

BY – LAWS

OF THE

HOUGHES NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
310 MANET AVENUE
QUINCY, MA 02169

Revised 2021,
voted March 2022

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
BY-LAWS Adopted

Article I. Name

- A. The name of this Church shall be the Houghs Neck Congregational Church; Quincy, MA.

Article II. ~~Object~~ (Mission Statement)

- A. The ~~object~~ (Mission Statement) of this Church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ for the purposes of sharing in the worship of God and in making His will dominant in the lives of ~~men and women~~ (persons) individually and collectively, especially as that will is set forth in the life, teachings and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Article III. Polity

- A. The Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head and finds in the Holy Scripture, interpreted by the Holy Spirit through reason, faith and conscience its guidance in matters of faith and discipline.
- B. The ~~government~~ (governance) 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 the ~~State~~ (Commonwealth) of Massachusetts.
- C. While this Church is amenable to no ecclesiastical judicatory, it accepts the obligations of mutual council and cooperation involved in the free fellowship of Christian churches and pledges itself to share their common aims and work.

Article IV. Doctrine

- A. This Church recognizes the Bible as the sufficient rule of faith and practice and holds that living in accordance with the teachings 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 or her~~ (the member's) 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.
 - 1. **Faith:** We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, goodness and love; and in Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord and Savior, who for us and our salvation lived and died and rose again and lives forevermore; and in the Holy Spirit, who reveals Christ's will; and renews, comforts and inspires the Church.
 - 2. **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 humankind, 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 reconciliation. Depending as did our forebears, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into the 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.

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Article V. Membership

A. The Houghs Neck Congregational Church is composed of its members who, believing in God as Heavenly Father and accepting Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior; and depending on the guidance of the Holy Spirit are organized for Christian Worship for the ongoing work of Christian witness.

1. Reception. Persons become *Active* Members of the Houghs Neck Congregational Church by:

- a. Baptism and either confirmation or profession of faith in Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior
- b. Reaffirmation of profession of faith
- c. Letter of transfer or certification from other Christian Church(es).

~~**1. Inactive Members.** If after a period of one year (*only one year* ?????), in spite of approaches and communications by the Diaconate, a member has had no contact with the Church and has not contributed to its support, a letter shall be sent by the Diaconate asking if the person desires to have their name removed from the Active Membership of the Church and placed on the Inactive roll. If that member so requests or fails to respond to the letter and continues to show no interest in the life of the Church for a period of three (3) months after said letter has been sent, by action of the Diaconate shall forward a letter to the Member confirming change in status to Inactive, with a copy to the Clerk (*who shall*) to transfer the Member to the Inactive Roll upon recommendation of the Diaconate.~~

Inactive Members. If after a period of two (2) years, an Active Member has had no contact with the Church and has not contributed to its support, the Active Member shall be contacted by the Diaconate through a personal visit or by a phone call to determine if the person desires to ~~have their name~~ be removed from Active Membership of the Church and placed on the Inactive Roll. If the Active Member so requests, the Diaconate shall forward a letter confirming the change in status to Inactive; with a copy to the Clerk. Regardless, the Diaconate shall forward a summary of the communication to the Clerk for the Church's records.

~~**2. Termination.** Termination of membership may be accomplished by a Member's request to the Diaconate for withdrawal. The Church shall patiently endeavor to secure his or her continuance in it fellowship. Failing in such effort, the Church will accept the request and terminate the membership. A member's name shall be removed on death from the active and inactive rolls of this Church. All requests for the termination of membership by letter of transfer shall be acted upon by the Pastor and the Clerk, and reported to the Diaconate. Such letters of transfer and commendation as issued shall be directed to a particular local church.~~

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Article V. Membership (continued)

2. Transfer/Termination. Termination of membership shall be accomplished as follows.

- a. Transfer.** A Member shall initiate the request to Transfer membership in writing, addressed to the Diaconate. The Diaconate shall act upon the request and forward the Member a letter of transfer and commendation with a copy to the Clerk; the Member's name shall be removed from the rolls of the Church.
- b. Death.** Upon receipt of notification of the death of a Member, the Diaconate shall request the Clerk to remove the Member's name from the rolls of the Church.
- c. Termination.** A Member shall initiate the request to terminate membership in writing, addressed to the Diaconate. The Church shall patiently endeavor to secure the Member's continuance in its fellowship. Failing in such effort, the Diaconate shall act upon the request and forward the Member a letter of termination with a copy to the Clerk; the Member's name shall be removed from the rolls of the Church.

Article VI. Services and Meetings

A. The services and meetings of the Church shall be as follows.

1. Worship

- a.** Service(s) of Worship shall be held at given hours each Sunday, (*as determined by the Diaconate*); except when temporarily suspended by vote of the Church (*or in the event of a declared governmental emergency*).
- b.** ~~The Sacraments.~~—The Sacraments of the Lord's Supper shall be at times decided upon by the Diaconate. No Sacrament is compulsory on any Member or church attendee.
- c.** The baptism of adults and the baptism or dedication of children shall be administered at the discretion of the Pastor or ~~in his or her absence~~, (*if absent*), the Diaconate.
- d.** Other Services for worship, inspiration, prayer and study may be held as determined by the ~~Church~~, (*Diaconate*).

