

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
of  
BARRINGTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

BY-LAWS

**I. NAME**

This church shall be called the First Congregational Church of Barrington, New Hampshire.

**II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this church is to worship God, to reach out to our community and the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to encourage unbelievers to come to a saving knowledge of Him, and to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature; attaining to the full measure of the fullness of Christ.

**III. DECLARATION OF FAITH**

**The Word of God:** We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, complete as the revelation of God's will for salvation, and the supreme and final authority and standard of truth in all matters to which they speak. Isa. 59:21; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; Mt.5:18; 1 Thes. 2:13; Eph. 3:5; 1 Cor. 2:10-16; Rev. 22:18-19; Jn. 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Mt. 22:29.

**The Trinity:** We believe in one God, creator and sustainer of all things, eternally existing in three Persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, that these are equal in every divine perfection and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption. Deut. 6:4; Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3; Col. 1:16-17; Rev. 4:8, Mat. 28:19; Is. 9:6, Is. 48:16; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 1:13-14.

**God the Father:** We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. Jn. 12:49; 1 Jn. 1:3; Jn. 4:24; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; 1 Jn. 1:5; Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Mt. 6:25-32; Jas. 4:8; Jn. 17:3.

**Jesus Christ:** We believe that Jesus Christ is God's only eternal Son, and has precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. We believe further that He is not only true God, but true man; conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin

Mary. We also believe in His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, His priestly intercession on behalf of His people, and His personal, visible, premillennial return from heaven. Jn. 1:1, 14, 17:5; Heb. 1:3; Jn. 8:58; Col. 2:9; Heb. 1:8; Phil. 2:5-7; Lk. 1:35; Mt. 1:18; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Mt. 28; Acts 1:9; Heb. 9:24; Rev. 19, 20.

**Holy Spirit:** We believe the Holy Spirit has precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections as God the Father and God the Son. We believe in His personality, and His work in regeneration, sanctification, and preservation. His ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, to implement Christ's work in redeeming the lost, and to empower the believer for Godly living and service. Jn. 16:7-11; Titus 3:5; Jn. 3:3-8; 1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 15-16; Eph. 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:22; Jn. 16:13-15.

**Man:** We believe God created man, male and female, in the image of God and free from sin. However, because of Adam's choice to willfully disobey God, man is now a sinner by nature and choice and is therefore spiritually dead. Gen. 1:27; Eph. 4:23-24; Gen. 1:26, 31; Rom. 5:12, 14, 19; Rom. 3:23; Eph. 2:1.

**Salvation:** We believe in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We further believe that this salvation is based upon the sovereign grace of God, and was purchased by Christ on the cross, and is received by man through faith, apart from any human merit, works, or ritual. We believe that saving faith includes a recognition of and a repentance from sin. We further believe salvation results in righteous living, good works, and proper social concern. Eph. 2:8-9; Jn. 14:6; Rom. 5:8; Lk. 13:5; 2 Pet. 3:9; Eph. 2:10; Jas. 2:14-26.

**The Church:** We believe that the Church is the spiritual body of which Christ is the head. We believe that the true Church is composed of all persons who through faith in Jesus Christ, have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. We believe that this Church has many local assemblies whose members have made a credible confession of faith, sought baptism, and have associated themselves for worship, for instruction, for evangelism, and for service. We believe the ordinances of the local church are believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper. We also believe in the interdependence of local churches and the mutual submission of believers to each other in love. Eph. 2:14-16; Eph. 5:23; Mat. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; Titus 3:5; 1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 10:25; Acts 2:41; Acts 18:8; Jn. 3:23; Lk. 22:19; Eph. 5:21.

**Christian Conduct:** We believe that the supreme task of every believer is to glorify God in his life; that his conduct should be blameless before the world and in accordance with the authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and that he should seek to realize for himself the full stature of maturity in Christ. Ecc. 12:13-14; Jn. 14:21; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 2 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 2:17-24; Eph. 4:11-12.

