

1 **PREAMBLE**

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3 This Church recognizes the Word of God in the Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice, and
4 holds that living in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ is the true test of fellowship
5 and discipleship. Members shall have the privilege and responsibility to follow the Word of God
6 according to the dictates of their own conscience, under enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and
7 sharing together in the work of love, justice, and community. This Church recognizes the merit
8 of the faith of the historic church, but affirms its responsibility in each generation to make this
9 faith its own. The Church shall recognize the Statement of Faith, Revised 1981, affirmed by the
10 Fourteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

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12 **Appendix A:** Statement of Faith, Revised 1981, affirmed by the Fourteenth General Synod of
13 the United Church of Christ.

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15 **MISSION STATEMENT**

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17 We welcome people to faith in Jesus Christ to discover God, equip one another for life, and
18 reach inward and outward to serve.

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20 **Covenant of Welcome**

21 “First Congregational Church is Open and Affirming: Because we believe each person is made in
22 God’s Image, we welcome all persons into the life and worship of this congregation.”

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24 Regardless of age, ability, gender identity or sexual orientation, racial or ethnic identity, all are
25 welcome here.

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27 **ARTICLE I**
28 **ORGANIZATION**

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30 **Section 1.** This Church shall be known as First Congregational Church of St. Joseph
31 Michigan. It shall be governed by its members only, but shall be in covenant with the United
32 Church of Christ.

33 **Section 2.** This Church shall consist of Officers, Minister(s), a Church Council, a Board of
34 Christian Education, a Board of Diaconate, a Board of Missions, a Board of Trustees, the
35 Committees, the Auxiliary Organizations, and the members.

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37 **ARTICLE II**
38 **MEMBERSHIP**

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40 **Section 1.** Any person who desires to commit themselves totally to God through Christ,
41 responding with faith and gratitude, praise and service, may become a member of this Church
42 upon recommendation of the Minister. All candidates who appear before the congregation during
43 worship for covenant and recognition shall be received into the fellowship of the Church and
44 enrolled in the membership roster.

45 Section 2. Members of the Church share their faith with each other through worship,
46 community activities and outreach, supporting each other on the journey of life and faith, and
47 belong to each other as Christ’s Body. Members serve, give freely, and participate in the life of
48 the Church.

49 Section 3. Members of the Church shall be entitled to vote at any regular or special meeting
50 of the Congregation.

51 Section 4. Membership shall be reviewed at least every 5 years and the membership roll
52 updated to account for faithful activity and participation. This review will be conducted by the
53 Minister with support from Church Council and/or a special committee. Members will be invited
54 to review their status (active, inactive), and be removed from the membership roll if desired.
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56 **ARTICLE III**
57 **SERVICES AND MEETINGS**
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59 Section 1. There shall be regular Sunday service of worship every week, with opportunities
60 for fellowship, education, and outreach every month as desired.

61 Section 2. The Congregational Election Meeting shall be held in the Church on a Sunday in
62 November following regular worship, unless otherwise designated by the Church Council. At
63 this meeting the officers and board members for the ensuing calendar year shall be elected.
64 These officers and board members shall take office at the beginning of the calendar year
65 following their election. At least two weeks prior to the meeting, the Church Council shall give
66 written notice.

67 Section 3. The Annual Meeting of the congregation shall be held on a Sunday in January
68 following regular worship, unless otherwise designated by the Church Council. The purpose
69 shall be to receive the yearly reports of the Minister(s), Officers, Boards, Committees and
70 Auxiliary Organizations, and to conduct any business at hand. At least two weeks prior to the
71 meeting, the Church Council shall give written notice.

72 Section 4. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Church Council on its
73 own resolution or on request of a Board. A special meeting must be called by the Church
74 Council upon receipt of a petition signed by twenty-five (25) or more members as defined by
75 Article II. At least two weeks prior to any regular or special meeting, the Church Council shall
76 give written notice. The notice shall include the time, place and nature of business to be
77 conducted.

78 Section 5. Fifty (50) members, as defined by Article II, shall constitute a quorum at any
79 regular or special meeting.