2. Business Meetings

- a. Annual Meeting.** The Annual Meeting shall be held in June to hear the yearly reports of the Officers, Organizations, ~~Departments~~ (*Boards and Committees*); to transact business; ~~adopt the annual budget~~; (*and to*) set up plans for the New Year.
- b. Election/Budget Approval Meeting.** Election for all Officers, Board and Committee members not appointed by (*the*) Church Council (*and adoption of the proposed Annual Budget*) shall be held at a Church meeting in April.

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Article VI. Services and Meetings (continued)

2. Business Meetings (continued)

c. Regular Services as Business Meetings. The regular Sunday meeting of the Church shall be considered competent in case of necessity to transact business, ~~except~~ *with the exception of* corporate action requiring legal notice; and *with* business specifically referred to other meetings.

1) *Corporate action may be taken at a regular Sunday meeting of the Church as long as requirements for notification have been fulfilled.*

d. Special Meetings. Special meetings for business may be ~~called~~ *(requested)* by the ~~minister~~ *(Pastor)*, the Church Council, the Diaconate, the Trustees or on written request ~~of~~ *(by)* five (5) *(active)* members of the Church to the Clerk *(who shall call the meeting and post all necessary notifications)*.

e. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of twenty (20) *(Active) Members*.

f. Rule and Regulations

1) **Voting.** Voting shall be by ballot, voice vote or show of hands, except as otherwise provided in the By-Laws. Unless otherwise required, a majority vote is decisive, ~~and unless restricted by law all members of the Church are entitled to vote.~~

2) **Election of Officers, Board and Committee Members.** The candidates submitted by the Nominating Committee and presented by the Clerk on a suitably prepared ballot ~~including~~ *which shall include* appropriate space for write-in candidates who shall meet the requirements for the position for which the candidate is nominated. The right of any Active Member to make a nomination from the floor shall always be recognized. In the event any nominee after election declines to serve *(or if a vacancy occurs)*, the Nominating Committee shall propose a substitute to be voted upon at the next duly called Business Meeting of the Church *(Council and upon a majority vote the candidate shall be elected and commence to serve immediately)*. Unless otherwise indicated, all Officers, Board and Committee members shall serve a three-year term. The Nominating Committee shall attempt to ensure that all Board and Committee Members' terms are staggered to ensure Board and Committee continuity.

3) **Official Year.** The Official Year of the Church shall begin on June 1 and all Officers, Boards and Committees shall assume their duties at that time and continue in office until ~~their successors are elected and qualified~~ *(the end of their respective terms)*.

4) **Moderator.** The Pastor of the Church shall ordinarily be the Moderator of business meetings. In the *(event of)* absence *(or incapacitation)* of the ~~Minister~~ *(Pastor)*, the chairperson of the Diaconate ~~will~~ *(shall)* act as Moderator.

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article VI. Services and Meetings (continued)

2. Business Meetings (continued)

f. Rule and Regulations (continued)

5) **Reports.** All Officers, Boards (*and*) Committees, ~~and Departments~~ shall report in writing (*by a date as requested by the Clerk for presentation to the Church*) at the Annual Meeting and at such other times as may be requested by the Church.

3. **Education.** The Church shall conduct a Sunday School. As part of ~~the~~ Christian training, the School will be afforded (*the opportunity*) to contribute to the regular expenses of the Church. It shall be the purpose of the Sunday School to lead its members into a better knowledge of the Bible and Christian truths and practices, as well as an increasing experience of fellowship with God and in the development of a character which shall be genuinely and consistently Christian in all human relationships. It ~~will~~ (*shall*) endeavor to develop interest in the Church and increasing desire and ability to participate in its life and work. Rules for the administration of the Sunday School shall be ~~proposed~~ (*developed and maintained*) by the Board of Christian Education.

Article VII. Officers *and Standing Committees*

A. The Officers of the Church shall be the following.

1. Pastor.

- a. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite time by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the (*active*) members of the Church. When a vacancy occurs in the Pastorate, the Church Council (unless a special committee is appointed for the purpose), after seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit shall, with the cooperation of ~~the~~ (*an*) Associate Minister of the ~~Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ~~ (*Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ*), make a canvas of available ministers; settle upon the one who in their judgment should be called to the Pastorate; introduce ~~him or her~~ (*the minister*) to the Church; and at a duly called meeting propose ~~his or her~~ election.
- b. When a Pastor has been elected and has accepted the call, if it is agreeable to ~~him or her~~ (*all*), the Church shall request the ~~Pilgrim Association of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ~~ (*Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ*) to hold an Ecclesiastical Council for the purposes of installing or recognizing the Pastor in accordance with established usages. At ~~his or her~~ (*the*) first opportunity, the Pastor shall become a member of the Church and of the association (*if any,*) of which the Church is a member.

