

Introduction

The history of the Pittsford Congregational Church is lengthy and rich in texture and substance. Originally gathered by fifteen courageous men and women on April 14, 1784, at a time when Vermont was still an independent republic, this church has been sustained by God's steadfast providence and the support of devoted Christian stewards throughout more than two centuries of change in the surrounding community and world. Forty years ago on January 22, 1961, this church entered into free denominational affiliation with the United Church of Christ, while maintaining its congregational form of government.

Now, on the threshold of the twenty-first century, we have undertaken a solemn review of our church's bylaws, for the purpose of enabling and equipping the church leadership and membership to successfully address the evolving needs and challenges of this community of faith. This task has not been approached with a spirit of legalism; rather, we have sought to regard the essence of church bylaws as a positive expression of structure and conduct that contributes to an orderly and efficient transaction of business and an effective accomplishment of ministries. This review process has consumed more than a year in careful study, with deliberate consideration and revisitation of many issues, always striving to identify and grasp the underlying principles and processes which relate to the specific requirements. In formulating the proposed changes, we have employed earnest prayer and engaged in candid discussion, in an attempt to discern and present the core elements that will empower this congregation and its leadership to work together with a unity of will and purpose. It is our fervent hope that such a framework will serve to guide this church to develop and implement a clear vision for the future, whereby we will devote our God-given talents and resources in powerful Christian testimony, witness, and service to our neighbors, both near and far.

We have chosen to leave Article I through IV unaltered at this time, despite the occasional usage of gender-specific wording therein. That choice is motivated, in part, by our desire to preserve the full historical content of those sections as a tribute to the faithful men and women who composed and adopted the original text. Moreover, we believe it is abundantly evident, regardless of the particular language used to communicate the Gospel, that God's invitation to fellowship and discipleship is open to **all persons**, without distinction. As God's own Holy Word proclaims, "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus*" (Gal 3:28; NIV). In recognition of the boldness and inherent inclusivity of that statement, we consider that truth to be an entirely sufficient declaration of our intentional openness to all persons who would sincerely seek Christian fellowship with this church.

Dated at Pittsford, Vermont on this 18th day of November , 2001.

Ad hoc Bylaws Review Committee – Pittsford Congregational Church

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BYLAWS FOR THE PITTSFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

We, the Body of Christ at the Pittsford Congregational Church, proclaim these bylaws to guide and sustain us in our efforts for the Kingdom of God.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this church shall be “The Pittsford Congregational Church” in Pittsford, Vermont.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ for the purpose of sharing in the worship of God and in making His will dominant in the lives of men, individually and collectively, especially as that will is set forth in the life, teachings, death and living presence of Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE III – POLITY

This church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head and finds in the Holy Scriptures, interpreted by the Divine Spirit through reason, faith and conscience, its guidance in matters of faith and discipline.

The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject in legal matters to the Articles of Incorporation granted it by the Secretary of the State of Vermont.

While this church is amendable to no ecclesiastical judicatory, it accepts the obligations of mutual council, comity and cooperation involved in the free fellowship of the United Church of Christ, and pledges itself to share its common aims and work.

ARTICLE IV – DOCTRINE

This church recognizes the Bible as the sufficient rule of faith and practice and holds that living in accordance with the teaching of Jesus Christ is the true test of fellowship. Each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of his own conscience, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The following statement of faith, therefore, is not a test but an expression of the spirit in which the church interprets the Word of God.

I. FAITH -

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his deeds we testify:

He calls the worlds into being,
creates man in his own image
and sets before him the ways of life and death.

He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

He judges men and nations by his righteous will
declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord,
he has come to us and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the world to himself.

He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

He calls us into his Church
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be his servants in the service of men,
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.

He promises to all who trust him
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
his presence in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end.

