

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
OF SIOUX CITY, IOWA, INCORPORATED

BYLAWS

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Adopted 12/06/98 Amended 05/07/2000 Amended 1/29/2000
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ARTICLE I.
NAME AND AFFILIATION

This Church will be known as “The First Congregational United Church of Christ of Sioux City, Iowa, Incorporated.”

ARTICLE II.
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of The First Congregational United Church of Christ of Sioux City, Iowa, Incorporated, is to be an alive and growing family of faith in God, the God whom we know through Jesus Christ and who has given us in Jesus the image of what human life is meant to be.

We strive to mature in faith by encouraging the free exploration of our Christian beliefs so that our faith will be more relevant to our individual lives and to the society in which we live.

With friendship and understanding, we find strength in the diversity of interests and backgrounds of our members. We welcome all persons to join us in seeking answers to life’s ultimate questions.

We take love to be the heart of the Gospel of Jesus and the unifying force in our Church. Therefore, we celebrate God's love and blessings in worship. We nurture one another through acceptance and caring and sharing. We reach out beyond ourselves to the needs of others, to promote justice and to witness to God's love.

In all we do, we seek to continue our heritage of being pioneering people in a changing world.

ARTICLE III.
FAITH AND POLITY

SECTION 1 - The temporal power over the work and destiny of this Church is exercised by the Congregation in meetings of its members. All organizations and officers are primarily responsible to the Congregation.

SECTION 2 - The Church is committed to allow each member to follow the Word of God without the acceptance of a formal doctrine.

SECTION 3 - In faithful adherence to the traditions of our faith, this Church pledges itself to work closely and harmoniously with all other denominations and faiths to foster interfaith understanding, to spread the good news of God and to serve in God's name throughout this community, the nation, and the world.

SECTION 4 - We hold to the autonomy of the local Church and its independence of any ecclesiastical control. We cherish the fellowship of the churches united in the Association, State, and National bodies for counsel and cooperation in matters of common concern.

ARTICLE IV.
CHURCH COVENANT

We join with the fellowship of the United Church of Christ in the Statement of Faith adopted by the General Synod and also adopted by this Church at its 1983 Annual Meeting. The Statement of Faith is as follows:

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being,
create persons in your own image
and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will
declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior,
you have come to us
and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be your servants in the service of others,
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.

You promise to all who trust you
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
your presence in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 - CONDITIONS

Members are accepted either by Baptism or by reaffirmation of faith.

All applicants for membership in the First Congregational United Church of Christ of Sioux City, Iowa, will meet with the minister(s) for a period of instruction prior to being received into membership. No one will be denied membership on the basis of age, race, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Membership categories: An **adult member** supports the church with regular worship attendance and resources of time, talent and money and has full voting rights. A person who has not become a member through Baptism or Confirmation will complete a period of new membership instruction before becoming a member. A **baptized member** is a child received into the Church through Baptism and has full membership privileges except voting rights. A **baptized member** becomes an **adult member** at Confirmation and will have full voting rights. An **associate member** is an adult member who is also a member of another church and is eligible for all membership rights, privileges, and responsibilities after instruction.

SECTION 2 – RIGHTS

Any adult member, including associate member, may vote on Church business. Non-members or inactive members may not vote at meetings of the Congregation.

SECTION 3 – TERMINATION

- A) By letter of transfer - Any member of the Church, by request to the Church Council, may be granted a letter of transfer to another Church.
- B) By inactivity - A member who for a period of two years has not attended the Church's worship or contributed to its support will be removed from the active membership roll.
- C) By withdrawal - If a member requests the Council in writing to be released from that member's obligations, said request will be granted.

ARTICLE VI. BUSINESS MEETINGS

- A) The President of the Church, or such person as he/she may designate, will preside as moderator. The moderator will appoint a parliamentarian for each meeting to advise on procedures in accordance with these Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, and Roberts' Rules of Order.
- B) The Annual Meeting will be held in January on such date and at such time as will be selected by the Church Council.

