

# **The Constitution of Plymouth Congregational Church United Church of Christ Lawrence, Kansas**

---

**Approved by Vote of the Membership on November 13, 1988**

## **Article I. Name**

The name of this Church shall be Plymouth Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Lawrence, Kansas, commonly known since its organization in 1854 as "Plymouth Church."

## **Article II. Purpose**

It shall be the purpose of this Church "to support the worship of God and the work of the Gospel." (Charter of Plymouth Congregational Church, December 14, 1882).

## **Article III. Polity**

The GOVERNING AUTHORITY of the Church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject in legal matters to such regulations and obligations as may be required by reason of its incorporation under the laws of the State of Kansas. The membership assembled in Congregational Meeting shall elect officers; approve the annual budget, call the Senior Pastor, and authorize acquisition, disposition and mortgaging of real property. These membership responsibilities shall not be delegated.

The Church Council functions as the trustees of the Church, and shall implement the decisions of the membership. The membership may delegate responsibilities other than responsibilities of the membership to the Church Council. All acts of the Council are subject to the will of the membership.

Plymouth Church is part of the United Church of Christ, and its relationship to that denomination shall be sustained in accordance with those portions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ relating to local churches, originally adopted July 4, 1961, or as later amended.

## **Article IV. Covenant of Faith**

The members of this Church are united by the acceptance of a mutual covenant, which is as follows:

In the love of truth and in the spirit of Jesus, we unite for the worship of God and the service of all. We seek to know the will of God and to walk in God's ways, made known or to be made known to us; to love one another; to proclaim the Gospel to all the world; to work and pray for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of our shared humanity. And we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the gift of life eternal. Amen.

## **Article V. Members**

The members of the Church are those persons who have subscribed to the polity and covenant, have been received by the Church as prescribed in the Bylaws, and participate actively in the life of the Church.

## **Article VI. Bylaws**

The work of the church shall be conducted in accordance with the Bylaws appended to this Constitution.

## **Article VII Amendments**

Amendments to the Constitution shall be by two-thirds of the members present and voting at a Congregational Meeting having a quorum of ten percent of the membership as reported at the last Annual Meeting.

## **Article VIII. Adoption**

This Constitution is adopted and is effective as of this 13th day of November, 1988.

---

# **The Bylaws of Plymouth Congregational Church United Church of Christ Lawrence, Kansas**

Approved by Vote of the Membership on November 13, 1988. and amended as set forth herein.

## **Article I. Name.**

The name of this church shall be Plymouth Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Lawrence, Kansas, commonly known as "Plymouth Church."

## **Article II. Membership**

### **Section 1. Members.**

Plymouth Church recognizes all persons as members of the family of God, and all Christians as members of the community of faith. In this faith community we include, in addition to members as defined elsewhere in these Bylaws, children who have not yet owned the covenant and become members as defined below, and all those members who through death have entered into the communion of saints.

### **A. Definitions.**

- 1. Active member:** Any baptized person who has made public acceptance of the polity and covenant of Plymouth Church and actively participates in the life of this Church through prayers, presence, gifts, and service.
- 2. Associate Member:** A person residing in the Lawrence area who is a member of another

church, but because of the temporary nature of the residence in the area, or for other sincere reasons, does not wish to sever membership in the home church. Associate members make public acceptance of the polity and covenant of Plymouth Church and incur all the responsibilities and enjoy all the rights of Active Members.

**3. Non-Resident Member:** An Active or Associate Member who no longer resides in the Lawrence area. Such persons shall be encouraged to transfer membership to a church in the vicinity of present residence, but shall not be discontinued from membership except under procedures described below under Inactive Status (Article II, Section 4).

**4. Inactive Member.** A member who no longer identifies actively with Plymouth Church as described in Article II, Section B.4.1, but has not requested termination of membership.

## **B. Procedures.**

**1. Reception of New Members.** Persons may be received into Church membership by the Pastors through:

- a. Profession of Faith (baptism and confirmation)
- b. Presentation of a letter of transfer from another Christian church
- c. Reaffirmation of faith, if a letter of transfer is not available
- d. Associate Membership, as defined above.

**2. Reinstatement of membership.** Any former member of Plymouth Church who has been issued a letter of transfer, or withdrawn from membership may be received again into membership by letter of transfer or reaffirmation.

## **Section 2. Responsibilities and Rights.**

### **A. Responsibilities.**

All members, to the extent to which they are able, are expected to:

1. Attend public worship and share in the sacraments, fellowship, and programs of the Church
2. Contribute to the financial support of the Church
3. Participate in the affairs of the Church by contributing time and talent; and
4. Attend the Annual Meeting and Called Meetings of the Congregation

### **B. Rights.**

1. Only Active Members and Associate Members are eligible to hold elective offices of the Church, to serve on elective boards, and to vote in Annual and Called Meetings.
2. All members have access to meetings and minutes of the Church Council, organizations of the

Congregation, boards, and all of their committees, except as follows:

- a. The Council and Personnel Committee may meet in Executive Session for discussion of personnel and other sensitive matters, and such sessions shall not be open to the membership.
- b. In order to permit frank and open discussion of all applicants, and to preserve the privacy of the applicant, meetings of the Senior and Associate Pastor Search Committees shall not be open to the membership unless the Committee decides by majority vote that a specific meeting shall be open to the membership.

