

BYLAWS OF CHRIST CHURCH UNITED IN LOWELL

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this Church shall be Christ Church United in Lowell (“CCU”).

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

The purposes of Christ Church United are to worship God, to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments recognized by the United Church of Christ (“UCC”); to strive for Christian love and unity within this Church and the worldwide Church; to render loving service toward all people; and to be active in the struggle for justice for those who are oppressed by economic, political or social systems.

ARTICLE III

FAITH AND COVENANT

1. CCU acknowledges that its members are followers of Jesus the Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of all who see God in his life, death, and resurrection. It acknowledges as brothers and sisters in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit as creative sources for the building of a better world. It respects traditions of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith relevant to its own time and place. It recognizes two Sacraments: Baptism and Communion.
2. We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and the Will of God. We propose to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of CCU to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ by our actions and in our community while worshipping God and striving for truth, justice, peace, and love. We depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We seek to recognize daily the presence of the Realm of God in our midst and we live in the hope for true righteousness and eternal life.

ARTICLE IV

POLITY

1. CCU, a parish of the UCC, has entered into a covenantal relationship with the member churches of the UCC.
2. The government of this church is vested in its members who, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, exercise the right of control in all its affairs in accordance with the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

ARTICLE V

MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership in CCU shall be open to any person who has been baptized, confirmed, or has made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
- B. Members of CCU shall pledge themselves to attend the regular worship of CCU and the celebration of Communion; to live the Christian life; to share in the life and work of CCU; to contribute to its support and benevolences; and to work to sustain the spiritual welfare of the membership and its community.
- C. Individuals desiring membership in CCU whether by affirmation of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or letter of transfer, shall request such membership of the Pastor or the Diaconate. Approval of such requests shall be by majority vote of the Diaconate.
- D. A member, upon written request to and approval by the Diaconate, shall receive a letter of transfer to another church or an acknowledgment of termination of membership in CCU.
- E. The membership of those who have neither participated in the regular worship of CCU nor contributed in its support for a period of two continuous calendar years, after notice and an opportunity to be heard, shall be transferred to inactive membership by majority vote of the Diaconate.
 1. Upon expiration of two years from the date of such transfer, the names of such inactive members shall, unless previously restored to the active list, be removed from the membership rolls by vote of two thirds of the members of the Diaconate.
 2. Inactive members, upon request to the Diaconate, shall be restored to the active membership list by majority vote of the Diaconate.
- F. Inactive members shall retain the privileges of membership but may not vote at regular or special meetings of CCU and may not serve on boards or committees of CCU.
- G. Associate Membership shall be available to members of CCU who reside for an extended time in a community distant from CCU and to individuals who reside in this area for an extended time but who wish to be affiliated with CCU without giving up their permanent church membership.
 1. Individuals desiring Associate Membership shall submit a request to the Pastor or the Diaconate. Approval of such requests shall be by majority vote of the Diaconate.
 2. Associate members will be accorded all privileges of membership except the right to vote at Congregational Meetings.

ARTICLE VI

GOVERNING BODY

Subject to the ultimate authority vested in the Congregation, the governing body of CCU shall be the Coordinating Council (convened by the Moderator), whose duties and responsibilities shall be as follows:

1. General

- A. To visualize, coordinate, review, and supervise the entire work of CCU.
- B. To have general superintendence over all boards, committees, and staff (including pastoral staff) of CCU.
- C. To employ, discipline, or discharge paid staff and volunteers, other than a Minister called to serve the Congregation in accordance with the congregation's personnel policies.

2. Worship

To work with the Diaconate to prepare for Sunday worship services, special services, weddings and funerals, and to maintain a sanctuary that encourages meaningful worship.

3. Faith Development

- A. To assure that meaningful Christian education is provided for children and adults.
- B. To assure that the necessary resources are provided for the educational mission of CCU.

4. Fellowship

- A. To promote faithful stewardship by the Congregation, including raising funds to support the annual budget and determining what special appeals for funds should be made.
- B. To provide opportunities and ways in which members of the Congregation can better know and relate to one another.
- C. To help members develop an atmosphere of welcome for members and nonmembers at all services and gatherings.

5. Outreach

- A. To develop and encourage an active missions program by the congregation, in terms of time, talents, and money.
- B. To educate the Congregation regarding mission needs.

- C. To assure that the Congregation is informed and educated as to opportunities for active service to meet the needs of those who are disadvantaged.