- C) Special business meetings will be called by the Secretary upon

request of the Church Council or upon the written request of any ten (10) members. Such notice will specify the purpose of the meeting and will be read at all services the two (2) Sundays preceding the date set for such meeting.

D) Quorum At all Annual Meetings and at special business meetings, twenty-five (25) adult and associate members present will constitute a quorum.

E) Vote A majority vote of the adult and associate members present will be decisive, except for the calling of a minister, which will require a three-fourths vote of all members of the Church present at the meeting specially called for that purpose.

ARTICLE VII. THE MINISTRY

SECTION 1 - The minister will have in his/her care the spiritual welfare of the Church, with the assistance of the Council and all of the standing committees. He/she will preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments, have under his/her care the services of worship in cooperation with the Worship Committee, administer the activities of the Church in cooperation with the various committees, and promote in all ways possible the spiritual welfare of the Church and those whom it serves.

SECTION 2 - In all relationships between minister and Congregation the freedom of the minister and the autonomy of the congregation are presupposed in the following ways:

A) It is the responsibility of the Pastoral Search Committee, nominated by the Council and elected by the congregation, to seek a candidate for the office of minister. Nominations from the floor will be accepted provided the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This committee will consist of seven (7) to nine (9) members.

- B) The Pastoral Search Committee will seek the counsel and assistance of the conference staff in filling the vacancy, but will not be limited by it.
- C) The Pastoral Search Committee will present to a meeting of the Congregation the name of the candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy.
- D) The minister(s) will be called for a stated period of time by at least a three-fourths vote of all adult and associate members of the Church present and voting.
at an annual or a special meeting of the Congregation which has been duly called.
- E) When a call is extended, it will be in writing and will follow, substantially, the form of call provided by the Iowa Conference, a copy of which is attached. (See page 20.)

SECTION 3 - When a minister(s) has accepted a call to this Congregation, the Church and the minister(s) will join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of installation. A report of the installation will be signed by the Association Executive and copies of it sent to the Iowa Conference and to the Church and Ministry Committee of the Northwestern Association.

SECTION 4 - No other minister(s) will perform any religious ceremony in the Church building without permission of the resident minister(s) or the Worship Committee, in the absence of the minister(s).

SECTION 5 - The pastoral relationship may be terminated:

- A) by the minister(s) at any time by giving no less than ninety (90) days notice to the President of the Council.

- B) by the Congregation, by a vote of a majority of the members present

and voting at an Annual Meeting or at a special meeting of the Congregation called for that purpose. Prior to the meeting, however, the matter of termination will be considered by the Council. It will meet with the minister(s) prior to said congregational meeting and will submit its recommendation at said meeting. Normally, notice of termination will be given to the minister(s) at least ninety (90) days prior to the effective date thereof. If termination is for cause, dismissal may be immediate.

C) by mutual consent of the minister(s) and the Congregation, on such other terms and conditions as may be agreed upon.

ARTICLE VIII. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 1 – GENERAL

The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer will be elected at the Annual meeting for one (1) year terms.

SECTION 2 – PRESIDENT

The President will preside at all Church business meetings and be the chairperson of the Council. The President may be re-elected for one additional term. Having served a one or two year term the President will be ineligible for re-election until two years have elapsed.

SECTION 3 – VICE PRESIDENT

The Vice President will preside at Church business meetings in the absence of the President and will be the Vice President of the Council. The Vice President will normally become President and will serve on the Personnel Committee for a one or two year term while Vice President.

SECTION 4 – SECRETARY

The Secretary will keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the Church and of the Council. The Secretary will also keep an updated Church Directory of the members of the Church and make a full report to the Church at its annual meetings. The Secretary will have on file all documents, written official reports, and communications (including records of letters of transfer), notify all persons elected to office, to committees, or to membership in the Church, give legal notice of all meetings when such notice is necessary, report all communications intended for the Church, and conduct its correspondence as far as may be necessary. There will be no limitation to the number of consecutive terms the Secretary may serve.