### **Section 3. Termination of Membership.**

Any member who desires to withdraw membership from the Church may do so in either of the following ways:

- A. Letter of Transfer.** A letter of transfer to another church shall be prepared for any member upon written request to the Board of Membership. Upon such notice, the Board of Membership shall promptly issue such letter of transfer and remove the person's name from the membership roll and place it in the archival roll.
- B. Withdrawal.** Any member who desires to withdraw membership from Plymouth Church may do so by written request to the Board of Membership. Upon such notice, the Board of Membership shall remove the person's name from the active membership roll and place it on the archival roll. That person shall then have no privileges of transfer, unless the person requests reinstatement.

### **Section 4: Inactive Membership.**

Recognizing that there are times of transition in the lives of all persons and that during those times such persons may not wish to sever all church ties, Plymouth Church has established a procedure for inactive membership.

- A. Inactive Status.** When a member has moved away from the Lawrence area or has ceased to identify with Plymouth Church for any other reason, and has not requested a termination of membership, the Board of Membership may remove that person's name from the active membership roll.
  1. A member who has not attended Sunday worship, contributed to the church, activities, or communicated with the church for a period of twelve consecutive months, may be transferred to the inactive roll by the Board of Membership.
  2. The member shall remain on the inactive roll indefinitely, or until the member requests a termination of membership by letter of transfer, or withdrawal.
- B. Removal from Inactive Status.** A member's name shall be removed from the inactive roll and returned to the active roll at any time such member resumes activity as defined in Subsection A.1.

## **Article III. Services and Meetings of the Congregation**

### **Section 1: Worship.**

Public services of worship shall be held each Sunday. The sacraments of Baptism and Communion shall be celebrated, and other services of worship may be held, as determined by the Pastors and the Board of Deacons.

## **Section 2. Congregational Meetings**

**A. Annual Meeting.** The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held during the month of January or within the first 10 days of February.

1. The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held to fill vacancies in elective offices; to elect board members, Council members-at-large, and delegates to the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference; to adopt a Mission Spending Plan for the ensuing year; to receive the annual reports of the officers, pastors, organizations and boards; and to transact such other business as may come before it. Any matter affecting the religious, financial, or social welfare of the church may be placed on the agenda for the Annual Meeting using the following process. The agenda shall be determined by the Moderator with the advice of the Church Council, except that an agenda subject shall be introduced upon receipt of a written petition to the Council signed by at least five percent of the Church membership reported at the previous Annual Meeting. Such petition shall be presented to the Council at the last meeting of the Council prior to the Annual Meeting.
2. The organizational year of the Church shall begin following the Annual Meeting and all newly elected officers, board members, and committee members shall assume their duties at that time and continue in office until the following Annual Meeting.

**B. Called Meetings.** Called Meetings of the Church shall be held on call of the Moderator, the Church Council, or five percent of the Church members by written request addressed to the Moderator.

**C. Notice of Congregational Meetings.** Notice of each Annual Meeting and of any Called Meeting shall state the subjects and objectives thereof and shall be given by 1) publishing such notice in the official Plymouth newsletter for distribution to all members at least ten days prior to the day set for the meeting, and 2) announcement from the pulpit at least two Sundays prior to such meeting. A notice of proposal to amend the Constitution and Bylaws must include the specific words to be deleted and adopted, and a brief explanation.

### **D. Congregational Meeting Procedures.**

1. **Officers.** The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the Congregation, and the Clerk shall act as Secretary.
2. **Quorum.** Ten percent of the Church voting membership as reported at the last Annual Meeting shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present at the meeting, the members may adjourn such meeting to the same day and hour of the following week, at which time the members present shall constitute a quorum for any purposes stated in the original call, except for amendment of the Constitution.
3. **Voting.** All Active and Associate members have the right to act and vote at any meeting of the Congregation. A majority vote of those present and voting shall be decisive, except that a three-fourths vote by written ballot shall be required to call or dismiss a Senior Pastor, a three-

fourths vote by written ballot shall be required to call an Associate Pastor, and a two-thirds vote shall be required to amend the Constitution.

**4. Elections.** If no more than one person is nominated for an elective office, election may be by acclamation. A written ballot is required if more than one person is nominated for an office.

**5. Rules.** The rules of parliamentary procedure compiled in the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all Congregational Meetings, unless otherwise provided in the Constitution or Bylaws. A Parliamentarian shall be appointed and announced at each Congregational Meeting.

**E. The fiscal year of the Church shall be the calendar year.** However, the Treasurer may close the books at such time as directed by the Board of Stewardship.

## **Article IV. Organizations of the Congregation**

### **Section 1. Nominating Committee**

**A. Purpose.** The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one eligible member of Plymouth Church as a candidate for each elective position in the Church, and shall publish the list of nominees in a Church publication at least ten days prior to the Annual Meeting

**B. Membership.** Annually, the Church Council shall activate a Nominating Committee. The Moderator-Elect shall construct the Nominating Committee from the Council Representatives from the Boards in consultation with the Pastors and Membership Associate. The Nominating Committee shall consult with members of the Congregation, especially with retiring members of boards, concerning candidates for nomination.

### **Section 2. Senior Pastor Search Committee**

**A. Purpose.** A Senior Pastor Search Committee shall be established whenever a vacancy occurs in the Office of Senior Pastor.