80 Section 6. At least once a year the Church will engage in a meeting to discuss and determine
81 our church vitality and to discern what God might have us do to strengthen our ministry. The
82 Minister, in consult with Church Council, will direct these meetings, according to need, vision,
83 and circumstance.
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85 **ARTICLE IV**
86 **OFFICERS**
87

88 Section 1. The Officers of the Church shall be elected at the Congregational Election
89 Meeting. The Nominating Committee of the Church shall place in nomination the names of the

90 candidates for each office, subject to nominations from the floor by any Church member present
91 at the Congregational Election Meeting. The nominee receiving the largest number of votes
92 shall be elected.

93 Section 2. A Moderator shall be elected at the Congregational Election Meeting and shall
94 serve for a period of two years. Normally, the Moderator-Elect will succeed to the office of
95 Moderator. The Moderator shall be a non-voting member of all Boards of the Church, shall
96 receive notice of all Board meetings, and may attend meetings as deemed necessary. The
97 Moderator shall be a voting member of Church Council and preside at its meetings. The
98 Moderator shall preside at all Congregation meetings. In the event of a vacancy in the office of
99 Moderator, the Moderator-Elect shall fill the office for the remainder of the term.

100 Section 3. A Moderator-Elect shall be elected at the Congregational Election Meeting and
101 shall serve for a period of two years. The Moderator-Elect shall be a non-voting member of all
102 Boards of the Church, shall receive notice of all Board meetings, and may attend meetings as
103 deemed necessary. The Moderator-Elect shall be a voting member of Church Council. In the
104 absence of the Moderator, the Moderator-Elect shall serve as Moderator. In the event of a
105 vacancy in the office of Moderator-Elect, the Nominating Committee shall make an appointment
106 to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term vacated.

107 Section 4. A Treasurer shall be elected at the Congregational Election Meeting and shall
108 serve for a period of one year. The Treasurer shall serve no more than three successive terms.
109 The Treasurer shall be a voting member of Church Council. The Treasurer shall be responsible
110 for the financial records of the Church, shall supervise the disbursement of church funds, and
111 shall oversee the counting and recording of the Church receipts and moneys. The Treasurer shall
112 oversee the preparation of monthly balance sheets or reports of the financial condition of the
113 Church. The Treasurer shall present an annual balance sheet to the Congregation at the Annual
114 Meeting. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Treasurer, the Nominating Committee shall
115 make an appointment to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term vacated.

116 Section 5. A Clerk shall be elected at the Congregational Election Meeting and shall serve
117 for a period of one year. The Clerk shall serve no more than three successive terms. The Clerk
118 shall be a voting member of Church Council. The Clerk shall supervise the recording of minutes
119 of all Congregation business meetings and Church Council meetings, and shall maintain a file of
120 the minutes in the Church. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Clerk, the Nominating
121 Committee shall make an appointment to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term vacated.

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ARTICLE V

MINISTER(S)

126 Section 1. The Minister(s) shall, together with the Church's staff and the congregation at-
127 large, provide for regular and special services of worship, including weddings and funerals, and
128 the administration of the sacraments, and have freedom in preaching. The Minister(s) shall visit
129 those in need of pastoral care and lend counsel and encouragement to those in need. The
130 Minister(s) shall serve by the grace of God, as pastor, teacher, administrator and counselor,
131 working in covenant with the Church's staff, Officers, Boards, Committees and Auxiliary
132 Organizations to provide for the Church's professional leadership. The Minister(s) shall be
133 responsible to the congregation at-large, through the Church's Council, Boards, Committees and
134 Auxiliary Organizations, and shall seek advice and counsel when and if such counsel is in order.
135 The Minister(s) shall, insofar as time and schedule permit, help coordinate the on-going life and

136 ministry of the Church, and provide an active presence within the community. The Minister(s)
137 shall have freedom of voice and counsel, but shall be without vote in the Church's Council,
138 Boards, Committees, Auxiliary Organizations and congregational meetings.

139 Section 2. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, the Church Council shall notify the Conference
140 Minister of the Michigan Conference, United Church of Christ. The Diaconate may secure the
141 services of an interim minister to lead the Church and/or provide for such other ministerial
142 supply as needed, until a permanent Minister is called. In the event that an interim minister is
143 called, it shall be the responsibility of the Personnel Committee to negotiate that person's terms
144 of Call.

