DEVOTIONS: Irene Hardisty

MINUTES: March 23, 2021

SPECIAL REPORTS AND OLD BUSINESS

- Financial update including Q1 results (Emily Tripp)
- Stewardship update; consulting strategic grant proposal (Linda Wilker)
- Welcoming Migrants Committee Report (Alicia Claypool)
- Senior Pastor Search Committee update (Caroline Bettis Valentine)
- Annual meeting prep (Sarai Rice, David Johnson)
- Bylaws final update (Mary Riche, Rocky Morton, Artis Reis)

NEW BUSINESS

MEMBER AT LARGE (Amy Anderson)

STAFF REPORTS

CLOSING PRAYER

NEXT REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING: May 25, 2021

May 25 devotions: Linda Wilker
Church Council
March 23, 2021

In attendance: Cindy Eaton-Eklund, Emily Tripp, Diane Hayes, Irene Hardisty, Jodi Gruening, Liza Ovrom, Bonnie Sunderland, Julie Carroll, Lorna Truck, Sid Ramsey, Alex Moon, Amy Anderson, Caroline Valentine, Christopher Goodson, David Johnson, Elizabeth Talbert, Erin Davison-Rippey, Fritz Craiger, Georgia Sheriff, Jeff Marks, John McCormally, Karen Quance Jeske, Linda Wilker, Lindsey Braun, Mary Kate Buchanan, Mary Riche, Matthew Harvey, Pam Kenyon, Pam Duffy, Rushing Kimball, Sarai Rice, Susan Waller, Wendy Bellus

Devotions: Fritz Craiger


Special Reports and Old Business

Financial Update (Emily Tripp): We remain close to budget in the second quarter. Submitted a second application for forgiveness of bank PPE loan.

Amended strategic grant for continuation of Georgie Sheriff’s contract (Emily Tripp): Motion to approve by John McCormally, seconded by Elizabeth Talbert. Passed unanimously.

Church Health and Safety Task Force Update (Julie Carroll):
1. Review updated and revised charter. To reflect that the group has evolved more into a think-tank than a group of experts. Motion to approve by Amy Anderson, seconded by Sid Ramsey. Discussion. Motion to adopt CHAS’s new charter passed.
2. CHAS recommends the return to in-person sanctuary service May 2 under the following conditions: timing, access to building, other details. Discussion, Alex Moon, asked about capacity for visitors. Irene Hardisty, discomfort that people will misconstrue that Church Council guarantees people will be safe. Consensus is that there are no guarantees. Fritz Craiger, will virtual service continue and the answer is yes. Motion to return to in-person sanctuary service as recommended by CHAS made by Alex Moon, seconded by Jodi Gruening. Motion passed unanimously.

Senior Minister Search Update (Caroline Bettis): meet weekly on Wed evenings. Mike Goldsbury from Slingshot Group met with church leaders. Released survey for congregation on Monday, respond by April 5 to help prepare church profile.

Bylaws and Governance Committee update (Mary Riche): completed review by congregation, 19 people submitted written comments, 11 people attended first zoom, 12 attended second and 18 attended third meeting. April 5 deadline final proposed doc will be available for legal review. Church Council will see it again on April 23 for April 27 meeting.
Nomination discussion/annual meeting prep (Jodi Gruening): Board of Trustees 4 yr term, proposed bylaws sets a 3 yr term. Spouse/domestic partner cannot serve on a board at the same time (varies with proposed bylaws). These nomination discussions are governed by current bylaws. Diane Hayes prepared document of nominated names. Names were examined and boards identified.

Stewardship (Linda Wilker): total giving to charities has increased, but percentage to churches is significantly trending down. We continue to get a smaller piece of the pie, even though total giving is slightly up 2021 over 2020. Need to think differently about stewardship at Plymouth. In discussion with stewardship consulting firms, Horizon and another competing firm, Generis. BCS submitting competitive grant applications to cover initial discover phase with a consulting firm.

New Business: none

Member at Large: no report

Staff Reports:
Georgia Sheriff: preparing church school rooms for in person worship
Lindsey Braun: share stories of Joy with her, confirmation classes in progress and will help lead Easter vigil.
Rushing Kimball: Echo stewardship update, starting book study with young adults
Mary Kate Buchanan: working with dancers for holy week
Susan Waller: Joy to work with MKB for good Friday service. Mental Health and Wellness programs on Wednesdays with youth. Youth essay about writing letters with older adult member and it was picked up by the NY Times.
Karen Quance Jeske: working on a new spiritual gift discernment tool to transition members of congregation into ministry.
Cindy Eaton-Eklund: sabbatical begins April 1 and will be studying improving social and digital media to help Plymouth grow.
Christopher Goodson: spinning many plates, brass included Easter worship, bells are practicing now, warmer weather means outside programming including a summer lawn concert series, Stations of the Cross currently in the gallery.
Sarai Rice: concentrating on processes, highlighted Easter, and progress on Shelby.

Closing Prayer: Sarai Rice
Meeting Adjourned at 8:40 p.m
Board of Benevolences did not meet in April
A request has been made to the Plymouth Foundation to support summer and fall programming. As in-person church resumes, there will be a concerted effort to provide family-friendly experiences in worship settings, both as a best practice, and because Plymouth is not in a position to provide child care at this time due to on-going COVID-19 risks.

A new unit of Zoom Church School started in April and the theme is “Joy Made Complete”. Families picked up activity bags on April 10th. About 40 kids are participating in this unit; some families are taking a break as spring activities and travel begin.

The break in in-person church school is being used to tidy up the church school rooms and determine what belongs to Plymouth Nursery School and what is connected to church school. Additionally, BCE is interested in rethinking opportunities to use the “Children’s Library” in a reimagined way. The Strategic Planning Committee was invited to take a look at the children’s library and to consider creative ways to use the space to engage children and families.

Plans for summer programming are underway; the plans for summer are informed by the results of a parent survey sent to parents last month. Summer programming will happen under the umbrella of "Kid’s Club", and will include a virtual Vacation Bible School, “God’s Neighborhood”, and will hopefully have some in-person family events, all adhering to the COVID-19 safety standards used by Plymouth.

BCE is looking at potential opportunities from ShelbyNext once the data is migrated. The group has identified a number of processes that could benefit from this upgrade, including the ability to identify families and also a streamlined process for event registration.
Board of Christian Social Action – no report or did not meet
Board of Christian Stewardship
Church Council Report
April, 2021

• Board of Christian Stewardship met virtually on April 6, 2021 via Zoom.
• Updates were provided to the board from the previous Church Council – Church Health & Safety and Bi-Laws updates.
• Carol Stratemeyer provided an update from the Senior Minister Search Committee.
• Lorraine May provided an update from the Long-term Strategic Plan Implementation Committee.
• Mary Ann Beard provided an updated from the Financial Sustainability Committee.
• Board reviewed current board positions and nominations.
  o Mike Baldwin is returning to the board after taking a pause.
  o Steve Sypal has submitted his resignation from the board.
  o The board voted to remove Katelyn Karlzen from the board due to lack of participation.
  o Four board members have elected to “red shirt” this year and extend their service for an additional year: Diane Graham, Courtney Rife, Carol Stratemeyer, and Keith Uhl.
  o Three new members for 2021-22 year to be approved at annual meeting: Dave Everett, Steve Jacobs, and Sally Pederson.
  o Assuming our new members are approved, we will have a full board of 12 members for next year. But, we will have six members rolling off in June, 2022. This means we will elect four new members for three-year terms plus two new members for one-year terms for the 2022-23 year.
• Board discussed potential consultants Horizon Stewardship and Generis.
  o Competitive grant application was submitted on April 1.
  o Rushing will setup a larger call with Generis for Tuesday, April 13.
  o We will seek feedback from boards after that meeting with the goal of selecting a vendor by month-end.
• Staff provided updates and Sarai Rice closed us in prayer.
• Next BOCS meeting is April 6, 2021.
The Board of Deacons have hosted sanctuary mediation sessions since December and supported meditation services throughout the month of March.

As in-person services have started, so has the presence and support of the deacons at worship services. Deacons will continue to support the weekly outdoor in-person services and will also be an integral part of the new indoor services slated to begin May 9 as well as confirmation services on May 2.

Junior Deacon Julie Carroll continues to serve as Chair of the Health and Safety Task Force and Dr. Roscoe Morton is also representing deacons on that committee. Bryan Fiala continues to represent the Board of Deacons on the Senior Minister Search Committee and Judy Stark is representing the deacons on the Plymouth Strategic Plan Implementation Committee.

Deacons assisted ministerial staff with Lenten and Easter services including the virtual Maundy Thursday service, Palm Sunday processional, the Easter vigil, and three outdoor Easter Services.

Recruitment for individuals to fill open slots for the 2021-22 church year is going well although not all slots are filled with a potential candidate. Recruitment continues and will continue beyond the board elections at the annual meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Sid Ramsey, Senior Deacon
Board of Membership – no report or did not meet
Board of Music & Fine Arts
Meeting Agenda – April 5, 2021

NEW ZOOM LINK: https://zoom.us/j/96707773293
Meeting ID: 967 0777 3293

Board Members: Wendy Bellus, Chloe Bodenhamer, Emily Chafa, Judy Diedrichs, Lori Fenton, Steph-Graham, Laura Morrissey, Lorenzo Sandoval, Ann Unger, Marti West

Staff and Additional Liaison Board Members: Chris Goodson, Carl Gravander, Kathy Murphy, Anna Osborne

Welcome | All (5:45 p.m.)

Church Council Summary | Wendy (5:50 p.m.)
Health & Safety Task Force:
- Recommend return to in-person worship May 2
- Safety protocols: pre-registration, no singing, masks required
- Deacons will receive additional training
- Virtual services will continue since attendance is limited
- April 11 – reconvene for in-person outdoor service opportunities

Senior Minister Search:
- Continue meeting weekly
- Congregational survey open through today – please take it if you haven’t already!
  https://plymouthchurch.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=bfaa77a62f55185463eb4ab76&id=3f68254c81&ea233707a25
- Site visit with Slingshot – Lori attended

Bylaws update:
- April 5 – the final document will be sent for legal review
- April 27 – Church Council will review final document
- May 11th - Annual Meeting
  o Even if bylaws are passed, revisions will continue
  o Possibility to reduce the number and size of boards

Board reps:
- Discussions for new board representatives on each board

Old Business (6:00 p.m.)

March Meeting Minutes – Vote to Approve (6:05 p.m.)

Budget Updates | Chris G. (6:06 p.m.)
- Three documents are attached, including
  BMFA Fund 1 (annual budget) [Balance Sheet]: AV component added to budget, budget does not include brass from Easter service
  MFA Fund 1: Restricted (designated) funds [detail report];
  and Fund 5: Arts@Plymouth [detail report]. around $12,000 cushion, no fundraisers held yet this year

Board Reports for active groups (6:10 p.m.)
- Deacons - no report
- Trustees (Kathy) - no report
• Children’s Choirs
  o Four Children’s Choir Directors will lead music for the in-person, outdoor worship at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings, April through beginning of September. This group will alternate odd/even weeks with an ensemble from the Saturday Night Band.

• Matins and Youth
  o Matins are planning a June week-long, in-Des Moines tour, for summer 2021. The week will culminate with a concert for the church at Greenwood Park’s Sylvan Amphitheatre.
  o Susan Waller will go on sabbatical late June through late September.
  o Matins programming is currently TBD for early September (traditional kickoff period) given the uncertainty of many variables related to COVID. Chris may convene Matins for kickoff, or they may wait until Susan’s return, depending on worship needs and operational status at that time.

• Saturday Worship
  o A trio from the Saturday Night Band will alternate odd/even weeks with a group of Children’s Choir Directors to lead the in-person, outdoor worship at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings, April through beginning of September.

• Chancel Choir
  o Weekly, beginning: Thursday, April 15, 7:00-8:00 p.m.
  End date is TBD
  Members and guests of the Chancel Choir will gather on the lower level of the parking garage, safely outdoors, distanced, and masked for rehearsal and fellowship time.

