

Constitution and Bylaws
of
Centre Congregational Church
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
in
Lynnfield, Massachusetts

ARTICLE I - Name

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

ARTICLE II - Purpose

The purpose of this church is to worship God, to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church Universal; to render loving service towards people; and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace. On December 11, 2005, the Congregation declared itself to be an "Open and Affirming" church where *everyone* is welcome including those of differing sexual orientations, race and ethnicity.

ARTICLE III - Government

This church is a part of the United Church of Christ and accordingly sustains the relationship to the United Church of Christ described in those portions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ relating to local churches. This church is in fellowship with the Metropolitan Boston Association and the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ. We encourage ecumenical fellowship.

The government of this church is vested in its members, who in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws exercise the right of control in all its affairs. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it accepts the obligations of mutual counsel, cooperation and fellowship with other congregations of the United Church of Christ and avails itself of the resources the denomination provides for the enhancement of ministries and missions.

Any action of Parish Council, the Diaconate, or any Ministry Team, Board, Committee, or organization within the church is subject to review, revision and/or reversal by a majority vote at a duly called Congregational Meeting as outlined in Article XII, Section 2.

ARTICLE IV - Principles

Section 1 - Covenant of Worship and Service.

This church is an association of men and women united by the acceptance of a mutual covenant, which is as follows: "We, the members of this church, drawn by the ties of a common faith in Jesus Christ, do reverently covenant with God and with one another, to seek prayerfully the blessed fellowship of the life made known to us, through the example and teachings of Jesus and

acknowledge Him to be Lord and Savior. We covenant together to promote loyally and lovingly the interest and activities of this church and of Christ's kingdom in the world."

Section 2 - Statement of Faith.

This church grants to all its members the right to their individual interpretations of the principles of the Christian religion and respects them in their honest convictions. Consequently, the following Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ is set forth not as a test for membership in this church but as a testimony of the belief generally accepted by the United Church of Christ.

"United Church of Christ Statement of Faith"

"We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit,
 who is made known to us in Jesus our brother, and to whose deeds we testify:
God calls the worlds into being, creates humankind in the divine image,
 and sets before us the ways of life and death.
God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.
God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness
 declared through prophets and apostles.
In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord,
God has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death,
 and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.
God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit,
 creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ,
 binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.
God calls us into the Church
 To accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
 To be servants in the service of the whole human family,
 To proclaim the Gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil,
 To share in Christ's baptism and eat at His table,
 To join Him in His passion and victory.
God promises to all who trust in the Gospel
 Forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
 Courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
 The presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing,
 And eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.
Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God. Amen."

ARTICLE V - Membership

Section 1 - Qualification.

We welcome all candidates for membership who confess their faith in Jesus Christ and endeavor to live according to His Law of Love.

Section 2 - Admission and Membership Classification.

Members - Admission to membership is by confession of faith; by confirmation; by reaffirmation of faith; or by letter of recommendation from another church. Those who desire to unite with the church shall meet with the Pastor(s) and other members of the church appointed by Membership Ministries for encouragement and instruction. After approval by Membership Ministries, candidates

shall become members on giving public assent to the Centre Congregational Church Covenant and receiving the sacrament of baptism, if not previously baptized. The service of admission shall be held during any regular service of the church.

Associate Members - Any person not a member of this church but in sympathy with its work and expressing interest and meeting the qualifications in Section 1 above may become an Associate Member by so signifying such desire to the Pastor(s) and by subsequent approval of the Membership Ministries. Associate Members shall be entitled to vote on all but financial matters of the church. They shall be eligible for elective or appointive office except those of Moderator, Vice Moderator, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, Recording Clerk, Auditor, member of the Diaconate or Parish Council.

Section 3 - Duties.

Members are expected to be faithful to all duties essential to the Christian life, to attend regularly the worship services of the church, to give generously and systematically for its support and its benevolences, and to share in its ministry and mission outreach.

Section 4 - Privileges.

