

Bylaws of the Village Congregational Church in Whitinsville  
(United Church of Christ)  
Revised 1969, 1975, 1980, 1988, 1996, 2000, **2004**

## Article I. Membership

### 1. Qualifications

#### **Full Members**

Full members of this church shall be those persons who unite with the church by confession of faith, confirmation, reaffirmation of faith, or by letter of transfer from another church; and who have been approved for membership by the Diaconate and the Senior Minister.

#### **Associate Members**

Persons may become associate members by vote of the Diaconate. While not having the right to vote or serve on elected committees, Associate Members are invited to participate in all other church activities. Associate membership shall terminate upon request from the member.

#### **Inactive Members**

A full member, who for a period of two years has not attended a worship service or contributed to the support of this Church, may be transferred to Inactive Status, by vote of the Church Committee, on recommendation of the Diaconate and the Senior Minister. A member transferred to Inactive Status shall receive written notice of the decision by the Clerk.

#### **Reception of Members**

The reception of members into the church may be performed at any service of worship, or in cases of hardship in a manner approved by the Senior Minister and the Diaconate.

### 2. Duties

Members shall pledge themselves, insofar as they are able, to follow the purpose and doctrine of the Village Congregational Church as stated in the Constitution of the Church. Members will also be active in the ongoing mission and stewardship of the Church.

### 3. Continuance and Termination

If a Full Member requests to be released from his/her covenant obligations to this Church, such request shall be granted and membership shall be terminated by the Diaconate.

Members who have moved temporarily from the community, or for other valid reasons are unable to maintain their activity in this church, may be continued, by written request, as a member subject to annual review of this status by the Diaconate.

An Associate Member who has not taken communion, attended worship, or contributed to the mission of the church for one year, can, on the recommendation of the Diaconate and the Senior Minister, and vote of the Church Committee, be removed from the Church rolls.

Associate members shall not be counted in any of the statistics of the Church, except being listed as Associate Members.

### 4. Restoration of Membership

Any person whose membership has been transferred to Inactive Status may be restored to membership by vote of the Church Committee, upon recommendation of the Diaconate and the Senior Minister.

Any person whose membership in this Church has been voluntary terminated, may be restored to membership by vote of the Church Committee, upon recommendation of the Diaconate and the Senior Minister.

## **Article II. Worship Services and Sacraments**

Worship services of the Church shall be held every Sunday. The time of the worship service shall be approved by the Church Committee, upon recommendation of the Diaconate. The order of service shall be determined by the Senior Minister in consultation with the Diaconate.

The holding of worship services, other than the Sunday Worship service, shall be decided by the Senior Minister and the Diaconate.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated monthly during Sunday worship at a time decided by the Senior Minister and Diaconate.

The Sacrament of Baptism shall be held at times determined by the Senior Minister.

## **Article III. Meetings of the Congregation**

The Church shall be governed by the membership through their action at the two annual business meetings, held on the first Sunday of November and the first Sunday of May and any special meetings as described below. All meetings of the congregation shall be called to order and presided over by the Moderator or as provided for in Section 6 of this Article

### **1. Calling a Meeting**

A meeting may be called if indicated by an affirmative vote of the Church Committee, or must be called by the Moderator within 30 days of receipt of a written petition of at least 10 full Church Members.

### **2. Meeting Notification**

The Clerk of the Church shall post a notice, in a conspicuous place within the Church, of the time, place, and agenda of the meeting. An Executive Officer shall publicly read the meeting notice during Sunday Worship services two successive Sundays preceding the day of said meeting. In addition a written notice of the meeting will be mailed to the home of each member of the Church. The monthly Church mailing will be utilized for this purpose whenever possible.

### **3. Quorum**

Unless otherwise specified in these bylaws, a quorum at any meeting of the Church shall consist of the presence thirty (30) full members.

### **4. Majority Rule**

Unless otherwise stated in these bylaws, a majority of full members present and voting at a meeting shall prevail. A three-quarter vote shall be required to amend the Constitution or Bylaws and a 90% affirmative vote to call a Minister (Senior, Associate or Assistant). A two-third vote shall be required to dismiss a Minister without mutual agreement.

## **5. Secret Ballot**

Any full member present at a meeting can call for any vote taken by the meeting to be taken by secret ballot. This request must be supported by at least 9 other full members in order for it to prevail. The Moderator also has the power to call for a secret ballot.

