

CONSTITUTION

Revised: January 28, 2007

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO

**PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
CONSTITUTION**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Article I. Name.....	1
Article II. Purpose.....	1
Article III. Polity.....	1
Article IV. Faith and Covenant.....	1
A. Faith.....	1
B. Covenant.....	2
Article V. Open and Affirming Declaration.....	2
Article VI. Membership.....	2
A. Classes of Membership.....	2
B. Termination of Membership or Change of Status.....	3
Article VII. Worship and Christian Education.....	3
A. Worship.....	3
B. Christian Education.....	3
Article VIII. Congregational Meetings.....	5
A. Meetings.....	5
B. Requirements.....	5
Article IX. Ministers.....	6
A. Senior Minister.....	6
B. Associate Minister(s).....	6
C. Duration of Ministry.....	6
D. Interim Ministers.....	6
Article X. Staff.....	7
A. Program Staff.....	7
B. Administrative and Building Staff.....	7
Article XI. The Church Council.....	8
A. Duties of Council.....	8
B. Composition of Council.....	9
Article XII. Elected Officials.....	11
A. Election Process.....	11

B. Duration of Office.....	11
C. Duties of Church Officials.....	12
D. Meetings of Elected Committees.....	15
Article XIII. Other Elected Committees.....	16
A. Auditing Committee.....	16
B. Pastoral Search Committee.....	16
C. Nominating Committee.....	17
Article XIV. Other Appointed Committees.....	18
A. Pastoral Relations Committee.....	18
B. Plymouth Service Fellowship.....	18
C. Budget and Finance Committee.....	18
D. Interim Minister Search Committee.....	19
E. Permanent Committees.....	20
F. Ad Hoc Committees.....	20
Article XV. Finances.....	20
Article XVI. Memorial Funds.....	20
Article XVII. Accountability.....	21
Article XVIII. Church Policies.....	21
Article XIX. Amendments and Revisions.....	21

THE PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

A United Church of Christ

Fort Collins, Colorado

CONSTITUTION – Revised January 25, 2004

Article I. Name

The name of this church shall be The Plymouth Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ, Fort Collins, Colorado.

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be to worship God and to make God's will visible in the lives of people, 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 is in communion with all churches which follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. It acknowledges special obligation to other congregations which are a part of the United Church of Christ and pledges itself to share in their communion religious and educational work, especially as represented by the Northeastern Association, the Rocky Mountain Conference and the General Synod of The United Church of Christ. The government of this church is vested exclusively in its members.

Article IV. Faith and Covenant

A. Faith

This church recognizes the Holy 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 Christian character. Members shall have the undisturbed right to follow the word of God according to the dictates of their own conscience, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The most recent Statement of Faith adopted by the General Synod of the United Church of Christ shall serve as a guide to faith and worship for the members of this church.

B. Covenant

The covenant of this church shall be recited by new members, upon occasion of their entrance into the faith community:

In the presence of God and these witnesses, I give myself unreservedly to God's service and take this to be my church. Ever mindful of the welfare of my brother and sister members, I promise to walk with them in faithfulness and Christian love. I promise, so far as I am able, to attend the services of this church, observe its sacraments, support its benevolences and endeavor to make it a fruitful body of Christian people.

Article V. Open and Affirming Declaration

The members of Plymouth Congregational Church, UCC, of Fort Collins, Colorado, affirm their belief that all persons are created by God and are equal in worth and dignity. We recognize, celebrate and give thanks for the many diverse gifts of God among us. We declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation, welcoming into full membership and participation in the Body of Christ persons of every race, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnic origin, physical and mental ability, economic status and nationality. We joyously pledge ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation providing a safe welcome for a diverse people.

Article VI. Membership

Membership in this church is open to all who acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, who wish to journey in faith with others of this fellowship, and who are willing to share in the work of the church and contribute to its support in proportion to their means.

