

# APPROVED BY-LAWS

April 30, 2017



First Church of Christ ~ Simsbury, CT

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**First Church of Christ and  
Ecclesiastical Society of Simsbury, Inc.  
689 Hopmeadow Street  
Simsbury, CT 06070**

**FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST and**  
**ECCLESIASTICAL SOCIETY OF SIMSBURY INCORPORATED**  
**BY-LAWS**

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**BYLAWS FOR THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST  
AND ECCLESIASTICAL SOCIETY OF SIMSBURY, INCORPORATED  
ADOPTED AND APPROVED [April 30, 2017]**

**I. NAME and AFFILIATION**

The name of the organization shall be The First Church of Christ and Ecclesiastical Society of Simsbury, Incorporated (hereafter, First Church or the Church), a Connecticut corporation operating under the laws of the State of Connecticut. First Church is affiliated with the United Church of Christ (UCC) and is a member church of the Connecticut Conference of the UCC and the Farmington Valley Association.

**II. MISSION and PURPOSE:**

To call a Congregation to be faithful to the Gospel and to experience fulfillment through spiritual and personal commitment to the word of God as revealed through the ministry and teachings of Jesus Christ, and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

**III. MEMBERSHIP**

The Church welcomes to its membership all who desire to unite with it as followers of Jesus Christ in worship of God and service to humanity by entering into covenant with the Church. Led by God's Spirit, we welcome, respect and affirm all people, without regard to sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, race, ethnicity, gender, age, marital status, economic circumstance, or physical, emotional or mental ability. Requests for membership or reinstatement of active membership should be made to one of the ordained ministers or a member of the Board of Worship.

**IV. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Members whose addresses have been unknown for two years or who for two years have not remained in relationship with the Church or contributed to its support may, after a review and recommendations to that effect by the Board of Worship, be transferred to an inactive list. From the date of such transfer, such persons shall cease to be reported on the active membership roll.

Requests for letters of transfer of membership from First Church shall be processed by the Church Office as delegated by the Board of Worship.

**V. ORGANIZATION**

**A. Corporate Officers**

The corporate officers shall be: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Clerk, and Senior Minister. All corporate officers, except the Senior Minister, shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Church in even numbered years for a term of two years. If a corporate officer is unable to complete a term of office, a replacement shall be appointed at a duly called Executive Council meeting. A special situation exists for calling the Senior Minister, see section XXVI A 2.

## B. Duties of the Corporate Officers

1. President - The President is the chief executive officer of the Church and shall preside over all meetings of the Church and the Executive Council. The President shall be responsible for calling meetings of these bodies, and shall be a voting member thereof. A candidate for the office of President shall previously have served as Vice President or been a member of the Executive Council.
2. Vice President - The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of, or at the request of, the President. A candidate for this office shall have previously served as a member of the Executive Council. The Vice President shall be a voting member of the Board of Personnel, and an ex-officio member of the Panel of Delegates and such other Boards or Committees as assigned by the President.
3. Clerk - The Clerk shall make a true record of all business transacted at meetings of the Church and the Executive Council. The Clerk shall cause to be kept all records of the Church and legal notices of meetings, and shall perform such other duties as usually pertain to this office.
4. Treasurer - The Treasurer shall have charge of the funds of the Church, and shall cause the disbursement of funds under the policies set by the Church, shall present the annual budget to the Congregation and shall perform such other duties as usually pertain to this office.
5. Senior Minister - The Senior Minister is the spiritual leader of the Church and a voting member of the Executive Council.
6. Ex-Officio Members - The President, Vice President, and Senior Minister shall be ex-officio members of all Boards and Committees, with nonvoting status except as defined above. The Senior Minister may delegate this responsibility to an Associate Minister.

