace in which we professedly acknowledge ourselves devoted to the fear and Service of the only true God, our Supreme Lord, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, the High Priest, Prophet, and King of his Chh, unto whose Conduct we submit ourselves, and upon whom alone we wait, and hope for Grace and Glory, to whom we bind ourselves in an Everlasting Coven't never to be Broken.*

*Wee-likewise, give up ourselves one unto another in the Lord, resolving by his help to cleave Each to other, as fellow members of one Body, in Brotherly love, and holy watchfulness over each other, for mutual Edification, and to subject ourselves to all the Holy administrations, appointed by Him, who is the head of the Church, dispensed according to the rules of the Gospel, and to give our constant attendance on all the publik ordinances of Christian Institutions, walking orderly, as becometh Saints.*

*Wee-do likewise acknowledge our posterity to be included with us in this Gospel Covenant, and Blessing God for so rich a favour, do promise to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, with Greatest Care, and to acknowledge them in their Covenant relations according to the Gospel rules.*

*Furthermore. Wee-promise to be Careful to the utmost to procure the Settlement and Continuance among us, of the offices and officers appointed by Christ, the Chief Shepard, for the Edification of the Church, and accordingly to do our Duty faithfully, for their maintenance and encouragement, and to Carry toward them as becomes us.*

*Finally. Wee-do promise and acknowledge to preserve Communion with the faithful Churches of Christ, for the giving and receiving of mutual Counsel and assistance in all Cases wherein it shall be needed.*

*Now, the Good Lord be merciful to us, and as he has put it into our hearts, thus to Devote ourselves to him. Let him pity and pardon our frailties, and humble us for our Carnal Confidence; and Keep it for ever upon our hearts to be faithful to himself, and one to another for his praise and our Eternal Comfort, for Christ Jesus Sake, to whom be Glory for Ever. Amen*

**Original Covenant of 1734**

Provided for historical reference and emphasis of the longstanding, central role of Tewksbury  
Congregational Church in the life of this community

# Table of Contents

<b>CONSTITUTION OF TEWKSBURY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Article I – Name and Polity</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Article II – Purpose and Doctrine</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Article III – Membership</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Article IV – Meetings</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Article V – Governance</b> .....	<b>v</b>
1. Board of Ministries .....	<b>v</b>
2. Board of Deacons .....	<b>vi</b>
3. Moderator .....	<b>vi</b>
4. Clerk .....	<b>vi</b>
5. Registrar .....	<b>vi</b>
6. Treasurer .....	<b>vi</b>
7. Financial Secretary .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>Article VI – Pastor</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>Article VII – Promulgation</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>BYLAWS OF TEWKSBURY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Article 1 – Authorization, Amendment, &amp; Suspension</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Article 2 – Worship</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Article 3 – Education</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Article 4 – Membership</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1. Reception .....	<b>2</b>
2. Termination of Membership .....	<b>2</b>
3. Equality .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Article 5 – Church Officers</b> .....	<b>3</b>
1. Pastor .....	<b>3</b>
2. Moderator .....	<b>4</b>
3. Clerk .....	<b>4</b>
4. Registrar .....	<b>4</b>
5. Financial Secretary .....	<b>4</b>
6. Assistant Financial Secretary .....	<b>5</b>
7. Treasurer .....	<b>5</b>
8. Assistant Treasurer .....	<b>5</b>
9. Auditor .....	<b>5</b>

10. Safe Church Advocate .....	5
11. Assistant Safe Church Advocate.....	5
<b>Article 6 – Standing Boards and Committees .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1. General .....	5
2. Board of Ministries .....	6
3. Deacons .....	7
4. Religious Education .....	8
5. Trustees.....	8
6. Finance.....	8
7. Membership and Enlistment.....	9
8. Missions .....	9
9. Music.....	9
<b>Article 7 – Special Committees.....</b>	<b>9</b>
1. General .....	9
2. Memorial Gifts .....	9
3. Pastor-Parish Relations .....	10
4. Nominating & Development Committee.....	10
5. Personnel Committee.....	10
6. Stewardship Committee .....	10
7. Search Committee.....	11
8. Ad Hoc Committees .....	11
<b>Article 8 – Church Administration .....</b>	<b>11</b>
1. Budget .....	11
2. Posting of Warrant Articles .....	12
3. Reports.....	12
4. Staff.....	12
5. Church Representatives .....	12
<b>Amendments: .....</b>	<b>13</b>

# CONSTITUTION OF TEWKSBURY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

## **Article I – Name and Polity**

The name of this church shall be Tewksbury Congregational Church, United Church of Christ. This Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head, and finds in the Holy Scriptures, interpreted by the Divine Spirit through reason, faith, and conscience, its guidance in matters of faith and discipline. The governance of the church shall be vested in its membership, in which all members shall have equal rights of participation in the full life, ministry, mission, and decision making of the Church. The Church shall covenant with the appropriate Association, Conference, and other instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ, and give prayerful consideration to the actions and statements of such entities, as well as participate in the work and mission of the United Church of Christ. The Church hereby affirms its prerogative to make and adhere to its own decisions, the actions or statements of any body or leader of the United Church of Christ notwithstanding. The Church shall incorporate as a non-profit entity subject to applicable laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

## **Article II – Purpose and Doctrine**

The object of this church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ for the purpose of sharing in the worship of God and in making His will dominant in the lives of people, individually and collectively especially as that will is set forth in the life, teachings and deeds of Jesus Christ.

Tewksbury Congregational Church welcomes all people desiring to lead their lives according to the teachings of Jesus Christ, regardless of race, color, national origin, previous religious background, economic status, gender, age, sexual orientation, or physical or cognitive challenges. This Church recognizes the Bible as the sufficient rules of faith and practice, and holds that living in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ is the true test of fellowship. Members shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of their respective consciences, under the enlightenment 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.