145 Section 3. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, the Church Council shall appoint a Pastoral
146 Search Committee of not less than 5 nor more than 9 members, to be elected by vote of the
147 members as defined by Article II at a Special Meeting. It shall be the responsibility of the
148 Pastoral Search Committee, with the assistance of the Michigan Conference staff, to seek a
149 candidate for the pastoral vacancy. The Pastoral Search Committee shall use the guidelines of
150 the United Church of Christ as a resource. Once a suitable candidate is selected, the Pastoral
151 Search Committee shall inform the congregation of the candidate's qualifications and invite the
152 candidate to participate in a worship service, after which a closed ballot vote of the members
153 present, as defined by Article II, shall be taken at a Special Meeting. A favorable vote of two-
154 thirds of the votes cast constitutes a call. The Personnel Committee will negotiate the terms of
155 the call pursuant to Article XIII.

156 Section 4. A Minister is called for an indefinite period of time and shall not be subject to
157 annual election. A Minister's relationship to the church shall be contractual and covenantal. The
158 Minister is accountable to the congregation. A Minister will be provided a job description and
159 will have an annual review by the Personnel Committee, which shall report the results of the
160 review to the Church Council.

161 Section 5. In order to terminate the pastoral relationship, either party shall give two-months'
162 notice, unless another period is mutually agreed upon. When a Minister initiates a termination,
163 the Minister shall inform the Pastoral Relations Committee and Church Council for a planned
164 announcement to the church membership. When the Church initiates a termination, it shall be
165 accomplished through a recommendation of the Personnel Committee to the Church Council and
166 voted upon by the church members. A termination vote shall be by closed ballot and shall
167 require a majority of the votes cast by the members, as defined in Article II, present at an Annual
168 or Special Meeting. A copy of the notice of the meeting shall be hand delivered to the Minister
169 and mailed to the Chairperson of the Southwest Association Church and Ministry Committee, the
170 Association Minister for the Southwest Association and the Michigan Conference Minister. A
171 report of the termination vote shall be similarly disseminated.

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ARTICLE VI

CHURCH COUNCIL

176 Section 1. The Church Council shall be the governing body of the Church. It shall oversee
177 the general operation of the Church through the various Boards, Committees and Auxiliary
178 Organizations. It shall have the right to amend the Church Budget during the year as is
179 necessary to meet specific needs of the Church or to respond to changes in the level of giving by
180 the members. It shall work with the congregation, Minister(s), Boards, Committees and
181 Auxiliary Organizations to establish the operating life of the Church. The Church Council shall

182 arbitrate disputes between the various Church Boards, Committees and Auxiliary Organizations.
183 Requests for the use of Church facilities by non-member organizations shall be submitted for
184 approval to the Church Council, in consultation with the Minister(s). The Church Council may
185 appoint committees to carry out its responsibilities.

186 Section 2. The Church Council shall be composed of the Moderator, Moderator-Elect;
187 Church Clerk; Church Treasurer; a Chairperson or a designated representative of the Board of
188 Christian Education, the Board of Diaconate, the Board of Missions, the Board of Trustees. The
189 Minister(s) shall be non-voting members of the Church Council.

190 Section 3. Regular meetings of the Church Council shall be held monthly on a day to be
191 determined by the Church Council. In the absence of business requiring a meeting, virtual or in
192 person, the Moderator may cancel said meeting with the concurrence of the majority of Church
193 Council.

194 Section 4. The Moderator may call special meetings of the Church Council on twenty-four
195 hours' notice. The notice must be written, by electronic mail, cellular message, or letter.

196 Section 5. Five (5) voting members shall constitute a quorum for any meeting.

197 Section 6. The Moderator shall preside at all regular or special meetings of the Church
198 Council. In the absence of the Church Moderator, the Moderator-Elect shall preside.

199 Section 7. Any action or vote required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of Church
200 Council may be taken without a meeting if all voting members consent to participate, either in
201 writing or by electronic mail, and copies of the consents are presented and the action or vote is
202 noted in the minutes of the following Church Council meeting.

203 Section 8. The Church Council shall oversee the Nominating Committee, consisting of the
204 Moderator, Moderator-Elect and past Moderator. The Minister(s) shall be non-voting members
205 of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall recruit candidates for the
206 Officers, Boards, Committees and other positions ordinarily filled by referral to the Nominating
207 Committee. In the event there is less than a full slate of nominees for open position(s) the
208 position(s) will remain vacant until candidate(s) can be appointed by the Nominating Committee.

