



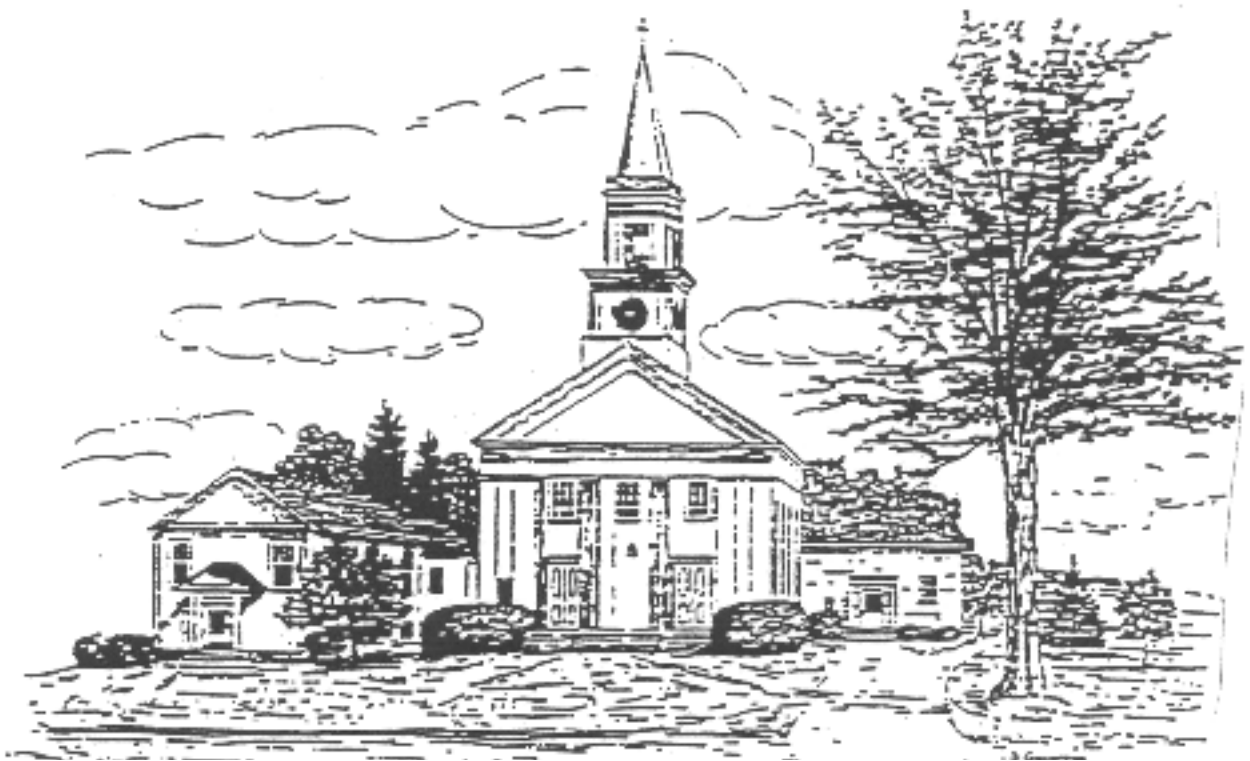
# GROVELAND

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C O N G R E G A T I O N A L

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# CHURCH



**Bylaws**

**Approved by Congregational Vote June 16 2019**

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### **Mission Statement:**

Our mission is to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ; to encourage faith, caring and hope among all God's people; to be joyful stewards by sharing our God-given talents and resources to enrich the lives of others.

### **Article I -Name**

The Name of this Church is the Groveland Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in Groveland, Massachusetts.

### **Section A Internal Revenue Service (501c3)**

The Internal Revenue Service has issued a ruling dated June 10, 1964, which as subsequently amended, grants blanket federal income tax exemption (NonProfit) to the United Church of Christ and the following:

- All Member Churches
- Conferences and Associations
- General Synod
- Executive Council
- Ministries
- Commissions and Councils
- Institutions related to the Council of Higher Education
- Health and Welfare Institutions related to the United Church of Christ.

The Internal Revenue Service Group exemption number of the United Church of Christ is 1665. Membership can be verified in the volume published annually titled "Yearbook United Church of Christ".