  We will focus on rebuilding our voices after a year of decreased activity and use the Alice Parker hymns as literature to explore, rehearse, and practice. These will be vocal calisthenics sessions (but don’t worry... only John Beamer will have to box a kangaroo).

  Just like the hymns sang last fall, bring a chair and whatever you need for comfort.
  We will enjoy a supportive acoustic on the lower level of the parking deck. You can park down there, too. No registration.

  We will follow each rehearsal session with a flexible time of fellowship. Stay as long as you like.
  Bring a snack.

  o Mark your calendar for a Chancel Choir picnic on Sunday, May 23, 6:00 p.m. (possible date change)
  Location is TBD.
  The Chancel Choir Council will make plans for a catered event. (We’re not quite ready for a potluck...)
  More information to come...

• Handbells | Plymouth Bells are rehearsing regularly in Waveland Hall and that is going safely, and well

• Gallery
  o Sign up for a 30-minute Gallery visit via the website. A virtual Gallery is also available on the church website.
  o We have a new permanent installation commissioned by Arts@Plymouth: 15-piece set of the Stations of the Cross
  o Arts@Plymouth released a virtual concert presentation with musical meditations on the Stations of the Cross on Friday, March 26.

Staff Reports | Chris G. (6:15 p.m.)
CONCERT SERIES

Summer Concert Series | “Sounds of the City” Lawn Concerts @Plymouth
Summer 2021 will see the return of Plymouth Church’s well-received “Sounds of the City” Lawn Concert series, which features a variety of local performers.
Join us on the Ingersoll lawn at 7:00 p.m., on the First and Third Fridays of June, July, and August; and 6pm in September for concerts (June 4, 18; July 2, 16; August 6, 20; September 3, 17).
The Saturday Night Band will open and close the series on June 4 and September 17 with a wide variety of performers in between. Bring a chair, a refreshing beverage, and enjoy the “sounds of the city”!
You do not need to register for these events.

Summer Virtual Concert Series | “Friday Music with Seth Hedquist”
Summer 2021 will see the return of “Friday Music with Seth Hedquist,” Plymouth’s beloved Saturday Night Band leader. Each Friday, Seth will help you wind down the week on Facebook Live at 5:30 p.m.
Join Seth at 5:30 p.m., on the Second and Fourth Fridays of June, July, August, and September for these desk concerts (June 11, 25; July 9, 23; August 13, 27; September 10, 24).

On Wednesday, March 31, I spent 3.5 hours meeting with Dick Swanson and Ed Bittle, members of the FSSG. We have broad-ranging discussions about how to properly support and position Arts@Plymouth for continued strength.

I am currently finalizing reports to the Plymouth Foundation on 5 recent grants: (1) Stage Extensions for the Sanctuary [April 2020], (2) Media Grant [April 2019], (3) Piano Grant: Phase 2 - refurbishment of 1984 Steinway B [April 2020], (4) BMFA “New Initiatives” Grant [October 2019], (5) Presentation Cart / Portable PA [October 2019, initiated by ARC].

Working on at least a dozen media projects ... hopefully you’ve noticed improvements in our production.

Be sure to check out your YouTube page and the many archived recordings, services, and information available there.

Nancy Studebaker has left the Church staff. A temp will assist in the interim while we conduct a new search. Diane Hayes will see us through the nominations process.

Saturday, May 1st, 7:00pm - John McCutcheon virtual concert. Tickets will be for sale for $20 and $6 will be given back to Plymouth. Share out and spread the word!

Regular Updates (6:20 p.m.)

COVID-19 | Chris G.
  o Planning for upcoming in-person services, outdoor (begins April 11) and indoor (begins May 9)
  o Planning for continued, measured reopening. Concerns about possible variants and spikes, but committed to re-engaging the faith community, in-person.

Senior Minister Search | Emily
  o Complete the Congregational survey (link up above)

New Business (6:30 p.m.)

Thanksgiving Service update | Chloe Bodenhamer and Lori Fenton
  o First meeting set for April 26th - more news to come!

Calling new BMFA board members | All
  • Review names and process for asking potential new members to join
    • Judy: Dixie & Will
    • Chloe: Emma
- Lori: Dan & Melissa
- Laura: Julie
- Chris will email script to callers

- **Deadlines and schedule:**
  - By April 12, Wendy will send names and terms to Diane H.
  - Call members before Thursday and email Wendy
  - Names will be published by April 20, then we'll send election forms for bios to each nominee
  - April 27, the notice for the May 11 annual meeting is published, including the names
  - Filling the BMFA positions of secretary and vice chair

**Adjourn (7:00 p.m.)**

**Next Meeting: Monday, May 3 at 5:45 p.m.**
BOARD OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH
REPORT TO CHURCH COUNCIL
APRIL 2021

The Board of Spiritual Growth met March 30 and April 20, 2021.

We continue to plan for programming the Center for Spiritual Growth. We are finalizing a five-year curriculum of programs, workshops, retreats, and service projects. We envision offering repeat programs using the Animate program, and we continue to discuss offering a series on “The Second Half of Life,” based on the work of Angeles Arrien. We would also like to revive the tradition of an Advent retreat, and to offer an annual retreat on prayer/spiritual practices.

We have reached out to the staff of the National Park Service at Effigy Mounds National Monument in Allamakee County to see if we can arrange a service day for Plymouth members. NPS staff presented a program last fall which was very well received by members of our congregation. There seemed to be interest on both sides in continuing the dialog, so we are trying to see if we can arrange that.

New members for the Board of Spiritual Growth are Craig Shives, Brian Leckrone, and Neil Fagan.
Board of Stewardship – no report or did not meet
1. Plymouth United Church of Christ Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes: April 20, 2021

Present:
Lorna Truck, chair
Franklin Codel
Jan Franck
Aaron Barker
Peter Pashler
Deb Ledesman
Erin Netteland-Sandvig
Kathy Murphy
Matt Harvey
Richard Swanson
Emily Tripp, Director of Operations and Finance.
Sarah Rice, Interim Senior Minister

Not Present:
Dick Jones, Treasurer
Guests:
Mark Schuling

Time Called to Order: 7:01 p.m.
Time Adjourned: 8:30 p.m.
Location:
Virtual/Zoom
Prepared by:
Erin Sandvig

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<th>AGENDA</th>
<th>DISCUSSION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Devotion</td>
<td>Kathy shared about gratitude</td>
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<td>Foundation report</td>
<td>Mark Schuling from the foundation. There is a lease on a property on 41st for a garage which belongs to Plymouth but is shared lease between Plymouth and St. Augustins church. St. Augustins may want to buy out their part of the lease with the City of Des Moines. Lease is for 99 years Informational only.</td>
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<td>Approval of Minutes</td>
<td>Minutes approved for March.</td>
<td>Motion to Approve—Dick</td>
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<td>Second—Jan</td>
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<td>Carried</td>
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<td>March Financials</td>
<td>PPP loan received approval. Income for February $90000. Expenses $195000. Received PPP loan now with surplus $102000. Quarter 1 Income: $282000 Expenses: $129000. Projected for FY2021 a deficit of $82000. Still within the corridor. Last year behind pledge income 14% at this point. Currently behind budgeted pledges by 5%. Pledge income was estimated more conservatively then in past years. Will need to review the overall trends of expenses monthly. West Bank account is down due to a $75000 transfer to the money market account due to a request due to Moderator David Johnson. Committees getting their financial reports monthly. Franklin requested that we need more information on current financials due to uncertain variances.</td>
<td>Motion to Approve to delay approval until May—Dick Second—Peter</td>
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<td>Designated Gifts Policy</td>
<td>Lorna, Peter, Franklin and Emily had a small group committee. What is the appropriate level of oversight for accepting and spending funds received from bequests? Discussion about the policy was completed. Some changes to be made and sent out for a vote.</td>
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<td>Stewardship Grant</td>
<td>Vote for approval of the grant request of $10000 for a Stewardship Consultant. Vote was passed 9 to 1.</td>
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<td>Fundraising Policy</td>
<td>Received reports from those committees who requested to have a fundraising activity. Reviewing this would allow us to track money that is raised that goes to the larger community. There may have been some fundraising that occurred that was not tracked. Can approve once the special offering report for Easter has been received.</td>
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<td>Staff Update</td>
<td>Laurie Deaton making progress on transition to Shelby. Plan to implement by mid-May. Staff first, then congregation by August. In person worship, continues in parking lot since Easter. Indoor worship 5/9/21. Requires preregistration.</td>
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Sarai graced us with a closing prayer.
Plymouth Women did not meet in April 2021.
Plymouth’s mission is to grow in love of God and neighbor and its importance is prominently displayed on the first page of these Proposed Bylaws.

The Governance and Bylaws Committee relied on the book Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership by Dan Hotchkiss throughout its work. Utilizing best practices for governing a church our size, as recommended in the Hotchkiss book, was the committee’s goal. Implementing a revised governance structure will strengthen the success of Plymouth’s strategic plan, permit our pastoral staff to focus on their callings, and free members to focus their gifts and talents on the mission and many ministries of Plymouth.

The committee learned that Plymouth’s governance structure has multiple layers, and Plymouth is fortunate to have so many members willing to fill the 100s of volunteer positions, sometimes for multiple terms, and with such cheerful spirits. Over the years, more procedures have been added and many have not been reviewed or updated since the current bylaws were adopted in 1997.

Throughout our interviews with ministers, staff and lay leaders, the committee discovered and documented that some governance procedures were effective while many others were not followed, or they were outdated. Confusing lines of responsibility resulted in poor or no recordkeeping while members had difficulty gaining easy access even though all agreed to the importance. In some cases, certain duties were not performed at all. Over time, a lack of transparency and accountability became unintended outcomes by well-intentioned leaders and staff. As a result, the Church Council became more of a reporting body than a governing body, with more time spent sharing information than on deliberating policies.

This Executive Summary captures the major changes of the proposed bylaws, designed to streamline the governing process, increase efficiencies, and improve effectiveness:

1. Refocus the Church Council’s primary decision-making role to the ministry work of the boards that carry out Plymouth’s mission ‘to grow in love of God and neighbor’
2. Create a smaller Executive Committee within the Church Council to focus on administration, operations and business-focused decision-making
3. Clearly define the duties of the Senior Minister as the Church’s senior executive and staff leader
4. Clearly define the duties and responsibilities for recordkeeping to ensure transparency
5. Clearly define the communication process to ensure accessibility of information to all members

Plymouth ministers, staff, lay leaders, and members of the congregation have reviewed draft bylaws multiple times in the past few months. The committee listened to each comment and concern, considered all feedback, and made numerous revisions which led to the improved, final document distributed today. The committee believes its work is complete.

Please consider, contemplate and pray about the recommendations being proposed as you read through the materials in this package.

Then it’s up to you, the members and ultimate authority, to vote on this recommendation of governance best practices for Plymouth Church.

Sincerely,
The Bylaws and Governance Committee: Rocky Morton, Artis Reis, Mary Riche
Executive Summary Proposed Bylaws

- Project Timeline 2019 – 2021
- Proposed Changes/Highlights
  - Church Council Governance and Ministry
  - Executive Committee of the Church Council
  - Senior Pastor and Pastoral Staff
  - Church Officers
- Recommended Next Steps
### Governance and Bylaws Committee Timeline

**DISCOVERY & RESEARCH**  
May – December 2019

- **LEARNING**
  - Church Council approves motion to form Governance and Bylaws Committee
  - Studied: “Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership” by Dan Hotchkiss
  - “Inside the Large Congregation” by Susan Beaumont (photo of Plymouth Church on the cover)
  - Roberts Rules of Order
  - UCC General Synod
  - Bylaws of other UCC churches of similar size

- **LISTENING**
  - October – December
    - Interviewed and surveyed Ministers, staff, lay leaders, and recent past moderators
    - What works and what doesn’t in the existing bylaws?
    - How are decisions made and by whom?
    - How do bylaws affect your ability to do your job?
    - How is information provided to Church Council; board and committee members; congregation?
    - Is your board managing its responsibilities as defined in the bylaws?
    - What would you change?

