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We further covenant to act out this faith in works of love towards all who seek God's way of peace, truth, justice, and mercy.

(Written by the Diaconate, March, 1981, Revised 1997)

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP in this church shall be open to any person who is baptized. Baptism is “a sign and seal of our common discipleship. Through baptism, Christians are brought into union with Christ, with each other and with the church in every time and place.”¹ By baptism a person becomes a member of the body of Christ, the church universal, and is welcomed at Christ’s table. For the newly baptized, infant or adult, the journey is from the baptismal font to the feast at the table.²

Membership is open to all regardless of age, race, disability, gender, or sexual orientation in accordance with the gospel covenant which binds into a unity faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

Persons are accepted into membership of this church by confirmation, letter of transfer and profession of faith. There shall be two classes of membership in this church:

A. COVENANT MEMBERSHIP, and B. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP.

A. COVENANT MEMBERS shall pledge themselves to attend the regular worship of the church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper; to live the Christian life; to share in the life and work of the church; to contribute of record to its support and benevolences; to seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and the community; and to follow after Christ in all works of justice, mercy, and compassion.

Any COVENANT MEMBER may, on his/her own request, be granted a letter of transfer to another church. Such a request shall be made to the clerk who shall issue the appropriate letter of release.

A COVENANT MEMBER whose address has been long unknown or who, for a period of two years, in spite of spiritual care, has not attended the church's worship or contributed of record to its support, may, be removed from the membership roll and placed on an

¹The United Church of Christ Book of Worship, The United Church of Christ Office of Church Life and Leadership, New York, 1986, quoted from *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, Faith and Order Paper No. 111* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982), p.129

²The United Church of Christ Book of Worship, The United Church of Christ Office of Church Life and Leadership, New York, 1986, p.131

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inactivelist. If, after the expiration of a year, the relationship remains unchanged, the name may be dropped from the membership rolls.

B. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP in this church shall be open to any person who is baptized, who worships regularly with this church and contributes of record to its support, but who for some conscientious reason does not wish to become a covenant member, or who wishes to remain a covenant member of another church. Associate membership confers all the rights, privileges, and expectations of covenant membership. The name of any associate member who for a period of two years has not attended the church's worship and contributed of record to its support, may be removed from the associate membership roll

ARTICLE VI - GOVERNING BODY: THE WHOLE PEOPLE OF GOD

The primary governing body of this church shall be the membership assembled in a Congregational Meeting. A quorum shall consist of thirty of the members. The vote of the majority of members present shall be the action of the church in all matters. In matters where legal age is a requirement of the law, minors shall refrain from voting.

ARTICLE VII - COUNCIL

A. COMPOSITION

The Church Council shall be the executive body of this church, composed of the Pastor(s) ex-officio, the coordinators of all the church ministry teams, the clerk, the treasurer, the vice-moderator, and moderator. Any member of any church team is also encouraged to attend and vote at council meetings. Should it appear that any one team is proportionally over-represented at a council meeting, the moderator may limit the number of voting team members. All members of the Church Council must be covenant members of the church.

A simple majority of its members shall constitute a quorum for a meeting. However, on any matter which will ultimately involve the commitment of the entire parish, a vote must result in a two-thirds majority of the entire council.

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B. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the Council shall be to gather together to hear the reports of the ministry areas and appointed committees at least 10 times per year. The further purpose of the Council shall be policy making and, through its ministry area and appointed committees, the transaction of the business of the church, and the determining and raising of the current expense budget. It shall keep an accurate record of its proceedings, be the custodian of all church records, and report to the congregation at its regular and special meetings. All acts and deliberations of the Council are subject to the will of and revision by the congregation. The Council shall also be responsible for calling special meetings of the congregation when important decisions are to be made.

C. ANNUAL MEETING

At the Annual Meeting the congregation shall elect the Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Clerk of the church, along with all the other coordinators of Ministry Areas who shall also serve in those positions for the Council.

D. LEADERSHIP

1. MODERATOR

The Moderator represents the congregation to the public and shall preside over all meetings of the Church Council and all regular and special congregational meetings. In the event the Moderator is unable to serve as the public spokesperson, the Council may appoint someone to serve in that role for a specified limit of time.

2. VICE MODERATOR

The Vice Moderator shall act for the moderator when necessary. The moderator and the vice-moderator are accountable to the Church Membership.

3. CLERK

The Clerk shall keep in permanent archival form all records of the Church: financial reports, minutes of regular and special meetings, minutes of the Church Council, and accurate records of Church membership, baptisms, marriages, and deaths in the parish. It is the clerk's duty to issue all notices and letters of transfer, notify all candidates of their elections, post and file legal notices of meetings, and maintain a record of all Church proceedings.