### **Section B Massachusetts Department of Revenue**

The Massachusetts Department of Revenue recognizes Groveland Congregational Church as tax exempt (NonProfit) by certificate 745531392.

## **Article II Preamble and Purpose**

The Groveland Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, and holds as truth the traditional doctrine of the Trinity: God as Father and Creator, Jesus as Son and Savior, and Holy Spirit as Guide and Comforter.

It further acknowledges as kindred in Christ all who share in the confession. It adheres to the Word of God in the Scriptures and in the direction of the Holy Spirit to prosper its redemptive mission in the world. It claims as its own the faith of the historic church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It accepts the responsibility to make this faith its own in the reality of worship and in the expression of its mission and ministry locally and into the world.

In accordance with the teachings of Jesus, it recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion. Its very existence is to serve God by providing all people an opportunity for Christian worship, education, fellowship, pastoral care and mission within the spirit of Christian love. It recognizes the current Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ as a guide to the practice of its faith and ministry. (See Article VIII)

## **Article III Governance**

### **Section A Congregationalism**

The governance of this church is vested in its members, in the tradition of New England Congregationalism, and operates in accordance with established principles of The United Church of Christ. The polity is determined by the action of the members at the Annual Meeting and when necessary, at specifically called church meetings.

### **Section B Policy and Procedure Document**

A Policy and Procedure Document shall be maintained and reviewed as needed by the Leadership. Temporary changes may be applied to the document by The Leadership given that the congregation is notified and the change is approved at the next congregational meeting.

## **Article IV Membership**

### **Section A - Membership**

#### **1. There are two primary member relationships with Groveland Congregational Church, Stewards and Partners, which are open to all those baptized in the Christian Faith.**

##### **a. Steward Responsibilities** (at least three of the following)

- i. Pray for the well being of the Church
- ii. Attend Church services
- iii. Tithe or provide financial support regularly
- iv. Share in the work of the Church
- v. Attend and vote at the annual meeting and or special meetings

##### **b. Partner Responsibilities** (at least two of the following)

- i. Pray for the well being of the Church
- ii. Occasional attendance
- iii. Claim Groveland Congregational as your Church
- iv. Give of your talents and treasures

##### **c. Members**

- i. The Members of this church shall be persons who have been received by recommendation of the Pastor and vote of the Leadership of the Church, by public acceptance of the church's covenant and at least one of the following:
  1. On presentation of satisfactory letter of transfer
  2. By reaffirmation of faith
  3. On confession of faith
  4. Through the Act of Confirmation
- ii. Reception: The public reception of Members shall be determined by the Pastor and Trustees of Worship.

**Section B – Termination:** Membership in this Church will cease under the following circumstances:

1. By letter of transfer. A member wishing to transfer membership to another church shall request such a transfer from the Pastor, Clerk, or the Leadership.
2. By letter of resignation. A member wishing to resign from membership may do so by notifying the Pastor, Clerk, or the Leadership in writing. This action shall be reported to the Clerk who will write a letter of dismissal from membership to the member resigning.
3. By death.

**Section C – Annual Review:**

The Pastor, Clerk, and Financial Secretary will annually review and notify Members of their present designation.

## **Article V The Ministries of the Church**

The Congregation is called by God to action and in turn calls on individuals to serve in a variety of capacities including but not limited to Leadership, Teams, and Employees all in service to the mission and ministries of the church.

The Officers, Trustees, and the Professional Clergy shall constitute the Leadership. The Leadership shall conduct the business and guide the actions of the church.

The Ministries of the Church shall include, but are not limited to:

- The Ministry of Faith Formation is helping community members grow in their faith.
- The Ministry of Hospitality is ensuring all are welcomed with biblical hospitality.
- The Ministry of Outreach is helping unchurched people into Christians' community.
- The Ministry of Stewardship is caring and nurturing of the gifts God has given to both the community and to the individual members.
- The Ministry of Worship is supporting the spiritual life of the church.

### **Section A Officers**

The Officers are elected annually and may serve consecutive terms. They are the Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary.

#### **1. Moderator**

- a. Shall preside at all business meetings
- b. Shall base all questions of parliamentary procedure upon "Robert's Rules of Order", except as may be specifically stipulated in these bylaws.
- c. Shall in the temporary absence of the Clerk appoint a Clerk pro-tem. In the temporary absence of the Moderator, a Trustee shall open the meeting and immediately proceed to the election of a Moderator pro-tem.