**B. Membership.** The Search Committee shall comprise at least nine and no more than twelve voting members of Plymouth Church. The Moderator shall nominate at least nine members of Plymouth Church to the Search Committee. Care must be taken to assure that members of this Committee are representative of the whole membership. The names of the nominees shall be published to the congregation and presented to the Church Council for consideration. Additional nominations may be made by members of the Congregation at that time. The membership of the Search Committee must be approved by a majority vote of the Church Council. The Moderator, Immediate Past Moderator, and Moderator-Elect are ex officio, non-voting members of the Committee.

**C. Responsibilities.** The Search Committee shall consult with the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference concerning United Church of Christ recommendations for conducting a search. When the search is completed, the Committee shall report its recommendation to the Church Council. Approval by at least a three-quarters vote of the Council is required before submitting the name of the candidate to the Congregation. The Senior Pastor shall be called by written ballot vote of three-quarters of the membership present and voting at a Congregational Meeting.

**D. Organization and Operation.** At the first meeting of the Committee, the Committee shall elect a

chair, vice-chair, and secretary. The Committee shall propose a budget for Council approval. The Committee shall meet with sufficient frequency to accomplish its responsibilities expeditiously. Minutes of all meetings shall be submitted by the Secretary and approved by the Committee. Meetings of the Committee shall be closed and confidential, unless the Committee by majority vote opens a meeting to the Congregation. Persons may be invited to attend for advice and consultation. Minutes of the meetings may be disposed of as decided by the Committee once a Senior Pastor is called by the Congregation.

### **Section 3. Delegates to the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference or other UCC instrumentalities.**

Lay delegates to the Annual Meeting of the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference of the United Church of Christ shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for three-year overlapping terms. The number of delegates is determined annually by quotas for local congregations, established by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference. In addition to those delegates, the Moderator and Moderator-Elect shall be counted among the quota of lay delegates. The pastors of the Congregation holding ministerial standing in the Kansas Oklahoma Conference shall be clergy delegates.

### **Section 4. Pastor-Parish Committee.**

This Committee shall consist of the Moderator, Immediate Past Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Senior Pastor, and Associate Pastor(s). The purpose of this Committee shall be to facilitate informal communications between the lay leadership and the Pastors with respect to:

- A. programs and meeting agenda
- B. concerns of the Congregation
- C. promotion of mutual ministry
- D. nurture of the pastors
- E. prevention and resolution of conflict and misunderstanding
- F. and such other matters as may come before the Committee. A meeting may be called by any of its members.

## **Article V. Officers**

### **Section 1. Definitions.**

The corporate officers of the Church are the Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Clerk, Treasurer, and Senior Pastor.

### **Section 2. Terms and Limitations.**

The Moderator-Elect shall be elected for a term of one year, followed by a one-year term as Moderator, and then a one-year term as Immediate Past Moderator. If the Moderator-Elect is unable to assume the office of Moderator, a Moderator shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year, followed by a one-year term as Immediate Past Moderator. The Clerk and the Treasurer shall be elected to one-year terms with a limitation of six consecutive terms. The Senior Pastor holds office

without stated limitation of time.

### **Section 3. Moderator.**

The Moderator is the lay leader of the Church, and principal spokesperson for the Congregation on matters of Church policy. The Moderator shall preside over all meetings of the Congregation and meetings of the Council. If the Moderator position becomes vacant, the post will be filled with the Immediate Past Moderator. If this is not possible the Council will first seek to fill the position with a former Moderator.

### **Section 4. Moderator-Elect.**

The Moderator-Elect shall fulfill the duties of the Moderator in the absence of the Moderator, and serve in such other capacities as the Moderator may request.

### **Section 5. Clerk.**

The Clerk shall serve as secretary of meetings of the Congregation and meetings of the Council. When a signature is needed as Secretary on corporate documents, the Clerk shall sign as Secretary of the Corporation.

### **Section 6. Treasurer.**

The Treasurer shall:

- A.** Supervise the receiving of moneys and the making of payments per the Mission Spending Plan and as otherwise authorized by the Board of Stewardship.
- B.** Deposit all monies and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the Church with such depositories as may be designated by the Church Council. The Treasurer shall disburse the funds of the Church as may be ordered by the Church Council and shall render to the Moderator and/or the Church Council whenever they request an account of the all the transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the Church; and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Church Council or these bylaws.
- C.** Be responsible for development and overview of financial accounting and reporting systems
- D.** Be bonded for such amount as required by the Board of Stewardship
- E.** Be an ex officio member without vote of the Board of Stewardship and its Committees
- F.** Perform other duties as prescribed by the Board of Stewardship; and
- G.** Receive Disbursement, as directed by the Congregation or Church Council according to these by laws, of principal and income from the Plymouth Congregational Church Endowment Fund.

### **Section 7. The Senior Pastor**

- A.** The Senior Pastor is the spiritual leader of the Congregation and the administrative officer of the church.