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article VII. Officers *and Standing Committees*

A. The Officers of the Church shall be the following. (continued)

1. Pastor. (continued)

- c. While the term of the Pastor shall be indefinite, the Church may at any time by a ~~majority~~ (*decisive*) vote of active members at a meeting (*duly called by the Clerk in accordance with the requirements of the By-Laws*), request ~~his or her~~ (*the Pastor's*) resignation with the expectation that it will be presented within sixty (60) days. On the other hand, the Pastor shall give sixty (60) days' notice in case ~~he or she wishes to leave of his or her volition~~ (*of the desire to terminate the relationship*). In the case of loss of ministerial standing on the part of the Pastor, relations shall cease at once.
- d. The Pastor shall have ~~in~~ charge (*of*) the spiritual welfare of the church, with the assistance and under the direction of the Diaconate. ~~He or she~~ (*The Pastor*) shall preach the Gospel; administer the Sacraments; ~~have under his or her~~ (*be responsible for*) ~~care~~ all services of public worship; provide pastoral care to those in need; coordinate Church evangelism; and renewal programs; and administer the activities of the Church in cooperation with the various Boards and committees. The Pastor shall ordinarily preside at all meetings of the Church except when (*personal*) matters ~~concerning him or her~~ are considered. ~~or when another moderator is chosen.~~ ~~He or she~~ (*The Pastor*) shall be a full member of the Church Council, Diaconate and Board of Trustees and an ex-officio advisory member of all other Boards and Committees and shall be Chair of the Church Council.
- e. *The Pastor shall have charge of the responsibilities of a Secretary if and as may be required and as such shall assign tasks, and to oversee same to ensure they are carried out in a professional manner. Included is the coordination with tasks of elected officials to ensure seamless completion of all assigned to the Secretary.*

2. Sunday School Superintendent

- a. The Sunday School Superintendent shall be an Active Member of the Church; elected for a three-year term ***and shall be a member of the Church Council, representing the Board of Christian Education.*** The Superintendent ~~will~~ (*shall*) perform all the functions associated with the acquisition of materials; training of teachers and adapting an effective curriculum for the Church School. In matters related to the above responsibilities, ~~he/she~~ (*the Superintendent*) shall work in concert with the Board of Christian Education and be aided by them in (*the*) carrying out of such duties. ~~She/he~~ (*The Superintendent*) will assist the Board in ~~developing~~ (*maintaining*) a (*current expenditures*) report (*and the preparation of the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.*) Any unbudgeted expenditures ~~will~~ (*shall*) be brought to the Church Council for review (*and action*).

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article VII. Officers *and Standing Committees* (continued)

3. Director of Music

- a. The Director of Music shall be hired by a Committee appointed by the Church Council. The Director shall be hired for an indefinite period of time. Upon a ~~2/3~~ ~~(two-thirds)~~ *(decisive)* vote, the Church Council may request the Director to resign, expecting the resignation within sixty (60) days. The Director shall give sixty (60) days' notice in ~~case he or she wishes to leave of his or her~~ *(the event of a desire to terminate the appointment)* ~~own volition~~.
- b. The Director of Music shall perform all responsibilities associated with music for worship services throughout the year. This will include but not be limited to acquisition of music, musicians, rehearsal and performance of music for worship; selecting and leading the performance of music for worship; selecting and leading the choir; arranging for instrumentalists and vocalists; and playing the organ and piano. He/she *(The Director)* will also *(be afforded the option to)* perform music for weddings, memorials and funerals. In matters of music for all services, the Director of Music will *(shall)* report to the Minister. The Director of Music shall ~~make recommendations to work~~ *(cooperate)* with the Music Committee for budgetary and expenditure purposes in order to create an effective music program; *(and shall cooperate with the Board of Trustees to ensure Church musical instruments are maintained in proper operating condition)*. The Director shall cooperate with the *(Music)* Committee (and Board of Trustees) in ~~developing~~ *(maintaining)* a report of ~~the finances spent from~~ *(expenditures)* ~~operating costs~~.
- c. ***The Director of Music shall not be a member of the Church Council.***

4. Clerk

- a. The Clerk shall be an Active Member of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term ***and shall be a member of the Church Council.***
- b. The Clerk shall keep ~~a~~ faithful records of the proceedings of the Church and of the Church Council. The Clerk shall be a member of the Church Council ~~and its~~ ***Secretary.***
- c. The Clerk shall ~~keep~~ *(maintain a current and up-to-date)* register of members of the Church *(active, inactive and terminated ;)* with *(postal and e-mail)* addresses *and telephone numbers;* with dates and modes of their reception and removal; ~~also~~ *(and)* a record of baptisms and marriages. ~~He or she~~ *(The Clerk)* shall issue letters of transfer as requested by the ~~Church~~ *(Diaconate)*, notifying the churches to which they are addressed.
- d. The Clerk shall preserve on file *(and electronically)* all communications and written official reports; notify all persons elected to offices and committees; give legal notices of all meetings when such notices are necessary; conduct all correspondence so far as this is not otherwise provided for; and perform other duties as are prescribed by law or as usually pertain to the office of a Clerk or Secretary of an Assembly.