6. Administration

- A. To prepare an annual budget and to submit it to the Congregation for approval.
- B. To be responsible for the expenditure of CCU funds through the appropriate boards and committees and to monitor the expenditure of such funds.
- C. To authorize disbursement of funds from the Reserve Fund in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws.
- D. To administer, through the pastoral staff and appropriate boards and committees, all programs of CCU.
- E. To formulate and enact policies, rules and regulations governing the use of CCU's building and other church properties.
- F. To maintain adequate insurance for CCU.
- G. To appoint such ad hoc committees as it may deem necessary or appropriate, including a pastoral search committee in the event of a vacancy in the office of a full time ordained minister.
- H. To receive and act upon petitions or requests of groups or individuals.
- I. To resolve disputes between or among boards, committees, and staff.
- J. To respond, as needed, to matters of concern to CCU that do not fall within the scope of existing boards and committees.
- K. To plan the Annual Meeting and special Meetings, and to provide to the Congregation at least two Sundays prior to such meetings copies of items to be considered.
- L. To provide for an annual audit of the financial records of the Church, which may include a professional audit.
- M. To be responsible for ensuring the effective performance of all duties and responsibilities of all boards, committees, and staff.
- N. To develop and maintain policies and procedures that will support and promote a safe and loving environment for all who are involved in the life of CCU.
- O. To keep and preserve a true record of all its transactions which records shall become the permanent records of CCU.
- P. To do all other acts incidental to the performance of the foregoing duties and responsibilities or in

furtherance of the mission of CCU.

Meetings

1. The Coordinating Council shall meet at such times as it shall determine.
2. Meetings are open to all members of the Congregation.
3. Notice of all meetings shall be published in the church newsletter and in the Sunday Bulletin.
4. Minutes of meetings shall be available to all members of CCU.
5. Members of the Congregation who desire to bring business before the Coordinating Council shall provide a written summary to the Moderator of the matter they wish to present at least two full days before the Coordinating Council meeting.
6. Special meetings of the Coordinating Council may be called by the Pastor, the Moderator, any two members of the Coordinating Council or by petition from seven members of the Congregation.

ARTICLE VII

OFFICERS

The officers of CCU shall be the **Moderator, the Clerk, the Treasurer and the Counter**. The officers shall each be elected for a term of one (1) year. Subject to the authority vested in the Coordinating Council, the duties and responsibilities of the officers shall be as follows:

1. The Moderator

- a. To convene and preside at all official meetings of CCU.
- b. To convene and preside at all joint meetings of two or more boards of CCU.
- c. To act as advisor to the pastoral staff and other officers of CCU.
- d. To serve ex officio as a member of all boards and committees.
- e. To act as chairperson of the Coordinating Council.
- f. To be well informed with respect to the total life and ministry of CCU.
- g. To provide support and assistance to the Coordinating Council and to be sensitive to the advice of the Coordinating Council.
- h. To be responsive to the needs of CCU.

2. The Clerk

- a. To keep and preserve an accurate record of proceedings of all annual and special meetings of CCU and of all meetings of the Coordinating Council.
- b. To keep and preserve an accurate roster of the members of CCU with dates of their reception and removal.
- c. To record baptisms, marriages, and deaths.
- d. To issue letters of transfer voted by the Diaconate.
- e. To give legal notice of all meetings of CCU when such notice is required.
- f. To act as custodian of all permanent records of CCU except those records which under these Bylaws or the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, are to be maintained by another board, committee, or individual.
- g. To correspond when necessary or appropriate with individuals and other entities on behalf of CCU including forwarding of annual reports to the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC.
- h. To maintain a current copy of Robert's Rules of Order.
- i. To perform all other acts incidental to the performance of the aforementioned duties and responsibilities.
- j. To perform such other duties as are prescribed by law, assigned by the Coordinating Council, or as usually pertain to the Office of Clerk or Secretary of an assembly.

3. The Treasurer

- a. To oversee the bookkeeper.
- b. To sign checks.
- c. To attend Coordinating Council meetings and present to the Coordinating Council monthly statements of the finances of CCU.
- d. To help count the offering.
- e. To perform all other acts incidental to the performance of the aforementioned duties and responsibilities.
- f. To perform such other duties as are prescribed by law, assigned by the Coordinating Council, or as usually pertain to the office of Treasurer.
- g. Convene and chair meetings of the finance committee.