209 Section 9. For the Congregational Election Meeting, the Nominating Committee shall
210 recommend a slate of candidates to the congregation, with an attempt to afford retiring Officers,
211 Board members, and Committee members a one-year break in service upon completion of a
212 maximum period of service in another position. The recommendations shall not be construed as
213 preventing other nominations from the floor at the meeting.

214 Section 10. The Church Council shall appoint Delegates to the Southwest Association UCC
215 and Michigan Conference UCC meetings, and to the Southwest Association Ecclesiastical
216 Councils, Services of Ordination and Installation Services. Delegates shall vote their
217 conscience unless otherwise instructed by the congregation and shall report the salient items of
218 interest and concern to the Church Council and the membership.

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ARTICLE VII

CHURCH BOARDS & COMMITTEES ORGANIZATION

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223 Section 1. The central operating boards - Christian Education, Diaconate, Missions, and
224 Trustees - which make up Church Council shall commit their organization and functions
225 according to the following rules of order:

226 Section 2. At each Congregational Election Meeting the congregation shall elect new Board
227 members to replace the retiring Board members. Board members shall be elected for a term of

228 three years. No Board member shall serve for more than two consecutive terms. In the event of
229 a vacancy in any of the operating boards, the Nominating Committee shall make an appointment
230 to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term vacated.

231 Section 3. The first regular meeting of each Board following the Congregational Election
232 Meeting will be a joint meeting of the current and newly elected members. During this meeting
233 the Board members elected for the following calendar year shall elect a Chairperson, Vice-
234 Chairperson, and Secretary to hold office for the term of the following calendar year.

235 Section 4. Regular meetings of each Board shall be held monthly on a day to be determined
236 by that Board. In the absence of business requiring a meeting, virtual or in person, the
237 chairperson may cancel said meeting with the concurrence of the majority of the members of the
238 board.

239 Section 5. The Chairperson may call special meetings of their Board on twenty-four hours'
240 notice to all its members. The notice must be written, by electronic mail, cellular message, or
241 letter.

242 Section 6. A majority of the voting members of each Board shall constitute a quorum for any
243 meeting of that Board.

244 Section 7. The Chairperson shall preside at meetings and shall oversee the inter-relationship
245 of the Board with the Church Council and other Boards, Committees and Auxiliary
246 Organizations. The Vice-Chairperson shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson.

247 Section 8. Authority for parliamentary procedure at any meetings of the Church
248 (boards/committees/congregational) shall be *Robert's Rules of Order*. Strict compliance shall not
249 be required.

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ARTICLE VIII

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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254 Section 1. Consisting of five members, the Board of Christian Education shall supervise and
255 direct the total education work of the church, with the counsel of the Minister. The Board shall
256 appoint teachers and shall initiate and maintain Christian Education activities. The Board shall
257 oversee the Confirmation program and promote official Church organizations for the youth of
258 the church. The Board of Christian Education may appoint committees to carry out these
259 responsibilities.

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ARTICLE IX

BOARD OF DIACONATE

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264 Section 1. Consisting of twelve members, the Board of Diaconate shall attend to the spiritual
265 and sacramental needs of the Church in cooperation with the Minister(s). The Board shall
266 provide for ministries of personal outreach to the Church. The Board shall provide for the
267 welcoming of visitors and the maintenance of worship services.

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ARTICLE X

BOARD OF MISSIONS

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272 Section 1. Consisting of seven members, the Board of Missions shall administer the social

273 services, benevolences and mission endeavors of the church, shall oversee the distribution of
274 mission funds allocated in the church budget, develop and promote opportunities for hands-on
275 outreach, including local, national and international, and shall actively inform and advocate for
276 special mission offerings. The Board of Missions may appoint committees to carry out these
277 responsibilities.

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280 **ARTICLE XI**
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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282 Section 1. Consisting of nine members, the Board of Trustees shall have the care and
283 custody of all church assets, buildings, grounds and property. The Board shall oversee the
284 business and financial matters of the Church. With the assistance of the other Boards, the
285 Trustees shall prepare and present the proposed annual budget to the Church Council for review
286 prior to the Annual Meeting. The Board of Trustees shall oversee the annual budget after its
287 approval by the congregation, and shall provide for the acceptance or rejection of bills tendered.
288 The Board of Trustees may purchase, acquire, receive, hold, sell, convey, transfer, mortgage or
289 otherwise encumber the real property of the Church only with approval of the Church Council
290 and a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the church present at an Annual or Special
291 Meeting. The Board of Trustees may appoint committees to carry out these responsibilities.