**DEFINE & DISCERN**  
January - June 2020

- **DOCUMENTING AND INFORMATION GATHERING**
  - Perception and reality
    - What are the differences between the perceived practices and the actual practices?
    - How are decisions made and by whom?
    - How is transparency defined in the decision-making process?
    - Where can decision-making be streamlined to accommodate today’s fast-changing environment?
    - What makes most efficient use of time and talents?
    - How can accessibility be strengthened so information is available on a timely basis to all members?
    - Where does record-keeping need to be revised and updated?
    - What is the greatest impediment to agility?

**DRAFT, REVIEW, COMMENT**  
July 2020 - April 2021

- **FEEDBACK LOOP**
  - Drafting has been a recurring process for nine months with Ministers, staff and members providing review, comment and feedback.
  - Input led to revisions in each succeeding draft, guiding the process of review, comment and feedback for a total of five times.
    - Summer/Fall 2020: Ministers, staff and past moderators
    - December 1, 2020: Lay leaders
    - February 23, 2021: Church Council and the Congregation
    - March 7, 15 & 18, 2021: Congregational Zooms for member feedback
    - March 21: Received written member feedback to PlymouthBylaws@gmail.com
    - April 20, 2021: Proposed Bylaws distributed to members
    - April 27, 2021: Proposed bylaws on the agenda for Church Council meeting
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<td>Structure and members</td>
<td><strong>VOTES</strong></td>
<td><strong>VOTES</strong></td>
<td>Best practice for a church our size is to streamline.</td>
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<td>(1) Moderator, chair</td>
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<td>Too large to be nimble.</td>
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<td>(1) Moderator-Elect</td>
<td>(1) Moderator-Elect</td>
<td>More focus on Plymouth ministries.</td>
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<td>(0) Senior Pastor</td>
<td>(1) Senior Pastor</td>
<td>Add congregational representation per request of members.</td>
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<td>Boards</td>
<td>(2) Benevolences</td>
<td>(1) Benevolences</td>
<td>Recognize the importance of the position of Senior Pastor with a vote on Church Council and Executive Council.</td>
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<td>(2) Christian Education</td>
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<td>(1) Women’s Fellowship</td>
<td>(1) Women’s Fellowship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22 votes</td>
<td>15 votes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member-at-Large</td>
<td>One member-at-large, representing the Congregation</td>
<td>Add a second Member-at-Large</td>
<td>Feedback from members recommended an additional position because of its importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Staggered two-year terms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>First-year member will serve as the Church Council Secretary</td>
<td>Feedback from Lay Leadership recommended specific duties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Second-year member will serve on the Executive Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Deacons exemption</td>
<td>“A member and that member’s spouse or domestic partner are not both eligible for board membership at the same time.” (From current bylaws language)</td>
<td>The spouse/partner of a person on the Board of Deacons can serve on another board or as an officer, if they choose. (Double household exemption)</td>
<td>Challenging to fulfill annual 10-member recruitment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Specifically requested by the Board of Deacons.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Church Council Governance and Ministry (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious education</td>
<td>Board of Education covers birth thru 6th grade. (There is no mention of Confirmation in current bylaws.)</td>
<td>Expand the curriculum, programs and activities to include birth to 6th grade, middle school and high school. New board name: Board of Christian Education for Youth and Families.</td>
<td>Expand the existing programs to cover all ages (aligns with strategic plan). Education is a life-long learning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board of Spiritual Growth covers an unspecified audience.</td>
<td>Focus and enhance the original “those who seek” approach and new board name: Board of Spiritual Growth and Adult Education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking committees to boards</td>
<td>Some committees and other groups are not linked to a board, so they carry out important responsibilities outside the current governance structure. • Transition into Ministry • Stephen Ministers • Youth Executive Council</td>
<td>All committees and other groups will be linked to or aligned with a board and reviewed annually for purpose and progress.</td>
<td>Ensure record-keeping includes all groups. Ensure a clear and accurate picture of ministries so members can find volunteer opportunities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Executive Committee of the Church Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structure and members</td>
<td></td>
<td>VOTES</td>
<td>Senior Pastor gets 1 vote recognizing importance of senior executive role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Moderator, chair</td>
<td>These 3 boards oversee church finances, the worship experience, and member recruitment and retention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Immediate-past Moderator*</td>
<td>Add 3rd year to Moderator's term for continuity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0) Moderator-Elect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Senior Pastor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Chair, Board of Trustees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Chair, Board of Deacons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Chair, Board of Membership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) 2nd-year member-at-large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0) Director of Operations and Finance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 votes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Add another year to this top lay leader position</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Executive Summary, Proposed Bylaws, 2021

Plymouth Church, Des Moines, Iowa

pg. 4
Executive Committee of the Church Council (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nomination process</td>
<td>Nominating Committee not active in nomination process.</td>
<td>Sunset the Nominating Committee.</td>
<td>Adds transparency to a historic practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Church Council responsible for slate of board nominees.</td>
<td>The revised nomination process is clearly defined with all positions open for nominees by members.</td>
<td>Acknowledges inactive role of Nominating Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderator-Elect historically nominated by the Senior Minister, Moderator and Moderator-Elect.</td>
<td>The Church Council and the Executive Committee will prepare the slate of nominees; the Executive Committee will nominate the Moderator-Elect.</td>
<td>Offers clear process for members to nominate top position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Standing Committees</td>
<td>Important committees with informal relationship to overall structure:</td>
<td>Formalize procedures for meetings and minutes:</td>
<td>Enhanced transparency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Audit</td>
<td>• Audit Committee</td>
<td>Stronger link to the Church Council via the Executive Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Personnel Committee</td>
<td>• Human Resources Committee (formerly Personnel Committee)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Long-range planning committee of past Moderators</td>
<td>• (new) Advisory Committee (long-range planning committee of past Moderators)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Senior Pastor and Pastoral Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral titles</td>
<td>Sr. Minister, Associate Ministers, TIM Ministers</td>
<td>Change titles to Pastor from Ministers</td>
<td>At the request of pastors, recognizing all believers are ministers and some are ordained to a pastoral ministry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth’s Senior Executive</td>
<td>Senior Minister and CEO</td>
<td>• Sr. Pastor remains Plymouth’s senior executive and staff leader with a vote on Church Council and on the Executive Committee.</td>
<td>Interview with former Senior Minister requesting clearly defined duties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Can hire and terminate employees, in accordance with HR procedures and in consultation with the Executive Committee and Human Resources Committee.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Senior Pastor and Pastoral Staff (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013 Bylaws Amendment for internal candidate</td>
<td>Bylaws allow for an internal candidate to be considered before launching a national search.</td>
<td>Both internal and external candidates will be considered; an internal candidate will not be given first or preferential opportunity.</td>
<td>Specific to a past situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Minister search committee</td>
<td>Twelve members organized by the Board of Deacons. Nine members, one appointed by each board, and three more selected by the committee. Committee names chair, vice-chair and secretary.</td>
<td>Senior Pastor search committee of seven members; proposed by Church Council, nominated by self, or by others, and members from the congregation. Selected by Executive Committee and Moderator (or designee) will serve as non-voting chair.</td>
<td>Opens up nomination process to all members. Smaller number allows greater flexibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Ministerial staff</td>
<td>Not currently defined in bylaws</td>
<td>Include provisions for Interim Pastors</td>
<td>Needed update. Formalizes process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Church Officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church Clerk</td>
<td>Church Clerk position is the Secretary of the Plymouth Corporation, assigned to take minutes at Congregational Meetings, and to keep member records.</td>
<td>Sunset Church Clerk title and assign duties to new position and title of Church Secretary.</td>
<td>Confusion about title, assignments, and record-keeping duties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Secretary</td>
<td>Secretary of the corporation is assigned to the position and title of Church Clerk.</td>
<td>The newly titled position of Church Secretary will serve as the Secretary of Plymouth Corporation. Responsible for minutes at Congregational Meetings; maintain and preserve records; make accessible to the membership.</td>
<td>Recognition of need to retitle position and define duties, including need for transparency, accountability, and preservation of records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Treasurer</td>
<td>Elected by the Board of Trustees (but cannot be a Trustee) and can serve no more than four one-year consecutive terms.</td>
<td>Sunset the position.</td>
<td>Recommended by the current Treasurer and Board of Trustees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Executive Summary, Proposed Bylaws, 2021

Plymouth Church, Des Moines, Iowa

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Recommended Next Steps

- Determine how many boards and committees, at what size and composition, are needed for Plymouth to thrive in the future.

- Review composition of church boards, committees, and groups to align board ministries with the 2020-2025 strategic plan.

- Establish and maintain a new Governance Policies and Procedures Manual to include specific information from the Proposed Bylaws; better suited to a manual and allowing flexibility with updates.

- Establish annual training for Lay Leadership on governance structure, procedures, and Roberts Rules of Order.

- Review Plymouth’s Employee Handbook; update as needed.

- Establish regular, timely review of Bylaws no longer than five years.
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**PROPOSED BYLAWS**

Plymouth Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
Des Moines, Iowa  

Adopted at the MMDD, YYYY Annual Meeting  
Effective MMDD, YYYY  

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Plymouth Church, Des Moines, Iowa
PROPOSED BYLAWS

Plymouth Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Des Moines, Iowa

Article I. WHO WE ARE

Section 1. Name
Plymouth Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ, Des Moines, Iowa, is referred to as “Plymouth” in these Bylaws. The body of Plymouth members may be referred to as the “Congregation” in these bylaws.

Plymouth is in communion with all churches that follow the teaching of Jesus Christ. Plymouth acknowledges special obligation to other congregations that are a part of the United Church of Christ (UCC) and pledges itself to share in their common religious and educational work, especially as represented by the Central Association of the Iowa Conference, Iowa Conference of the UCC, and the General Synod of the UCC.

Section 2. Mission, Guiding Principles, and Motto
The purpose of Plymouth Church is to bind together followers of Jesus Christ to share in the worship of God.

Plymouth’s mission is to grow in love of God and neighbor.

Inclusiveness and acceptance are guiding principles of Plymouth. Whoever you are, wherever you are on life’s journey, you are always welcome at Plymouth.

Plymouth’s motto, as expressed by former Senior Pastor Stoddard Lane (1929 – 1943): “We agree to differ. We resolve to love. We unite to serve.”

Section 3. Plymouth Covenant
The following Covenant binds members together:
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 all members, I promise to walk with them in faithfulness and Christian love. And I promise that, so far as able, I will attend the services of this Church, observe its sacraments, share in its work, support its benevolences, and endeavor to make it a fruitful body of Christians.

Section 4. Services
Public worship services will be held, and the sacraments of baptism and communion will be celebrated, as determined jointly by the Senior Pastor and the Board of Deacons. Other worship services may be held as determined by the other boards with approval by the Senior Pastor.

Weddings, funerals and other services will be held as determined by the pastors.
Section 5. Congregational Governance
Plymouth is an Iowa non-profit corporation with governance vested in its members. Members approve and carry out Plymouth’s mission, strategic plan, and programs. Members serve on Church Council, Executive Committee, boards, and committees. Members retain all authority not specifically delegated in these bylaws.

Section 6. Membership
A. Members
The members of Plymouth will make a public commitment of faith in Jesus Christ. Plymouth will receive members on presentation of letters of transfer from other churches, by reaffirmation of faith, or on confession of faith and baptism.

B. Reception of Members
The Board of Membership and the pastors will present new members to be received in a public worship service. The Congregation may receive new members unable to attend in person.

C. Duties
Members will agree to Plymouth’s Covenant and will endeavor to fulfill those promises and support the spiritual welfare of Plymouth and its community.

D. Associate Members
Associate members are Plymouth members who have church membership elsewhere which they do not desire to sever, and who desire to share in the faith and covenant of worship and services of Plymouth. Associate members will have the same rights and duties as active members.

