

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

I. **Name:**

The name of this church shall be The Federated Church of Christ, Incorporated.

II. **Purpose:**

The purpose of this church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ in the worship of God and in making God's will dominant in their lives, especially as that will is set forth in the life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We firmly believe that the federation of the First Baptist Church of Brooklyn and the First Trinitarian Church of Brooklyn has enabled us to render effective service to the moral and religious life of the community, as well as promote on a larger scale the kingdom of our Lord and Savior. For this purpose we are united as one church in worship, service, administration, and Christian fellowship, and welcome members by confession of faith or by transfer from another Christian Church.

III. **Polity:**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Christian churches. The church maintains denominational ties with the American Baptist Churches, USA and with the United Church of Christ.

IV. **Covenant:**

We are united in striving to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures, and in our purpose to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church of Christ to proclaim the gospel to all humankind, exalting the worship of the one true God, and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace and the realization of brotherhood and sisterhood. Depending as did our forerunners upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world into the Kingdom of God; and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting.

V. **Membership:**

A. *Full Membership:* The full members of this church shall be all those who have previous to this revision of these Bylaws been acknowledged as full members of this church.

1. New members will be received into full membership in this church, and in the American Baptist Churches, USA and the United Church of Christ, upon public acceptance of its principles, upon approval of the Diaconate, and by:

- a. Presentation of a satisfactory letter from another Christian church, or
- b. Reaffirmation of faith, if a letter is not available, or
- c. Confession of faith, confirmation, or baptism (if not baptized as an infant).

(1) Young people who have been baptized as infants, or who are seeking believer's baptism, may join the church after completion of a series of classes under the guidance of the Pastor and the Board of Christian Education.

(continues)

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

A. *Full Membership* (continued)

2. The Right Hand of Fellowship will be extended to new members during an appropriate service of worship.

B. *Associate Membership*: Any person who holds active membership in another Christian church, and worships with and contributes to the support of this church, may be admitted as an Associate Member, on approval of the Diaconate. Such a member shall have the privileges of Full Membership but may not serve as Moderator, Deacon, or Trustee.

C. *Obligations and Rights of Membership*: The action of becoming a member is one of covenanting with others to strive to live a Christian life, to share in the fellowship and the work of the church, to attend the regular worship of the church including the celebration of the Lord's Supper, to contribute to the financial support and Christian outreach of the church and to nurture concern for one's fellow members and for one's fellow human beings.

D. *Eligibility*: Full and Associate members shall be eligible for all offices, except as otherwise provided, and shall have the right to vote on all matters before the church. When voting on legal matters governed by the laws of the State of Connecticut, voting shall conform to the requirements of such laws.

E. *Non-Resident Members*: Members living at a distance which precludes active participation who communicate with this church annually may request that their names be retained on the Non-Resident membership roll of this church. These members shall be contacted each year at the time of the annual stewardship campaign.

F. *Termination of Membership*:

1. Any member in good standing who desires a letter of dismissal and recommendation to another church is entitled to receive the same, upon application to the Clerk and review by the Pastor. Membership in this church shall terminate upon issuance of this letter.
2. Any members requesting that their names be removed from the membership list of this church shall have such request granted, after consultation with the Pastor and/or the Diaconate.
3. Any member whose behavior becomes a detriment to the Church may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose, only after patient and loving efforts by the Pastor and the Diaconate.
4. Any member whose address has been long unknown or who for a period of two years, in spite of repeated efforts has not communicated with the church, may be dropped from the roll after review by the Deacons.

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

VI. Administration:

No church member may serve on more than one Board and one Committee. No Officer shall serve on more than one Board or Committee during any one year. Membership on the Executive Board shall not be counted

A. *Executive Board*: The Executive Board shall consist of the Pastor, the Moderator, the Clerk, the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, the Head Deacon, the Head Trustee, the Chairperson or designated member of all Committees, and a representative from the WCGCS (Women's Christian Group for Community Service).