292 Section 2. The Board of Trustees may employ person(s) to attend to business and financial
293 matters of the church, such as maintaining the financial records under supervision of the
294 Treasurer, conducting banking needs, accounting for the contents of the church safe, and
295 ordering supplies.

296 Section 3. The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and Moderator [or Moderator-Elect
297 when needed] shall sign and execute all legal papers and documents in the name of, and on
298 behalf of, the Church, except as otherwise provided herein.

299 Section 4. The Board of Trustees shall also be responsible for the operation of the First
300 Congregational Church Memorial Garden. Subject to the approval of Church Council, the Board
301 shall establish the terms, conditions and cost to have ashes placed in the Memorial Garden. The
302 Board shall oversee all financial transactions and shall have responsibility to oversee all
303 plantings in the Memorial Garden and its maintenance. The Board may appoint volunteers to
304 handle plantings and maintenance.

305 Section 5. The Board of Trustees shall also oversee the Remembrance Fund. The purpose of
306 the Fund is to honor financial gifts offered in memory of those who die. The Board shall receive,
307 acknowledge, account for and oversee the expenditure of the Fund. The Board shall provide an
308 accounting of the gifts and expenditures for the Church's Annual Report.

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310 **ARTICLE XII**
PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

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313 Section 1. Consisting of three members, a Pastoral Relations Committee shall attend to each
314 Minister in the service of the church. The Moderator-Elect shall serve as a non-voting member
315 on each committee and shall represent the Committee on the Church Council. The purpose of
316 the Pastoral Relations Committee shall be to support and maintain an open and healthy
317 relationship between the Ministers and the members of the congregation, and shall include, but

318 not be limited to:
319 1. Serving as a liaison between the Minister(s) and members of the congregation to maintain
320 an open channel of communication so that concerns may surface in a non-threatening way;
321 2. Serving as a liaison between Ministers [if applicable];
322 3. Serving as a “sounding board” for the Ministers
323 4. Serving as an advocate for the Minister(s) with regard to compensation, housing, family
324 responsibilities, career plans, continuing education, conferences, vacations, and expectations.
325 Section 2. The Nominating Committee, in consult with the Minister affected, shall appoint
326 members to the Pastoral Relations Committee for a newly called Minister. Committee members
327 shall serve for staggered terms of three years, such that one committee member’s term expires
328 annually. No Committee member shall serve for more than one three-year term. In the event of
329 a vacancy on the Committee, the Nominating Committee shall, in consult with the Minister
330 affected, make an appointment to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term vacated.
331 Section 3. During the first quarterly meeting of the calendar year, the Committee members
332 shall elect a Chairperson.
333 Section 4. Regular meetings of the Committee may be held quarterly on a day to be
334 determined by the Committee.
335 Section 5. The Chairperson may call special meetings of the Committee on twenty-four
336 hours’ notice to all members. The notice must be written, by electronic mail, cellular message,
337 or letter.
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339 **ARTICLE XIII**
340 **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

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342 Section 1. The Personnel Committee shall be comprised of the Moderator, Moderator-Elect,
343 [Senior] Minister, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and two members elected by the
344 congregation. The purpose of the Committee is to evaluate staff performance and the total
345 ministry of the church with regard to, but not limited to:
346 1. Job description;
347 2. Compensation package;
348 3. Congregational and Ministerial expectations; and
349 4. Staff relations.
350 Section 2. When call agreements and contracts need to be negotiated, the Personnel
351 Committee will work with the candidate and consult with Council, boards and committees, as
352 necessary, to submit a recommendation of the terms of the agreement or contract to the Board of
353 Trustees.
354 Section 3. The Moderator or [Senior] Minister will call meetings of the Personnel
355 Committee as needed.
356 Section 4. If a Minister’s credentials are reviewed for cause by the Church and Ministry
357 Committee of the United Church of Christ, the Personnel Committee may recommend to the
358 Church Council that the Minister be placed on paid suspension pending resolution of the review.
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360 **ARTICLE XIV**
361 **ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE**
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363 Section 1. This congregation has established a separate fund known as “The Endowment
364 Fund of the First Congregational Church of St. Joseph, Michigan, United Church of Christ”. The
365 purpose of the Endowment Fund is to enhance the ministry of The First Congregational Church
366 of St. Joseph, United Church of Christ, beyond the general operation of the congregation.

