



**By-Laws of the
Rangeley Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ
Rangeley, Maine**

Updated and amended July 09, 2006

BY-LAWS OF RANGELEY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
RANGELEY, MAINE
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ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this corporation is Rangeley Congregational Church United Church of Christ. It is located in the town of Rangeley, County of Franklin, State of Maine.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this church is to worship God, to grow in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, and to be guided by the Holy Spirit to promote Jesus teachings by our living, working and giving in our community and around the world.

ARTICLE III: POLITY

1. The government of this church is vested in its members. They shall exercise the right of control in all its affairs subject in legal matters to the laws of the State of Maine relating to non-stock corporations performing religious functions and services.
2. This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, yet recognizes its relationship with the Franklin Association and the Maine conference of the United Church of Christ. It will maintain relations of mutual counsel and cooperation with other churches.

ARTICLE IV: COVENANT

1. This church imposes no system of doctrine upon its members. Recognizing the Bible as the sufficient rule of faith and practice, each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of one's own conscience.
2. The following statement of Covenant is an expression of the spirit in which the Church exists:
Recognizing the duty and privilege of uniting ourselves for Christian fellowship, the public worship of God, and the advancement of his Kingdom, we solemnly covenant and agree with one another to associate ourselves to be a church of the Lord Jesus Christ. We devoutly acknowledge our dependence upon God the Father Almighty, and hereby confess our faith in Him, in His Son our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. We promise to follow Christ, to labor

together for the coming of His Kingdom and to walk in love with one another and with all humankind.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP (COVENANT, ASSOCIATE & FRIEND)
COVENANT MEMBERSHIP

1. Qualifications: The covenant membership of this church shall consist of such persons as give satisfactory evidence of Christian character and accept its covenant. Candidates for Covenant Membership may be received on the recommendation of the Minister and the affirmation of the Board of Deacons.
 - a. Presentation of satisfactory letters of transfer from other churches.
 - b. Reaffirmation of faith. . . if letters are not available.
 - c. Confession of faith and baptism.. .if not previously baptized.
 - d. Confirmation.
2. Reception: The reception of Covenant Members shall be at a Church Service.. .details to be determined by the Minister and the Board of Deacons.
3. Duties: Covenant members are expected to attend the services of this church, to give regularly for its support and its charities, to share in its organized work and to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life.
4. Rights: All Covenant members may act and vote in the business of this church.
5. Termination:
 - a. On request, a letter of termination of Covenant Membership and recommendation to another church shall be granted to any member.
 - b. If any Covenant Member desires for doctrinal or other reasons to terminate membership, the Deacons may remove the name of such a member from the membership rolls upon receipt of a written request from that member.
 - c. Membership in this church may also be non-residence and inactivity as provided in section 6 & 7 of this article.
 - d. If a member persistently breaches his covenant vows, and the Diaconate shall have made faithful efforts to bring him to amendment in accordance with the law of Christ, the Diaconate shall recommend termination of such membership to the Church Council.
 - e. Prior to the termination of membership the Church Council shall give such member an opportunity to be heard.

- f. The Church Council shall have full discretionary power to terminate membership.
6. Non-Residence: Since the permanent absence of members makes fidelity to our mutual obligations difficult, members removing beyond our watch and care are requested to take letters to a church in their new home as soon as may be feasible unless some good reason exists why they should not do so.
7. Inactive List: Covenant members may be moved to the Inactive list at the discretion of the Board of Deacons. Such members will be those who have had no contact with or support of the Church for a period of two years.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

1. A person who is a member of another church may be accepted as an Associate Member of this Church. Associate Members shall enjoy all the privileges of regular membership including that of voting.
2. Associate Membership shall terminate when active affiliation with this Church shall be deemed by the Deacons to have ceased or upon request for termination by the Associate Member.
3. Reception: The reception of Associate Members shall be at a Church Service.. details to be determined by the Minister and the Board of Deacons.

