

BY-LAWS OF RANGELEY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Updated and Amended July, 2019

NAME

The name of this corporation is First Congregational Church, d.b.a. Rangeley Congregational Church United Church of Christ. It is located in the Town of Rangeley, County of Franklin, State of Maine.

PURPOSE

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.

POLITY

1. The government of this church is vested in its members. They shall exercise the right of control in all its affairs subject 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 Living Water Association (formerly known as the Franklin Association) and the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ. In keeping with those covenants, while not bound to them, it seeks to follow their generally accepted practices, policies, and guidelines. It will maintain relations of mutual counsel and cooperation with other churches.

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.
3. The following statement reflects our commitment to be an Open and Affirming church: Walking toward God, we the members of the Rangeley Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Rangeley, Maine, seek to be a congregation which includes all persons who desire to have a relationship with God and to live God's love, as shown to us through the teachings and examples of Jesus Christ. We embrace each person as an individual and respect the differences of gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identification, mental and physical ability, as well as racial, ethnic, religious and/or

socioeconomic background. We welcome all to share fully in the life, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, and blessing of participation in our congregation as we all learn and grow together. We are an open and affirming church: open to all and affirming of all God's beloved children. No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

COVENANT MEMBERSHIP

1. Qualifications: The covenant membership of this church shall consist of such persons as provide 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 and provision of one of the following:

- 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. If a member persistently breaches his or her covenant vows, and the Diaconate shall have made faithful efforts to rectify the situation with the Member, the Diaconate shall recommend termination of such membership to the Church Council.
- d. Prior to the termination of membership the Church Council shall give such member an opportunity to be heard.
- e. 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 moving 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: Inactives are former Covenantal, Associates, and Students who fail to attend or provide support for two years. Note that Inactives may be returned to active status any at time and resume their former status at any time should they return by attendance or financial support.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

1. An Associate Member is to be treated as a Covenant Member, with the exception that it is understood that they will maintain a relationship with another church concurrently. All other aspects (reception, duties, voting, inactivity, etc.) are identical.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

1. A Student Member is to be treated as a Covenant Member, with the exception that it is understood that they are relieved of duties of attendance and support. All other aspects (reception, voting, inactivity, etc.) are identical.

2. This category can only be used while the member is attending school. Thereafter, the Deacons may reclassify them as Covenantal, Associate, or Inactive as appropriate.

FRIENDS OF THE PARISH

1. Those persons who attend, support, or have an interest in the activities of the church shall be considered Friends of the Parish. The primary intention of this category is to facilitate communications and involvement.

2. Friends shall have the privilege of voice in matters of church business but not the right to vote.

3. Anyone may be added to the list of Friends of the Parish. The Deacons shall have responsibility to periodically review the list and remove those names no longer appropriate.

4. Friends may serve in positions and on committees other than: Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, Clerk, Stewardship Committee, Board of Deacons, and Church Council.

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. Such meetings shall be called by a vote of the Church Council. Notice of a Church business meeting shall be given from the pulpit on the two Sundays preceding the meeting.

- 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 made available to the membership at least ten business 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 made available to the membership at least ten business days prior to the meeting.
- d. Quorum: A quorum for all church meetings shall consist of at least 15 of the voting members.
- e. All meetings of the Church shall be conducted using Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.
- f. All Church meetings shall be led by the Moderator or the Vice Moderator in the event of the Moderator's absence.
- g. Only those members physically present at a church-wide meeting will be allowed to vote. There shall be no use of absentee ballots or proxies.
- h. For purposes of satisfying the notice requirement as well as distributing reports or necessary information, email shall be considered sufficient for those members who have provided an email address. For those who do not provide an email address, hardcopy mailings or in-person distribution are required.

OFFICERS

1. Minister:

- a. The Minister shall be called 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. Any candidate for the position of Minister shall be authorized and in good standing with the United Church of Christ or eligible for dual-standing with the United Church of Christ. 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 (i.e., a Call Agreement).
- d. On an annual basis, the Church Council shall provide feedback to each employee, including the called minister, regarding performance. Such reviews should include participation by the Pastor Staff Parish Committee whenever possible. The assessment may use tools, surveys, or other methods that are approved by the Council.
- e. Resignation by the Minister shall require notice in writing and will be effective according to the terms of the minister's Call Agreement. The Minister shall be terminated according to the terms of his / her Call Agreement if two thirds of the voting membership present vote for the removal of the Minister. The Church Council shall notify the Living Water Association and the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ of all terminations in writing.