All active members shall have the privilege of participating in activities and in voting on all action items in duly called Congregational Meetings, except that the right to vote on financial matters of the church shall be in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Associate Members shall have the privileges previously set forth in Section II of this article.

Section 5 - Termination.

Membership in the church may be terminated under the following conditions:

(a) By Letter. An active member may, upon written request to the Membership Clerk, be granted a letter of transfer to any Christian church. Such letter of transfer shall be valid for six months.

(b) By Withdrawal. Any active member wishing to join a body not accepting letters of transfer may be granted a certificate of church membership by the Membership Clerk.

(c) By Lack of Status. Active members whose whereabouts are unknown for three consecutive years, may be terminated by approval of Membership Ministries.

(d) By Resignation. Any member may resign by notifying the Membership Clerk in writing of such resignation.

(e) By a majority vote of the Diaconate not sooner than one month after recommendation by the Senior Pastor with the concurrence of Membership Ministries, an individual's membership can be terminated for *unrepentant* behavior or behavior of such egregious nature as to undermine the faith and life of the church.

ARTICLE VI - Pastoral Staff and Duties

Section 1 - Senior Pastor.

The Senior Pastor, in conjunction and consultation with the Diaconate, is responsible for the public

services of worship, including the sacraments, and for the pastoral care and spiritual welfare of the congregation. As the senior administrative officer and head of staff, the Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the entire professional and support staff of the church. The senior pastor is *ex-officio* a member of all Ministry Teams, Boards, Committees, Commissions and Organizations at the church. At the time of the Annual Meeting, the Senior Pastor shall present a report of pastoral work and of the overall life and activities of the church.

Section 2 - Other Staff.

At its discretion, Parish Council may hire or terminate the employment of full or part-time ordained or non-ordained staff members to serve the administrative, educational or pastoral needs of the church, provided that the termination of non-ordained staff shall be executed according to Section 4 (four) of this Article VI.. The scope of the work of this/these person(s) shall be defined by the Parish Council in consultation with the Senior Pastor. If the scope of the work includes regular attendance at any Ministry Team, Board, Committee, Commission or Organization meeting, this/these persons(s) shall be *ex-officio* a voting member of that Ministry Team, Board, Committee, Commission or Organization.

Section 3 – Performance Reviews.

An annual performance review of the Senior Pastor shall be coordinated by the Moderator and Chair of the Diaconate, including the selection of a committee to complete the review. The Pastor, in turn, shall conduct annual performance reviews with all other staff members. However, the Pastor, in consult with the Moderator may include other members of the congregation and Ministry Team members in said reviews. In the event of dissatisfaction over a performance review, Parish Council will appoint three (3) active members of the church to act as a review board and make recommendations to Parish Council.

Section 4 – Call and Termination.

If the relationship between the Senior Pastor and the church is to be dissolved by either party, a two (2) month notice shall be given (a) by the Senior Pastor to the Recording Clerk to be transmitted to the Parish Council and to the church; or (b) by the Recording Clerk to the Senior Pastor on vote of the church at a duly called Special Congregational Meeting where notice of the proposal is contained in the call of the meeting.

When a letter of resignation of the Senior Pastor or other ordained pastoral staff members is received, or if the call of such person is revoked by the church, or if such person is disabled or deceased or if there is a vacancy in the position of the Senior Pastor for any other reason, Parish Council shall, in consultation with the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ, obtain the services of an Interim Pastor.

When a vacancy occurs in the position of Senior Pastor, as soon as practicable, thereafter, Parish Council shall appoint a Pastor Search Committee. Membership of the Pastor Search Committee shall consist of eight (8) mature and well-respected members of the congregation, and shall, as much as possible, be representative of the diversity within the church. The Pastor Search Committee shall consider the available candidates and after examining credentials and standing, and meeting with the candidate or candidates, it shall make a single recommendation at a duly called Special Congregational Meeting, at which time the active members present shall vote upon this recommendation. Included in the vote(s) of the church shall be the terms of salary and allowances, housing, pension plan, health insurance, vacation, and any other terms discussed and agreed upon by the Pastor Search Committee and approved by Parish Council.