Persons shall be received as members in one of the following ways:

- Completion of Confirmation
- Presentation of satisfactory letters of transfer from other churches
- Reaffirmation of faith
- Confession of faith.

Persons desiring to join the church shall meet with a minister for one or more periods of instruction. An appropriate ceremony recognizing their affiliation with the church shall be conducted during a worship service.

A. Classes of Membership

The membership of the church shall be classified in three ways: (1) Active (2) Associate (3) Inactive

1. Active Membership

An active member is one who covenants with the congregation to attend the services of the church, cooperates in its work and contributes to its support. All active members are eligible to vote in the business meetings of the church and to hold office

on the Church Council. Because our congregational polity relies centrally upon those persons who have covenanted together to be the church, those participating in church government: the council or committees, shall hold active or associate membership in the congregation.

2. Associate Membership

Upon application to and upon recommendation by the Board of Deacons, a person who holds membership in another Christian church may be received as an Associate Member. An Associate Member shall be considered as an Active Member with the same privileges and responsibilities. A letter of transfer will not be requested from the other congregation the person holds membership in.

3. Inactive Membership

An inactive member is a member who, for a period of two years, has not communicated with the church, attended worship or contributed to the church's support. At the recommendation of the Board of Deacons, after consultation with the Clerk and Senior Minister, persons may be moved from the active or associate membership to the inactive roll. An effort shall be made to make personal contact with members prior to action on membership status. Inactive members may, upon renewal of their membership obligations, be reinstated as active members.

B. Termination of Membership or Change of Status

1. Active members may, upon their own request,

- a. Be granted a letter of transfer to another Christian church,
- b. Be declared inactive,
- c. Be released from church membership.

2. Inactive members who remain on the inactive roll for one year may be dropped from the membership rolls by a majority vote of the Board of Deacons. An effort shall be made to make personal contact with members prior to action on membership status.

Article VII. Worship and Christian Education

A. Worship

The primary purpose of Plymouth Congregational Church is to worship God. Services of worship shall be held each Sunday. The sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion shall be celebrated. Other services of worship shall be held as determined by the minister(s) in consultation with the Church Council.

B. Christian Education

The church shall conduct and support a program of Christian education to equip and enable persons to make the Christian faith their own, and to participate in God's continuing activity in the world. This program shall include faith development opportunities for people of all

ages such as Sunday morning classes, confirmation classes, vacation Bible school and other programs as determined by the Youth Education and Adult Education committees.

Article VIII. Congregational Meetings

A. Meetings

1. Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the congregation shall be held each year in the month of January on a date determined by the Church Council. Prior to this meeting, the Council, the ministers and all church organizations shall submit their annual reports in writing. Church officials shall be elected at this meeting and the budget for the ensuing year shall be submitted to the congregation for their approval. The election results shall be announced in the next following newsletter of the church. Any other matter affecting the religious, financial or social welfare of the church may also be addressed at the Annual Meeting.

2. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Church Council, by request of a minister, or by petition to the Church Council. A valid petition must be signed by not less than ten percent (10%) of the active members of the church. The Church Council must call a special meeting within three weeks of receipt of a valid petition or the request of a minister.

B. Requirements

1. Notice of Church Meetings

Business meetings of the church shall be announced at worship services on two successive Sundays prior to the meeting and by written notice to all members at least one full week in advance of the meeting. Such written notice shall be by direct mailing or by placement in the church newsletter. Notice of special meetings shall be the responsibility of the clerk of the church and must include a statement of the purpose of the meeting.

2. Quorum

The membership present at a duly called meeting shall have full authority to transact business.

3. Rules of Order

In business meetings and where applicable, Roberts Rules of Order are authoritative.

