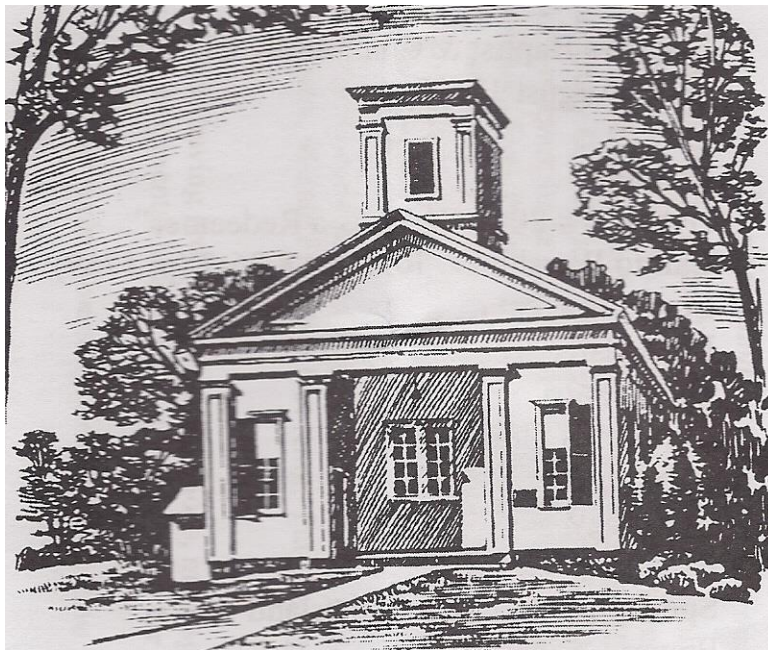


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BYLAWS
OF
THE FLANDERS BAPTIST AND COMMUNITY CHURCH



East Lyme, Connecticut
Adopted October 23, 1988

BYLAWS OF THE FLANDERS BAPTIST AND COMMUNITY CHURCH
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ARTICLE I Name

The name of this church shall be the Flanders Baptist and Community Church, Incorporated.

ARTICLE II PURPOSES

The purposes of the church shall be:

- (a) To maintain a sanctuary for the worship of God. the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, the preaching of the Gospel, and the administration of the sacred ordinances;
- (b) To provide a symbol of the Kingdom of God on earth and of the Universal Church founded by His Son, Jesus Christ;
- (c) To foster a loving fellowship of spiritual brothers and sisters, as ordained by our Lord and Saviour;
- (d) To bear witness to Christ's message of love and salvation and to render loving service to those who are dispirited, impoverished, and oppressed; and
- (e) To conduct a program of Christian education through the operation of a church school for children and Bible study classes for adults.

ARTICLE III POLITY

As members of the Flanders Baptist and Community Church, we make the following declarations:

- (a) Jesus Christ is the only head of this church and it is to Him that we turn for guidance in all matters of faith, doctrine, and conduct.
- (b) Within the sacred principles revealed through His life and teaching, Christ has entrusted to us the responsibility and authority for the organization and operation of this church.
- (c) The functional distribution of responsibility for the operation of this church is delegated by the congregation to its elected officials, who are answerable to the congregation for their stewardship.
- (d) The pulpit of this church is entrusted to the Pastor with the full expectation that he will preach the word of God, free from mortal interference, according to the dictates of his mind and conscience.
- (e) The Flanders Baptist and Community Church is a member of the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A., the American Baptist Churches of Connecticut, and the Stonington Union-New London Baptist Association. Cooperation and collegiality are also maintained with the interdenominational Christian fellowship provided through local and regional councils of churches.

ARTICLE IV DOCTRINE

- (a) This church holds the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the inspired record of God's revelatory actions in human history and the authoritative basis for its doctrine and practices.

(b) The covenant presented in the succeeding article has been adopted by the congregation to provide its members with a means of declaring their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and the Vital Force in their daily lives.

ARTICLE V COVENANT

We, the members of the Flanders Baptist and Community Church, acting in the presence of Almighty God, do solemnly and reverently enter into the following covenant with one another:

(a) Having received the sacrament of baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we lovingly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is our personal Lord and Saviour.

(b) We declare ourselves to be one body in Christ and promise to walk together in Christian love, to help one another in times of illness and distress, to share one another's joys, as well as burdens, and to remember one another in our prayers.

(c) We will strive to conduct ourselves according to the Commandments of Almighty God and the teachings of His Son, Jesus Christ, and we will endeavor to achieve the perfect union of humility, tolerance, forgiveness, generosity, truth, and piety in our daily lives.

(d) Remembering that all men and women are children of God, we will be guided by the principles of equality, justice, and brotherhood in our treatment of others.

(e) We will seek to live each day fruitfully and joyfully, remembering that all things are possible with the help of our Heavenly Father.

(f) We will work together to strengthen our church through faithful attendance at worship services, participation in its business and social meetings, and sustained financial support of its ministry. We will, furthermore, stand ready to apply our individual talents to the needs of the church.

(g) We will be alert to the spiritual needs of relatives and friends who might benefit from membership in our church and invite them to attend a devotional service with us.

(h) Recognizing the potential for extending our religious experience, we will strive to increase our understanding and knowledge of the Bible through private study and reflection.

(i) We will give careful attention to the religious education of our children by including them in devotional services and prayers in the home and by fostering their attendance at church school classes.