## **2. Clerk**

- a. Shall write the warrant, as submitted by The Leadership and to give legal notice for the Annual Meeting and all Special Church meetings.
- b. Shall keep accurate records of the above named meetings and post the minutes within thirty (30) days.
- c. Shall maintain the official register with dates that include status of membership, modes of reception, baptisms and marriages.
- d. Shall issue letters of transfer and record letters of dismissal.
- e. Shall conduct all correspondence related to the duties of the Clerk.
- f. Shall keep on file all communications and written reports until such time as it seems best to transfer these to the Church Historian.
- g. Shall provide a yearly summary of these activities to be included in the Annual Report.

## **3. Treasurer**

- a. Shall work in close cooperation with the Trustees and Financial Secretary.
- b. Shall disburse all monies of the church with the approval of the established policies of the Trustees.
- c. Shall ensure the maintenance of detailed financial records as required for adequate accounting procedures.
- d. Shall ensure all monies from pledges, bequests, trusts, investments, reserves and/or other sources of income as received, are transferred to the appropriate account, as directed by the Trustees.
- e. Shall hold and be responsible for the safekeeping of all accounts (checking and savings), stock certificates and other assets.
- f. Shall furnish a written report to each meeting of the Trustees and submit an Annual Report.



#### **4. Financial Secretary**

- a. Shall work in close cooperation with the Treasurer and Trustees at all times.
- b. Shall receive all monies of the church and promptly deposit said monies in the working account of the church as designated by the Trustees.
- c. Shall furnish the Treasurer with a detailed transmittal of the deposit within three (3) working days.
- d. Shall record pledged income to donor's statements.
- e. Shall furnish each pledging unit with a statement of pledge activity as often as considered necessary by the Trustees but no less than at the end of each calendar year as required by IRS regulations.
- f. Shall furnish a written report of all income activity to each meeting of the Trustees and submit an Annual Report.

## **Section B The Trustees**

The Ministries of the church shall be guided and supported by the Trustees.

1. Trustees are made up of Ministers and Shepherds.
  - a. There shall be one (1) Minister and one (1) Shepherd for each Ministry.
  - b. The Ministers shall provide guidance and support of Shepherds. The Ministers tasks shall be to set the overarching direction and vision of the church
  - c. The Shepherds shall work in partnership with the The Ministers and Teams by taking on the responsibilities, recurring duties, and normal tasks necessary for the operation of the church.
2. The Trustees of the church shall include:
  - a. The Trustees of Faith Formation
  - b. The Trustees of Hospitality
  - c. The Trustees of Outreach
  - d. The Trustees of Stewardship
  - e. The Trustees of Worship
3. Trustees are charged to oversee and guide the ministry and the life of the church.
4. Trustees bear fiduciary oversight and liability.
5. Trustees shall be responsible for the care of all property, real and personal, belonging to the church, and shall take all necessary measures for its protection, management and upkeep.
6. Trustees shall be elected at the annual meeting for a two year term.
  - a. The two year term of office will be divided as the first year as a Shepherd and the second year as a Minister.
  - b. Trustees may not serve consecutive terms.
  - c. Employees may not be a Trustee.
7. Trustees shall not exceed sums in excess of \$1,000 above budgeted amounts in any approved budget line item without approval at a congregational meeting.
8. Trustees shall in cases of emergency, or if deemed necessary, appoint a temporary, or assistant to the Treasurer and/or Financial Secretary.

## **Section C Vacancies**

If any vacancy occurs within the Officers, Trustees, or Other Elected Positions The Leadership will call a Nominating Team to bring a candidate to the congregation at a special church meeting within sixty (60) days of the vacancy. The congregation has the authority to overrule term limits at an annual or special meeting if necessary.