**Last Things:** We believe in the bodily resurrection of all persons who ever lived, both those saved by Jesus Christ and those who are not; and the eternal, conscious existence of all persons, in heaven or hell. Those who are not saved will endure eternal torment in the endless lake of fire with Satan and his angels. Those who are saved will enjoy eternal joy and happiness in the presence of God. We believe God will reward each believer according to his or her works here on Earth. 1 Cor. 15:20-58; Mat. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:6-15; Rev. 14:9-13; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; Rev. 22:12.

## IV. GOVERNMENT

The authority of this church is vested in the Corporate Members, subject at all times to the final authority of Scripture. The Corporate authority shall be delegated to the following permanent offices in accordance with these by-laws:

- The Elder Team;
- The Deacons.

These leaders come under the general oversight of the Elder Team.

We hold to the autonomy of the local church and its independence from ecclesiastical control. This local church may, at its discretion, enter into an affiliation with a Bible-believing, Christ-centered, congregational association.

## V. MEMBERSHIP

### Section A: Qualifications & Description of Membership

**General Qualifications:** Membership of this church shall be composed of believing individuals who publicly claim their personal salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who have been publicly baptized, who manifest the fruit of a true Christian life by their conduct, who subscribe to the aforementioned Declaration of Faith, and who are willing to support the church by their prayers, service, contributions, and attendance to the best of their ability.

**Non-voting Member:** Any person who has reached their thirteenth birthday and has not reached their eighteenth birthday, may apply for and be granted Non-Voting Membership in the church after satisfying all the requirements detailed in the paragraph entitled "General Qualifications", and completing the procedures pertaining to membership outlined in subsequent paragraphs. 1) Non-voting Members may attend and participate in business meetings of the church, but may not make motions or vote in these meetings. 2) They are privileged to serve on committees, except as noted in other sections of these By-laws. 3) They may not serve as Chair in any committee. 4) Non-voting Members agree to be subject to the responsibilities of and discipline of Christian conduct outlined in subsequent paragraphs of these By-laws. Non-voting Members are expected to apply for Corporate Member status as they approach their eighteenth birthday.

**Corporate Member:** Any member who has reached their eighteenth birthday may apply for and be granted Corporate Membership after satisfying all the requirements detailed in the paragraphs entitled "General Qualifications" and completing the procedures pertaining to Corporate Membership outlined in subsequent paragraphs. Persons who are seventeen years of age, and are within three months of their eighteenth birthday, may apply for Corporate Membership, follow the procedures for Corporate Membership, and be accepted as Corporate Members, effective on their eighteenth birthday. Corporate Members may serve in office or committee for which they are qualified to serve. Corporate Members have one vote in all

business meetings of the church. Corporate Members agree to be subject to the responsibilities and discipline of Christian conduct

outlined in subsequent paragraphs of these By-laws.

**Inactive Member:** Any member who joined the Church prior to October 25, 1992, when these requirements for membership were adopted, who willingly does not participate in the life of the Church, is not under Church discipline for erroneous doctrine or behavior, yet wishes to still be listed on the membership roll, may be placed on inactive status by the Elder Team. Inactive members do not have any vote, may not serve as an officer of the Church, and are not considered when determining whether a quorum exists for any business meeting of the Church. The Elder Team, at its sole discretion, may choose to make a corporate member an inactive member rather than removing them from membership under the provisions of Article V, Section 4, *Absence*. As with removal from membership, the Elder Team shall make reasonable efforts to contact the person being considered for inactive status prior to placing them in this status.

Any inactive member who wishes to change back to full corporate membership may do so by being active, to the best of their ability, in Church activities for 6 consecutive months, and must meet all the current qualifications for corporate membership, and follow the procedure for membership put forth in Article V, section 2, *Procedure for Membership*. Inactive members who are restored do so under these by-laws, so they may not revert to inactive status.

## **Section B: Procedure for Membership**

All applications for membership shall be made to any member of the Elder Team. The applicant shall be given a copy of the By-laws and shall attend church-information classes using materials relating to the doctrine and policies of the church.