## C. Boards and Committees

1. All Board, elected Committee, and Panel of Delegates members must be active members of the church.
2. Subcommittees and ad hoc committees may be appointed by the Executive Council or the various Boards, may be discharged by the appointing body and need not be staffed by members of the Church.
3. Minutes of all meetings held by Committees, Boards, and the Executive Council are to be completed in a timely fashion. The Heritage Committee must receive copies of all minutes.
4. The Executive Council and all Boards shall meet regularly from September through June, and in July and August as needed, to carry out their responsibilities.
5. All Board and Committee Chairs shall be responsible for ensuring that annual spending does not exceed their approved respective budget and for reviewing all expenses for said budgets

in accordance with the Financial Approval and Signature Authority Policy dated December 7, 2015, as amended from time to time.

6. Board and Committee Chairs for the following program year are to be elected by Board or Committee members at least two weeks before the Annual Meeting of the Congregation, with the name of the elected person reported to the Executive Council and the Chair of the Nominating Committee. Chair rotation is encouraged, and ordinarily a Board or Committee Chair will serve in that capacity for no more than two consecutive years.
7. Except as described in Section XVI D of these By-Laws, no member of any Board or Committee may serve more than two consecutive terms. Individuals filling an unexpired term will be eligible to serve two terms following the expiration of the unexpired term.
8. Each Board may select from the membership of the Church, including such Board's membership, such Committees as it deems necessary.

D. Risk Management:

The Executive Council shall annually review and determine that adequate risk management policies and procedures are in place, including: appropriate vehicle, real property, professional, workers' compensation, officer and director liability insurance policies; Safe Church policies; and funds handling policies.

VI. **GOVERNING BODY**

- A. The governing body of the Church shall be its membership present at a Church meeting. The vote of a majority present at the meeting shall be the action of the Church, provided a quorum is present.
- B. Seventy-five members shall constitute a quorum for all Church meetings. Any member from the active membership roll may vote at a Church meeting.
- C. Church Meetings
  1. There shall be a Financial Meeting of the Church during the first calendar quarter of each year, the purpose of which shall be to receive financial reports, discuss and approve an operating expense budget for the year and transact any other business proper to be brought before the Church.
  2. There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Church during the second calendar quarter of each year, the purpose of which shall be to receive program reports; elect officers, Board and Committee members; and transact any other business proper to be brought before it. Officers, Board members and Committee members (unless otherwise provided herein) newly elected at the Annual Meeting shall take office as of June 1. Each Board and Committee shall hold a joint meeting of new and continuing members after the Annual Meeting.

3. Special meetings of the Church may be called by a majority vote of the Executive Council and must be called by the President upon receipt by the President of a written request from any twenty-five members of the Church.
4. The Clerk shall provide at least two weeks' notice to the membership of all meetings by publication in the Church bulletin or by email or direct mailing, except in cases of emergency.
5. Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority.

## VII. **EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

- A. The Executive Council shall be the primary policy-making, strategic planning and operational oversight body of the Church. As such, the Executive Council must approve all Church policies. The procedures for implementing these policies are left to the various Boards and Committees.

The Executive Council shall have complete power to act for and on behalf of the Church, except with respect to those duties specifically delegated by these By-Laws to meetings of the Church or those matters on which a meeting of the Church has acted.

The Executive Council shall appoint such Committees as it deems necessary, and may, when necessary, invite the Chairs of appointed Committees to attend Executive Council meetings. Members of the Congregation and any representative of Church organizations may attend Executive Council meetings as non-voting attendees. The President shall serve as the Chair of the Executive Council.

- B. The Executive Council shall consist of the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, the Clerk, the Senior Minister, any Associate Minister, and the Chairs of the Boards of Mission and Outreach, Christian Education, Trustees, Worship, Stewardship, Music, Personnel, Nominating, Deacons, Communications and Public Relations, and the Panel of Delegates. Each member shall have one vote. The Church Administrator and the Chair of the Heritage Committee are ex-officio members.
- C. The Executive Council shall meet monthly or as needed. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority.
- D. The Executive Council shall oversee the employment of all non-ordained professional staff. It will be assisted in this responsibility by recommendations from the appropriate Boards and Committees.
- E. The Executive Council has authority to approve any borrowing or spending subject to the following limits:
  - i) Borrowing: The Executive Council, with agreement of the Board of Finance, may borrow from third parties an amount such that the outstanding balance of all such borrowing does not exceed \$50,000. Any borrowing in excess of that amount requires approval by the majority vote of the Congregation at a duly called Church meeting.