(j) Should our individual circumstances call us away from this fellowship, we will seek membership in another church with all possible dispatch.

ARTICLE VI MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. GENERAL

Membership shall be open to any person who subscribes to the Purposes, Polity, Doctrine, and Covenant set forth in these bylaws and who qualifies under the provisions of Sections 2, 3, or 4 of this article.

SECTION 2. BAPTISM

This category shall encompass applicants who accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and who undergo baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. The mode of baptism shall be a matter of choice, according to the conscience and conviction of the applicants.

A candidate for membership through baptism shall first hold a preliminary meeting with the Pastor. Following the meeting, the Pastor shall forward notice of the application, accompanied by his recommendations thereon, to the chairman of the Diaconate. Upon receipt of a favorable endorsement of the application from the Diaconate, the Pastor shall schedule and perform the baptism. Following the baptism, the applicant shall receive the right hand of fellowship during the earliest practical worship service.

SECTION 3. LETTERS OF TRANSFER

In most cases, a letter certifying that an applicant has been a member in good standing of another Christian church will be honored, provided that the demitting church adheres to principles of faith and doctrine similar to those of the Flanders Baptist and Community Church. Such letters should bear the signature of the pastor of the demitting church and should be mailed directly to the Pastor of the Flanders church. Having received a letter of transfer, the Pastor shall meet with the applicant, following which he shall forward a copy of the letter, accompanied by his recommendations, to the chairman of the Diaconate. When a favorable endorsement is issued by the Diaconate, the applicant shall be formally welcomed into the fellowship of the church by the Pastor and the Congregation.

SECTION 4. PROFESSION OF FAITH

When a baptized applicant does not fall directly within the provisions of Sections 2 or 3 (above), the Pastor shall examine his qualifications for membership. This examination shall be made on the basis of documentary evidence and/or a personal interview. Having completed his assessment, the Pastor shall forward his findings and recommendations to the chairman of the Diaconate. Upon receipt of a favorable response from that board, the Pastor shall schedule a formal welcome into the church fellowship.

SECTION 5. OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

All members of the church shall understand and accept the obligation to govern their lives and conduct according to the Life, Teaching, and Spirit of Jesus Christ and to accept the principles of faith and doctrine expressed in these bylaws. As provided in the Covenant (Article V), all members shall strive to enter into the life of the church by their deeds, as well as their words.

SECTION 6. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall terminate upon receipt by the Clerk of a letter requesting such action and endorsement of the request by the Pastor. It may also be terminated upon receipt by the Clerk of compelling evidence of de facto withdrawal from membership.

SECTION 7. LETTERS OF DISMISSION

A letter of dismission shall be granted to any member in good standing who wishes to transfer to another church. Such letters shall be issued with the approval of the Diaconate and shall bear the signature of the Pastor or, in his absence, that of the Clerk.

SECTION 8. EXCLUSION FROM MEMBERSHIP

If any members become offensive to the church and its good name by reason of unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of the Covenant, the church may terminate their membership. However, such action will be taken only after a hearing before the Diaconate and a determined effort to elicit repentance and remedial behavior.

ARTICLE VII OFFICERS

SECTION 1. GENERAL

The officers of the church, all of whom must be members, shall include the Pastor, Assistant or Associate Pastor, Moderator, Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Historian, Church School Superintendent, Assistant Church School Superintendent, Church School Treasurer, and Sunshine Treasurer. It shall be understood, however, that all of these offices may not be required at all times. Accordingly, activation of individual offices shall take place at the option of the church membership, acting in response to the needs of the church. In the absence of any provisions to the contrary, the nomination of candidates to fill the various offices shall be based solely on their qualifications and willingness to serve.

SECTION 2. TERMS OF OFFICE

The Pastor and/or Assistant or Associate Pastor (when the subordinate role is to be filled) may be called for either a definite or indefinite period, as provided in Article XI, Section 4. All other officers shall be elected to serve one-year terms (see Article XIII). However, there shall be no limit to the number of times a church member may be reelected to fill the same office.

SECTION 3. PASTOR

The Pastor shall have the following obligations:

- (a) Plan and conduct regular Sunday morning worship services and special religious observances. May invite other clergymen to conduct an occasional service or to deliver a sermon,
- (b) Interpret the Holy Scriptures and preach the Gospel according to his/her understanding and convictions, as derived from the guidance and inspiration received from the Holy Spirit.
- (c) Seek to strengthen the spiritual development of the church fellowship through commitment to the Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ.
- (d) Administer the ordinances of the church, namely, baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- (e) Serve as spiritual counselor to those seeking guidance or comfort; make appropriate referrals in cases requiring the services of specialists in other professional disciplines.
- (f) Make pastoral calls upon church members who are ill or confined; extend spirituality of church to prospective members; plan and implement means of increasing membership; call upon deacons, deaconesses, and other church members for assistance, as necessary or desirable.
- (g) Conduct Bible study classes for adults and serve as advisor to the church school.