1. The Senior Pastor shall be an ordained minister in full standing in the United Church of Christ, and shall serve with professional freedom and responsibility as the spiritual leader of the Congregation. The Senior Pastor shall seek to enlist persons as followers of Christ, preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, have care of all services of public worship in consultation with the Board of Deacons, and oversee and perform parish visitation.
  2. The Senior Pastor shall administer the activities of the Church in cooperation with the Church Council, boards, and committees. All staff personnel, including other pastors employed by the Church, are responsible to the Senior Pastor in the execution of their duties. Working within fiscal and policy guidelines established by the Council through its Personnel Committee, the Senior Pastor shall:
    - a. employ and dismiss salaried staff, with the exception of the Associate Pastor(s), as defined in Article VII, Section 1A
    - b. ensure there is a written and up to date position description for each staff position, which shall be available to the Church Council
    - c. ensure that personnel files are maintained
    - d. develop and implement procedures for periodic performance review
    - e. recommend to the Council, through the Personnel Committee, adjustments in salary and benefits.
- B. Call of Senior Pastor.** The Senior Pastor shall be called or terminated by a vote of three-fourths of the membership present and voting at a Congregational Meeting. Votes shall be taken by written ballot. Resignation of services shall become effective not earlier than sixty days after written notice has been given by either party, unless a different period was agreed upon in writing at the time of call. Termination of services shall become effective immediately after a vote for termination by the Congregation, unless a different period was agreed upon in writing at the time of the call or termination.

## **Article VI. Church Council**

### **Section 1. Composition**

**A.** The voting members of the Church Council shall be the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor(s), Moderator-Elect, Immediate Past Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, the chair of each board, the Chair of the Endowment and Planned Giving Committee, and three members of the Congregation at large. Each board may elect one of its members to be the voting member of the Council if the chair is unable to serve. The three members of the Congregation at large will serve overlapping three-year terms. The Moderator may vote to affect the outcome.

### **Section 2. Duties**

**A.** The Council members are the functional trustees of the Church, and shall be the planning, evaluating and coordinating body of the Church.

**The Council shall:**

1. implement the decisions of the membership,
  2. exercise general powers authorized by the laws of the State of Kansas and by the Annual and Called Meetings of the Congregation
  3. conduct, manage, and control the business and affairs of the Church consistent with the Charter of Incorporation, Constitution, Bylaws, and the actions of Congregational meetings.
  4. assure that the ministry and program of the Church are accomplished through the development of appropriate policies and long-range plans,
  5. hold hearings concerning review and revision of the Mission Spending Plan prepared by the Board of Stewardship, approve and present the proposed budget to the Annual meeting for adoption.
- B.** The Church Council may adjust the Mission Spending Plan approved by the congregation at the Annual Meeting under the following conditions:
1. The Council may not increase or decrease the Mission Spending Plan more than three (3) percent without approval of a Called Congregational Meeting.
  2. The Council may not increase or decrease the Mission Spending Plan without a two-thirds vote of the Council membership.
  3. The Council shall notify the congregation at least three (3) weeks in advance of a Council meeting at which the Council shall vote on a motion to increase or decrease the annual Mission Spending Plan approved by the congregation at the Annual Meeting.
  4. The Council shall consult with the Stewardship Board on proposed increases or decreases to the Mission Spending Plan before the Council votes on such a motion.
- C.** The Council shall be responsible for establishing all staff positions, funding all paid positions, and through the Personnel Committee, ensuring that employment policies and contractual obligations with employees are properly administered. With regard to the position of Associate Pastor, the Council is authorized to conduct a search, recommend a call to the Congregation, terminate that pastoral relationship, and, upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor, assign duties.

**Section 3. Organization and Structure**

- A. Meetings.** The Council shall meet at least nine times per year. Special meetings may be called by the Moderator, the Senior Pastor, or by three members of the Church Council upon two days written notice to all members of the Council. Meetings shall be open to the entire membership of the church, and the agenda for regular meetings shall provide opportunity for any board, committee, church organization, or individual member to present reports and recommendations on matters of Church programs, plans, and policy. When, in the judgment of the Moderator or Senior Pastor, the sensitive nature of the matter under consideration requires that a portion of the meeting be closed, the Council shall on such occasions go into executive session restricted to voting members only. All decisions shall be made in open meeting and recorded in the minutes. When the performance of any staff is under consideration, he or she may be excused from that portion of

the closed meeting.

- B. Attendance.** If any member of the Council fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the Council without reason acceptable to a majority of the remaining members, then that person's place shall be declared vacant.
- C. Vacancies.** Vacancies in elected positions on the Council, and boards and committees that report to the Council may be filled by Council appointment for the unexpired term, subject to confirmation at the Annual Meeting if the unexpired term exceeds one year. See Art. V. Sec 3 to fill a vacancy in the post of Moderator.
- D. Quorum.** A simple majority of the voting members of the Council shall constitute a quorum. When a quorum is present in person at any meeting of the Council, the vote of a majority of those members present shall decide any question brought before any such meeting. The act of a majority of Council members present in person at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall constitute the act of the entire Church Council.

#### **Section 4. Committees of the Church Council.**

Standing and ad hoc committees of the Council shall include, but are not limited to Personnel, History, and Hospitality and Safety Committees. The chairs of Council Committees shall be ex officio, non-voting members of the Council. Additional ad hoc committees, such as the Program Assessment Committee or Bylaws Committee, may be called into existence by the Council as needed.

- A. Personnel Committee.** This committee shall comprise seven voting members made up of three at-large members, one member from the Board of Stewardship, the Past-Moderator, the Moderator, and the Moderator-Elect. The three at-large members and the one member from the Board of Stewardship, shall be appointed by the Council before the annual meeting. The three at-large members of the Committee shall serve three-year overlapping terms, with one new at-large member being appointed each year. The member from the Board of Stewardship will serve a one-year term. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex officio member without vote.

