

CONSTITUTION
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CHELSEA
(UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST)

Article 1. Name

The name of this church shall be FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CHELSEA (United Church of Christ), hereinafter referred to as the "Church."

Article 2. Purpose

The members of this Church covenant together to serve God in love and in faith to accomplish the mission of the Church.

Article 3. Governance

The Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its sole head, and the Christian Bible as its guide.

The government of the Church is vested in its members who exercise the right of control in all affairs, subject in legal matters to the Articles of Incorporation granted it by the laws of the State of Michigan.

While the Church is not subject to the dictates of any ecclesiastical body, it accepts the obligations of mutual council, respect, and cooperation involved in the free fellowship of the United Church of Christ (UCC), and pledges to share in its common aims and work.

Article 4. Doctrine

The Church recognizes the Christian Bible as the foundation for the Church's worship and practices. The Church also recognizes the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ (in Appendix 2) as an expression of the faith commonly held among us.

Article 5. Membership

A. Requirements

The sole requirement for any person to become a member of the Church is that he/she has been baptized into the Christian faith.

B. Reception

A person is received into membership by one of the following means: 1) Confirmation; 2) Profession of Faith; 3) Letter of Transfer from another Christian church; 4) Re-affirmation of Faith.

C. Privileges and Responsibilities of Membership

An Active member may: vote on all matters that come before the congregation; serve on any of the Church's committees and/or the Church Council; and represent the Church at external functions.

An Active member is expected (to the extent that he/she is able) to: attend worship, support the Church and its members through prayer, volunteer to serve on committees, assist with worship, contribute to its life, mission, and financial support; and conduct his/her life in a manner consistent with the Mission Statement of the Church.

An Inactive member will be entitled to receive all Church communications (email, prayer requests, Commentary Newsletter), pastoral care, weddings, and funerals.

An Inactive member will be expected to the extent he/she is able to: attend worship, support the Church and its members through prayer, and conduct his/her life in a manner consistent with the Mission Statement of the Church.

D. Changes in Membership status

A member remains on the Church's membership roster until the Church receives a notice of a transfer of membership to another church, a written notification that the person no longer considers him or herself a member of the Church, or until the Membership Committee recommends a change in status. The Office Administrator is responsible for membership records.

Article 6. Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the membership present or represented by absentee ballot, at a called congregational meeting at which there is a quorum. A quorum is defined as twenty percent of the membership as reported to the UCC.

BY LAWS FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CHELSEA (UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST)

Article 1. Governing Body

A. Definition

The governing Body of the Church shall be Active members of the Church assembled in a duly called congregational meeting. A quorum shall consist of twenty percent of the membership. The Governing Body shall hold an annual meeting and may hold other meetings as set forth in these bylaws. Majority rules in all matters except the Call of a Pastor, which requires a two-thirds vote.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

1. Shall hold an Annual Meeting as set forth in Article 3.
2. Shall hold other congregational meetings as set forth in Article 3.
3. Shall be responsible for calling a Pastor.
4. Shall have the right to terminate the Church's relationship with the Pastor.
5. Shall have sole authority to approve unbudgeted, extraordinary expenditures of \$5,000.00 or more.

6. Shall have sole responsibility to approve the purchase or any sale of any real property.
7. May establish committees, task forces or other groups to further the mission of the Church.

Article 2. Services

A. Worship

Worship shall be held at a regularly announced hour each Sunday, except when changed by a vote of the membership and/or by Council approval.

B. Sacraments

The sacraments observed and offered by the Church are Baptism and Holy Communion.

C. Christian Education

The Church shall regularly provide its members and guests with opportunities for Christian education.

Article 3. Business Meetings

A. Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the congregation shall be held in February, specific date and time to be determined by the Council. A quorum must be present for business to be conducted. The yearly reports of the officers and committees shall be submitted at this time for the approval of the congregation. The congregation shall also approve a Church Budget for the ensuing fiscal year, elect officers and committee members, and transact any other business that may come before it.

B. Special Meetings

Special Meetings of the congregation may be called by the Pastor, the Council, or the written request of 12 Active members. Such meetings must be announced during Sunday morning worship at least two weeks prior to the date of the called meeting and displayed in writing at the Church. The written notification must include the date, time, purpose, and location of the meeting. In addition, members will be notified via electronic communication or postal service at least one week prior to the date of the called meeting. Specially called meetings must also have a quorum (see below) and may only transact the business that necessitated the call and was announced to the congregation. All transacted business will be considered binding and possessing authority equivalent to that conducted at an Annual Meeting.

C. Quorum and Rules

A quorum is defined as twenty percent of the membership as reported to the UCC. Robert's Rules of Order shall apply, except as otherwise provided in the By Laws or determined by a majority vote of those in attendance or represented by absentee ballot.