Article IX. Ministers

A. Senior Minister

The senior minister shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the church. It shall be the senior minister's responsibility to enlist persons as followers of Jesus Christ by preaching the gospel, administering the sacraments, and having under his or her care all services of worship. The senior minister shall be an ex-officio member, with voice and vote, of all organizations and committees within the church. He or she shall administer the activities of the church in cooperation with the Church Council and the various organizations and committees. The senior minister shall make an annual report to the congregation. These areas of responsibility and any others shall be defined by a job description developed by the Personnel Committee and approved by Church Council. Full authority and control of the pulpit is vested in the senior minister. In his or her absence, it is vested in an associate minister designated by the Council. In the absence of all ordained called ministers, the authority and control of the pulpit shall be vested in the Church Council.

B. Associate Minister(s)

Each associate minister shall work under the supervision of the senior minister and in cooperation with the Church Council. Each associate minister's areas of responsibility shall be defined initially by a job description and shall be subject to modification by the Personnel Committee in consultation with the senior minister and approval by Church Council. Each associate minister shall be an ex-officio member, with voice and vote, of all organizations and committees within the church and shall make an annual report to the congregation.

C. Duration of Ministry

The senior minister and associate minister(s) shall be called for an indefinite period. The relationship between the church and a minister may be dissolved by either party through written notice of intent sixty days prior to the effective date. Notification of such action shall be sent by the Moderator of the Church Council to the Conference Minister and to the chair of the Church and Ministry Committee of the Northeastern Association.

D. Interim Ministers

In the event of a vacancy in the Senior Minister position, an Interim Minister may be called for a period of time to be determined by the Church Council in consultation with the Conference Minister. The duties of the Interim Minister shall be defined by the Church Council in consultation with the Personnel Committee. In the event of an Associate Minister vacancy, Church Council has discretion to meet temporary staffing needs in the manner deemed most appropriate.

Article X. Staff

The church shall employ staff members as needed. Their areas of responsibility shall be defined by job descriptions developed by the personnel committee in consultation with the senior minister and approved by Church Council.

A. Program Staff

1. Program staff are staff members who have areas of responsibility relating to worship, congregational nurture and Christian education. They include but are not limited to such positions as choir director, organist and director of youth or adult education.
2. The hiring of program staff shall be the task of the Church Council, working closely with the senior minister and the Personnel Committee. Ad hoc committees may be appointed to aid in the hiring process.
3. Program staff may be terminated by majority vote of the Church Council upon recommendation of the Personnel Committee and/or the senior Minister.

B. Administrative and Building Staff

1. Administrative and building staff are staff members who assist the ministers and the program staff or who maintain the church building and grounds. They include but are not limited to such positions as secretaries and custodians.
2. Administrative and building staff shall be hired by the senior minister in consultation with the Church Council. It shall be the senior minister's responsibility to keep the council informed when positions need to be filled.
3. Termination of administrative and building staff shall be done by the senior minister after consultation with the Church Council. If an administrative and building staff members disagrees with a termination decision, he or she may appeal to the Church Council.

Article XI. The Church Council

A. Duties of Council

1. The Church Council shall be the executive body of the congregation.
2. It shall be the duty of the council to visualize the mission of the church and to advise and cooperate with the ministers in its general affairs. They shall decide upon and arrange for any special services of the church and, if necessary, shall make arrangements for special speakers.
3. The council shall transact the business of the church. It shall arrange the program for all business meetings, shall present a comprehensive annual report and shall present recommendations to the congregation for a better and more effective church program.
4. The council shall oversee the budget planning process and present a responsible budget to the congregation at the Annual Meeting. It shall also recognize our responsibility for support of Our Church's Wider Mission and other benevolences.
5. The council shall provide for the adequate support of all church staff, and shall accept and complete all other duties as provided throughout this constitution.
6. Accurate minutes shall be kept of all council meetings. These minutes shall be made available to council members prior to each meeting. They shall become a part of the permanent public records of the church.
7. The Church Council shall meet monthly. A minimum of ten monthly meetings shall be held each year. Special meetings may be called at the request of a minister or a minimum of five council members. Council members shall be individually notified of special meetings.
8. Meetings of the Church Council shall be open to all church members, although only council members shall be entitled to vote. Allowance of comments by church members at council meetings shall be at the discretion of the Moderator.
9. All acts and deliberations of the Church Council are subject to revision by the congregation through the process outlined in Article VIII.