**Responsibilities.** The Personnel Committee shall;

1. have the responsibility and authority to adopt and revise personnel policies addressing search and termination procedures, vacation, sick leave, health insurance, retirement fund, compensatory time, maternity/paternity leave, leave of absence without pay, official holidays, grievance procedures, and any other issues relating to personnel policy for all salaried staff with the exception of search and termination procedures for called ordained pastors. Search and termination policies for the Senior Pastor are established in Article IV, Section 2, and Article V. Section 7.B; for the Associate Pastor[s] in Article VII, Section A, 1 and 2, and Article VI. Section 2.B. All such policies shall be subject to the approval of the Council.
2. assure that appropriate boards participate in the search and review of applicants for salaried positions,
3. ensure that the Senior Pastor or designated staff person maintains adequate personnel files, including current position descriptions,
4. ensure that background checks are conducted on all applicants for church employment before

employment begins,

5. shall review all salary and benefit proposals in consultation with the Senior Pastor and Stewardship Board, which in turn shall be submitted to the Council for its approval;
6. drawing upon broad congregational comment, it shall conduct an annual performance review of the Senior Pastor, recommending to the Council any adjustments in salary and benefits. The Personnel Committee may go into executive session whenever necessary.

**B. History Committee.** The Church Council shall annually appoint (or reappoint) with no limitation on the number of terms a History Committee, comprising a Church Historian and four or more additional members. The Historian shall chair the Committee.

**Responsibilities.** The History Committee shall promote the preservation, appreciation, understanding, and utilization of the heritage of Plymouth Church and the United Church of Christ. This responsibility shall include but is not limited to the following:

1. provide proper procedures for conservation, arrangement, and storage for Church records and artifacts of historical value. This includes the placement of records in office files and in the History Committee files as well as the timely deposit of records in the archives at Spencer Research Library,
2. help to create or retain records of important current events in the life of the Church,
3. compile information needed to gain a knowledge and understanding of the history of Plymouth Church (including the lives of its members) and of the United Church of Christ,
4. present information and interpretations of the history of Plymouth Church and the United Church of Christ, and
5. assist persons in the study of Church records.

**C. Hospitality and Safety Committee.** This Committee shall consist of at least six members, appointed by the Council, who shall serve three-year staggered terms. One member of the church staff shall serve as liaison to this committee. This committee shall designate one member to serve on the Church Council in an ex-officio capacity. This committee shall designate its own chair.

**Responsibilities:** The Hospitality and Safety Committee shall:

1. Participate in the search and screening of applicants for a Hospitality and Safety Associate position.
2. Recruit and educate ongoing volunteers for their duties Sunday morning during the 9:30 a.m. service.
3. Ensure that the church has the appropriate number of volunteers and a Hospitality and Safety Associate every Sunday.
4. Assume the duties of the Hospitality and Safety Associate in his or her absence.

5. Review the policy and the procedure of welcoming all guests.
6. Ensure hospitality while also ensuring the compliance with the Safe Church Guidelines.
7. Serve as a voice defining the intersection between hospitality and Safe Church Guidelines on the Church Council.
8. Meet at least once each quarter and at other times with a meeting called by the chair at the request of any member.

## **Article VII. Salaried Staff**

### **Section 1. Definitions.**

The salaried staff comprises one or more duly called ordained pastors, any non-called ordained pastors in the employ of the church, and other salaried employees of the church. Specifically excluded from this definition of salaried staff are those persons who serve on a volunteer basis, are appointed by an appropriate board or committee (e.g. head usher), or who are employed to perform limited services on a part-time, hourly basis (e.g. paid soloists, temporary secretarial help, custodial assistance). The Senior Pastor position is described in Article V. Section 7. All salaried staff positions are authorized and funded by the Council, subject to the policies of the Personnel Committee, and are responsible to the Senior Pastor in the execution of their duties.

**A. Associate Pastor(s).** An Associate Pastor is a called minister who is in full standing in the United Church of Christ, and serves with professional freedom to supplement and complement the spiritual leadership of the Senior Pastor.

**1. Associate Pastor Search Committee.** When the Council authorizes a search for an Associate Pastor, it shall appoint an Associate Pastor Search Committee consisting of at least nine but no more than twelve members of Plymouth Church. Care must be taken to ensure that members of this committee are representative of the whole membership as well as of the specific program areas served by this position. The Senior Pastor and Moderator shall be two of the voting members. The Search Committee shall report its recommendations to the Council.

**2. Call of the Associate Pastor.** The call to the Associate Pastor shall be made by three-fourths vote of the Congregation upon recommendation of the Council. A three-fourths vote of the Council shall be required to terminate the pastoral relationship. The Associate Pastor shall be called for an indefinite term. Resignation of services shall become effective not earlier than sixty days after written notice has been given, unless a different period was agreed upon in writing at the time of call. Termination of services shall become effective immediately after a vote for termination by the Council, unless a different period was agreed upon in writing at the time of the call or termination. The Associate Pastor shall carry out duties assigned by the Church Council upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor, including the duties of the Senior Pastor in his or her absence.