- (h) Seek to expand the commitment of the fellowship to the maintenance of relevant domestic and foreign missions.
- (i) Serve as ex officio member of all church boards and committees. Pastor shall have the right, but not the duty, to participate in the work of all boards and committees. Participation shall be obligatory only when Pastor is specifically named to membership.
- (j) Provide principal liaison between the church and the denominational Christian organizations to which it belongs; maintain cooperation and collegiality with the interdenominational fellowship of the neighboring region.
- (k) Supervise Assistant or Associate Pastor and Administrative Assistant to the Pastor (when positions are filled); exercise spiritual oversight of Youth Fellowship through membership on the Board of Christian Education.
- (l) Respond to appropriate requests for conducting weddings and funerals.
- (m) Continue theological and pastoral-counseling studies with the encouragement and support of the church; attend appropriate seminars and meetings.
- (n) Acting in concert with the Moderator, appoint such Ad Hoc Committees as may be required from time-to-time.

SECTION 4. ASSISTANT OR ASSOCIATE PASTOR

As dictated by circumstance, it may become necessary or desirable to acquire the services of an Assistant or Associate Pastor on a full- or part- time basis. Action to fill either of these positions shall be taken only with the approval of the church membership, when recommended by the Church Council. The responsibilities of these positions shall be determined jointly by the Pastor and the Church Council.

Recruitment and election of an incumbent shall proceed in substantially the same manner as that prescribed for the office of Pastor. Prior to recruitment, the Pastor shall summarize the anticipated duties in a position description.

SECTION 5. MODERATOR

The Moderator shall have the following responsibilities:

- (a) Preside at all business meetings of the church.
- (b) Serve as presiding officer at meetings of the Church Council.
- (c) In concert with the Pastor, appoint such Ad Hoc Committees as may become necessary.
- (d) Follow the progress of Ad Hoc Committees in performing assigned tasks.
- (e) Serve as ex officio member of all church boards and committees. Moderator shall have the right, but not the duty, to participate in the work of all boards and committees. Participation shall be obligatory only when Moderator is specifically named to membership.

SECTION 6. CLERK

The clerk shall perform the following:

- (a) Maintain an accurate record of the proceedings of all business meetings of the church membership and the Church Council.
- (b) Serve as church registrar, maintaining a roster of all members; record dates of all admissions, dismissions, baptisms, marriages, and deaths.
- (c) Organize and maintain segregated subject matter files of correspondence, reports, and other documents; give special attention to documentary material of historical interest.
- (d) Compile periodic statistical summaries, denominational reports, and such other data as may be required.
- (e) Prepare letters of dismissal for Pastor's signature. In absence of Pastor, sign such letters with concurrence of the Diaconate and forward copy to Pastor for information.

SECTION 7. ASSISTANT CLERK

The Assistant Clerk shall be responsible for performing the duties of the Clerk during the latter's absence. It shall also be incumbent upon the Assistant Clerk to assist the Clerk in such other ways as may prove both feasible and mutually agreeable.

SECTION 8. TREASURER

The Treasurer shall be bonded in such manner and amount as the Board of Trustees directs. The cost of the bond shall be borne by the Church. This officer shall have the following responsibilities:

- (a) Serve as financial manager of church and maintain custody of weekly offerings, missionary funds, annual operating funds, and miscellaneous income of an unrestricted nature. Excluded are sums received or earned by the church school, sunshine fund, and auxiliary organizations.
- (b) Record all financial transactions in accordance with established bookkeeping practices, and establish segregated accounts for all categories of income and expenditure.
- (c) Initiate all disbursements for salaries, maintenance, and operations in accordance with annual church budget.
- (d) Make disbursements from missionary account in accordance with church policy directives.
- (e) Submit written report at Annual Business Meeting, giving breakdown of operating receipts and expenditures vs. approved budgetary allocations.
- (f) In concert with the Boards of Trustees and Finance, serve as guardian of all trust funds. Such funds may be withdrawn or transferred from their depository only upon authorization by two-thirds of the church members present at a formally-announced business meeting and shall require the written approval of the Treasurer and not less than two members of the Board of Trustees, one of whom shall be the chairman. The Treasurer shall receive and apply the income from such funds in accordance with the instructions of the donors and standing authorization by the church membership.

(g) Serve as custodian of all deeds, plans, and other documents pertaining to church properties and finances. All such documents shall be listed in a record book maintained for that purpose, and they shall be stored in a bank vault.

(h) As required by the Church Council, submit account books and supporting documentation to the Board of Finance for audit.

(i) Serve as ex officio member (with vote) of the Board of Finance.

(j) Execute all purchase orders and contracts.

SECTION 9. ASSISTANT TREASURER

During the absence of the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer shall perform such duties as may be specifically designated. Moreover, the incumbent shall routinely assist the Treasurer in any ways that may prove both feasible and mutually satisfactory. When this position is filled, the incumbent shall be bonded in the same manner as the Treasurer.

SECTION 10. HISTORIAN

The Historian shall be responsible for the following tasks:

(a) Preserve documents and records of a purely historical interest to the church.

(b) Maintain scrapbook containing such contemporary newspaper articles, church notices, and photographs as will serve to document significant occurrences in the life of the church.

(c) Prepare yearly report summarizing events and accomplishments judged to be of lasting historical significance.

(d) Prepare calendar showing significant milestones in history of the church and encourage observance of major anniversaries.

SECTION 11. CHURCH SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

In selecting a candidate for this office, the Nominating Committee shall consult the Board of Christian Education (see Article VIII, Section 6).

The Superintendent shall have the following responsibilities:

(a) Serve as executive head of the church school, administering the school within the guidelines established by the Board of Christian Education.