*Faith* – We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, goodness and love, and in Jesus Christ, His son, our Lord and Savior, who for us and our salvation lived and died and rose again and liveth evermore; and in the Holy Spirit, who taketh of the things of Christ and revealeth them to us, renewing, comforting, and inspiring all souls.

*Covenant* – We are united in striving to know well 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 mankind, exalting the worship of the one true God and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of human brotherhood. Depending, as did our forefathers, 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 life everlasting.

## **Article III – Membership**

Any person who is at least fourteen years of age and has been baptized in any Christian tradition shall be eligible for membership in Tewksbury Congregational Church upon application to the Pastor and Board of Deacons. Applicants for membership shall complete a confirmation or other membership

class as proscribed by the Board of Deacons and if applicable and possible submit a letter of transfer to the Church Registrar affirming their membership in good standing in any other Christian church. The Board of Deacons shall examine the applicants and recommend them for membership to the Church, which shall vote to accept said applicants at any duly called Meeting of the Church, or during a regular service of worship which may be done without prior notice. New members shall publicly affirm or confess their faith at a designated service of worship and the Registrar shall be notified of this action.

Membership in Tewksbury Congregational Church confers upon the member the right to fully participate in Church Meetings and to serve on boards and committees or hold office in the Church, except that service as an officer or on a board as provided in this Constitution requires that the member be eighteen years of age. All members may serve on other committees as may be provided for in the bylaws, and non-members who are active participants may serve in ad hoc volunteer capacities. Membership shall terminate upon request of the member, or by a three-fourths vote of the church upon the recommendation of the Board of Deacons, or as the result of formal measures as defined by the Safe Church Policy requiring a three-fourths vote of the Board of Ministries and the Board of Deacons. The Registrar shall issue a letter of transfer to another Church or otherwise update the rolls in accordance with action taken. Members may also be put on an archived list if they have not been in contact for two or more years. Archived members shall not be included in any reports to the United Church of Christ.

#### **Article IV – Meetings**

Tewksbury Congregational Church will conduct its official business at a Budget Meeting in January and an Elections Meeting in May. The Board of Ministries shall set the date for each Meeting not less than thirty days prior to the intended date and notify the Church Clerk of their action. The Budget Meeting shall include adoption of a budget for the fiscal year which runs concurrent with the calendar year, except that January funds shall be pro-rated and level-funded based on the previous fiscal year. The Elections Meeting shall include approving the slate of nominations for all boards, committees, and officers with the exception of the Board of Ministries. Both meetings may also include other items to be presented for a vote upon petition to the Church Clerk by any board, committee, constitutional officer, or any three members. Only those items presented on the warrant shall be in order for action, but other informational presentations not requiring a vote may be made upon notice to the Church Moderator. Any board, committee, officer, or any five members may also petition the Clerk to call a Special Meeting to act on any item requiring immediate action. Quorum for all meetings shall be ten percent (10%) of the membership as most recently reported to the United Church of Christ unless otherwise specified. A lesser number shall have the power to adjourn. The meetings of the Church shall be conducted in a business-like manner using the most recent revision of Robert's Rules of Order, except that on any point where they are in conflict with this Constitution or the associated Bylaws.

#### **Article V – Governance**

Tewksbury Congregational Church will conduct its business through the delegation of authority to elected officers and specified Boards & Committees as described within this Constitution and associated Bylaws.

##### *1. Board of Ministries*

The Board of Ministries shall serve collectively as the executive body of the Church. It shall be the function of the Board of Ministries to visualize the entire task of the Church, to advise the Pastor and the Board of Deacons on the general direction of Church activities, and to cooperate with the Pastor and all Boards, Committees, Officers, and Staff of the Church in the formation of a well-rounded program.

## *2. Board of Deacons*

The Board of Deacons shall serve to advocate and lead in the many ministries of the Church including evangelism, service, and mission. In addition the Deacons shall serve as the premier coordinating body of all matters directly relating to worship services of the Church, but shall work closely with other appropriate committees in planning services.

## *3. Moderator*

The Moderator shall preside at all legally called meetings of the Church.

## *4. Clerk*

The Clerk shall be the custodian of all records relative to the business of the Church and record and publish minutes of Church Meetings.

## *5. Registrar*

The Registrar shall maintain an updated list of all members of the Tewksbury Congregational Church, along with baptisms, weddings, and funerals conducted under the auspices of Tewksbury Congregational Church.

## *6. Treasurer*

The Treasurer shall pay the bills of the Church according to the annual budget approved by the Church membership.

## *7. Financial Secretary*

The Financial Secretary shall receive all payments on current expenses and benevolence subscriptions; take charge of all offerings and special collections; keep an accurate account with each subscriber; and furnish subscribers with quarterly statements of their accounts.

## **Article VI – Pastor**

The Pastor shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the Church with the assistance of the various officers, boards, and committees of the Church, shall seek to enlist persons as followers of Christ, preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments, oversee all services of public worship, and administer activities of the Church in cooperation with the various officers of the Church. The Pastor shall be considered a full member of the Church consistent with the United Church of Christ Manual on Ministry, and maintain standing within the Association of the United Church of Christ in which the Church is registered. The Pastor(s) shall be (an) ex officio member(s) of each committee.

When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate, the Board of Ministries shall appoint a Search Committee of between six and ten church members for the purpose of seeking a Pastor. The Search Committee, after seeking the guidance of the Divine Spirit, shall, in consultation with appropriate leaders in the United Church of Christ, make a canvass of available ministers, select one who, in their judgment should be called to the pastorate, introduce the candidate to the Church, and at a duly called meeting propose election. The Pastor must be an Ordained Minister in the United Church of Christ, or eligible for ordination upon receiving the Call. Upon acceptance of the Call by a candidate the Search Committee shall be automatically dissolved.