**B. Other Salaried Staff.** Other salaried staff members may be employed as needed to carry out the activities of the Church in the manner provided by these Bylaws, and after consultation with the Council and appropriate boards and committees. Other salaried staff members include:

**1. Support staff:** such as music, education, administrative.

**2. Assistant Pastor(s):** holding ministerial standing in a church (not necessarily the United Church of Christ).

**3. Interim staff:** pastoral and lay.

## **Article VIII. Church Boards.**

### **Section 1.**

The Boards of Plymouth Church shall include Deacons, Membership, Fellowship, Music and Fine Arts, Christian Education, Stewardship, and Mission and Service.

### **Section 2. Composition and Procedures**

- A.** Each board shall comprise nine voting members with the exception of the Board of Deacons which shall have twelve voting members.
- B.** Board members shall be elected at the Annual meeting for three-year overlapping terms. No board member shall be elected to consecutive terms on the same board unless serving a partial term. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the Council for the unexpired part of the term, subject to confirmation at the Annual Meeting if the unexpired term exceeds one year.
- C.** A vacancy on a board shall be declared for three unexcused absences in a year.
- D.** At the first meeting of a board following the Annual Meeting, each board shall elect a chair/ Council member, vice-chair, and secretary from among the board membership. If the chair is unable to serve on the Church Council, another board member may be elected as Council member. Committee chairs and members shall be appointed as soon thereafter as possible.
- E.** Each board shall hold at least nine regular meetings a year. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by written request of at least four members of the board.
- F.** Each board shall keep appropriate records and documents, such as attendance and minutes, which shall be transmitted to the Church Office in a continuing and timely manner for distribution to officers, Council, boards and committees.
- G.** All meetings of each board are open to the members of Plymouth Church.
- H.** Each board shall be provided with appropriate staff support by the Senior Pastor.

### **Section 3. Responsibilities.**

- A.** Each board has responsibility for the general functions designated in the Bylaws and shall create such standing or ad hoc committees and task forces as are needed to carry out these functions. Each committee shall be chaired by a board member. Committee membership shall comprise other members of the board, and may include volunteers appointed from the general membership. Each board also shall have authority to appoint persons to other volunteer positions in its area of responsibility (e.g. church school superintendent or head usher).

- B.** Each board shall have authority to make decisions to carry out its responsibilities, provided those decisions are not in conflict with the powers and responsibilities of the Council and the Congregation. Such decisions may be modified by the Council or by the Congregation at Annual or Called Meetings. Boards should seek counsel from the Senior Pastor, the Moderator, and other boards having a relevant interest in major decisions, and shall file promptly a copy of decisions with the Senior Pastor, Moderator, and Clerk.
- C.** Each board shall prepare annual financial estimates for all budgetary line items related to its responsibility, and shall submit such estimates and requests to the Board of Stewardship.
- D.** A quorum of a board shall be one more than half the number of members currently serving on the board. Action of a board shall be taken by a simple majority of those members attending a meeting at which a quorum is present.

#### **Section 4. Board of Deacons.**

The Board of Deacons shall nurture the spiritual growth of the Congregation. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- A.** Evaluate the regular and special worship service of the Church in consultation with the Pastors.
- B.** Provide liturgical resources, in consultation with appropriate Boards,
- C.** Provide pulpit supply in the absence of Pastors,
- D.** Provide for and coordinate worship support services,
- E.** Prepare elements for Communion,
- F.** Serve Communion in worship, and to those unable to attend worship, designating persons from outside the Board, if necessary, in order to provide enough servers;
- G.** Work with other Boards and the Pastors to create environments which support members' spiritual needs, such as special worship services, prayer groups, retreats, and individual meditation,
- H.** Establish programs to help persons prepare for and meaningfully celebrate transitional events in life, such as birth, confirmation, graduation, marriage, retirement, and death,
- I.** In conjunction with the Pastors, provide a ministry to members unable to attend public services of the church, such as those unable to attend worship, nursing home residents, and the hospitalized.
- J.** Sponsor lay ministry programs designed to care for persons in personal crisis, such as Stephen Ministry.
- K.** Support members in discernment who are pursuing paths to ordination in the UCC.

#### **Section 5. Board of Membership.**

The Board of Membership shall oversee the ministry for new members and shall consider the experience of both new and current members through attention to membership concerns, membership records, and

media ministry. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- A. Organize and implement an on-going program to recruit, orient, and assimilate new members,
- B. Create and maintain an information system concerning members and make this information available to relevant boards and committees,
- C. Review membership rolls on an annual basis, recommend transfer of members to inactive or non-member status,
- D. Assist in developing printed and other media materials to introduce Plymouth and its programs to members and non-members,
- E. Provide a forum whereby current members may express areas of both satisfaction and concern with the Church,
- F. Oversee all advertising outside the Church, and
- G. Evaluate the media ministry.

#### **Section 6. Board of Fellowship.**

The Board of Fellowship shall oversee the fellowship ministry of Plymouth Church. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- A. Coordinate all traditional holiday celebrations and Sunday fellowship hour.
- B. Coordinate and supervise adult fellowship groups of the Church and any special events.
- C. Initiate and provide for new fellowship groups as needed.

#### **Section 7. Board of Music and Fine Arts.**

The Board of Music and Fine Arts shall oversee music and other art for the worship services, and nurture spiritual growth and enrichment of the Plymouth membership through the arts in additional ways. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- A. Assist and advise the Director of Music and Fine Arts Ministries in:
  - Development of a long-range music program as well as working with the other boards, committees and individuals as appropriate,
  - Supervision of the use of all musical supplies, vestments, and recommendation of purchases, repair and replacement as necessary
- B. Advise the Senior Pastor and Personnel Committee regarding employment and performance of the professional music staff members
- C. Promote visual arts through displays, religious drama, etc.

