

**PEACE DALE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
**United Church of Christ**  
**Peace Dale, Rhode Island**  
**2009**

**ARTICLE I**

Name

- A. The name of this Church shall be Peace Dale Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ, located in South Kingstown, Rhode Island.

**ARTICLE II**

Purpose, Doctrine, and Covenant

- A. Purpose

The purpose of this Church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ to share in the worship of God and to make God's Vision of peace, justice and love for all Creation vital and active in the lives of people, individually and collectively, especially as that Vision is set forth in the life and teachings, death, resurrection and living presence of Jesus Christ.

- B. Doctrine

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 discipleship. Each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of conscience, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The following Statement of Faith, therefore, is not a test or creed, but an expression of the spirit in which the Church interprets the Word of God.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

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

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

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

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

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

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

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and

eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

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

Blessings and honor, glory and power be unto you.

Amen.

C. Covenant

"Here in God's presence we acknowledge the covenant which has been most fully revealed to us through Jesus Christ. We promise to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. With this congregation we promise to worship faithfully, to observe the sacraments, to work and pray for Christian purposes, to pledge our stewardship, and to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world. Amen."

### ARTICLE III

#### Polity

- A. This Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head and finds in the Holy Scriptures, interpreted by the Divine Spirit through reason, faith, conscience, and tradition, its guidance in matters of faith and discipline.
- B. The government of this Church is vested in its members who exercise the right of control in all its affairs subject in legal matters to the charter granted it by the legislature of the State of Rhode Island at its January session, 1872.

This Church accepts the obligations of mutual counsel, comity and cooperation involved in the free fellowship of the United Church of Christ, and pledges itself to share in its common aims and financial support, especially as represented by the Rhode Island Conference and the General Synod.

This Church seeks to cooperate in the ecumenical movement by association with the Local, State, National and World Council of Churches.

- C. The following decisions shall be reserved exclusively to the membership assembled in congregational meetings.
  - 1. Calling and dismissal of an ordained minister as appropriate.
    - a. A minister shall be called only upon recommendation of a Pastoral Search Committee elected for that purpose at a meeting of the members of the Church, nominations having been made by the Executive Board. Upon acceptance of the recommendation of said committee by two-thirds vote of the members present at another duly called meeting to hear such recommendation, such minister shall be called for an indefinite period of time.
    - b. A minister may be removed on sixty days notice by majority vote of the membership present at a meeting duly called for that purpose by the Executive Board. The minister shall have been advised of the potential action at least thirty days prior to said meeting. In the case of loss of ministerial standing, relations may cease at once.
    - c. A minister may terminate the relationship voluntarily upon sixty days notice of resignation given to the Executive Board. Such resignation shall then be submitted to the

Church membership at a meeting duly called for that purpose. A majority vote is required for acceptance.

2. Electing officers and members of boards and committees as may be provided for in the Bylaws of the Church.
3. Approving the annual Church budget according to the procedures provided in the Bylaws of the Church.
4. Repealing any action taken by a board or agency.
5. Buying, selling, mortgaging, leasing any or all of the real property of the Church, the details of such transaction to be handled by the Finance Committee.
6. Approving requests or recommendations from the Finance Committee to borrow funds in the name of the Church.
7. Approving expenditure for non-budgeted items exceeding one half percent (1/2 %) of the total operating budget.
8. Amending the Bylaws of the Church according to Article VIII of these Bylaws.
9. Removing an officer or committee member from office during a term for just cause upon a two-thirds vote of the Church membership at any regular or special meeting.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

##### Membership

- A. The members of this Church shall be those persons who have confessed their faith in Jesus Christ, have made covenant with this congregation of the United Church of Christ, and, upon recommendation by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons, have been received by the Church.

A register of members, prepared by the Board of Deacons, shall be kept in the Church Office.

- B. Reception

1. Persons recommended by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons shall be affirmed by the congregation and be welcomed into membership at a service of worship after attending a new member orientation.
2. Members shall be admitted:
  - a. On confession of faith and baptism.
  - b. On presentation of Letters of Transfer from other churches.
  - c. On reaffirmation of faith, if such Letters are not available.