E. Inactive Members
Members who have not communicated with Plymouth, attended services, or contributed to its support, for a period of three years or more will be designated inactive by the Board of Membership. Prior to such designation, the board will make reasonable efforts to contact and inform the member what is needed to retain active status. If the member cannot be located or does not wish to remain active or does not act to restore active membership within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the board, the board may declare the member inactive without further notice.

Inactive members, who request to become active members again, may do so by resuming attendance at Plymouth worship services and activities, or by financial contributions to Plymouth.

Inactive members will not be counted as members, including for the purpose of assessment or contribution to the various local, regional, state, or national organizations of the UCC or other religious organizations with which Plymouth affiliates.
F. Change of Membership Designation

Members may request a letter of transfer to any church, be dismissed from membership, or designated inactive. When a change in membership designation occurs, the Board of Membership will provide the appropriate letter of confirmation.

G. Membership Rolls

The Senior Pastor, on behalf of the Congregation, will keep and maintain in the church office, membership information (to be known as the Book of Life), and access will be determined by church policy:

1. membership, showing the name of the member, date and manner of admission, date of birth and date of death, transfer of membership, dismissal, or inactive status;
2. baptisms of children, showing the name of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), date of baptism, and date and place of the child’s birth;
3. baptisms of adults, showing the name of the person, date of baptism, and date and place of the person’s birth;
4. marriages, showing the names, date of the marriage, and dates of birth of the parties;
5. names and dates of birth of children of member-families;
6. confirmation class members and other information requested by the Senior Pastor or the Executive Committee.

Article II. GOVERNANCE

Section I. Church Council

A. Church Council Members

The Church Council (Council) will be chaired by the Moderator and consists of Moderator, Moderator-Elect, chairpersons of Council boards, president of Plymouth Women’s Fellowship, two members-at-large, and the Senior Pastor.

Two members-at-large will be elected to serve staggered two-year terms. During the first year of a two-year term, the member-at-large will serve as the Church Council Secretary. During the second year of a two-year term, the member-at-large will serve as a voting member of the Church Council’s Executive Committee.

Church Council members represent the interests of Plymouth’s full congregation including those expressed in Plymouth’s mission and strategic plan.

B. Church Council Duties

The Council will carry out the mission, guiding principles, motto and strategic plan by engaging Plymouth members in visioning for Plymouth’s future, and by requesting and reviewing annual plans and programs from Council boards and committees. The Council will advise its Executive Committee of their recommendations and provide a progress report on all Council programs at the congregation’s annual meeting. The
Council will prepare and maintain a current list of Council members, boards, and board committees with their contact information and members' terms of office, which will be available electronically and in the church office, and provided to the Church Secretary (see Article IV. Section 3. C.).

Upon a vacancy of an at-large-member position, the Council will appoint a Plymouth member to fill the unexpired term.

C. Church Council Meetings and Minutes
The Council will meet at least quarterly at times and places it decides, with 10 days’ advance notice of the time, place of the meeting, and the agenda, and will be available to Plymouth members electronically and in the church office.

A majority of the Council constitutes a quorum. The Council will act by majority vote of members present.

The Church Council Secretary will, with staff assistance, prepare minutes of Church Council meetings. The minutes will be submitted to and preserved by the Church Secretary (see Article IV. Section 3. C.).

Open-meeting minutes will be available to Plymouth members electronically and in the church office. Closed-session minutes will be available only to Council members or others as determined by the Church Council, Moderator or Senior Pastor.

If the Council goes into closed session, the minutes of the open meeting will state the reason for the closed session, the time and duration of the closed session, the general topic addressed, and any action taken in the closed session. Confidential information shall remain confidential.

The Church Council Secretary, with staff assistance, will keep an updated roster, naming Church Council members, Executive Committee members, their terms, and contact information, which shall be provided to the Church Secretary (see Article IV. Section 3. C.), and available to Plymouth members electronically and in the church office.

Section 2. General Provisions for Church Council Boards
A. Board Leadership
At its first meeting following the annual meeting, each board will elect from its members an executive committee consisting of a chair, vice chair, and secretary. The vice chair will act for the chair in the chair's absence. (Chair of the Board of Deacons will be known as the Senior Deacon and the vice chair as the Junior Deacon.)
The board’s executive committee will have general supervision of the board’s activities and may act in the name of the board in emergencies or minor matters. Actions taken by a board’s executive committee will be submitted for ratification by the full board at the next board meeting. A board may appoint other board members to its executive committee. A board can remove its chair, vice chair, or secretary with presence of a quorum and majority vote of members present.

B. Board Duties
Boards shall annually conduct a board orientation to, and evaluation of, their work. The duties of each Church Council Board are defined in Article II, Section 3.

C. Board Meetings and Minutes
Boards will meet at times and places they decide, with at least three days’ advance notice of the time, place, and agenda, and will be available to Plymouth members electronically and in the church office.

Each board secretary will prepare written minutes of board meetings and each board’s executive committee meetings. The minutes will be provided to board members and submitted to and preserved by the Church Secretary (see Article IV, Section 3.C.).

If the board goes into closed session, the minutes of the open meeting will state the reason for the closed session, the time and duration of the closed session, the general topic addressed, and any action taken in the closed session. Confidential information shall remain confidential.

Written minutes of a board’s executive committee meetings will be provided to board members and will describe the facts and circumstances of the emergency or matter, action taken, and the basis and rationale for executive committee action.

Open-meeting minutes of a board and its executive committee will be available to Plymouth members electronically and in the church office. Closed-session minutes will be available only to members of that board and others as determined by that board or the Moderator or Senior Pastor.

Each board secretary will keep an updated roster, naming board members, their terms, and contact information, which will be given to the Church Secretary and available to Plymouth members electronically and in the church office.

D. Board Vacancy
A board will fill a vacancy by recommending a candidate for the Church Council to approve.
E. Board Committees
A board may form and dissolve its committees to assist in performing its work, with prior written notice to both the Church Council and its Executive Committee.

The board forming a committee will document, in the minutes of the meeting at which that committee was formed, the purpose of the committee and how the committee will assist in implementing that board’s work.

Annually, the existence of a committee will be reviewed by the board forming it to decide whether the committee’s work is completed.

F. Board Expenditures
Boards and committees will not obligate Plymouth for any expenditure except as provided in Plymouth’s budget, without prior approval from the Council’s Executive Committee.

G. Board Fundraising
Any fundraising activity by boards and board committees requires prior approval from the Board of Trustees and will follow any directions given by the Board of Trustees regarding fundraising.

H. Board Public Statements
Boards and board committees will not speak or act on behalf of Plymouth Church as a whole without prior authorization from the Council’s Executive Committee or its designee (e.g. Senior Pastor).

I. Board Reports
By September 30, each Council board will report its plans to the Council’s Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will review and present recommendations to the Council for approval.

By April 30, each Council board will report to the Council on its activities during the previous 12 months for inclusion in Plymouth’s annual report. The board reports will include performance measurements and progress toward program goals, and which committees should be continued into the next year.

J. Board Liaisons
Liaisons are board members selected by a board to encourage and facilitate communication with another Plymouth board or group on that group’s activities which might impact the activities of the liaison’s board. Board liaisons not listed in these bylaws may be appointed upon approval of the two boards and the Council.
Section 3. Church Council Boards

A. Board of Benevolences
The Board of Benevolences is a twelve (12)-member board, with four members elected annually to serve three-year terms. The board will supervise, promote, and interpret Plymouth’s benevolence activities; promote representation of Plymouth members in decision-making bodies of the denominational and ecumenical agencies to which Plymouth contributes; and periodically advise the Board of Trustees in the most effective use of benevolence resources.

B. Board of Christian Education for Youth and Families
The Board of Christian Education for Youth and Families is a fifteen (15)-member board, with five members elected annually to serve three-year terms. The board will assist in recruiting, training, and placing Christian Education volunteer staff. The board, with pastoral and staff assistance, will plan and implement all programs including, but not limited to, Church School and Vacation Bible School. The board will approve choice or design of curriculum for children up through sixth grade, Confirmation Classes for middle-school students, and programs and activities for high-school students and families. The board will procure necessary materials and equipment for this programming, and maintain the children’s library. The board will have a liaison to the Plymouth Nursery School Board of Directors.

C. Board of Christian Social Action
The Board of Christian Social Action is a fifteen (15)-member board, with five members elected annually to serve three-year terms. The board will help Plymouth explore the relationship between Christian faith and contemporary social issues by identifying issues and stimulating dialogue. By inviting action on any issue, the board shall make clear that its opinions or actions bind neither Plymouth nor any member.

D. Board of Christian Stewardship
The Board of Christian Stewardship is a twelve (12)-member board, with four members elected annually to serve three-year terms. The board will assist Plymouth members and friends to understand and commit to principles of Christian stewardship; develop ongoing programs to obtain statements of intention to provide financial support for Plymouth’s mission and ministry; periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of all means of providing financial support to Plymouth; develop awareness and provide learning opportunities for Plymouth members of alternate ways to give to Plymouth; and communicate with other boards and committees.

E. Board of Deacons
The Board of Deacons is a thirty (30)-member board, with 10 members elected annually to serve three-year terms. The board will assist the pastors in performing services and Plymouth’s spiritual activities for Plymouth and the community, including assisting in preparing and administering the sacraments; receiving and
depositing open collections; appointing ushers; leading the Congregation in caring for the poor, the sick, the sorrowing, and the stranger; and performing other duties requested by the Senior Pastor.

Board of Membership
The Board of Membership is a twelve (12)-member board, with four members elected annually to serve three-year terms. The board will promote the welcoming nature of Plymouth Church in the community; encourage, recruit, integrate, and instruct prospective and new members on the life and opportunities provided by membership and to encourage participation in church activities; assist in the growth of Plymouth membership by facilitating, initiating, and supporting opportunities for all persons who wish to join Plymouth; to provide opportunities for caring and support of members and the community. The Board of Membership, under the supervision of the Senior Pastor, shall carry out the duties outlined in Article I. Section 6, to ensure the integrity and accuracy of membership rolls.

F. Board of Music and Fine Arts
The Board of Music and Fine Arts is a twelve (12)-member board, with four members elected annually to serve three-year terms. The board will oversee a comprehensive music and arts program to complement Plymouth’s mission; oversee Plymouth’s children, youth, and adult choirs; provide music and art for Plymouth’s services; and foster growth and enrichment of Plymouth members, of all ages, through music and the arts.

G. Board of Spiritual Growth and Adult Education
The Board of Spiritual Growth and Adult Education is a nine (9)-member board, with three members elected annually to serve three-year terms. The board will plan, implement, and encourage diverse opportunities for spiritual growth, enrichment, and faith formation for adults and maintain the library in the Center for Spiritual Growth.

H. Board of Trustees
The Board of Trustees is a twelve (12)-member board, with three members elected annually to serve four-year terms. The board will oversee and provide recommendations to the Executive Committee of the Church Council on Plymouth’s property, finances, business, contractual affairs (including operating reserve policy), designated funds and other program areas outside the general operating budget; supervise insurance; in December of each year, recommend the annual budget to the Council’s Executive Committee for final approval by the Council; develop policies regarding budget variances; recommend, in concert with the Human Resources Committee, employee compensation and benefits; review the annual financial audit and implement audit recommendations; designate the depository for funds; and act on fundraising requests made by other boards and committees.
Section 4. General Provisions for Board Committees and Other Groups

A. Committee Definition
Every committee, task force, program, or other group formed by or associated with a Council board is referred to in these bylaws as a committee, regardless of the name by which it is formed or called.

For any Plymouth committee or group not linked to a Council board, the Executive Committee and the Church Council will determine the Council board with which that committee or group will be linked.

B. Committee Formation and Duration
A committee may form and dissolve a subcommittee with prior written notice to its board and the Church Council. The notice of formation or dissolution will state the committee to which that subcommittee will be or has been linked.

The committee forming a subcommittee will document, in the minutes of the meeting at which that committee was formed, the purpose of the subcommittee and how the subcommittee will assist in implementing that board’s work.

Annually, the existence of a subcommittee will be reviewed by the committee and board forming it to decide whether the subcommittee’s work is completed and whether its continued existence is necessary.