- D. Evaluate periodically the decor of the Sanctuary and other church spaces to advise the Board of Stewardship or other bodies as appropriate about the aesthetics of church space

### **Section 8. Board of Christian Education.**

The Board of Christian Education shall establish and administer the church school and other educational programs designed for persons of all ages. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- A. Provide nursery care for infants and pre-school children,
- B. Supervise the use and maintenance of the nursery area and the purchase of nursery equipment,
- C. Oversee the church school, review and approve curricula, and provide assistance in recruiting and training teachers and volunteers,
- D. Supervise the Confirmation program,
- E. Provide fellowship programming for junior and senior high school youth,
- F. Coordinate a variety of educational opportunities for adults such as classes, forums, workshops, study groups, Bible studies, retreats,
- G. Coordinate special all-Church educational programs such as Vacation Church School,
- H. Oversee a church library,
- I. Provide additional and special supplies and resources for the educational program,
- J. Report annually to the Board of Stewardship on status of all educational equipment and materials and recommend replacement and additions, and
- K. Advise the Senior Pastor regarding the employment and evaluation of professional education staff members.

### **Section 9. Board of Stewardship.**

The Board of Stewardship shall manage the financial affairs, and maintain and improve the properties of the Church. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- A. Formulate strategies for development of the Mission Spending Plan; coordinate Mission Spending Plan requests of the various boards with the annual fund drive; and prepare annually a Mission Spending Plan for review and approval by the Council. All moneys received by Plymouth Church shall be entered as receipts in the Mission Spending Plan and allocated for disbursement according to the budgetary line items adopted by the Congregation in Annual Meeting, unless otherwise stipulated in these Bylaws and the Constitution. (See Sec. 9 L)
- B. Conduct and coordinate an ongoing program of stewardship education, and select an Annual Appeal Chair and committee members who shall develop and lead the Annual Appeal for pledges for the following year,

- C. Review and evaluate the pledge system, communicate with members regarding the status of the pledges, and report regularly to Council on the status of pledge receipts,
- D. Maintain records from past years for use in making seasonal projection and comparisons,
- E. Develop a long-range maintenance plan; maintain and improve buildings and properties of the Church, its capital assets, and equipment and supplies necessary to operate the Church; and assure that a written inventory of Church property is maintained, based on a physical inventory taken at least once every three years;
- F. Recommend to the Council policy on use of facilities and properties,
- G. Review all potential and existing contracts, except for budgeted operational items of one thousand dollars or less, to ensure that all contracts are in proper form, and to recommend appropriate action to the Council when action may result in a financial commitment of the Church,
- H. Monitor the Church budget and the performance of existing contracts on a monthly basis. Internal adjustments as may be required to maintain a balanced budget are the responsibility of the Board of Stewardship, with the approval of the Council. Expenditures within a given year shall reflect the priorities established by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting. The Board of Stewardship, with the approval of the Council, is authorized to borrow funds in order to maintain an adequate cash flow, and for emergency purposes in an amount not to exceed twenty percent of the annual budget.
- I. Review all proposed capital expenditures not specifically included in the current budget,
- J. Arrange for an annual internal review of all financial records of the Church, arrange for an external review of all financial records of the Church every 3 years, and arrange for a certified audit, as necessary,
- K. Review the adequacy, costs, and performance of the insurance program on an annual basis, and
- L. Oversee and establish procedures for receipt and expenditures of Memorial Gift Funds and all other designated Special Funds (other than the Endowment Fund); seek approval from the Council for all such expenditures exceeding one thousand dollars; and maintain a current Memorial Gifts List. Expenditures shall be made in accordance with current tax law and shall be consistent with the directives of the Council and the donors, and current tax law. Other Special Funds may be established for accounting purposes or for the express purpose of meeting needs not already funded by the Mission Spending Plan.

## **Section 10. Board of Mission and Service.**

The Board of Mission and Service shall initiate, enable, and coordinate the mission and service priorities of Plymouth Church and the United Church of Christ in the world. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- A. Interpret, coordinate, and promote support of Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and other mission programs of the United Church of Christ;

- B. Establish a calendar for all special mission offerings in coordination with the Stewardship Board and promote and interpret the same,
- C. Conduct an ongoing program of mission education within the Congregation,
- D. Provide a liaison with campus ministry and nurture support for this program,
- E. Review requests for funds from local agencies and allocate such funds within budgeting guidelines established by the Council,
- F. Initiate programs that respond to needs of persons in the Lawrence community,
- G. Encourage and coordinate ecumenical endeavors in the Lawrence area and provide representatives to ecumenical organizations and functions when Plymouth Church is requested to do so, and coordinate the actions of other organizations that share with Plymouth Church a wider mission of the church in the world,
- H. Provide forums for the discussion of social justice issues; and
- I. Draft position statements on social justice issues on behalf of Plymouth Church, subject to the approval of the Council.