B. Composition of Council

1. Members of Church Council shall consist of:
 - a. Officers of the council elected at large from the congregation:
 - Moderator
 - Moderator-elect
 - Clerk
 - Treasurer
 - b. Members of the pastoral staff:
 - Senior Minister
 - Associate Minister(s)
 - c. Members elected at large from the congregation:
 - Youth Representative
 - d. Committee Representatives from elected bodies in the church:
 - Deacons
 - Trustees
 - Personnel
 - Youth Education
 - Adult Education
 - Mission
 - Stewardship
 - Social Concerns
 - Evangelism
 - Open and Affirming
 - Congregational Life
2. Committee Representatives shall be chosen yearly at a meeting of each elected body in the church held after the Annual Meeting and prior to the February council meeting. The primary roles of Committee Representatives shall be to represent their associated committee between committee meetings at all other meetings such as Church Council and to act as the primary spokesperson for the committee. As such, they are solely authorized to decide which issues affecting the committee can be acted upon in an external forum and which need to be brought back to their committee for further discussion. Although it is expected that Committee Representatives will function as the Chair of their committee, committees are free to choose any internal leadership structure that best fits their needs.
3. If a Committee Representative is unable to participate in a meeting of Church Council, then any substitute committee member he or she designates for that meeting will have the full vote and authority to represent his or her committee.

4. With the exception of church Ministers, the Moderator, the Moderator-elect, the Clerk and the Treasurer, no person may serve on Church Council for a period longer than two consecutive years. Upon retiring from council, members shall be eligible to serve on council again in any capacity after a period of one year.
5. No member of Church Council may be the representative of more than one group or committee at the same time.
6. Unless approved by a vote of Church Council, members of the same immediate family may not serve on the Church Council concurrently. Family members in question must abstain from voting during this council decision.

Article XII. Elected Officials

The elected officials of the church are those persons who have been elected by the congregation at the Annual Meeting. These include the Moderator, Moderator-elect, Clerk, Treasurer, Youth Representative to council, Deacons, Trustees, and members of the following committees: Personnel, Youth Education, Adult Education, Mission, Stewardship, Social Concerns, and Evangelism.

A. Election Process

1. The slate of elected officials and committee members prepared by the Nominating Committee shall be presented at the Annual Meeting. Additional nominations for any office may be made from the floor provided that the person nominated has given consent to serve if elected. The voting shall be by ballot. Those receiving a majority vote of the active members present shall be declared elected. All active members shall be eligible for election, even if not present at the meeting. At-large vacancies on the Church Council shall be filled through appointment by the Church Council. Representative vacancies on Church Council with the exception of Moderator, shall be filled by an elected member of the committee or group they represent. Vacancies on elected committees shall be filled through appointment by the respective committee. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Moderator, the Moderator-elect shall assume the Presidency. Appointees shall serve until the next election at the Annual Meeting of the congregation and shall not be precluded from nomination to the same office.

B. Duration of Office.

1. Moderator
The office of Moderator shall be assumed by the past Moderator -elect at the first council meeting of the year following the election of new officials. The Moderator shall serve for a term of one year and shall be ineligible to serve a second consecutive full term as moderator. Upon completion of term of office, the outgoing Moderator becomes a member of the Nominating Committee for one year, and is responsible for convening the Committee, but shall not serve as chair.
2. Moderator-elect
The Moderator-elect shall normally serve for a term of one year before assuming the office of Moderator. However, in the event of a Moderator's vacancy the Moderator-elect shall assume the office of Moderator regardless of the time served as Moderator-elect.
3. Clerk and Treasurer
The Clerk and the Treasurer shall each serve for a term of one year, and shall be eligible for re-election until they have served three consecutive terms.