- ii) Spending: The Executive Council may authorize spending in excess of the total operating budget in an amount of up to \$10,000 per year. Any additional spending above that amount requires prior agreement of the Board of Finance.
- F. The Executive Council shall approve annually the members of the Nominating Committee, the Pastoral Relations Committees, the Financial Review Committee, the Memorial Garden Committee, the Communications and Public Relations Committee, and if necessary, the Advisory Committee on Church Development. Members-at-large for the By-Laws Committee shall be appointed every two years, on the off year of election of Officers.
- G. The Executive Council shall each year commission the President and Vice President to conduct a performance evaluation of the Senior Minister and any Associate Ministers. The President and Vice President shall solicit input from members of the Congregation and staff, as they deem appropriate, and the Chair of the Board of Worship, and shall prepare the evaluation in accordance with guidelines suggested by the Board of Personnel. Upon completion, the evaluation shall be delivered to each minister by the President and Vice President.
- H. The Executive Council shall have overall responsibility for the Church's Boards and Committees, which shall report their activities to the Executive Council. The quorum for all Boards and Committees, and the Executive Council shall be a simple majority. Nominations to fill membership vacancies on any Board or Committee must be approved on an interim basis by the Executive Council.
- I. The Executive Council shall be responsible for appointing any search committees for ordained staff.
- J. The Executive Council shall review and approve the Board of Finance recommended Church budget for presentation to, and approval by, the Congregation at the annual Financial Meeting.
- K. Annually, preferably in September, the President, assisted by the Vice President, shall review with the Executive Council the Church By-Laws.

VIII. **BOARD OF MISSION AND OUTREACH**

A. Purpose

The Board of Mission and Outreach shall identify, interpret, and implement the outreach mission of the Church.

B. Responsibilities and Authority

The Board of Mission and Outreach shall be responsible for and have authority to:

- 1. Identify social and moral issues or practices with which Christians should be concerned. It shall make recommendations to the Executive Council on any such issues on which it feels the

Church should be informed or take action. While the Board may express its views on such issues, it shall not of itself take a stand on any social or moral issue in the name of the Church.

2. Recommend programs or means to the Executive Council by which the Church can contribute to the progress and improvement of people's social or spiritual lives everywhere. The Board shall be responsible for relating the life of First Church to its community.
3. Recommend to the Executive Council the establishment of all mission-related offerings and be responsible for administering these funds.

C. Composition

The Board shall consist of up to twelve members elected at the Annual Meeting of the Church. Up to four members shall be elected each year for three-year terms.

**IX. BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

A. Purpose

The Board of Christian Education shall provide and maintain an effective program of Christian education.

B. Responsibilities and Authority

The Board of Christian Education shall be responsible for and have authority to:

1. Establish Christian Education policy.
2. Develop curriculum.
3. Define space and equipment needs.
4. Enlist and train workers in the Christian education functions of the Church.
5. Provide input on the performance of Christian Education staff including the Associate Minister for Youth and Young Adults and the Director of Children's Ministries. The Board also may provide input related to the recruitment and retention of Christian Education staff.

C. Composition

The Board shall consist of up to nine members elected at the Annual Meeting of the Church. Up to three members shall be elected each year for three-year terms. The Associate Minister for Youth and Young Adults and the Director of Children's Ministries shall be ex-officio members of the Board.



X. **BOARD OF WORSHIP**

A. Purpose

The Board of Worship, with the ordained ministers, shall lead the spiritual life of the Church.