Members unable to attend a congregational meeting will be sent an absentee ballot upon written request to the Office Administrator (such request must be received via electronic or postal service communication at least one week prior to the meeting) and returned to the Secretary at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Article 4. Church Year

The Church year shall run from January 1 through December 31 of the same year. All officers and committee members shall assume their offices and duties upon their approval of the membership at the Annual Meeting and until their successors are elected, their term expires, or departure by resignation from office.

Article 5. Reports

A. Annual Reports

All officers (except the Treasurer) and committees shall submit Annual Reports to the Office Administrator no later than one month prior to the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall submit his/her Annual Report to the Office Administrator no later than two weeks prior to the Church's Annual Meeting.

B. Special Reports

The Church Council will have the authority to require any committee to submit additional reports as the Council deems necessary for the good of the Church.

Article 6. Organizational Structure

A. The Pastor(s)

1. Call

The Pastor(s) shall be called for an indefinite period of time by a two-thirds vote of the membership in attendance, or represented by absentee ballot, at a congregational meeting called for that purpose.

2. Duties

The duties of the Pastor(s) shall include but not be limited to: providing for the preaching and teaching of the Gospel, the administration of the sacraments, and the spiritual welfare of the Church's members with the assistance of the congregation; enlisting people as disciples of Christ; conducting the services of the church, such as Sunday morning worship, weddings, and funerals; overseeing the activities and affairs of the Church in consultation with the Church Council; serving as an advisory member of the Church's committees and as a member of the Church Council with voice and vote.

3. Membership and Ministerial Standing

Unless otherwise approved by the Church Council, the Pastor(s) will become an Active member of the Church and hold his/her ministerial standing in the Covenant Association of the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ. In the event of his/her loss of ministerial standing, relations with the Church may cease at once.

4. Termination

The Pastor(s) shall give sixty days notice of his/her resignation from the office of Pastor. Likewise, the membership may, by a two-thirds vote of the members in attendance, or represented by absentee ballot, at a congregational meeting called for that purpose, request the resignation of the Pastor with the expectation that termination will occur within sixty days. These terms may be altered by mutual consent of Pastor and Church Council.

B. The Church Council

1. Nature and Function:

The Church Council (hereinafter referred to as the "Council") with the President as Chair, shall be a body consisting of four Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, as well as the Pastor(s), and Leaders of the following Ministry Teams: Worship, Mission and Outreach, Member Caring and Facilities/Operations.

A majority (51%) of Council members present is necessary to establish a quorum. Once a quorum is established, a quorum exists until the meeting is adjourned.

2. Roles and Responsibilities:

- a. Is responsible to the Governing Body.
- b. Shall engage in strategic planning for the future of the church, and in collaboration with the Ministry Teams, set the overall policy and direction of the church.
- c. Shall work with the staff, Ministry Teams and other laypersons to implement the Church's vision.
- d. Shall call an Annual Meeting of the Governing Body as set forth in Article 3.
- e. Shall call special meetings of the Governing Body as set forth in Article 3.
- f. May call other special meetings of the Governing Body at its discretion.
- g. Shall meet monthly.
- h. Shall keep a record of its proceedings.
- i. Shall hire any interim Pastor, establish the terms and conditions of employment of any interim Pastor, and have the authority to terminate a relationship with any interim Pastor.
- j. Shall establish the terms and conditions of employment of the Pastor(s), Music Minister and other employees.
- k. Shall establish and provide support to a Search Committee for a Pastor when there is a vacancy.
- l. May create committees and task forces as deemed necessary.

- m. Shall appoint members to fill vacancies for resigned Officers/Ministry Team leaders.
- n. Shall receive, review and act on requests from any Ministry Team for unbudgeted, extraordinary expenditures.
- o. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.

3. President

- a. Shall preside over all Congregational meetings and Council meetings.
- b. In consultation with members of the Council, sets all Council Agendas and Congregational Meeting Agendas.
- c. Shall sign all contracts, loans and deeds in the name of the Church as directed by Council.
- d. Shall provide an Annual Report of Council activities.

4. Vice President

- a. Shall be the Chairman of the Finance Committee.
- b. Shall be responsible for monitoring and reporting of all invested funds.
- c. Shall sign contracts, loans and deeds in the name of the Church as directed by Council.
- d. Shall preside over Council or Congregational Meetings upon delegation of the President.
- e. Shall provide an Annual Report of invested funds.