SECTION 5 - TREASURER

The Church Treasurer will maintain detailed books of account; pay all bills; maintain adequate payroll records; keep an accurate record of all such disbursements; record receipt of all monies deposited by the Financial Secretary; be authorized to open and maintain checking and savings accounts and such various accounts as deemed necessary in the accomplishment of the Treasurer's duties; submit to the Council at each regularly scheduled meeting a statement of all current account balances and statements of receipts and disbursements for the prior month; prepare a year-to-date and yearly budget comparison; and administer the Church budget subject to any specific directives from the Council. There will be no limitation to the number of consecutive terms the Treasurer may serve.

SECTION 6 - FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary may be elected at the annual meeting for a two (2) year term and is eligible for re-election. He/she will be responsible for receiving, depositing, recording and reporting the income of the Church to its members and to the Council. He/she will provide all contributors with quarterly statements. The Financial Secretary is a voting member of the Church Council. If no Financial Secretary is elected, these functions will be the responsibility of the Treasurer.

SECTION 7 - COUNCIL

A) **Membership** All Council members will be members of this congregation. The Council will consist of the officers of the Church, namely, President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, together with up to five (5) additional Church members.

The officers will be nominated by the Nominating Committee. Each member of the Council except the President, Secretary and Treasurer will be a voting member of a standing elected committee. Members of the Council may serve two consecutive full terms of two years each. The minister(s) will be ex-officio members of the Council without vote.

B) **Duties and Powers** The Council will be the executive and policy making body of this Church. All Committees will support and implement policy established by the Council.

The Council will approve all expenditures of Church funds except those expenditures which are made by majority vote of Committees of the Church for the purposes within their jurisdiction as specifically set forth in these by-laws and from funds budgeted for such Committee.

The Council may appoint ad hoc committees as necessary, including the Nominating Committee, which will be comprised of the President, Vice President and two or three at-large members. The Nominating Committee will present a proposed slate of nominees for Council approval and upon such approval will present this slate for confirmation at the Annual Meeting, when nominations will also be sought from the floor.

The Council will advise and counsel with the minister(s) on the general programs of the Church and cooperate with the minister(s) in carrying out such programs. All acts and deliberations of the Council are subject to the will and revision of the Congregation.

The Council will coordinate the programs and activities of the various Committees of the Church. The Committees of the Church will report to

the Council in the frequency, manner and detail requested by the Council.

The Council will annually review the proposed Church budget as recommended by the Treasurer. Said proposed budget, with the Council's approval, will be recommended to the Congregation for appropriate action at the Annual Meeting.

The Council will be responsible for investing, managing, and accounting for the financial and legal affairs of the Church by carrying out the following actions:

- 1) Act as trustees for the investment, endowment, and legal requirements of the Congregation.
- 2) Choose a depository for funds, securities and legal documents.
- 3) Provide advice, assistance and direction to the Church Treasurer and the Financial Secretary as needed.
- 4) Provide for a financial review of the Church accounts and also an independent non-member accountant to audit the endowment and memorial gift monies.
- 5) Encourage members and friends of the Church to make generous gifts and bequests to the Church, not intended as a contribution to current expenses.

The Council will keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings and report to the Church at regular and special meetings as may be necessary.

The Council will receive the report of the Nominating Committee by November 15th and approve the slate of nominees for all elected offices and committees for presentation at the Annual Meeting.

All vacancies in the offices of the Church because of resignations, death, or other reasons which are not filled at the regular election or by appointment as herein provided, will be filled by Council appointment for the period remaining until the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE IX
ELECTED COMMITTEES

SECTION 1 - GENERAL

- A) Committees There will be six (6) standing elected committees
- 1) Worship
 - 2) Building and Grounds
 - 3) Christian Education
 - 4) Church Missions Committee
 - 5) Pastoral Relations
 - 6) Personnel
- B) Meetings: Written minutes of all meetings will be submitted to the Church Administrator or similar functionary.
- C) Members: Each committee will consist of at least three (3) members who will assume the responsibilities of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary and will remain in office for one (1) year or until a successor is elected . Each member will be elected at the Annual Meeting to a two (2) year term, and so staggered to maintain committee continuity. If additional committee members are needed, the committee may appoint them.
- D) Organization: Immediately following their election, the members of each elected committee will meet and elect a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary. Each committee will establish its goals and objectives for the coming year, and set the number of regular meetings it will hold.