FRIENDS OF THE PARISH

1. All persons who habitually attend services of this church and/or contribute to its support, are considered Friends of the Parish. They shall have the privilege of voice in matters of church business but only Covenant and Associate Members shall have the right to vote. Friends may serve on boards and committees other than: Stewardship, Deacons, or the Church Council; Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer; Financial or Assistant Financial Secretary; or Clerk.

ARTICLE VI: SERVICES AND MEETINGS

1. Worship: Services of worship shall be held at given hours each Sunday.
2. Sacraments: The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at such times as the Board of Deacons may determine. Baptism will be administered at the hour of Sunday morning worship or at such other times as may seem appropriate to the Minister.
3. Special Services: Weddings, funerals and other special services of a religious nature which are held in the Church shall be conducted by the Minister of the church except that others may assume or participate in the leadership of such services with the approval of the Minister and the Board of Deacons.

4. Church Meetings:

- a. Business Meetings: Business Meetings shall be in order following the regular meetings for worship. Notice of a Church business meeting shall be given from the pulpit on the two Sundays preceding the meeting, except that such notice shall not be necessary when the only purpose of the meeting is to choose delegates to meetings of County-wide or State-wide groups with which the Church is associated.
- b. Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting of this church shall be held in the month of July on a date to be determined by the Church Council. The principal business shall be to receive annual reports, to select officers, to elect members of boards and standing committees, and to transact such other business as may be properly read from the pulpit on two Sundays preceding the meeting. Notice of the Annual Meeting and the Annual Reports shall be mailed to the membership at least ten days prior to the meeting.
- c. Special Meetings: On written request to the Church Council by seven or more voting members of the Church, a special meeting shall be called. The nature of the business to be considered at the Special Meeting shall be stated in the call which shall be delivered from the pulpit for two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting and mailed to the membership at least ten days prior to the meeting.
- d. Quorum: A quorum for all church meetings shall consist of at least 15 of the voting members.

ARTICLE VII: OFFICERS

1. Minister:

- a. The Minister shall be called for an indefinite period by a two thirds vote of the voting members present at a meeting of the Church held especially for that purpose. With the assistance of the Board of Deacons, the Minister shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the Church and shall seek to enlist followers of Christ into its membership, preach the gospel, administer the Sacraments and have under his/her care all, services of public worship. The Minister shall serve as advisor to all boards and standing committees ... with voice but no vote.
- b. When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate, a special search committee shall be appointed by the Church Council to seek a candidate for that office. As soon as the vacancy occurs, it shall be reported to the

Maine Conference Executive. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the search committee shall, with cooperation and counsel of the executive head of the Maine Conference, make a canvass of available ministers. The search committee may consult the Maine Conference Placement Committee and other agencies. The Search Committee shall present to the Church the name and credentials of the candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy.

- c. Acceptance of the "call" for Minister, shall require terms and conditions of the relationship to be reduced to writing and copies given to all parties.
 - d. Resignation by the Minister shall require notice in writing and will be effective three months from the date of submission or on a date mutually agreeable to the parties. If two thirds of the voting membership of the Church vote for the removal of the Minister, the Minister may be offered the option of resignation. The Church Council shall notify the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ of all terminations in writing.
2. Clerk: The Clerk shall keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the Church and of the Church Council, of which the Clerk shall be a member and its secretary. The Clerk shall keep a register with addresses of the members of the Church with dates and modes of their reception and removal; also a record of baptisms, marriages and deaths. The Clerk shall issue letters of transfer voted by the Church notifying the churches to which they are addressed, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, notify persons of their election to offices, boards and committees, give legal notice of meetings when such notice is necessary, conduct all correspondence so far as this is not otherwise provided for and perform such other duties as are prescribed by law or as usually pertain to the office of clerk or secretary of an assembly. The Clerk shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year.

ARTICLE VIII: BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

The Boards and Committees:

- a. The Board of Deacons, the Board of House and Grounds, the Board of Christian Mission, the Board of Christian Fellowship, the Board of Christian Education and the Board of Finance. The specific duties of these boards are outlined on subsequent pages.
- b. The Nominating Committee, appointed by the Church Council, will present candidates to the Church Council who will in turn

present the candidates to the Congregation for final approval at the annual meeting.

