

Date: April 2008
From: Executive Board.
To: The First Church of Christ In Wethersfield.
Regarding: Bylaws Administrative Correction

Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The board has created and tasked a sub-committee to recommend various corrections to the bylaws of the church In keeping with the work by the Research and Long-Range Planning Committee.

Because the bylaws are a legal document that defines how we govern ourselves in the areas not covered by federal, state, or local laws, it is important that they be correct because every member of the church is held accountable to them.

The board feels that there are a number of issues in the current bylaws that need to be revised. These changes are in three flavors:

1. *Typographical and grammatical changes.*

There are a number of typographical and grammatical errors that should be corrected.

These are just corrected in the revised document, without an explanation.

Example: The spelling of “bylaws”. Bylaws is correct; by laws, by-laws, and ByLaws, are either incorrect or secondary spellings.

2. *Consistency changes:*

There are a number of terms that are used throughout the document inconsistently. This leads to confusion and misunderstanding.

Example: The term “member”. The current bylaws have three different terms for members: members, active members, and voting members. In First Church, there are only members. ‘Active member’ is never defined, leading to different classes of members without defining them. All members have the right to vote, and stating ‘voting member’ adds to confusion.

3. *Content changes:*

There are two items that should be corrected because of changing circumstances.

The Statement of Faith in Section 4 specifically commends the 1957 Statement of Faith from the United Church of Christ to the membership. We recommend replacing the UCC Statement of Faith recommendation with a similarly worded recommendation to the

Statement of Faith that has Staff, Deacon, and Board approval that will be adopted in the April 2008 annual meeting.

The assistant treasurer position was specifically created to be a bank or trust to manage the endowment and trust funds. This makes another corporation an officer of our Church. While meaningful and correct at one time, legal changes have made this unacceptable. We recommend removal of the assistant treasurer position. Assignment of the bank or trust company will be by the board, and oversight remains with the Trustee Division.

What follows is a section by section explanation of the proposed changes. Sections that have no changes are not listed.

Title Page

1. Added Address

Table of Contents

2. Made Table of Contents dynamic, so the page numbers change when printed on different printers.

Section 2

3. Cannot be changed. Wording **MUST** remain exactly as it is for legal purposes.

Section 3

4. Capitol “T” and “C” for “The Church”. Our linkage is with the Church universal and not necessarily with any organized church, some of which are apostate.
5. Small ‘c’ for references to the local church.

Section 4

6. Replace the reference to the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ (1957) with the Statement of Faith that will be adopted in the April 2008 annual meeting. As with the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ, the First Church of Christ in Wethersfield is a separate document that is commended to members and friends.
7. Remove the word “contemporary”.
8. Replace the word “expression” with the word “testimony”. Congregational churches are not Creed/Confessional and viewing creeds as testimonies ensures that the aforementioned creeds will not be used as faith tests.
9. Complete removal of 2nd sentence. This statement would allow Statements of Faith from Universalism, Mormonism, Jehovah Witness, etc, to be included.

Section 5

10. Remove the Statement of Covenant to a separate document. Statements of Covenant are matters of faith and belief and have no legal weight. They are religious expressions of the purpose of the church (Section 3). Refer to the Statement of Covenant the same way the Statement of Faith is referred to.

Section 7.2

11. All members present at meetings are allowed to vote based on wording in other parts of the Bylaws. Added 'present' to enhance clarity and to be consistent with other voting procedures.

Section 7.3

12. The Board suggests increasing the quorum requirements to at least 40 members. The number of members to call a special meeting should match.
13. Remove the word 'Active' from 'Active members'. Active is not defined.
14. Removal of 'Example' lists. Unless specific and limiting, they add no value and only contribute to confusion and misunderstanding.

Section 7.4

15. Increase quorum requirements to 40 members.

Section 8.4

16. Because of the elimination of the assistant treasurer bank and trust company as an officer of the church, allow the board to designate the bank or trust company to manage endowment or trust funds.
17. Incorrect section reference. Should be 17.2, not 16.2

Section 8.6

18. Removal of 'Example' lists. Unless specific and limiting, they add no value and only contribute to confusion and misunderstanding.

Section 9.3

19. Wording unclear. Revised to specifically state what funds are controlled by the deacons.
20. Remove comma after the word "equivalents", providing clearer meaning.

Section 9.4

21. Removal of 'Example' lists. Unless specific and limiting, they add no value and only contribute to confusion and misunderstanding.

Section 10.3

22. Removal of 'Example' lists. Unless specific and limiting, they add no value and only contribute to confusion and misunderstanding.

Section 13.3

23. Removal of 'Example' lists. Unless specific and limiting, they add no value and only contribute to confusion and misunderstanding.

Section 14.2

24. Section 3, sub-section a. The Trustee Division should only have control of endowment and trust funds, not all church funds. Day to Day operations come under the oversight of the Finance Committee.
25. Section 4, sub-section a. The church has, over time, owned several properties. Change to reflect the current property management procedures.
26. Section 5, removal of Assistant Treasurer.

Section 14.4

27. Second paragraph; removal of Assistant Treasurer.

Section 15.2

28. Removal of 'Example' lists. Unless specific and limiting, they add no value and only contribute to confusion and misunderstanding.
29. Remove limitation of broadcasting to radio and TV, expanding to all media. By making it generic, we won't be limited as technology changes.

Section 15.3

30. Removal of 'Example' lists. Unless specific and limiting, they add no value and only contribute to confusion and misunderstanding.

Section 17.1

31. Removal of the Assistant Treasurer in two places. Adjust language to be grammatically correct.

Section 17.2

32. Replace 'lock in' with 'limit' for clarity.

Section 17.9

33. Removal of the Assistant Treasurer. This position was specifically created for a Bank and Trust Company and was required in the past but is no longer necessary or advisable.

Section 17.10

34. Renumber to account for the deletion of section 17.9

Section 19.1

35. Remove limitation on what Search Committee's can investigate.

Section 22

36. Cannot be changed. Wording **MUST** remain exactly as it is for legal purposes.

Section 23

37. Removed the word "active" from "active members".

38. Add latest Amendment date.