After the applicant has completed the information classes, the applicant shall meet with the Elder Team during which time he will give personal testimony of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and evidence of his understanding of, and agreement with, the By-laws of this church.

At least one week before the applicant is recommended at the business meeting, the name of the applicant shall be publicized in the warrant calling the business meeting. If any member has a valid reason for objecting to the receiving of any applicant into the church, he shall immediately appear before the Elder Team and give Scriptural reasons for his objections. The validity of these objections shall be considered by the Elder Team.

All satisfactory candidates shall be recommended by the Elder Team at any called business meeting of the church for approval and admission. He shall be accepted into membership by a 9/10ths vote by the members present. The applicant shall not be present in the meeting when the application is being considered.

During his time of service, each Pastor and his wife shall be members of the church.

Candidates for membership shall be encouraged to give a testimony at the service in which they are publicly welcomed.

### **Section C: Conduct and Duty**

Regular attendance at the services of the church, daily reading of the Bible, private and family devotions, personal and public testimony, and the winning of others to Christ are urged upon each member. It shall be the sacred duty of parents to provide Christian instruction for their children. Each member shall consider it his sacred duty and privilege to make full use of his talents for the Lord's service whenever opportunity affords.

All members are encouraged to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress; and to be courteous in speech and slow to anger (1 Peter 3:9; Galatians 6:2).

Each member is called upon to heed the admonitions of the Lord: "Do not love the world or the things of the world", and "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." He should be "an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (1 John 2:15; Romans 12:2; 1 Timothy 4:12). He is expected to abstain from any act or practice, which may be harmful in its influence or a stumbling block to the weak.

Erroneous Doctrine and Behavior: Anyone who is associated with the church who embraces, promotes, or practices any doctrine or public behavior that is contrary to the Declaration of Faith or clear Scriptural teachings, shall be disciplined in love according to the Word of God, with the intent to instruct and restore the errant Christian brother or sister.

### **Section D: Absence**

Every reasonable effort will be made to establish active Christian fellowship with the missing member. Members who do not actively participate in or communicate with the church concerning their spiritual life and interests in the Lord's work for an extended period of time may be removed from the membership. The Elder Team will evaluate each situation on an individual basis.

### **Section E: Withdrawal and Removal**

Any member who wishes to withdraw from the church shall submit his request to the Elder Team in writing. The request shall be considered and acted upon, and shall be reported to the church at the next Annual Business Meeting.

Members who pass on to be with the Lord shall be removed from the membership list. They shall be remembered to the church at the next Annual Business Meeting.

Disciplinary Removal: In the case of erroneous doctrine or behavior, a member may be removed from membership as part of the disciplinary process described elsewhere in these By-laws.

## **Section F: Discipline and Restoration**

Guiding Principles: The Scriptural intent of church discipline is to correct erroneous behavior or doctrine and restore members to full and wholesome fellowship with the church body. If any member shall conduct himself in a manner which, in the studied opinion of the Elder Team is not in accordance with Scriptural principles and the Declaration of Faith and the By-laws of this church, and for which he does not show evidence of repentance, he shall be interviewed and counseled by the Elder Team after the manner clearly indicated in the Word of God (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1).

If, after the interview process, the member chooses to continue in an unrepentant condition, the Elder Team shall, with urgency, meet to decide appropriate disciplinary action or actions for the particular case, including disciplinary removal from membership of the church.

Any person, after being removed from the membership, and should later repent and desire to rejoin the church, would apply according to Article V, Section B.

Any person removed, withdrawn, or deprived of membership, except by death, shall be notified by letter by the Deacon of Records.

## **VI. CHURCH POLITY**

### **Section A: The Elder Team**

#### **1. Purpose of the Elder Team**

The purpose of the Elders is to shepherd the Church body as a whole, including:

- providing for the spiritual care of the individual members of the Church.
- providing oversight & direction for all the ministries of the Church,
- insuring the Purpose of the Church, as outlined in Article II, is carried out.