- c. Ad Hoc Committees may be appointed by the Church Council and the above mentioned boards may appoint such sub committees as may be deemed desirable.
- d. Elected members of boards shall serve for terms of three (3) years on a rotating system except for the Audit Committee which will serve two (2) year staggered terms. The maximum term served shall be two (2) consecutively.
- e. Boards shall elect a Chairperson no later than one month after being approved by the Congregation.
- f. All boards and committees shall present their plans and programs before implementation to the Church Council for approval, except for incidental or routine plans and programs.
- g. All boards and Committees shall submit an annual budget to the Board of Finance and monthly progress reports to the Church Council.

1. The Church Council:

- a. The Church Council shall be the executive body of this church. It shall consist of twelve (12) members, one each from the boards and standing committees outlined in Article VIII paragraph 1, the Clerk, the Treasurer, and four (4) members at large.
- b. Whereas an individual may serve on more than one board or committee, no individual may serve as a Church Council representative from more than one committee. The Church Council shall elect a chairperson and a Vice chairperson no later than one (1) month following the Annual Meeting. The chairperson of the Church Council shall ordinarily preside as moderator at all meetings of the Congregation.
- c. It shall be the function of the Church Council to visualize the entire task of the Church. Acting on its mission statement, it shall be responsible for the general program of the Church and routine business. It shall inform the Minister concerning the Church's activities. It shall approve and/or recommend reports from the Boards to the Congregation. It shall appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of three (3) persons outside the Church Council for the purpose of finding qualified candidates for boards and committees.
- d. The Church Council shall meet on a designated day generally each month or at such times as may be deemed necessary or advisable.

The chairperson or the chairperson's designated alternate and five (5) other members shall constitute a quorum. Meetings of the Church Council shall be open to all members of the Church who may speak but not vote.

- e. In the event of a vacancy in any of the offices, boards and committees herein created, the Church Council shall choose and appoint someone who is not currently serving to temporarily fill such term. The appropriate board or committee shall recommend candidates. A person appointed to fill a vacancy shall not be ineligible for election to that office because of time spent filling the vacancy. The Church Council shall be responsible for establishing the job description and duties of any salaried employee of the Church.
 - f. The Church Council shall have the custody of Church land, buildings and equipment. It shall have the authority to buy, sell mortgage, lease or transfer real property as directed by the Congregation. It shall act on requests for the use of Church land, buildings and equipment for other than Church or Church related activities.
 - g. The Church Council or its designee shall review annually, prior to budget creation, the mutual ministry of our minister and church, evaluating and establishing goals for each and shall include in their budget, recommendations concerning the Minister's salary and expenses.
 - h. The Church Council shall have maintained a calendar of events to be held on Church property in order to prevent conflicts.
 - i. On or before its August meeting, the Church Council shall appoint delegates to the Franklin Association and the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ, and to any other organization as deemed advisable.
 - j. In carrying out its duties, the Church Council shall be subject at all times to the will of the Congregation. Any action it takes may be approved, modified or nullified by the Congregation at any properly called church meeting.
2. **The Board of Deacons:** The Board of Deacons shall consist of seven (7) persons. A quorum shall consist of the chairperson or the chairperson's designated alternate and three (3) other members. The term of office shall be for three years. The maximum terms served shall be two (2) consecutively.