(b) Establish graded curriculum and select coordinated teaching materials.

(c) Seek to provide students with a growing knowledge and understanding of the Bible and the application of the Gospel's teachings to their daily lives.

(d) Recruit, train, and evaluate performance of teaching staff. New teaching appointments shall be made in consultation with the Board of Christian Education.

(e) As desirable, initiate exchange of information between Flanders Church School teaching staff and that of sister churches within the region.

- (f) Meet occasionally with Director(s) of Youth Fellowship to discuss matters of mutual interest.
- (g) When necessary, submit supplementary budget requirements to Board of Finance via the Board of Religious Education.
- (h) Present written year-end progress report to church membership at Annual Business Meeting.
- (i) Serve as ex officio member of Board of Christian Education.

SECTION 12. ASSISTANT CHURCH SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The incumbent of this office shall assume responsibility for the administration of the church school during the absence of the Superintendent and shall perform such other duties as may prove desirable. In selecting a candidate for this office, the Nominating Committee shall consult the Superintendent and the Board of Christian Education.

SECTION 13. CHURCH SCHOOL TREASURER

In selecting a nominee for this office, the Nominating Committee shall confer with the Church School Superintendent (or candidate for that office) and the Board of Christian Education.

The Church School Treasurer shall have the following responsibilities:

- (a) Serve as custodian of all church school receipts, gifts, and budget allocations.
- (b) Assist Superintendent with formulation of annual operating budget.
- (c) Initiate all disbursements in payment of operating expenses incurred by the church school. Expenses in excess of the approved budget shall be brought to the attention of the Superintendent.
- (d) Maintain itemized account of all receipts and expenditures and submit summary to Superintendent for incorporation in latter's report to church membership at Annual Business Meeting.
- (e) As required by the Church Council, submit financial records to Board of Finance for audit.

SECTION 14. SUNSHINE TREASURER

The Sunshine Treasurer shall assume the following obligations:

- (a) Serve as custodian of all funds to be used for the purchase of flowers or other tokens of cheer and love for those who are ill, dispirited, or disabled.
- (b) Initiate disbursements as are deemed justified, irrespective of such race, religion, or church membership.
- (c) Maintain an itemized account of all receipts and expenditures and summarize in written report to be presented at Annual Business Meeting.
- (d) As required by the Church Council, submit financial records and supporting documentation to Board of Finance for audit.

ARTICLE VIII BOARDS

SECTION 1. GENERAL

All board members shall be members of the church. In the absence of any provision to the contrary, membership on all boards shall be determined solely on the basis of qualifications and willingness to serve. No person elected to board membership at the Annual Business Meeting shall serve more than two consecutive terms on the same board, subject to the proviso that the Church Council shall be empowered to authorize such exceptions as may be required for the good of the church. Moreover, a former board member shall become eligible for reelection to the same board following an absence of at least one year from that board.

As used in these bylaws, the term "chairman" carries no connotation of gender; it shall be construed in the strict lexicographical sense to refer to the person who presides over a meeting, board, or committee.

SECTION 2. DIACONATE

The Diaconate shall consist of sixteen members, divided into overlapping three-year terms of office. To the greatest extent possible, consistent with the availability of candidates who are willing and able to serve in the manner hereinafter set forth, the Diaconate shall consist of an equal number of deacons and deaconesses. Should an imbalance appear necessary or desirable, the Nominating Committee shall obtain the approval of the Church Council prior to implementation. However, any such authorization shall be of limited duration, and the Council shall insure that equalization is restored at the earliest practical date.

Changing circumstances may be expected to dictate adjustments in the number of Diaconate members. The Church Council shall, therefore, periodically assess the burden imposed upon this body and shall be responsible for approving the number of members required to bear that burden. If a reduction in membership is indicated, it shall be achieved by means of attrition. The equalization of deacons and deaconesses shall also be achieved in this manner. There shall be no distinction between the roles of deacons and deaconesses. Both are eligible and shall be called upon to perform any of the services expected of the diaconate. As soon as practicable following the Annual Business Meeting of the church membership, the Diaconate shall elect a chairman and a secretary. It shall be the duty of the chairman to preside at all meetings of the Diaconate and to ensure that the required number of deacons and deaconesses are available on all occasions requiring their services. The secretary shall prepare and maintain a file of the minutes of all meetings and shall assist the chairman with the preparation of the duty roster.

Meetings of the Diaconate shall be held at least once each quarter. The attendance of not less than half of the total membership shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of all business, which shall be decided by majority vote of the members present.

The Diaconate shall have the following obligations:

- (a) Watch over the spiritual vigor of the church, attendance at religious services, and growth in church membership.
- (b) Assist the Pastor in the administration of the ordinances.

- (c) Make preparations for the celebration of the Lord's Supper.
- (d) Extend the hospitality of the church to visitors and potential members and assist the Pastor in drawing new members into the mainstream of the fellowship.
- (e) In the absence of the Pastor or a visiting minister, provide leadership for devotional services.
- (f) Supervise the seating of worshippers at church services.
- (g) Assist Pastor in visiting and comforting sick, shut-in, and distressed members of the church.
- (h) Receive offerings at church services.
- (i) Consider and act on all applications for church membership and letters of dismissal, as forwarded by the Pastor with his recommendations (see Article VI).
- (j) Investigate any conduct of such a nature that it threatens to impair the church's standing (see Article VI, Section 8).