5. Treasurer

- a. Shall serve as a member of the Finance Committee.
- b. Shall receive duplicate deposit slips of all deposits made by the Financial Secretary.
- c. Shall pay all bills of the Church.
- d. Shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements.
- e. Shall provide monthly financial reports to the Council.
- f. Shall provide accurate payroll information to Payroll Service.
- g. Shall maintain custody of all documents relating to the property of the Church under the direction of the Council.

- h. Shall sign contracts, loans and deeds in the name of the Church as directed by the Council.
- i. Shall provide an Annual Report of activities.

6. Secretary

- a. Shall keep accurate records of all meetings of the Congregation and Council.
- b. Shall, with the assistance of the Church Administrator, keep a register of members with dates and modes of reception and removal, keep a record of baptisms, marriages and funerals, issue letters of transfer, preserve all official reports and communications, send out absentee ballots to members who request them in writing.
- c. Maintain current church policies.
- d. Shall provide an Annual Report of membership.
- e. Shall sign contracts, loans and deeds in the name of the Church as directed by the Council.

7. Ministry Teams

Each Team will be led by a Team Leader elected by membership at the Annual Meeting.

1. Worship Team – Committees:

Music and Worship: Consisting of 2-4 members plus the Pastor(s) and Music Minister. Responsibilities include supporting and planning all aspects of the Church's worship activities, securing volunteers, such as ushers/greeters, communion assistants, and hosts for coffee hour. Also responsible for chancel care, communion supplies, securing coverage for Pastor(s) and Music Minister as needed, coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Christian Education: Consisting of 1-2 members. Responsibilities include: overseeing of all educational opportunities, working with staff to support children's and adult's christian education, coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Parables (which is an interactive, “special-needs friendly” worship service that celebrates and empowers the gifts of all those with special needs ... and those without): Consisting of 3-5 members. Responsibilities include: supporting all aspects of the Parables worship, education and outreach activities, securing volunteers for worship and meals, coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

2. **Mission/Outreach Team – Committees:**

Missions: Consisting of 2-3 members. Responsibilities include: developing a mission and outreach attitude/awareness among the membership, promoting and executing mission and outreach activities of the Church, both locally and globally, exploring new avenues for service, coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Mission Trip: Consisting of 2-3 members. Responsibilities include: overseeing activities and funding of Mission Trips, coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Communications/Publicity: Consisting of 2-3 members. Responsibilities include: coordinating with all committees to promote and publicize Church events and programs, providing for Church communications with assistance of Office Administrator (i.e., website, social media, newsletter, photo directory, mailings, local newspapers), coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

3. **Member Caring Team – Committees:**

Member Caring/Fellowship: Consisting of 2-3 members. Responsibilities include: caring for church members, encouraging the involvement of new and continuing members in the life of the Church, engaging and coordinating activities to support members in need, planning and providing fellowship opportunities (i.e., picnic, harvest dinner, Easter breakfast, pancake supper, potlucks, receptions, etc.), assisting Pastor(s) with visitations, coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Subcommittee:

Wedding/Funeral: Consisting of 2 members. Responsibilities include: coordinating wedding services and funeral luncheons.

Stewardship: Consisting of 2 members; one member will serve on Finance Committee. Responsibilities include: overseeing the development and utilization of the Church's financial and member talents, soliciting, handling and acknowledging endowments, developing and implementing a plan to encourage giving, developing and implementing an annual stewardship drive, coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

4. **Facilities/Operations Team – Committees:**

Facilities Management: Consisting of 4 members. Responsibilities include: maintaining, preserving and improving all physical properties of the Church, performing and maintaining records of inventory, inspection and service for all equipment and properties, establishing priorities for repairs and improvements, securing and overseeing all custodial and contracted services, overseeing and coordinating all building rentals with the Office Administrator, coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Leadership Relations: Consisting of 2 members. Responsibilities include: serving as liaison for feedback between the Church's leadership, staff and congregation, annually conducting performance reviews of all employees of the Church, supporting and enhancing employee development and growth, coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Memorial: Consisting of 2 members. Responsibilities include: administering all memorial monies in consultation and approval of Council, contacting and consulting with families regarding gift suggestions, recording of gifts in Memorial book, writing acknowledgment for gifts, coordinating with the Finance Committee to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its responsibilities, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Finance: Consisting of 3 members: Vice President (chairman), Treasurer, and a member of the Stewardship Committee. Responsibilities include: securing a professional review of the Church's financial policies/procedures on a biennial basis, consulting with all committees in the preparation of the annual budget, developing a budget proposal to present to Council at the December meeting, presenting the proposed budget to membership for approval and adoption at the Annual Meeting, reporting regularly on its activities to the Council, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Financial Secretary: Responsibilities include: keeping a record of individual giving, making a semi-annual accounting to members of their particular donations, providing for the counting, recording, and depositing of all offerings taken at/for the Church, and keeping all financial information regarding individual members strictly confidential unless otherwise agreed upon by the affected party.