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

II. COVENANT – We are united in striving to know the will of God as taught in the holy Scriptures, and in our purpose to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church of Christ to proclaim the gospel to all mankind, exalting the worship of the one true God, and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of human brotherhood. Depending, as did our fathers, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world into the kingdom of God, and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness, and the life everlasting.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

As members of the whole Body of Christ and of this fellowship, and as the Providence of God enables us, we shall strive to walk together in all of God's ways, to be faithful to all the commitments essential to the Christian life, to love our neighbors as ourselves, to be good stewards of God's blessings and creation, to attend habitually the services of this church, to give regularly for its support, benevolences, and missions, to share in its organized work for the world, and to seek in obedient witness in every way to win those among us to Christ Jesus.

The members of this church shall be persons who have publicly accepted its covenant and who have been received by the church in one of the following manners:

- (a) on presentation of satisfactory letters of transfer from other churches;
- (b) if letters are not available, by reaffirmation of faith on recommendation of the Board of Deacons;
- or (c) on confession of faith and baptism (unless previously baptized and exempted because of conviction) on recommendation of the Board of Deacons.

- I. Reception – Persons recommended by the Board of Deacons shall be received at a church service by public assent to the covenant. Any who are unable to attend in public may be received by the Deacons acting on behalf of the church.
- II. Termination of Membership – Membership shall be generally subject to the principles and practices of the United Church of Christ, and especially as follows:
 - A. By letter or withdrawal – on request, a member in good standing may:
 - 1. be granted a letter of transfer to any church in fellowship with this church.
 - 2. be released from membership, if after due deliberation and conference, a desire for such release is clear.
 - B. Inactive Membership
 - 1. Upon recommendation of the Deacons and by vote of the church, members whose addresses have long been unknown or who for a period of two years, in spite of kindly approaches, have not communicated with the church or contributed to its support, may be transferred to an inactive list.
 - 2. Notice of such action shall be mailed to the last known address of the member and any new address discovered, within one year from the date of transfer.

3. From the date of such transfer such persons shall cease to be reported on the active membership roll and shall not:
 - a. hold any church office or serve on any board or committee.
 - b. be entitled to engage in parliamentary motions or voting at any church or committee meeting.

C. Dismissal

1. If, after the passage of one year from the conferment of inactive status, the addresses of inactive members are still unknown, or they are unwilling to renew their active connection with the church, inactive members may be removed from the membership roll by a further vote of the church.
2. The membership of a person shall not be terminated (except by the granting of a letter of transfer or release) at a meeting in which the recommendation for such action is first made.

- III. Restoration to membership – Upon recommendation of the Deacons and by vote of the church at a duly-called meeting, any person whose membership has been inactivated or terminated may be restored to full membership.

ARTICLE VI – SERVICES and MEETINGS

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

I. Worship

- A. Services of worship shall be held at given hours each Sunday, except when temporarily suspended by vote of the church.

B. The Sacraments

1. The Lord's Supper (Holy Communion) shall be celebrated at such time as the Deacons may determine.
2. The baptism of adults and the baptism of consecration of children shall be administered at such time as the Minister may designate or, in the Minister's

absence, the Deacons may coordinate the administration of baptism by authorized clergy.

- C. Other services of worship, inspiration, prayer, and study may be held as determined by the church body.

II. Business Meetings

A. Annual Meeting

1. The Annual Meeting shall be held as provided in the Articles of Incorporation of the church, to hear the yearly reports of the officers, organizations, and committees, to elect officers, transact business, adopt the annual budget, and set plans for the new year.
2. The date of the Annual Meeting shall be set for the fourth Sunday in January of each year.

B. Special Meetings

1. Special meetings for church business may be called by the Church Clerk on written request of the Minister, the Deacons, the Trustees, the Church Council, a Pastoral Search Committee, or at least five members of the church.
2. The nature of the business to be transacted shall be stated in the call.
3. In the event that the proposed nature of business for a special meeting shall include consideration of requesting the Minister's resignation or otherwise terminating the Minister's term of office for any cause other than allegations of criminal conduct, prior to the scheduling of such a meeting, the petitioning group must meet with the Pastoral Relations Committee on at least three separate occasions to thoroughly review the relevant issues. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall establish the schedule and format for such interaction with the petitioning group, and shall formulate advisory recommendations for presentation at the ensuing special church meeting.