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Article VII. Officers *and Standing Committees* (continued)

4. Assistant Clerk

- a. The Assistant Clerk shall be an Active Member of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term.
- b. The Assistant Clerk shall be responsible to and under the jurisdiction of the Office of the Clerk; *The Assistance Clerk shall not be a member of the Church Council unless in the event of absence or incapacitation of the Clerk, the Assistant Clerk shall assume the duties of the Clerk including presence at Church Council meetings.*
- c. ***The Assistant Clerk shall be a member of the Church Council.***

5. Financial Secretary

- a. The Financial Secretary shall be an Active Member of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term ***and shall be a member of the Church Council.***
- b. The Financial Secretary shall take charge of all offerings and special collections; keep an accurate account with each subscriber; deposit all moneys received in the account of the ~~Houghs Neck Congregational~~ Church; forward deposit receipts and statement to the Treasurer; and ~~may~~ furnish subscribers with ~~quarterly~~ statements of their accounts, if (*and when*) they so desire (*but no less than annually*).

6. Assistant Financial Secretary

- a. The Assistant Financial Secretary shall be an Active Member of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term.
- b. The Assistant Financial Secretary be responsible to and under the jurisdiction of the Financial Secretary.
- c. In the absence (*or incapacitation*) of the Financial Secretary, the Assistant Financial Secretary shall assume the full responsibilities of the ~~office of the~~ Financial Secretary.
- d. ***The Assistant Financial Secretary shall not be a member of the Church Council unless the Financial Secretary is absent or incapacitated.***

7. Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer shall be an Active Member of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term ***and shall be a member of the Church Council.***
- b. The Treasurer shall be responsible to pay the bills of the Church on order from the ~~Board of Finance and Investment~~ (*Church Council*) and shall have the custody of all papers relating to the property of the Church.
- c. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements and give such bonds as the Board of Finance and Investment shall prescribe.
- d. The Treasurer may, with the approval of the Board of Finance and Investment, invest endowments, legacies, trust funds and securities (in such funds as are legal investments for trust funds of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts) and pay the regular income from the same to the (*Church*) Treasury in regular installments. The Treasurer shall keep a separate accounting of all benevolence funds.

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article VII. Officers and Standing Committees (continued)

4. Treasurer (continued)

- e. The Treasurer shall remit benevolence moneys in accordance with the standing orders of the Church or special orders from the ~~Board of Finance and Investment~~ (Church Council).
- f. *The Treasurer shall prepare the proposed annual budget based on communication with representatives of all Boards and Committees whose responsibilities include obtaining income for the Operating Budget or expending these funds and present the document to the Board of Finance and Investment in such a timely manner to permit proper scrutiny and review prior to presentation to the Church for approval at the Annual Election/Budget Meeting.*

5. Assistant Treasurer

- a. The Assistant Treasurer shall be an Active Member of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term.
- b. The Assistant Treasurer shall be responsible to and under the jurisdiction of the Treasurer.
- c. In the absence (*or incapacitation*) of the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer shall assume the full responsibilities of the ~~office of the~~ Treasurer.
- d. ***The Assistant Treasurer shall not be a member of the Church Council unless the Treasurer is absent or incapacitated.***

6. Director of Stewardship

- a. The Director of Stewardship shall be an Active Member of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term.
- b. The Director of Stewardship shall (*lead*) a Stewardship Campaign whereby the annual budget or budgets of the Church shall be underwritten.
- c. The Director of Stewardship shall (*may*) select as many ~~assistants~~ (*campaign members*) as are needed to perform the task (*of the Stewardship Campaign*).
The Director of Stewardship shall be a member of the Church Council.

7. Historian

- a. (*The Historian shall be an Active Member of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term.*)
- b. The Historian shall keep (*maintain*) a journal of all occurrences of interest to the Church.
- c. ***The Historian shall be a member of the Church Council.***

8. Church Council Members at Large

- a. (*Each Member at Large shall be an Active Member of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term. Terms shall be staggered.*)
- b. ***Church Council Members at Large shall individually be members of the Church Council.***

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article VII. Officers and Standing Committees (continued)

9. Delegates

- a. *(Each Delegate shall be an active member of the Church and elected to a one (1) year term.)*
- b. The Church's quota of Delegates shall be elected *(as follows)*: Two (2) to the ~~Massachusetts Conference~~ *(Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ)*; ~~two (2) to the Pilgrim Association~~; and two (2) to the Interfaith Social Services, Inc.
- c. ***Delegates shall not be members of the Church Council.***

10. Board of Mission

- a. *(The Board of Mission shall consist of three (3) Active Members of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term. Terms shall be staggered.) One member of the Board of Mission shall be designated by the Board to be a member of the Church Council.*
- b. *(The Board of Mission shall initiate and promote programs and projects for mission outreach in the areas of mission and social action.)*
- c. *(The Board of Mission shall propose the annual budget for Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM).)*
- d. *(The Board of Mission shall allocate funds provided in the Annual Budget for programs and ministries of concern within the Congregation and in the wider community. It shall be responsible for the scheduling, with Church Council affirmation, of special offerings promoted by the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ.)*