Should the congregation decide to call additional ordained pastoral staff the call and termination process as outlined in this section shall also so apply.

If the relationship between any other staff and the church is to be dissolved by either party, other than by death or disability, a two (2) month notice shall be given (a) by the staff member to the Senior Pastor to be transmitted to Parish Council and to the church; or (b) by the Pastor to the staff member on vote of Parish Council.

ARTICLE VII - Church Officers and Duties

Section 1 – Officers and Other Elected Positions.

The Officers of the church shall be the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Recording Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary, all of whom shall be members of the church and shall be elected by majority vote of the active members of the church present and voting at the Annual Meeting. Terms, starting at the beginning of the fiscal period, shall be three (3) years. No officer shall serve in the same office for more two (2) full terms, except by two thirds vote at a duly called Special Congregational Meeting of the congregation as outlined in Section two (2) of ARTICLE XII . This general principle of limited service is to be applied throughout church life, including the Diaconate, Ministry Teams and their respective members. In addition to the election of its Officers, the Congregation shall elect an Assistant Treasurer, Assistant Financial Secretary, two (2) Auditor(s), the Chairperson of the Diaconate, Deacons, Chairpersons of the various Ministry Teams and three (3) at large members of the Nominating Committee.

Section 2 - Duties.

The Moderator shall preside at all Congregational Meetings and all meetings of Parish Council. In the absence of the Moderator, the Vice-Moderator shall preside. In the absence of both the Moderator and the Vice-Moderator, a *moderator pro-tem* shall be elected by those members attending such meeting. The Moderator is a member, *ex-officio*, of all Ministry Teams, Committees, Boards, Commissions and Organizations of the church.

The Vice-Moderator shall be a member of Parish Council, and shall have such duties as assigned by the Moderator. Normally, the Vice-Moderator will be nominated as Moderator when the Moderator's term of service expires, or when, for whatever reason, the office of Moderator becomes vacant. The Vice-Moderator will serve as the chair of the Nominating Committee.

The Recording Clerk shall be a member of Parish Council and shall keep a record of the proceedings of all Congregational Meetings and Parish Council meetings. The Recording Clerk shall issue all credentials of Delegates representing the church, give notice of meetings and shall conduct appropriate correspondence as requested by the Parish Council or Congregational Meetings.

The Treasurer shall be a member of Parish Council. The Treasurer shall maintain a file of all income reports provided by the Financial Secretary and from any other source for the account of the church; shall take charge of all deeds, documents, and papers relating to the property of the church; shall have authority to issue checks against the church accounts for approved church obligations; shall keep in books belonging to the church full and accurate accounts of income and disbursements, taking proper vouchers for such transactions. The Treasurer shall render to Parish Council whenever the members thereof may require it, and to the church at its Annual Meeting, a report of all transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the church. The Treasurer shall be an *ex-officio* member of Finance Ministries. The Treasurer shall be bonded.

The Financial Secretary shall be a member of Parish Council and shall be an *ex-officio* voting member of Finance Ministries. The Financial Secretary shall keep a proper record of each pledge made and payments thereon; shall receive also all offerings received at each and every service of the church; shall deposit all monies received by the church in the name and to the credit of the church in such depository as may be designated by Parish Council; shall report bank deposits of all monies received to the Treasurer; shall keep in books belonging to the church, full and accurate accounts of receipts as Financial Secretary; and shall render to Parish Council, whenever the members thereof may require it, and to the church at its Annual Meeting, a report of the activities of the Financial Secretary. The Financial Secretary shall be bonded.

The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer and, in the absence of the Treasurer, shall assume the duties of that office. Normally, the Assistant Treasurer will be nominated for the office of Treasurer when the term of service expires for the Treasurer, or when, for whatever reason, the office of Treasurer becomes vacant.

The Assistant Financial Secretary shall assist the Financial Secretary and, in the absence of the Financial Secretary, assume the duties of that office. Normally, the Assistant Financial Secretary will be nominated for the office of Financial Secretary when the term of service expires for the Financial Secretary, or when, for whatever reason, the office of Financial Secretary becomes vacant.