C. Committee Members
Any Plymouth member or active Plymouth participant is eligible for membership on any committee.

Committee vacancies may be filled by the committee.

D. Committee Meetings and Minutes
At its first meeting following its formation, each committee will elect a chair, a secretary, and other officers determined by the committee.

A majority of committee members constitutes a quorum. Committees will act by majority vote of the members present.

Committees will meet at times and places they decide, with at least three days’ advance notice of the time, place, and agenda, available to Plymouth members electronically and in the church office.

Each committee secretary will prepare written minutes of committee meetings. The minutes of each meeting will be submitted to and preserved by the Church Secretary (see Article IV, Section 3.C.).
Committee meeting minutes will be available to Plymouth members electronically and in the church office. Committees of Church Council boards will not have closed sessions. Each committee secretary will keep an updated roster, naming committee members, their terms, and contact information, which will be given to the Church Secretary and available to Plymouth members electronically and in the church office.

E. Committee Expenditures
Committees will not obligate Plymouth for any expenditure except as provided in Plymouth’s budget, without prior approval from their board and the Church Council’s Executive Committee.

F. Committee Fundraising
Committees will not engage in fundraising activity without prior approval from their supervising board and the Board of Trustees.

G. Committee Public Statements
Boards and board committees will not speak or act on behalf of Plymouth Church as a whole without prior authorization from the Council’s Executive Committee or its designee (e.g. Senior Pastor).

Section 5. Executive Committee of Church Council

A. Executive Committee Members
The Executive Committee, chaired by the Moderator, consists of the Moderator, Immediate-Past Moderator, and chairpersons of the boards of Deacons, Trustees, and Membership; a member-at-large, and the Senior Pastor. The Moderator-Elect is a non-voting member. The Director of Operations and Finance is the staff representative.

Executive Committee members represent the interests of Plymouth’s full congregation as expressed in its mission and strategic plan.

B. Executive Committee Duties
The Executive Committee will establish overall policies affecting Plymouth’s operations, property, finances, and personnel, and will resolve time-sensitive matters. All decisions will be made to carry out the mission, guiding principles, motto and goals of the strategic plan. The Executive Committee will review Plymouth’s annual budget upon recommendation of the Board of Trustees, and refer to Church Council for approval; determine whether to incur expenses or debt not included in the budget; approve the Board of Trustees’ operational reserve policy recommendation; approve the annual audit; recommend to the Congregation the mortgage or sale of property; approve salary and other compensation for pastors and staff after reviewing recommendations by the Human Resources Committee; create, maintain and update a manual on governance policies and procedures; complete an
annual performance review of the Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Human Resources Committee; provide for timely reviews of Plymouth's bylaws; provide a progress report to the congregation’s annual meeting on its activities and future plans; and establish ad hoc committees for specific projects or personnel searches.

The Executive Committee will have access to all Plymouth’s records and confidential personnel files and will act on recommendations from the Human Resources Committee for revisions to the Plymouth Employee Handbook. Confidential information shall not be disclosed by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee or Church Council may form, modify, and dissolve any board with approval of the other.

The Executive Committee will name representatives or delegates to denominational and inter-denominational organizations of which Plymouth is a member.

The Executive Committee will consider and decide upon requests from any non-Plymouth organization wanting Plymouth representation in that organization. Approvals of requests will be reviewed at least annually prior to June 1.

C. Executive Committee Meetings and Minutes
The Executive Committee will meet at least monthly at times and places they decide, with at least three days’ advance notice of the time, place, and agenda, and will be available to Plymouth members electronically and in the church office. Five Executive Committee members constitutes a quorum.

The Executive Committee will act by an affirmative vote of at least five members. The Church Council Executive Committee has the powers of the Church Council between meetings of the Church Council, and will inform the Church Council at its next meeting of any actions taken on behalf of the Church Council. The Executive Committee cannot modify or nullify any actions taken by the Church Council.

Plymouth members and staff may attend Executive Committee meetings; however, the Executive Committee may go into closed session to discuss confidential or sensitive matters, including personnel matters.

An Executive Committee member will be elected as Executive Committee Secretary and be responsible, with staff assistance, for written minutes of each meeting. The minutes of Executive Committee meetings will be provided to Executive Committee members, Church Council members, and submitted to and preserved by the Church Secretary (see Article IV. Section 3, C).

If the Executive Committee goes into closed session, the minutes of the open meeting will state the reason for the closed session, the time and duration of the
closed session, the general topic addressed, and any action taken in the closed
session. Confidential information shall remain confidential.

Open-meeting minutes of the Executive Committee will be available to Plymouth
members electronically and in the church office. Closed-session minutes will be
available only to Executive Committee members or others as determined by the
Executive Committee, Moderator or Senior Pastor.

Section 6. Standing Committees of Church Council Executive Committee

A. Advisory Committee

1. Members

Plymouth’s Advisory Committee consists of the second through sixth
immediate-past moderators. Any vacancy on the committee will be filled by
the next-most-recent past moderator available, beginning with the seventh.

2. Duties

From time to time, matters can arise for which additional study, historical
perspective, or counsel might be useful to current Plymouth leadership. The
committee will meet when requested by the Executive Committee,
Moderator, or Senior Pastor and engage in such work and will provide its
information and counsel to the Moderator, Senior Pastor, Executive
Committee, or Church Council.

3. Meetings and Minutes

The committee will appoint a secretary to prepare written minutes of
committee meetings. The minutes of each meeting will be submitted to and
preserved by the Church Secretary (see Article IV. Section 3.C.).

B. Audit Committee

1. Members

Annually, the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Director of
Operations and Finance, will appoint a five-member audit committee
consisting of three Plymouth members, one of whom is a Certified Public
Accountant or a person with financial expertise relevant to financial audits;
one member from the Board of Trustees, and one member from the
Plymouth Foundation Board. The Board of Trustees will appoint a
committee chair from the three at-large members. Upon a vacancy, the Board
of Trustees will appoint a person to fill the unexpired term.

The at-large members will serve staggered three-year terms. At least one year
must intervene before an at-large member having completed a term is eligible
for reappointment to the committee. However, a person appointed to serve
an unexpired term with less than half a term remaining is eligible for
appointment to an immediately succeeding term.
2. Duties

The committee will select the audit firm for Plymouth’s annual audit, after consultation with the Board of Trustees; meet with the audit firm; provide to the Board of Trustees a copy of the audit report and the committee’s report on it; and determine whether Plymouth has complied with the auditor’s recommendations.

The committee chair will sign the engagement letter between Plymouth and the audit firm, for a fee not to exceed the amount included in Plymouth’s budget. The auditor will report directly to the committee. The audit report will be presented to the Executive Committee and Church Council by the Board of Trustees.

A copy of the audit report will be maintained in Plymouth’s office and be electronically accessible to Plymouth members.

3. Meeting and Minutes

The committee will appoint a secretary to prepare written minutes of committee meetings. The minutes of each meeting will be submitted to and preserved by the Church Secretary (see Article IV, Section 3.C.).

C. Human Resources Committee

1. Members

The Human Resources Committee will consist of the Moderator-Elect, one member of the Board of Trustees appointed annually by that board, and three members of Plymouth appointed by the Executive Committee serving staggered three-year terms. The committee will elect a chair who has at least one year of experience on the Human Resources Committee.

2. Duties

The committee will conduct the annual performance review of the Senior Pastor in collaboration with the Church Council’s Executive Committee; will ensure annual performance reviews are conducted for Plymouth pastors and staff; and will meet regularly with the Senior Pastor to make recommendations to the Church Council’s Executive Committee regarding human resource issues, including staff evaluations, compensation, benefits, and other matters covered in Plymouth’s Employee Handbook.

The committee may request input from Plymouth employees or members and will have access to Plymouth’s records, including personnel records, when performing its responsibilities.

The committee will ensure exit interviews are conducted with staff members regarding their experiences at Plymouth.
3. Meetings and Minutes
The committee will appoint a secretary to prepare written minutes of committee meetings. The minutes of each meeting will be submitted to and preserved by the Church Secretary (see Article IV, Section 3.C.).

Article III. FISCAL AND PROGRAM YEARS; TERMS OF OFFICE; CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section 1. Fiscal and Program Years
A. Plymouth’s fiscal year begins January 1.
B. Plymouth’s program year begins June 1.

Section 2. Terms of Office
Terms of officers, Church Council, Executive Committee, board, and committee members begin on June 1.

Section 3. Congregational Meetings
A. Meeting Procedures
   1. Manner of Notice
      Notice of any congregational meeting will be posted in Plymouth’s office, at other locations in the church, and on the Plymouth website; included in the weekly Plymouth bulletin, mailings, or electronic mailings; emailed to addresses in Plymouth’s member list; and given from the pulpit at all worship services occurring between the date of the notice and the meeting.

      2. Quorum, Chair and Church Secretary
         Fifty members present in person or electronically constitute a quorum. The Moderator will chair the meeting. The Church Secretary will record meeting minutes. Congregational meetings shall be conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order and these bylaws.

      3. Voting
         Prior to any voting, the Moderator will appoint three tellers to verify the vote count and report the results of the election.

      4. Action
         Members will act by majority vote of members present, in person or electronically. However, action to call a Senior Pastor, or dismiss a Senior Pastor, or action on any plan or basis of union or withdrawal from any other church or denomination of churches will require a two-thirds majority vote of members present.
B. Annual Meetings

1. Date
The annual meeting of Plymouth members will be held in the month of May on a date determined by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will determine the manner of meeting, in person or electronically or both.

2. Notice
Notice of an annual meeting will be given at least three weeks before the meeting and will include the agenda for the meeting, and the methods by which members may attend and vote in person or electronically.

3. Agenda
The business of the annual meeting will include a presentation of the annual report by the Senior Pastor, the election of officers, the members-at-large, and the new members of Church Council boards; annual reports of the officers, Church Council and its Executive Committee, boards, and committees for the current program year; proposed plans for the next program year; and other appropriate business.

Any member may raise any issue affecting the religious, financial, or social welfare of Plymouth, provided the member delivers a description of the issue and the substance of the information to be presented at the meeting to Plymouth’s office at least seven days before the meeting. The meeting agenda will be amended to include such requests.

4. Eligibility for Election
Any Plymouth member is eligible for election to any Church Council board, or office, including members-at-large, except as otherwise provided in these bylaws.

A person and a person’s spouse or domestic partner can serve, at any one time, in only one position as a member of any Church Council board or as a member-at-large or Moderator-Elect, Moderator or Immediate-Past Moderator except in the case of the Board of Deacons. The spouse of a member of the Board of Deacons can serve as a member of any Church Council board other than the Deacons or as member at large, Moderator-Elect, Moderator or Immediate-Past Moderator. An employee of the church cannot serve in any of these capacities.

A person appointed or elected to fill an unexpired board term with less than half the term remaining, is eligible for election to an immediately succeeding term. At least one year must intervene before a board member, having completed a term, is eligible for reelection to the same board.
5. Nominations

The Executive Committee will nominate the Moderator-Elect to be on the ballot at the annual meeting. The Church Council will nominate the members-at-large, nominees for council boards, a representative to the Plymouth Foundation Board, and officers to be on the ballot at the annual meeting.

Before March 1, a list of vacant positions to be filled by election at the annual meeting will be compiled by the church staff, and notification will be made to the Church Council and members of the congregation.

By March 15, Plymouth members may propose names for any vacant position. Proposals must be made in writing and addressed to Plymouth’s office.

The Church Council and its Executive Committee will prepare a slate of nominees, listed in alphabetical order and provided to members in writing and electronically, with all written or electronic notices for the annual meeting.

After notice of the annual meeting is given, additional nominations may be made by written request of at least 10 Plymouth members, with the consent of the additional nominee(s), submitted to Plymouth’s office not less than two weeks before the annual meeting date. Plymouth staff will compile an alphabetic listing of all eligible nominees for the ballot.

6. Installation

The Senior Pastor will ensure the acknowledgement of the elected officers and board members at the first weekend worship services of the program year.