SECTION 3. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

This board shall consist of six members, two of whom shall be elected each year to serve a three-year term of office. The members shall yearly elect a chairman, who shall convene and preside at all meetings. Meetings shall be held at least once each quarter. The attendance of not less than four members shall constitute a quorum for conducting the board's business, and all matters before the board shall be decided by majority vote of the members present.

The board shall perform the following functions:

- (a) Hold in trust all real property of the church, assuming responsibility for its maintenance and protection.
- (b) Supervise procurement, custody, and care of all church appliances and equipment.
- (c) Initiate all measures required to protect church property against loss, e.g., comprehensive insurance coverage and appropriate liability indemnification.
- (d) Establish criteria and fee schedule for private, unaffiliated use of church facilities by individuals or organizations.
- (e) In concert with the Board of Finance and the church Treasurer, serve as guardian of trust funds. These resources may be withdrawn from their depository only upon approval by two-thirds of the church membership present at a formally-announced business meeting and shall require the written approval of the Treasurer and not less than two Trustees, one of whom shall be the chairman.
- (f) Employ and supervise custodian of the church.

SECTION 4. BOARD OF FINANCE

This board shall consist of three members, one of whom shall be elected each year to serve a three-year term. As soon as practicable following the Annual Business Meeting, the board shall elect a chairman, who shall be responsible for convening all meetings of the board. No member of the Board of Trustees,

nor the church Treasurer, shall be eligible for election to the Board of Finance. However, the Treasurer shall serve as an ex officio member with vote.

The presence of two board members and the Treasurer shall constitute a quorum for conducting all business. The unanimous vote of this quorum shall be required for the disposition of all matters requiring the board's action.

The board shall discharge the following responsibilities:

- (a) Consult church officers, boards, and committees, as necessary, to determine budget requirements for ensuing year. Of paramount concern are the compensation and allowances of all salaried officers and supporting personnel and the maintenance, operation, and improvement of church property.
- (b) Prepare consolidated budget proposal for action by church membership at Annual Business Meeting. In order that church members may review proposal prior to such action, copies shall be available at the two Sunday worship services immediately preceding the date of said meeting.
- (c) Resolve budgetary problems resulting from unanticipated operating expenses.
- (d) Serve as Auditing Committee (see Article IX, Section 5).
- (e) When necessary, develop fund-raising proposals for presentation to Church Council and church membership.

SECTION 5. CHURCH COUNCIL

There shall be a Church Council comprised of the officers named in Article VII, one representative from each of the boards named in Article VIII, and one representative from each of the standing committees named in Article IX. The church Moderator shall serve as chairman of the Council. In his absence, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees shall preside.

A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for conducting all business before the Council, and all such business shall be decided by a two-thirds vote of the members present. Meetings of the Council shall be convened by the chairman at bimonthly intervals.

In discharging its responsibilities, the Council shall be free to deploy its membership into such working groups as may prove desirable. Furthermore, the Council shall be empowered to expand the composition of any working group by seeking the participation of additional members of any board or standing committee or representatives from the church membership-at-large.

Foremost among the responsibilities of the Church Council are the following:

- (a) Develop and document short-term (two to five years), mid-term (six to ten years), and long-term (eleven to twenty years) plans to guide the progressive and coherent development of the mission, organization, staff, and physical plant of the church. Plans shall be reviewed annually and modified as necessary to keep pace with evolving needs and trends. Initial plans and subsequent modifications shall be presented to the church membership for approval at the Annual Business Meeting.

- (b) Seek ways of bringing the distinctive quality and character of membership in the Flanders Baptist and Community Church to the attention of persons in search of spiritual renewal and enrichment.
- (c) Enhance the sensitivity of the membership to affiliated missionary effort and its need for encouragement and support. both spiritual and material.
- (d) Make interim appointments to fill vacancies in offices, boards, and standing committees that cannot wait until the next annual election. In selecting appointees, Council shall give consideration to recommendations of Nominating Committee. Appointments made in this manner shall be valid only until the next Annual Business Meeting, at which time the vacancies shall be filled in the customary manner (see Article IX, Section 4(c), and Articles XIII and XIX).
- (e) Oversee the functioning of all boards and standing committees, following their progress and resolving all conflicts in jurisdiction and authority.
- (f) Act as a clearing house for new programs and proposals, directing them to the appropriate officer, board, or committee for recommendations and return to the Council for action.
- (g) With the exception of the positions of the Pastor, and Assistant or Associate Pastor, which are the responsibility of the Pastoral Relations and Pulpit Committee (see Article IX, Section 1 and 2), develop proposed staff employment policies and salary schedules for review and recommendations by the Board of Finance and approval by the church membership.

SECTION 6. BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

This board shall be composed of three members, one of whom shall be elected each year to serve a three-year term. The Pastor or Assistant/Associate Pastor (when the latter office is filled), the Superintendent of Church School, the Youth Fellowship Director(s), and the Administrative Assistant to the Pastor shall be ex officio members with vote.

The board shall elect a chairman yearly from among its elected members. Meetings shall be convened by the chairman at semiannual intervals or more often, if necessary. The presence of two elected members and two ex officio members shall constitute a quorum. All actions of the board shall be by majority vote of those present.