367 Section 2. The Endowment Fund Committee shall be the custodian of the Endowment Fund.
368 The Committee shall consist of five members (four elected by the congregation and a fifth
369 appointed by the Board of Trustees to serve as a representative). The [Senior] Minister and
370 Moderator will be non-voting members of the Committee.

371 Section 3. At each Congregational Election Meeting the congregation shall elect new
372 Committee members to replace the retiring Committee members. Committee members shall be
373 elected for a term of three years. No Committee member shall serve for more than two
374 consecutive terms. In the event of a vacancy on the Committee, the Nominating Committee shall
375 make an appointment to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term vacated.

376 Section 4. The first regular meeting of the Committee following the Congregational Election
377 Meeting will be a joint meeting of the current and newly elected members. During this meeting
378 the Committee members elected for the following calendar year shall elect a Chairperson, Vice
379 Chairperson and Secretary.

380 Section 5. A meeting of the Committee shall be held by the end of the fiscal year to review
381 the current standing of the Fund. Regular meetings of the Committee may be held based upon
382 requests made of the Fund or at discretion of the the Committee. The Chairperson may call
383 special meetings of the Committee on twenty-four hours’ notice to all members. The notice must
384 be written, by electronic mail, cellular message, or letter. Three voting members of the
385 Committee shall constitute a quorum for any meeting.

386 Section 6. The Chairperson shall preside at meetings. The Vice-Chairperson shall preside in
387 the absence of the Chairperson. The Committee will report at each annual meeting of the
388 congregation, and will render a full and complete account of the administration of the
389 Endowment Fund during the preceding year.

390 Section 7. Any action or vote required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the
391 Endowment Committee may be taken without a meeting if all voting members consent to
392 participate, either in writing or electronic mail, and copies of the consent are presented and the
393 action or vote is noted in the minutes of the following meeting.

394 Section 8. All assets are to be held in the name of The First Congregational Church of St.
395 Joseph, Michigan United Church of Christ Endowment Fund. Determinations to hold, sell,
396 exchange, rent, lease, transfer, convert, invest, reinvest and in all other respects to manage and
397 control the assets of the Endowment Fund, including stocks, bonds, debentures, mortgages,
398 notes, or other securities, as in their judgment and discretion they deem wise and prudent, are to
399 be made by the Committee, with advice and counsel of an Endowment Fund manager if desired.
400 The Committee may request members of the congregation to serve as advisors. The Committee
401 may also retain professional counsel on investment decisions or legal matters and charge the cost
402 of such services to the income of the Endowment Fund.

403 Section 9. The Endowment Fund shall consist of two parts – a General Endowment Fund
404 and a Building and Site Endowment Fund. The General Endowment Fund and the Building and
405 Site Endowment Fund shall be collectively referred to as the “Endowment Fund”. The
406 Endowment Committee will seek and accumulate gifts and bequests to the Endowment Fund.
407 No portion of the Endowment Fund shall be used to finance the general operations of the
408 Church, except in the event of particular, temporary, difficult circumstances, which are in

409 keeping with the Mission Statement, and approved as provided in subsection 4 below. Except
410 where authorized in the terms of the gift, all principal amounts will be retained and only
411 “spendable” income expended. The Committee will determine what portion of the Endowment
412 Fund is principal and what portion is “spendable” income according to prevailing practices of
413 church and community foundations and generally accepted accounting principles. All
414 disbursements shall be consistent with gift restrictions, except in the case of dissolution under
415 Section 10 below.

416 1) Disbursements from the General Endowment Fund shall be consistent with the purpose of
417 the Endowment Fund as set forth in Section 1 of this article, and may be made for special non-
418 recurring, temporary or unforeseen situations, projects, programs or needs of the Church not
419 provided for in the operating budget, including the wider Church mission and to minister to the
420 needs of the Congregation.