B. Responsibilities and Authority

The Board of Worship shall be responsible for and have authority to:

1. Provide services of public worship and establish their nature and order; assist in the administration of the sacraments of baptism and communion and represent the Congregation in other special services; provide an atmosphere conducive to worship (music, flowers, order); provide for ushering and receiving the offering.
2. Provide Christian fellowship among the congregation, call upon and welcome new members and introduce new families into the life of the Church and encourage mutual Christian concern among the members.
3. Establish guidelines for receiving new members; removing members from active membership; and maintaining the membership list.
4. Encourage the growth of individuals as Christians; assist the Congregation to understand and participate in worship.
5. Interpret the role of the Church in the spiritual life of its community.

C. Composition

The Board of Worship shall consist of twelve members. Four members shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Church each year for a term of three years.

D. Board Coordination

Consistent with its role in the worship life of the Church, the Board of Worship shall select one of its members to work in association with the Board of Music Ministries as needed.

XI. **BOARD OF FINANCE**

A. Purpose

The Board of Finance shall be responsible for supervision of the management and expenditure of funds necessary for operation of the Church and for maintenance of appropriate records of all financial transactions. The Board of Finance shall be responsible for establishing the investment policy for endowments and other major monetary assets, for ensuring adherence to that policy in investment decisions, and for interpreting and safeguarding endowment fund restrictions imposed by gifting and other appropriate documentation.

## B. Responsibilities and Authority

The Board of Finance shall be responsible for and have authority to:

1. Oversee the collection of funds necessary for the operation of the Church.
2. Make recommendations to the Executive Council for any necessary borrowing.
3. Manage endowment funds according to endowment policy approved by a majority vote of the Congregation at a duly called Church meeting.
4. Approve for payment and disburse funds for necessary and authorized Church expenses in excess of amounts provided for in the annual budget or approved by the Executive Council as provided in Section VII.E of these By-Laws.
5. Maintain proper and adequate records of all income received and funds disbursed. Submit to the Congregation at the annual Financial Meeting a complete accounting of Church income and expenses and other pertinent financial information. Furnish periodic financial reports as directed by the Executive Council. Provide safekeeping for all funds under Board of Finance control.
6. Prepare an annual budget of income and expenses for presentation to the Executive Council and ultimate presentation to the Congregation at the annual Financial Meeting.
7. Oversee and coordinate administration by the Church office of Church financial data, systems and records and provide support to other Boards and Committees in the use of Church financial systems and data.
8. Approve an annual budget request for Church office administration expenses, including information technology requirements.
9. Monitor all financial operations and provide input to the Church Administrator or Senior Minister, as appropriate, the performance of the financial staff.
10. Consult with the Board of Trustees, which has overall responsibility for real and personal property of the Church, on financial matters relating to Church property.

## C. Composition

The Board shall consist of up to nine members plus the Treasurer, who shall be Chair. Three members of the Board (excluding the Treasurer, who is elected under the provisions of Section IV.A of these By-Laws) shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Church each year for three-year terms.

#### D. Committees

The Board shall appoint the following Committees of such size and composition as it deems desirable: 1) Budget and Planning Committee, 2) Endowment and Investments Committee, and 3) Operations and Collections Committee.

The Budget and Planning Committee shall be responsible for assembling and preparing the annual budget, and any revisions thereof. The Endowment and Investments Committee shall be responsible for making recommendations to the Board regarding the management and structure of the endowment funds, and shall provide financial advice and counsel to the other Boards and Committees. The Operations and Collections Committee shall be responsible for the bookkeeping, controlling and reporting of receipts and expenditures in accordance with the approved budget.

### XII. **BOARD OF MUSIC MINISTRIES**

#### A. Purpose

The Board of Music Ministries shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining musical programs that support the spiritual life and the various programs of the Church.

#### B. Responsibilities and Authority

The Board shall be responsible for and have authority to:

1. Establish policy concerning music programs for the Church.
2. Develop curriculum and programs.
3. Define space and equipment needs.
4. Enlist and train workers in the music ministry functions of the Church.
5. Provide input to the Senior Minister on the performance of the Director of Music Ministries. The Board also may provide input related to the recruitment and retention of music ministry staff.
6. Oversee the music ministry programs of the Church including, but not limited to all choirs, special music, music education, music camps, music during Church school, and all worship services.

