

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF THE
WILLISTON-WEST CHURCH
(United Church of Christ)
Adopted June 1999

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this church shall be WILLISTON-WEST CHURCH of the United Church of Christ, located in Portland, State of Maine, and may be referred to as Williston-West Church.

ARTICLE II Purpose

The avowed purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church worldwide; to render loving service toward all people; and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace. (See the Statement of Faith in Article XIII)

ARTICLE III Organization

The government of this church is vested in its Covenant members who exercise the right of control in all its affairs subject, however, to laws of the State of Maine relating to non-capital stock corporations or ecclesiastical corporations.

ARTICLE IV Covenant Membership

- A. A covenant member in this church is any person who has been baptized, presented to the Church by the Board of Deacons and made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as expressed in the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith.
- B. Covenant members shall attend the worship of the church regularly, participate in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, strive to live the Christian life, share in the life and work of the church, contribute consistently to its support and benevolences, and seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and the community.
- C. Any Covenant member, upon request, may be granted a letter of transfer by the Clerk, or dropped from the membership roles.
- D. Any Covenant member who for a period of one year has not attended the church's worship or contributed to its support will receive a letter of concern from the Board of Deacons, mailed to the last known address. If no response occurs within 30 days, they may be dropped from the covenant membership roles by a recommendation from the Committee and a vote of the Council.

ARTICLE V Governing Body

The governing body of this church shall be the Covenant membership assembled at any church meeting duly called under Article IX. The vote of a majority of Covenant members present at the meeting shall be the action of the church, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws. A quorum shall consist of twenty percent of the total Covenant membership of the church, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI Council

- A. The council shall be the executive body of this church. One-half of its members shall constitute a quorum. It shall be composed of the Pastor, Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer and the Chairpersons of all Boards and permanent committees. Any member may appoint a representative to attend any meeting in his/her place.
- B. Vacancies on any permanent committee or board shall be filled by the Council upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee for the unexpired term.
- C. The Council shall be the policy-making body and transact the business of the church. All acts and deliberations of the Council shall be subject to revision by the total Covenant membership.
- D. The Council Shall:
 - 1. Review the budget as presented by the Trustees and recommend it, with or without amendments to the church membership at the Annual meeting duly called under Article IX.
 - 2. Instruct the Stewardship Committee as to the amount of pledged income that will be required to satisfy the budget.
 - 3. Keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings.
 - 4. Be custodian of all church records, and report to the church at its regular and special meetings.
 - 5. Instruct the proper officers on all fiscal matters.
 - 6. Appoint such other committees as it may deem necessary, in addition to the stated boards and committees.
 - 7. Meet at least quarterly for the transaction of such business as may properly come before it. Special meetings may be called by the Moderator as provided in Article VII (B.3)
 - 8. The Council shall appoint a Treasurer pro-tem in the absence of a treasurer.

ARTICLE VII Pastor, Staff and Church Officers

A. Pastor

1. The Pastor shall be called by the church and shall hold office without limitation of time. In order to terminate this relationship three months' notice shall be given by either party; or termination shall be by mutual consent between the Pastor and the church.
2. The Pastor shall become a Covenant member of the church and Church Council after accepting a call to serve as minister.
3. The Pastor shall:
 - a. Be in charge of the spiritual welfare of the congregation, preach the Word, and be entrusted with the stated services of public worship and the administering of the Sacraments.
 - b. Exercise the privilege of religious teacher and counselor in public and private.
 - c. Be a non-voting, advisory member of all boards and committees directly responsible to the church.
 - d. Notify the Clerk promptly of all Baptisms, church memberships, and dates of admission and deaths.
 - e. Have general supervision of the day-to-day operations of the Church, with authority to spend up to \$250.00 for any given request before requiring consultation with the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

B. The Pastoral Search Committee

1. The Pastoral Search Committee, consisting of the Chairperson of the Board of Deacons, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, the Moderator, and from four to six additional covenant members solicited by the Council, has the responsibility of seeking a candidate for any vacancy in the office of Pastor.
2. As soon as a Pastoral vacancy occurs, it shall be reported to the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ.
3. The Pastoral Search Committee may request the Minister of the Conference to secure relevant information about any minister whom it wishes to consider

church Pastoral Search Committee.