C. Notices

1. Notices of the Annual and other church meetings shall be duly warned by verbal announcement at a regular church service at least seven days in advance of such a meeting. For all church meetings other than the Annual

Meeting, a written notice shall also be provided at least to each active church member, post-marked or hand-delivered a minimum of ten days prior to such meeting.

2. A written request for a meeting shall be signed by the petitioners and shall be posted in the church at least seven days in advance of such meeting.

D. Quorum

1. No business of the church may be conducted without a quorum present.
 2. A quorum shall consist of twenty-five active members except as noted in ARTICLE XI, Section I.
- E. Voting – Unless some other fraction is specified, a majority of the valid votes cast by the church members present is decisive, and only members of the church who are present are entitled to vote. Voting by proxy or absentee ballot is not allowed. The total numbers of valid votes shall generally include all votes cast, including indecipherable ballots, with the exclusion of blank ballots (or other means of signifying abstention from voting). All unusual circumstances, such as fraudulent ballots, shall be addressed as directed by the voting conventions in the version of Robert’s Rules of Order cited below.
- F. The conduct of church business at meetings shall be guided by “Robert’s Rules of Order Revised”, 1915 Version, as modified and enhanced by the Constitution Society in 1996, except that non-members and inactive church members typically shall be entitled to participate in discussion and discourse of issues and proposed actions.

III. Official year

- A. The official year of the church shall be the calendar year and all officers, boards and committees, except for the Church School Superintendent (see ARTICLE VII, Section VII), shall assume their duties immediately following the Annual Meeting and shall serve until their successors are elected and qualified.

ARTICLE VII – OFFICERS

Serving as an officer of a Christian church is a noble task. Officers shall regard their service on behalf of this congregation as an opportunity to contribute their God-given gifts and talents

toward accomplishment of God's purpose in this fellowship, not as a means of increasing personal status or authority. Accordingly, officers shall devote themselves to humble and obedient service before God and as true ambassadors of this church, ever mindful that God's good pleasure and the delegation of authority by the church membership establish the specific nature and duration of their service.

The officers of the church shall be the following:

I. Minister

A. Calling of the Minister

1. The Minister shall be called for an indefinite time by at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at a duly-called meeting. When a vacancy occurs in the ministry, the Church Council, or a Pastoral Search Committee appointed by them, shall, with the cooperation of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ and others, make a canvass of available candidates, recommend the one who in their judgement should be called to this pastorate, introduce the candidate to the church, and propose election.
2. When a Minister has been elected and has accepted the call, the Southwest Association of the Vermont Conference UCC shall be invited to install the Minister in accordance with established practice. The Minister shall become a member of this church at the first practical opportunity.

B. Responsibilities of the Minister

The Minister shall:

1. be in charge of the spiritual welfare of the church with the assistance of the Board of Deacons.
2. seek to welcome followers of Christ, preach the Gospel, and administer the Sacraments and rites of the church.
3. have care of all services of public worship, offer pastoral guidance, visitation, and counseling, and shepherd the activities of the church in cooperation with the various boards and committees.

4. be an advisory non-voting member of all boards and committees, except the Pastoral Relations Committee, unless otherwise noted.
5. meet regularly and interact closely with the Pastoral Relations Committee.

C. Completion of Minister's term of office

1. By resignation – The Minister shall give a minimum of sixty days to end the term of ministry.
2. While the term of the Minister shall be indefinite, the church may at any time by majority vote at a meeting called for the purpose and in accordance with the procedures specified for such actions [ARTICLE VI, Section II(B)(3)], request the Minister's resignation with the understanding that it will be effective after sixty days, or such other period as may be mutually determined.

II. **Moderator** – The Moderator shall be a member of the church, shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve for one year, and shall preside at the Annual Meeting and all special meetings of the church.

III. **Clerk** – The Clerk shall be a member of the church and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve for one year.