- C. Responsibilities of Active Members

1. Active member received into the fellowship of this Church shall participate frequently in the worship life of the congregation, actively support through participation and prayer the ministry of

the congregation, and contribute financially to the need of the Church to the best of his or her ability.

D. Associate Members

1. Those desiring to retain membership in another Church may be received in like manner as associate members, with all privileges and responsibilities of full membership other than holding position of Church officer.

E. Affiliated Members

1. Affiliated members are members who wish to maintain their connection with the Church but cannot at this point in their lives fulfill covenant with the Church and its mission as stated in paragraph A. Affiliated members have been baptized and have shown earlier commitment levels to the Church. If at a later date, the member desires to fulfill a covenant, full active membership can be instated through declaring intent before the ministers and/or the congregation.
2. A member may submit a request to the Board of Deacons to be made an affiliated member and shall be upon vote of that Board.
3. Any member failing to meet the responsibilities of membership as stated in paragraph C.1. may, upon vote of the Board of Deacons, have their membership status changed to affiliated or terminated, such person having been first advised of the potential action. A Review of Membership, every two years, shall be made by the Board of Deacons on the odd numbered years.
4. An affiliated member may be restored as an active member by virtue of fulfilling responsibilities stated in paragraph C and by action of the Board of Deacons.
5. An affiliated member does not have voting privilege, but does have the right of a Letter of Transfer.

F. Termination of Membership

1. A Letter of Dismissal and Recommendation to another Church shall, by vote of the Board of Deacons, be granted to any member in good standing requesting it. This Letter shall be valid for one year only, unless renewed. The right to vote shall be suspended when a Letter is granted, and membership shall terminate upon notice of acceptance in the Church to which the Letter was addressed, or at the end of one year, if there are no grounds for renewal.
2. If a member desires to join a religious body with which this Church is not in fellowship or which would not receive its Letter, the Church may, at the member's request, terminate membership.
3. If a member in good standing requests to be released from covenant obligations to this Church, such request may be granted and membership terminated.

## ARTICLE V

### Services and Meetings

A. Worship

1. Services of worship shall be held at given hours each Sunday, except when temporarily suspended

by vote of the Church, or by the Executive Board on recommendation by the Board of Deacons.

2. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated on the first Sunday of each month, or, at such other times as the minister(s) or Board of Deacons shall appoint.
3. The sacrament of Baptism shall be administered at such times as the minister(s), or in their absence, the Board of Deacons may appoint.
4. Other services for worship, study, inspiration and prayer may be determined by the Church, the minister(s) or the Board of Deacons.

B. Business Meetings

1. Congregational Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting shall be held on or near February thirteenth (the anniversary of the founding of the Church), the exact date to be determined by the Executive Board. The meeting shall be held for the election of officers, board and committee members, delegates, and other representatives of the Church, the hearing of reports, and for the transaction of any other proper business.

2. Congregational Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by a minister, the Executive Board, the Board of Deacons, the Board of Property Management, or shall be called by the Clerk on written request of five or more members qualified to vote. The object of the meeting shall be stated in the call.

3. Congregational Meeting Notices

- a. Notice of the Annual Meeting or of a special meeting shall be posted on the Church bulletin board two weeks in advance of said meeting, and announced at worship services on two consecutive Sundays, the second at least twenty-four hours in advance of said meeting. This shall be considered sufficient notice.
- b. A special meeting may be called for a date at least seven days following the dated mailing of a notice for such meeting to all active Church members.
- c. A special meeting for the purpose of electing officers to fill vacancies arising during the year may be stated at a regular Sunday service of worship for a time immediately following the service, or for a time during the week.
- d. New members will be welcomed into the congregation at least twice yearly at a special worship service advertised at least seven days in advance.

4. Quorum

- a. A quorum for the transaction of any business at congregational meetings shall consist of 10 % of the active membership of the Church.
- b. A quorum for the transaction of any business at board and committee meetings shall consist of the majority of the voting members of said board and committee.
- c. Ex officio members of boards and committees are non-voting members not included in a quorum.

5. Parliamentary Procedure

Roberts' Rules of Order shall govern the parliamentary proceedings of all business meetings of the congregation, boards and committees, except that they may be suspended by a majority vote.