5. The Pastoral Search Committee shall present to the Covenant membership of the church the name of the candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy. An 80% majority vote of the Covenant membership at a special meeting of the Church constitutes a call to serve as minister.
6. In the call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated, including the agreement by Williston-West Church to participate in the Pension Fund of the United Church of Christ, and other terms agreed between the candidate and the committee. The minister the church, the Cumberland Association, and the Minister of the Conference shall each receive a copy of the call.
7. When a minister accepts a call to this church, the church and the minister may join in requesting the Cumberland Association to arrange for a service of installation or recognition. If such a service takes place, a report of this service shall be signed by the proper officer of the Association and by the Minister of the conference, and copies shall be sent to the Secretary of the United Church of Christ and to the council for Church and Ministry.
8. The Pastor may be discharged at a special church meeting called pursuant to Article IX (B), provided there is a quorum of at least one third of the Covenant members present. Prior to such vote the Pastor shall be entitled to speak to the meeting and to respond to questions. The discharge vote shall be by secret written ballot and shall require a two-thirds majority of those present voting for the discharge. The Pastor shall be entitled to three months of further service from the date of the discharge vote.

C. Moderator

1. The Moderator shall be a covenant member and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve as chairperson of the Council for a term of one year and may serve two consecutive years.
2. The Moderator shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the church and shall be an ex officio member, with vote, on all boards and committees.
3. In the Moderator's absence or in the case of the Moderator's inability to carry out the functions of the office, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall serve until a replacement is elected.
4. The Moderator shall preside over all meetings called pursuant to Article IX and all meetings of the Council, and shall serve as chairperson of the Council. In the absence of the Church Clerk, the Moderator shall appoint a clerk pro-tem.
5. The Moderator shall be responsible for calling special church meetings pursuant to Article IX (B).

D. Clerk

1. The Clerk shall be a covenant member and shall be elected to serve for a term of one year.
2. The Clerk shall:
 - a. Keep a complete record of all business meetings of the church and Council, all Baptisms and church memberships, with dates of admission, dismissal or death.
 - b. Secure all letters of transfer for new members and issue all letters of transfer of membership or dismissal.
 - c. Present for the Annual Meeting a written report of the past church year.
 - d. Prepare a membership list to be published with the Annual Church Report.
 - e. Submit to the Church secretary a copy of the minutes of each Council meeting.
 - f. Submit to the council within two weeks after the Annual Meeting, for publication and distribution to the church members, a list of all officers of the church and all members of the boards and permanent committees.
 - g. Notify Delegates of meetings at which their presence is required.
 - h. Provide notice of all meetings called pursuant to Article IX to all covenant members of the church, either by the Sunday Bulletin or by direct mail, stating the time, the place, and the business of the meeting.
 - i. Notify all officers of the church, members of committees, and delegates of the church promptly after their election.

E. Treasurer

1. The Treasurer shall be a covenant member and shall be elected to serve for a term of one year, and may, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, serve three consecutive terms. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Council, attending its regular meetings. The Treasurer must have the financial background to fulfill the duties as prescribed in the Bylaws.
2. The Treasurer shall:
 - a. Have custody of all moneys belonging to the church and insure the deposit of all money received in the name of the church accounts, except as otherwise provided in these articles.

- b. Disburse money only on the order of the Board of Trustees, and keep such records and make such reports as the Trustees may determine.
- c. See that benevolence funds are remitted to the organizations and benevolences for which they have been contributed.
- d. Give bond in such amount and with such surety as the Board of Trustees may designate, the cost of same being paid by the Church.
- e. Establish and approve Internal Controls in Financial Administration of all Church funds.
- f. Serve as an advisor to the Church Council and the Christian Enlistment Committee and work with the Board of Trustees and the Church Council in communicating the financial situation of the Church to the Congregation.
- g. Appoint a Trustee to carry the responsibility of the Treasurer in his or her absence.

ARTICLE VIII Boards and Permanent Committees

A. General Provisions

1. All boards and permanent committees shall derive their membership from the Covenant members of the church body, unless otherwise stated herein, and shall be regarded as integral parts of the church by the Council.
2. Each board and permanent committee shall organize itself as it deems necessary.
3. The chairperson of each permanent committee, or his or her duly-appointed representative, shall be a member of the Council, and as such, shall attend regular meetings of the Council.
4. All boards and permanent committees shall report to the Council at its regular meetings and shall make a written report to the church at its Annual Meeting.
5. A member of any board or permanent committee or officer, after serving two full terms of office, shall be ineligible for reelection for one year, unless otherwise stated.
6. All boards and permanent committees shall meet regularly.
7. The Sunday Church Bulletin shall be the official publication for the purpose of notifying members of official business.
8. Each committee shall submit a budget request to the Board of Trustees by September 15 of each year.