- a. Shall cooperate with the Minister in serving the spiritual interests of the Church and community.
 - b. Shall be concerned with cases of individual need within the church community and the community at large. It shall recommend financial or material aid when, in its judgement this is called for. The Deacon's Relief fund shall be used for this purpose and expenditures will be approved by a quorum of the board of Deacons.
 - c. The board shall be responsible for the ushers and for the comfort and convenience of the worshippers .Delete and one Deacon should be on duty during church services.
 - d. The Board of Deacons shall be responsible for establishing the musical program of the Church.
 - e. The Board shall be responsible with the Minister for the Order of Worship.
 - f. The Deacons shall be responsible for the Memorial Fund expenditures; those designated and non-designated.
 - g. Shall assist in the administration of the sacraments and shall be responsible for the preparation of the elements and the care of the equipment used. It shall also have the care of the chancel which shall include the Communion Table and its furnishings.
 - h. The board shall appoint a Flower Committee who shall be responsible for appropriate flowers at church services.
 - i. The Board of Deacons shall be responsible for pulpit supply in the absence of the minister.
 - j. The Board of Deacons shall be responsible for the development of their annual budget which shall be submitted to the Board of Finance on an annual basis.
 - k. It shall serve as a mentor to the Scholarship Committee.
3. **The Board of House and Grounds:** The Board of House and Grounds shall be composed of five (5) persons. A quorum shall consist of the Chairperson or the Chairperson's delegate and two (2) other members.
- a. This board shall have the care and custody of all church buildings and shall maintain the same in good order.
 - b. This board shall supervise all contracted service providers... weekly cleaning, snow removal, lawn care, etc. and submit a performance report of each to the Church Council on a monthly basis.
 - c. Expenditures of non budgeted items exceeding \$300.00 shall require approval of the church council.

- d. This board shall appoint a sexton at its organizational meeting. The sexton shall oversee the day by day operations and security of church properties. Specific responsibilities of the sexton shall be determined as deemed necessary.
 - e. The Board of House and Grounds shall be responsible for the development of their annual budget which shall be submitted to the Finance Committee on an annual basis.
4. **The Board of Christian Mission:** The Christian Mission Board shall consist of five (5) members. A quorum shall consist of the Chairperson or the Chairperson delegate and two (2) other members.
- a. Shall promote a program of missionary education to keep the Church informed of the worldwide ministry of the U.C.C. and coordinate the missionary activities of the various groups within the Church.
 - b. In cooperation with the Board of Deacons and the Minister, shall work to assure that special needs of individuals within our Church family and the Rangeley community are met.
 - c. It shall coordinate Missionary activities.
 - d. The Board of Christian Mission shall be responsible for the development of their annual budget which shall be submitted to the Finance Committee on an annual basis.
5. **The Board of Christian Fellowship:** the Christian Fellowship Board shall consist of four (4) members. A quorum shall consist of the Chairperson or the Chairperson delegate and two (2) other members.
- a. Shall serve as a social/hospitality committee to promote the social life within the Church.
 - b. Shall serve to foster the growth of Fellowships.
 - c. The Board of Christian Fellowship shall be responsible for the development of their annual budget which shall be submitted to the Finance Committee on an annual basis.
6. **The Board of Christian Education:** The Board Christian Education shall consist of five (5) persons. A quorum shall consist of the chairperson or the chairperson's delegate and two (2) other members. Leaders of all Christian Education organizations in the church shall be members ex-officio.
- a. The Board Christian Education shall oversee the church school, the church youth program, adult education, nursery care and the church library. This board shall, in consultation with and with the approval of the minister, Uesign and administer the program of Christian Education for the church and shall be responsible for the

Church School and all other ongoing short-term classes and learning groups for persons of all ages. This board shall appoint a Church School Coordinator and shall be responsible for the recruitment and training of all other teachers and leaders as deemed necessary.

- b. This board shall perform the necessary tasks required to assure that a library be available to enhance the educational work of the Church. The library shall be a resource available to everyone in the church family.
 - c. The Board of Christian Education shall be responsible for the development of their annual budget which shall be submitted to the Finance Committee on an annual basis.
7. **The Board of Finance:** The Board of finance shall be responsible for administration of all financial activities of the Church as directed by the Church Council. It shall consist of the following five (5) members: the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, a delegate of Rangeley Congregational Church Endowment (Investment) Fund, a delegate of the Stewardship Committee, and a delegate of the Audit Committee. A quorum for meetings shall consist of the Chairperson or the Chairpersons delegate and at least three (3)(2) of these members. The chairperson or delegate plus the Treasurer shall serve as members of the Church Council:
- a. Shall be responsible for development of the annual budget for presentation to the Church Council.
 - b. Shall submit a report to the monthly Church Council meeting summarizing the previous periods financial activities Delete and comparing year to date status relative to the annual budget.
 - c. Through its Stewardship subcommittee it shall organize and conduct an annual campaign to raise funds for the operation of the Church.
 - d. Through its Audit committee it shall conduct an annual audit of all the Church's financial activities for submission to the Annual Meeting and prepare and submit required appropriate reports.
8. **Members at Large.** The Nominating Committee shall appoint four (4) Members at Large to serve on the Church Council for a three year term to be staggered among the four. No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