#### **2. Responsibilities of the Elder Team**

The Elders shall be known collectively as the Elder Team.

The Elder Team shall exercise its responsibility for shepherding and for the spiritual care of the church body by providing Biblical counseling, teaching, preaching, discipleship training, worship opportunities, evangelistic outreach ministries, and Christian leadership development for the members of the Church.

The Elders shall act as the corporate officers of the Church. They shall have the right to enter into contracts and make binding commitments in all matters: legal, fiscal, fiduciary, and otherwise. They shall have the right to delegate signature authority to a single member of the Elder Team, and to delegate the day-to-day operations of the Church to paid staff and/or to deacons, in accordance with the deacon's duties & responsibilities as laid out in these by-laws.

The Elder Team shall conduct all the affairs of the Church subject to the Scriptures, and all applicable laws of the United States and the State of New Hampshire.

The Elder Team shall present an annual budget to the Church body for approval at the annual meeting. Budget items for staff compensation shall be prepared by the three permanent deacons and non-compensated elders and presented to the Elder Team. The Elder Team works with the Deacon of Finance to direct the disbursement of funds to ministry areas and other obligations.

The Elder Team shall have sole oversight of the approved budget of the Church, and have the authority to re-prioritize the spending of the Church within the aggregate constraints of the approved budget, if necessary, to insure the success of the Church in carrying out its purpose. Any such action shall be officially communicated to the church body.

The Elder Team shall interview, prepare, and present potential candidates for membership to the Church congregation.

The Elder Team shall meet as often as necessary, but at least a minimum of twice monthly, and shall work by consensus on all matters before them.

The Elders shall review annually the service of all Pastoral staff, including other members of the Elder Team. Such reviews will remain privileged and confidential within the Elder Team.

### **3. Organization of the Elder Team**

The Elder Team shall consist of the Senior Pastor, and a minimum of two other qualified Church members who have been called by God to Eldership, have been examined by the existing Elders and congregation, and have been affirmed by the Church members. Elders may be added to the Elder Team at any time that the existing Elders believe it is appropriate and that God has called a person to fulfill the duties of an Elder.

Eldership is oftentimes a life-long calling, but there is a recognized need for occasional periods of rest and reflection. A first-time Elder shall be affirmed by the church body for a period of three years. Subsequently, Elders are affirmed by the church body for a period of five years, which is renewable indefinitely.

The Elders are free to organize themselves and to divide up responsibilities according to gifts and calling, but in all cases to insure that the Purpose of the Church is accomplished effectively.

The Elder Team shall have the authority to appoint ad hoc committees, such as they deem necessary to fulfill a need in the Church.

#### **4. Qualification and Appointment of Individual Elders**

An elder shall be a member of the church and Biblically qualified as set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Absolutely no consideration to social status, income, ordination, level of formal education, or any non-Biblical quality may be used to determine qualification.

God's call on a person to become an elder is essential and must be recognized by both the candidate and the Elders.

All candidates for the Elder Team shall be examined prayerfully by the existing Elder Team. Once examined and approved, candidates for the Elder Team shall be presented to the congregation by the Elder Team so that the congregation may also examine the candidates. After a minimum of one public opportunity for the candidate(s) to be examined by the congregation, the Elder Team may call a special meeting for a congregational affirmation of the candidate(s). No other business shall be conducted during this meeting. The presence of a minimum of ½ of the corporate members of the Church constitutes a quorum for this meeting. Signed proxies from corporate members will be accepted for voting but shall not be used for determining the existence of a quorum. Voting shall be by closed ballot and a 2/3 super-majority affirmative vote is necessary for appointment.

The Church recognizes that Scripture teaches male leadership within the Church. Therefore, the Senior Pastor and the majority of Elders must be male. The Church also recognizes that Scripture makes exceptions for women who meet the above qualifications and whom God has called when positions become available.