4. Youth Representative
The youth representative shall serve for a term of one year. A youth representative shall not be eligible to serve more than one term.
5. Deacons
Twelve deacons shall be elected for a term of two years, six being elected each year. After a second consecutive term, one year must transpire before they are eligible to be re-elected as deacons.
6. Trustees
Nine trustees shall be elected for a term of three years, three being elected each year. One year must transpire before they are eligible to be re-elected as a trustee.
7. Personnel Committee
Three persons shall serve on the Personnel Committee. One member shall be elected each year for three year terms. Members may serve only a second consecutive term on the committee.
8. Youth Education Committee
Nine persons shall serve on the Youth Education Committee. Four Adult members shall be elected each year for a term of two years. A high school youth member shall be elected each year for a term of one year. Members may serve only a second consecutive term on the committee. The leadership shall be appointed by the committee in consultation with the ministers.
9. Adult Education, Mission, Stewardship, Social Concerns, Open and Affirming, Evangelism, and Congregational Life Committees
Six persons shall serve on the Stewardship and Open and Affirming committees and eight persons shall serve on each of the others. Half of the members of each committee shall be elected each year - for two-year terms. Members may serve only a second consecutive term on the committee.

C. Duties of Church Officials

1. Moderator
The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the Church Council and shall conduct all meetings of the congregation. The Moderator shall work in cooperation with the Church Council and the ministers in visualizing and enacting the mission and ministries of the church.
2. Moderator-elect
The Moderator-elect shall preside in the absence of the Moderator.

3. Clerk
The clerk shall keep an accurate record of all proceedings of the church, in regard to its annual and special meetings, and all items of business that may be transacted at any other time. The clerk, as directed by the Church Council, shall conduct all correspondence. The clerk shall perform such other duties as are prescribed by law or as usually pertain to the office of a clerk. He or she shall file all communications pertaining to the office, and inform the appropriate church body of all communications received and executed. The clerk shall keep an active membership list of church members, dates and modes of their reception and/or removal; and records of baptisms, weddings, funerals that take place at this church. The clerk shall be assisted in these duties by the minister(s) and the church secretary. The church places this complete file in trust with the clerk. The file should be made available to the Church Council at all times, and be transferred in completed condition to the newly elected clerk.
4. Treasurer
The treasurer shall be in charge of all monies of the church deposited to the church account. The treasurer shall pay the bills of the church in a timely manner in consultation with the Church Council or staff. The treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements and give a detailed financial report to the Church Council each month, and to the congregation at the Annual Meeting.
5. Youth Representative
This person shall represent the youth members of the congregation on the Church Council. His or her duty will be to keep the council informed of the concerns and needs of the church's youth members.
6. Deacons
It shall be the duty of the deacons to cooperate with the minister(s) in attending to the spiritual needs of the church and the community. They shall assist in the preparation and administration of the sacraments and shall help create a worshipful environment at all services of the church. They shall also be responsible for securing leadership for the Plymouth Service Fellowship and representing it on Church Council.
7. Trustees
The trustees, under the direction of the Church Council, shall have responsibility for the care and custody of the property of the church. They are authorized to act in case of emergency pertaining to the property. They cannot, however, buy, mortgage, lease or transfer property without the specific vote of the church membership. The trustees shall keep all church property in good repair, insure the property against damage and preserve all deeds and legal documents.

8. Personnel Committee
 - a. The purpose of the committee shall be to conduct an annual review of the senior minister, work with the senior minister to conduct an annual review of the associate minister(s), work with ordained ministers on current contracts and salaries for all staff, provide church Council with job description and salary proposals as appropriate, and take appeals from staff members who disagree with the application of the Church's personnel policies.
 - b. Personnel Committee meetings, like those of other committees, will normally be open. However, under the direction of church policy, the committee may vote to go into executive session, during which time meetings will become closed to others at its discretion. Executive sessions of the Personnel Committee will be used for discussion only, and any vote of the committee will occur only after a return to open session.
 - c. Except as stated in section 8b of this Article, pastors are invited to attend all meetings and will have access to the agenda beforehand. Decisions of the Personnel Committee that impact members of the church staff require approval by church Council prior to their implementation.