1. It shall be the function of the Executive Board to consider the entire task of the church. The Executive Board shall administer the affairs of the church in cooperation with the Pastor. The Executive Board is responsible for the formulation and implementation of church policy; for establishing staff personnel policies; for coordination of the activities of the various boards and organized groups of the church, for promoting and encouraging channels of communication throughout the church; for maintenance of properties and equipment, for periodic review of all church functions; and for both short and long range planning. The Executive Board may act for the church, and any action so taken may be subject to review by the church. The Executive Board shall meet monthly, and five members shall constitute a quorum.
2. The Executive Board shall appoint a chairperson of a Buildings and Grounds Committee who shall then appoint such members as deemed appropriate, to care for the church properties; secure and supervise a Sexton; provide for necessary repairs; and submit proposals for improvement or new construction. The Committee shall have the ability to expend up to \$500 for any one purpose not budgeted, with the consent of the Executive Board.
3. If in supervising the affairs of the church, it should become necessary to acquire the service of a lawyer or paralegal, it is the function of the Executive Board to make such arrangements.
4. When a vacancy exists in the pastorate, the Executive Board shall appoint a Pastoral Search Committee of at least six church members.
5. The Executive Board shall present a comprehensive report to the Annual Meeting of the church, consisting of the reports of all Officers, Boards, Committees, and Organizations on the work of the past year, and the chief objectives of the church for the coming year. Reports are due to the Church office on or before December 31, for the annual report to be distributed at least 2 weeks prior to the annual meeting.
6. Vacancies: Vacancies arising on any Board or Committee shall be filled by action of the Executive Board. Appointees shall serve for the remainder of the current year.
7. The Executive Board shall appoint at least one representative to the Killingly-Brooklyn Interfaith Council (KBIC or its successor) in addition to the Pastor.
8. The Executive Board shall appoint delegates to represent the church at both local and statewide meetings and functions of the ABC and the UCC.

(continues)

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

A. *Executive Board*: (continued)

9. The Executive Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee for a one year term, which shall consist of at least three church members. The committee shall prepare nominations for Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Deacons, Trustees and committees for the Church year.
 - a. One person shall be nominated for each position, except as otherwise provided, and each nominee shall indicate acceptance prior to printing of the nominations. Nominations will be made available to the church membership at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.
 - b. The right of a member to make nominations from the floor shall always be recognized.

B. *Pastor*: The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose.

1. The Pastor shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the church, with the assistance of the Diaconate; shall preach the Gospel; administer the sacraments, ordinances and rites of the church; have under care all services of public worship, visit the sick and the home bound; promote the growth of the church by visitation and friendly contact; and be an ex-officio member of all Boards and Committees, with voice but not vote. The Pastor will provide guidance to the Director of Christian Education.
2. The Pastor shall supervise the work of the office and the office secretary and cooperate with the Executive Board in administering the affairs of the church. The pastor shall assure that the church office secretary keeps a record of the addresses of all members; date and mode of members acceptance and dismissal; all baptisms, marriages, and deaths; and issue all letters of transfer.
3. Upon acceptance of a call to this pastorate, the Pastor shall become a Full Member of this church. The Pastor is expected to be in good ministerial standing in the American Baptist Churches, USA or the United Church of Christ, or both.
4. While the term of the Pastor is indefinite, the church may terminate the Pastor by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose, with the expectation that the resignation will become effective within sixty days of such request. Likewise, the Pastor shall give sixty days notice of intention to leave the church. However, in the event of loss of ministerial standing, the relation between the church and Pastor shall terminate immediately. The notice period specified herein may be altered by mutual consent.
5. In the event of substantiated allegations of misconduct, an ordained person is subject to the rules and guidelines of the denomination which holds the Ordination.

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

- C. *Christian Education Coordinator*: The Christian Education Coordinator shall be called for an indefinite period by a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose. Selection of a candidate for Christian Education Coordinator shall be approved by the Christian Education Committee and the Executive Board before presentation to the Congregation for election. Prior to election, the candidate shall be introduced to the Congregation at a regular Sunday service devoted in part to this purpose, at which time the candidate shall have opportunity to speak to the Congregation.
1. The Christian Education Coordinator, with the guidance of the Christian Education Committee and the Pastor, shall lead in the planning of a definite educational program consistent with the accepted policies of the church. The Christian Education Coordinator shall be responsible for and direct the Ministry to church members and children, assisting all Christian Educational personnel. Church families having children and young people shall be called upon especially in order that planning is done with a thorough knowledge of the needs of the membership.
 2. Christian Education Coordinator serves under the supervision of the Pastor and the Chairperson of the Christian Education Committee, with an annual performance review upon contract renewal. The Christian Education Coordinator may attend meetings of the Executive Board, but will not be required to do so. Suitable records of education shall be kept and a Christian Education report will be included in the Annual Report of the church.
 3. While the term of the Christian Education Coordinator is indefinite, the church may terminate this position by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose, with the expectation that the resignation will become effective within sixty days of such request. Likewise, the Christian education Coordinator shall give sixty days notice of intention to leave the church. The notice period specified herein may be altered by mutual consent.
- D. *Officers*: The following officers of this church shall be elected at an annual meeting of the church for a three year term and shall be ineligible for re-election after two successive terms in office.
1. Moderator: The Moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the church, and shall serve as chair of the Executive Board, with voice and vote. The Moderator shall ensure that all committees and boards meet as soon as practicable after the annual meeting.
 - a. The Moderator shall be an ex-officio member of all Boards and Committees with voice but no vote.
 - b. In the absence of the Moderator a meeting shall be called to order by an officer of the church and a Moderator pro-tem shall be elected to conduct the meeting.