The term of the Pastor shall be indefinite. The relationship between the Pastor and the Church is grounded in a common covenant with each other and God. Should the Church feel that the covenant is no longer shared as envisioned, the Pastor may be removed by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of those present

and voting at a meeting called for that purpose. In the case of loss of ministerial standing on the part of the Pastor, relations shall cease at once.

An Associate Pastor may be hired if deemed necessary and proper by the Board of Ministries and affirmed by a vote of the Church. A Search Committee shall be convened to seek a candidate as provided for above. The Call shall specify the duties and area of ministry incumbent upon this person. An Associate Pastor shall be a Licensed, Commissioned, or Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ. The Associate Pastor relates to the polity in the same way as the Pastor as provided for herein. The Church may also mentor and supervise a Member in Discernment or Seminary Intern.

## **Article VII – Promulgation**

This Constitution shall come into force and supersede all previous governing documents upon the ratification by two-thirds of the members present and voting at a duly called Meeting of the Church. All policies and procedures in effect at the time of ratification shall remain in effect provided that they are not inconsistent with this Constitution. Ratification of this Constitution shall not be construed to relieve Tewksbury Congregational Church of any financial or legal obligation in effect at the time of ratification. No part of this Constitution may be suspended, but it may be hereafter amended by affirmation of two-thirds of the membership present and voting at two consecutive regular Church Meetings.

This Constitution shall be supplemented by a set of bylaws which shall include provisions expanding and clarifying provisions of this Constitution, provided they are not inconsistent herewith. The Church is empowered to create officers, committees, policies, and rules of procedure via bylaws, which may be amended or temporarily suspended by a vote of two-thirds of the membership present and voting at any duly called Meeting, such proposals being specifically stated in the warrant there for.

Upon dissolution of the Church, its assets, liabilities, and all property and interest of which then be possessed, including any devise, bequest, or grant contained in any will or other instrument, shall be transferred to the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ.

# **BYLAWS OF TEWKSBURY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

## **Article 1 – Authorization, Amendment, & Suspension**

These Bylaws serve to supplement the Constitution of Tewksbury Congregational Church. As stated in the Constitution of the Church these bylaws may be amended or temporarily suspended by a vote of two-thirds of the membership present and voting at any duly called Meeting, such proposals being specifically stated in the warrant therefore. The suspension provision must specify which articles or sections are to be suspended, and for what period of time, as well as what substitute action shall be taken or which body is authorized to determine substitute action. The notice of suspension shall be appended to the end of all copies of the bylaws and may be rescinded prior to the originally designated expiration date by a majority vote pursuant to a duly warranted meeting article. The suspension provision may be extended beyond the designated expiration date by a two-thirds vote pursuant to a duly warranted meeting article, provided that such extension also includes a new designated time limit.

## **Article 2 – Worship**

Services of worship shall be held at given hours each Sunday, as specified by the Board of Deacons, except when temporarily suspended by a proper vote of the Church, or by the discretion of the Pastor in response to safety concerns related to weather or other acts of God.

The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated on the first Sunday of each month, but by a vote of the Board of Deacons and agreement from the Pastor, the monthly celebration may be postponed to another Sunday within the same month. Any change from the first Sunday shall be published thirty days before the change takes effect if possible. The Lord's Supper may also be celebrated at such other times as appointed by the Pastor, the Board of Deacons or as determined by the Church.

The Baptism of adults and the Baptism or consecration of children shall be administered by the Pastor, or in his/her absence, a member of the Board of Deacons. Other services for worship, inspiration, prayer, and study may be held as appointed by the Pastor or the Board of Deacons, or as determined by the Church.

## **Article 3 – Education**

The Church shall conduct a Church School, the expenses of which shall be included in the regular budget of the Church. As a part of Christian training, the school will be afforded the opportunity to contribute to the regular expense and benevolence budgets of the Church.

It shall be the purpose of the Church School to lead all congregants into an increasing experience of fellowship with God and in the development of a character which shall be genuinely and consistently Christian in all human relationships. It will endeavor to develop interest in the Church as well as increasing desire and ability to participate in its life and work.

## **Article 4 – Membership**

The members of this Church are all those persons who have been received by vote of its Board of Deacons, by vote of the Church, and have made public acceptance of its covenant:

- a) On presentation of satisfactory letters of transfer from other Churches,
- b) By reaffirmation of faith (if letters are not available)
- c) On confession of faith (and baptism if not previously baptized.)

### *1. Reception*

Candidates for admission to the Church, whether by letter, confession of faith, or reaffirmation of faith, shall make application to the Pastor, or in the Pastor's absence, the Board of Deacons. Upon completion of a class of instruction or a personal interview with the Pastor, and after due consideration of the candidates, the Board of Deacons may vote to recommend them for membership.

The candidates, having been approved by a favorable vote of the Board of Deacons and by a vote of the Church, shall be received into membership with an appropriate ceremony at any regular service of worship of the Church. The candidate's names shall be printed in a calendar or order of worship the day they are received into membership. The candidates may be received into membership by the Pastor or by a Deacon acting on behalf of the Church. In case of illness or extreme circumstances, the above-mentioned procedure may be omitted and the person(s) may be received by the Pastor or Deacon outside of worship.

At any regular Worship Service the Church may, without special notice, act upon the reception of members previously recommended by the Board of Deacons, but not upon other business.