4. The Counter

- a. To receive and count, with the Treasurer, all monies from pledges, offerings, special collections or other sources. (Or in the absence of either or both, a member(s) of the Coordinating Council will help count.) The total of cash receipts should be recorded in writing and initialed by the people who counted the cash offering.
- b. To give the counted offerings, pledges, monetary gifts, and initialed records to the bookkeeper for deposit.
- c. To respect and maintain the confidentiality of those who give.
- d. To perform all other acts incidental to the performance of the aforementioned duties and responsibilities.
- e. To perform such other duties as are assigned by the Coordinating Council.

5. The Audit

The Finance Committee shall oversee an audit at the end of each fiscal year. The audit may be conducted by an external reviewer contracted for this purpose. The audit findings will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and a summary and recommendations reported to the Coordinating Council.

ARTICLE VIII

Boards and Committees

1. In addition to the Coordinating Council, the Boards and Committees of the Church shall be as follows:
 - a. Diaconate
 - b. Board of Trustees
 - c. Pastor/Parish Relations Committee
2. Subject to the authority vested in the Coordinating Council, the duties and responsibilities of the Boards and Committees shall be as follows:

1. Diaconate

- a. To maintain personal contact with the members of CCU to provide spiritual support and to minister to the ill and to those in special need, and to assure that there is a visitation program for the sick, bereaved, newcomers and those who have been absent from Sunday worship services.
- b. To promote church membership and regular attendance at worship services.
- c. To join with the Pastor in providing orientation to prospective members and to approve for membership in accordance with Article V those who earnestly desire church membership.

- d. To grant letters of transfer, to revise membership rolls in accordance with Article VII 2., and to communicate with members who have lost interest in church membership to encourage their return and active participation in the life of the Church.
- e. To constitute the advisory board for the Pastor in the administration and promotion of the spiritual needs of CCU.
- f. To work with and through the Pastor to establish the order and to enhance the tone and spirit of worship.
- g. To be responsible for the preparation of the Sanctuary for worship.
- h. To participate with the Pastor during the reception of new members and when the rite of Baptism is administered.
- i. To prepare and serve Communion at regular and special worship services and to designate, in the absence of the Pastor, an alternate to administer the Sacraments.
- j. To act as a temporary pastoral supply committee to provide interim ministry for CCU.
- k. To propose its annual budget for submission to the Coordinating Council, and to administer the approved Diaconate budget.
- l. To find, or provide, pulpit supply when the Pastor is absent.
- m. To execute all the other tasks assigned by the Coordinating Council
- n. Meetings of the Diaconate are open to all members of CCU.

2. Board of Trustees

- a. To maintain custody of the Permanent Funds and Savings Accounts of CCU.
- b. To invest such funds, together with future additions thereto, in such manner as is deemed suitable and proper for Trustees under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- c. To maintain continuous records of all gifts, past, present and future, including the purpose for which the income is to be used, the principal amount, and the manner in which it is invested.
- d. To ensure that funds received from designated or restricted gifts, bequests, memorial funds, and the like are expended in accordance with the instructions of the donors, testators, legal representative, or family members of the decedent.
- e. To make appropriate determination and disposition of funds when designated gifts,

bequests, memorial funds, and the like are deemed to be inconsistent with the plans, policies, or best interests of CCU, subject to final approval by the Coordinating Council and the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

- f. To solicit, promote, and encourage the making of gifts, bequests, memorials, and the like to CCU.
- g. To provide to the members of CCU annual reports of income earned from the investment of the Permanent Funds and Savings Accounts of CCU. To provide to the members of CCU a report relating to CCU's fiscal year indicating the principal of the Permanent Funds and Savings Accounts, the manner in which such funds were invested, income earned or generated, and their disposition. The annual audit will include verification of the endowment holdings and expenditures.
- h. To advise the Coordinating Council, at its meeting immediately preceding the Annual Meeting of CCU, as to the amount of available income to be used for general and special purposes for the upcoming fiscal year.
- i. To withdraw principal from Permanent Funds upon approval by the Congregation; withdraw income from Permanent Funds and to withdraw income and principal of the Savings Accounts, upon the signature of any one Trustee.
- j. To execute diligently and effectively other duties and responsibilities assigned to it by the Coordinating Council.
- k. Meetings of the Board of Trustees are open to all members of CCU.

