

1 CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE
2 SAYVILLE CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
3 131 MIDDLE ROAD, SAYVILLE, NEW YORK 11782
4 (REVISED November 30, 2018)
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6 ARTICLE I: NAME AND LOCATION

7 The name of this church shall be the Sayville Congregational Church of
8 Christ, and the corporate name shall be the Religious and Congregational
9 Society of Sayville.
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11 ARTICLE II: MISSION

12 To live together in the community of God's love and to commit to a covenant
13 that calls us to be faithful to the challenges and inspiration of the Eternal Spirit
14 as revealed in the event of Jesus Christ. We believe we are called to accept
15 and respect each other with love and concern in our worship and witness. We
16 accept responsibility to reach out with the courage of our convictions to others
17 in the cause of justice, liberation and equality for all. In these things and more,
18 we covenant to keep God's ultimate promise for one another "I Care, I Am
19 With You."
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21 ARTICLE III: GOVERNMENT

22 The government of this church is vested in its members who exercise the right
23 of control in all its affairs, subject to legal matters to the Articles of
24 Incorporation granted by the State of New York. A copy of these Articles of
25 Incorporation are available in the church office.
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27 This church is part of the United Church of Christ without any break in its
28 Congregational historical tradition of autonomy and self government. It
29 maintains its standing as a local church of the United Church of Christ by
30 membership in the Suffolk Association of the New York Conference of the
31 United Church of Christ.
32

33 This Constitution shall serve as the governing document of the Church; its
34 provisions, unless they conflict with the Articles of Incorporation, shall be
35 understood to represent the will and authority of the whole Church
36 membership.

37
38 ARTICLE IV: DOCTRINE

39 This church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head and finds guidance in
40 matters of faith and discipline in the Holy Scriptures, interpreted with the help
41 of the Holy Spirit through reason, faith and conscience.
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43 This Church recognizes the Bible as the sufficient rule of faith and practice
44 and holds that living in accordance with the teaching of Jesus Christ is a goal
45 we share. All members shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of
46 God according to the dictates of their own consciences, under the
47 enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The United Church of Christ Statement of
48 Faith will be used as an expression of the spirit in which the Church interprets
49 the word of God.
50

51 ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

52 This Church will welcome into its membership any person who loves the Lord
53 Jesus Christ and whose purpose is to live according to his laws of love. The
54 Covenant Members of this Church shall be persons who present satisfactory
55 letters of transfer, or reaffirm their faith, or confess their faith and assent to
56 baptism, if not previously baptized.
57

58 Covenant Members:

59 Covenant Members of the Church have ultimate responsibility for determining
60 the actual practices, programs and other aspects of the Church's identity.
61 Covenant Members understand that their responsibility is influenced by
62 ongoing study and application of scriptural truths learned through Baptism
63 and Confirmation as well as commitment to the Church's Covenant.
64

65 Covenant Members' responsibilities shall include attending services of
66 worship; receiving the Sacrament of Holy Communion; contributing to the
67 needs of the Church by discerning and employing one's gifts of talent, time
68 and treasure; attending Congregational Meetings; and voting on issues at
69 hand.
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74 Upon personal request, a Covenant Member's name may be removed from the
75 Church rolls. A letter of transfer will be granted upon request. A
76 representative of the Board of the Church, after consulting with the members
77 in question, may recommend removal from Covenant Membership those who
78 have failed to meet responsibilities of membership for a period of one year or
79 more, including at minimum attending one worship service and making a
80 financial contribution of record. Vulnerable adults, including homebound,
81 elderly and those receiving care outside of the immediate area are exempt
82 from the responsibilities of membership, and may not be removed from the
83 rolls.

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85 If a former member wishes to be reinstated as a Covenant Member they may
86 request such reinstatement in writing addressed to the Pastor. Such requests
87 will be promptly addressed.

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89 Upon recommendation of the deacons for extreme cause, an active Covenant
90 Member's name may be removed from the church rolls by a two-thirds vote of
91 the Congregation at a duly called Congregational Meeting.