(continues)

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

D. *Officers:* (continued)

2. Clerk: The Clerk shall keep a faithful record of all proceedings of the church and the Executive Board, of which the Clerk shall be Secretary. The Clerk shall notify all persons elected to offices, boards, or committees; give all notices required for legal meetings; and conduct all correspondence not otherwise provided for.
3. Treasurer. As the financial officer of the church the Treasurer shall be responsible for administering the church's monies; for overseeing and keeping detailed records of the church's finances; and for the supervision of the church office secretary in matters relating to financial affairs of the church. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees with voice and vote.
 - a. The Treasurer shall be responsible for receiving proof of all monies deposited from the Financial Secretary and other sources; for all deposited funds received in such depository as the Trustees direct; and for such papers as relate to the property of the church; presenting a cash flow statement of all accounts at the monthly meetings of the Board of Trustees and Executive Board; and for presenting a complete financial statement of all accounts at the annual meeting.
 - b. The Treasurer shall approve payment of all bills of the church; shall sign checks in payment of financial claims against the church; and shall contract to invest funds and pay income from these funds as directed by the Trustees.
 - c. The Treasurer shall be authorized to approve non-budgeted expenses up to \$400.00. Approval must be received from the Trustees for payment of larger, non-budgeted bills.
 - d. The Treasurer shall be prepared for an audit to be performed at the end of each year.
 - e. If a vacancy should occur during the year, a church member shall be appointed by the Executive Board to complete the year. The position will be filled for a full term at the next annual meeting.
 - f. As a corporate agent, The Treasurer shall be co-signers with the Moderator and Chairman of Trustees.
 - g. The Treasurer shall provide support and guidance to fundraising activities to assure proper recordkeeping.
4. Financial Secretary: The Financial Secretary shall receive all offerings and special collections; shall keep an accurate record of all subscribers accounts; shall pay or submit to the Treasurer proof of deposit for all monies received, and shall furnish subscribers with statements of their accounts at least twice each year. Records of subscriber's accounts shall be held as a sacred trust.

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

- E. *Boards*: The following members of Boards shall be elected at an annual meeting of the church for a three year term and shall be ineligible for re-election to the same Board after two successive terms in office, unless approved by the Executive Board. All boards shall select their own chair, and shall meet once a month prior to the meeting of the Executive Board.
1. Board of Deacons: The Board of Deacons, or Diaconate, shall consist of seven members. Members shall be elected as needed. A quorum of the Board shall consist of four members.
 - a. The Ministry of the Board of Deacons is to be servants of the church and of all people. They shall assist the Pastor in services to members, overseeing the pastoral ministry and guiding the organizational ways in which the spiritual needs of the church are met.
 - b. The Deacons will receive applications for membership in this church, and shall welcome new members into the fellowship of the church. They shall make an annual survey of the church roll and update the membership lists.
 - c. The Deacons shall provide for supply of the pulpit in case of the absence of the pastor or provide interim leadership in the event of a vacancy in the Pastorate.
 - d. The Deacons shall appoint a Historian who will keep a journal of all occurrences of interest to the church, both past and present.
 - e. The Deacons shall provide for ushers at services of worship.
 - f. The Deacons shall have a monthly communion offering to be used by the Deacons or the Pastor to assist those in need.
 - g. The Deacons shall appoint a Music Coordinator who will assist the Pastor in the selecting of music, act as a liaison between the Pastor, choir and music accompanist, and the office for bulletin preparation, provide copies of new music, update the Red Book with new music as needed, keep a record of hymns and songs used in worship and report copy activity to the CCLI when requested.
 - h. The Deacons shall appoint a Flower Coordinator who will work in conjunction with the Pastor and Music coordinator to decorate the church in observance of each season of the liturgical year, to coordinate the ordering of special flowers and to provide suitable floral arrangements for Sundays and other special occasions.
 2. Board of Trustees: The Board of Trustees shall consist of four members. A quorum of the board shall consist of a majority.
 - a. The Trustees shall have charge of the financial affairs of the church, including overseeing the investments, contracts, salaries, etc. The Board shall not have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer real property without specific approval given by vote of the church at a meeting called for that purpose.
 - b. The Trustees shall develop a proposed budget for the ensuing year, after consultation with the Executive Board. The budget in final form shall be presented to the membership for approval at the Annual Meeting of the church. The proposed budget may be amended only by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