9. Youth Education Committee

The responsibility of the committee shall be to oversee the youth education programming of the church. Working cooperatively with the, ministers, the committee shall offer educational opportunities including, but not limited to, Sunday morning classes, confirmation, Vacation Bible School and Junior and Senior High Youth Fellowships. The committee shall also promote intergenerational education, provide training, support and recognition of teachers, promote awareness and use of Conference camps, evaluate curricula and oversee the youth education budget.

10. Adult Education Committee

The purpose of the committee shall be to enhance spiritual growth and help the congregation to better understand and respond to the world from a grounding of faith. Believing that an informed congregation can more effectively witness to Christ's love in the world, the Adult Education Committee shall offer Bible studies, book studies and forums on spiritual issues, family and relationship issues, and current events of local and global concern.

11. Mission Committee

The purpose of the committee shall be to celebrate and promote the mission work of the United Church of Christ and to encourage generosity toward all mission endeavors supported by the church, especially to Our Church's Wider Mission and the global ministries of Church World Service.

12. Social Concerns Committee

The purpose of the committee shall be to examine the social and economic justice issues in the community, nation and throughout the world; to champion these issues within the congregation and be responsible advocates of selected causes.

13. Evangelism Committee

The purpose of the committee shall be to envision and implement a program designed to share God's gracious love in Jesus Christ with the unchurched. The intent of the program shall be to attract new persons, invite them to consider church membership and assist them in becoming involved in the life of the congregation. The committee shall seek the assistance of the congregation in this task.

14. Stewardship Committee

The purpose of the committee shall be to assist the ministers with the Annual Stewardship Program and, throughout the year, to encourage the congregation to be faithful stewards.

15. Open and Affirming Committee

The purpose of the committee shall be to advocate the living out of Plymouth's Open and Affirming Declaration (Article 5) in the program, mission, and outreach of our congregation.

15. Congregational Life

The purpose of the committee shall be the oversight of our congregational life: nurturing it in areas of greatest opportunity, keeping us integrated as a single congregation, and supporting fellowship groups that already exist.

D. Meetings of Elected Committees

Meetings of all elected committees shall be open to all church members, although only committee members shall be entitled to vote. Allowance of comments by church members at committee meetings shall be at the discretion of the committee chairs.

Article XIII. Other Elected Committees

A. Auditing Committee

1. The Auditing Committee shall be composed of three members who shall be elected for terms of three years, one being elected each year. Members shall wait one year after completion of their term before being eligible to serve again.
2. This committee shall at the close of the fiscal year, audit the books as kept by the Church Treasurer and the Youth Education Committee. A report shall be made to the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

B. Pastoral Search Committee

1. In the event of any pastoral vacancy, it shall be the responsibility of the Search Committee, elected by the congregation, to seek a candidate. In filling the pastoral vacancy, the Search Committee shall seek the counsel of the Church and Ministry Committee of the Northeastern Association and the Conference Minister of the Rocky Mountain Conference.
2. The Search Committee, working closely with the Church Council shall select one candidate to be presented to the congregation. In consultation with the Church Council, the Search Committee shall formulate the terms of the Call.
3. The Search Committee shall make available to the congregation all pertinent facts regarding the candidate. Prior to being voted upon at a duly called congregational meeting, the candidate shall be given ample opportunity to meet the congregation on an individual basis.
4. The Search Committee will insure that proper procedure is adhered to in voting. A first vote shall be taken by the congregation for or against the candidate becoming a minister of the church. When the results of this vote are made known to the congregation, a second vote shall be taken as to whether a Call shall be extended.
5. In the Call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated, including the agreement of the church to participate in an appropriate pension plan, health and accident insurance, and other terms agreed upon between the candidate and the committee. The minister, the church, the Northeastern Association Church and Ministry Committee and the Conference Minister shall each receive a copy of the Call.
6. The Search Committee shall assist the newly called minister in requesting the Northeastern Association to arrange for a Service of Installation. A report of this service shall be signed by the proper officer of the Association and by the Conference Minister, and copies shall be sent to the Secretary of the United Church of Christ.