3. Pastor/Parish Relations Committee

- a. To consult with and to advise the Pastor and other ordained staff regarding pastoral concerns.
- b. To consult with members of the Congregation regarding matters of concern related to the Pastor and other ordained staff.
- c. To provide an informal forum to resolve conflicts between or among the Pastor, ordained staff, and members of the Congregation.
- d. To recommend to the Coordinating Council, for submission to the Annual Meeting, changes in pastoral salaries and conditions of employment.
- e. To perform such other duties as are assigned by the Coordinating Council.

ARTICLE IX

COMPOSITION OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES AND TERMS OF OFFICE

1. The Boards and Committees of the Church shall consist of the following members:
 - a. Diaconate – six (6) members, each of whom shall be elected to serve a one year term.
 - b. Board of Trustees – three (3) members, one of whom shall initially be elected for a three year term, one of whom initially elected for a two year term and one of whom initially elected for a one year term. One successor trustee shall be elected annually for a three year term.
 - c. Pastor/Parish Relations Committee – Three (3) members, one of whom shall be selected by the Pastor and each of whom shall be elected annually for a one year term.
 - d. Church Coordinating Council – Twelve (12) members including the Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Pastor, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, the Chair of the Diaconate and six (6) at large members.
2. The terms of office shall be as follows:
 - a. Moderator One member elected annually for a one year term but who after having served three successive terms shall be ineligible for re-election for one (1) year.
 - b. Treasurer, Clerk and Counter – One member each to be elected annually for a one year term.
 - c. At large Members – six members each elected annually for a one year term.
3. There shall be elected annually two (2) delegates to the Andover Association and the Massachusetts Conference, each of whom shall serve a one year term.
4. It is intended that all officers and members of Boards and Committees shall continue in office until successors are elected. In the event any officer or member cannot serve until the end of their term then a replacement may be appointed by the Coordinating Council. The replacement shall serve out the remainder of term of the person replaced.

ARTICLE X

STAFF

1. The staff shall be comprised of the Pastor, other ordained and non-ordained staff (as the case may be) including but not limited to the Sexton and Administrative Secretary.
2. Calling of the Pastor
 - a. The Pastor shall be recommended by a pastoral search committee appointed by the Coordinating Council and called by CCU whenever a vacancy occurs. The pastoral relation may be dissolved by either the Pastor or the Congregation by giving 90 days written notice of such intention to the Congregation through the Diaconate (by the Pastor) or through the Moderator (by the Congregation).
 - b. Duties of the Pastor

- (1) To preach the Word of God and Jesus Christ.
- (2) To have a central place of leadership in all affairs of CCU.
- (3) To supervise the ordained and non=ordained staff.
- (4) To administer the Sacraments.
- (5) To promote in all ways the spiritual welfare of CCU and those of whom it serves.
- (6) To become a member of CCU as soon as convenient after assuming the duties.
- (7) To serve exofficio as a member of all boards and committees with all of the privileges of an elected member, but in the Coordinating Council will have a vote.
- (8) To preside at meetings of CCU in the absence of the Moderator except when matters concerning the Pastor are being considered.
- (9) To make a report of the year's work at the Annual Meeting.
- (10) To request standing in the Andover Association of the UCC.
- (11) To represent CCU and participate in the life and activities of the Massachusetts Conference, Andover Association, and other organizations of clergy.
- (12) To recommend that the Coordinating Council employ, discipline, or discharge paid staff.
- (13) To perform the duties listed in the Call.

c. Salary and Benefits

The salary, benefits, and all other conditions of employment of the Pastor shall be set by vote of the Congregation.

3. Calling of other fulltime ordained, commissioned, or licensed staff

- a. All full time ordained staff shall be recommended by a pastoral search committee appointed by the Coordinating Council and called by the Congregation whenever a vacancy occurs. Such call shall be framed so as to involve an indeterminate period of service. The pastoral relation may be dissolved by such ordained staff member or the Congregation by giving a 60 days written notice of such intention to the congregation through the Diaconate (by such ordained staff member) or to the ordained staff member by the Moderator by the Congregation).
- b. Other full time ordained, commissioned, or licensed staff shall perform the duties listed in the Call and such other duties as are assigned by the Pastor.

- c. The salary, benefits, and conditions of employment shall be set by vote of the Congregation.
4. Part time ordained, commissioned, or licensed staff
- a. The Coordinating Council may employ part time ordained, commissioned, or licensed staff as needed.
 - b. Duties of part time ordained, commissioned, or licensed staff shall perform the duties listed in the contract of employment and such other duties as are assigned by the Pastor.
 - c. The salary, benefits, and conditions of employment of part time ordained, commissioned, or licensed staff shall be set by the Coordinating Council.
5. Non-ordained Staff
- a. The non-ordained staff shall consist of the Sexton, the Administrative Secretary, and such other non-ordained staff as the Coordinating Council may from time to time employ.
 - b. The duties, salary and benefits of all non-ordained staff shall be governed by the provisions of Article X, Section 4.b. and c., relating to part time ordained, commissioned, or licensed staff.