(continues)

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

2. Board of Trustees (continued)

- c. The Trustees may withdraw, near the end of the fiscal year, up to 5% of the Endowment fund to cover anticipated or estimated budget shortfalls. If the shortfall was over-estimated, any funds withdrawn in excess will be placed back into the Endowment fund. This withdrawal must also be approved by a vote from the Executive Board. Any anticipated withdrawal above 5% must be brought before the Congregation to a special vote.
- d. The Trustees shall appoint a Stewardship Committee annually to carry out the fundraising campaign of the church at least two months prior to the Annual Meeting.
- e. The Trustees shall appoint an Auditing Committee for an audit of the financial records of the church annually, or as required.

F. *Committees*: The following members of Committees of this church shall be elected at an annual meeting of the church for a three year term and shall be ineligible for re-election to the same Committee after two successive terms in office unless approved by the Executive Board. All committees shall select their own chairperson annually.

1. *Committee for Christian Education*: The Committee shall consist of three members and shall be responsible for the supervision and direction of the educational work of the church, including Sunday Church School. They shall provide teachers for the Church School, and coordinate other educational activities. The Christian Education Coordinator shall be an ex-officio member with voice but not vote.
2. *Missions Committee*: This committee shall consist of three members and shall carry forward a program of mission education and promotion in the church, in cooperation with the Pastor and Executive Board.
3. *The Pastor Parish Committee*: This committee shall consist of three members. The Pastor, the Diaconate, and members of the Executive Committee shall submit names from which the Nominating Committee may choose a nominee for the Pastor Parish Committee. The duty of the committee shall be to remain in communication with the Pastor regarding the needs of the Pastor and the Pastor's family. This committee, in conjunction with the Pastor, will evaluate the church's ministry annually, and will review the Pastor's financial package. When called upon, this committee will act as a liaison between the Pastor and the congregation to provide open communications.
 - a. At least one member of the Committee should be a member of the Diaconate.
 - b. At least one member of the Committee should be a member of any Search Committee that may exist.

G. *Term Limitations*: It is strongly suggested that any person holding an elected office for two consecutive terms should wait at least twelve months prior to serving in another elected position.

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

H. *Bonding*: The Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, and church office secretary shall each be bonded or insured by the church in the amount of at least five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000).

VII. Meetings:

- A. *Services of Worship*: Services of Worship shall be held at given hours each Sunday, which hours shall be determined by the Executive Board. The service of Communion shall be celebrated on the first Sunday of each month, except as the Board of Deacons may determine.
- B. *Business Meetings*: The Annual Meeting of the church shall be held in January at a time and date to be specified by the Executive Board to receive written annual reports from all Officers, Boards, Committees, and organizations; to hold elections; to transact routine business; to adopt the annual budget; and to set plans for the new year. Annual reports will be distributed to all members of the church at least 2 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting, and subsequently will be available in the vestibule of the church.
1. *Special Meetings*: Special Meetings maybe called by the Clerk upon directions of the Pastor, the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees, the Executive Board, or upon written request of five members of the church. All items of business to be transacted must appear in the call of the meeting, and only those items appearing in the call may be acted upon.
- C. *Notices*: Notices for meetings shall be posted in the church vestibule, and shall be read from the pulpit at a Sunday Worship Service at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.
- D. *Quorum*: A quorum of the church membership shall consist of at least twenty five (25) Full and Associate members of this church.
- E. *Voting*: Unless otherwise specified herein, a simple majority vote by those present and voting is decisive. Voting may be by voice vote or show of hands unless a ballot is proposed and voted.
- F. *Official Year*: The official and fiscal year shall be the calendar year. All officers, boards, and committees elected at the Annual Meeting shall assume their duties at the close of that meeting, and shall continue in office until their successor has been elected and has assumed the duties of that office.
- G. *Rules and Regulations*: Roberts Rules of Order (Revised), shall apply in the conduct of meetings insofar as there is no conflict with these Bylaws, which shall take precedence.