11. Board of Christian Education

- a. *(The Board of Christian Education shall consist of the Pastor; the Sunday School Superintendent; and three (3) active members of the Church and elected to a three (3) year term. Terms shall be staggered. The Sunday School Superintendent shall represent this Board at Church Council meetings.)*

12. Board of Trustees

- a. The Board of Trustees shall consist of nine (9) ***members, seven (7) of whom shall be*** Active Members of the Church and ***each*** elected to a three (3) year term. Terms shall be staggered. ***One Active Member of the Board shall be designated to be a member of the Church Council.***

13. Pastoral Relations Committee

- a. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall consist of three (3) *(Active)* Members of the Church, two (2) of whom shall be elected on the even years and one (1) on the odd years, *(each)* for a term of three (years). *A member of the Diaconate shall serve as one of the three members of the Committee. The Committee will (may) make suggestions to the Nominating Committee of potential candidates to be considered for the Pastoral Relations Committee. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall not be a voting member of the Church Council.*

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article VII. Officers *and Standing Committees* (continued)

14. Other Officers

- a. Other officers may be elected as need shall dictate.
- b. *If the need arises, the Church Council shall define the role, responsibilities and size and makeup of the committee if required; the approval shall require a definite majority.*
- c. *If the Church Council deems this committee to be permanent, the Church Council shall prepare a proposed amendment to the By-Laws; upon Church Council approval, the Clerk shall make all necessary arrangements to properly present the proposed amendment to the Church at the next called meeting; the Committee may operate ad-hoc in the interim. **The amendment shall clarify if a member of this Committee shall be a member of the Church Council.***

Article VIII. Church Council

- A. The Church Council shall consist of the Pastor as Chair; the Sunday School Superintendent; the Clerk (who shall be the Secretary of the Council); the Assistant Clerk; the ~~Church~~ Treasurer; the ~~Church~~ Financial Secretary; the Director of Stewardship; the Chairs of the several Boards and Committees **as herein defined:** (*Chair of the Diaconate; Vice Chair of the Diaconate; Historian; Mission; Communication; ~~Delegates~~; and three (3) Members-at-Large elected by the Church in April.*)
- B. It shall be the function of the Church Council to visualize the entire function of the Church; to advise the Pastor on the general direction of the Church's activities; and to cooperate with ~~him/her~~ (*the Pastor*) in the formation of a well-rounded program.
- C. The Council may act for the Church in minor matters, always assuming that unless such action is taken with practical unanimity, it must have the confirmation of the Church.
- D. All Officers, Boards and Committees shall present their plans and programs to the Church Council for ~~their~~ information.
- E. The Church Council ~~shall~~ (*will*) meet once monthly (*; meetings especially during the summer months may be cancelled upon decisive vote of the Council.*)
- F. Any active Church member ~~will be~~ (*is*) free to attend a Church Council meeting **but will not be eligible to vote;** except when the Church Council meets in an executive session for reasons of confidentiality.
- G. The presence of ~~nine (9)~~ Council Members shall constitute a quorum.
- H. Special meetings may be called by the Chair (**; *the Trustees; the Diaconate;*** ~~or~~ *by request of seven (7) members of the Church Council; or seven (7) Active Members of the Church*).

Article IX. Boards

- A. All Boards (*and Committees*) ~~will~~ (*shall*) act on behalf of the Church and Church Council. Although each Board (*and Committee*) has discretion to carry out its regular function, any decision that would significantly alter Church faith, practice, finance or property shall be made under the guidance of the Church Council. All Board Members shall be Active Members of the Church.

HOUGH'S NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article IX. Boards (continued)