#### **5. Disqualification of Individual Elders**

All individual Elders are subject to the authority of the Elder Team.

If at any time, an Elder's conduct or life circumstance ceases to be in accordance with Scriptural qualifications, they are expected to resign their position of Eldership immediately, and spare the witness of the Church from public disgrace. The Elder Team has the responsibility to ensure its members' integrity and faithfulness to the Lord. Therefore, an individual Elder may be dismissed by a consensus vote of the rest of the Elder Team.

In the case where accusations are made against an Elder, the accusations can be entertained by the other Elders only if the accusations are made by two or more credible witnesses, or if the accused Elder confesses to the sin. If the Elder denies the accusations, the accused Elder must suspend all Elder activity until the rest of the Elder Team meets to consider the accusations, and render a decision.

If the accusations are found to be true, the other Elders must act swiftly and Biblically, and must dismiss the offending Elder from their position publicly. There is no provision for the dismissed Elder to appeal the decision to the congregation. Depending upon the nature of the sin, the Elders may further discipline the dismissed Elder as a Church member, as provided in these by-laws in Article V. If the accusations are found to be false, the Elders must discipline the accusers swiftly and Biblically, as they deem appropriate for the circumstances of the accusation, in accordance with Article V of these by-laws.

## **6. Dismissal of the Elder Team**

An individual Elder may not be dismissed by the Church membership. If the Church membership has lost confidence in the Elder Team to carry out the Purpose of the Church as a whole, including the disciplining of its own members, the Church members may call for a meeting of the Church for the single purpose of holding a vote of no confidence for the entire Elder Team. If the vote of no confidence is sustained, the entire Elder Team shall be dismissed, the Senior Pastor's contract shall be terminated, and any other paid staff who are Elders shall have their contracts terminated.

A vote of no confidence for the Elder Team may be held only at a special business meeting of the Church held specifically for that purpose. No other business shall be conducted at this meeting. This meeting is called for by the signed petition of 25% of the corporate members of the Church presented to the Deacon of Administration, who will schedule the meeting to occur within 30 days of receiving the petition. The petition must state the Biblical reason(s) the petitioners believe the current Elder Team is no longer fit to serve as Elders. The warrant for the meeting, specifying the purpose of no confidence, must be posted 14 days as any other business meeting, according to Article IX of these by-laws.

Once the no confidence petition is presented to the Deacon of Administration, the Elders may not dismiss or re-assign any other officers of the Church.

The presence of a minimum of 2/3 of the corporate members of the Church constitutes a quorum for this meeting, and a quorum must exist at the time the vote is taken. Signed proxies from corporate members will be accepted for voting, but shall not be used for determining the existence of a quorum. The Elders, as members of Church, are allowed to participate in the vote. The Deacon of Administration shall serve as the moderator of the meeting.

At the no confidence meeting, the petitioners shall present their case. The Elders will have the right to answer and dispute all charges brought against them. Only the reasons on the petition for dismissal may be argued at the meeting. The vote of no confidence must be sustained by a 2/3 super-majority of the corporate members of the Church. Abstentions shall not count as votes in determining percentage.

## **7. Interim Governance After a Vote of No Confidence**

Within three days after a vote of no confidence is sustained, the Deacon of Administration shall provide for pulpit supply, and present the names to the other permanent Deacons (Deacon of Records, Deacon of Finance) for their consensus.

Within seven days after a vote of no confidence is sustained, the Deacon of Administration shall make a request of the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, or a similar evangelical ministry, for emergency assistance in finding an interim Senior Pastor. The Deacon of Administration shall bring a candidate for the interim position to all the other Deacons for their approval as quickly as possible after that.

Within 14 days of a sustained vote, the Deacons shall meet to appoint five corporate members to serve as a search committee for a Senior Pastor.

Until a Senior Pastor is called by the Church, and the Elder Team is restored to the minimum of three members, the Deacons and staff shall work with the Interim Senior Pastor to insure the day-to-day operations of the church continue.

