

The official By-laws of the United Congregational Church of Tolland are in possession of and on file in the Church Office. There is no guarantee these By-laws have not been altered from the official By-laws on file in the Church Office. These By-laws are not to be manipulated or altered without written permission of the Church Office.

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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I—NAME

The name of this church shall be the United Congregational Church of Tolland.

ARTICLE II—PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ in Christian worship and service, so that the kingdom of God may come in the lives of all people.

ARTICLE III—GOVERNMENT

The church shall be congregational in polity. Its government shall be vested in its members, who shall exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject in legal matters to the Articles of Incorporation granted it under the laws of the State of Connecticut.

The church is a member of the United Church of Christ, The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Tolland Association of the United Church of Christ and shall be represented in the activities of these organizations.

ARTICLE IV

This church affirms the freedom and the responsibility of the individual and the right of private judgment. The Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ as a part of worship is, therefore, not a test of faith but an expression of the things most commonly believed among us.

ARTICLE V

- A. Members—Members of this church shall be persons who have been approved by the Board of Deacons:
 - (1) on presentation of satisfactory Letters of Transfer from other churches,
 - (2) by Reaffirmation of Faith, or
 - (3) on evidence of Christian baptism and Confession of Faith.

- B. Reception of Members—Persons who have been approved for membership shall be received into the church and shall receive the right hand of fellowship at such

communion or worship service as the Board of Deacons and the Senior Pastor shall designate. Any, who are unable to be received in public, may be received by the Senior Pastor and two Deacons acting in behalf of the church.

- C. Inactive Members—If any member of the church fails to attend services of worship, or to participate in any of its activities, or to contribute in any way to its support for a period of two or more years, upon approval by vote of the Board of Deacons, and after notice by the Clerk or Senior Pastor, be placed on the inactive list. Such member may be re-instated by vote of the Board of Deacons.
- D. Termination of Membership—Any member, active or inactive, may request from the Clerk, a Letter of Transfer to a specified church. Notice of the granting of such letters shall be published in the church calendar.
- E. Baptism—Baptism shall be administered to those who have not received the Sacrament of Baptism at the time of their admission to the Church, and to the children of those who stand in covenant relation to Christ, and promise to bring up their children in the nurture of the Church.

ARTICLE VI—SERVICES AND MEETINGS

The services and meetings of this church shall be as follows:

- A. Worship Services
 - (1) Services of worship shall be held at the same hour(s) each Sunday except that the Board of Deacons, with the advice of the Senior Pastor, may change the time of the services by publishing the new hours in the church calendar for two Sundays preceding the change.
 - (2) The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at such time as the church or Board of Deacons, with the advice of the Senior Pastor, may designate. The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated no fewer than four times in any twelve month period.
 - (3) Other services for worship, inspiration, prayer or study may be held as planned by the Deacons or the Senior Pastor.
- B. Business Meetings
 - (1) Annual Meeting—The Annual Meeting shall be held in January on a date fixed by the Business Committee, which shall instruct the Clerk in writing to call the meeting. The purpose of this meeting shall be to receive yearly reports, to elect officers, boards, committees and delegates to transact business, to adopt the annual budget, to receive suggestions and to make plans for the new year.
 - (2) Budget Meeting—The Budget Meeting for the consideration of and action on a proposed budget shall be held at least two weeks before the stewardship campaign.
 - (3) No worship service shall be used for action on any church matter.

- (4) Special meetings for business shall be called by the Clerk upon written instructions by: Board of Deacons, Board of Trustees, Church Council or 20 active members of the church. The nature of the business to be transacted shall be stated in the notice.
- (5) Rules & Regulations:
 - a. The Clerk shall call all business meetings of the church. This notice shall contain a statement of the nature of the business to be acted upon in the meeting and shall be read from the pulpit and posted on the church bulletin board at least one week in advance.
 - b. A quorum shall consist of twenty-five active members.
 - c. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with accepted parliamentary procedure. No motion shall pass except by majority vote, except for amendments to this constitution which, as provided in Article XI, require a two-thirds vote.
 - d. Elections shall be by written ballot if any seat is contested. All other voting shall be as deemed appropriate by Moderator or membership itself under the circumstances.
 - e. The fiscal year of the church shall be from and including January 1st through December 31st.
 - f. All officers, boards and committees shall assume their duties at the close of the Annual Meeting and continue in office until their successors are elected. The Senior Pastor, or in his/her absence, the Moderator, shall call the first meeting of boards and committees unless otherwise provided for in this constitution.
 - g. The Moderator shall preside at all business meetings. In the Moderator's absence, the Vice Moderator shall preside. In the Moderator's and Vice Moderator's absence, the Clerk shall call the meeting to order and receive nominations and supervise the election of a Moderator pro tem.