## **Article IX. Endowment Fund and Planned Giving Committee**

### **Section 1. Plymouth Congregational Church Endowment Fund.**

- A. Purpose.** The Plymouth Congregational Church Endowment Fund (hereinafter the “Endowment Fund”) shall exist to enable individuals to be faithful stewards of God’s gifts during and beyond their lifetimes and to enhance and expand the ministry and mission of Plymouth Church as expressed in the vision and hope of the Plymouth Covenant.
- B. Description.** The assets of the Endowment Fund shall be segregated from other assets of Plymouth Church, but be under the control and direction of the Church Council and Treasurer with disbursement of funds by the Treasurer or otherwise as directed by the Church Council. Records of the assets shall be maintained in accordance with generally accepted methods of fund accounting. Separate accounts shall be kept for separate funds within the Endowment Fund. Funds may, however, be commingled for investment purposes. Funds within the Endowment Fund shall be classified as either “endowed” (only the income may be disbursed) or “expendable” (both the principal and income may be disbursed) and either “restricted” or “unrestricted” as to the purpose for which they may be used. The terms of each gift and of each fund shall be faithfully observed in their classification and in their management and disbursement. Disbursement of expendable principal and expenditure thereof shall be as directed and authorized by the donor, and shall require a majority vote at a Congregational Meeting. Disbursements of income and expenditure thereof shall require a majority vote of the Church Council.

### **Section 2. Endowment Fund and Planned Giving Committee**

- A. Duties.** The Endowment Fund and Planned Giving Committee (hereinafter the “Committee”), on behalf of the members of Plymouth Church, shall oversee investment of assets of the Endowment Fund by the United Church Funds (or other designated fund management entity as approved by the Church Council). The Committee shall make recommendations to Church Council regarding

disbursement of the assets that are managed by United Church Funds. The Committee shall coordinate and conduct an ongoing program for planned giving.

**B. Membership.** The Committee shall comprise eight voting members elected at the Annual Meeting for four-year overlapping terms. No member shall be elected to consecutive terms unless serving a partial term. The Moderator, Treasurer, and Senior Pastor shall be ex-officio non-voting members. One member of the Board of Stewardship shall be selected by the Board of Stewardship to serve as a non-voting member of the Committee. Vacancies shall be filled in the manner provided in Article VIII, Section 2.B. of these Bylaws. A member may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council.

**C. Organization and Meetings.** At the first meeting following the Annual Meeting, the Committee shall elect a chair, a vice chair and a secretary from among the members of the Committee, and may at any time appoint a financial secretary who need not be a member of the Committee. Meetings of the Committee shall be held at least quarterly and as often as is necessary. Absent objection by a member, special meetings may be held by telephone. A majority of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

**D. Operations.** The Committee shall:

1. have custody directly or through the United Church Funds (or other designated fund management entity as approved by the Church Council) and control of the assets in the Endowment Fund and, subject only to authorized direction by the Congregation or the Church Council as provided in Section 1, shall hold, manage, invest and reinvest, purchase and sell, loan, rent, lease, transfer, and convert the assets of the Endowment Fund as they, in their judgment, shall deem necessary to the growth, security, and income of the assets. All assets of the Endowment Fund shall be held in the name of the Fund and voted, conveyed, transferred, disbursed, or otherwise dealt with by resolution of the Committee and the signature of the chair or a duly authorized delegate of the Committee. Disbursement of the principal or income shall be in accordance with Article IX, Section 1, Subsection B, and shall be only to the Church or, by the express direction of the Church Council, for the account of the Church. The Committee may employ such professional services, including legal, accounting, investment, and custodial services, as it deems advisable; such services may be compensated from unrestricted income. Any Committee member or delegate of the Committee having signature authority in respect to Endowment Fund assets shall be bonded under a fidelity bond acquired by the Church. The costs for such fidelity bond will be paid from unrestricted income of the Fund. Each Committee member shall serve without compensation, but shall not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by the Endowment Fund on account of any action taken or omitted to be taken, except due to a breach of a duty of loyalty, due to acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law, or any transaction from which such Committee member derived an improper personal benefit.
2. Develop and conduct an ongoing planned giving program to include coordination with the planned giving programs of the United Church of Christ and the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference; providing information in the form of seminars, publications, and mailings on various options for making planned gifts; informing the Congregation of the endowment, memorial, and special gifts resources of Plymouth Church and arranging for the celebration of these gifts on an annual basis; and serving as a program resource for any stewardship effort of the church.

**E. Policies and Reports.** Semi-annually, the Committee shall provide to the Church Council a re-

port of the managed assets in the form of financial statements fairly reflecting the status of the fund. An annual report, which shall be an audited report if so directed by the Church Council, shall be provided to the Annual Meeting.

**F. Existing Wills and Trusts.** The Committee shall have full power and authority to act as the responsible organization of Plymouth Congregational Church for the management of any moneys or property given for the benefit of Plymouth Congregational Church. Gifts to the Church providing for administration by the Plymouth Congregational Church Endowment Trust, Endowment Counselors, or other such names, shall be administered by the Endowment Fund and Planned Giving Committee.

#### **Article X. Amendment of Bylaws.**

These Bylaws may be amended by majority vote at a Congregational Meeting as set forth in Article III, Section 2, of the Bylaws.

#### **Article XI. Adoption**

These Bylaws were adopted the 13<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1988, revised on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1992, revised on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1994, and revised on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of February 2014. These Bylaws were further amended on the 26th day of January, 1997; the 31st day of January, 1999; the 28th day of January 2001; the 26th day of January, 2002; the 4th day of January, 2004; the 29th day of January, 2006; and the 4th day of February, 2007; and the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of February 2013.