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

VIII. Finance:

The church shall seek the support of its members by contributions of individuals and organizations. Opportunity shall be offered to all members of the church to make pledged subscriptions through an annual stewardship campaign.

- A. *Permanent Fund*: All legacies not specifically appropriated to some other purpose shall be set aside in a Permanent Fund. The Permanent Fund shall be placed in trust by the Treasurer under order of the Trustees. The object of the Permanent Fund will be to supplement subscriptions, not to replace them; the income from the Permanent Fund shall be used insofar as practicable for other than routine expenses.

IX. Amendments:

These Bylaws may be altered, amended, or replaced only by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting, providing that the following conditions have been met:

- A. The proposed changes have been submitted by the Executive Board, or have been submitted in writing to the Clerk bearing signatures of at least five Full members of the church.
- B. A notice of the call of the meeting has been posted in the vestibule of the church and copies of the proposed changes have been made available to the church membership at least one month before the meeting.

X. Effective Date:

These Bylaws became effective at the close of the Annual Meeting on January 31, 2016 (previously amended at a Special Meeting on April 19, 2015) and superseded all other rules, regulations, and Bylaws previously issued.

Bylaws of the Federated Church of Christ - January 31, 2016

XI. Board / Committee Matrix:

To help clarify and provide an easy reference, the following is provided.

Name	Chosen By / How?	Members	Term	Limit*	Note
Auditing Committee	Trustees	1+		none	annually or as required
Buildings and Grounds Chairperson	Executive Board	1	indefinite	none	
Buildings and Grounds Committee	Buildings and Grounds Chairperson	1+	indefinite	none	expend up to \$500, with consent of Exec. Board
Christian Education Committee	Members 2/3 majority at annual meeting	3	3	2	
Christian Education Coordinator	Members 2/3 majority	1	Indefinite	none	approve by Christian Ed. Committee & Exec. Board before vote
Clerk	Members 2/3 majority at annual meeting	1	3	2	
Deacons	Members 2/3 majority at annual meeting	7	3	2	members elected as needed; quorum = 4
Deacons Chair	Deacons	1	3	2	
Delegate(s) to ABC	Executive Board	1+	Indefinite	none	local and state meetings
Delegate(s) to UCC	Executive Board	1+	Indefinite	none	local and state meetings
Financial Secretary	Members 2/3 majority at annual meeting	1	3	2	
Flower Coordinator	Deacons	1	Indefinite	none	
Historian	Deacons	1	Indefinite	none	
Killingly-Brooklyn Interfaith Council	Executive Board	1+	Indefinite	none	includes Pastor
Legal Counsel	Executive Board			n/a	hired as needed
Missions Committee	Members 2/3 majority at annual meeting	3	3	2	
Moderator	Members 2/3 majority at annual meeting	1	3	2	ex-officio member of all Boards and Committees
Moderator pro-tem	in absence of Moderator, members 2/3 majority	1	n/a	n/a	meeting called to order by officer of church, Moderator pro-tem elected
Music Coordinator	Deacons	1	Indefinite	none	
Nominating Committee	Executive Board	3+	1 year	none	Nominations available at least two weeks prior to Annual Meeting
Pastor	Members 2/3 majority	1	Indefinite	none	from Search Committee
Pastor Parish Committee	Members 2/3 majority at annual meeting	3	3	2	1 should be a Deacon; 1 should be a member of any Search Committee
Pastoral Search Committee	Executive Board	6+	as needed	none	vacancy in the pastorate
Secretary for office	Pastor & Exec. Board	1	Indefinite	n/a	hired position
Sexton	Buildings and Grounds Committee	1	Indefinite	none	
Stewardship Committee	Trustees	1+	Indefinite	none	at least 2 months prior to annual meeting
Treasurer	Members 2/3 majority at annual meeting	1	3	2	authorize expenses up to \$400, ex-officio Trustee
Trustees	Members 2/3 majority at annual meeting	4	3	2	quorum = majority
Trustees Chair	Trustees	1	3	2	
Ushers	Deacons	as needed	n/a	n/a	
WCGCS Chair	WCGCS	1	n/a	n/a	

* Any person holding an elected office for 2 consecutive terms cannot be re-elected to the same position unless approved by Executive Board, and should wait at least 12 months prior to serving in another elected position.