The Auditor(s) shall be elected by the congregation. The auditors shall audit the accounts of the Financial Secretary, Finance Ministries, Treasurer, and all other accounts of the church and shall present a report to the church at its Annual Meeting. There shall not be fewer than two (2) auditors. Parish Council may retain the services of an audit firm to conduct an independent audit of the financial records from time to time as needed.

Chairpersons of the Diaconate and the various Ministry Teams shall be responsible for the functioning of the Diaconate and their respective Ministry Teams, seeing that all duties as outlined in these Bylaws are fulfilled. They shall report to Parish Council regarding programs, perceived problems, and other concerns of the congregation. They shall report on the work of their respective groups to the church at its Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE VIII - Parish Council

Section 1 – Parish Council.

There shall be a Parish Council which shall serve as the administrative body of the church between Congregational Meetings. Its members shall consist of the Senior Pastor, Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Recording Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Chairperson of the Diaconate, and the Chairpersons of the following Ministry Teams: Membership, Education, Outreach, Stewardship, and Finance.

Parish Council shall promote the general efficiency of the church, its Officers, Boards, Ministry Teams, Committees, Commissions and Organizations. In addition Parish Council shall develop policies and programs for the church to fulfill the purpose of this church as stated in Article II of these Bylaws. It may create and revise a succinct Mission Statement toward this same goal, and may create and revise committees and organizations, as needed to accomplish the work of the church.

In addition to its administrative and goal-setting tasks, Parish Council shall be responsible for

creating a budget for the upcoming Fiscal Year to be presented and acted upon at the Annual Meeting.

Section 2 – Meetings.

Meetings of Parish Council shall occur not less than six (6) times a year to consider the temporal and spiritual needs of the church. Other meetings may be called by the Pastor, Moderator, or three (3) members of Parish Council. Seven (7) Parish Council Members present shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3 – Responsibilities of Parish Council.

Parish Council shall:

- a.) Request the presence of any members of Ministry Teams, Boards, Committees, Commissions or Organizations at a meeting to discuss any area of concern to the congregation. Meetings will be open to all active church members except when Parish Council votes to go into executive session. Minutes of the meetings, or a summary of the minutes, may be circulated in the church newsletter except when Parish Council is in Executive Session.
- b.) Have charge of the church's financial affairs, subject to the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It shall plan and arrange for the necessary funds for the operation and maintenance of the church; shall prepare and present to the Annual Meeting for approval by majority vote the budget for the ensuing year; shall, when so voted, borrow funds or otherwise arrange for funds for any authorized purpose. Expenditures in excess of funds already authorized in the budget by the church membership shall be reviewed and approved by Parish Council before commitments are made. All proposed contracts shall be reviewed and approved by Parish Council before such contracts can be executed. Parish Council shall accept and review financial reports of funds raised in the name of the church; shall when authorized by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at an Annual Meeting or a Special Congregational Meeting of the church, where notice of proposed action is contained in the call of that meeting, enter into contracts relating to the acquisition and disposition of real estate or major modifications to church buildings. Parish Council shall receive on behalf of the church all gifts, donations, and contributions of all types whether financial or physical.
- c.) Request the resignation of any Officer, Deacon, Chairperson, Auditor or any other person appointed or elected who is no longer active in the life of the church, and fill the vacancy.
- d.) Present a summary of its activities in a report by the Recording Clerk and/or Moderator at the Annual Meeting.
- e.) Appoint a Church Historian(s) to an indefinite term. The Church Historian (s) shall preserve, protect, and promote any memorabilia of historical significance and maintain an ongoing record of important events relating to the life of Centre Congregational Church.
- f.) Appoint a Church Librarian(s) to an indefinite term. The Librarian(s) shall coordinate and supervise the operations and activities of the Centre Congregational Church Library under the direction of Educational Ministries. Educational Ministries may create a Library Subcommittee if it seems wise.
- g.) Appoint a Membership Clerk(s) to an indefinite term. The Membership Clerk(s) shall keep a register of the active, associate, and inactive members of the church with dates of reception and removal; record baptisms, marriages and deaths; make a full report to the church at its Annual Meeting; and send all letters of transfer.