6. Voting

- a. All matters of business shall be determined, except as otherwise provided herein, by a majority voice vote of those active members attending, unless otherwise determined by the meeting in accordance with parliamentary procedure.
- b. Ballot vote may be so ordered by a majority voice vote without discussion in accordance with parliamentary procedure.

7. Official Year

- a. The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on January 1st.
- b. All officers shall assume their duties at the time of their election at the Annual Meeting and shall continue in office for their respective terms or until their successors are elected.
- c. Board and committee members shall assume their duties at the first meeting of the respective boards and committees following their election at the Annual Meeting.
- d. The chairperson of the past year shall call the first meeting.

**ARTICLE VI**

**Officers, Ministers and Duties**

A. Officer Qualification

1. Active Membership, as defined in Article IV shall be a requirement of all who are elected as officers.

B. Election of Officers

1. Officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting in accordance with parliamentary procedure. The right of any member to make a nomination from the floor shall always be recognized.
2. In the event of a mid-term vacancy of an officer, the Nominating Committee shall recommend and the Executive Board shall appoint a person to fill the vacancy until the next Congregational Meeting of the Church, at which time a person shall be elected in the usual manner to fill the remainder of the unexpired term.

C. The Officers of the Church shall be as follows

1. President

- a. The President shall be the executive officer of the Church, elected by the Church for a term of one year and may be eligible for reelection to a second term, but after serving two years will be ineligible for reelection until after a lapse of one year.
- b. The President is authorized to speak for and represent the Church on matters not otherwise delegated by these Bylaws. The President shall preside at meetings of the Executive Board and shall vote only in case of tie. The President shall represent the Board and report to the Church membership at the Annual Meeting and at such other

times as may be requested by any Church officer, board or committee.

- c. In the absence of the President, the Chairperson of the Board of Deacons shall assume the duties of the President.
- d. The Church President shall act as Moderator; in the absence of the Church President, the Chairperson of the Board of Deacons shall act as Moderator; in their absence a person selected by the meeting shall preside. The Moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the Church. The Moderator may identify and seek procedural advice from a parliamentarian present at the meeting.

2. Clerk

- a. The Clerk shall serve as a member of the Executive Board.
- b. The duties of the Clerk shall include the following
  - 1) Keep a record of the meetings of the Church and of the Executive Board.
  - 2) Give legal notice of all meetings when such notices are necessary.
  - 3) Conduct all correspondence so far as this is not otherwise provided for.
  - 4) Perform such other duties as usually pertain to the office of Clerk.

3. Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer shall serve as a member of the Executive Board.
- b. The duties of the Treasurer shall include the following
  - 1) Manage all deposits and receipts of the Church, and shall use such depository as the Church shall order, including managing the accounting of all contributor records.
  - 2) Have custody of all papers relating to the property of the Church.
  - 3) Report regularly to the Finance Committee.
  - 4) Pay all bills of the Church and keep accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements.
  - 5) May be directed to sell, upon authorization of the Finance Committee, any stocks, bonds or securities owned by the Church.
  - 6) Sign, on behalf of the Church, deeds, contracts of sale, leases and other papers relating to the sale and management of real estate.
  - 7) Purchase a blanket bond and/or insurance in an amount deemed adequate by the Finance Committee covering all personnel handling moneys and securities of the Church.
  - 8) Shall be an ex officio member of the Board of Stewardship.

4. Historian
  - a. Shall have charge of, and gather and maintain information, data, and items of interest relating to the history of the Church.
  - b. Shall organize all papers and records of historical value to the Church.
  - c. Keep a journal of all occurrences of interest to the Church.
  - d. Have care and supervision of the Book of Remembrance, and the responsibility for promoting its use.