### *2. Termination of Membership*

The continuance of membership shall be subject to the principles and usage of the United Church of Christ, and membership may be terminated under the following conditions:

- a. A member in good and regular standing who desires a letter of dismissal and recommendation to another church, upon request is entitled to receive it by action of the Church Clerk,
- b. Membership shall terminate upon notice of acceptance into another church. General letters addressed to no particular church shall not be granted,
- c. If a member in regular standing requests in writing to be released from church membership, the Church may grant the request and terminate such membership.
- d. Members whose addresses have long been unknown or who for a period of two (2) years, in spite of kindly approaches, have not communicated with the Church or contributed to its support may by recommendation of the Membership and Enlistment Committee, and by vote of the Board of Deacons be transferred to an archived list. From the date of such transfer, said persons shall cease to be reported on the voting membership roll and shall forfeit their privileges to vote at Church meeting. If possible these people shall be notified in writing of such action. Members of the Archived List by written request, and by vote of the Board of Deacons, may terminate their membership. A person on the Archived List may be restored to voting status by request to the Pastor and/or a member of the Membership and Enlistment Committee. The request shall be granted upon the recommendation of the Membership and Enlistment Committee, and by vote of the Board of Deacons. A person on the Archived List for a period of Five (5) years may be removed from the rolls by vote of the Church after recommendation by the Board of Deacons.
- e. Should a member become an offense to the Church and its good name by reason of un-Christian conduct, or by persistent breach of the voting member's covenant vows, the Church on recommendation of the Board of Deacons may dismiss such member on a three fourths (3/4) vote of members present and voting. This shall occur only after due notice and opportunity has been given for a fair hearing by the Board of Deacons and after faithful efforts have been made to bring said member to amendment in accordance with the laws of Christ.

- f. Should a member, subject to a Formal Measure as defined by the Safe Church Policy, be determined to be in violation of said Policy, the membership of said member may be terminated on a three fourths (3/4) vote of members present and voting of the Board of Ministries and the Board of Deacons.

### *3. Equality*

All persons shall be treated equally with regard to any of the duties or responsibilities and all shall share equally as members.

## **Article 5 – Church Officers**

In addition to the Constitutional Officers, the Church Officers will be Assistant Clerk, Assistant Financial Secretary, Assistant Treasurer, Auditor, and Safe Church Advocate. Officers, except the Pastor(s), shall be elected at the Elections Meeting and unless otherwise stated in these By-Laws, their term of office shall be two (2) years. The Moderator, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, Safe Church Advocate, and Assistant Safe Church Advocate will be selected in even numbered years, while the Clerk, Registrar, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Auditor will be selected in odd numbered years. The term of office for all officers (except the Pastor(s)), shall commence from June 1 following the Elections Meeting at which they are elected until the end of the May that completes their term unless stipulated elsewhere. An individual may serve only three (3) consecutive full terms in a particular office but only those terms commencing following the 2012 or subsequent Elections Meetings shall count toward this limit. After a third term, said individual shall be ineligible for the same position for a period of one year unless otherwise provided in these By-Laws. A vacancy in an office shall be filled by vote of the Board of Ministries until the next Elections Meeting.

An individual can be elected to no more than one office and to membership on no more than one standing board or committee concurrently. However, one individual may both hold the office of Clerk and the office of Registrar simultaneously. Any officer, other than the Pastor, absent from regular meetings or otherwise failing to fulfill their stated duties shall be subject to removal by a two thirds vote of the Church at a regular meeting or one duly called for that purpose. The position will be filled as described for filling a vacancy.

No member of the Church shall be elected an officer unless he/she shall be eighteen (18) years of age or older. The positions of Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, shall be bonded positions, said bond to be at least one half (1/2) of the annual revenue of the Church. All officers, except the Moderator, Clerk, Assistant Financial Secretary, Assistant Treasurer, and Assistant Safe Church Advocate shall prepare an annual report detailing their activities for the previous program year. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary will submit reports covering the previous fiscal year.

### *1. Pastor*

In the role of spiritual leader of the Church, the Pastor shall convene conversations among the Committees and with Staff about the fulfillment of the Church's Gospel Mission. The Pastor shall supervise any Administrative Assistant(s) employed by the Church.

The Pastor shall receive an annual review. This review will be initiated by the Board of Deacons and Board of Ministries with specific policies to be promulgated by the Board of Ministries with the consent of the Board of Deacons. Annually in May, a Pastoral Ministry Review Committee will be called by the Chair of the Board of Ministries with the Chair of the Board of Deacons and an additional

member of the Board of Deacons and the Board of Ministries. The Chair of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee may serve as an ex officio member at the discretion of the Pastor.

While the final compensation of the Pastor is determined during the annual budgeting process, a Pastoral Compensation Committee comprised of two members of the Board of Deacons, two members of the Board of Ministries, and the Chair of Finance will be formed annually in October and be authorized to work with the Pastor to establish a proposed compensation plan with regards to salary, professional development, time off, and other related matters. Specific policies will be promulgated by the Board of Ministries.

Should the Church feel that the covenant with the Pastor is no longer shared as envisioned, the Pastor may be removed by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of those present and voting at a meeting called for the purpose, such removal to take effect within sixty (60) days of an affirmative vote. For the purposes of this meeting the quorum shall be twenty percent (20%) of voting members, as annually reported to the United Church of Christ by the Clerk. The Warrant article calling for removal shall require a minimum of five percent (5%) of voting members as signatories and be accompanied by a statement of reasons for removal. The warrant shall be reviewed by the Pastor Parish Relations Committee, the Board of Deacons, and the Board of Ministries prior to being read to the Congregation, but the meeting called for this purpose must take place within sixty (60) days of its submission to those committees. The Pastor shall be afforded due process for conflict resolution with the petitioners as well as the opportunity to respond to the reasons presented. The Board of Ministries shall oversee the process and assure that the congregational meeting is held in a timely manner and in a way that honors an attitude of mutual respect and spiritual discernment. Sixty (60) days notice shall be given by the Pastor in case of requesting voluntary release.

#### *2. Moderator*

The Moderator shall preside at all legally called meetings of the Church.

#### *3. Clerk*

The Clerk shall oversee the nominating process for Board of Ministries elections and post the slate of nominees to other official positions in the Church. The Clerk shall collect from all appropriate entities annual reports for compilation and publication. The Clerk shall read and post the warrant for any Meeting of the Church. The Clerk shall conduct correspondence on behalf of the Church gathered in Meeting and preside over such meetings in the absence of the Moderator.