h.) Appoint a Safe Church Director for a term of up to three (3) years to develop, submit to Parish Council for approval, and thereafter implement and oversee all Safe Church Policies and Procedures which are designed to follow Jesus' example of respect for the integrity and dignity of all persons. These Policies and Procedures require our members to provide safe sanctuary for persons of all ages entrusted to its care, and they protect those who have responsibilities as leaders and teachers. Upon approval by Parish Council these Safe Church Policies and Procedures shall apply to all Church programs and to all groups using our facilities as guests or as part of any arrangement with Finance Ministries. The Safe Church Director may recruit, upon approval by Parish Council, additional members to execute the mission of the Safe Church Program.

i.) Appoint four (4) members to the Tower Day School Board. One (1) member shall be the Treasurer or from Finance Ministries and one (1) member shall be shall be the Chair of Education Ministries or a member of Education Ministries. Two (2) other members shall be chosen as members at large. Membership shall be determined so that terms do not expire at the same time. The Tower Day School Board also includes as members the Tower Day School Director and a member of the Tower Day School staff. The Tower Day School Board shall develop goals, objectives, and policy for the Tower Day School in conjunction with the Tower Day School Director.

ARTICLE IX - The Diaconate & Ministry Teams of Parish Council

Section 1 - The Diaconate.

The Diaconate shall have nine (9) Deacons, normally elected for up to a three (3) year term in such a way that 1/3 of the Diaconate is elected each year. After serving for six (6) consecutive years, a Deacon shall not be eligible for re-election for at least one (1) year, except by two thirds vote of the congregation at a Special Congregational meeting as outlined in Section two (2) of Article XII.. The Chair of the Diaconate shall be elected by the Congregation normally for a three (3) year term, and shall be a member of Parish Council. Deacons will be elected by the congregation at its Annual Meeting. The Diaconate shall be responsible for the overall spiritual life of the church including but not limited to ministries of compassion and outreach to the homebound. In consultation with the Senior Pastor, the Diaconate shall be responsible for Public Worship, the music program, the sacrament of communion, ushers, flowers, weddings, funerals and collations, filling the pulpit in the absence of the Senior Pastor, and all other matters having to do with the worship and spiritual life of the congregation.

Section 2 - Membership Ministries.

The Chair of Membership Ministries shall normally be elected up to a three (3) year term by the congregation and shall be a member of Parish Council.. There shall be no less than five (5) and no more than ten (10) members of Membership Ministries. Members of the Membership Ministries shall be appointed by Parish Council upon the recommendation of the Chair of Membership Ministries. Membership Ministries responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, instruction for people interested in becoming active members, integration of new members into the life of the church, coffee hour, fellowship activities, church promotion, and website maintenance. In addition, they shall do an annual review of the membership and associate membership rolls for individual evidence of interest, attendance, activity and support of the church. They shall contact, where feasible, apparent non-participants and assess the extent of their continuing interest in the life of the church. They shall then identify those persons who are inactive, and upon notice to the Membership Clerk their names shall be removed to the Inactive Membership Roll. Anyone on the Inactive

Membership Roll may be reinstated to Active Membership by requesting Membership Ministries in writing to vote to do so. Membership Ministries shall notify the Membership Clerk of any changes in membership status.

Section 3 - Education Ministries.

The Chair of Education Ministries shall normally be elected up to a three (3) year term by the congregation and shall be a member of Parish Council. There shall be no less than five (5) and no more than ten (10) members of Education Ministries. Members of Education Ministries shall be appointed by, or hired by, Parish Council upon the recommendation of the Chair of Education Ministries. Education Ministries' responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the design and implementation of a weekly educational program for children; oversight of the nursery; oversight of the youth groups; confirmation class (in conjunction with the Senior Pastor); adult education; and the church library.