ARTICLE XI

FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on January 1 and shall end on December 31.

ARTICLE XII

BUSINESS MEETINGS

1. Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of CCU shall be held during the month of December, the exact date to be fixed by the Coordinating Council. The purpose shall be to receive the annual reports of the officers, boards and committees, and pastoral staff; to receive and act upon the proposed budget; to elect officers and to consider any other business as may be specified in the Warrant.

2. Special Meetings

Special meetings shall be called by the Moderator at the request of the Pastor, the Coordinating Council, or seven (7) active members of CCU, and the notice shall specify by whom such meeting was requested.

3. Notice

The purpose and nature of the business to be transacted shall be as specified in the Warrant signed by the Moderator or by the Clerk in the Moderator's absence. A copy of the Warrant for Annual and Special Meetings shall be posted conspicuously in the Narthex and in Fellowship hall and shall be mailed to all active members at least two (2) Sundays prior to such meetings.

4. Quorum

- a. Annual and Special Meetings – Twenty (20) members of CCU entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum at any annual or special meeting of the Congregation. It shall be presumed that a quorum is present at such meetings unless the issue of the validity of the quorum is raised.
- b. Boards and Committees – A majority of members of each Board or Committee shall constitute a quorum at meetings of Boards and Committees.

5. Voting

All active members shall be eligible to vote at all meetings of the Congregation unless otherwise precluded by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Unless otherwise required, a majority vote is decisive.

6. Conduct of Meetings

All business meetings of CCU shall be conducted according to the customary usages of deliberative assemblies and "Robert's Rules of Order" (latest revision) shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII

LIABILITY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1. The Pastor, staff, officers and members of the Coordinating Council shall not be personally liable for any debt, liability or obligation of CCU. If any of the foregoing should be held liable for any such debt, liability or obligation of CCU, such person shall be fully indemnified by CCU.
2. All persons, corporations or other entities extending credit to, contracting with, or having any claim against CCU may look only to the funds and property of CCU for payment of such debt, liability or obligation of CCU for the payment of any debt, damages, judgment or decree or for any other amount that may become due and payable for CCU.
3. Except when otherwise provided by law, no contract or other transaction entered into on behalf of CCU by the Pastor, staff, officers or members of the Coordinating Council shall, in the absence of fraud, be affected or invalidated by the fact that any such person is an officer, director, shareholder, member, employee or agent of any association, firm or corporation, which may be a party to or have any interest (pecuniary or otherwise) in any such contract or other transaction.

ARTICLE XIV

PROPERTY

1. CCU may in its corporate name sue or be sued, acquire by purchase, gift, devise, bequest or otherwise own, hold, invest, reinvest or dispose of property both real and personal for such work as CCU may undertake; it may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer and convey such property for the general purposes of CCU; and it may receive and hold in trust both real and personal property and invest and reinvest the same and make any contracts for promoting the objects and purposes of CCU.
2. Upon dissolution of CCU, its assets and all property and interests of which it shall then be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after such dissolution, shall be transferred to the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC.

ARTICLE XV

RESERVE FUND

1. A Reserve Fund has been established to be held by the Board of Trustees. This Fund shall be reserved for extraordinary repairs, replacements, maintenance of CCU property, or such other purposes as the Congregation may determine and shall continue to be held by the Board of Trustees.
2. Any excess of income over expenditure available at the end of each Fiscal Year shall be added to the Reserve Fund unless the Congregation, by majority vote, specifies another use.
3. Disbursements from the Reserve Fund shall be made by the Treasurer for extraordinary repairs

replacements, or maintenance by vote of seventy-five (75%) percent of the members of the Coordinating Council, or for any purpose by majority vote of the Congregation.

ARTICLE XVI
ADOPTION OF BYLAWS

Upon adoption, these Bylaws will supersede all previous Bylaws and amendments of CCU.

ARTICLE XVII
AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these Bylaws may be adopted at any duly called business meeting of the Congregation by a two thirds affirmative vote of the members present; notice of the proposed amendment shall be given in accordance with the provisions of Article XII, Section 3.

Revised: October 31, 2004