#### C. Composition

The Board shall consist of up to seven members elected at the Annual Meeting of the Church. It shall be the intent that two of the members not be participants in any musical ensembles of the Church. Members shall serve three-year terms. The Director of Music Ministries and any other music staff shall be ex-officio members of the Board.

D. Board Communication and Coordination

The Board shall select one of its members to communicate and coordinate with the Board of Christian Education, and another of its members to communicate and coordinate with the Board of Worship.

XIII. **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

A. Purpose

The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for managing and maintaining all the real and personal property of the Church, including vehicles.

C. Responsibilities and Authority

The Board of Trustees shall have responsibility for and authority to:

1. Care for and manage the real and personal property of the Church. All property management contracts shall be approved by the Board and supervised by the Church Administrator.
2. Establish expense reimbursement fees for the use of Church facilities by outside groups, and establish compensation fees with the agreement of the Board of Finance. The Board of Trustees has the authority for the purchasing or leasing of personal property within its established budget.
3. Keep a record of its votes and actions, which shall be open to inspection at any meeting of the Church.
4. Provide input to the Church Administrator on the performance of custodial staff.
5. Regularly review with the Church Administrator the maintenance and capital needs of the church. The Board shall coordinate with the Church Administrator the work of the custodial staff, which shall report to and take direction from the Church Administrator.

D. Composition

The Board shall consist of up to nine members elected at the Annual Meeting of the Church. Up to three members shall be elected each year for three-year terms.

XIV. **BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP**

A. Purpose

The Board of Stewardship shall be responsible for raising the financial resources to meet the

Church's budget and providing education and communication with the Congregation on ways of faithfully giving of one's time, talent, and treasure for Christ's work.

B. Responsibilities and Authority

The Board of Stewardship shall be responsible for and have authority to:

1. Direct the stewardship efforts to financially support the ministry programs of the Church.
2. Develop, implement, and maintain an educational ministry for faithful stewardship, built on the foundations of the tithe, planned giving, and Christian service.
3. Organize the leadership of the Church and other workers to support the stewardship program.
4. Periodically and faithfully communicate to the Congregation the philosophy of faithful giving as responsible stewards and the progress of the stewardship program against plans and expectations.
5. Identify the talents, experience and interests of Church members for Christian service opportunities.
6. Organize a planned giving program for the Church and provide periodic evaluations to the Congregation on planned giving.

C. Composition

The Board shall consist of up to eight members of the Church, with six members elected by the Congregation, and one member from each of the Board of Finance and the Board of Mission and Outreach. The two members elected annually by the Congregation shall serve a three-year term and may serve two consecutive terms.

D. Committees

The Board shall appoint a Committee for Endowment Development, and any other committees of such size and commission as it deems desirable, to accomplish the ministries of the Board. The Committee for Endowment Development shall be responsible for developing, coordinating, and promoting a program of planned giving for the Church.

XV. **BOARD OF PERSONNEL**

A. Purpose

The Board of Personnel has oversight responsibility for the human resources activities of the Church.

## B. Responsibilities and Authority

The Board of Personnel shall be responsible for and have authority to:

1. Generate and maintain organization charts identifying supervisory authority and reporting relationships for ordained, professional and administrative staff.
2. Collaborate with supervisors, as needed, to review and update position descriptions. The President and Vice President shall be responsible for revisions to the Senior Minister's position description.
3. Assure that annual performance evaluations of Church professional and administrative staff are completed in consultation with their respective supervisors and the appropriate Board or Committee, as appropriate, and ensure that employee feedback is part of the performance evaluation process.
4. Review current remuneration for the following positions in preparation for establishing the annual salary budget using current salary surveys and other available data as appropriate and as outlined in the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual:
  - Ordained Staff
  - Director of Music Ministries
  - Director of Children's Ministries
  - Church Administrator, Financial Assistant, other Church Office positions, Facilities Manager, and any other positions subsequently established.
5. Ensure that procedures are in place to protect the confidentiality of personnel data and that such data are shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know.
6. Monitor the employee benefits package annually to insure adequate coverage and minimize expenses.
7. Prepare and recommend an annual salary and benefits package to the Board of Finance for approval and inclusion in the fiscal year budget.
8. Assure that cost efficient employee skill development programs are identified and implemented as part of the employee performance evaluation process.
9. Develop guidelines for and coordinate personnel activities, such as hiring, performance evaluations, terminations, salary adjustments and ranges for all Church staff, for both full-time and part-time positions.
10. Maintain and update the Safe Church Policy as necessary, in collaboration with the Board of Christian Education and the Senior Minister. All changes require Executive Council ratification.
11. Serve in an advisory capacity on all human resource issues and ensure that the Church's