#### *4. Registrar*

The Registrar shall see that all voting members have the opportunity to vote in elections for the Board of Ministries, and make appropriate reports on membership to internal bodies and to the United Church of Christ. The Registrar shall receive and grant letters of transfer for church membership as appropriate. The Registrar shall record minutes of Church Meetings in the absence of the Clerk or when the Clerk is acting as the Moderator.

#### *5. Financial Secretary*

The Financial Secretary shall keep an accurate account of all receivables and give a report at the monthly scheduled meeting of the Finance Committee of the revenue condition of the Church. The Financial Secretary is also responsible for the safe keeping of revenue records.

#### *6. Assistant Financial Secretary*

The Assistant Financial Secretary shall assist the Financial Secretary and assume the duties in the absence of the Financial Secretary.

#### *7. Treasurer*

Accurate accounts of all disbursements shall be kept and a report given at the monthly meeting of the Finance Committee of the expenses condition of the Church. The Treasurer is responsible for the safe keeping of financial records. The Treasurer shall keep a separate account of all restricted funds and shall expend such funds in accordance with the standing orders of the specific fund.

#### *8. Assistant Treasurer*

The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer and shall assume the duties in the Treasurer's absence.

#### *9. Auditor*

It shall be the duty of the Auditor to audit and compare accounts of the Financial Secretary and Treasurer and to certify as to the accuracy of the financial reports rendered by the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, to make a report in writing to the Elections Meeting showing the results of the periodic auditing of the Church as well as the annual audit of the accounts of the affiliated and auxiliary organizations of the Church, to make a report in writing to the Elections Meeting upon the condition and activity of all special accounts and funds of the Church.

#### *10. Safe Church Advocate*

A member of the Church shall be elected to this office to implement the Safe Church Policy. This person shall be an Authorized Volunteer as defined in the Policy and shall have cleared a CORI check in Massachusetts. With the utmost discretion and confidentiality, the Advocate shall:

- a. Be a certified CORI officer and serve as the CORI Administrator;
- b. Work with all appropriate committees to assure that any adult working with youth under the auspices of the Church has completed the CORI process;
- c. Make recommendations regarding the maintaining of a safe and secure environment at the Church and Church-sponsored activities.
- d. Receive and maintain a file of incident report forms and CORI checks.
- e. File mandated report forms with the Department of Social Services.

#### *11. Assistant Safe Church Advocate*

The Assistant Safe Church Advocate shall assist the Safe Church Advocate, and shall perform the duties outlined in the Safe Church Policy.

### **Article 6 – Standing Boards and Committees**

#### *1. General*

The standing boards and committees of the Church (hereinafter referred to as committee) shall exercise jurisdiction over the various aspects of Church life and welfare as stated in this article. They shall supervise staff where appropriate, managing a portion of the Church budget as provided to the respective committee, and developing programs to fit the needs of the Church in their specific areas of responsibility.

All Standing Committees, except for those stipulated below, shall consist of four (4) members, two (2) of whom shall be elected annually to serve for a term of two (2) years. An individual may serve

only three (3) consecutive terms. After their third term, said individual shall be ineligible for the same board or committee for a period of one year unless otherwise provided in these By-Laws. In addition to the voting members, each committee may recruit with the help of the Nominating & Development Committee up to four (4) associate committee participant to serve for an unlimited number of one-year terms. Associate committee participants have no voting privileges. Church membership is not a requirement to serve as an associate committee participant.

Members of each committee shall be elected via the nominating process at the Elections Meeting unless otherwise provided for in these Bylaws, and shall not concurrently serve on any other standing committee. Each committee shall organize by electing a chair and a secretary at the first meeting and shall be empowered to form subcommittees as they deem necessary. The Board of Ministries and the Pastor shall be promptly notified by each committee as to the election of the chairperson. Minutes of each committee meeting shall be filed in the Church Office upon approval by the committee. Also, each committee shall compile its portion of the policy and procedures manual.

Each committee shall meet at least once in each calendar month except for July and August and may meet at any time subject to the call of the respective Chair. Each standing board and committee is encouraged to meet on the evening of All Boards and Committees which will be set by the Board of Ministries in consultation with the Chairpersons of each board and committee. Except as otherwise provided, three voting members shall constitute a quorum and the necessary proportion to make decisions. Any board or committee member absent from regular meetings or otherwise failing to fulfill their stated duties shall be subject to removal by a two-thirds vote of the Church at a regular meeting or one duly called for that purpose. In case of a vacancy on any Church board or committee, except the Board of Ministries, said board or committee shall fill the vacancy until the next Elections Meeting.

## *2. Board of Ministries*

The Board of Ministries shall serve as the executive body of Church government. Through the empowerment of direct annual election, the Board is authorized by the congregation to conduct the business of the church, provide long term vision and determine specific priorities and actions to reach those long term goals.

The membership of the Board of Ministries shall include the Pastor of the Church and six (6) at-large members. Two members of the Board are elected to three year terms annually. The Board shall elect a Chairperson at the first meeting of the Board held after the election. At that meeting, each member of the Board will select a Ministry that they will coordinate for the year. The Ministries will be defined in the Board of Ministries Policies & Procedures Manual, updated annually. The Board may designate a vice-chair or co-chairs as determined by the Board membership each year.

The Board shall meet the evening of All Boards and Committees and at least once more in each calendar month. In addition to the designated regular meeting times, the Board may meet at any time subject to the call of the Pastor or the Board of Ministries Chair(s). Any four (4) members shall constitute a quorum necessary to conduct business and, except as otherwise provided, a simple majority shall be necessary to decide substantive questions except as otherwise provided in the Constitution or Bylaws.