C. Special Meetings

1. Call for Meeting

The Moderator will call a special meeting of Plymouth members when requested by the Church Council or its Executive Committee, the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees, or the Board of Membership, or by written request of 25 Plymouth members, addressed to the Moderator and identifying the issue for the meeting.

2. Notice of Meeting

Notice of a special congregational meeting will be given at least 10 days before the meeting and will include the agenda for the meeting, and methods by which members may attend and vote in person or electronically. The notice will comply with the Manner of Notice
procedures for annual congregational meetings as stated in Article III. Section 3.A.1 to the extent applicable.

Article IV. PASTORS, STAFF, AND LAY OFFICERS

Section 1. Ordained Pastors

A. General Provisions

For each ordained pastor called by Plymouth, the Moderator will appoint a care and concern group, including at least one member of the search committee recommending that pastor, to informally provide support and care for that pastor through their first year at Plymouth. The Human Resources Committee will serve as a resource for the care and concern group and will receive a final, written summary of the group’s activities with the pastor.

Consistent with the faith and practice of the UCC, every ordained pastor of the Word and Sacrament may, among other things,

- Preach the gospel.
- Administer the sacraments.
- Conduct public worship.
- Provide pastoral care.
- Impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through available channels of effective communication.
- Offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead.
- Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice, and proclaiming God’s love for the world.

B. Senior Pastor

1. Term

The Senior Pastor will be called for an indefinite term.

2. Duties

The Senior Pastor is Plymouth’s senior spiritual leader. The Senior Pastor will recruit others to become Plymouth members and followers of Christ, will provide for the spiritual welfare and growth of Plymouth and those whom it serves, and will have charge of Plymouth services.

The Senior Pastor is Plymouth’s senior executive. The Senior Pastor will administer and manage Plymouth’s activities, financial stewardship, property, and personnel, in consultation with the Executive Committee and Church Council. All decisions made by the Senior Pastor will further Plymouth’s mission, guiding principles, church motto and the goals of the strategic plan.
The Senior Pastor, working with the Board of Membership, will ensure that the rolls of Plymouth members are accurate and up to date, including a formal Book of Life that records important dates for members around birth, baptisms, marriage, death, confirmation, and other significant life events.

The Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Church Council and its Executive Committee, pastors, and staff, will assign at least one pastor or program staff to work with each board and other groups of the Church Council, the Plymouth Foundation Board, and other board committees, as needed.

The Senior Pastor will assign the duties of other pastors.

The Senior Pastor may delegate supervisory responsibilities but is accountable for that delegation.

The Senior Pastor will ensure that annual performance reviews are conducted for all pastors and staff.

The Senior Pastor will ensure a current employee organizational chart of Plymouth staff and duties is maintained, including the pastor(s) who are authorized to act for the Senior Pastor in the Senior Pastor’s absence. The organizational chart will be located and maintained in Plymouth’s office and electronically accessible to all members.

The Senior Pastor will ensure a current roster is maintained by the Church Secretary with names, contact information, and terms of office for members serving on the Church Council, its Executive Committee and standing committees, Church Council boards and board committees. This roster will be located in Plymouth’s office and electronically accessible to all members.

Before each annual congregational meeting, the Senior Pastor will ensure a written and digital annual report is prepared, with summaries of Plymouth’s work in the prior 12 months, including measurements on progress toward goals in Plymouth’s strategic plan; financial statements for the past year including actual performance compared to budget; Plymouth membership data for the past 10 years; and average and median attendance at church services for the past 10 years. The annual report will be kept in Plymouth’s office and electronically accessible to all members.

3. Vacancy
   a. Resignation
      A Senior Pastor who plans to resign will notify the Church Council and its Executive Committee in writing. The Church Council will notify the Congregation of the Senior Pastor’s plan to resign. The
resignation will be effective on the date stated in the notice, unless the pastor and the Executive Committee agree to a different date. The Executive Committee will call a congregational meeting to receive the resignation.

b. Termination
If two-thirds of the Executive Committee and two-thirds of the Church Council recommend that a Senior Pastor’s call be terminated, the Moderator will call a special congregational meeting for a vote on that recommendation. A Senior Pastor will be terminated by a two-thirds affirmative vote of members present.

c. Interim Senior Pastor
When a vacancy occurs, the Executive Committee, in consultation with the Church Council, may determine that an Interim Senior Pastor is needed. If so, the Executive Committee will appoint an Interim Senior Pastor Search Committee. The committee will consist of the three most recent Immediate-Past Moderators available to serve when the committee is formed with additional members as determined by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee, with concurrence of the Church Council, will hire the Interim Senior Pastor recommended by the committee upon terms the Executive Committee decides.

d. Senior Pastor Search Committee
Vacancies will be filled with the assistance of a Senior Pastor Search Committee, and in accordance with the policies of the United Church of Christ.

Prior to the formation of this committee, the Church Council’s Executive Committee will provide at least 14-days’ notice to the Congregation, advising members that nominations for this committee may be made by any Church Council board or by any Plymouth member, in writing or electronically, addressed to the Moderator. Nominations must be received in Plymouth’s office by the deadline stated in the notice.

Notice will be posted in Plymouth’s office, at other locations in the church, and on the Plymouth website; published in the weekly Plymouth bulletin, mailings, or electronic mailings; emailed to addresses in Plymouth’s member list; and given from the pulpit at all worship services occurring within 14 days of the date of the notice.
The Executive Committee will select the search committee with seven voting members. The Moderator or the Moderator's designee will chair the search committee and serve as a non-voting member. The search committee will undertake a comprehensive search that may include both internal and external candidates. The search committee may retain an external firm to assist in the recruitment process.

e. Recommendation and Election
Prior to making a recommendation, the Senior Pastor Search Committee will seek counsel from the Iowa Conference of the UCC.

Concurrence of at least five voting members of the search committee is necessary to recommend a candidate with proposed terms of employment to the Church Council’s Executive Committee. If approved by the Executive Committee, the Senior Pastor candidate will be considered at a congregational meeting. A Senior Pastor candidate will be elected by a two-thirds affirmative vote of members present.

f. Installation
When a Senior Pastor candidate accepts the call, Plymouth will invite the Association of the UCC to which Plymouth belongs to install the new Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor will promptly become a member of Plymouth and of the UCC associations to which Plymouth belongs.

C. Other Ordained or Eligible-to-be-Ordained Pastors
1. Term
All pastors will be called for an indefinite term, except interim pastors and Transition into Ministry program (TiM) pastors, who may or may not yet be ordained.

2. Pastoral Vacancies
Vacancies will be filled with the assistance of a pastor search committee, and in accordance with the bylaws of the UCC.

When there is a pastoral vacancy, other than the Senior Pastor or a TiM pastor, a pastor search committee will be appointed. The committee members will be the Senior Pastor and three members appointed by the Church Council and three by its Executive Committee. This committee will be chaired by the Moderator or designee by the Executive Committee.

The committee will seek counsel of the Iowa Conference of the UCC. The search committee will interview candidates and recommend a candidate, and the terms of employment, to the Church Council. If approved by the Church
Council, the candidate will be considered at an annual or special congregational meeting. A candidate will be elected by a majority vote of members present, electronically or in person. When a pastoral candidate accepts the call, Plymouth will invite the Association of the UCC to which Plymouth belongs to install the new pastor. The pastor will promptly become a member of Plymouth and of the UCC associations to which Plymouth belongs.

3. Termination
The Senior Pastor may terminate a non-senior pastor’s pastorate with advice from the Human Resources Committee and with concurrence of a majority of Church Council members present.

4. Interim Non-Senior Pastor
An interim search committee may be formed by the Church Council’s Executive Committee when there is a pastoral vacancy, other than for the Senior Pastor. The interim search committee with five voting members will include the Senior Pastor, two members from the Church Council’s Executive Committee and two members from the Church Council, named respectively by those bodies. The Moderator-Elect will chair the committee and will only vote to break a tie. The committee will interview candidates for the interim vacancy and recommend a candidate to fill the vacancy. The terms of that employment will be approved by the Executive Committee and the hiring decision will require a majority vote by the Church Council members present.

Section 2. Plymouth Staff
All staff, except pastors, may be hired and released by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Human Resources Committee, and in accordance with the policies in Plymouth’s Employee Handbook.

Section 3. Lay Officers
A. Moderator and Moderator-Elect
1. Moderator
The Moderator is Plymouth’s senior lay leader. The Moderator is the person who was Moderator-Elect for the previous program year, unless another person is elected as Moderator at a congregational annual meeting. The Moderator serves a one-year term, and presides at congregational meetings and as chair of the Church Council’s Executive Committee.

2. Moderator-Elect
The Moderator-Elect will be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year and will perform the duties of the Moderator in the Moderator’s absence.
3. Vacancy

Upon a vacancy in either the office of Moderator or Moderator-Elect, the Church Council’s Executive Committee will propose a nominee for election by the Church Council to fill the unexpired term.

B. Immediate-Past Moderator

The Immediate-Past Moderator will serve a one-year term as a voting member of the Executive Committee, and the Interim Senior Pastor search committee.

C. Church Secretary

The Church Secretary will serve as Secretary of Plymouth Corporation.

A Plymouth member who is not a member of either the Church Council or its Executive Committee will be elected at the congregation’s annual meeting to serve a three-year term as Church Secretary.

At least one year must intervene after the Church Secretary’s term ends before that person is eligible to be elected to another term. In case of a vacancy in this office, the Church Council’s Executive Committee will appoint a person to fill the unexpired term. A person appointed to fill an unexpired term with less than half the term remaining is eligible for election to an immediately succeeding term.

The Church Secretary will, with staff assistance, prepare minutes of the congregation’s annual meetings or special congregational meetings. The Church Secretary will receive and preserve minutes from the Church Council, its Executive Committee, boards and committees. The minutes will be located in Plymouth’s office and electronically accessible to Plymouth members.

The chair of a congregational meeting will appoint a person to serve as Church Secretary for that meeting if Plymouth’s Church Secretary is unavailable.

D. Other Officers

Other officers may be elected at congregational meetings.
Article V. OTHER PROVISIONS

Section 1. Parliamentary Authority
The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order will be the parliamentary authority for matters of procedure not specifically covered by these bylaws and any special rules of order Plymouth may adopt which are not in conflict with local, state, or federal laws. Boards and Committees will conduct business pursuant to small board provisions.

Section 2. Manner of Meetings
Plymouth congregation, Church Council, Church Council’s Executive Committee, boards, and committees may meet for open regular or special meetings in person or by means of an electronic communications technology, provided members have the ability to read or hear and be heard substantially concurrent with the proceedings, to vote on matters submitted to the members, pose questions, and make comments.

Section 3. Amendments
These bylaws may be amended at a congregational meeting by a two-thirds vote of members present.

Section 4. Effective Date of Bylaws
These bylaws are effective on June 1, 2021, and supersede all previous Plymouth bylaws.
Signature Page

BYLAWS

Plymouth Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Des Moines, Iowa

Adopted at the MMDD, YYYY Annual Meeting
Effective MMDD, YYYY

__________________________________________  ____________________________________________
First/Last Name, Moderator                  Rev. Sarai Rice, Interim Sr. Pastor
(Signature, Date)                           (Signature, Date)

__________________________________________
First/Last Name, Moderator-Elect
(Signature, Date)

Proposed Bylaws, 2021  Plymouth Church, Des Moines, Iowa  pg. 24
BYLAWS
Plymouth Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ
Des Moines, Iowa

Article I. NAME
The name of this Church shall be Plymouth Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ, Des Moines, Iowa.

Article II. PURPOSE AND MOTTO
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 will dominant 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. The Motto of Plymouth Church is expressed in these words of Stoddard Lane: “We agree to differ. We resolve to love. We unite to serve.”