The Clerk shall:

- A. keep records of the proceedings of the church and of the Church Council.
- B. keep a register of the members with their addresses and with dates and modes of their reception and removal.
- C. keep records of baptisms, marriages and deaths.
- D. issue letters of transfer.
- E. preserve on file all communications and written official reports.
- F. give official notices of all Annual Meetings and special meetings.
- G. conduct all official correspondence.
- H. perform such other duties as are prescribed by law or as usually pertain to the office of a clerk or secretary of an assembly.

IV. **Financial Secretary** – The Financial Secretary shall be a member of the church and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve for one year.

The Financial Secretary shall:

- A. take charge of all offerings, special collections, and other gifts.
- B. receive and deposit all income.
- C. send receipts of deposit to the Treasurer.
- D. keep an accurate account of all pledges and gifts.
- E. furnish financial statements to all contributors to the church upon their request.

- V. **Treasurer** – The Treasurer shall be a member of the church and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve for one year.

The Treasurer shall:

- A. receive all receipts of deposit from the Financial Secretary.
- B. pay bills of the church as directed by the Trustees.
- C. keep accurate account of all receipts and disbursements.

- VI. **Auditors** – Two auditors shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve a one year term.

The Auditors shall:

- A. examine the accounts of the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary.
- B. conduct a year-end audit and furnish a written report thereof for the Annual Meeting.
- C. perform other audits as requested.

- VII. **Church School Superintendent** – The Superintendent shall be a member of the church and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year beginning in July.

The Superintendent shall:

- A. have supervision of all phases of the church school under the direction of the Board of Christian Education.
- B. be a member of the Board of Christian Education.

- VIII. **Sexton** – The Sexton shall be a member of the church and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve one year. No person shall hold the offices of Sexton and Board of Trustees member concurrently.

The Sexton shall:

- A. be responsible for maintenance and care of the church-owned buildings and grounds, with the assistance of the custodian and volunteers.
- B. serve as the contact person to schedule use and rental of church property by individuals and groups.
- C. interact with the Board of Trustees in accomplishment of the particular property-related duties specified in the job description which involve such coordination.

- IX. **UCC Representative** – The UCC Representative shall be a member of the church and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve for one year.

The UCC Representative shall:

- A. attend Church Council meetings.
- B. report activities of our church to the Vermont Conference UCC.
- C. attend and report on Southwest Association activities.
- D. serve as a liaison with the UCC and report on activities of General Synod and Vermont Conference UCC, pertaining to our church's involvement in its mission, stewardship, workshops, training events, retreats, ecumenical needs, and global involvement.

- X. **Historian** – The Historian shall be a member of the church and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve for one year.

The Historian shall:

- A. collect, assemble, collate, and preserve for future access various church-related items of historical significance and interest.
- B. respond to requests for genealogical information through research of church records and other sources.
- C. write an annual report and provide accounts of church history upon request.
- D. attend Church Council meetings.

- XI. **Other Officers** – Other officers may be elected as needed.

- XII. **Corporate Officers** – Unless otherwise directed by the Church Council or the church membership, the corporate officers, including agent, of this church shall consist of members of the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE VIII – BOARDS and COMMITTEES

Serving as a member of a board or committee of a Christian church is a noble task. Board and committee members shall regard their service on behalf of this congregation as an opportunity to contribute their God-given gifts and talents toward accomplishment of God’s purpose in this fellowship, not as a means of aggrandizement in personal status or authority. Accordingly, members of boards and committees shall devote themselves to humble and obedient service before God and as true ambassadors of this church, ever mindful that God’s good pleasure and the delegation of authority by the church membership establish the specific nature and duration of their service.

Each Board and Committee shall elect its own chairman, secretary, and such other committee officers as it may determine to be necessary to perform its respective functions.

The standing and ad hoc boards and committees of this church shall include:

- I. **Church Council** – The Church Council shall be comprised of members of the church and shall consist of: Minister, Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Church School Superintendent, Sexton, two Deacons, two Trustees, two Pastoral Relations Committee members, two Members-at-Large elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year, one Board of Christian Education member, one Missions Committee member, one Women’s Fellowship member, one Music Committee member, and the UCC Representative. A quorum shall consist of eight members.