C. Nominating Committee

1. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of seven members. The outgoing Moderator shall serve on the committee for one year. Six members shall be elected for alternating terms of two years, three being elected each year at the Annual Meeting of the congregation. Members shall wait one year after completion of their term before being eligible to serve again. The committee shall elect a chair who will present the slate of officers at the Annual Meeting.
2. The committee shall have these responsibilities:
 - a. To solicit the congregation for interest and nominate one candidate for the following council positions
Moderator-elect
Clerk
Treasurer
Youth Representative.
 - b. To nominate
Six candidates for the position of deacon
Three candidates for the position of trustee
One Candidate for the Personnel Committee
Four adult candidates plus one high school youth candidate to the Youth Education Committee
Four candidates for the Adult Education, Mission, Social Concerns, Evangelism Committees, and Congregational Life
Three candidates for the Stewardship and Open and Affirming Committees
 - c. To nominate one candidate for the Auditing Committee.
 - d. To nominate six persons for the Nominating Committee, three of whom shall be chosen by the congregation at the Annual Meeting.
 - e. In the event of a pastoral vacancy and upon request of the Church Council the Nominating Committee shall select eight individuals to serve as a Search Committee. It is highly recommended that this committee consist of a cross section of the church membership. Said individuals shall be voted on by the congregation at a special meeting of the congregation.
3. The committee shall contact all nominees being considered for an office and shall secure their approval to serve, if elected.
4. The names of candidates to fill all vacancies in the offices of the church shall be published in the church newsletter at least two weeks before the Annual Meeting of the church in January.

Article XIV. Other Appointed Committees

A. Pastoral Relations Committee

1. An ongoing Pastoral Relations Committee will operate to support the pastoral staff and to facilitate communication and understanding among them and with the congregation.
2. The Pastoral Relations Committee will consist of at least four members, two appointed each year, serving for two-year terms that are renewable by re-nomination. Nominations to the committee, which require approval by vote of Council, shall be provided by the following stakeholders so that, during each year, there is a committee member nominated by each of them:
 - The Senior Minister,
 - Each Associate Minister,
 - Church Council Leadership (Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Clerk, and Treasurer), and
 - The collective pastoral staff if required to obtain at least four members.
3. The Pastoral Relations Committee is not a part of Church government. To this end:
 - It is not represented on the Church Council,
 - It makes no decisions involving pastoral staff members, and
 - Any committee member who is also a member of a Church government committee must abstain from voting on motions that uniquely pertain to pastoral staff members.
4. Pastoral staff members will be invited to all meetings of the Pastoral Relations Committee, and participation by others will be by invitation only. Although it is expected that meeting dialog will be shared with pastoral staff members who are not present, comments made at the meetings will be otherwise held in confidence.

B. Plymouth Service Fellowship

1. An ongoing volunteer service group, the Plymouth Service Fellowship coordinates Church related functions such as funeral luncheons, receptions, and coffee hours. It is expected that everyone attending the Church shares the responsibility for supporting the Service Fellowship in carrying out its required tasks.
2. Leadership for the Plymouth Service Fellowship is appointed by the Board of Deacons and shall be responsible for recruiting an adequate number of members.

C. Budget and Finance Committee

1. The following council members shall serve on this committee: the Council Moderator, Moderator-elect, Clerk and Treasurer, and one representative each from the

Personnel and Stewardship Committees. The Moderator-elect shall serve as the chair of this committee and convene it as needed to fulfill its responsibilities as defined below.