It shall be the function of the Board of Ministries to serve as the executive body of the Church with the following responsibilities:

- a) To act for the Church in business and financial matters between stated meetings not granted to other boards, committees, and officers as delineated in these Bylaws

- b) To work with the entire congregation to provide vision and set goals for the Church in the short and long term
- c) To oversee the operation of the church office and related administrative matters involving the church's operations.
- d) To guide committees in utilization of resources to reach the collective goals of the congregation
- e) To resolve disputes between committees or elsewhere within the Church, except in the context of issues under the purview of the Pastoral Parish Relations Committee (PPRC)
- f) To coordinate and oversee any programs or initiatives not assigned to a specific committee, or those activities that involve more than one committee
- g) To provide oversight that all hired staff of the Church are properly supervised and regularly reviewed by the appropriate committees
- h) To fill positions of Church Officers left vacant between Election Meetings. Such officers shall only serve until the next Elections Meeting and may then be reelected by the Congregation at that time
- i) To assure that written Policies and Procedures are provided by all Officers, boards, and committees to explain their respective practices for carrying out their responsibilities. The Board shall be responsible for promulgating the completed Policies and Procedures and shall prepare any such documents not falling under the control of any specific Officer, board, or committee. Said Policies and Procedures shall be maintained in the Church Office.

Prospective members to the Board of Ministries are nominated by a church member through the submission of a nomination form to the Church Clerk by the third Sunday of March. Self-nomination is permissible. Nominated members must submit a summary statement describing their previous service to the Church and their reasons for accepting a nomination to the Board prior to the first Sunday of April. Notice shall be posted and announced on the dates stated herein and when nominations first open. Ballots will be sent by mail to each member of the Church, allowing two weeks for them to be returned to the Clerk. Ballots will be tallied by the current Board of Ministries at the April Board of Ministries meeting, and the candidates will be notified of the results immediately by the Chair of the Board of Ministries. In the event of there not being more candidates than there are seats to fill, the Clerk shall call a meeting of the Church to take place in April, but not during Holy Week, for the purpose of electing the declared candidates by acclamation. New members will be presented to the Congregation during worship on the first Sunday of May and officially begin their term at the May All Boards & Committees Meeting. A vacancy on the Board will be filled at a special meeting called for that purpose where individuals nominated by the Board of Ministries will be subject to approval by a vote of the Church. Said member will serve on the Board until the next regular Board of Ministries election when the remainder of the term will be filled through the standard election process.

In the event that a board or committee provided for in these bylaws has fewer than the requisite number of members to conduct its business, the Board of Ministries shall have the authority to carry out the duties of said board or committee assigned by these bylaws. In addition, the Board shall be empowered to fill these seats upon the recommendation of candidates by the Nominating and Development Committee, said candidates to be confirmed by a vote of the Congregation for continuance of their terms by inclusion on the nominations slate at the next Elections Meeting.

### *3. Deacons*

The Board of Deacons shall consist of eight (8) members elected each for a term of three years in the manner prescribed in these bylaws such that two or three members are elected annually. The Deacons shall assist in the preparation and administration of the ordinances in caring for the poor, the

sick, the sorrowing, the indifferent, and the stranger. The Board shall appoint and supervise Head Ushers and may delegate a Deacon to oversee particular worship services. The Deacons shall review all candidacies for membership in the Church and make recommendations thereon to the Congregation. The Deacons' Restricted Fund shall be administered under the sole jurisdiction of the Pastor.

The position of Life Deacon is an honorary position intended to recognize exceptional service by a member of the Church in the role of Deacon. To be eligible for Life Deaconship, one must first have served at least six years on the Board of Deacons, and have served as an active member of this Church, exemplifying Christian conduct, for at least twenty years. Life Deacons shall, at the invitation of the Board of Deacons, play an advisory role regarding policy, serve in the sacraments and worship of the Church, and support the Board of Deacons in any other way as directed by them. Any member honored as a Life Deacon shall remain so until death or termination of membership in the Tewksbury Congregational Church.

#### *4. Religious Education*

The Board of Religious Education shall have supervision and direction of the educational work of the Church, including the administration of the Church School. It shall supervise lay and professional leadership, including the Director of Religious Education, Church School teachers, and Youth Group leaders. It shall, where appropriate, co-ordinate with other committees regarding overall themes for curriculum topics and shall co-operate in the educational aspects of social services and benevolences.

#### *5. Trustees*

The Board of Trustees, except as otherwise provided, shall have custody of and oversee the maintenance and improvements of the real and physical property of the Church, subject to the regulation of applicable laws. The Trustees shall supervise one or more Sextons to properly maintain the building and grounds or otherwise insure the cleanliness and maintenance of the property of the church. The Trustees shall make recommendations relative to the sale, purchase, mortgage, or transfer of any property and take no action without specific authority by vote of the Congregation. The Trustees have the authority to lease or rent church property with proper review by the Finance Committee of any associated contract or agreement. Rooms and halls within the Church should not be rented for periods exceeding seven (7) consecutive days. Use of the Sanctuary shall be determined by the Board of Deacons, Pastor, and the Trustees.

#### *6. Finance*

The Finance Committee shall have the general oversight of the finances of the Church. They shall review and certify that the budget submitted at the Budget Meeting is in balance. At the Budget Meeting, but prior to the consideration of the budget, the Finance Committee shall provide a summary of the assets and overall financial health of the Church in the context of at least the previous five (5) years of performance. The Finance Committee will submit an annual report that covers the previous fiscal year. Ex Officio members shall include the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary.

The Finance Committee is authorized and empowered to administer the investment programs of the Church, making from time to time such changes in the programs as in its judgment may be in the best interests of the Church, and is authorized to engage outside investment advisory and management services.

The Finance Committee will review all staff employment agreements and make recommendations as necessary for all said agreements prior to any binding signatures taking place. The

Finance Committee will review and make recommendations, as necessary on all contracts that financially obligate the Church.