The board shall perform the following functions:

- (a) Determine the educational needs and interests of the church membership as a whole and sponsor programs designed to respond to those needs and interests. Included within the scope of this effort shall be the operation of the church school; the offering of adult Bible study classes; and special-interest activities, e.g., workshops, discussion groups, courses of instruction, and lectures.
- (b) Assist superintendent in on-going search for ways of increasing the effectiveness of church school program in providing students with a firm basis for the development of their Christian faith and conduct.

- (c) Approve graded curriculum and coordinated teaching materials employed by church school, as well as the appointment of additions to the teaching staff. As necessary, assist superintendent in recruitment of teachers.
- (d) Assist Superintendent of church school in finding ways to increase student enrollment and regularity in class attendance.
- (e) Meet with representatives of the Christian education boards of sister churches for exchange of ideas and experience.
- (f) When the positions of Church School Superintendent, Church School Treasurer, and Youth Fellowship Director(s) become vacant, provide Nominating Committee with recommendations for filling vacancies.
- (h) Assume temporary responsibility for all obligations not specifically assigned to any office, board, or committee.
- (i) Administer exceptions specified in Article VIII, Sections 1 and 2.
- (g) Assist Youth Fellowship Director(s) in publicizing program, increasing participation by both junior- and senior-level boys and girls, and obtaining necessary support.
- (h) Assist Administrative Assistant to Pastor in effort to discover and encourage sharing of special skills and knowledge possessed by church members.

ARTICLE IX STANDING COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. GENERAL

The standing committees of the church shall be established to perform functions of a continuing nature. When an additional standing committee becomes necessary, an amendment to the bylaws shall be prepared and presented to the church membership via the Church Council for review and recommendations. Adoption of the amendment shall constitute authorization to activate the proposed committee (see Article XX).

In the absence of any provision to the contrary, membership on all standing committees shall be determined solely on the basis of qualifications, diversity and breadth of view, and willingness to serve. Furthermore, it shall be understood that the term "chairman" carries no connotation of gender. As stated earlier in these bylaws, this term is employed in the common lexicographical sense to refer to the person who presides over a meeting, committee, or board.

All standing committees shall be accountable to the church membership through the oversight of the Church Council. Although members of standing committees shall normally be members of the church fellowship, the Church Council shall be empowered to approve such exceptions as may be necessary or desirable.

SECTION 2. PASTORAL RELATIONS AND PULPIT COMMITTEE

This committee shall consist of the Moderator, a Deacon, a Deaconess, the Treasurer, one representative each from the Boards of Trustees and Finance, and two members-at-large. Each of the

named boards shall be responsible for the annual appointment of its representative, and the members-at-large shall be elected yearly at the Annual Business Meeting.

The committee shall elect a chairman yearly from among its members. At least one committee meeting shall be held each quarter at the call of the chairman. The attendance of not less than six members of the committee shall constitute a quorum, and all actions of the committee shall be decided by a three-fourths vote of those present.

The committee shall perform the following functions:

- (a) Seek to promote effective two-way communication and understanding between the Pastor and the fellowship, with emphasis on the spiritual, professional, and material needs of the Pastor and the spiritual nourishment of the fellowship.
- (b) Develop proposed pastoral employment policies, including salary schedules, special benefits, and customary allowances, and submit to the church membership for approval, via the Board of Finance for review and recommendations.
- (c) Conduct a semiannual appraisal of the Pastor's performance with respect to the duties specified in the position description and meet with him/her for a discussion of the result. Conversely, the Pastor shall be asked for an appraisal of the cooperation and responsiveness of the fellowship and the adherence of the church to the commitments made at the time of his/her employment. Following this reciprocal assessment, the committee shall consider the accuracy of the Pastor's position description and advise the Church Council of any modifications which are judged to be advisable.
- (d) Monitor the Pastor's well-being, including that of family (when applicable), in the church and the and his/her role community.
- (e) When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate, conduct a search for qualified candidates in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article XI.

SECTION 3. MUSIC COMMITTEE

The music Committee shall be comprised of the Director of Music (normally serves as Organist and Choir Director), Accompanist and Assistant Choir Director, Pastor or his designated representative, and two members-at-large. The members-at-large shall be elected yearly by the church membership at the Annual Business Meeting. The Committee shall elect a chairman yearly, who shall be responsible for calling at least one meeting each quarter. The attendance of three members at a meeting shall constitute a quorum, and all decisions of the committee shall be by majority vote of those present.

The committee shall be responsible for performing the following duties:

- (a) As necessary, recruit Director of Music and Accompanist.
- (b) Oversee the variety of choral arrangements and hymns to insure favorable impact upon congregation.
- (c) Approve selection and presentation of special musical events within the church.

(d) Invite guest soloists or musical groups to make occasional appearances at regular or special church services and gatherings.

(e) Assume protective custody of musical properties, as assigned by the Board of Trustees.

(f) Approve and submit annual operating budget of Music Director to Board of Finance.

SECTION 4. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating Committee shall consist of one representative of the Board of Trustees, a Deacon and a Deaconess to represent the Diaconate, and three members-at-large. The members at large shall be elected yearly at the Annual Business Meeting, as provided in Article XIII, and the Board of Trustees and the Diaconate shall name their representatives as soon as practicable following that meeting.