## **6. Order of Business**

The Moderator will determine the actual order of business for meetings. The Moderator can, if necessary, vacate the chair of a meeting and can appoint a chairperson pro-tem. If the Moderator is absent for a meeting, the Clerk shall call the meeting to order and a chairperson pro-tem shall be elected from the full members in attendance to perform the duties of Moderator during the meeting, unless such need is terminated by the entrance of the Moderator.

## **7. Church Meetings**

There shall be a Church Meeting of the congregation in November of each year for the purposes of presenting the Church's annual program plans, approval of budgets, presentation of Stewardship plans, and review of non-financial written reports from all standing committees.

There shall be a Church Meeting of the congregation in May of each year for the purposes of the election of officers and committees, presentation of written financial reports, including the endowment information, endowment policy of the church, and approval of any revisions to church budgets. Elected officers and committees shall assume their responsibilities immediately following the meeting.

A Church Member may request additional agenda item(s) at any Church meeting in writing to the Moderator no less than 7 days prior to the meeting date.

All written reports shall be made available to Church Members at least one week prior to each of these Church meetings. All reports shall become part of the permanent records of the Church upon acceptance at each of these Church meetings.

## **8. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the Congregation may be held in accordance with this Article III, sections 1 & 2 and shall consider such business as defined by the meeting notice.

## **9. Meeting Minutes**

The Church Committee shall review and approve the minutes of all meetings of the congregation at its next regular meeting.

# **Article IV. Government and Administration**

## **1. Description**

The governance of the Church is vested in its members, that is, the Congregation, which shall function through duly called semi-annual or special meetings. Ultimate matters of policy such as acquisition, encumbrance and disposition of property, the establishment and dissolution of a pastoral relationship, and the determination of the annual budget rest with the Congregation.

The Congregation functions by its own actions and through officers, committees, staff and authorized organizations. It views itself as an organic whole, and each part is to be related to the total functioning of the Church.

The Congregation designates a Church Committee to act on its behalf between meetings of the

Congregation.

The church fiscal year shall be January 1st to December 31st. The church year for terms of office shall be from the close of business of the May Church meeting until the next May Church meeting.

All committees formed for the purposes of doing work of the Church are responsible to the Church Committee.

All members, volunteers, officers and employees of the Village Congregational Church are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with these By-laws and any other policies and procedures that may be adopted by the church. The Safe Church Policy of the Church is attached as Appendix A to these by-laws.

the Safe Church Policy of the Church attached as Appendix A to these Bylaws.

## **2. General Procedure**

An officer or committee member elected by the Congregation must be a full member of the Church in good standing for at least one year prior to nomination. Associate and prospective members may serve on appointed committees at the discretion of the Church Committee.

Except for meetings of the Nominating committee, all Church meetings are open to Church members. A member of the Church may speak to an item on a committee agenda providing the request had been made to the chair of the committee prior to the meeting. A Church member may request to add an item to the agenda providing that request is made in writing to the chair of the committee seven days prior to the posted date of the meeting.

Committee organization following the May Meeting:

All elected committees must meet and organize prior to the next meeting of the Church Committee.

The Church Committee shall meet within thirty (30) days after the May meeting to reorganize and schedule their regular monthly meetings for the next 12 months.

Each committee of the church will be responsible for setting goals and planning strategies to meet those goals during the course of the year. They will present these goals, in writing at the November meeting of the church and regularly update the Church Committee and congregation of their progress.

In addition to the organizational meeting required in Sub-Section C above, each elected committee shall hold at least seven (7) meetings prior to the next Church election, at least six of those meetings to be held on church property. The committees will also submit approved minutes of each meeting to the Church Administrator to be posted within the Church, in a place approved by the Church Committee for such postings, no more than seven (7) days after the meeting at which they were approved. The chairman or two or more members of an elected committee may call for a meeting of that committee by giving notice, personally or by mail to all other members of the committee.

A majority of the members of a particular committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of that committee. If a meeting by telephone conference or email becomes necessary, there must be a written record of the meeting given to the Church Administrator to be posted for the congregation in accordance with Section 2e of these Bylaws.