Personnel Policies and Procedures are followed by all Boards, Clergy, professional and administrative staff.

12. Develop and maintain a Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual for the Church, including procedures for hiring, evaluation and termination of non--ordained staff. Modifications to the manual shall require Executive Council approval.

C. Composition

The Board of Personnel shall be composed of up to six members plus the Vice President. Each elected member shall serve a three- year term, with two members elected at the Annual Meeting each year.

XVI. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A. Purpose, Responsibilities and Authority

The Nominating Committee shall propose for election nominees for all offices and Board positions, not otherwise provided for in these By-Laws, for consideration at the Annual Meeting of the Church. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Committee will actively seek to fulfill the Church's Open and Affirming covenant to include all members in the life and leadership of the Congregation. It will also submit nominations for vacancies that may occur on Boards and Committees of the Church to the Executive Council, which shall appoint such nominees to fill the unexpired terms of such vacancies.

B. Composition

The Executive Council shall appoint a Nominating Committee of up to six members, two of whom shall be appointed each year for three-year terms. The President and one of the ordained ministers shall serve as ex-officio members of the Nominating Committee.

C. Meetings

The Nominating Committee shall meet as needed.

D. Waiver of Term Limits

Upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee to the Executive Council, and the subsequent approval of the Executive Council, term limits for individual positions on the several Boards, Committees, or Church Officers may be waived due to difficulties experienced in the recruitment of candidates for vacant positions.

## XVII. PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEES

### A. Purpose, Responsibilities and Authority

The Pastoral Relations Committees shall serve as standing committees to support and maintain an open and healthy relationship between each ordained minister and members of the Congregation. In fulfilling this mission, the Pastoral Relations Committees shall:

1. Assist in developing solutions to areas of potential conflict between the ministry of the ordained minister(s) and that of the Congregation.
2. Counsel the ordained minister(s) as requested, in their personal and financial concerns.
4. Support the ministry of the ordained ministers in the community and the denomination.
5. Provide feedback to the ministerial staff obtained from the Congregation regarding programs or strategies proposed by the ministerial staff. Serve as an advocate on behalf of the ministerial staff in conversations with the Congregation.
6. All activities and discussions held during meetings of the Committees shall be treated as confidential in nature.

### B. Composition

There shall be a Pastoral Relations Committee for each ordained minister. The Committee for the Senior Minister shall be five members of the Congregation. Each other minister shall have a Committee of three to four members. Based on the recommendation from the ordained minister, member nominations shall be confirmed by the Executive Council for two-year terms coinciding with the terms of the Church Officers. It is suggested that the Committee formed for a newly hired minister have two members who served on the search committee.

### C. Meetings

Each Pastoral Relations Committee shall meet at least quarterly.

## XVIII. PANEL OF DELEGATES

### A. Purpose, Responsibilities and Authority

The Panel of Delegates shall represent the Church at all Synod, Connecticut Conference and Farmington Valley Association events to which the Church is entitled and invited to send representatives. Additionally, the Panel shall serve as an advocate for the Congregation to the Executive Council on matters of policy and feedback.



B. Composition

The Panel of Delegates shall be composed of four delegates, plus the Vice President. One delegate will be elected each year at the Annual Meeting to serve a term of four years.

C. Meetings

The Panel of Delegates shall meet as needed. The Chair of the Panel of Delegates shall be a member of the Executive Council; will report on the Panel's activities; and will receive direction from the Executive Council.