All members of the Nominating Committee thus named and elected shall serve terms of one year. However, no limit shall be imposed on the number of terms that a member may serve. The committee shall elect its own chairman, who shall be responsible for calling all meetings. The attendance of four members at a meeting shall constitute a quorum, and all decisions of the committee shall be by majority vote of those present.

The Nominating Committee shall discharge the following obligations:

(a) Prepare and submit a slate of candidates for all offices and board and committee memberships to be filled at the Annual Business Meeting. Included in the slate shall be candidates to fill any unexpired terms that the Church Council may have filled during the year by interim appointment (see paragraph Cc) below).

(b) Prior to presenting slate of candidates at Annual Business Meeting, determine willingness of all nominees to serve in desired capacities.

(c) When crucial vacancies in elective offices, boards, or committees occur between successive Annual Business Meetings, submit recommendations for interim appointments to Church Council for consideration. Interim appointments shall expire on the date of the next Annual Business Meeting, at which time the resulting vacancies shall be filled in the customary manner.

SECTION 5. AUDITING COMMITTEE

This committee shall consist of two members of the Board of Finance. If it becomes impractical for these members to perform required audits on a timely basis, the Chairman of the Board and the Moderator shall seek the services of competent substitutes to serve on an interim basis. In discharging its obligations, the committee shall proceed in the following manner:

(a) Prior to the Annual Business Meeting, the designated officials shall audit such financial record books as may be specifically requested by the Church Council.

(b) The auditors shall present a written report of their findings to the membership at the Annual Business Meeting.

(c) When accepted by the church membership, the auditor's report shall be appropriately endorsed by the Clerk and filed in the permanent collection of church records.

SECTION 6. BYLAWS COMMITTEE: The bylaws Committee shall consist of three members, one of whom shall be elected each year to serve a three-year term. The committee shall elect a chairman, who shall be responsible for calling all meetings.

The committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- (a) Conduct an annual review of the bylaws to detect any conflicts with church practices, the presence of ambiguities, or the absence of necessary provisions.
- (b) Discuss apparent conflicts, or omissions with the cognizant officer, board, or committee and determine the desirability of amendments.
- (c) As may prove desirable, prepare proposed amendment(s) for presentation to the church membership in accordance with the provisions of Article XX.

ARTICLE X AD HOC COMMITTEES

As the need arises to conduct a study or perform a task of limited scope and duration, the Pastor and the Moderator shall jointly appoint an appropriately-constituted committee. Upon completion of its assignment and submittal of a written completion report, the committee shall normally cease to exist. Membership on such committees shall not be restricted to formal members of the church, i.e., those who have received the right hand of fellowship.

ARTICLE XI THE PASTORATE

SECTION 1. RECRUITMENT

When the pastorate becomes vacant, or a vacancy is known to be imminent, the Pastoral Relations and Pulpit Committee (see Article IX, Section 2) shall conduct a search for qualified candidates. In meeting its obligations, the committee shall seek the assistance of the Executive Minister and the Regional Minister of the American Baptist Churches of Connecticut. Coincident with the initiation of the search, the committee shall insure that the Pastor's position description is an accurate reflection of the vacancy to be filled.

SECTION 2. SELECTION

In corresponding or conferring with potential candidates discovered during the search, the committee shall ask for detailed information concerning education, work experience, salary requirements, personal references, and any other data of immediate relevance. Having completed its evaluation of the information thus received, the committee shall (when practical and applicable) attend a church service being conducted by the most promising candidate(s). Next, the committee shall request the assistance of the Regional Minister in arranging such personal interviews as may be warranted. When these steps have disclosed one or more candidates judged to offer the desired characteristics and capabilities, the committee shall seek the guidance of the Regional Minister in extending an invitation to the preferred candidate(s) to conduct a Sunday worship service at the Flanders Baptist and Community Church and to meet the fellowship at a reception following the service. Only one candidate shall be presented to the membership at a time.

SECTION 3. THE CALL

The call of a Pastor may be considered by the membership at any regular or special business meeting. However, notice of such meeting and its objective shall be printed in the church bulletin and read from the pulpit on not less than two successive Sundays prior to the date of the meeting. At least a three-fourths vote, provided that there be present and voting not less than forty members, shall be necessary to extend a call. Voting shall be by written ballot.

The call extended to a minister shall, as a minimum, draw attention to the responsibilities set forth in the position description and shall specify the following conditions of employment: (a) initial salary, (b) duration of appointment, (c) length of annual paid vacation, (d) amount of annual paid sick leave, (e) pension allowance, (f) health insurance, (g) use of parsonage, (h) payment of utilities, (i) car allowance, (j) attendance at church-affiliated meetings, and (k) participation in job-related professional development seminars and courses.

SECTION 4. DURATION

The Pastor and the Assistant or Associate Pastor (when relevant) may be called for either a definite or indefinite period of time. In either case, the incumbent or the church may terminate the relationship upon a sixty-day notice, or upon lesser notice by mutual consent.

SECTION 5. TERMINATION

Action by the church to terminate an incumbent's pastorate shall be brought before the membership at a formal business meeting, notice of such meeting and its objective having been printed in the church bulletin and read from the pulpit on not less than two successive Sundays prior to the date on which the meeting is to be held. A majority vote, provided that there be present and voting at least forty members of the fellowship, shall be necessary to effect termination. Voting shall be by written ballot.