92
93 Friends of the Church:

94 Such membership includes those individuals who are unready to make a full
95 membership commitment but who attend worship and give regularly. Friends
96 of the Church can serve in non-governance leadership ministry roles. Such
97 members are eligible for the rites and ceremonies of the Christian Covenant
98 Community, as appropriate. Friends of the church are not eligible to vote.

99
100 Affiliate Membership:

101 Affiliate Membership includes former members, including children and
102 surviving spouses of former members who may no longer live in the area.
103 Affiliate Members are not eligible to vote or hold a position in a leadership
104 ministry. Affiliate Members are eligible for the rites and ceremonies of the
105 Christian Covenant Community, as appropriate.

106
107 Non-members:

Non-members are eligible for pastoral services, rites and ceremonies, including funerals and memorial services of the Christian Covenant on a case-by-case basis.

ARTICLE VI: ELECTED OFFICERS, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Section I: Officers

The officers of this Church shall be:

Minister:

The Minister shall be called by a vote of at least two-thirds of the members present at an official Congregational Meeting. He or she, as pastor and teacher, shall minister to the spiritual welfare of the congregation, being receptive to the Board of Deacons for advice, guidance and assistance. The Minister shall seek to enlist individuals as followers of Christ, preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, and have responsibility for all services of public worship. The Minister's duties shall include administration of the activities of the Church in cooperation with the Board of Deacons and related Committees. The Minister shall be an *ex officio* member of the all boards and committees of the Church.

Moderator:

The Moderator shall preside at all official meetings of the Church and of the Board of Deacons, working with the minister and Board to set the agenda. The Moderator acts as the liaison between members of the Congregation, the Board of Deacons and all committees. The Moderator shall serve as the President of the Corporation.

Clerk:

The Clerk shall record the proceedings of the Congregational Meetings and the Board of Deacons of which he or she shall be a member and secretary. The Clerk shall be responsible for giving official notice of all Congregational Meetings. The Clerk shall keep a register with addresses of the members of the Church, dates and modes of their reception and departure. The Clerk will record and maintain a record of all births, baptisms and marriages. Further, the

Clerk shall be responsible for preserving and keeping on file all communications and written official reports including letters of transfer.

Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall receive an accounting of all receipts and disbursements and shall direct management of all Church funds in accordance with the policies of the Board of Deacons and the budget approved by the Covenant Members. He or she shall make a full report at the Annual Meeting and other such other reports, as may be requested by the Church. The Treasurer shall serve as the Chairperson of the Finance Committee as well as the Treasurer of the Corporation.

Section II: Boards

Board of Deacons:

The Board of Deacons is a representative body comprised of all currently serving Deacons. The Board of Deacons is the final decision-making body between Congregational Meetings, working closely with the Minister in the spiritual and institutional affairs of the Church. Specifically, the Board of Deacons is charged with insuring the resources of the church are utilized in a manner consistent with Christ's mission for the church and in accordance with this Constitution and By-Laws. The Board of Deacons shall consist of three to five Deacon Elders, three to five Deacon Trustees, and the three elected officers of the Church. The Board of Deacons shall meet regularly as needed, not to be less frequent than once a quarter. The Minister shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the Board of Deacons.

Deacon Elders:

Three to Five Deacon Elders shall be elected from the Covenant membership of the Church. The Deacon Elders shall be ordained into the deaconate and shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to Christ's mission for the Church to include, but not be limited to, worship, faith development, pastoral care, mission, outreach, evangelism, and prophetic witness. Deacon Elders, in conjunction with Deacon Trustees, shall approve the hire of all staff serving in mission-related positions, including Worship Musicians and Christian Educators. Deacon Elders shall also approve all mission partnerships with

outside organizations. Two Deacon Elders and the Minister shall receive requests for and approve disbursements of funds from the Deacon's Fund, in accordance with the policies set down by the Board of Deacons. Deacon Elders shall divide their responsibilities among themselves and shall form such teams and *ad hoc* committees as needed to fulfill their duties. The Clerk shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the deacon Elders.