ARTICLE IX: FINANCES

1. The Financial Secretary. The Secretary shall receive all monies belonging to the Church, counting the receipts loose offering immediately following

- every service when offerings are received with the assistance of an Council Member the Assistant Financial Secretary, or a member of the church council or Diaconate, depositing them in such depositories as the Church Council shall direct, and the Secretary shall inform the Financial Treasurer of the amount of each deposit. The Secretary shall keep accurate accounts of all receipts, pledges and income from gifts, securities, and special offerings and shall send written notice concerning contributions to the members as often as deemed necessary by the Church Council. The Secretary will alert the Financial Treasurer of the wishes of the donors in the disposal of gift monies. The secretary and assistant secretary shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year or until a successor is elected. There is no limitation on the number of terms that may be served.
2. The Financial Treasurer. The Financial treasurer shall receive all income receipts from the Secretary and shall be responsible for all financial records of the Church. The Assistant Financial treasurer shall sign all checks and pay bills of the Church as budgeted. Non budgeted expenses in excess of \$500.00 shall require signatures of two persons, the second being either the Financial Treasurer or the Chairman of the Council. The Financial Treasurer and Assistant Financial Treasurer shall be elected to serve for one year or until a successor is elected. There is no limitation on the number of terms that may be served. The Financial treasurer shall have the authority of Council, in the absence of the Secretary, and Assistant Secretary for the counting of the monies with the assistance of a Council member or a member of the Diaconate
 3. Offerings. The church shall seek financial support from contributions of individuals and organizations. Through the Stewardship campaign, opportunity shall be afforded all members and friends of the Church to make pledges to the regular budget, and to contribute to special projects.
 4. Rangeley Congregational Church Endowment Investment Fund. A fund to be known as the Rangeley Congregational Church Endowment Investment Fund shall be maintained. It shall be managed by the same named committee within the Board of Finance.
 - a. The Endowment Investment Fund principal cannot be reached or encumbered by the Church, but is to be set aside and invested to provide as high a level of current income as is consistent with the preservation of capital. Endowment Investment Fund income is to be used to supplement the general funds of the Church.
 5. The Rangeley Congregational Church Investment Fund Committee shall be appointed by the Church Council not later than one month after the Annual Meeting. It shall be comprised of five persons deemed to be

- qualified in financial matters, to serve for a period of one year. The Investment Committee shall be responsible for all invested church monies.
6. Audit Committee. The Audit Committee shall consist of two (2) members. They shall be elected at the annual meeting for alternative two (2) year terms.

ARTICLE X: FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of this Corporation shall be July 1 to June 30.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS

These by-laws, with the exception of the one entitled Rangeley Congregational Church Endowment Investment Fund,(Article IX paragraph 4.) may be amended at any regularly called business meeting of the Church, provided that at least three (3) weeks prior to such meeting the proposed amendment(s) has been presented to the membership by mail. The proposed amendment(s), in order to be declared in force, must receive a favorable vote by at least two thirds of the voting members present. The by-law entitled Rangeley Congregational Church Endowment Fund (Article X paragraph 4.) can only be amended by a favorable vote of at least two thirds of the voting membership of the Church.

ARTICLE XII DEFINITION

In this document, the words "congregation" and "church" are used interchangeably, and refer to the membership of the Rangeley Congregational Church.

ARTICLE XIII DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution or liquidation of the Church, its assets and all property and interests of which it shall then be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after such dissolution, when not inconsistent with the terms of such devise, bequest, gift or grant, shall be transferred to the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ and/or to such organization or organizations which have qualified for exemption from Federal income tax under the provisions of Section 501 c (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as the Church may determine by majority vote of its voting membership.