The Church Council shall:

- A. be the primary administrative body of the church, responsible for considering the entire task of the church, subject to governance by the authority vested in the church membership, and as guided by the direction of the Holy Spirit and the obligations of Christian faith.
- B. act for and on behalf of the church body in routine and appropriate matters, always assuming that unless such action can attain practical unanimity of support within the Council, it must seek and obtain the confirmation of the church membership.
- C. prepare the annual church budget for proposal to the church membership at Annual Meeting, with suitable input and assistance from the Minister, Boards, Committees, and financial officers of the church.
- D. advise the Minister on the general direction of the church’s goals, priorities, and activities, and cooperate in the establishment of a balanced and vibrant fellowship of Christian love, worship, ministry, witness, and charity.
- E. have the authority to:

1. appoint a person or persons to fill vacancies which occur within boards, committees, and offices as recommended by the Nominating Committee as addressed in ARTICLE VIII, SECTION VII(B).
 2. appoint delegates, as needed, to the Vermont Conference UCC Annual Meeting, meetings of the Southwest Association of the Vermont Conference UCC, and to meetings of any other organization to which the church should send delegates, upon recommendation of the Minister, boards, and committees, and with consideration of providing compensation thereto.
 3. select an Interim Minister, as provided in ARTICLE VIII, SECTION II(I).
- F. create ad hoc committees as needed to fulfill appropriate functions.
- G. meet at least monthly, and as otherwise needed, to maintain a pro-active approach to addressing the church's business and needs.
- H. determine its own mode of procedure.

II. Board of Deacons – The Board of Deacons shall consist of six church members, elected for terms of three years in such manner that the terms of at least two members expire annually. After serving two full terms, a Deacon shall be ineligible for re-election for one year. A Deacon who has served many years or a member of the church with a long record of service may be elected a Deacon Emeritus, being entitled for life to all the privileges of a member of the Board of Deacons. A quorum shall consist of three members.

The Board of Deacons shall:

- A. have the duty to minister to the spiritual needs of our church community:
1. defining the purpose and mission of our faith.
 2. discerning discipleship and stewardship.
 3. celebrating our strength of faith, entering into the work of evangelism.
- B. oversee the support and care of the poor, the sick, the sorrowing, the indifferent, and the stranger in our midst.
- C. assist in the preparation and administration of the Sacraments.
- D. perform an annual survey of the church membership roll and at the Annual Meeting make recommendations to the church regarding necessary revisions.
- E. constructively evaluate the performance of the Minister and the congregation, with regard to their respective responsibilities and established goals, and provide a written report thereof at the Annual Meeting.
- F. receive applications for admission to church membership, examine all applicants for membership on confession of faith, and recommend to the church such persons as they deem to be prepared for membership.
- G. promote nurturing and visitation of persons throughout our fellowship.
- H. arrange for pulpit supply in the temporary absence of the Minister.

- I. in the event of a Ministerial vacancy, seek and interview potential interim Minister(s) and recommend a suitable candidate to the Church Council for consideration.

- III. **Board of Trustees** – The Board of Trustees shall consist of six members, elected at Annual Meeting for terms of three years in such manner that the terms of at least two members expire annually. After serving two full terms, a Trustee shall be ineligible for re-election for one year. A quorum shall consist of three members.

The Board of Trustees shall:

- A. manage the regular care, use, and safekeeping of the physical property of the church, as guided by the church membership.
 - B. manage the financial affairs of the church, in conformity with responsible Christian stewardship and as guided by the church membership, in accordance with duly-adopted church policies and the laws of the State of Vermont.
 - C. obtain specific authorization by vote of the church membership prior to any purchase, sale, lease, mortgage, or transfer of the church's real property. The periodic short-term rental of the use of specific church facilities, such as storage sheds, Fellowship Hall, and parsonage, which have been generally designated as being available for use by outside parties, is exempt from this requirement.
 - D. obtain specific authorization from the Church Council, or by vote of the church membership if deemed necessary by the Church Council, prior to scheduling any maintenance or construction project with an anticipated cost greater than two percent (0.02) of the church's adopted annual budget for general expenditures. Genuine emergencies, which require funding before the Church Council could reasonably convene, are exempt from this requirement.
 - E. keep custody of all documents and valuable papers related to property of the church.
 - F. make an annual review of ministerial compensation, and of salaries for secretarial and custodial employees, and make appropriate recommendations of the Church Council for action.
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- IV. **Board of Christian Education** – The Board of Christian Education shall consist of the Minister, the Church School Superintendent, and four other persons at least two of whom shall be members of the church, elected for terms of two years in such manner that the terms of two persons expire annually.