ARTICLE VII—CHURCH SCHOOL

The church shall conduct a Church School, the expenses of which shall be included in the budget of the church. As a part of Christian training, the School shall be afforded the opportunity to contribute to current expense and benevolence budgets of the church.

It shall be the purpose of the Church School to lead its members into an increasing experience of fellowship with God and to promote the development of a character which shall be genuinely and consistently Christian in all human relations. It will endeavor to develop interest in the church and increasing desire and ability to participate in its life and work.

ARTICLE VIII—OFFICERS

- A. Senior Pastor—The Senior Pastor shall be chosen and called by vote of the church. The Senior Pastor's term shall be indefinite; in case either party wishes to

dissolve the relationship, due Christian consideration shall be given and ample time allowed.

The Senior Pastor shall have in charge the spiritual welfare of the church with the assistance of the Board of Deacons and shall seek to enlist followers of Christ, preach the gospel, minister the Sacraments, be responsible for all services of public worship and administer activities of the church in cooperation with the various boards and committees. The Senior Pastor shall be an advisory, non-voting member of the Church Council and of all boards and committees.

The church staff shall be responsible to the Senior Pastor and under the guidance of the boards and committees to which they are assigned according to their expertise.

- B. Associate Pastor—The church may call one or more additional ordained pastors who shall be in full and regular standing in the association to which this church belongs. Such Associate Pastor(s) shall share with the Senior Pastor the responsibilities for the spiritual welfare of the church with the assistance of the Board of Deacons. The Associate Pastor(s) shall be an advisory, non-voting member of the Church Council and of all boards and committees in the area of responsibility.

The Associate Pastor(s) shall be chosen and called by vote of the church. The term shall be indefinite; in case either party wishes to dissolve the relationship, due Christian consideration shall be given and ample time allowed.

Additional part-time pastoral positions may be authorized by vote of the Congregation. Such positions shall be filled by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Board of Deacon, and called by vote of the church. The term shall be indefinite.

- C. Professional Leaders:

- (1) Associate of Christian Education—Associate of Christian Education may be called to serve on the staff of the church. When the Board of Christian Education, in consultation with the Senior Pastor, deems it appropriate, it shall appoint a special committee to seek a candidate for the position of Associate of Christian Education.

The Associate of Christian Education shall be a member ex-officio with voice but without vote of the Christian Education Committee and Church Council and shall be responsible for the church program of Christian Education for all ages under the direction of the pastors and the Christian Education Committee. The salary and contract responsibility resting with the Business Committee.

- (2) Organist/Choir Director—The Organist/Choir Director shall be responsible for the ministry of music, including regular and special

services of worship, under the direction of the Senior Pastor. The nature and extent of duties shall be determined by the Music Committee, the salary and contract responsibility resting with the Business Committee. The Organist shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Church Council and the Music Committee with voice but without vote.

- (3) Moderator—A Moderator shall be elected annually and shall serve not more than two consecutive terms. The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the church and of the Church Council and shall be a member of the Business Committee and Nominating Committee.
- (4) Vice Moderator—A Vice Moderator shall be elected annually and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms. The Vice Moderator shall preside, in the Moderator's absence, at all meetings of the church and of the Church Council. The Vice Moderator shall support Church Council activities in preparation to become a future moderator, shall be an ex-officio member of the Stewardship Committee and shall be a delegate to the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ.
- (5) Clerk—A Clerk shall be elected annually. The Clerk shall keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the church and of the Church Council. The Clerk shall keep a register with addresses of the members of the church, with dates and modes of their reception and removal and a record of baptisms and marriages. The Clerk shall issue Letters of Transfer; preserve on file all pertinent records, communications and written official reports; notify all persons elected to offices, boards and committees; give legal notice of all meetings; conduct all correspondence so far as this is not otherwise provided for; and perform such duties as are prescribed by law or as usually pertain to the office of a Clerk.
- (6) Assistant Clerk—An Assistant Clerk shall be elected annually to assist the Clerk and to function in his/her absence. He/She shall serve as the Recording Secretary of the Church Council and all Business Meetings of the Congregation.
- (7) Treasurer—A Treasurer shall be elected annually. The Treasurer, under the direction of the Business Committee shall provide for the prompt receipt, accounting and deposit of all funds in the church depository. Under the direction of the Board of Trustees, the Treasurer shall have custody of all papers relating to the property of the church.