Deacon Trustees:

Three to five Deacon Trustees shall be elected from the Covenant Membership of the Church. The Deacon Trustees shall be ordained into the deaconate and shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to corporate management of the Church and its resources to include, but not be limited to, stewardship, physical property oversight, personnel management and, in conjunction with the treasurer, the management of Church funds. Deacon Trustees, in conjunction with Deacon Elders, shall approve the hire of all staff serving in mission-related positions, including Worship Musicians and Christian Educators. Deacon Trustees shall approve the hire of all personnel in non-mission functions, to include but not be limited to those responsible for care and maintenance of physical properties. Deacon Trustees shall divide these responsibilities among themselves and shall form such teams and *ad hoc* committees as needed to fulfill their duties. The treasurer shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the deacon trustees.

Section III: Special Committees

Nominating Committee:

The Nominating Committee shall prepare and present to the Congregation a slate of candidates, nominating one person for each Church office to be filled. Candidates for the Nominating Committee, itself, shall be recommended by the Board of Deacons. The entire slate of candidates should represent the diversity of the Congregation with respect to race, age, gender, sexual orientation, and duration of Church membership. The Nominating Committee shall keep the Congregation informed as to which positions are vacant, and the responsibilities thereof. If a vacancy in any Church office or Board occurs in the period between Congregational Meetings, the Nominating Committee shall recommend candidates to the Board of Deacons for appointment. At all times, the Nominating Committee and the Board of Deacons shall make every

217 effort to consider the spiritual gifts of particular individuals in filling
218 positions.
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224 ARTICLE VII: ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMPOSITION OF BOARDS 225

226 Section I: Length of Election 227

228 A. Officers

- 229 1. The Minister shall be called for an indefinite period of time at a
230 Congregational Meeting called for this purpose.
- 231 2. Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer shall be elected for a one-year term at the
232 Annual Meeting and are eligible for reelection to office.
- 233 3. Deacon Elders and Deacon Trustees shall be elected to a two-year term and
234 may be reelected.
235

236 B. Members of the Nominating Committee

- 237 1. Members of the Nominating Committee serve for one-year and may be
238 reappointed.
239

240 C. Members of the Pastoral Relations Committee

- 241 1. Members of the Pastoral Relations Committee may serve for two years and
242 may be reelected until there is a change in ministerial staff.
243

244 Section II: Eligibility for Election

245 Only Covenant Members in good standing of this Church may hold elective
246 positions.
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248 Section III: Removal from Service

249 Any elected official may be removed from their position by a two-thirds vote
250 of the members present, constituting a quorum of the membership, at a
251 Congregational Meeting called for that purpose.
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261 ARTICLE VIII: CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS
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263 Section I: All Congregational Meetings

264 Twenty-five percent (25%) of the Church membership shall represent a
265 quorum.
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267 All official business requiring attention of the Church membership shall be
268 conducted at a duly called meeting where a quorum is present.
269

270 The Board of Deacons may postpone a Congregational Meeting because of
271 extreme conditions.
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273 Any member may request the Minister or the Moderator to call a
274 Congregational Meeting. The Moderator will convene the Board of Deacons
275 which may accept or reject the request. If the Board of Deacons approves the
276 request to call a Congregational Meeting, the Moderator will do so and be
277 responsible for preparing the agenda. In addition, notice must be given on two
278 consecutive Sundays preceding each Congregational Meeting, including
279 announcements in Sunday bulletins, eChimes, and the church's website.
280

281 Section II: Annual Congregational Meeting

282 The Annual Congregational Meeting shall be held on or about the second
283 Sunday in November for the purpose of electing officers and conducting other
284 business including approval of the annual fiscal plan. An alternate or second
285 session may be held, if necessary, on or about the second Sunday of
286 December.
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288 The Board of Deacons shall be responsible for selecting the specific dates and
289 providing notice thereof on two consecutive Sundays preceding each session.
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291 Officers, Deacons and Members of the Nominating Committee shall assume
292 their offices at midnight on December 31st. The Annual Church Budget shall
293 come into effect at that time.
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298 ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

299 This Constitution may be amended by a two-third vote of a quorum of
300 covenant members present at any Congregational Meeting, provided a two-
301 week notice of suggested changes are provided, according to the procedure for
302 notice of Congregational Meetings. Special meetings, duly called, may be
303 scheduled for this purpose.
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305 ARTICLE X: EFFECT