- E) Budget: Prior to October 1st each year all committees will prepare and present to the Treasurer a proposed budget for the next year.
- G) Access to Council: Each committee will have access to Council as needed.

SECTION 2 - WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Purpose: to help the minister(s), music director, and Christian Education Committee develop a worship experience across services and liturgical seasons, integrating members' talents and inspirations in an effort to create services which reflect our values and encourage us to live lives of faith and integrity.

Responsibilities:

1. Consider church members' and visitors' interests and needs when developing and evaluating services and trainings in order to ensure experiences which are relevant and transformative.
2. Arrange for pulpit supply when there is no settled minister.
3. Plan an alternative worship service to be implemented whenever illness or emergency prevents the minister from carrying out his/her duties.
4. Assist in ministering to the spiritual interests of the church and the community.
5. Assist with communion.
6. Coordinate with Music Director and the Creative Worship Team to plan meaningful activities and provide oversight for other non-elected ministry teams.
7. Seek occasions to cooperate with churches of all denominations in worship exchanges.
8. Prepare an annual worship budget to be submitted to the Treasurer.
9. Prepare an annual report of committee activities for the Annual Meeting.
10. Adopt a plan to ensure a smooth and prompt transition to a new year of committee work.
11. Report committee activities to the Church Administrator.
12. The minister and music director are ex-officio members of this committee.

Purpose: acting on behalf of the Congregation, to serve as stewards and caretakers of church property and to oversee the aesthetic appearance of the church

Responsibilities:

1. Within the limits of the budget, to arrange for and supervise custodial maintenance and repairs. The committee will work closely with the personnel committee in the hiring of the custodian and in the supervision of his/her work, and will delegate to the minister(s) the day-to-day supervision of these functions.
2. **Insurance:** Annually, the committee will review all policies of insurance covering 1) the loss of or damage to the property of the church, 2) those policies covering liability for claims arising from the use of church properties and 3) those policies covering church personnel.
It will make such recommendations to the Council as it considers appropriate concerning the policy limits, the scope of coverage, the cost, and the placement of said policies.
The Council will make final decisions regarding these matters.
3. **Use of facilities:** Pursuant to policies to be established by the committee, with the approval of the Council, the use of all church buildings and property will be subject to the approval of the committee. Upon the request of the Council or at such other time as the committee may observe a need, the committee will consider the construction of new facilities, or the repair or improvement of existing facilities, or the acquisition of new or different equipment.
4. **Inspections:** Annually, committee members will make an inspection of the buildings and other properties of the church for the purpose of determining whether the physical facilities of the church are in a safe condition and whether their condition and appearance enhance the mission of the church. They will report their findings in writing to the Council. The report will include the recommendations, if any, that the committee may have for further action.

5. **Ensuring the security of the church:** The chairperson of this committee or his/her delegate will be responsible for the lock-up of the church after services on Sunday.
6. Other duties of the committee include:
 - a. Inventory and upkeep of the kitchens
 - b. Internal decorating
 - c. Upkeep of grounds, lighting, and parking lots
 - d. Maintenance of signs
 - e. Preparation of an annual Buildings and Grounds budget to be submitted to the Treasurer
 - f. Written report of committee activities to the Church Administrator
 - g. Oversight for non-elected ministry teams
 - h. Preparation of an annual report of committee activities for the Annual Meeting
 - i. Adoption of a plan to ensure a smooth and prompt transition to a new year of committee work

SECTION 4 - CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Purpose: to supervise and direct the educational program of the Church, assess educational needs of the church membership, and design a program of Christian education which meets these needs

Responsibilities:

1. Select age-appropriate curriculum for the Christian education of Sunday school, vacation Bible school and confirmation. (Consider cooperating with Mayflower Congregational Church on Bible school.)
2. Assist in training Sunday school teachers.
3. Assist in planning, promoting, and implementing any educational activity within the church.
4. Seek opportunities to network with churches of all denominations regarding activities involving Christian education of children and youth.
5. Work with the personnel committee in the selection of nursery supervisors and facilities and ongoing program guidance.
6. Report committee activities to the Church Administrator.