If any officer or committee member resigns or ceases to be a full member of the Church during their term, that office shall be vacant. The Moderator shall be notified of all resignations or other committee vacancies. Should a vacancy occur in any office or elected committee, the Moderator will notify the Nominating Committee who shall immediately present nominees for the vacancy for approval by the Church Committee. Members filling vacancies shall serve until the next Church election, at which time the Nominating Committee shall submit a qualified candidate for

nomination in accordance with these Bylaws and the vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the term.

If the unexpired term of an officer or committee member is greater than eighteen months it will count as a term as defined in Exhibit 1 for the person approved to fill the position. The person fulfilling the unexpired term may then be elected to (1) additional term as defined in Exhibit 1. The person may not be elected or appointed to that committee until a calendar year has passed. A vacancy occurring on the Nominating Committee shall be filled directly by the Church Committee.

Each committee may appoint sub committees consisting primarily of its members to carry out its responsibilities. Appointments to sub committees shall last until the sub committee is disbanded or the next church election, whichever comes first. Upon expiration of their term, members may be reappointed for continued service.

Ex-officio as relating to these Bylaws intends that said person has the privileges of committee membership, except that of voting, and the person would not be counted in determining the presence of a quorum.

## **Article V. Officers**

### **1. Officers**

The Executive Officers of the Church shall be the Senior Minister, Moderator, and Clerk, who shall be sworn in at the meeting at which they are elected or as soon after as is practical.

In times when there is no Senior Minister, the Senior Deacon will serve as an officer of the Church.

With the exception of the Senior Minister, all Officers of the Church will serve without compensation.

### **2. Election**

All of the Officers of the Church, except the Senior Minister, shall upon expiration of a term or as required be elected by ballot at the May Meeting. Should an Officer resign or cease to be a full member of the Church during their term of office, the vacancy, except that of the Senior Minister, shall be filled by the Church Committee on recommendation of the Nominating Committee until the next regular election in accordance with Article IV Section 2g of these Bylaws.

### **3. Minister(s)**

A Senior Minister shall be elected by the Congregation at a Church Meeting called for that specific purpose, provided the candidate shall have been first recommended by a Pastoral Search Committee named by the Church Committee. A Senior Minister shall have no fixed term of office. A ninety percent (90%) vote shall be required to elect a Senior Minister and at least 50 full members of the Church must be present and voting. The Senior Minister's initial contract shall be recommended by the Church Committee for approval by a majority vote of the Congregation.

An Associate or Assistant Minister shall be elected by the Congregation at any Church Meeting upon recommendation of the Church Committee. A vote shall be required to elect an Associate or Assistant Minister. An Associate or Assistant Ministers' contract shall be recommended by the Church Committee for approval by the Congregation.

Any Ministers' tenure may be terminated by either party upon ninety(90) days written notice to the other. The time of this notice may be changed to sixty(60) or thirty(30) days at the discretion of the Minister and the Church Committee. If, at a duly called meeting of the Congregation, a majority of full members vote to initiate dismissal proceedings, the Clerk is thereby instructed to issue within one month a Call for a Special Meeting of the Congregation to

consider the continuation of the Minister's services. In case of a dismissal of a Minister (Senior, associate, or assistant) a two thirds vote by secret ballot shall be required and at least 50 full members of the Church must be present at the meeting.

The Senior Minister shall be the spiritual leader of the Church and shall seek to enlist men and women as followers of Christ, preach the gospel, administer the Sacraments, visit the sick and have under pastoral care all services of public worship. The Senior Minister shall be a voting member of the Church Committee, Diaconate, Christian Education Committee, and ex officio member of all other church committees. The Senior Minister will also coordinate and advise the Officers and committees in administering the various activities of the Church. The Senior Minister shall execute such other duties as usually pertain to the office or may be determined by the Congregation.

#### **4. Moderator**

The election and terms of the Moderator shall comply with Exhibit 1. In addition to the qualifications of Article IV Section 2a of these Bylaws, a candidate for Moderator will have served on the Church Committee a minimum of one (1) year before the election. The Moderator shall:

Preside at all Church and Church Committee meetings, establishing, in consultation with the Senior Minister, setting the agenda for those meetings.

The moderator will be sensitive to the needs of the members of the Church and should initiate and participate in such planning as is vital to the future of the Church.

The moderator is the senior lay leader of the Church and shall actively participate in creating among the members an awareness of operational and strategic issues facing the Church and seeing that the Church functions as smoothly as possible. The moderator will consider any proposed amendment to the Bylaws to ensure that it does not contradict any other portion of the Bylaws.