B. Diaconate

1. The Diaconate shall consist of *twelve* (12) Active Members (*of the Church*). It ~~will~~ (*shall*) be a ~~top~~ priority for the Nominating Committee to ~~elect an equal number of men and women~~ (*nominate Active Members that shall reflect the gender and racial makeup of the Church*) to the Diaconate.
2. The Diaconate shall organize by the selection of its own Chair~~person~~, Vice Chair~~person~~, Clerk and such other officers *and/or* sub-committees as it may deem necessary.
3. The Chair~~person~~ and Vice Chair~~person~~ shall represent the Diaconate on the Church Council.
4. It shall be the duty of the Diaconate to cooperate with the Pastor(s) in ministering to the spiritual interests of the Church and community. ~~They~~ (*The Diaconate*) shall assist in the preparation and administering of the Sacraments; in caring for the poor; the sick; the sorrowing; the stranger; and the shut-in. They shall have sole jurisdiction of the Diaconate Fund, ~~received at the Communion Sunday services~~ (*included in the Annual Budget*).
5. It shall be the duty of the Diaconate to supervise the conditions of Church Membership as described in these By-Laws (cf. Article V.).
6. Ushering at services of Worship ~~may~~ (*shall*) be performed by members of the Diaconate. (*In the event of an emergency during Church services, members of the Diaconate serving as ushers shall lead the Congregation in an orderly exodus from the Church.*)
7. **Life Member of the Diaconate.** (*An Active Member of the Church who has served or is serving as a Member of the Diaconate*) whom the Church may wish to make an honorary member of the Diaconate for life; with all the powers, responsibilities and privileges; may be elected by the Church as a Life ~~Deacon~~ (*Member of the Diaconate*). Because ~~these will be~~ (*this is*) regarded by the Church as the highest position which it can bestow upon a member of the Diaconate, ~~they shall be elected~~ (*the election process shall be*) as follows: A candidate will be proposed to the Diaconate for nomination. If the candidate receives a three-quarter (3/4) approval vote at a regular Diaconate meeting, the Diaconate will (*inform the Clerk of the action and request the name of the candidate be placed in nomination*) ~~nominate the candidate~~ for election by the Church at any Church Meeting (*; a decisive vote is required for election.*)
8. ~~Junior Deacon~~ (**Junior Members of the Diaconate.**) There shall be (*a maximum of*) ~~up to~~ four (4) Junior Deacons (*Junior Members of the Diaconate*), each of whom shall be at least twelve (12) years of age; each of whom shall be elected ~~annually~~ for a term of ~~three~~ (*one*) (*1*) year. It ~~will~~ (*shall*) be a ~~top~~ priority for the Nominating Committee to ~~elect an equal number of men and women~~ (*select for election, Active Members that shall reflect the gender and racial makeup of the Church;*) to the Diaconate. The Junior ~~Deacons~~ (*Members*) shall function under the supervision of the Diaconate and serve according to its direction. Rules and principles pertaining to Junior ~~Deacons~~ (*Members*) shall be ~~devised~~ (*determined*) by the Diaconate.

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article IX. Boards (continued)

C. Board of Christian Education

1. There shall be a Board of Christian Education consisting of the Pastor, Sunday School Superintendent and three (3) ~~other~~ *Active Members (elected by the Church)*.
2. The Board shall have supervision and direction of the educational work of the Church.
3. ~~It is~~ *(The Board is)* authorized to search for a Superintendent of the Sunday School; to be elected by the Church at the Election meeting **or by the Church Council until the next Election meeting.**
4. *The Board* is to have charge of the School with full power to appoint and remove teachers and other officers not otherwise provided for; and to inaugurate and maintain other Christian Education activities.
5. *The Board's* other activities may include such projects as Vacation *(Bible)* School; week-day Christian Education; courses or lectures on religious subjects; special young people's groups; ~~men's or women's~~ *(adult)* organizations; and the like.

D. Board of Trustees

1. The Board of Trustees shall have the care and custody of the property of the Church, including the ~~office~~ *(Church building)* and the Parsonage. The Board shall oversee the maintenance of the church property. ~~They~~ *(The Board)* shall decide what needs to be repaired, replaced or purchased; ~~and They~~ shall arrange for any work to be ~~done~~ *(performed)* either by a Board Member, Church Member, volunteer or outside contractor. Any change or work ~~done~~ *(performed)* ~~is always~~ *(shall be)* subject to regulations prescribed by the law of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the City of Quincy. Any expense over ~~Two Thousand Dollars and No Cents (\$2,000.00)~~ *(Three Thousand Dollars and No Cents (\$3,000.00) not previously approved in the current Budget by the Church)* shall be subject to the approval of the Church Council.
2. The Board shall meet regularly each month. *(Meetings especially during the summer months may be cancelled upon decisive vote of the Board.)* Special meetings may be called as needed for items that need immediate attention, discussion or vote. The Board shall elect its own officers and committees and determine its own mode of procedure. A quorum shall consist of four (4) members.
3. The Board shall oversee the hiring and the work ~~done by~~ *(of)* the Church Sexton.

E. Board of Finance and Investment

1. The Board shall be responsible for the prudent administration and investment of all Church assets under trust including but not limited to general and restricted funds, endowment funds and bequests from members and friends.
2. The Board is empowered to make investments and maintain bank accounts in the name of the Houghs Neck Congregational Church.
3. The Board shall meet ~~quarterly~~ *(annually)* or as directed by the Church Council.
4. The Board shall ~~prepare~~ *(review and upon agreement, recommend approval of an annual budget; presented to the Board by the Treasurer).* ~~with a Task Force comprised of representatives whose responsibilities include obtaining income for the Operating Budget or expending these funds.~~ The ~~committee~~ *(Board or the Treasurer, at the discretion of the Board)* shall review the *(proposed)* budget with the Council; *(for information only)*. ~~It~~ *(The Board or Treasurer, at the discretion of the Board)* shall propose the budget to the Congregation at the Annual *(Election/Budget)* Meeting.