7. In consultation with ministry teams, prepare an annual Christian education budget to be submitted to the Treasurer.
8. Prepare an annual report of committee activities for the Annual Meeting.
9. Provide oversight of non-elected ministry teams.
10. Adopt a plan to ensure a smooth and prompt transition to a new year of committee work.

SECTION 5 - CHURCH MISSION COMMITTEE

Purpose: to help our church engage in mission projects throughout the local community and beyond, from needs of our own congregants to those of our community and the world

Responsibilities:

1. Provide opportunities for the donation of time, talents, and funds to agencies in our community which help the needy.
2. Provide opportunities for social justice awareness and action in our community and beyond.
3. Seek occasions to work with churches of all denominations in projects of mutual concern.
4. Keep the Congregation informed of the work of our denomination's state, regional, and national mission boards.
5. Prepare annual mission budget to be submitted to the Treasurer.
6. Report committee activities to the Church Administrator.
7. Administer endowment income designated to missions.
8. Prepare an annual report of committee activities for the annual meeting.
9. Adopt a plan to ensure a smooth and prompt transition to a new year of committee work.
10. Provide oversight for non-elected ministry teams.
11. Coordinate and implement the annual financial stewardship drive.
12. In concert with the minister, develop regular events for discernment of members' use of spiritual gifts for the betterment of the Congregation and the community.

SECTION 6 - PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Purpose: to ensure a vital, healthy, mutually beneficial relationship between the congregation and members of the pastoral staff. Every member of this committee stands in the gap to facilitate direct and healthy communication between pastors and church members.

Responsibilities:

1. Work to ensure that the needs of the pastor and pastoral family can be expressed and understood. These include but are not limited to physical/medical issues, financial issues, emotional and spiritual concerns, continuing education needs, and relationships at all levels (marriage, family/children, friendships both inside and outside the Church, professional relationships, inter-staff relationships in the Church, etc.).
2. Act as the official committee for dealing with specific grievances, the reconciliation of which are necessary for restoration of healthy relationships. These would include any grievances of a Congregational member toward a specific pastor or program which is their primary responsibility. They also would include a pastor's grievances toward the church or specific members of the Church.
3. Be a vehicle for positive encouragement and expressions of gratitude or thanks.
4. Adopt a plan to ensure a smooth and prompt transition to a new year of committee work.
5. The Chair of Pastoral Relations will check in with the President on a quarterly basis.

SECTION 7 - PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Purpose: to assist the minister in the hiring, evaluation and termination of paid staff

Responsibilities:

1. Upon approval of the Council, create, maintain and review personnel policies.
2. Assist the minister in an annual evaluation of individual staff members. Solicit input from committees and individuals having direct relations with the staff person in question.
3. In conjunction with Council, set up an annual review of the minister(s).
4. Prepare an annual personnel budget to be submitted to the Treasurer.
5. Report written minutes of committee activities to the Church Administrator.
6. Prepare an annual report of committee activities for the Annual Meeting.
7. Maintain a file of updated documents which include:
 - a. Job descriptions for paid staff
 - b. Assessment tools for evaluation of staff
 - c. Employment policy handbook
8. Adopt a plan to ensure a smooth and prompt transition to a new year of committee work.

ARTICLE X RULES AND BYLAWS

The Corporation will have the power to create and alter Bylaws expedient and necessary for the conduct and management of its affairs. The Bylaws will be adopted or altered at any Annual Meeting or Special Meeting called for that purpose by a majority of members present voting in favor thereof.

It has been the custom to attach a ministerial call agreement to the bylaws. However, since the agreement is updated periodically, a Pastoral Search Committee should seek the latest update by using this link or by searching on the website of the Iowa Conference of the UCC.

<http://www.ucciaconf.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Call-Agreement-2015-10-01.pdf>