Section 4 - Outreach Ministries.

The Chair of Outreach Ministries shall normally be elected up to a three (3) year term by the congregation and shall be a member of Parish Council. There shall be no less than five (5) and no more than ten (10) members of Outreach Ministries. Members of Outreach Ministries shall be appointed by Parish Council upon the recommendation of the Chair of Outreach Ministries. Outreach Ministries shall promote and inspire the congregation in its work in the wider world. It shall determine the balance of support for Denominational Mission and Local Mission projects; encourage participation of the congregation to give generously to disaster relief; encourage "hands-on" opportunities for mission involvement; and promote congregational awareness of matters of public significance. It shall furthermore encourage the members to make an active response both individually and as a congregation in order to bring Christian influence to bear upon the public order.

Section 5 - Stewardship Ministries.

The Chair of Stewardship Ministries shall normally be elected up to a three (3) year term by the congregation and shall be a member of Parish Council. There shall be no less than five (5) and no more than ten (10) members of Stewardship Ministries. Members of the Stewardship Ministries shall be appointed by Parish Council upon the recommendation of the Chair of Stewardship Ministries. Stewardship Ministries shall inspire generosity in gifts of time and money in the service of Christ through this congregation. They shall be responsible for planning and implementing the annual Stewardship Program of the Church, a program of planned giving, and, if so requested by Parish Council, oversight of Capital Campaigns.

Section 6 – Finance Ministries.

The Chair of Finance Ministries shall normally be elected up to a three (3) year term by the congregation and shall be a member of Parish Council. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be ex-officio members of Finance Ministries. Members of the Finance Ministries shall be

appointed by Parish Council upon the recommendation of the Chair of Finance Ministries. There shall be no less than five (5) and no more than ten (10) members of Finance Ministries. Finance Ministries shall be responsible for the monitoring of the annual church budget, and have oversight of all matters of the church related to finance, property, and insurance coverage for all aspects of church life

a. Property Finance Ministries, either as a committee of the whole or through a subcommittee on Property, shall have oversight of the church property, including the church buildings, contents and grounds. It shall recommend to Parish Council appropriate personnel for care and maintenance of the property. It shall oversee the use of the church building, making suitable rules regarding use by groups within the church and by groups outside the church. It shall plan and execute all repairs and maintenance of church property, except such repairs or maintenance that would alter the general physical appearance of the church, which will be subject to the approval of Parish Council.

b. Investments Finance Ministries, either as a committee of the whole or through a subcommittee on Investments, shall have the responsibility for the portfolio of all church investments. It shall have the power to invest or re-invest funds placed in its custody by Parish Council. It will provide the Treasurer with a detailed report of holdings, changes, and interest earned for inclusion with the Treasurer's Annual Report to the congregation. All records shall be subject to audit by the church Auditors.

c. Memorials Finance Ministries, either as a committee of the whole or through a Memorials subcommittee, shall publicize, maintain, and be responsible for the Church's Memorial Funds. Whenever it is reasonably feasible to do so, before Memorial Funds are distributed, consultation with a family member(s) representing the deceased will be sought. It shall have the authority to decline any gift with the concurrence of Parish Council. Acknowledgment of all Memorials gifts shall be made to the donors and to the survivors of the deceased and a record of such gifts shall be kept in the Book of Remembrance.

ARTICLE X – Nominating Committee and Denominational Delegates

Section 1 – Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee shall present to the Annual Meeting a list of nominees for the Officers (Moderator, Vice Moderator, Recording Clerk, Treasurer and Financial Secretary), the Chairpersons of all Council Ministry Teams, all members of the Diaconate, including the Chairperson, the Assistant Treasurer, the Assistant Financial Secretary, Auditor(s) and Denominational Delegates. Normally, all such nominations will be for a three (3) year term, with service limited to no more than six (6) consecutive years as per Article VII, Section 2.

The Nominating Committee shall prepare timely nominations for any vacancies that might occur in these positions between Annual Meetings, and shall request Parish Council to call a timely Special Congregational Meeting for the purpose of acting on its nominations.