D. Ministers

1. The ministers shall be such in number as may from time to time be called by the Church. One minister shall be designated by the Church to be the Senior Minister.
2. Each minister shall become a member of the Church as soon as practicable after acceptance of the call as indicated in the signing of a written contract.
3. The Rhode Island Conference of the United Church of Christ or the United Church of Christ churches in the vicinity shall be invited to sit as an ecclesiastical council for the purpose of installing or recognizing the minister in accordance with established usage. The minister shall seek standing in and become a minister of the Rhode Island Conference of the United Church of Christ at the first opportunity.
4. The Senior Minister and the Board of Deacons shall have in charge the spiritual welfare of the Church. The Senior Minister shall seek to enlist persons as followers of Christ, preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments, have under his/her care all services of public worship, administer the activities of the Church in cooperation with the various boards, committees and organizations, represent the Church in the wider community, and shall recommend to the Executive Board the appointment or dismissal of Church Secretaries and shall submit budget requests for office expenses to the Executive Board not later than September 20th.
5. An Assistant, Associate or other ordained minister will be under the direction of the Senior Minister. Special expectations and duties will be outlined in the call when extended.
6. Sabbatical leave for ministers shall be granted for graduate study, research, or other professional improvement and spiritual growth in accordance with their Calling and policies approved by the Executive Board.
7. The senior minister shall be an ex officio member of all boards and committees except a Pastoral Search Committee. All other ordained and called clergy shall be ex officio members of all boards and committees pertinent to their job description. In the case of a Search Committee for a minister other than the Senior Minister, the Senior Minister shall be a full member.

## ARTICLE VII

### Boards, Committees and Delegates

A. Membership and organizational procedures for Standing Boards and Committees

1. Active Membership, as defined in Article IV, including associate membership, shall be a requirement for all who are elected, or appointed on an interim basis, to all boards and

committees.

2. Members of standing (permanent) boards and committees, whose members are chosen by election, shall be elected at the Congregational Annual Meeting in accordance with parliamentary procedure. The right of any member to make a nomination from the floor shall always be recognized.
3. In the event of a mid-term vacancy of an elected member of a standing board or committee, the Nominating Committee shall recommend and the Executive Board shall appoint a person to fill the vacancy until the next Congregational Meeting of the Church, at which time a person shall be elected in the usual manner to fill the remainder of the term.
4. A member of a standing board or committee shall recuse him or her self from participating in decisions where a conflict of interest exists.
5. After serving one full term no elected member of a standing board or committee shall be eligible for reelection until after the lapse of one year.
6. When there is a change in the number of members of a standing board or committee which affects the allocation of terms of office, the board or committee with the Nominating Committee, shall decide on the adjustment.
7. The number of members of any standing board or committee, as set forth in the Bylaws, shall be the minimum number. At any Annual Meeting of the Church, the number of members of any standing board or committee may, upon recommendation of the Executive Board, be increased by action of the Church, through normal election procedures.
8. Each standing board or committee shall determine the officers for its organization and elect these officers at its first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Church. The Church Secretary shall be immediately notified of the names of the officers.
9. A majority of the elected members of each standing board or committee (excluding ex officio members) shall be the minimum number to constitute a quorum for purposes of taking official action on the business of such board or committee.
10. The Chairperson may declare a vacancy if a committee member has four (4) unexplained absences. The Chairperson shall inform the committee member and the Nominating Committee.
11. Unless otherwise specified, each standing board or committee shall hold such meetings of its members as it determines are necessary for the proper conduct of its business to ensure complete fulfillment of its responsibility and function. If minutes of its meetings are essential to its operations, a secretary shall be elected and instructed to keep such a record. A copy of minutes of all meetings shall be given to the Church Secretary.
12. Chairpersons shall submit annual budget requests to the Executive Board not later than September 20th.
13. Chairpersons shall submit a written annual report of their Board or Committee to the Executive Board for presentation in the Annual Report to the congregation.