2. This committee shall meet as needed to review the church's financial condition, comparing income and expenditures to the provisions of the current budget.
3. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to see that all salaries are reviewed annually prior to the Fall Stewardship Program.
4. Prior to the fall stewardship program this committee shall accept budget requests from other committees desiring funding.
5. The Budget and Finance Committee shall study the financial needs of the church and shall formulate a budget to cover the administrative, benevolent, and building needs of the church each year. After approval by the Church Council, the committee shall present the budget to the congregation for approval at the Annual Meeting.

D. Interim Minister Search Committee

1. In the event of a vacancy in the Senior Minister's position, the Church Council may fill this position with an interim minister. If it chooses this path, it shall select eight individuals to serve as an Interim Minister Search Committee. It is highly recommended that this committee consist of a cross section of the church membership.
2. The Interim Minister Search Committee, working closely with the Conference Minister and Church Council shall select one candidate to be presented to the congregation. In consultation with the Church Council, the Interim Minister Search Committee shall formulate the terms of the Call.
3. The Interim Minister Search Committee shall make available to the congregation all pertinent facts regarding the candidate. Prior to being voted upon at a duly called congregational meeting, the candidate shall be given opportunity to meet the congregation on an individual basis.
4. The Interim Minister Search Committee will insure that proper procedure is adhered to in voting. A first vote shall be taken by the congregation for or against the candidate becoming a minister of the church. When the results of this vote are made known to the congregation, a second vote shall be taken as to whether a Call shall be extended.
5. In the Call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated, including the agreement of the church to participate in the an appropriate pension plan, health and accident insurance, and other terms agreed upon between the candidate and the committee.

The minister, the church, the Northeastern Association Church and Ministry Committee and the Conference Minister shall each receive a copy of the Call.

6. Upon selection of the Interim Minister, this committee shall be disbanded.

E. Permanent Committees

1. Permanent committees shall be appointed by the Church Council in consultation with the senior minister. The size, role and composition of each committee and the length of term of its members shall be determined prior to formation of the committee.
2. Current permanent committees of the church are:
 - The Memorial Committee
 - The Long-Range Planning Committee

F. Ad Hoc Committees

The Church Council or the congregation gathered in meeting may appoint ad hoc committees as it deems them necessary to serve the needs of the church or the community. These committees may be elevated to the status of permanent committees, or they may be disbanded when their task is completed.

Article XV. Finances

The primary source of the church's income is from pledges made during the Fall Stewardship Program. A pledge is a given amount that a person or a family chooses to contribute to the church over the twelve months of the calendar year. It is not a binding decision. The church recognizes that unforeseen circumstances may develop that make payment of a pledge impossible, in which case the church office should be notified.

Article XVI. Memorial Funds

Contributions in memory of a loved one may be placed in the memorial fund at any time. Use of these funds shall be directed by the Memorial Committee under supervision of the Church Council. Whenever the purchase of a memorial gift is contemplated, the family of the loved one in whose memory the contributions were made will be consulted and their wishes taken seriously. The final authority on use of the funds, however, rests with the Church Council. Memorial gifts shall be entered in the church memorial book.

Article XVII. Accountability

All groups which operate under the auspices of Plymouth Congregational Church shall be accountable to Church Council. A description or charter of each group shall be on file with Church Council. It shall be the responsibility of Church Council to decide the frequency of reporting to Council.

Article XVIII. Church Policies

While this document covers essential elements of church policy, it is intended that Church Council maintain a collection of additional policies as required to fully cover the needs of the church. All such additional policies shall require the approval of Church Council for their implementation.

Article XIX. Amendments and Revisions

Amendments to the Constitution may be made at any duly called congregational meeting or at the Annual Meeting by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the members present. The proposed amendments must be made known and discussed at a previous congregational meeting and then again made known at the calling of a congregational meeting for final adoption.

Approved by Membership at Congregational Meeting on January 25, 2004