The Board of Christian Education shall:

- A. have supervision and direction of the educational work of the church.
- B. have charge of the church school with full power to appoint and remove teachers.
- C. initiate and maintain other religious educational activities.

- D. schedule confirmation classes as necessary.
- E. cooperate in the educational aspects of social service and missions.

- V. **Missions Committee** – The Missions Committee shall consist of six persons of whom at least four shall be members of the church, elected for terms of three years in such manner that the terms of two persons expire annually.

The Missions Committee shall:

- A. seek to foster the ideals of Christian Stewardship.
- B. recommend benevolences at the Annual Meeting.
- C. assist in promoting interest in missions and systematic giving, endowments, and bequests.
- D. cooperate with the Deacons and the Board of Christian Education in mission education programs.

- VI. **Music Committee** – The Music Committee shall consist of four persons of whom at least two shall be members of the church, elected for terms of two years in such manner that the terms of two persons expire annually.

The Music Committee shall:

- A. oversee all church music, choirs, choir robes, and musical instruments.
- B. appoint the organist and choir directors, and make recommendations to the Church Council concerning their financial compensation.

- VII. **Nominating Committee** – The Nominating Committee shall consist of six members of the church, three of whom shall be elected by the church at the Annual Meeting for a one year term, and one representative each from the Board of Deacons, Board of Trustees, and the Women’s Fellowship. The committee shall endeavor to enlist people into the mission and ministries of our church, always attempting to match individual gifts and abilities with the church’s needs. The work of this committee shall in no way limit the right of any church member to make nominations from the floor at Annual Meeting and other business meetings of the church or Church Council.

The Nominating Committee shall:

- A. prepare a list of nominations of officers and committee members for each new year, seeking to distribute the responsibilities of leadership as widely and as wisely as possible, and shall:

1. post the list of nominees in the church at least two weeks before the Annual Meeting.
 2. provide the list of nominees to the church secretary for inclusion in the Annual Report.
- B. identify qualified candidates to fill mid-term vacancies which occur within Boards, Committees, and Offices, for recommendation to the Church Council.

VIII. **Pastoral Relations Committee** – The Pastoral Relations Committee shall consist of five members of the church. Except when filling a mid-term vacancy, a maximum of three committee members shall be elected yearly at the Annual Meeting, to serve a term of two years. Committee members shall serve no more than six consecutive years in one interval of successive terms, and shall then be ineligible for additional service on this committee until the lapse of two years.

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall:

- A. strive to strengthen the relationship between the Minister and the congregation, and to promote a unity of purpose and spirit of cooperation throughout the fellowship.
- B. foster consistent and constructive communication within the congregation and between individuals, the church leadership, and the Minister, in an atmosphere of trust, respect, and confidentiality.
- C. consult with the Board of Deacons with regard to their annual review of ministerial and congregational performance, and with the Board of Trustees concerning their annual review of the scope and content of ministerial compensation.
- D. meet regularly with and interact closely with the Minister, who shall not be a member of this committee.

IX. **Pastoral Search Committee** – A Pastoral Search Committee shall be appointed by the Church Council to seek ministerial candidates to fill a vacancy in the pastorate of the church. The Committee shall be chosen to be reasonably representative of the predominant characteristics of the church congregation, and shall function in their task on behalf of the church membership and in appropriate coordination and cooperation with Boards, other Committees, and denominational bodies, including the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ. Although the committee's size may be subject to modification at the Church Council's discretion, a Pastoral Search Committee shall generally consist of nine church members, with as many as three additional church members designated as alternates to replace any committee member who may be unable to complete the term of service. The term of service shall run continuously from the date of appointment until the installation of the chosen Minister.