## **Section B: The Deacons**

### **1. Appointment, Terms, and Qualifications of Deacons**

Deacons shall be appointed by the Elder Team and affirmed by the church membership.

Deacons shall be members of the church.

The term of appointment of a Deacon shall be three years.

The number of Deacons will be set by the Elder Team as needed to ensure leadership for various ministry areas in the church. Such designations shall be communicated with and affirmed by the church membership.

### **2. Responsibilities of Deacons**

Deacons shall work as ministry leaders according to their gifts to assist the church in accomplishing its mission.

Each Deacon shall oversee and lead a designated area of ministry specified by the Elder Team.

Deacons shall meet quarterly with the Elders to assure good communications and accomplishment of the church mission. Additional meetings may be called if needed or requested by the Elders.

In addition to providing leadership to their ministry areas, Deacons may assist the Elders in activities of public worship in the church.

Each Deacon shall lead his area of ministry in a manner that reflects good stewardship of the human, financial and material resources authorized to that ministry in order to accomplish the mission of the church.

### **3. Deacon Ministries**

There shall be three permanent positions of deacon ministry:

- **Deacon of Administration.** He shall assist the Elder Team and Pastoral staff in the day-to-day administration of the church. He shall act as coordinator of the deacons in matters of communications and meetings. In addition, he shall serve as assistant moderator of general church business when needed.
- **Deacon of Finance (Treasurer).** He shall be responsible for receipt and deposit of all monies of the church, including monies of any organization of the church entrusted to him. He shall draw checks in the name of the church to disburse monies pursuant to contracts, obligations, and commitments of the church, or on the order of properly

authorized pastoral staff or Elder Team. He shall keep, in books belonging to the church, full and accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements. He shall prepare a report of the annual meeting, and, as often as required by the Elder Team, provide a statement of the church's assets, liabilities, income and expenditures. He shall supervise those working in finance ministry and shall be bonded in an amount set by the Elder Team.

- **Deacon of Records (Clerk)** He shall keep complete records of all business meetings of the church. He shall secure signatures of members subscribing to the by-laws. He shall keep a register of their names with dates of admission, dismissal, death and record of baptism and shall assist the Elder Team in issuing letters of dismissal and recommendation. He shall preserve all communications and written official reports on file and shall give legal notice of meetings when such notice is necessary. He shall give a written annual report to the church of membership statistics each year.

Additional Deacons may be designated to lead the ministries of music, evangelism, ushering, media technology, building and grounds, children's education, local missions, distant missions, hospitality, visitation, teen programs, family ministry, men's ministries, women's ministries and any others deemed necessary by the Elder Team to accomplish the mission of the church.

The Elder Team, with the assistance of each Deacon, shall establish a manual of guidelines and policies for their ministry area. This shall be updated annually and a copy shall be kept on file in the church office.

## **Section C: Pastoral Staff**

### **1. Senior Pastor**

The Senior Pastor shall be a man who is an ordained minister, chosen and called by the Elders, and affirmed by a super-majority of 2/3 of the church membership.

He shall meet the same Biblical qualifications required for eldership, be received into church membership, and installed by the Elders. He shall be an elder sharing in the spiritual welfare of the church, serving as preacher and teacher. He shall provide leadership for the services of public worship and the administration of the sacraments. He shall provide leadership for the religious education of the congregation, the counseling of its troubles and the comforting of its sick and bereaved.

The Senior Pastor will share in the administration of the church. He shall have general supervision over all other employees of the church. He shall be responsible for compiling and maintaining an up-to-date file of all persons in any way identified with the church, its congregation, church school and affiliated organizations. He shall issue letters of dismissal and recommendation when requested by the Elders in accordance with Article V Section B and Article V Section F

## **2. Associate and Assistant Pastors**

Additional Pastors may be called by the Elder Team and affirmed by the church membership.

Each assistant or associate pastor shall be a qualified candidate for ordination and a member of the church.

Each assistant or associate pastor may or may not be called to be an elder. This shall be determined in accordance with Article VI Section A.