B. Executive Board

1. The Executive Board shall consist of the following

- a. President.
  - b. Immediate Past President.
  - c. Senior Minister, ex officio, and other full time ordained staff, ex officio.
  - d. Clerk.
  - e. Treasurer.
  - f. Chairperson of the Board of Deacons.
  - g. Chairperson of the Board of Property Management.
  - h. Chairperson of the Board of Christian Education.
  - i. Chairperson of the Board of Mission and Service.
  - j. Chairperson of the Board of Music.
  - k. Chairperson of the Board of Hospitality.
  - l. Chairperson of the Board of Stewardship.
  - m. Chairperson of the Board of Church Family Life.
  - n. Chairperson of the Finance Committee, ex officio.
  - o. Chairperson of the Personnel Committee, ex officio.
2. The Executive Board shall meet regularly at such time and place as may be fixed by the Board, and shall give reasonable notice to the Church of its regular meeting date. Special meetings may be called by the President, a Minister, or shall be called by the President on the written request of any three members of the Executive Board.
  3. Unless otherwise publicized, all meetings of the Executive Board are open to attendance by any interested Church member, who shall have voice but not vote. The President may on his or her own ruling declare the meeting in executive session at any time, limiting the meeting to members of the Executive Board as specified, except that the Executive Board may overrule this decision by the President.
  4. The Clerk shall serve as Secretary to the Executive Board and shall keep appropriate records and take care of all correspondence. The Clerk shall notify the person, board, or committee whose responsibility it is to implement a decision of the Executive Board.
  5. The general control and arrangement of the affairs of the Church between congregational meetings shall be vested in the Executive Board, which shall have full authority and power to perform all acts necessary to promote the interest and welfare of the Church not otherwise provided for and not inconsistent with its charter, by the Bylaws of the Church, or special instructions from the Church.
  6. The Executive Board shall prepare the Annual Report and budget according to the following procedure

- a. A budget shall be prepared by the Executive Board following the Stewardship campaign and shall be submitted for approval at the Annual Meeting. The final budget, as approved by the Church shall, unless changed by the Church, fix the limit of the aggregate expenditures for the next fiscal year.
  - b. The Executive Board, in preparing the budget, shall receive the review and recommendation of the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will receive requests from Staff members and Boards and Committees of the Church and work with them to meet the needs of the congregation, as it seeks to serve in Christ's name.
  - c. The Executive Board shall publish annual reports submitted by boards and committees in the Church's Annual Report and present it to the congregation.
7. Approve personnel policies and employment arrangements for all professional and paid employees, as may be recommended by the Personnel Committee.
  8. Approve requests for employment or dismissal of all staff persons. Such requests would be received as follows
    - a. From the Senior Minister - Secretaries.
    - b. From the Board of Property Management - Sexton and Assistants.
    - c. From the Board of Music - Organist, Choir Directors and any other support persons needed.
    - d. From the Board of Christian Education - Director of Christian Education and any other support persons needed.
    - e. From the Board of Mission and Service - such support persons as may be needed.
  9. Plan, coordinate, develop, and evaluate the program of the Church.
  10. Advise and assist officers, boards and committees within the Church as to activities for which they are responsible.
  11. Interpret the principles and policies of the Church as needed in intervals between Church meetings.
  12. Define responsibility between specific groups in the Church where the question seems to be in doubt.
  13. Appoint special committees when deemed necessary to meet the needs of the Church.
  14. Engage legal counsel whenever necessary to protect the interests of the Church.
  15. Nominate persons to serve on a Pastoral Search Committee, when needed, in accordance with Article III. C. 1. Such committee shall consist of at least ten and not more than fourteen members, and shall include one youth, one representative from the Board of Deacons, one from the Board of Property Management, one from the Board of Christian Education, and one from the Board of Mission and Service. In the case of a search for a minister other than the Senior Minister, the Senior Minister shall be a full member of the committee. The other members shall be chosen at large.

16. Appoint a Nominating Committee at least three months prior to the Annual Meeting to serve for one year.
  - a. Nominating Committee shall consist of five members, one of whom shall be a Deacon.
  - b. Nominating Committee shall prepare nominations for all offices, boards and committees not otherwise provided for, and make nominations during the year to fill vacancies.
  - c. They shall prepare a ballot nominating at least one person for each position to be filled at the Annual Meeting, and such nominations shall be available and posted at the Church not later than two Sundays previous to the Annual Meeting.
  - d. Seven members of the Church may present a name to the committee, at least one week before the Annual Meeting, and the name presented must be included in the ballot.
  - e. Up to two youth members of high school age, whose term shall be for one year, renewable for up to three years total may be nominated to standing boards. Youth members shall be eligible to vote based upon membership by-law provisions
  - f. In the event of a mid-year vacancy of an elected member of a board or committee, the Nominating Committee shall recommend and the Executive Board shall appoint a person to fill the vacancy until the next Congregational Meeting of the Church, at which time a person shall be elected in the usual manner to fill the remainder of the unexpired term of office.
  - g. Persons nominated to fill vacancies shall not have a known conflict of interest with the decisions expected of the position being filled.
  