The moderator shall use the influence of her/his office to assure that officers and committees carry out their responsibilities as outlined in these Bylaws or by vote of the Congregation.

Except the PSRC, the moderator may not serve on any other committee of the church during her/his term(s).

The moderator will prepare a written annual report of the Church that will be approved by the Church Committee at the September meeting for presentation at the November meeting of the Congregation.

Under no circumstances shall a former moderator serve in the office less than 2 years from the expiration of his/her most recent term.

#### **5. Clerk**

The election and terms of the Clerk shall comply with Exhibit 1. The Clerk shall:

- a) Attend and keep the minutes of all meetings of the Church and Church Committee.
- b) The Clerk, with the assistance of the Church Administrator shall:

Keep a register of the Church members with dates and methods of reception into the congregation plus the member's current address, phone number, and email address.

Keep a record of baptisms, marriages, and deaths of Church members. These records shall be kept at a safe, central place to be designated by the Church

Committee.

Issue letters of transfer or any other changes in membership status as requested.

Preserve on file minutes and annual reports of all committees.

Post copies of nominating ballots in a conspicuous place in the Church at least 7 days before the Election of Officers and committees.

Post notices of all Church Meetings.

Prepare an annual statistical report of the church membership.

Notify all persons of their election and/or appointment to positions within the Church or its committees.

## Article VI. Church Committee

### 1. Membership

The Officers of the Church, the Senior Deacon, and the chairs of the Christian Education Committee, Financial Committee, Missions Committee, Parish Staff Relations Committee and the Property Committee, and Nominating Committee. One member elected at large by the Congregation in accordance with Exhibit 1 will also serve on the Church Committee.

The Director of Music, the Associate Minister, the Assistant Minister, and the Christian Education Director, whichever are then employees of the Church, shall be ex-officio members of the Church Committee.

### 2. Duties

Be the administrative body of the Church, acting for and on behalf of the Congregation between meetings of the Church, but, in accordance with these Bylaws, shall have no authority in matters specifically reserved for action by the Church in a Congregational meeting.

Oversee all Church activities, coordinating the activities of the officers, committees, organizations and staff of the Church, receiving their recommendations, and having authority to formulate and implement policies. The Church Committee will hold regular monthly meetings 11 times a year to conduct the business of the church.

Provide an outline of responsibilities for various committees and officers unless otherwise stipulated by these Bylaws.

Have the authority to appoint any ad hoc committee it may deem necessary to fulfill the mission of the Church on an as needed basis.

Approve all letters or contracts of employment, except with the Minister as provided elsewhere in these bylaws, in order that they be legal and binding.

Annually review the overall condition of the Church, approve the budget and the report of the PSRC with regard to changes in salaries and related expenses pertaining to the budget for the following year. Approve the Moderators annual written review of the total ministry of the Church.

Have the final review of the proposed church budget for recommendation to the Congregation for action at the November Meeting.

Approve or disapprove proposed expenditures exceeding budgeted amounts. It is understood that the involved committee has the responsibility of presenting these requests for approval to the

Church Committee.

Arrange for the scheduling of events by the Church and its organizations.

Be responsible for the total stewardship program of the Church and approve any fund raising events conducted in the name of the Church by its organizations.

Have the authority to declare vacant the position of any elected or appointed officer, committee member, or employee, with the exception of the minister, who fails, as determined by the Church Committee and the Bylaws, to properly discharge the duties of his/her position.

Recommendation for such action shall be made by the person and/or committee to whom this person reports. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the Church Committee members present supporting such a recommendation will be needed for removal.

Ensure that the provisions of all the Church policies and committee resolutions are acted upon by the appropriate person or committee.

Approve the use of the Church facilities by any outside organizations as presented by the Property Committee.

## ARTICLE VII. Appointed Committees

The following positions will be appointed by the Church Committee as recommended by the Senior Minister, Moderator, and Chair of the Nominating Committee:

### **Auditor**

The appointment and term of the Auditor shall be three (3) years.

Examine all official financial records of the Church and prepare a report for the May Meeting of the Congregation.

The auditor will recommend to the Church Committee every three years, a qualified organization to perform an external audit of the Church's financial records.