Article III. POLITY
The government of this Church is vested exclusively in its members. This Church is in communion with all churches which follow the teaching of Jesus Christ, and it acknowledges special obligation to other congregations which are a part of the United Church of Christ and pledges itself to share in their common religious and educational work, especially as represented by the Central Association, the Iowa Conference and the General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

Article IV. FAITH AND COVENANT
This Church recognizes the Bible as the sufficient rule of faith and practice and holds that living in accordance with the teaching of Jesus Christ is the true test of Christian covenant. Members shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of their own conscience, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The following statement of faith, therefore, is not a test but an expression of the spirit in which the Church interprets the Word of God.

United Church of Christ Statement of Faith (Adapted by Robert V. Moss, 1976)
We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our brother, and to whose deeds we testify:

31 God calls the worlds into being,
32 creates humankind in the divine image,
33 and sets before us the ways of life and death.
34 God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin,
35 God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness declared through prophets and apostles.
36 In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord,
37 God has come to us
38 and shared our common lot,
39 conquering sin and death
40 and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.
41 God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit,
42 creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ,
43 binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.
44 God calls us into the Church
45 to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be servants in the service of the whole human family,
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. God promises to all who trust in the gospel
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.
Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God. Amen.
(APPROVED IN OBERLIN, OHIO, JULY 5-8, 1959)

Covenant
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. And I promise that, so far as able, I will attend the services of this Church, observe its
sacraments, share in its work, support its benevolence and endeavor to make it a fruitful body of Christians.

Article V. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Members.
The members of this Church shall be persons who make public acceptance of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and
Savior. Persons shall be received as members in the Church on presentation of letters of transfer from other
churches, by reaffirmation of faith if letters are not available, or on confession of faith and baptism.

Section 2. Reception of members.
The Board of Membership and the ministers shall present new members to be received at a public worship service
of this Church. Anyone unable to attend in public may be received in absentia by the Congregation.

Section 3. Duties.
Members shall pledge themselves to live the Christian life, to attend regular services of this Church, to contribute
to its support and benevolences, to share in the organized work of this Church and to seek diligently the spiritual
welfare of its membership and of the community.

Section 4. Termination of membership or change of status.
a. Members may, on their own request:
   1. Be granted a letter of transfer to any Christian Church.
   2. Be dismissed with a certificate of Church membership.
   3. Be declared inactive.
b. If a member requests to be released from covenant obligations, the Church shall patiently endeavor to secure
   continuance in its fellowship; failing in such effort, the Board of Membership may grant the request.
c. Any request for termination of change of status shall be approved by the ministers and the Board of Membership.
d. When dismissal is granted, the Clerk shall issue the appropriate letter of transfer or release.

Section 5. Inactive Members.
Members whose addresses have long been unknown or who for a period of two years have not communicated with
the church or contributed to its support, may, by action of the Board of Membership, be declared inactive. While
inactive, they shall not be counted as members. Persons who are inactive may request reinstatement as members
and be granted such by the Board of Membership.

Section 6. Associate Members.
Associate members shall be those persons who have church membership elsewhere which they do not desire to
sever, but who desire to share in the faith and covenant of worship and service of this Church. Persons shall be
eligible for associate membership upon approval of the Board of Membership. Associate members shall have the
same rights and duties as members of the Church.

Article VI. SERVICES AND MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship.
a. Public services of worship shall be held each Sunday as determined by the Board of Deacons.
b. The sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper shall be celebrated and other services of worship may be held
as determined by the ministers and the Board of Deacons.

Section 2. Business Meetings.
a. Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held in the month of May each year on a date
determined by the Church Council, to elect officers and new board members; to hear the yearly reports of
the officers, organizations and departments; and to transact business and formulate plans for the new year.
1. Any matter affecting the religious, financial or social welfare of the Church may properly come before
the Annual Meeting.
2. The program year of the Church shall begin on June 1, and all newly elected officers, boards and
committee members shall assume their duties at that time and continue in office until their
successors are elected and qualified.
3. It shall be the duty of all officers, boards, committees and auxiliary organizations to submit written reports
of their activities for the Church year at the Annual Meeting.
b. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Church may be held on call of the Board of Trustees, the Board of
Deacons, the Church Council, the Senior Minister Search Committee, or by written request of twenty-five
members of the Church addressed to the Moderator.
c. Notice of Church Meetings.
1. Notice of each Annual Meeting of the Church shall be given at least three weeks prior to the meeting.
   Notice shall be given from the Pulpit and by publication in the weekly Church bulletin or
   newsletter.
2. Notice of any special meeting of the Church shall state the objective thereof and shall be given at least
   four days prior to the meeting. Notice shall be given from the Pulpit and by publication in
   the weekly Church bulletin or newsletter.
d. Business Procedure.
   1. Presiding Officers. The Moderator shall preside and the Secretary of the Church Council shall act as
      secretary at all meetings of the congregation.
   2. Quorum. At all meetings of the Church, twenty-five members shall constitute a quorum.
   3. Voting. Elections of Church officers and Board members shall be by ballot. A majority vote of those
      present and voting shall be decisive, except in calling or dismissing the Senior Minister, or
      an action upon any plan or basis of union with, or withdrawal from, any other church or
denomination of churches thereof, when a two-thirds vote of those present and voting shall
   be required, unless otherwise specified in these bylaws. All members and associate members
   shall have the right to act and vote at any meeting of the Church.
   4. Meetings of the Plymouth Membership, Council, Boards, and Committees shall be authorized to meet for all
      open Regular or Special meetings by means of the internet or other electronic communications
      technology in a manner pursuant to which the members have the opportunity to read or hear the
      proceedings substantially concurrent with the occurrence of the proceedings, vote on matters
      submitted to the members, pose questions, and make comments.

Article VII. OFFICERS

Section 1. Senior Minister.
a. Duties. The Senior Minister shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the Church and
those whom it serves. The Senior Minister shall seek to enlist persons as followers of Christ,
preach the gospel, administer the sacraments and have care of all services of public
worship. The Senior Minister shall be the chief executive officer of the Church and shall
administer the activities of the Church in cooperation with the Church Council, various
boards, committees and other Program Staff. The Senior Minister shall make a report of the
year’s work at the Annual Meeting.
b. Term. The Senior Minister shall be called for an indefinite term.
c. Vacancy. When it is determined that a vacancy will occur in the pastorate, a committee to
be known as the Senior Minister Search Committee shall be organized by the Chair of the Board of
Deacons, composed of the following persons:
   1. One member of each board of the Church, to be chosen by the respective boards.
   2. The members so chosen shall choose three members from the Church at large.
The Committee shall organize by choosing a Chair, a Vice Chair and a Secretary.
d. Search Process. In the event that any ministers employed on the Program Staff wish to apply for the position
of Senior Minister, they will be considered as Internal Candidates, and the search process shall consider any
Internal Candidates prior to consideration of External Candidates.
e. Approval of an Internal Candidate. If the Senior Minister Search Committee decides that a call should be
issued to an Internal Candidate, it will make the recommendation to the Church Council, but only with
functional unanimity of the Committee members; and, should the Committee recommend a call to be issued
to an Internal Candidate, it must be approved by functional unanimity of the Church Council for it to be
forwarded to a meeting of the Church. A call of an Internal Candidate, who is considered prior to External
Candidates and who has the approval of both the Senior Minister Search Committee and the Church
Council, must be voted upon at a duly called special or annual meeting of the Church called for that
purpose, and approved by a three-fourths vote in the affirmative of those present and voting.
f. Approval of an External Candidate. If the Senior Minister Search Committee’s recommendation is to call an
External Candidate, the recommendation shall be made directly to a duly called special or annual meeting
of the Church called by the Committee for that purpose, and approved by a two-thirds vote in the
affirmative of those present and voting.
g. Installation. When a Senior Minister has been elected, and has accepted the call, the Association of the
United Church of Christ to which the Church belongs shall be invited to recognize and install the Minister
in accordance with established practice. The Minister, at the first opportunity, shall become a member of
the Church and of the Association of which the Church is a member.
h. Dissolution by the Senior Minister. Should the Senior Minister desire to dissolve the pastoral relationship, the
Senior Minister shall notify the Board of Deacons in writing. The Board of Deacons shall at once call a
meeting of the Church and shall submit the resignation to the membership. If accepted, the resignation
shall become effective at the end of sixty days, unless otherwise agreed upon by both the Minister and the
Church.
i. Dissolution by the Church. Should the Church desire the resignation of its Senior Minister, the Board of
Deacons at a meeting called for that purpose, written notice of which shall have been sent to all members of
the Board at least ten days in advance, may by a two-thirds vote of all the members of the Board request
such resignation. This request shall then be read by the Chair of the Board of Deacons to the membership
of the Church at a meeting of the Church called for the purpose of acting thereon. If the Church approves
the action of the Board of Deacons the Clerk shall at once notify the Minister in writing and the pastoral
relationship shall cease and terminate at once, unless both parties shall mutually agree upon a future date;
but in any event the Minister shall receive full salary for the sixty days following the Church meeting.

Section 2. Program Staff.
For purposes of these Bylaws all ministers, including the Senior Minister, and others as designated by the Church
Council shall be Program Staff. The Church Council may call or release ministers other than the Senior Minister
and employ or release other Program Staff as needed. Their responsibilities shall be defined by the Church Council
in consultation with the Senior Minister. The employment of Program Staff other than the Senior Minister may
be terminated by majority vote of the Church Council on recommendation of the Personnel Committee.
Section 3. Moderator and Moderator-Elect.

A Moderator-Elect shall be elected at each Annual Meeting for a term of one year. The Moderator-Elect shall perform the duties of the Moderator, in case of absence or disability, and shall succeed the Moderator at the end of the Moderator's term. The Moderator shall serve for a term of one year, and shall preside over all business meetings of the congregation and all meetings of the Church Council during the term. The Moderator and Moderator-Elect shall be members of the Church Council, but they and their spouses or domestic partners shall not be members of any Church board. In the event of a vacancy occurring in either office, the Church Council shall provide for succession.

Section 4. Clerk.

A Clerk who shall be the Secretary of the corporation shall be elected at each Annual Meeting. The Clerk shall sign letters of dismissal and recommendation and shall oversee the keeping of the following records: a complete roster of the membership of the Church, showing date and manner of admission and date of death or dismissal; a list of all children baptized, with the names of both parents and the date of birth; a list of all adults baptized with their names and dates and places of their birth; a record of all marriages; a register of the children of families of members; and such other records of the religious or social activities of the Church as may be deemed advisable or necessary, or as may be required by the Program Staff or Deacons. The Clerk shall make a report at the Annual Meeting showing all changes in membership, and giving the total membership of the Church at the end of the year. In case of a vacancy in this office, the Church Council shall elect a member of the Church to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

Section 5. Treasurer.

A Treasurer shall be elected for a term of one year by the Board of Trustees and shall not be an elected member of that Board. The Treasurer may be reelected for no more than four consecutive one-year terms. The Treasurer or a designee approved in advance by the Board of Trustees shall have charge, under the general direction of the Board of Trustees, of all insurance carried by the Church, and shall have knowledge of all contracts, papers and documents relating to the property or operation of the Church. The Treasurer shall provide financial advice to the Board of Trustees and Program Staff and shall review the financial records of the Church at least quarterly. The Treasurer shall serve as an ex officio (non-voting) member of the Board of Trustees. In case of a vacancy in this office, the Board of Trustees shall elect a member of the Church to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

Section 6. Other Officers.

Other officers may be elected by the congregation as need shall dictate.