306 This Constitution is in effect upon approval by the Congregation at a duly-
307 formed Congregational Meeting and replaces all previous documents until
308 such time future changes are made through the due process noted in this
309 Constitution.
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335 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION
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337 Amendment I: Endowment Fund Creation
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339 Creation of an Endowment Fund of the Sayville Congregational United
340 Church of Christ (March 22, 1992)
341

342 A. Resolution for Amendment to the Constitution

343 An Endowment Fund shall be established. The purpose, governance,
344 and operational procedures of this fund shall be defined by special
345 resolution adopted by the Congregation.
346

347 B. Resolution to Implement the Endowment Fund

348 Whereas, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all
349 the gifts God has given us including accumulated, inherited, and
350 appreciated resources:
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352 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, at a meeting assembled on March
353 22, 1992, that this Congregation approve and establish a new separate
354 fund to be known as THE ENDOWMENT FUND OF THE
355 SAYVILLE CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST,
356 Sayville, New York (hereafter called “the Fund”)
357

358 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that unless otherwise specified by the
359 grantor, the principal amount of the gifts to this FUND, will be retained
360 and preserved, and that only the income earnings from the managed
361 investments of the principal may be expended.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an Endowment Fund Committee (hereafter called the COMMITTEE) shall be established to be the custodian of the FUND.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the following Plan of Operation be set forth for the administration and management of the FUND.

C. Plan of Operation

1. The COMMITTEE shall consist of no less than three (3) and no more than five (5) duly elected members, all of whom shall be active members of the Sayville Congregational United Church of Christ. (The term of each member shall be three (3) years. No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive three-year terms. After a lapse of one year, a former member of the COMMITTEE may be reelected.) The COMMITTEE shall have its books audited annually by a qualified person (who is not a member of the COMMITTEE) at the expense of the FUND income, for presentation to the Congregation.

The COMMITTEE may request other members of the Congregation to serve as advisory members and, at the expense of the FUND income, may provide for such professional counseling on investments, accounting, or legal matters as it deems to be in the best interest of the FUND.

All assets are to be held in the name of THE ENDOWMENT FUND OF THE SAYVILLE CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST.

The COMMITTEE will appoint a corporate fiduciary as its agent, and no member of the COMMITTEE shall be empowered to hold, sell,

invest, transfer, convert, or in all other aspects manage and control the assets of the FUND. The appointed agent shall have custody of all assets of the FUND and shall make all investment decisions pursuant to such policies as may be prescribed by the donor or otherwise determined by the COMMITTEE. The COMMITTEE, with approval of the Board of Deacons, may at any time remove its agent and appoint a successor.

In the event that real property is donated to the FUND, the COMMITTEE shall be empowered to oversee the management of said real property until such time that it is deemed beneficial by the COMMITTEE to liquidate the property. Upon liquidation of the real property, the proceeds become part of the FUND principal and must be placed into the FUND at the first available opportunity.

Members of the COMMITTEE shall not be held liable for any losses which may be incurred upon the investments of the FUND except to the extent that such losses shall have been caused by bad faith or gross negligence. Members shall not be liable for acts or omissions of any other member. No member shall engage in any self-dealing or transactions with the FUND in which the member has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interests of the FUND.

2. Accumulation and Distribution

In order to assure growth of the FUND and to protect against inflation, 10% of earned income must be returned to the principal each year until the principal balance reaches \$250,000. Thereafter, 5% of the earned income must be returned to the principal each year. The COMMITTEE may also recommend to the full Board of Deacons that no distribution

be made in a given year so that accumulated interest may compound.
Not more than one year consecutively may pass without at least a
partial distribution of income, provided there is application for support
from the FUND.

The COMMITTEE shall determine what is principal and what is
income according to generally accepted accounting principals.

Borrowing against the FUND principal balance is to be strongly
discouraged, unless catastrophic events threaten the very existence of
the Church. In such catastrophic circumstances, borrowing against the
FUND principal may be approved by a 2/3 majority vote of the
members present at a duly called Congregational Meeting for the
specific purpose herein stated.