### **Historian**

The Historian shall:

Keep a record of outstanding events of the Church and its organizations and make a report of them if necessary at the November Congregational meeting.

Oversee the historical items and archives of the Church and report to the Church Committee on their condition at least annually. Keep these records and items in a safe, central place to be designated by the Church Committee.

### **By Law Review Committee**

Shall consist of the Senior Minister, The Moderator and 2 members of the congregation. The committee will elect its own chair and appoint its own secretary.

Review the Church Bylaws, every five (5) years, presenting a report of the Bylaw review to the Church Committee, and if necessary present to the congregation for adoption, any revisions to the Bylaws.

### **Pastoral Search Committee**

The appointment and terms of the Pastoral Search Committee shall comply with Exhibit 1. The Pastoral Search Committee shall:

Have its chairperson appointed by the Church Committee.

Organize the preparation and publication of a Church Profile for presentation to interested ministerial candidates.

In consultation with the Associate Conference Minister for the Central Area proceed to contact and interview prospective candidates for a vacant permanent Senior Minister position.

Present their ministerial candidate to the Congregation at an annual or special meeting called for that purpose.

## Article VIII. Elected Committees

### 1. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall be elected by the Congregation at the semi annual meeting of the church. The committee will conform to Exhibit 1 and consist of three (3) people, electing their own chair. The duties of the Nominating Committee shall consist of:

Prepare a ballot for use at the May Congregational Meeting, nominating one member, if possible, for each office and as many members as there are vacancies to be filled for each of the several elected committees, with the exception of the Nominating Committee, as provided by these Bylaws.

Obtain consent to serve from each individual prior to nomination.

Present nominees to the Church Committee for all vacancies on committees occurring during the year as provided in Exhibit 1, with the exception of the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee shall use its best efforts to fill positions on committees with nominees as to reflect the then current demographics and diversity of the congregation.

### 2. Parish-Staff Relations Committee

The committee will consist of three (3) members, one from the Church Committee, excluding the Officers and Senior Deacon and two (2) elected at large by the congregation in compliance with Exhibit 1. The committee will meet and elect their own chair. This committee shall:

Maintain an open and truthful relationship between the members of the Congregation and the professional staff of the Church. The committee shall have as its primary goal the sharing of ideas and hopes concerning the Church, its present life, and its future.

Assist in resolving concerns from the two main bodies of the church; the Congregation and the paid staff.

The Senior Minister will be a voting member of the committee as practical within the scope of the duties of the committee, but may not serve as chair.

The committee will, upon written notice of a concern from any member of the Church or paid staff, meet with the parties involved within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of a written notice of concern. The Officers of the Church shall be notified within three (3) days of the meeting, the purpose of that meeting.

The Committee will meet quarterly with the paid staff of the church as a group or individually to access their role in the mission, health, and future of the Church.

The committee will prepare the written review and salary recommendation of each of the paid staff members of the Church, including the Minister(s), Church Administrator, Director of Christian Education, Organist and Sexton. They will receive input from the involved committees. Church members will also be invited to participate in the review process.

The committee will prepare a written synopsis of each employees review that will be presented to the Church Committee along with the salary recommendation.

The full text of the review will be made available to the appropriate group or committee in case of disciplinary review or formal action to terminate an employee.

The Minister is the executive head of the staff and, in conjunction with the responsible person or committee, shall recommend to the Church Committee competent persons to be employed by the Church.

Termination of paid staff, with the exception of the minister(s) must be approved by the Church Committee on recommendation of the Minister and the responsible person(s) or committee(s).

The committee will also screen concerns that arise within the Safe Church Policy (attached as Appendix A to these Bylaws) and decide what course of action to follow to resolve same.

### **3. Property Committee**

The Property Committee will consist of three (3) members elected by the Congregation in compliance with Exhibit 1. The committee will meet and elect their own chair. The Property Committee shall:

Have supervisory charge of Church grounds, buildings, capital equipment, furnishings and maintenance thereof.

Determine the need for and administer Extraordinary Repair Fund(s) of the Church.

Provide fire, liability, Workmen's Compensation and other insurance necessary to protect the corporate Church.

Recommend to the Church Committee how Church properties are to be properly maintained and negotiate appropriate contracts for that care for approval by the Church Committee.