XIX. **FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**

A. Purpose, Responsibilities and Authority

The Financial Review Committee shall examine the Church's financial records annually, or more often if deemed necessary by the Executive Council.

The Committee shall also, from time to time as the Committee deems appropriate but not less than once every five years, recommend to the Executive Council that a compilation and review of the Church's financial records be performed by a certified public accountant. The Committee shall recommend annually to the Executive Council an amount to be established and maintained for a sinking fund to cover the anticipated cost of the compilation and review of the Church's financial records.

B. Composition.

The Financial Review Committee shall consist of three members, with training or experience in financial matters, appointed by the Executive Council. Each shall serve a three-year term, with appointment or reappointment occurring for one member on an annual basis.

C. Meetings

The Committee shall meet as necessary and shall make a report to the Executive Council at least annually.

XX. **ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH DEVELOPMENT**

An Advisory Committee on Church Development may, from time to time, be appointed by the Executive Council and composed of up to seven members plus the Vice President for such terms as set by the Executive Council.

The responsibilities of the Advisory Committee on Church Development shall include the maintenance of strategic plans and processes for the Church; to be an advisory panel to the Senior Minister on the spiritual needs of the Church; and to perform other special projects assigned by the Executive Council.

The Committee shall meet as required and shall report to the Executive Council as it deems necessary.

**XXI. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**A. Purpose, Responsibilities and Authority**

The Communications and Public Relations Committee shall be responsible for and have authority to:

1. Serve as a consultant on the internal and external communication needs of the Church with respect to the Congregation, the various Boards and Committees, the Executive Council and the ministerial program staff. Each organization will be responsible for the overall preparation of related material.
2. Establish and maintain a procedure, in conjunction with the various Board and Committees, for communicating Church related information to various outside news media as appropriate.
3. Assist the ministerial support staff with the format and content of various congregational communications.

**B. Composition**

The Communications and Public Relations Committee shall consist of up to seven members appointed annually by the Executive Council. A Chair will be selected by the Committee from among those appointed.

**C. Meetings**

The Communications and Public Relations Committee shall meet as needed.

**XXII. COMMITTEE OF DEACONS**

**A. Purpose, Responsibilities and Authority**

The Committee of Deacons shall be responsible for disbursing the Deacons' Funds in coordination with the ordained ministers and in accordance with the terms of the bequests.

**B. Composition.**

A Committee of Deacons consisting of five members shall be elected by the Church, one or two to be elected each year at the Annual Meeting of the Church for a single term of three years.

C. Meetings

The Committee shall meet as necessary and shall make a report to the Executive Council at least annually.

**XXIII. HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

A. Purpose, Responsibilities and Authority

The Heritage Committee, with oversight by the Church Administrator, shall be responsible for establishing facilities and procedures to preserve records and other artifacts of the Church and for developing programs to increase the Church's awareness of its history and memorabilia. The Committee shall maintain Church archives and memorabilia in good condition and accessible for research.

B. Composition

The Heritage Committee shall consist of up to seven members appointed annually by the Executive Council.

C. Meetings

The Committee shall meet as necessary and shall make a report to the Executive Council at least annually

**XXIV. CHURCH LIBRARIAN**

The Church Librarian shall be confirmed by the Executive Council, based on a recommendation from the Board of Christian Education, with no term limit. The Board of Christian Education shall oversee the work of the Church Librarian.

**XXV. MEMORIAL GARDEN COMMITTEE**

The Memorial Garden Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the Church's Memorial Garden and for maintaining permanent records relating to the Memorial Garden. The Committee shall consist of at least three but no more than five members, with terms renewed annually by the Executive Council at the request of the member. The Committee shall meet at least two times a year. The Committee relies on volunteers for its membership.

**XXVI. ORDAINED MINISTERS AND MINISTERIAL PROGRAM STAFF**

A. Ordained Ministers

The Church may specifically assign certain duties, such as preaching, pastoral care, etc., to ordained ministers. The Church shall always have at least one ordained minister and may, from

time to time, on recommendation of the Executive Council, establish additional ministerial positions.