#### *7. Membership and Enlistment*

In co-ordination with the Pastor(s) and the Board of Deacons, the Membership and Enlistment Committee shall be responsible for promoting Christian commitment and providing community outreach efforts for the Church. They shall see to it that new and prospective members are made to feel welcome in our Church. They shall encourage active participation in the life of the Church on the part of the enrolled membership. They shall work closely with the Pastor(s) and Registrar, and with the Board of Deacons to assure accurate and updated membership rolls.

#### *8. Missions*

The Missions Committee shall have charge of the supervision and coordination of the benevolent plans of the Church, and shall recommend to the Finance Committee beneficiaries of special offerings throughout the year. This committee shall assist in promoting missionary interest and systematic giving of time, talent, and treasure to benevolences. It shall co-operate with the Board of Religious Education in missions education programs, and it shall work with other boards, committees, and groups in organizing service projects that will serve to enhance the environment of Tewksbury Congregational Church.

#### *9. Music*

The Music Committee shall assure that music is provided for regular worship services and that opportunities exist for members of the Church to share their musical talents in worship. They shall supervise a music staff which may include a Director of Music whose duties shall be defined by the Committee, as well as an organist, vocal, and handbell choir directors. They shall exercise discretion over the care, maintenance, and use of musical instruments and related materials belonging to the Church.

### **Article 7 – Special Committees**

#### *1. General*

The special committees of the Church shall operate without the restrictions placed on the standing boards and committees. Members shall be permitted to sit on other committees and shall not be subject to the same limit of terms as the standing committees. Selection of members shall be accomplished pursuant to specific provisions for each committee.

#### *2. Memorial Gifts*

The Memorial Gifts Committee shall consist of four members who shall be chosen by the Congregation for a period of two (2) years and divide as equally as may be into that many groups and elected on a rotating basis. They shall maintain the Book of Remembrance and inventory of gifts. They shall see to it that donors are assisted in making appropriate donations and that such donations are used for their intended purpose. They shall take regular inventory of gifts to the Church and have responsibility for the Memorial Gifts cabinet.

Each gift or legacy made to the Church for a special designated purpose shall be kept separate and apart from other gifts or legacies and from general assets of the Church and so marked that it may be readily identified, and such gift or legacy shall be used only for the purpose designated. If the purpose of a gift or legacy cannot be immediately accomplished, the income thereof, in the absence of directions otherwise by the donor or testator, shall accumulate and be expended at the time of the expenditure of

the principle, for the same or a similar purpose as that to which the principal is applied. No designated gift or legacy shall be used to pay or pledge to secure a debt of the Church. In the annual report, the Treasurer shall list each such gift or legacy and state the nature of the investment represented by such gift or legacy and the disposition of the income thereof during the preceding fiscal year. The provisions of this section of the Bylaws shall govern gifts or legacies made with the restriction that the income only shall be used.

This Bylaw shall not apply to gifts or legacies of less than one-half of one percent (0.5%) of the annual budget, or gifts or legacies the purpose of which can immediately be accomplished such as gifts for immediate repairs, purchase of books, or similar purposes.

### *3. Pastor-Parish Relations*

The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall consist of four members who shall be chosen by the Congregation for a period of two years and divide as equally as may be into that many groups and elected on a rotating basis in the same manner as the standing boards and committees. The committee shall serve as a conduit of communication between the Pastor and the Pastoral family and the various members of the Church staff and the Congregation. They are to see to it that the needs and concerns thereof are addressed, including enhanced opportunities for spiritual and professional growth. They should see to it that Pastor, staff, and Congregation understand each other's needs and expectations in carrying out their respective roles in Christian ministry of the Church.

### *4. Nominating & Development Committee*

The Nominating & Development Committee shall consist of four members appointed by the Board of Ministries prior to each Elections meeting. The committee shall recruit candidates for the several offices of the Church and committee assignments as provided for in these bylaws. The committee shall prepare a ballot listing their recommendations to be published at least two Sundays prior to the Elections Meeting. If there are more candidates for a post than there are positions to be filled, the committee shall see to it that an election is held in a manner which is fair to all candidates and members. The term of the committee members shall end at the close of the Elections Meeting at which time the term of the new committee shall commence. The committee shall provide assistance to boards and committees to fill any vacancies throughout the church year, as well as identify potential candidates for program coordinator positions that report to individual committees.

### *5. Personnel Committee*

The Personnel Committee shall consist of four members appointed by the Board of Ministries. The Personnel Committee shall insure that annual staff reviews are conducted, and that said reviews include meaningful evaluations of work performed against expectation criteria as well as direction for improvement. The Personnel Committee will work with the Board of Ministries to ensure that the hiring/termination procedure used by the Church is appropriate and in agreement with relevant State and Federal laws. Staff is defined as contractual personnel and shall participate in the review process as required. The Personnel Committee will maintain all employee records including, but not limited to contracts and reviews. In addition, through the review process described in Article 8, Section 4, the Personnel Committee will make recommendations to the supervisory committee for each staff member with regards to salary adjustments for the subsequent fiscal year.

### *6. Stewardship Committee*

The Stewardship Committee shall include four members appointed by the Board of Ministries annually within thirty (30) days the Budget Meeting for a period of two (2) years and divide as equally

as may be into that many groups and elected on a rotating basis. The committee will draw on the assistance of all Boards and Committees as it works to advocate the sharing of gifts by Church members of time, talent, and treasure. They shall promote and manage the annual stewardship campaign in consultation with the Board of Ministries. They shall organize service projects, working with the Missions Committee and the Trustees that will serve to enhance the environment of Tewksbury Congregational Church. The committee shall publicly and appropriately acknowledge the contributions of Church members to these ends.