9. All moneys received in the name of the church shall be delivered to the Treasurer.

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B. Board of Deacons

1. The Board of Deacons shall consist of twelve covenant members, four to be elected each year to serve a term of three years.

2. The Board of Deacons Shall:

- a. Assist and support the Pastor in the spiritual interests of the church and community.
- b. Prepare the elements, assist in the administration of the Sacraments of the Lord's Supper and of Baptism, the reception of Covenant members; caring for the sick, the poor, the sorrowing; the indifferent, and the stranger.
- c. Assist the Pastor in preparation and presentation of candidates for Covenant membership, and arrange for a substitute in the temporary absence of the Pastor.
- d. Work with the Membership Committee in the annual review of individual membership status.
- e. Be responsible for appointing a head usher who shall have the supervision of all ushering in the church.

C. Board of Trustees

1. The Board of Trustees shall consist of nine covenant members, three of whom shall be elected each year to serve a term of three years. The Trustees shall be Covenant members of the Church. The chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall be elected to serve for a term of one year, and may, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, serve three consecutive terms.

The chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall be a member of the Council, attending its regular meetings and shall call the chair regular monthly meetings of the Board of Trustees.

2. The Board of Trustees shall:

- a. Take charge over all the financial affairs of the church, including care and custody of all church properties subject to the direction of the Council and except as these articles provide differently.
- b. Accept all gifts, bequests, and trusts in the name of the church, and

administer all such in accordance with the provisions of the donors.

c. Prepare an operating budget, including an account for Missions and Benevolences. A preliminary budget shall be presented to the Council for discussion at its regular fall meeting and to the Stewardship Committee following the Council's fall meeting. The final budget, after approval by the Council, shall be presented to the church at its annual meeting.

3. The Board of Trustees shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer properties upon special authority being granted by a vote of the Covenant members. The Trustees, after approval by the Council, may authorize any extraordinary expense if funds are available and may borrow an amount not to exceed 10% of the current annual budget. Approval of the Covenant membership must be given if borrowing is to exceed this amount.

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Committee.

2. The Board of Missions and Christian Outreach shall:

- a. Supervise and correlate the missionary and benevolence programs of the church, overseeing the distribution of funds in this area.
- b. Provide the congregation with educational material on the missionary work of the church.
- c. Encourage the members of our church to grow in Christian social concern and action by calling attention to current social issues and seeking practical ways in which members of the church may cooperate effectively with other churches and existing agencies in their approach to social issues.

F. Stewardship Committee

1. The Stewardship Committee shall consist of six members, three to be elected annually to serve for a term of two years. The Treasurer and a representative of the Board of Missions and Christian Outreach shall be advisory members of this committee.
2. Stewardship Committee shall:
 - a. Conduct a program of stewardship education throughout the year.
 - b. Organize and supervise the raising of budgeted funds for the church.
 - c. Secure, train, and organize Stewardship workers to assist in receiving the annual pledges of the people of the church.
 - d. Be responsible for the annual pledge follow-up throughout the year.
 - e. Seek pledges from new members and others.

G. Fellowship Committee

1. The Fellowship Committee shall consist of a minimum of six members, three to be elected annually to serve for a term of two years.
2. This committee shall be responsible for:
 - a. Providing meals to those persons in need.
 - b. Providing for coffee fellowship following church services.
 - c. Maintaining the church kitchen.

H. Music Committee

1. The Music Committee shall consist of a minimum of six members, three to be elected annually for a term of two years. At least two members of the committee shall be non-choir members.
2. This committee shall select and support a Music Director and an Organist as needed and, in concert with the Pastor, shall administer the music programs of the church. This committee shall also arrange for all maintenance of organ, pianos, bells, music library, and robes.

I. Nominating Committee

1. The Nominating Committee shall consist of a minimum of three members, to be elected annually by the Church Council and the Pastor.
2. No later than November 15th of each year the Pastor shall call the committee together for the purpose of electing a chair.
3. This committee shall prepare and submit nominations of all church officers, delegates, and members of boards and committees to the Covenant membership of the church at the Annual Meeting in January, unless otherwise stated in these articles.
4. The committee shall publish for two consecutive Sundays, at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting, the list of nominees.