Submit by June 30 of each calendar year to the Finance Committee a budget for the maintenance and repair of the building and grounds owned or leased by the Village Church. This budget must include estimates of cost for all projects and planned maintenance for the coming year.

Should comply to the best of their ability with all laws governing the safe use of public property as they pertain to the Village Church: i.e. evacuation plans, fire drills etc.

Maintain records of all capital purchases of the Church exceeding \$15,00 dollars.

### **4. Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee shall be composed of 5 members elected at large in compliance with Exhibit 1. The committee will meet and elect their own chair. The Finance Committee shall:

Keep and maintain separate ledger accounts of all monies received for general Church expenses and approved organizations for which the Church is required to maintain such accounts.

Make written financial reports available prior to each regular Church Committee meeting, including transfers from all investment accounts under the Church's control and budget positions. The committee will also make an annual financial report to the Church at the May meeting.

Oversee management of the portfolio of invested funds in accordance with the Endowment Policy as described in Exhibit B of these Bylaws. Any change in the Endowment Policy shall require approval of two-thirds of the Congregation.

Present an Endowment Policy (attached as Appendix B to these bylaws) to the Congregation for approval every two years at the November meeting of the congregation.

The signatures of the Finance Committee Chair and Moderator are required on all withdrawals on the Church's accounts. Another committee member shall be appointed by the chair in his or her absence to act as signatory. The Clerk shall act as signatory in the absence of the Moderator. Bonding of all signatories is at the discretion of the Finance Committee.

There shall be an internal audit of the financial records of the Church on an annual basis. There shall be an external audit of the financial records of the Church at least once every three (3) years. (See Auditor Article VII section 2)

Have power to establish a trust or foundation for the purpose of receiving grants and bequests for objectives in keeping with the purposes of this Church.

All budgeted withdrawals made by the Finance Committee will be made in accordance with Section 4e. Any unbudgeted withdrawals must have the approval of the Church Committee.

The Finance Committee will appoint two (2) of its members to monitor the Stewardship of the church. They will keep track of the Pledge records, monitor the pledges and mail out quarterly statements to the church membership. On an alternating monthly basis those two members will work with the Diaconate to count the Sunday offering and see that the deposit is made by the close of business on Monday.

The Finance Committee may appoint a financial secretary whose duties could include: Charge of the day to day bookkeeping of the church, having the ability to outsource said work if the committee deems that is in the best interest of the Church.

Appoint, with the approval of the Church Committee, an Assistant Financial Secretary, who, under the supervision of the Financial Secretary, shall assist in the discharge of these duties.

Have as a sub committee, the Budget Committee. Function of that committee listed below:

#### **4a. The Budget Committee**

The Budget Committee will be a sub committee of the Finance Committee. The Budget Committee will consist of a member of the Finance Committee, a member of Diaconate and two members at large whose names will be submitted by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Congregation in compliance with Exhibit 1. The Budget Committee shall:

Have its chairperson appointed by the Finance Committee.

Receive by June 30<sup>th</sup> from all committees an itemized proposed budget for the year to carry out their particular functions and responsibilities as specified by these By-laws.

Submit by August 15 of each year an itemized and balanced capital funds budget and operating

budget for the ensuing calendar year for approval by the Church Committee.

## **5. Diaconate**

The election and terms of the Diaconate shall comply with Exhibit 1. The Diaconate shall:

Elect a presiding officer to be designated as the Senior Deacon. The Senior Deacon, in absence of the Senior Minister, shall direct the Diaconate in fulfilling the various pastoral services of the Church.

Administer policies adopted by the Congregation and the Church Committee pertaining to the spiritual interests of the Church.

Devise and execute programs designed to enlarge the membership of the Church.

Prepare the Sacraments and assist in administering them. Prepare a list of ushers to serve during worship each Sunday.

Confer with the Senior Minister concerning the services of the Church and the spiritual enrichment of the Congregation.

Care for the sick, sorrowing and needy, including a regular program of visitation by its members.

Be concerned with the welfare of the Minister(s) and her/his family.

Ensure that the Minister(s) participates in conferences, workshops and continuing education that will be of benefit to the Church.

Supervise and coordinate the work of all related organizations or committees concerned with the worship and spiritual life of the Church.

Recommend to the Church Committee appropriate needs/ uses for The Memorial Funds of the Church.

Administer through the Pastor and Senior Deacon, the Deacons' Fund.