The Pastoral Search Committee shall:

- A. elect a chairperson, a recording secretary, and a communications liaison. The liaison shall attend Church Council meetings and provide regular progress reports to the Council and to the church congregation.
 - B. prayerfully and deliberately research, canvass, and recruit available ministerial candidates, maintaining confidentiality and professional courtesy.
 - C. prayerfully select a qualified candidate for potential service as Minister of the Pittsford Congregational Church, for recommendation to the church membership.
 - D. upon a candidate's approval by the church membership and acceptance of the call to ministry, make installation plans with the new Minister and the Southwest Association of the Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ.
- X. **Stewardship Committee** – The Stewardship Committee shall consist of five persons, being one delegate each from the Board of Deacons, Board of Trustees, and Missions Committee, and two persons to serve as members-at-large. The three delegates shall be chosen by their respective boards and committees at their first business meeting following Annual Meeting, to serve terms of one year. The members-at-large shall be elected at Annual Meeting to serve a term of two years, such that the term of one member-at-large shall be completed each year.

The Stewardship Committee shall:

- A. understand and uphold:
 - 1. stewardship of God's creation.
 - 2. the mission of our church as deep commitment grounded in faith.
 - 3. gifts of talents and service.
 - B. set goals and schedule for stewardship activities, including:
 - 1. educating and informing the congregation about financial support for the church's needs, planned giving, and memorial/honorary gifts.
 - 2. preparing materials needed, recruiting and training persons for stewardship visitation to homes.
 - C. interact closely with the Missions Committee on matters of mutual purpose, and with the Board of Trustees and Church Council regarding budget issues and goals.
 - D. seek assistance from the Vermont Conference UCC for training and support.
- XI. **Other Committees** – Other committees may be appointed by the church or the Church Council as needed.

ARTICLE IX – FINANCES

Financial contributions to the church have a dual nature. They satisfy the material needs of the church and its ministries in the present and future, and they are a symbolic act of offering ourselves in devotion and service to God. The opportunities for returning a portion of God's bountiful blessings to His service through the church are manifold, including regular offerings, pledges, and tithes, and special gifts such as endowments, memorials, trusts, and annuities, which may be unrestricted in their usage or designated by the giver for a specific purpose. The church's stewardship and management of the financial resources thus derived are a solemn obligation before God. Pursuant to the authority vested herein, the Church Council, in consultation with the church membership, the Minister, church officers, boards, committees, and others, may develop, adopt, and implement financial guidelines and policies. Such documentation shall serve to provide structure to the vision development, goal establishment, planning, and investment aspects of the management of the church's financial resources. Furthermore, such guidelines and policies shall strive to attain an appropriate balance among categories of resource utilization, such as maintenance/enhancement of the physical property, missions/outreach, and Christian education, based on the discernment of God's will for this fellowship and community.

ARTICLE X – AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

All organizations connected with the church are regarded as integral parts of the church and are under its general jurisdiction and shall report at the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

- I. Prior to action by the membership on any proposed amendment to ARTICLES I through, IV, the proposed changes shall be first submitted to the Church Council for study and review. The Council shall make its recommendation to the membership within six weeks of receiving such amendments. Subsequent to such recommendations by the Council, these ARTICLES may be altered or amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at any regular or special meeting provided a notice specifying the time of the meeting and the substance of the proposed amendment shall have been given from the pulpit and printed in the bulletin on six Sundays immediately preceding said meeting and copies of the proposed amendments shall have been distributed to the members of the church. A quorum for such meetings shall consist of fifty members.

- II. Exclusive of ARTICLES I through IV, these Bylaws may be altered or amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at any regular or special meeting, provided that a notice specifying the time of the meeting and the substance of the proposed amendment shall have been given from the pulpit and printed in the bulletin on the two Sundays immediately

preceding said meeting and copies shall have been distributed to the members of the church.