The Church shall create or revise such positions and change their titles as the Church may from time to time determine, acting on Executive Council recommendations. Any such change, however, shall be acted on by the Church only at a meeting called for that purpose, or as part of another meeting when such item has been included in the call for that meeting and proper notice given of the meeting, and shall be acted on only when the Executive Council recommends such action. No such change in the position description shall be used to remove an incumbent from office.

1. The Church shall call to its ministerial positions only those persons deemed qualified by the United Church of Christ acting in accordance with its established procedures. Ministers shall be installed by the Farmington Valley Association.
2. The nomination of a candidate for a ministerial position shall be made by a committee of eleven Church members named to the task by the Executive Council. The Senior Minister shall be an ex-officio member of any such committee for an associate ministerial position. The President of the Congregation shall be an ex-officio member of any such committee for the senior ministerial position. This committee shall introduce its candidate to the Church and propose the candidate's election at a meeting called for that purpose. Upon an affirmative two-thirds vote at the special Church meeting called for this purpose, the position will be offered to the candidate.
3. The Call extended shall include a description of the position being filled, a statement of the financial terms, and a copy of the Church's professional personnel policies as prepared by the Board of Personnel and approved by the Executive Council. A copy of the Call shall go to the candidate, one to the Association Committee on Church and Ministry, and one to the Conference Executive.
4. A ministerial position may be vacated by an incumbent presenting sixty days' written notice of intention to terminate, unless otherwise agreed. The Church, on recommendation of the Executive Council, may terminate the employment of an incumbent at a meeting publicly called for this specific purpose; in such circumstances and upon a majority vote in favor of termination, the sixty-day notice period may be adjusted.

C. Ministerial Program Staff

Those persons holding the positions of Director of Children's Ministries, Director of Music Ministries, Church Administrator, and such other program staff designated from time to time by the Executive Council, shall form the ministerial program staff.

The Senior Minister shall be responsible for the supervision and evaluation of all ministerial program staff. Other administrative staff and the Facilities Manager shall be supervised and evaluated by the Church Administrator.

**XXVII. BY-LAWS REVISION**

An ad-hoc By-Laws Revision Committee, reporting to the Executive Council, will periodically collect, assess, and evaluate suggested changes to the By-Laws provided by the Officers, Boards and Committees, and members of the Church. The Committee shall select a Chair, periodically report to the Executive Council, and generate official minutes, recording suggestions received, discussion(s) thereof, and recommendations or rejections related thereto. Copies of the minutes shall reside with the Church office and with the Heritage Committee.

Membership on the Committee shall include the Senior Minister and Church Administrator; two past Presidents, and two at large members appointed by the Executive Council. The past Presidents and members at large will retire after two years of service.

The By-Laws may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of the members voting at a duly called Church meeting, provided the substance of the proposed amendment(s) has been included in the call for the meeting, or communicated to the Congregation in advance of the meeting.

**XXVIII. TERMINATION**

The First Church of Christ and Ecclesiastical Society of Simsbury, Incorporated, and its property shall forever be devoted to religious purposes. No officer, director, member or employee thereof shall receive any pecuniary profit from the Church, except reasonable compensation for services in effecting one or more of its purposes.

In the event of the dissolution of The First Church of Christ and Ecclesiastical Society of Simsbury, Incorporated, its property shall become vested in, and its functions as trustee, if any, administered by the Missionary Society of Connecticut or its successor, or, in the event this is impossible, by such Church or other organization which is organized and operated exclusively for religious or charitable purposes which the membership of The First Church of Christ and Ecclesiastical Society, of Simsbury, Incorporated shall designate at a meeting called before the said dissolution, or, in the absence of such determination, as the Superior Court of the Judicial District of Hartford shall determine.

**Revised and approved by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting May 17, 2009.**  
**Revised and approved by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting May 16, 2010**  
**Revised and approved by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting May 15, 2011**  
**Revised April 3, 2017**