## Section D Professional Clergy

The Pastor/s shall be both preacher and teacher, administering the sacraments and fulfilling the pastoral office according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

1. Requirements:
  - a. Shall be an ordained minister, whose “Ministerial Standing” has been authorized by the Massachusetts Conference, Northeast Association, United Church of Christ.
  - b. Shall Preach the Gospel, administer the Sacraments, lead in worship and assist in providing a warm, Christian fellowship by developing and initiating programs for the spiritual benefit of the membership.
  - c. Shall be available to person/s who may need pastoral support.
  - d. Shall seek to know the membership of the church.
  - e. Shall assist the church in fulfilling its Christian responsibility to the wider Church.
  - f. Shall have knowledge of the total program of the church and be a member without vote of the Leadership, Teams and Organizations of the church.
  - g. Shall develop and maintain a Pastor and Parish Team to assist in fostering a healthy relationship between Pastor and congregation in order to enhance the effectiveness of the church’s mission.
  - h. Shall support and guide the confirmation program.
2. Should a vacancy occur in the Pastorate:
  - a. The Leadership shall act to provide continuation of religious services.
  - b. The Leadership shall work with the Massachusetts Conference to find and covenant with a qualified Interim Pastor until the church is prepared to call a Pastor. This candidate may come from any United Church of Christ Conference so long as the pastor is authorized to circulate a profile.
  - c. The Trustees shall initiate action to call a special church meeting for the purpose of electing a Team or Teams, which shall be charged with the responsibility of selecting a candidate for Pastor. It is suggested that the committee follow the current recommended denominational procedure in the selection of a candidate.
  - d. When the Team/s have a candidate, the church, at a Special Congregational Meeting, may elect a candidate by no less than a three-fourths (3/4) vote to extend a call to become the Pastor.
3. Involuntary Termination of the Pastor
  - a. The Leadership,(excluding the Pastor) with a 2/3 vote will recommend termination to the congregation.
  - b. At a Special Congregational Meeting, the recommendation must be approved by three-quarters (3/4) vote.

## Section E Teams

1. Ministry Teams are the backbone of the congregation. Ministry Teams can be formed either around a common interest or by direct invitation of The Leadership, however all teams need to be in relationship with one of The Shepherds.
  - a. Teams may be formed and reformed on a regular basis.
  - b. Teams completing a goal may dissolve upon completion.
  - c. Teams may bear responsibility for both long term and short term tasks
  - d. Teams do not need official minutes but need to use all the tools necessary to stay focused, ontrack and document their actions.
2. The following Standing Teams exist for the ongoing operation of the church. Each team will consist of at least 3 individuals, presented at the Annual Meeting.
  - a. Deacons will connect with the Ministry of Worship.
    - i. Shall be prepared to conduct the worship service in the Pastor's absence and provide all necessary equipment and supplies.
    - ii. Shall provide, prepare and serve the elements of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, Sacrament of Baptism and acceptance of new members.
    - iii. Shall provide ushers, greeters and acolytes and identify their specific duties.
  - b. Safe Church will connect with the Ministry of Stewardship
    - i. Shall be responsible for coordination of safety provisions to protect the church, congregation, volunteers, employees, teams Sunday school, and all others involved with the functioning of the church.
    - ii. Shall be a resource for the congregation, volunteers, employees, teams, Sunday school, Perry Park Preschool, and all others involved with the functioning and use of the church with regard to issues pertaining to the safety of the church and the people who utilize it.
  - c. Pastor Parish Relationship Team will connect with the Pastor
    - i. Shall be appointed by the pastor in consultation with the Leadership.
    - ii. Shall assist in fostering a healthy relationship between Pastor and congregation in order to enhance the effectiveness of the church's mission.
  - d. Nominating Team shall work in collaboration with the Leadership and shall be accountable to the congregation.
    - i. Shall present a slate of church Leadership, Other Elected Positions, and Standing Teams members for approval at the Annual Meeting.
    - ii. Shall submit a nominee to the church at a special church meeting for any vacancy.

## **Section F Employees:**

The Church charges the Trustees to hire, supervise, and terminate employees that assist the church in its Ministry and Mission.

1. The Trustees will provide the employee with a clear job description that makes it clear who that employee reports too. (See the Policy and Procedure Document for a current listing of employee position descriptions.)
2. There will be a Yearly Employment review.
3. The employee will be given fair and appropriate compensation.