J. Membership Committee

1. The Membership Committee shall consist of a minimum of four members with at least two to be elected annually for a term of two years.
2. The Membership Committee shall:
 - a. Maintain current lists of names and addresses of church-associated persons and, with the Board of Deacons, conduct an annual review of individual membership status.
 - b. With the Board of Deacons, present to the Council in December the names of persons who have not attended the church for worship or contributed to its support and, upon direction of the council, contact persons regarding their membership status, reporting the results to the Council.
 - c. Work closely with the Pastor, the Deacons, and the Fellowship Committee to maintain an awareness of people who need pastoral contact.

K. Garden and Flower Committee

1. The Garden and Flower Committee shall consist of a minimum of four members with at least two to be elected annually for a term of two years.
2. This committee shall be responsible for the provision of flowers each Sunday in the church sanctuary and special flowers for Christmas and Easter.
3. The Garden and Flower Committee shall oversee the planting, maintenance, and care of the church perennial and annual gardens and shall recommend to the church Council any improvements for the church grounds.

L. Pastoral Relations Committee

1. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall consist of five members, the Chairperson of the Deacons, the Chairperson of the Trustees, the Moderator, and two people selected by the Pastor, each of whom will serve for a term of one year and may serve three consecutive terms.
2. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall:
 - a. Hold confidential dialogue, which is based on mutual trust, with the Pastor at regular intervals, at least six times a year.
 - b. Develop an awareness of the expectations of the Pastor and the congregation, seeking harmony in all areas.
 - c. Maintain an open line of communication with the Pastor and congregation in such a way that problems and concerns may be surfaced in a close and non-threatening way.
 - d. Assume responsibility for reviewing the salary and benefits of the Pastor and making recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

M. Delegates

1. Eight delegates shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve for a term of one year.
2. Upon notification by the Clerk or the Pastor, delegates shall attend meetings called by the Conference Office and by the Cumberland Association of Churches.

ARTICLE IX Church Meetings

A. Annual Meeting

1. The annual meeting of the church shall be held in January. The fiscal year of the church shall be from January 1 to December 31.
2. The Pastor, the Moderator and the chairpersons of all boards and permanent

committees shall submit in writing their annual reports at the close of the year.

B. Special Church Meetings

1. Special church meetings may be called by the Council or by a petition of the Council, signed by twenty-five Covenant members of the church. A notice specifying the nature of the business to be transacted shall be mailed to the covenant members fourteen days before the meeting and prior notice of such meetings shall be given to the membership of the church for two consecutive Sundays.
2. The Council shall call such meetings within three weeks from the receipt of the petition.
3. All business meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE X DISSOLUTION

- A. Williston-West Church may be dissolved at a special Church meeting pursuant to Article IX (B) by a 75% vote of the covenant members present, provided there is a quorum of at least 50% of the covenant members.
- B. Upon dissolution of the church, its assets and all property and interests of which it shall then be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gifts or grants contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise made before or after such dissolution, shall be transferred to the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ or its successors or assigns.

ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended at any annual meeting, or at any special meeting called for that purpose, by a two-thirds vote of all Covenant members present and voting; provided that the proposed amendment(s) have been presented to the Church Clerk in writing and copied of the changes have been made available during worship for two consecutive weeks prior to the date upon which action is to be taken.

ARTICLE XII POLITY

This church shall be part of the United Church of Christ and it shall sustain that relationship to the United Church of Christ described in those portions of the constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, adopted July 4, 1961, relating to local churches.

ARTICLE XIII OPEN AND AFFIRMING STATEMENT

As a statement of the openness of Williston-West, U.C.C. to all persons and as an affirmation of Christ's love for all individuals this church adopts the following statement and makes it part of these Bylaws.

We, the congregation of Williston-West, United Church of Christ, declare ourselves to be open and affirming.

With God's grace, we seek to be a congregation that includes all persons, embracing differences of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, mental and physical ability, as well as racial, ethnic, cultural or social – economic background. We welcome all to share in the life and leadership, ministry, and fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of participation in our congregation.

We commit to model a community of faith and spirit that works toward openness and understanding, offering justice, healing and wholeness of life for all people. We believe that through our diversity, all can grow and practice a unity of faith that transcends our differences.

Further, adoption of this statement affirms that same-sex couples may have a union celebrated in the sanctuary and that children of all people may be baptized into this community of faith.

STATEMENT OF FAITH of the United Church of Christ

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