17. Appoint an Executive Board Finance Committee which reports directly to the Executive Board.  
The Finance Committee
  - a. Shall have a minimum of 3 members, and a maximum number appropriate for an effective working committee, to serve 3-year staggered terms.
  - b. Shall have a working knowledge of finance among the members.
  - c. May have members who are eligible to serve on other Church Boards and Committees. The Finance Committee Chair cannot serve as chairperson of another board or committee.
  - d. Shall be the body authorized to sell, lease, or purchase property when such transaction has been approved by a majority vote of the Church members attending a duly advertised meeting called for this purpose.
  - e. Shall receive and hold, invest and reinvest all permanent funds of the Church and such other special funds and properties as may from time to time be derived by gifts, bequest or devise, except as otherwise provided in the instrument of the gift.
  - f. May enter into an agreement with a banking corporation, other financial organization, or appointed agent to act for the Church, to have physical custody of the securities owned by the Church and, under the direction of the Board, receive stock dividends, collect coupons on bonds, keep accurate records of such income and forward receipts for same to the Church Treasurer, and take such other action as shall be directed by the Board from time to time.

- g. Shall ascertain the needs of the Church for gifts of material properties, and make known such needs and solicit such gifts; inform members and others of various needs, projects and programs of the Church for which provisions could be made by them in their wills, trusts, and gifts; be empowered to accept or reject on behalf of the Church conditional gifts, or gifts in trust, and to administer the same in accordance with the terms of the gift, except when otherwise provided in the instrument of the gift.
  - h. Shall be responsible for overseeing and making recommendations for all financial risk management issues of the Church. The committee shall work with the Board of Property Management regarding appropriate level of property and liability insurance and with the Personnel Committee and Executive Board regarding other liability issues affecting the Church's interests. The committee shall make recommendations regarding the appropriateness and cost effectiveness of Church insurance policies.
  - i. Shall review, at each of its regular meetings, the status of all budgeted funds and income accounts and shall be responsible for the general financial stability of the Church. Direct a professional audit of the Treasurer's and Assistant Treasurer's accounts annually.
  - j. Shall establish the budget cycle process and submit its recommendations to the Executive Board by the November Executive Board meeting.
18. Appoint a Personnel Committee which reports directly to the Executive Board. The Personnel Committee
- a. Shall have a minimum of 3 members, and a maximum number appropriate for an effective working committee, to serve 3-year staggered terms. At least one committee member shall be a former member of the Executive Board. No person subject to church personnel policies, or any of their relatives, shall be appointed to the Personnel Committee.
  - b. Members are not eligible for membership on other boards or other standing committees.
  - c. Shall have a working knowledge of personnel management among the members.
  - d. Shall make recommendations to the Executive Board regarding all matters pertaining to personnel management, including establishment of policies, processes, compliance with statutes, hiring, conditions of employment, maintenance of position descriptions, performance evaluations, training, salaries, benefits, awards, sabbatical and leave.
19. Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) reports directly to the Congregation. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall
- a. Meet no less frequently than quarterly; meetings of the PRC may be called at any time.
  - b. Consult United Church of Christ and other resources associated with effective pastoral relations committee best practices. The PRC shall
    - 1) Be the body responsible for facilitating communications and fostering relationships of trust and understanding between the pastors and the congregation. The PRC monitors the morale of the pastors and congregation. The Committee takes on both the role of an advisory group and that of a support group with the primary function to improve communication.

- 2) Have no decision making authority and shall not have a role of a personnel, salary review, or evaluation committee.
- 3) Consist of five (5) members selected by consensus of the pastors and the church president. One of the members shall be a member of the Board of Deacons to serve as a liaison between the Deacons and the PRC.
- 4) Have members appointed for one-year terms; a member may be reappointed for a maximum of two additional consecutive terms. No member can serve more than three years in succession. If at any time a member of the PRC is unable to serve objectively, that member shall be recused by consensus of the Committee.
- 5) Respect the confidential nature of the PRC meetings. Permission to share information outside the PRC requires a unanimous vote of the PRC members, the pastors and any other parties involved.
- 6) Be placed on any meeting agenda at their request.