Article VIII. BOARDS

Section 1. General.

a. The Boards of this Church are the Boards of Benevolences, Christian Education, Christian Social Action, Christian Stewardship, Deacons, Membership, Music and Fine Arts, Spiritual Growth and Trustees.

b. Any member or associate member of the Church is eligible for election to any board. A person can serve on only one board at a time. A member and that member's spouse or domestic partner are not both eligible for board membership at the same time. At least one full year must intervene before a person having completed a full term on a board is eligible for reelection to the same board, but a person appointed to fill an unexpired term to a board is eligible for election to that board without one year intervening.

c. Insofar as possible the composition and leadership of each board will be balanced equally between men and women.

d. Board members are elected at the Annual Meeting as provided in these Bylaws (Article VI. section 2) and take office June 1.

e. Should any board member resign, refuse to serve, or fail in the performance of the assigned duties, the executive committee of that board, after attempting to persuade the member to resume the active duties of the office,
may recommend to the board that the office be declared vacant. Upon approval by a majority of the board, such person shall cease to be a member of that board. In the case of a vacancy, the remaining members shall nominate for election by the Church Council any eligible member of the Church to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

f. At its regular May meeting, each board shall organize itself for the following year by electing three officers: a chair, a vice chair and a secretary. The chair and vice chair shall serve as the board’s representatives on the Church Council. The officers constitute the executive committee of the board which has general supervision of all matters affecting the board and may act in the name of the board in emergency or minor matters. Boards may appoint such other members to the executive committee as may be required.

g. A board may appoint standing or special committees as required by the work of the board.

h. Each board shall meet monthly, except by decision of the board. Special meetings shall be held at any time on call of the chair or of three members. At any meeting of a board, a majority shall constitute a quorum.

i. No board shall obligate the Church for any expenditures from the general operating fund except as provided in the budget, without prior approval of the Board of Trustees.

j. Any board, committee or organization within the Church wishing to engage in fundraising activities must have the prior approval of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2. Board of Benevolences.

a. The Board of Benevolences shall consist of twelve members, four of whom shall be elected annually to serve a term of three years.

b. It shall be the duty of this board to: supervise, promote and interpret the benevolence activities of this Church; promote representation of Church members in decision-making bodies of the denominational and ecumenical agencies to which funds are given; and advise the Board of Trustees in the most effective use of benevolence resources by presenting a budget at the time designated by the Board of Trustees.

Section 3. Board of Christian Education.

a. The Board of Christian Education shall consist of fifteen members, five of whom shall be elected annually and serve a term of three years.

b. It shall be the duty of this board to: recruit, train and place the volunteer Christian Education staff; establish Christian Education curriculum and procure necessary material and equipment; establish and execute programs of activities for various groups of young people and adults; and have general supervision of those auxiliary education programs which serve the community and are sponsored by the Church.

c. This board shall appoint a liaison to the Plymouth Nursery School Board of Directors.

Section 4. Board of Christian Social Action.

a. The Board of Christian Social Action shall consist of fifteen members, five of whom shall be elected annually to serve a term of three years.

b. It shall be the duty of this board to help the Church explore the relationship between the Christian faith and contemporary social issues by identifying issues, stimulating dialogue and inviting action. While the board may voice its opinion and take action upon any issue, in so doing it shall make clear that its opinion or action binds neither the Church nor any member of the Church.

Section 5. Board of Christian Stewardship.

a. The Board of Christian Stewardship shall consist of twelve members, four of whom shall be elected annually to serve for a term of three years.

b. It shall be the duty of this board to: assist all members and friends of Plymouth Church in understanding the principles of Christian stewardship; encourage all members and friends of the congregation in their growing commitment to the practices of Christian stewardship; develop an ongoing program to receive statements of intention (pledges) to provide financial support for the ministry and mission of the Church; review the manner in which persons fulfill their stated intentions, responding where deemed appropriate; and maintain a channel of communication with other boards and committees to assure an effective stewardship
Section 6. Board of Deacons.

a. The Board of Deacons shall consist of thirty members. Ten Deacons, five men and five women, shall be elected annually to serve a term of three years.

b. It shall be the duty of this board to assist the ministers in ministering to the spiritual interests of the Church and community. They shall, with the ministers, have charge of the religious activities of the Church, except as otherwise expressly provided in these Bylaws; assist in the preparation and administration of the sacraments, and in caring for the poor, the sick, the sorrowing and the stranger. They shall provide for the Church services in the absence of the ministers, and shall provide for the temporary supply of the pulpit, the compensation to be determined by the Board of Trustees. They shall receive the open collections, and shall appoint the ushers. They shall perform the duties relative to the office of Senior Minister as provided in Article VII, section 1.

c. The board shall appoint a liaison to the Board of Music and Fine Arts.

Section 7. Board of Membership.

a. The Board of Membership shall consist of twelve members, four of whom shall be elected annually to serve a term of three years.

b. It shall be the duty of this board to: perform those functions assigned to it in Article V of the Bylaws; increase the membership of the Church in accordance with the purpose of the Church as set forth in Article II of the Bylaws; instruct the prospective and new members regarding the Church and its organization, and integrate these new members into the life of the Church; report regularly all changes in membership to the Church Council; and make a complete review of the entire membership rolls at least once every two years.

Section 8. Board of Music and Fine Arts.

a. The Board of Music and Fine Arts shall consist of twelve members, four of whom shall be elected annually to serve a term of three years.

b. It shall be the duty of this board to: develop, organize, promote and evaluate a comprehensive program of music and arts to provide an integral contribution to the overall mission of the Church; provide music and art for the worship services of this Church; and foster spiritual growth and enrichment of the Plymouth membership through music and the arts.

Section 9. Board of Spiritual Growth

a. The Board of Spiritual Growth shall consist of nine members, three of whom shall be elected annually to serve a term of 3 years.

b. It shall be the duty of this board to: develop, organize, promote and evaluate a comprehensive spiritual growth program that provides diverse opportunities for spiritual growth and development.

c. The board shall appoint a liaison to the Board of Christian Education.

Section 10. Board of Trustees.

a. The Board of Trustees shall consist of twelve members, three of whom shall be elected annually to serve a term of four years.

b. It shall be the duty of this board to: have charge of the property of the Church and manage its financial, business and contractual affairs; establish compensation for all employees, based on the recommendation of the Personnel Committee; prepare and submit to the Church Council, for approval or amendment, a budget of the estimated revenues and expenses of the Church; provide for an annual audit of the Church’s financial records; elect the treasurer of the Church as provided in Article VII, section 5; supervise matters pertaining to insurance; designate the depository for Church funds; and act on fundraising requests as provided in Article VIII Section 11.

c. Except with the prior approval of the Church Council, the board shall not commit the Church for any unbudgeted expense or obligation exceeding an amount equal to 5% of the budget then in effect; nor shall
it sell, transfer or convey any real property with a fair market value then exceeding an amount equal to 5% of the budget then in effect, to any person or entity other than Plymouth Congregational Church Foundation. The board shall not mortgage any real property without the approval of a majority of those present and voting at a meeting of the Church duly called and constituted for that purpose.

d. This board shall appoint liaisons to the boards of Benevolences, Christian Education, Christian Stewardship, and Music and Fine Arts, and to the Personnel Committee; and may appoint liaisons to the other Boards and Committees as deemed appropriate.

Article IX. CHURCH COUNCIL

Section 1. Composition.
a. The voting members of the Church Council shall be the Moderator-Elect, the chair and vice chair of each board or an alternate appointed by said board, the President of Women's Fellowship and one member at large, who is not a member of any board, elected annually by the Council at the May meeting. The Moderator shall vote in the event of a tie.
b. The Program Staff of the Church shall be non-voting members.

Section 2. Duties.
a. It shall be the duty of the Council to establish the over-all policy of the Church, to advise the Program Staff on the general direction of the activities of the Church and to cooperate with them in the formulation of a well-rounded program.
b. Between congregational meetings, the Council shall receive and act upon all questions, problems and policies of the Church which are not properly the exclusive province of any of the duly constituted boards or committees of the Church.
c. The Council shall call or release Program Staff as provided in Article VII, Section 2.
d. In deciding important matters of policy it shall be assumed that unless such action is taken with practical unanimity, it must have the confirmation of the Church.
e. The Council shall elect representatives or delegates from the Church to denominational and interdenominational agencies of which the Church is a member.
f. The Council shall establish or dissolve committees as provided in Article X, Section 3.

Section 3. Organization and Structure.
a. The Council shall meet at such times and places as it may provide. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum. Special meetings may be called by the Moderator or by three members of the Council.
b. The meetings of the Council shall be open forums at which any subject affecting the Church may be discussed. Any member or associate member of the Church may attend.
c. The Council shall, at its June meeting, elect a Secretary, who need not be a member of the Council.
d. All officers, boards, committees and auxiliary organizations shall present their plans and programs to the Council. The recommendations or decisions of the Council shall be binding.
e. The budget of the Church shall be presented by the Trustees for adoption by the Council as specified in Article VIII Section 9b.
f. The fiscal year of the Church shall be from January 1 to December 31.

Article X. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Nominating and Election Committee.
a. The Nominating and Election Committee shall consist of the Moderator, Moderator-Elect, the chair of each board of the Church and three members of the Church at large, not members of any board. The committee shall be elected at the Annual Meeting or any special meeting of the Church called for that purpose. Members shall serve for a period of one year commencing with the first of the month immediately subsequent to election. The at large members shall propose three members to be their successors; additional nominations for these positions may be made from the floor of the Nominating and Election Committee
meeting. The Program Staff shall be ex officio (non-voting) members. The Secretary of the Church Council shall serve as secretary. The Moderator shall act as chair.

b. It shall be the duty of the Nominating and Election Committee to have charge of the annual election of officers and new board members. At least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting, the committee shall prepare a ballot providing one nominee for each vacancy to be filled at the annual election.

c. The ballot shall provide for the election of three Trustees, each for a term of four years; four members of the Board of Benevolences, five members of the Board of Christian Education, five members of the Board of Christian Social Action, four members of the Board of Christian Stewardship, ten members of the Board of Deacons, four members of the Board of Membership, four members of the Board of Music and Fine Arts, and three members of the Board of Spiritual Growth, each for a term of three years; the Clerk and the Moderator-Elect for a term of one year; and for such other vacancies as may exist. The names of the nominees for each office and board vacancy shall be placed on the ballot in alphabetical order.

d. The Nominating and Election Committee shall provide notice of its meeting by publishing the date thereof in the Church bulletin or newsletter at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Any member or group of members or any board of the Church may present to the Nominating and Election Committee the name or names of proposed nominees for any of the elective offices or boards of the Church.

e. The Nominating and Election Committee shall publish the list of nominees in the weekly Church bulletin or newsletter at least three weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. Additional nominations for any office may be made by written request of twenty-five members of the Church with the consent of the nominee. Such additional nominations shall be presented to the Nominating and Election Committee not less than two weeks prior to the date of the Annual Meeting and shall be printed on the ballot provided for the election.

f. The Nominating and Election Committee shall provide an adequate supply of ballots. Blank lines shall be placed on the ballot so that the voter may be able to substitute an alternative choice for any name on the ballot. This committee shall make such preparations for conducting the annual election as may be necessary, and shall have charge of the polls.

g. The Moderator shall appoint tellers to count the ballots and report the results of the election.

Section 2. Personnel Committee.

The Church Council shall appoint a Personnel Committee to provide for annual performance reviews for the Program Staff and to coordinate decisions and make recommendations regarding Church staff with the Senior Minister and the boards. The Personnel Committee shall consist of the Moderator-elect, three members of the Church appointed by the Church Council, serving staggered terms of three years, to provide a rotating membership, and one member of the Board of Trustees appointed by that board. The Chair of the Committee shall have at least one year of experience on the Personnel Committee.

Section 3. Other Committees.

The Church Council shall establish or dissolve other committees to accomplish the purposes and goals of the Church. The Council shall determine the size, membership, and purposes of such committees. Boards may also establish committees as provided in Article VIII, Section 1g.

Article XI. AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

All authorized organizations connected with the Church, functioning within the scope of their authorization, and using its equipment are regarded as integral parts of the Church and under its general jurisdiction.

Article XII. RULES OF ORDER

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by these Bylaws and any special rules of order the Church may adopt.
Article XIII. AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at the Annual Meeting of the Church, or at any special meeting duly called and constituted, provided notice of the proposed amendment and the purpose or summary thereof be given from the pulpit or published in the weekly church bulletin for the two Sundays immediately preceding such meeting, or published in the Church newsletter at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

Article XIV. EFFECTIVE DATE OF BYLAWS

These Bylaws shall upon adoption be in full force and effect from and after May 13, 1997 and shall supersede and supplant all previous Bylaws of the Church.