Income generated by the FUND principal may be expended annually
and at such other times deemed necessary and/or feasible to accomplish
benefit the following purposes:

- a. One-quarter (1/4) for capital improvements of a building
program of the Sayville Congregational United Church of
Christ, Sayville, New York; and/or for scholarships or grants
to members of the Sayville Congregational United Church of
Christ for the purpose of such education or training which
enables this Congregation to grow in Christian faith and
service to God's people; and/or for the enhancement of the
special programs of the Church, including but not limited to
Christian Education, Evangelism, Music, and Student
Internship programs.
- b. One-quarter (1/4) for outreach into the community, including
but not limited to, social service agencies, institutions and
agencies to which this Congregation relates, and special

470 programs designed for those persons in our local area who are
471 in spiritual and/or economic need.

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473 c. One-quarter (1/4) for the wider mission of the United Church
474 of Christ at home and overseas, including but not limited to
475 UCC Colleges and seminaries, grants for UCC new Church
476 development, professional leadership, educational ministries,
477 world mission, and capital financing.

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479 d. One-quarter (1/4) for any purpose listed under A, B, or C
480 above.

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482 The COMMITTEE shall evaluate all requests for program support.
483 Those requests deemed to be consistent with the purpose of the FUND
484 and in the best interest of this Congregation, shall be recommended to
485 the Board of Deacons for approval for funding. The level of financial
486 support shall also be recommended by the COMMITTEE and approved
487 by the Board of Deacons.

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490 3. Amending this resolution: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any
491 amendment to this Plan of Operation will require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of
492 the members present at a duly called Congregational Meeting for the
493 specific purpose of amending this Plan.

494
495 4. Disposition or Transfer of the FUND: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that
496 in the event the Sayville Congregational Church ceases to exist either
497 through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the FUND shall be
498 at the discretion of the governing body in conformity with the approved
499 Congregational Constitution and in consultation with the denominational
500 staff to which this Congregation belongs at such time. Consultation with
501 the denomination may be desirable for continuation of Endowment Fund
502 obligations.

504 5. Adoption of resolution: this resolution, recommended by the Church
505 Council and accepted by the Congregation at a duly called Congregational
506 Meeting, is hereby adopted.
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519 Amendment II:
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521 Establishment of a Pastoral Relations Committee (October 18, 1998)
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523 There shall be established a Pastoral Relations Committee which shall provide
524 an arena for helpful and honest dialogue between the Minister(s) and the
525 people of the Congregation and among the members of the pastoral staff,
526 through the fostering and maintenance of good, open and healthful relations.
527

528 The following skills and attributes are generally looked for in members of the
529 Pastoral Relations Committee: Christian character that commands the respect
530 and admiration of the Congregation and Minister(s); maturity; patience and
531 flexibility; a vital interest in the life of the Church; an ability to maintain
532 confidentiality; an ability to appreciate different points of view; an ability to
533 negotiate and reconcile differences; availability for listening to Church
534 members; trustworthiness; and a willingness to learn to be effective in this
535 ministry.
536

537 Candidates for election to this Committee will be chosen according to the
538 following procedure. The Minister(s), with agreement among themselves, will
539 submit names of candidates to the Nominating Committee. Likewise, the

540 Congregation and Board of Deacons will submit separate lists of names to the
541 Nominating Committee. Using the list of criteria given in the previous
542 paragraph, the Nominating Committee will select candidates whose names
543 appear on all three lists and arrange the election or appointment of these
544 candidates to the Pastoral Relations Committee in the ordinary manner. If
545 there are not enough qualified candidates whose names appear on all three
546 lists, the Nominating Committee shall request the names of additional
547 candidates be submitted by all three parties (Minister(s), Congregation, and
548 Board of Deacons) and shall repeat this process until all open positions on the
549 Pastoral Relations Committee are filled.

550
551 Members of the Pastoral Relations Committee may serve on any other Board
552 or Committee, except the Board of Deacons.

553 The Pastoral Relations Committee is accountable only to the Congregation,
554 and shall make an Annual Report to the Congregation. Other reports may be
555 made at the Committee's discretion.

556
557 The Pastoral Relations Committee shall not be directly involved in the
558 negotiation or execution of contractual matters between the Church and
559 Pastoral staff, including the Minister(s).

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End of Document – November 30, 2018