## **3. Church support staff**

The Senior Pastor upon approval of the Elder Team may hire additional support staff. Costs associated with the compensation of paid support staff shall be within the designated amounts established by the annual budget.

Pastoral support staff shall exist to assist the pastoral staff and church in meeting its mission. They may, but not necessarily, include the positions of administration, worship and music leadership, teachers, secretarial support, financial services, cleaning, and maintenance.

Regularly employed support staff shall meet the qualifications of those required for church membership aside from attending membership classes and signing membership agreements.

**VII. (This section has been removed in its entirety, 01 February 2004).**

## **VIII. ORGANIZATIONS**

No organization shall be formed within or considered to be a part of the church activities before the sponsors have submitted their plans to the Elder Team for their approval and sanction.

The various organizations are requested to confer with the Pastor from time to time regarding their plans and activities. All matters of importance which affect the church shall be submitted to the Elder Team for their approval.

No organization shall be permitted to function under the name of the church whose chairman or supervisor is not a member of the church.

All organizations within the church shall submit a written report of activities and finances at the Annual Meeting of the church.

## **IX. MEETINGS**

### **Section A: Worship**

Worship services, Sunday School services, and other Gospel services shall be conducted at such times as decided by the Elder Team.

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of each month, unless otherwise designated by the Elder Team.

### **Section B: Business**

The Annual Business Meeting of the church shall be held during the second Sunday of June each year. It shall be held for the purpose of receiving annual reports, confirming officers and delegates, and transacting such other business as may appear in the call or may be authorized in these By-laws. The Annual Meeting shall be called by the Deacon of Records, by posting a notice upon the church doors, bulletin boards, and in the church bulletin at least fourteen days before the date of this meeting.

The Elder team shall report to the corporate membership the quarterly financial results of the Church by the last Sunday of April, July, and October of each year. This requirement may be met by calling a special business meeting of the Church, if the members need to vote on a warrant article; having an informational meeting (no quorum required) where the results are presented and discussed informally; or by publishing the results in the Church bulletin or newsletter. The Elder Team shall be encouraged to report on various aspects of the ministry on the same timetable.

Special Business Meetings of the church may be called at any time by the Deacon of Records when requested by either the Elder Team, or upon written request by five members specifying the purpose of the meeting. Notice of such a meeting shall be posted upon the church doors, bulletin boards, and in the church bulletin at least fourteen days before the date of this meeting. Only items on warrant will be discussed.

Quorum: Twenty-five percent of the corporate membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Voting: Only Corporate Members shall have the right to vote. Absentee or proxy ballots, written and signed, will be accepted.

No action of the Corporation shall be valid, when challenged at the time, unless a majority of the Corporate Members shall sustain a vote.

## **X. AMENDMENTS AND CHANGES**

Any of these by-laws from "Article IV. Government", through "Article IX. Meetings", may be

amended, revised, and/or changed by a two-thirds vote of the covenant members present and voting at either (1) any Annual Meeting of the church, or (2) any meeting especially called for that purpose; the relevant amendments, revisions, and/or changes being included in the call of this special meeting.

Any of these by-laws from "Article I. Name", through "Article III. Declaration of Faith", and "Article X. Amendments and Changes", may be amended, revised, and/or changed by a two-thirds vote of the covenant members present and voting in an Annual Meeting; the relevant amendments, revisions, and/or changes having been presented to the church in writing at a business meeting called and held at least one month before the time of the proposed action; and these same amendments, revisions, and/or changes having been included in the call of this business meeting.

Revised and adopted at the Annual Meeting of the First Congregational Church of Barrington, New Hampshire; April 23, 1979.

Amended January 30, 1981  
Amended January 29, 1982  
Amended February 8, 1987  
Amended September 20, 1987  
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Amended October 29, 1995  
Amended January 26, 1996  
Amended January 31, 1999  
Amended January 30, 2000  
Amended February 1, 2004  
Amended January 30, 2005