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E. DUTIES OF THE COUNCIL:

1. MEETINGS

To meet at least 10 times per year to hear the reports of the Ministry Areas and to act upon any matter brought to its attention in these reports. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order and the By-Laws of the United Church of Jaffrey.

2. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council shall review the decisions of the Trust and Care of Property Team on all fiscal matters. It may authorize any extraordinary expense if funds are available; but if borrowing or spending exceeds \$5000.00 it must receive the approval of the governing body, the congregation, at a special meeting. Upon the recorded approval by the congregation of a proposal for an expenditure requiring borrowing over \$5,000, the Moderator and Coordinator(s) of Trust and Care of Property team shall act as the church fiduciary for signing of contracts, agreements, and other similar documents.

3. POWER OF APPOINTMENT

In addition to the Ministry Areas, the Council shall appoint such other teams or committees as it may deem necessary, such as the Nominating Committee, Pastoral Search Committee, and others whose work is sporadic. Appointed teams or committees will have a term of one year, and may be reappointed as necessary.

4. REPRESENTATIVE POWER

The Council after hearing reports each month of all the ministry areas, committees, and teams may act on behalf of the larger congregation on all matters raised concerning program and finance. However, major changes in policy which will affect the other members or community should be brought to a special meeting of the congregation.

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F. NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS:

1. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Council shall appoint a Nominating Committee each year from Council members to draw up the slate of candidates for all open offices and positions on Ministry Areas. The Nominating Committee shall be facilitated by the Vice Moderator.

2. INCLUSIVITY & DIVERSITY

The Nominating Committee shall strive in all instances to create gender-balanced teams in order to honor our diversity as a community of faith.

G. MINISTRY AREAS AND TEAMS

1. NOMINATIONS

Nominations shall be made by the Nominating Committee for open positions Ministry Area Coordinators, Members at-Large, and the Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Clerk. The slate is presented to the membership in the Annual Report prior to the Annual Meeting. Further nominations can be entertained from the floor of the meeting. Elections shall take place at the time of the Annual Meeting.

2. TERM OF OFFICE

Ministry Area Coordinators shall be elected for a term of two years. An officer or Ministry Area Coordinator should serve no more than three years in one position.

3. MODERATOR AND VICE-MODERATOR

The Moderator and Vice Moderator serve in rotation. The Moderator is elected for a term of two years. The Vice-Moderator is elected for a term of two years with the understanding that s/he moves to the position of Moderator at the end of the Vice Moderators term. A new Vice Moderator is then nominated and elected and moves into the position of Moderator at the end of their term and so forth.

4. APPOINTMENTS

a. TREASURER AND COLLECTOR

Treasurer(s) and Collector(s) shall be appointed by the Church Council upon recommendation of the Trust and Care of Property Team.

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b. CONFERENCE AND ASSOCIATION DELEGATES

The Council shall appoint four delegates for a minimum of one year term to represent the United Church of Jaffrey at Association and Conference meetings of the New Hampshire United Church of Christ. Delegates shall report to the congregation and/or the Council the work of the Conference and Association. Delegates must be covenant members of the United Church of Jaffrey.

5. INSTALLATION OF LEADERS

When elected, or appointed, the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk, Ministry Area Coordinators Members-at-Large, Treasurer(s), Collector(s), Delegates, and all new ministry team members shall be publicly installed in their respective offices at a time fitting to the church calendar.

6. VACANCIES

It is the responsibility of the Area Coordinator to nominate a candidate to fill the vacancy of his or her unexpired term for council representation. Council can appoint this nominee to serve until the next Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE VIII MINISTRY AREAS AND TEAM DESCRIPTIONS

A. SPIRITUAL FORMATION MINISTRY AREA:

The Spiritual Formation Ministry Area is composed of four teams: Deacon, Education, Hospitality and Stewardship/Evangelism. Each team has its own coordinator(s) and specific responsibilities. The coordinators of each team shall meet regularly to integrate the work of their individual ministries.

1. THE DEACON TEAM

a. COMPOSITION

The Deacon team has two coordinators who must be covenant members of the church, elected by the church, and installed in their offices. They shall recruit at least 2 additional team members on an annual basis.

b. MEETINGS

They shall meet once a month for 10 months, at least. The Deacon coordinators will meet regularly with the coordinators of Education, Hospitality, and Stewardship/Evangelism.

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c. RESPONSIBILITIES

The task of the Deacon Team is to assist the pastor in nurturing and nourishing the spiritual life and well-being of the congregation. This is accomplished through worship, music, pastoral care, visitation, spiritual practices, and spiritual formation opportunities. Specifically the purpose of the Deacon Team is

- To assist the Pastor with pastoral care, visitation, and spiritual growth responsibilities.
- To assist the Pastor in planning worship, and with the sacraments, Baptisms, Weddings, and the Rite of Confirmation and to provide leadership in these area in the absence of a pastor.
- To oversee the ministry of music
- To specifically welcome and nurture new members
- To nourish and nurture all members of the congregation

The Deacon team may establish specific committees or teams such as music, visitation, worship, or others to support its specific tasks.

2. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TEAM

a. COMPOSITION

The Christian Education team has two coordinators who must be covenant members of the church, elected by the church, and installed in their offices. They shall recruit at least 2 additional team members on an annual basis.

b. MEETINGS

They shall meet once a month or as necessary. The Christian Education coordinators will meet regularly with the coordinators of Deacon, Hospitality, and Stewardship/Evangelism.

c. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Education Team shall work with the pastor in overseeing the Christian Education program of the church. With the pastor, it shall have authority to design and administer the Church's education program. It may appoint a Sunday

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school director and/or a Christian Education Coordinator to help design and implement the Church's Sunday school and/or educational programs under the direction of the Christian Education team and in consultation with the pastor. It shall submit to the Trust and Care of Property team an annual budget as necessary. The team shall also conduct an annual review and renewal of the covenant of the Sunday school director and/or Christian Education Coordinator prior to the Church's annual meeting. The Education Coordinator shall meet regularly with the Coordinators of Deacon, Hospitality, and Stewardship/Evangelism.

3. HOSPITALITY

a. COMPOSITION

The coordinator shall recruit additional team members on an annual basis.

b. MEETINGS

The Hospitality team will meet regularly as necessary. The coordinator shall meet regularly with coordinators of Deacon, Education, and Stewardship/Evangelism.

c. RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of the Hospitality team is to encourage and nurture the welcoming nature of our church.

4. STEWARDSHIP AND EVANGELISM

a. COMPOSITION

The Stewardship and Evangelism team has two coordinators who must be covenant members of the church, elected by the church, and installed in their offices. They shall recruit additional team members as needed on an annual basis.

b. MEETINGS

They shall meet regularly as necessary. The coordinators shall meet regularly with coordinators of Deacon, Education, and Hospitality.

c. RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of the Stewardship team is to educate and raise the congregation's spiritual awareness of the many ways it can be stewards of the church. Its special focus is to present an estimate of income for the coming fiscal year to the Trust and Care of Property team. The group will plan for this income through an annual Stewardship Pledge campaign.

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The purpose of the Evangelism team is to spread the word of the Gospel (the Good News) among the church congregation and community. Evangelism is inviting someone to know and love God, and it can be accomplished in a myriad of different ways.

B. TRUST AND CARE OF PROPERTY AREA

The Trust and Care of Property Area is composed of the Trust and Care of Property Team, the Treasurer and the Collector.

1. COORDINATORS

Trust and Care of Property team has two coordinators who must be covenant members of the church, elected by the church, and installed in their offices. They shall recruit at least 2 additional team members on an annual basis.

a. MEETINGS

They shall meet once a month for 10 months, at least.

b.. RESPONSIBILITIES

They shall consider the care and custody of the property of the church as a sacred trust, whether real or personal, in accordance with provisions of the articles of incorporation and this constitution and by-laws and in collaboration with the Church Council. It is the responsibility of the Trust and Care of Property Team, with the help of the Treasurer, to prepare the annual budget, incorporating approved budget requests from the Ministry areas and teams. It is also the duty of the Trust and Care of Property Team in consultation with the pastor(s), to conduct annual performance reviews of Church sexton(s) and secretarial staff. It is the responsibility of the Trust and Care of Property Team to nominate qualified persons for the offices of Treasurer(s) and Collector(s). These nominations are subject to the approval of the Church Council. The Treasurer(s) and Collector(s) are accountable to the Trust and Care of Property Team, and shall be bonded.

In matters of an emergency nature where collaboration is impossible it is expected that the Trust and Care of Property Team will act in faithful covenant to undertake remedial measures to meet the crisis at hand and then report their action to the Church Council.

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2. TREASURER(S):

The Treasurer(s), under the direction of the Trust and Care of Property Team shall keep accurate records of all Church operating accounts, special funds, and investments, pay all bills, and report regularly to the Trust and Care of Property Team, and the Council. The Treasurer(s) shall have responsibility for arranging for an annual audit of Church financial records, auditor to be chosen by the Trust and Care of Property Team. The Treasurer(s) shall assist the Trust and Care of Property Team with preparing the annual budget.

3. COLLECTOR(S):

The Collector(s) shall collect all monies, record the receipt of all monies, and deposit all monies promptly to appropriate accounts. The Collector(s) shall report weekly transactions to the Treasurer(s).

C. MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:

These must be covenant members of the church, elected by the church and installed in their offices. They should be such persons as can assume leadership on the various Team and Ministry Areas of the Council and may be appointed as delegates to Association and Conference meetings. Vacancies of the Council, with the exception of the Treasurer(s), may be filled from the Members-At-Large for the unexpired term. Their primary responsibility is to attend the Council meetings, so that they are well-informed as to the affairs of the church. Then, it is their responsibility to take this news out to the larger membership on a regular basis.

D. JUSTICE AND PEACE MINISTRY AREA

The Justice and Peace Ministry brings to the Congregation and the community the outreach programs of the United Church of Jaffrey. The teams may include Christian Social Concerns, Ukama, and Open and Affirming. Each team has a coordinator(s), team members, and specific responsibilities. They shall meet regularly to share and integrate the work of the individual teams with the overall ministry of Justice and Peace.

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Specific Christian Social Concerns responsibilities may include local mission work such as The Food Pantry, Emergency Shelter, Mitten Tree, Crop Walk, Ecology Ministry and Blanket Ministry. World missions may include One Great Hour of Sharing, Neighbors-In-Need, Just Peace special offerings, and The Christmas Fund.

E. THE PASTOR/PARISH RELATIONS TEAM

The Pastor/Parish Relations team will maintain good communications between congregation and pastor, and pastor and congregation in meeting at least six times per year for careful reflection of the combined ministry. The Team shall perform an annual evaluation of the Pastor and ministry of the church, and present their report to the Church Council.

ARTICLE IX - PASTOR

A. THE INTERIM PERIOD

For this Constitution and By-Laws the words "Parent Body" shall mean the New Hampshire Conference of The United Church of Christ. In securing an interim Pastor, the Church Council shall seek the advice of the Parent Body, in determining the type and duration of an interim ministry period. An Interim Search Committee shall be appointed by the Council to seek a candidate for the interim period. The Interim Search Committee shall be comprised of members of the church. The Interim Search Committee, in consultation with the Council and candidate, shall negotiate a covenant contract for recommendation to the Trust and Care of Property Team. Under no circumstances shall the current or former pastor or the interim pastor participate in the deliberations or actions of the Interim Search Committee.

B. PASTORAL SEARCH

It shall be the responsibility of the Pastoral Search Committee, appointed by the Council, to seek a candidate for a vacancy in the office of Pastor. This Committee shall consult with the Parent Body in securing a candidate for the office of Pastor. This Committee shall be comprised of members of the Church. The Committees shall be comprised of 7-9 Covenant Members of the church and shall reflect the diverse character of the church. Under no circumstances will the current or former pastor or the interim pastor participate in the deliberations or actions of the Pastoral Search Committee.

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The Pastoral Search Committee shall present to the church the name of the candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy. The candidate will then be asked to preach, after which the congregation will vote.

If the vote is favorable, the terms of the pastoral call shall be drawn up by the Pastoral Search Committee in a covenant agreement. The Pastor, the Church, and the "Parent Body" shall each receive a copy of the call and the covenant agreement.

C. PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITY

1. ACCOUNTABILITY

The pastor, upon arrival, shall be accountable to the Pastor/Parish Relations team and to the Deacon team for the following responsibilities:

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

Quality pastoral leadership in all areas of community worship including preaching, the sacraments, and creative worship.

- Pastoral care, including counseling and visitation
- Teaching
- Participation in community affairs.
- The pastor shall be an ex-officio (voice without vote) member of all elected and appointed Ministry teams, with the exception of the Interim Search Committee and the Pastoral Search Committee.

D. PASTORAL CALL

1. CALL

The pastor shall be called for an indefinite period. A covenant contract shall be evaluated, reviewed and renewed on a yearly basis.

2. TERMINATION

In order to terminate this relationship, at least three months notice shall be given by either party, or less by mutual agreement.

If the church decides to terminate the pastor's call, it shall be the responsibility of the Church Council to call a special meeting giving two weeks advance written notice for all.

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E. ASSOCIATE OR ASSISTANT PASTOR

The church may, at its discretion, choose an Associate or Assistant Pastor, terms of call and responsibilities to be determined in consultation with the Church Council and the Pastor.

ARTICLE X - CHURCH MEETINGS

A. ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the church shall be held the 2nd Wednesday in the month of January, with a snow date to be the next day. The "call" to the meeting shall be read and posted at least two weeks prior to the meeting. The Council, the officers of the church, the pastor(s) and all church organizations shall submit their annual reports in writing so that they may be made available to the membership in time for reading prior to the meeting.

B. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of the congregation may be held upon request of the Church Council, with two weeks posted notice of the date and purpose. At these congregational meetings, all votes must be given by members only.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended at any annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of church members present and voting. Such amendment is presented to the church membership in writing at a special meeting not less than a month before the vote comes. This amendment is inserted in the call for the meeting and made available to all church members.