## **Section G Other Elected Positions**

The following shall be elected annually:

1. **The Historian** will collect, arrange and preserve all church materials of historic value, establish an ongoing program of education, highlighting the church's historical significance, and report in writing to the Annual Meeting, and may serve consecutive terms.
2. **The Auditor** will examine the accounts of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary during the year and report in writing to the Trustees annually. They may serve consecutive terms.
3. **Scouting Coordinator** serve as the liaison between the church and the programs of the Scouts BSA. They may serve consecutive terms.
4. **Delegate(s) to the Massachusetts Conference United Church of Christ**, in accordance with the bylaws of the Massachusetts Conference United Church of Christ, shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to represent this church. Consecutive terms should be avoided.
5. **Delegates to the Northeast Association**, in accordance with the bylaws of the Northeast Association, delegates shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to represent this church. Consecutive terms should be avoided.

## **Section H Missional Organizations**

The church regards as an integral part of itself, any and all organizations, formed for the purpose of its ministry, which use the facilities of the church or its name. Each organization shall present a written report of its activities and finances to be included in the Annual Report. (Scouting organizations are exempt from financial reports). No new organization(s) may be formed without the approval of the church. (The current list of approved missional organizations is listed in the Policy and Procedure Document.)

## **ARTICLE VI – Meetings and Services**

**Section A – Meetings:** The Annual Meeting shall be held on the first Sunday of May. The nominee slate of the church shall be elected at that time and covenanted the second Sunday of May in worship.

1. Special church meetings may be requested in writing by the Pastor, the Leadership, or any ten (10) members. Special meeting requests will be submitted to the Clerk, and the warrant of such meeting shall specify the business to be considered.
2. All church meetings shall be called by the Clerk through written notice. At least Fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting, the notice shall be read on Sunday during regular worship and be sent to all members by mail, in the Bell or by electronic transmission such that the anticipated receipt is no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.
3. In order to conduct official church business at any regular or special meeting a quorum must be present. A quorum shall consist of twenty five percent (25%) of the current Stewards.
4. A majority vote shall be decisive unless otherwise specified in the bylaws.
5. A Member may cast an absentee ballot on the warrant as it exists in its original form.
  - a. A ballot may be requested by contacting the church office.
  - b. The ballot must be submitted in writing with the member's signature to the Clerk, prior to the meeting.
  - c. Absentee ballots will be included after a quorum exists.

**Section B – Services:** Worship services shall be held regularly at stated times, as arranged by the Pastor and the Trustees of Worship. The Sacraments of Holy Communion, Baptism and other special services shall be administered as determined by the Pastor and the Trustees of Worship.

## **Article VII Amendments**

These bylaws may be amended, modified or rescinded, or new bylaws may be adopted at any meeting of the church, provided that:

1. Due notice is given that such action is to be introduced. For the purpose of this article, due notice may consist of any of the following:
  - a. Written notice mailed to the membership approximately thirty (30) days prior to the date of such meeting,
  - b. Announcement from the pulpit at each regular worship service on not less than three(3) successive Sundays immediately prior to the date of said meeting.
2. Action on these matters shall require the approval of two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting where a quorum is present.
3. These bylaws, as voted at this meeting, shall supersede any and all bylaws previously adopted by the church. The bylaws shall be reviewed in increments of five (5) years, or at any time deemed necessary by the church.

## **Article VIII Supporting Documentation**

### **Section A: United Church of Christ Statement of Faith**

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his deeds we testify: He calls the worlds into being, creates man in his own image and sets before him the ways of life and death. He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin. He judges men and nations by his righteous will declared through prophets and apostles. In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, he has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to himself. He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races. He calls us into his church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, 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. He promises to all who trust him forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, his presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen. ([www.UCC.org](http://www.UCC.org) February 2019)



## **Section B: Organizational Chart**

### **1. Trustees (Ministers & Shepherds)**

- a. Trustees of Faith Formation
- b. Trustees of Hospitality
- c. Trustees of Outreach
- d. Trustees of Stewardship
- e. Trustees of Worship

### **2. Officers**

- a. Moderator
- b. Clerk
- c. Treasurer,
- d. Financial Secretary

### **3. Elected Positions**

- a. Historian
- b. Auditor
- c. Scout Coordinator
- d. MACUCC Delegate
- e. NEA Delegate

### **4. Key Concepts**

- a. Teams do the work and mission of the Church.
- b. The Pastor supports, teaches guides, and mentors the congregation, teams, trustees, and the church as a whole.
- c. Trustees are charged with legal and fiduciary responsibility.
  - i. Ministers work towards the overarching mission. and vision on the church
  - ii. The Shepherds support, guide, and mentor Teams.