8. Ad Hoc Committees:

Ad Hoc Committee members shall be appointed by the Council and shall be responsible for reporting regularly on its activities to the Council and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Nominating: Consisting of 2 members. Responsibilities include: preparing a slate of candidates to serve on the Council and committees at least one month in advance of the Annual Meeting for election by the membership, reaching out to new members and encouraging their candidacy, advising in full all prospective candidates of the duties and responsibilities of the position for which they are seeking election and establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.

Constitution and By Laws: Consisting of 4 members: the Pastor, one Church officer, and two at-large members. It shall meet every three years, or more often if directed by the Council, to review the Constitution and By Laws of the Church and to recommend to the Council any changes.

Scholarship: Consisting of 3 members: one representative each from the Finance, Christian Education and Stewardship committees. Responsibilities include: notifying the membership of scholarship availability, establishing guidelines for scholarship awards, reviewing all scholarship applications, selecting recipient(s) based upon established guidelines, arranging for the presentation of the scholarship(s), reporting regularly on its activities to the Council, establishing, reviewing and revising policies and procedures related to its function and upon adoption, providing any such policies and procedures to the Secretary, and providing a written annual summary of its activities to the congregation for the Annual Meeting.

Pastoral Search: Consisting of 7 members appointed by the Council. It shall be responsible for: contacting the Conference Minister of the Michigan Conference of the UCC when the Church's Pastor vacates his/her office, following the guidelines established and recommended by the Michigan Conference of the UCC with regard to the pastoral search process, recommending and presenting a candidate for the office of Pastor to the congregation for its approval, and extending a Call to the approved candidate.

Membership Review: Consisting of 2 members appointed by Council in September of even numbered years. It will conduct a review of the membership to determine whether Active members are meeting their responsibilities (Article 5.C of the Constitution). It will contact and encourage renewed commitment to those active members not meeting their responsibilities, and in the absence of a demonstration of commitment, recommend movement to Inactive membership status.

Article 7. Finances

A. General Operating Fund

The General Operating Fund is the fund into which all members' regular offerings and other undesignated monies are deposited and out of which the Church's general expenses are paid.

B. Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund is a restricted fund for the long-term financial sustainability of the Church. Only income (per endowment policy guidelines) can be accessed.

C. Spaulding Fund

The Spaulding Fund is a restricted fund used for Children’s Programs.

D. Memorial Fund

The Memorial Fund is the fund where all general and specially designated memorial monies are deposited and used for the Church’s special and more immediate needs in consultation with surviving family members of the deceased. This fund is held in a separate bank account managed by the Memorial Committee.

E. Capital Improvement Fund

The Capital Improvement Fund is a restricted fund for the Church’s capital improvements.

F. Scholarship Fund

The Scholarship Fund is a restricted fund where all such designated monies are deposited and drawn for scholarships that the Scholarship Committee awards.

G. Operating Emergency Fund

The Operating Emergency Fund is a restricted fund to be used to cover budget shortfalls.

H. Mission Trip Fund

The Mission Trip Fund is a restricted fund where all such designated monies are deposited and drawn for mission trip activities.

Article 8. Dissolution of the Church

In the event of the dissolution of the Church, its assets and all property and interests of which it shall then be in possession of, including any devise, bequest, gift, or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after any such dissolution, shall be transferred to the Michigan Conference of the UCC in order to protect the Church's non-profit status.

Article 9. Amendments

Amendments to these By Laws must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the membership present, or represented by absentee ballot, at a called congregational meeting at which there is a quorum.

THIS CONSTITUTION AND THESE BY LAWS WERE APPROVED AND ADOPTED AT THE ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AT WHICH THERE WAS A QUORUM. THEY WENT INTO EFFECT IMMEDIATELY AND SUPERSEDE ALL OTHER CONSTITUTIONS AND BY LAWS OF THE CHURCH.

WITNESSED BY:

, President

, Secretary

, Pastor

APPENDIX 1
MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of our church is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to enable and encourage individuals to take responsibility for relationships to God, self, church, and community.

We are called together to worship God, to grow in God's Word, to share the Lord's Supper, and to join in fellowship so that we can go forth enlightened, strengthened, and empowered to minister to humankind as Jesus did.

We are committed to: 1) assisting people to grow spiritually; 2) being a caring, responsible congregation; 3) reaching out to our membership and the larger community easing their burdens and helping them to have faith in the midst of their own world knowing that God loves each of us.

APPENDIX 2
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST STATEMENT OF FAITH
IN THE FORM OF A DOXOLOGY

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

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

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

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

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

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.