2. Clerk:

- a. 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.
- b. The Clerk shall receive from the Board of Deacons changes to membership, and coordinating with the Church Secretary, maintain lists of members and others for purposes of communication.
- c. The Clerk will maintain the Record Book which includes dates and modes of membership reception and removal, as well as 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.
- d. The Clerk shall preserve on file all written official reports, record the results of elections, and perform such other duties as are prescribed by law or as usually pertain to the office of clerk or secretary of an assembly.
- e. The Clerk shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

1. The Boards and Committees:

- a. The permanent, standing Boards of the church shall be: the Board of Deacons, the Board of Buildings and Grounds, the Board of Christian Mission, the Board of Christian Fellowship, the Board of Christian Education and the Board of Finance.
- b. Membership on these Boards to be elected at the church's Annual Meeting. Vacancies that occur shall be filled until the next Annual Meeting by a vote of the Church Council.
- c. Terms are for three years. No more than two consecutive terms are permitted for those serving on the Board of Deacons or as Members at Large on the Church Council. The specific duties of these boards are described below.
- d. 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 approval at the

Annual Meeting. The Nominating Committee shall be comprised of up to three (3) Members of the church who are not members of the Church Council.

e. Ad Hoc Committees may be appointed by the Church Council or any of the standing, permanent boards described above. Membership on such committees shall be determined by the sponsoring group (unless otherwise specified herein) and shall be confirmed by the respective board following each Annual Meeting. Ad hoc committees can be dissolved at any time. There are no term limitations associated with ad hoc committees. (Examples of Ad Hoc Committees are: Music and Worship (Deacons), Scholarship (Deacons), Pastor Staff Parish Relations (Council), Investment (Finance), Stewardship (Finance))

f. Boards shall elect a Chairperson from among their membership no later than one month after being approved by the Congregation. Similarly, standing Boards shall elect their representative to Council. The Council representative need not be the same as the Chairperson.

g. 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.

h. All boards and Committees shall submit an annual budget to the Board of Finance and monthly progress reports to the Church Council.

2. 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 six boards and standing committees outlined above, as well as 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 Moderator and a Vice Moderator no later than one (1) month following the Annual Meeting.

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.

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 Moderator, the Vice Moderator, or the Moderator'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. Matters of a sensitive or confidential nature, such as, but not limited to personnel issues, contract / finance deliberations, disciplinary issues, or consultation with an attorney may be dealt with in Executive Session in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

f. In the event of a vacancy in any of the offices, boards or committees herein created, the Church Council shall seek recommendations from the relevant group and shall then vote to appoint a person to fill such term until the next Annual Meeting. Similarly, any vacancy in an ad

hoc committee may be refilled by a vote of the sponsoring board or committee. A person appointed to fill a vacancy shall not be ineligible for election to that office because of time spent filling the vacancy.

g. 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.

h. 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. The Church Council shall make a recommendation concerning the Minister's salary and expenses. The Church Council shall have the ability to set and adjust the salary or benefits of any employee at any time, including the Minister, subject to the terms of call agreements or employment contracts.

i. The Church Council shall maintain a calendar of events to be held on Church property in order to prevent conflicts.

j. At its Annual Meeting, the Congregation shall appoint delegates to the Living Water Association and the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ, and to any other organization as deemed advisable.

k. 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.

l. In the event that a Board's Council representative is unavailable for a Council Meeting, a substitute may be named by that Board. The substitute shall have all rights that the regular participant holds. The Member-at-large positions, the Treasurer, and the Clerk shall not be permitted to utilize substitutes.

m. Council meetings and Board meetings may be conducted using audio or video conferencing. Those members participating remotely but concurrently shall be counted towards the quorum and allowed to vote.

n. The Church Council shall be responsible for establishing the job description and duties of any employee of the Church. With respect to employees other than the minister, the Church Council shall be responsible for hiring, assessment, and termination.

3. 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.

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 judgment this is

called for. The Deacon's Relief fund shall be established and used for this purpose. Expenditures will be approved by at least two (2) Deacons.

c. The board shall be responsible for providing ushers and liturgists for worship services. They shall provide for the comfort and convenience of the worshippers. 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 board shall be responsible for the Memorial Fund expenditures, both designated and undesignated.

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 arrange for appropriate floral arrangements by providing a means for donated arrangements, using their own resources, or utilizing budgeted accounts.

i. The board shall be responsible for filling the pulpit in the absence of the Minister. This includes the minister's vacation time, sabbaticals, and during any interim periods between settled pastors.

j. The board shall appoint and serve as a mentor to the Scholarship Committee.

4. The Board of Buildings and Grounds: The Board of Buildings and Grounds shall be comprised of at least three (3) 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 services providers operating within the purview of their mission (e.g., cleaning, snow removal, lawn care, etc.)

c. 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.

5. The Board of Christian Mission: The Board of Christian Mission shall be comprised of at least three (3) 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 United Church of Christ 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 groups within our Church family and the Rangeley community are met.

c. It shall coordinate Missionary activities.

6. 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.