Membership of the Nominating Committee shall be the Vice Moderator (Chairperson), one (1) active Deacon appointed by the Chairperson of the Diaconate, and three (3) members elected at large from the congregation at its Annual Meeting. The three (3) at large members of the Nominating Committee shall have terms limits of up to three (3) years. Parish Council, at the Annual Meeting, shall place in nomination the names of three (3) at-large members.

The Nominating Committee shall not nominate a member of its own Committee to any elective position in the congregation, nor shall more than one (1) member of a single church family serve on the Nominating Committee at the same time. The term for the Nominating Committee members shall be one (1) year.

The right of a church member to make a nomination from the floor shall always be recognized.

Section 2 – Denominational Delegates.

Denominational Delegates will represent Centre Congregational Church at meetings of the State Conference, Metropolitan Boston Association, and Community Interfaith Organizations and report on such meetings to Parish Council and the church membership. Church Delegates elected or appointed by the church to represent it in meetings or conferences with other organizations have no power to bind the church to financial obligations or to any definite course of action unless such power is expressly granted to them by action of the congregation.

ARTICLE XI - Annual Reports

Written Annual Reports by the Senior Pastor, Officers, Chairpersons of the Various Ministry Teams, Diaconate, and heads of other church organizations shall be presented to the church at its Annual Meeting. Copies of the Annual Report shall be available in the church office for distribution to the membership not less than five days (5) prior to the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE XII - Meetings

Section 1 - Public Worship.

Public Worship Services shall be held regularly on Sunday mornings, and at other times as may be determined by the Diaconate.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be administered not less than six (6) Sundays during the calendar year and at such other times and/or with greater frequency as the Senior Pastor and the Diaconate may designate.

Section 2 - Congregational Meetings.

The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held not more than three (3) months after the end of the fiscal year, on a date designated by Parish Council. On the agenda will be the election of Officers and other elective positions described in ARTICLE VII, Section 1, distribution of written Annual Reports, action on the budget and the transactions of any other business pertaining to the welfare of the church. The Recording Clerk, or another person appointed by Parish Council, shall ensure that the call for the Annual Meeting shall be announced in two services of public worship prior to the meeting and posted in the vestibule and publish a written notice in the church newsletter at least one week prior to the Annual Meeting.

The Fiscal Year shall run from July 1 to June 30 of the subsequent year unless changed by two thirds vote of the congregation at a Special Congregational Meeting as outlined on Section two (2) of Article XII.

Special Congregational Meetings of the church may be called by Parish Council, or shall be called by the Recording Clerk, or in the absence or disability of the Recording Clerk, by a church member designated by Parish Council, upon written request of ten (10) members of the church. The Recording Clerk (or another person appointed by Parish Council) shall ensure that the call for a Special Congregational Meeting shall be announced in two consecutive services of public worship prior to the meeting and posted in the vestibule and publish a written notice in the church newsletter at least one week prior to the Special Congregational Meeting. The call shall state clearly the purpose of the Special Congregational Meeting.

Ten (10) percent or more of the membership, on the previous June 30th as reported by the Recording Clerk shall constitute a quorum for action at any Congregational Meeting.

Voting shall be by written ballot at any Congregational Meeting, if so requested by five (5) church Active Members present.

Roberts Rules of Order (most recent edition) shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by this Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII - Elections

Elections shall be at the Annual Meeting and by a majority of the active church members present and voting. In case of a vacancy in the office of Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Recording Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, or Auditor(s), Parish Council shall request the Nominating Committee to prepare the needed nomination(s), and shall call a Special Congregational Meeting to act on those nominations. In the event that vacancies occur in the Diaconate or the Chairpersons of the Ministry Teams, Parish Council shall appoint members to fill the vacancy until the next Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE XIV - Amendments

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended only by a vote of two-thirds of the church members present and voting thereon at an Annual Meeting of the church, or at a Special Congregational Meeting of the church called for that particular purpose, notice of the proposed amendments having been given in the call of such Annual or Special Congregational Meeting.