Recommend an interim minister to the Church Committee during times when there is no settled minister. The Diaconate will also procure pulpit supply for Sundays when the settled Senior Minister will be away.

Have charge of securing and arranging flowers for Church services and distributing the same, and also be responsible for the care of the chancel.

The Diaconate shall supply the necessary ushers for all church services. Those ushers working with a member of the Finance Committee will collect and record the Sunday offering after the service so that a bank deposit can be made before the close of business on Monday.

### **5a. The Stewardship Committee**

The Deacons will organize and run an annual stewardship campaign for the Church forming a Stewardship Committee as needed. The Stewardship Committee will consist of a minimum of three members, at least one being a Deacon. The committee will elect its own chair. The committee will:

Be responsible for the organization and conduct pledging programs to provide the funds needed to operate the Church.

Actively seek bequests, endowments and gifts to the Church.

Devise means of encouraging a sense of stewardship and service among all members of the Congregation.

Ensure that by September 1<sup>st</sup> the Stewardship program of the Village Church is prepared and ready to begin.

Give to the Finance Committee all records of pledges and gifts to use in preparing and maintaining the budget and mission of the church.

#### **5b. The Music Committee**

The Music Committee will be a sub committee of the Diaconate and submit a monthly report for the Diaconate representative to present to the Church Committee.

The Music Committee will have (4) members, a Deacon, a member of the Chancel Choir, a member of the Handbell Choir and a member elected at large from the congregation. The Director of Music, Handbell Choir Director and any other staff person reporting to the Music Committee shall be an ex-officio member(s) of the committee.

The committee will elect a chair from within the committee.

In consultation with the Senior Minister nominate candidates for the positions of Director of Music and Handbell Choir Director.

In consultation with the Director of Music and Senior Minister be responsible for and have charge of the music properties and programs of the church.

#### **5c. Membership Review Committee**

The Membership Review Committee shall each January review the membership rolls of the Church and make recommendations for its revision to the Church Committee.

This committee will consist of the Senior Deacon, Clerk and the Senior Minister.

#### **5d. Delegates**

The Delegates to the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ will be appointed by the Diaconate and shall make available to the Congregation a report of the meetings attended.

The Delegates to the Central Association shall be appointed by the Diaconate and make available to the Congregation a report of the meetings attended.

The Delegate to the Northbridge Association of Churches shall be appointed by the Diaconate and make available to the Church Committee a report of the meetings attended.

#### **6. Christian Education Committee**

The election and terms of the Christian Education Committee shall comply with Exhibit 1. The committee shall elect its own chair. The committee shall:

Provide staff and resources for all Christian Education programs involving the children, young people and adults of our fellowship.

Have oversight over all youth programs associated with the Church.

Publicize, organize and be responsible for the distribution of financial or recognition awards to eligible youth.

#### **6a. Fellowship Committee**

The Fellowship Committee will be a sub committee of the Christian Education committee consisting of three (3) voting members with the authority to enlist other interested persons.

Promote the social activity of the Church by coordinating events that encourage fellowship amongst the congregation and community.

Promote hospitality by providing a social period after worship each Sunday.

#### **7. Missions Committee**

The election and terms of the Missions Committee shall comply with Exhibit 1. The committee shall elect its own chair. The committee shall:

Have the authority to recruit other interested persons.

Administer and coordinate policies, programs and funds approved by the Congregation for Christian Missions.

Develop service projects and activities with various organizations of the Church. Such programs should benefit the Northbridge area as well as the larger community.

Promote an interest in and educate the Congregation in benevolence giving and missions.

### **Article IX. Amendments and Review**

#### **1. Amendments**

The Bylaws of this Church may be amended at any meeting of the Church by a three-fourths vote of at least thirty (30) full members present and voting, provided:

An Executive Officer shall publicly read the meeting notice during Sunday Worship services two successive Sundays preceding said meeting.

A written notice including the text of the amendment(s) will be mailed to each household with a member residing therein at least 14 days before said meeting. A copy of the proposed amendment(s) will be posted in a conspicuous place in the church building.

#### **2. Review**

These bylaws shall be reviewed every three years by a Bylaw Review Committee (appointed in accordance with Article VII).

#### **3. Schedule**

The Bylaws, when approved as amended, shall be implemented as soon as practical by the appropriate authority.