7. The Board of Christian Education: The Board Christian Education shall be comprised of at least two (2) persons. A quorum shall consist of the chairperson or the chairperson's delegate and one (1) other member.

a. The Board shall oversee the church youth program, adult education, and any nursery care. In consultation with and with the approval of the minister, the board shall design and administer the program of Christian Education for the church and learning groups for persons of all ages.

b. This board shall be responsible for the recruitment and training of all other teachers and leaders as deemed necessary.

c. This board shall be responsible for developing, communicating and monitoring child-safe practices.

8. 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 seven (7) members: the Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, a delegate of the Investment Committee, a delegate of the Stewardship Committee, and the two members of the Audit Committee. One member will be elected to serve as the Chair, and another elected to serve as the Assistant Chair. A quorum for meetings shall consist of the Chair or Assistant Chair and at least three (3) of the members.

a. Shall be responsible for development of the annual budget for presentation to the Church Council and for ratification at the Annual Meeting.

b. Shall submit a report to the Church Council on a monthly basis summarizing the previous period's financial activities 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 the Church's financial activities for submission to the Annual Meeting and prepare and submit required appropriate reports.

9. Members at Large. The Nominating Committee shall recommend four (4) Members at Large to be elected at the Annual Meeting. They are to serve on the Church Council for three-year terms, staggered among the four. No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

10. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is comprised of the Minister, the Moderator of the Council, and the Chair of the Board of Deacons. A quorum for a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be any two (2) members. The Executive Committee is granted authority by the Church Council to

act on its behalf in matters of urgency when it is impractical to conduct a meeting of the Church Council. Any such actions are to be communicated to the Church Council as soon as practical after the event and should be reported and entered into the minutes at the next normal meeting of the Church Council.

FINANCES

1. The Financial Secretary shall receive all monies belonging to the Church. He/she shall count the loose offering (e.g., coins and cash not enclosed in an envelope) immediately following every service when offerings are received. He/she shall have the assistance of a second person (the Assistant Financial Secretary, a member of the Church Council, or a Deacon) to confirm cash amounts. He/she shall deposit them in such depositories as the Church Council shall direct in accordance with standard operating procedures, state laws, and IRS regulations. The Financial Secretary shall keep accurate accounts of all receipts, pledges, income from gifts, securities, and special offerings. It is essential that the Financial Secretary and the Assistant Financial Secretary keep their work highly confidential, since they and they alone, are to be aware of the amount and direction of an individual's contributions. The Financial Secretary and Assistant Financial Secretary shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. There is no limitation on the number of terms that may be served.

The Financial Secretary will have the authority of the Council, in the absence of the Treasurer, to sign checks, pay bills, and perform the Treasurer's other duties until the Treasurer returns or a new Treasurer is appointed.

2. The Treasurer shall receive all income receipts from the Financial Secretary and shall be responsible for all financial records of the Church. The Treasurer shall sign all checks and pay bills of the Church as budgeted or by direction of the Council. The Treasurer shall be elected to serve for a term of one year. There is no limitation on the number of terms that may be served. The Treasurer shall have the authority of Council, in the absence of the Financial Secretary and the Assistant Financial Secretary, to count collections using a second person as specified above, to post donations in accordance with the donor(s) direction and standard operating procedures, and to perform other duties of the Financial Secretary or Assistant Financial Secretary until the Financial Secretary or Assistant Financial Secretary returns or a new Financial Secretary or Assistant Financial Secretary is appointed.

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. All offerings are to be utilized or distributed in accordance with the direction of the donor.

4. Rangeley Congregational Church Endowment Fund. A fund to be known as the Rangeley Congregational Church Endowment Fund shall be maintained. It shall be managed by the Investment Committee under the direction of the Board of Finance.

a. The Endowment 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. The Investment Committee may avoid certain investments which are inconsistent with Christian values and may search out investments that promote these values.

5. The Rangeley Congregational Church Investment Committee shall be appointed by the Finance Committee not later than one month after the Annual Meeting. It shall be comprised of at least three (3) 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 alternating two (2) year terms.

7. Non-budgeted expenses in excess of \$500.00 or budgeted expenses in excess of \$2500 shall require signatures of two persons on the voucher, the second being either the Treasurer or another designated signatory (see #8 below).

Non-budgeted expenditures greater than \$500 shall require the approval of the Church Council.

8. Designated signatories for the Church Checking Account are: Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Chair of Investment Committee, and Council Moderator.

FISCAL YEAR

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

AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS

These by-laws, with the exception of the one entitled Rangeley Congregational Church Endowment Fund, 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. 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 (Finance Item 4.) can only be amended by a favorable vote of at least two thirds of the voting membership of the Church.

RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

No substantial part of the activities of the Church shall be carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Church shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publication or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidates for public office.

DEFINITIONS

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

In this document, the titles "Chair of Church Council" and "Moderator" are used interchangeably.

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.