C. Board of Deacons

1. The Board shall consist of fifteen members, with the goal of balanced representation of men and women, who shall be elected five each year, to serve three year terms.
2. The Board shall
  - a. Be responsible, with the minister(s), for all aspects of the worship, spiritual life and pastoral care of the Church, and establish policies and procedures for them.
  - b. Review the active membership list every two years and maintain an active register of members.
  - c. Assist the minister(s) in the recruitment, review and preparation of new Church members.
  - d. Prepare and serve Holy Communion.
  - e. Advise and assist the minister(s).
  - f. Evaluate the work of the minister(s) annually and submit the evaluation(s) and any recommendations to the Personnel Committee by June 30th.
  - g. Provide for pastoral supply when needed, except in the case of an extended absence when recommendation shall be made to the Executive Board for the appointment of an interim minister.
  - h. Appoint one of its members to the Nominating Committee to serve for one year.
  - i. Appoint annually one of its members, or another person from the congregation, as Head Usher and authorize that person to carry out these duties

Head Usher

- 1) Shall be responsible for the ushering at all services.
- 2) Shall see that the sanctuary is in proper order for worship.
- 3) Shall appoint a sufficient number of assistant ushers to carry out these

responsibilities.

j. Flower Committee

- 1) The Flower Committee shall consist of three members, one of whom shall be elected each year, to serve three year terms.
- 2) The Committee shall
  - a) Be in charge of the interior floral decorations of the Church sanctuary.
  - b) Submit to the Board of Deacons, any concerns that may arise.
  - c) Maintain records of all funds received and expended and report this information to the Treasurer.

- k. Be responsible for regulation, supervision of the Peace Dale Congregational Church's Columbarium and Memorial Garden.

D. Board of Property Management

1. The Board shall consist of nine members, three shall be elected each year to serve three year terms.
2. The Board shall
  - a. Oversee the maintenance, upkeep and operation of all the physical property of the Church. Such oversight is to include the purchase of all utility services; the placing of such fire, theft and liability insurance as deemed necessary; the contracting for snow removal and such other services as may be required from time to time; and the purchase of all necessary operating supplies.
  - b. Control the use of all Church properties, establish and publish rules and regulations governing such use and any donations requested to offset expenses incurred. One member of the Board shall be designated to receive all requests for the use of the Church property and shall present such requests to the Board for approval or rejection.
  - c. Recommend to the Personnel Committee the appointment or dismissal of the Sexton and any assistants who shall be under the supervision of, and shall report to, the Board of Property Management.
  - d. Prepare a written description of the duties and responsibilities of these paid staff persons. Such duties and responsibilities may be reviewed and changed from time to time.
  - e. Submit evaluations of work performance of those staff persons for whom the Board of Property Management is responsible to the Personnel Committee not later than June 30th.

E. Board of Christian Education

1. The Board of Christian Education shall consist of nine members, three are to be elected annually for a three a three year term.
2. The Board shall

- a. Provide for the Christian nurture and spiritual development of the total Church community (adults, youth and children).
- b. Supervise and direct the educational work of the Church to be carried out by the staff persons, approve the curricula, determine methods of instruction, ensure a safe and secure environment for children and youth.
- c. In consultation with the Senior Minister, recommend to the Personnel Committee the employment of any staff persons deemed necessary to carry out the program of the Board, including a job description.
- d. Submit evaluations of the work performance of all staff persons, for whom the Board is responsible, to the Personnel Committee not later than June 30th of each year.
- e. Oversee the Church library and appoint a Librarian.

F. Board of Mission and Service

- 1. The Board of Mission and Service shall consist of nine members, three of whom shall be elected annually for a three year term.
- 2. The Board shall
  - a. Interpret the work of, and secure support for, Our Church's Wider Mission.
  - b. Be responsible for a program of outreach education for the entire Church, seeking to provide opportunities and experiences of service, action and giving within and beyond the local Church.
  - d. Keep the Church informed on social issues when in the judgment of the Board, the Christian conscience is involved.
  - e. Recommend to the Executive Board the employment of such support persons deemed necessary to carry out the program of the Board.