The Treasurer shall make disbursements and pay the bills of the church on order from the Business Committee.

The Treasurer shall keep accurate account of all receipts and disbursements and submit a monthly report to the Business Committee.

The Treasurer shall keep a separate account of all benevolence funds and shall remit benevolence monies in accordance with the standing orders from the church or special orders from the Board of Missions.

- (8) Assistant Treasurer—An Assistant Treasurer shall be elected annually to assist the Treasurer in the performance of his/her duties.

In addition, an Assistant Treasurer shall be elected annually to assist the Treasurer, including as representative to the Tolland Green Learning Center Committee.

- (9) Director of Stewardship Committee—A Director shall be elected annually and shall organize and carry out, during the quarter before the Annual Meeting, an every member canvass, whereby the annual budget or budgets of the church shall be underwritten. The Director shall serve as Chairperson of the Stewardship Committee.

ARTICLE IX—BOARDS

- A. Trustees—There shall be a Board of Trustees, three in number, one to be elected at each Annual Meeting for a term of three years. No Trustee shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

The title to all church property shall be vested in the Board of Trustees as such. The Board of Trustees shall have the power to buy, sell or transfer any securities of the church, to invest and re-invest church funds and to determine what is capital and what is income; but any investments and re-investments shall be in securities and property authorized by the laws of the State of Connecticut then in force for the investment of trust funds. The Board may contract with a trust company, national bank, state conference or similar agency for management and/or supervision of any investment fund of the church. The Board of Trustees shall have no power to borrow, nor to buy, sell, lease, mortgage or transfer real property, without specific vote of the church.

- B. Business Committee—There shall be a Business Committee consisting of the Board of Trustees, the Moderator, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurers, Director of the Stewardship Committee and three members at large, one to be elected at each Annual Meeting for a three year term. The Business Committee shall elect a chairperson from the Board of Trustees and recorded by the Secretary. The Business Committee shall submit a budget for adoption at the Annual Meeting and be responsible for its administration. Five members shall constitute a quorum.

The Business Committee is charged with the maintenance and upkeep of church properties and with the management of all business affairs, including the use and

supervision of land, buildings and equipment.

The Business Committee, in conjunction with the Treasurer, shall provide for a prompt accounting and deposit of all collections immediately following worship service or as soon as practical thereafter. The Business Committee shall be responsible for maintaining accurate, individual accounts of member pledges for current expenses and missions and all payments made thereon, together with any special collections of any kind; and furnishing subscribers with statements of their accounts periodically.

- C. Board of Deacons—The Board of Deacons shall consist of eighteen members, nine men & nine women, three each to be elected annually for a term of three years.

No member shall serve more than two terms successively. The Deacons shall assist the Senior Pastor in the spiritual oversight of the church. They shall have responsibility for the administration of the Sacraments and they shall visit the sick and needy. They shall help introduce new families into the life of the church and see that visitors are made welcome. The Board shall be responsible for the supply of the pulpit when necessary.

They shall elect annually one of their members as Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and one as Secretary and hold meetings at regular intervals.

- D. Board of Christian Education—There shall be a Board of Christian Education consisting of the Associate of Christian Education and nine members, three of whom shall be elected annually for a term of three years. No member can serve more than two successive terms. It shall be the purpose and duty of this Board to foster, develop and maintain a comprehensive and vital program of Christian Education for the church. To this end, the Board shall implement and supervise the operation of the Church School and such other activities as will contribute to a broadened Christian knowledge and experience.

The Board shall adopt educational policies and create a program that is consistent with said policies; evaluate and select a curriculum for the Church School; provide for the recruiting and training of workers; and submit to the Business Committee a budget for Christian Education.