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article IX. Boards (continued)

E. Board of Finance and Investment (continued)

5. In its discretion, the Board shall (*may*) seek the services of an outside auditor to examine the Treasurer's account, the records of the Financial Secretary and other Church accounts at the end of each Church Year and shall make a report to the ~~Annual Meeting~~ (*Church Council*); said report to be included in the supplementary Annual Report prepared by the Clerk. The auditor(s) shall also examine any accounts of the Church when requested by the Church Council.
6. ***The Board shall not be represented on the Church Council.***

F. Board of Mission

1. The Board of Mission shall initiate and promote programs and projects for mission outreach in the areas of mission and social action.
2. The Board shall propose the annual budget for Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM). The Board shall allocate funds provided in the Annual Budget for programs and ministries of concern within the Congregation and in the wider community.
3. The Board shall be responsible for the scheduling, with Church Council affirmation, special offerings promoted by (*the Southern New England Conference of*) the United Church of Christ.
4. ***The Board shall designate one member to represent the Board on the Church Council.***

G. Pastoral Relations Committee

1. The purpose of the Pastoral Relations Committee is to support and maintain an open and healthy relationship between the ~~Minister~~ (*Pastor*), staff and members of the ~~Congregation~~ (*Church*).
2. The Committee shall meet with the ~~Minister~~ (*Pastor*) to share expectations, ideas, hope and concerns together.
3. The duties of the Committee include being the discreet and sensitive conduit *through* which both the ~~Minister~~ (*Pastor*) and the ~~Congregation~~ (*Church*) have a place for on-going evaluation of our common goals and experiences as a worshipping community.
4. The Committee shall act as the primary support group and sounding board for the ~~Minister~~ (*Pastor*). ~~It~~ (*The Committee*) shall help ~~him~~/~~her~~ (*the Pastor*) determine staff and lay-member reaction to ~~his~~/~~her~~ (*the Pastor's*) thoughts and ideas, as well as communicate current thoughts and ideas of the ~~Congregation~~ (*Church*) to the ~~Minister~~ (*Pastor*).
5. ~~It~~ (*The Committee*) will hold at least quarterly meetings with the ~~Minister~~ (*Pastor*), ~~unless he/she is unavailable~~ (*meeting at a mutually agreeable date and time*). If the Committee feels the need to examine or review sensitive reports prior to meeting with the Pastor, it will give the Pastor prior notice.
6. ~~It~~ (*The Committee*) shall promote a caring atmosphere of confidentiality and trust so that constructive communication can occur. It shall encourage the ~~Minister's~~ (*Pastor's*) professional growth and personal well-being as well as that of ~~his or her~~ (*the Pastor's*) immediate family. The Committee shall make recommendations to the Church Council regarding performance, salary and other appropriate contractual issues on an annual basis.

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article IX. Boards (continued)

G. Pastoral Relations Committee (continued)

7. Minutes of the ~~Pastor-Parish~~ (*Pastoral*) Relations Committee meetings will be issued in general format and not detailed so as to ~~assure~~ (*ensure*) confidentiality. ~~As a standing~~ (*The*) Committee ~~it~~ shall make only general reports to the Church Council to indicate that meetings have taken place. Should the Committee determine any action need (*to*) be taken, it will report same to the Church Council ~~and/or the Congregation~~.
8. In any year when a new Pastor is called, two (2) members of the Pastor Search Committee shall be asked to serve *a one (1) year term as additional members* of the Pastoral Relations Committee.
9. *The Committee shall not be represented on the Church Council.*

H. Communication Committee

1. *The Communication Committee shall be responsible for all communication from the Church to the greater community and to perform all tasks assigned to it by the Church Council and Pastor.*
2. *The Committee shall be responsible for the following tasks.*
 - a. *Maintain and update the Church Website on a regular basis including but not limited to uploading Church services, events, newsletters and all other of communication of interest to the Church and the larger community.*
 - b. *Publishing and distributing the Church Newsletter both paper and electronically.*
 - c. *Advertising the Church and activities in local newspapers.*
 - d. *Coordinate Church usage and schedule usage when and as directed by the Pastor; arrange for execution of rental documents and maintain a file for same and forward any collected moneys to the Financial Secretary.*
 - e. *Perform printing tasks including but not limited to preparation of the weekly in-person programs as directed by the Pastor.*
 - f. *Develop, maintain and upgrade as required the Hybrid presentation of Church Services and other events via the Internet.*
3. *The Committee be comprised of no less than six (6) members, three (3) of whom shall be Active Members of the Church. One of the Active Members shall be designated to represent the Committee on the Church Council.*

Article X. Church Council Committees

- A. All Committees ~~will~~ (*shall*) act on behalf of the Church and the Church Council. Although each Committee has discretion to carry out its regular function, any decision that would significantly alter Church faith; practice; finance; or property shall be made under the guidance (*and approval*) of the Church Council.