G. Board of Music

- 1. The Board of Music shall consist of nine members to serve a three year term. Each year the necessary number of persons shall be elected to maintain a nine member board. The Organist and Choir Directors shall be ex officio members.
- 2. The Board shall
  - a. Work closely with the Senior Minister, Organist, and Choir Director(s) in providing a music program which will enhance the worship of the congregation.
  - b. In cooperation with the Senior Minister conduct any necessary search for an Organist and/or Choir Director(s), subsequently recommending the candidate to the Executive Board.
  - c. Prepare a written description of the duties and responsibilities of these paid staff persons. Such duties and responsibilities may be reviewed and changed from time to time.

- d. Make an annual evaluation of the Organist and any paid Choir Director and submit them to the Personnel Committee by June 30th.
- e. Have general oversight of the Church music.
- f. Have charge of the pipe organ and all other musical instruments, hymn books and bound and unbound music, and choir robes belonging to the Church.

H. Board of Stewardship

- 1. The Board of Stewardship shall consist of nine members, three of whom shall be elected annually to serve for a term of three years. The Treasurer shall be an ex officio member.
- 2. The Board shall
  - a. Work with the Senior Minister to provide an ongoing educational program regarding Christian stewardship responsibilities of membership.
  - b. Plan and conduct an annual fund raising campaign for the current expenses and benevolences of the Church.
  - c. Maintain contact with the Treasurer concerning the general condition of pledge payments and cooperate with the Treasurer in the discharge of the latter's duties.

I. Board of Church Family Life

- 1. The Board of Church Family Life shall consist of nine members, three of whom shall be elected annually to serve for a term of three years.
- 2. The Board of Church Family Life shall
  - a. Strive to fulfill Jesus' call to make disciples and spread the good news of the gospel.
  - b. Assist the minister(s) in attracting and assimilating new members into the body of Christ.
  - c. Assist with church publicity, advertising, brochures, bulletin boards, name tags, etc.
  - d. Organize calling on new families and such other activities that will assist in membership growth and assimilation.
  - e. Call attention to the work and witness of our church that others may take part.
  - f. Promote Christian fellowship and social growth within the Church.

J. Board of Hospitality

- 1. The Board of Hospitality shall consist of nine members, three of whom shall be elected annually to serve for a term of three years.
- 2. The Board shall
  - a. Provide opportunity for fellowship by hosting Sunday morning worship fellowship activities.

- b. Host church and community fellowship events at the Board's discretion.
- c. Arrange for bereavement receptions if requested.
- d. Oversee the provisioning and utility of the kitchen spaces necessary to support fellowship activities in the Church.

K. Delegates

- 1. Delegates shall be elected at the Annual Meeting, at least one of whom shall be under the age of thirty (30). The number of delegates elected shall be in accordance with RI Conference guidelines. In addition, three consecutive alternates will be elected.
- 2. Delegates report to, and receive guidance from, the Executive Board pertaining to issues and decisions that are expected to be dealt with at the meetings to be attended.
- 3. After each meeting attended, a representative shall report to the Executive Board. A written annual report shall be submitted to the Executive Board.

L. Community Affiliations

- 1. In keeping with the Church's long tradition of community housing ministry, the Church shall support the vision and mission of Peace Dale United Church Housing, Incorporated and Peace Dale United Housing, Incorporated.
- 2. Members of the Peace Dale Church may serve as members of Peace Dale United Church Housing, Incorporated and Peace Dale United Housing, Incorporated governing bodies in accordance with their bylaws and/or articles of association. The Senior Minister of the Church shall serve as member of Peace Dale United Church Housing, Incorporated governing body in accordance with its bylaws and/or articles of association.

**ARTICLE VIII**

Amendments

These Bylaws may be altered, amended, repealed, or a new set of Bylaws adopted by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at any duly called meeting, provided that the substance of the proposed amendment shall have been made available to the congregation at least two weeks preceding said meeting.

Adopted June 2, 1996  
Revised February 8, 1998  
Revised February 7, 1999  
Revised April 30, 2000  
Revised December 3, 2006  
Revised February 8, 2009  
Revised November 22, 2009