- E. Board of Missions & Outreach—There shall be a Board of Missions & Outreach, nine in number, three to be elected at each Annual Meeting for a term of three years, plus one representative from each of the boards and fellowships of the church to be appointed by their respective group each year.
- F. Church Council—The Church Council shall consist of all church officers, all board and committee chairpersons, the presidents or representatives of all organizations affiliated with the church, and six members at large, two to be

elected at each Annual Meeting for a three year term. It shall meet at the call of the Moderator and hold a minimum of four meetings per year.

The Church Council shall serve as a program-planning group, coordinating all church activities and organizations. It shall be the function of the Church Council to consider the entire task for the church, to advise the Senior Pastor on the general direction of the church's activities and to cooperate with the Senior Pastor in the development of a well-rounded program. All officers, boards, committees and affiliated organizations shall present their plans and programs to the Church Council.

ARTICLE X—COMMITTEES

- A. Nominating Committee—At the Annual Meeting a Chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall be elected. The Committee shall be composed of the chairpersons of all elected Boards and Committees as stated in the Constitution. They shall prepare a slate which shall be available on Sunday previous to the Annual Meeting. Nominations may also be made from the floor. Any vacancies occurring after the Annual Meeting shall be filled by the committees.

- B. Other Committees—Each of the following committees shall be composed of three members, one member to be elected each year for a term of three years. The member senior in service shall call the first meeting of each committee.
 - (1) Music Committee—The Music Committee shall recommend to the Business Committee the employment of the Organist and Choir Director and shall have oversight of the music of the church.
 - (2) Flower Committee—The Flower Committee shall be responsible for the flowers at worship services of the church.
 - (3) Stewardship Committee—The Stewardship Committee shall work under the leadership of the Director of the Stewardship Committee and shall assist in organizing the Stewardship Campaign. During the year, the Committee shall also be responsible for contacting new church members for their pledges to the church.
 - (4) Scholarship Committee—The Scholarship Committee shall promote the Church Scholarships, receive and review applications to the three existing funds and all future scholarship funds. In consultation with the Pastor(s), the Committee shall select the recipients and amounts of each award, and shall share in the presentations thereof.
 - (5) Tolland Green Learning Center Committee—The Tolland Green Learning Center Committee shall help promote this important program of the Church. In addition to the three Committee members, an Assistant Treasurer of the Church shall also be a voting member; the Director of the Center will be a member ex officio, voice without vote. The Committee will serve to promote the programs of the Center, review and revise policies, share oversight of the fiscal and budgetary matters and generally

advise the Director, as necessary. The Director will serve as a member of the Church staff, responsible to the Senior Pastor. As needed, selection of a Director will be the responsibility of the Committee in conjunction with the Senior Pastor.

- (6) Endowment Committee—The Endowment Committee shall be responsible for educating the congregation about the variety of ways of supporting and enhancing the ministries and mission of the Church through Memorial gifts, bequests, trusts, and other such vehicles. Promotion of endowments and the Memorial Fund shall also be a responsibility. In consultation with the Senior Pastor, the Committee will act upon requested expenditures from the Memorial Fund, as well as maintaining the Endowment Policy of the Church.
 - (7) Additional Committees—Other committees may be appointed by the church or the Church Council as needed.
- C. Pastoral Relations Committees—Upon the Church vote to “call” a Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor(s), a Pastoral Relations Committee of between 3 to 5 members shall be established by agreement of the candidate, the Search Committee, and the Board of Deacons. A regular schedule of meetings and the purpose of each such committee shall be consistent with UCC guidelines. Members of each Pastoral Relations Committee shall serve two year terms and shall be eligible for renewing their terms. For purposes of information the Committee shall be included in the Nominating Committee report to the Annual Meeting.
- D. Youth Committee—There shall be a Youth Committee consisting of the Director of Youth Fellowships and six members, two of whom shall be elected annually for a term of three years. No member can serve more than two successive terms. In addition, the Committee shall elect up to five youths to serve for one-year terms. It shall be the purpose and duty of this Committee to support the existing youth fellowship programs and the Director. The Committee shall also work to create opportunities for youth involvement in a growing number of places in the Church, and to promote strong relationships between peers, adults, families, and personal relationships with God.
- E. Delegates—At the Annual Meeting the church’s quota of delegates and alternates shall be elected to the area, state and national fellowships.

ARTICLE XI—AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of members present at any regular or special meeting, provided that the notice of the meeting contains the substance of the proposed amendment and given at least two weeks before the meeting.