421 2) Disbursements from the General Endowment Fund may be made from “spendable”
422 income at the discretion of the Committee, upon the request of Church Council. If the Church
423 Council or the Committee rejects a request for a distribution, the requesting party may refer the
424 matter to the Congregation for reconsideration. The Congregation may approve a request for a
425 distribution from the General Endowment Fund at a regular or special meeting of the
426 Congregation by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present.

427 3) Disbursements of “spendable” income from the Building and Site Endowment Fund shall
428 be consistent with the purpose of the Endowment Fund set forth in Section 1, and may be made
429 for capital improvements and major maintenance projects determined by the Board of Trustees
430 and endorsed by Church Council.

431 4) Disbursement of “spendable” income from the Endowment Fund for the general
432 operations of the Church shall be made by the Committee only:

433 a) After approval of the disbursement at a regular or special meeting of the Congregation by a
434 two-thirds majority of the members present; or

435 b) For emergency needs that must be addressed before a Congregation meeting can be called,
436 with prior approval by Church Council.

437 Section 10. Any amendment to Section 8 that will change, alter or amend the purpose for
438 which the Endowment Fund is established, or which would terminate the Endowment Fund,
439 must be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members, as defined by Article II, present at a
440 congregational meeting called specifically for the purpose of amending or terminating the
441 Endowment Fund.

442 Section 11. In the event The First Congregational Church of St. Joseph, United Church of
443 Christ, ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the
444 Endowment Fund will be at the discretion of the congregation. The dissolution must be in
445 conformity with the approved congregational constitution and in consultation with the staff of
446 the denomination to which the congregation belongs. Consultation with the denomination may
447 be desirable for continuation of Endowment Fund obligations.

448 Section 12. Members of the Committee will not be liable for losses that may be incurred upon
449 investments of the assets of the Endowment Fund, as long as he/she acts in good faith and with
450 ordinary prudence. No member may engage in any self-dealing and will at all times refrain from
451 any conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interest of the
452 Endowment Fund.

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ARTICLE XV

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AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

The Church may sponsor auxiliary organizations to encourage Christian fellowship. The auxiliary organizations of the Church shall be self-governed but accountable to the Church Council in terms of financial and physical church resources used. Written definitions of auxiliary organizations need not be added to the bylaws, but records of auxiliary organizations should be located within some formal filing of the church's internal communication.

ARTICLE XVI
PROPERTY AND FINANCE

Section 1. The Board of Trustees shall have all the powers granted to ecclesiastical trustees under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Michigan.

Section 2. No retiring, seceding or resigning members of the Church shall have any right in or to the Church property or assets.

Section 3. The business of the Church shall be conducted at the Church or by virtual technology if necessary. If the Church is unavailable, an alternate location may be suggested.

Section 4. It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to obtain a blanket bond covering any and all persons handling the funds of the Church.

Section 5. The books of the Church may be audited before each Annual Congregational Meeting of the members, by a Certified Public Accountant, or by an Auditing Committee appointed by the Board of Trustees. Every two years, the financial records and practices of the Church needs a review either by internal or external sources to determine fiscal responsibility and security.

Section 6. The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and Moderator [or Moderator-Elect when needed] shall sign and execute all legal papers and documents in the name of, and on behalf of, the Church, except as otherwise provided herein.

Section 7. In the event The First Congregational Church of St. Joseph, United Church of Christ, ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of remaining property and funds will be at the discretion of the congregation in their concluding vote of dissolution and closure. The dissolution must be in conformity with the approved congregational constitution and in consultation with the staff of the denomination to which the congregation belongs.

ARTICLE XVII
AMENDMENTS

Section 1. These by-laws, and the appendices attached thereto, may be altered, amended or repealed in whole or in part by a two-thirds majority of the members, as defined in Article II, at an Annual or Special Meeting.

Section 2. The by-laws shall become effective immediately upon approval of the Congregation, and its provisions implemented as soon as practicable.

APPENDIX A

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST STATEMENT OF FAITH
IN THE FORM OF A DOXOLOGY

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God,
And to your deeds we testify:
 You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image,
and set before each one the ways of life and death.
You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.
You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.
In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen savior,
 you have come to us and shared our common lot,
 conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.
You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,
 binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.
You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
 to be your servants in the service of others,
 to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil,
 to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.
You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
 courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing,
 and eternal life in your realm which has no end.
Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.