#### *7. Search Committee*

The Search Committee shall be elected by the Church when a vacancy occurs in the pastorate or to fill an associate/assistant pastorate if so desired by the Congregation, pursuant to nomination by the Board of Ministries. The Board shall determine the appropriate number of members. The committee shall review candidates for the office and present one candidate to the Congregation for confirmation by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of members present and voting. The committee shall be considered dissolved once a new pastor has been confirmed and accepts the call to serve Tewksbury Congregational Church.

#### *8. Ad Hoc Committees*

If a need arises to form a temporary committee for a specific purpose not covered in another committee's jurisdiction, an ad hoc committee may be formed. Such a proposal shall be submitted in the form of a warrant article to be acted upon at the next regularly called meeting of the Church, or if of an urgent nature, at a meeting of the Church specially called for this purpose pursuant to the provisions for special meetings. The warrant article should specifically state the purpose, jurisdiction, and nature of what is expected of the committee as well as the number of members needed to serve and the means by which said committee would be seated. When the committee feels it has completed its task, it shall report to the Congregation. The committee shall be considered dissolved at the close of the Church meeting at which its findings were acted upon unless a motion is made and approved for it to continue its work.

### **Article 8 – Church Administration**

#### *1. Budget*

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on January 1 and shall close on the following December 31. Each fall, the Board of Ministries will assemble a proposed budget based on the planned expenditures and requested salaries as submitted by the individual Boards and Committees, balanced against the expected revenues as determined by the Finance Committee. Notice of the proposed appropriations shall be given fourteen (14) days prior to the Budget Meeting in order to permit study by the members prior to enacting the budget. The month of January for the new fiscal-year shall be flat funded at the previous fiscal-year level until the budget for the new fiscal-year is approved.

Once approved, the budget is understood to be a good-faith estimation of the expected expenditures for each individual committee. The individual committees will have jurisdiction over their component of the budget with the authority to manage the actual expenditure levels of each specified line item, or add an additional item so long as they notify the Finance Committee prior to any expenditures under the new line item of their intentions, and maintain their overall budget within the total granted to their committee by the congregation. Modifications to salaries and salary-related items are not permitted under this provision. Individual committee authority will only apply to modifications or additions up to a limit of the lesser of 1% of the total church budget or 25% of the committee budget

each fiscal year. For the purposes of this provision, the committee budget will exclude salaries and salary related items. In situations involving larger amounts, congregational approval is required.

### *2. Posting of Warrant Articles*

The Warrants calling meetings of the Church shall be prepared and posted by the Clerk of the Church on at least one Sunday previous to the meeting. All warrants must be publicly posted outside the church office and distributed to the congregation as widely as possible by any available electronic communication tools available to the Church. In addition, the posting of any warrants shall be announced at the Sunday service prior to the day fixed for such meeting. The order of business for a stated meeting shall be listed in the Warrant calling that meeting.

### *3. Reports*

The officers and the boards and committees of the Church and all organizations taking the name and working under the auspices of the Church shall present a written report of the year's activities to the Clerk of the Church, unless otherwise noted, no later than the first of July. The report should cover programs and activities that occurred in the year from the first of June of the previous year. The Church Clerk will compile said reports making them available to the congregation by the first of September. The reports will be subject to vote of the congregation at the Budget Meeting in January.

### *4. Staff*

The Church may hire paid staff to conduct specific tasks within the overall ministries of the Church. The creation of a new position is subject to the approval of the Congregation. While individual Boards and Committees have specific responsibilities to supervise paid staff, these staff members serve the Church and not individual committees, and therefore the hiring and review process for each staff member will be conducted by ad hoc committees including at least one representative of the supervisory committee and assembled specifically for each individual as defined in policies promulgated by the Board of Ministries. Each staff member must be provided a clear expectation of their responsibilities and compensation through a written contract. All contracts must be reviewed by the Finance Committee and do not become binding until they have the signature of the Staff Member, the Pastor, the Chair of the Supervisory Committee, the Chair of the Finance Committee, and the Chair of the Board of Ministries. In addition, a review of the staff member should be conducted annually as an assessment of performance and identification of potential areas of growth.

### *5. Church Representatives*

Through the many ministries of the Church as well as its covenant relationship with the United Church of Christ, the Church will at times require representatives to serve as a liaison or delegate within those organizations. Church representatives will be elected annually at the Budget Session of the Annual Meeting to serve one (1) year terms. Church Representatives are not subject to any term limits.

#### *a. UCC Delegates*

Delegates shall represent the Church at meetings of the Northeast Association and to the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ (MACUCC). Delegates shall communicate the proposed actions of the relevant Association, MACUCC, and UCC programs and policies to the Board of Ministries and Board of Deacons prior to any such meeting for guidance regarding the disposition of the Church relative to those proceedings. The delegates will report the outcome of votes and other actions of the relevant organizations to the Board of Ministries and Board of Deacons in a timely manner, as well as submit a summary of those activities to the Church Clerk to be included in the Annual Report.

*b. Chartered Organization Representative*

The Chartered Organization Representative shall serve as the primary point of contact for any sponsored Cub Scout Pack or Boy Scout Troop. The Representative will work with the necessary committees, in particular the Board of Trustees to ensure that the scouts are provided the necessary access to church facilities to conduct their activities. The Representative shall represent the church to the local BSA district and council, participate in their activities, and work with the church and council to maintain a strong scouting program.

**Amendments:**

*1/25/15 – Modification of the role of the Moderator* – The role of the Moderator was adjusted to remove this officer from participation in the Pastoral Review and Compensation process and to remove its *ex officio* role on the Board of Ministries.

*5/31/15 – Creation of the positions of Church Representatives* – The UCC, MACUCC, and Association Delegate positions that were formally characterized as officers of the church were reclassified as Church Representatives. The Chartered Organization Representative related to the Boys Scouts was included in that re-characterization.

*5/31/15 – Clarification of the Trustees authority to rent and/or lease church property* – The bylaw describing the authorities of the Board of Trustees was amended to clarify their authority to rent or lease the real property of the church without a vote of the church.