HOUGHS NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

Article X. *Church Council Committees (continued)*

- B. The Church Council shall appoint (*Active Members*) to the following Committees to operate in the fields indicated and, by vote, alter their size and duties *if deemed necessary*.
1. Music Committee: Three (3) Members.
 - ~~2. Publicity Committee: Three (3) Members; one (1) for news; one (1) for office printing; and one (1) for the Church Website.~~
 3. Flower Committee: Three (3) Members.
 4. Chancel Committee: ~~Four (4)~~ (*Two (2)*) Members.
 - ~~5. Church Calendar Chair: One (1) Member.~~
 6. Hospitality Committee: Two (2) Members.
 7. Nominating Committee: *Four (4)* Members.
- C. *The basic tasks of the Committees are as follows.*
1. Music Committee: *Meet with and assist the Music Director in the selection of new music for worship.*
 - ~~2. Publicity Committee: *Maintain and continually update the Church Website and develop new ways to place the name and activities of the Church in the greater community.*~~
 3. Flower Committee: *Place flowers reflecting the seasons in the Sanctuary and organize Church donations (or designate a Church Organization for the task;) for placing live flowers in the Sanctuary during high holidays.*
 4. Chancel Committee: *Prepare the Sanctuary with the proper colors and arrange to reconfigure the Chancel for Communion.*
 - ~~5. Church Calendar Chair: *Coordinate Church usage and schedule usage when and as directed by the Pastor; arrange for execution of rental documents and maintain a file for same and forward any collected moneys to the Financial Secretary.*~~
 6. Hospitality Committee: *Take charge of the Guest Book and Welcome Cards. Additionally organize the Fellowship Time after Church Services and organize other hospitality functions as needs arise. (Develop and maintain a schedule for pies at Fellowship Time.)*
 7. Nominating Committee: *At least two months prior to the date of the Church Elections, the Church Council shall appoint a Nominating Committee to prepare nominations for all Officers and Board and Committee Members to be elected by the Church. This Committee shall, with the cooperation of the Clerk, prepare a ballot nominating one (1) person for each office to be filled at the Annual Election. A copy of the ballot shall be posted in the Church Narthex no later than two (2) Sundays prior to the date of the Election; the Pastor or Clerk shall announce the posting during the Sunday Worship.*
- D. Other Committees may be appointed by the Church Council as needed, in accordance with the By-Laws. *None of the above listed Committees shall be represented on the Church Council.*

XI. Auxiliary Organizations

- A. All organizations connected with the Church and using its equipment are regarded as integral part of the Church and under its general oversight.

HOUGH'S NECK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BY-LAWS

XII. Finances

A. Offerings.

1. The Church shall seek support by contributions of individuals and organizations. Opportunities shall be offered to all Members of the Church and Congregation to make written subscriptions, ordinarily under the Stewardship Program. Auxiliary organizations are invited to contribute under plans of their own choosing.
2. The designation of moneys for current expenses, benevolence and specific objects shall be under the plans approved by vote of the Church. ~~Ordinarily there shall be received in connection with each Communion Service, an offering for the Diaconate Fund, to be used by the Diaconate for the relief of the needy.~~
3. **Apportionment.** The Church will cooperate with the churches of the ~~association and state conference~~ (*Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ*) under ~~that~~ (what) is known as ~~the apportionment plan~~ "Proportional Giving". Accordingly, the Board of Finance and Investment shall include in the budget of expenses the "per capita" ("Proportional Giving") contribution for the expenses of the ~~association and the denomination~~ (*Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ*).
4. **Permanent Funds.** All legacies ~~not~~ specifically designated by the donors to ~~some other~~ (a) purpose shall be set aside in a permanent fund, the income only of which is to be used. To this fund shall be added any specific endowment contributions and gifts in the form of memorials, "conditional gifts," and endowment gifts for specific projects (*or funds that require approval of use by donor(s) or the family in whose name the fund is named*). The permanent funds shall be managed by the (Board of) Finance and Investment so as to maximize the value of the investment. The object of the permanent funds shall be to supplement subscriptions rather than to supplant them. The income of the permanent funds shall be to supplement subscriptions rather than to supplant them. The income of the permanent funds shall therefore be used for objects other than the routine expenses of the Church; for example, (1) the improvement of the Property; (2) provision of paid workers; (3) special music; (4) religious lectureships and literature; (5) benevolent objects; (6) special projects; and (7) general funds subject to the order of the Church.

Article XIII. Amendments.

- A. ~~The~~ By-Laws Sections (VII. To XII.) inclusive may be altered or amended by a two-thirds (2/3) (affirmative) vote, being the vote of at least thirty (30) of the Active Church Members present; at any regular or specific meeting (of the Church) provided that a notice specifying the time (and date) of the meeting and substance of the proposed amendment shall have been given from the Pulpit; ~~or~~ printed in the ~~calendar~~ (*weekly Bulletin*); posted in the Narthex; and all Active Members of the Church are notified by either e-mail or regular mail, whichever is the Member's preference; on the two (2) Sundays immediately preceding said meeting.
- B. ~~By Law~~ (Articles I. to VI. Inclusive and Article XIII,) may be altered or amended (only) by a two-thirds (2/3) vote in the affirmative, being the vote of at least thirty (30) of the Active Church Members present; the proposed amendments(s) having been laid before the Church in writing not less than two (2) months previously to the date of the meeting; and copies having been made available to the members of the Church.

Received as revised, accepted and voted by a quorum of Active Church Members; ~~December 09, 2007~~ (*Insert Date of Approval*);

A True Copy (attest)

By: _____
M. Christine Keating, Clerk

_____ Date