ARTICLE XII CHURCH MEETINGS

SECTION 1. RELIGIOUS MEETINGS

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day and on such other occasions as may be appointed by the Pastor and the Diaconate. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at the worship service held on the first Sunday of each month and on Maunday Thursday. It may also be observed selectively, at the discretion of the Pastor and the Diaconate, on other especially solemn occasions.

SECTION 2. BUSINESS MEETINGS

The Annual Business Meeting shall normally be held immediately following the worship service on the third Sunday of January. However, no such meeting shall be held without first publishing an announcement in the church bulletin issued on the two consecutive Sundays immediately preceding that of the meeting. The agenda for this meeting shall include the reading of written year-end reports by all officers, boards, committees, and auxiliary organizations; action on the proposed budget for the ensuing church year; election of officers and filling of all vacancies in church boards and standing committees; and discussion of issues of immediate concern to the spiritual and material health of the church. Copies of all year-end reports shall be forwarded to the Clerk not less than ten days prior to the date of the Annual Business Meeting, in order that copies of the annual report of the church may be compiled and distributed at the meeting.

Quarterly Business Meetings shall normally be held immediately following the worship service on the third Sunday in the months of April, July, and October. No such meeting shall be held without first publishing an announcement in the manner prescribed for annual meetings. These interim meetings shall be held to receive brief verbal progress reports from officers and board and committee chairmen and to permit action on any matters requiring the attention of the church membership.

When unavoidable conflicts pose a serious threat to an Annual or Quarterly Business Meeting, the Moderator shall be empowered to engage in such rescheduling as may prove necessary.

SECTION 3. QUALIFIED VOTERS

All members of the church who are entered in the official membership roster maintained by the Clerk shall be eligible to vote on all issues presented at regular and special church business meetings.

SECTION 4. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

All church business meetings shall be conducted according to the parliamentary practices prescribed in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. In the absence of the Moderator, the chairman of the Board of Trustees shall serve as the presiding officer. The order of business at the Annual Business Meeting shall approximate the following:

- a) Call to Order
- b) Invocation or Prayer
- c) Announcements
- d) Reading and Approval of Secretary's Minutes
- e) Report of Pastor
- f) Report of Treasurer
- g) Reports of Other Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees
- h) Reports of Ad Hoc Committees
- i) Reports of Auxiliary Organizations
- j) Unfinished Business
- k) Reading of Correspondence
- l) New Business
- m) Election of Officers and Board and standing Committee Members
- n) Benediction or Closing Prayer

With the exception of item (m), the Quarterly Business Meetings shall follow substantially the same order of business. However, they will normally be of much shorter duration.

Church members wishing to place items on the agenda for any Annual or Quarterly Business Meeting shall notify the Clerk not less than five days prior to the date of the meeting.

SECTION 5. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings may be called at any time by the Pastor or Moderator, or upon written petition to the Moderator of at least ten qualified voting members of the church. The date and purpose of the meeting shall be published in the church bulletin at least one week prior to the date on which the meeting is to be held.

SECTION 6. QUORUM

Except as specified elsewhere in these bylaws, fifteen qualified voting members of the church shall constitute a quorum at all regular and special business meetings, and all matters brought before these meetings shall be decided by majority vote.

ARTICLE XIII ELECTIONS

SECTION 1. SCHEDULE

Yearly elections shall be held at the Annual Business Meeting. At that time, the Nominating Committee (see Article IX, Section 4) shall submit a slate of candidates for all church offices exclusive of the pastorate, for all expired terms on church boards and standing committees, and for any unexpired positions that may have been filled by interim appointments (see Article VIII, Section 5 (d) and Article XIV).

SECTION 2. NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

During the reading of the slate by the Nominating Committee, the presiding officer shall ensure that all voting members present have an ample opportunity to make additional nominations from the floor.

SECTION 3. METHOD OF VOTING

When multiple candidates for any office are named, either by the Nominating Committee, or as a consequence of nominations made from the floor, voting for that office shall be by written ballot. When only one candidate is nominated for an office, voting for that office shall be by voice vote, show of hands, or rising, as determined by the moderator.

SECTION 4. POSITIONS TO BE FILLED YEARLY

- a) Moderator
- b) Clerk
- c) Assistant Clerk (when filled)
- d) Treasurer
- e) Assistant Treasurer (when filled)
- f) Historian (when candidate available)
- g) Church School Superintendent
- h) Assistant Church School Superintendent
- i) Church School Treasurer
- j) Sunshine Treasurer
- k) Deacons (see Article VIII, Sections 1 and 2)
- l) Deaconesses (see Article VIII, Sections 1 and 2)
- m) Two Trustees to Serve Three-Year Terms
- n) One member of Board of Finance to serve three-year term
- o) One member of Board of Christian Education to serve three-year term
- p) Two members-at-large for Pastoral Relations and Pulpit Committee (one-year terms)
- q) Two members-at-large for Music Committee (one-year terms)
- r) Three members-at-large for Nominating Committee (one-year term)
- s) One member of Bylaws Committee to serve three-year term

ARTICLE XIV VACANCIES

When necessary, unexpired terms in elective offices, boards, or standing committees shall be filled on an interim basis. Such appointments shall be made by the Church Council, having given due consideration to the recommendations of the Nominating Committee. Persons thus appointed shall serve until the next Annual Business Meeting, at which time the vacancies shall be filled in the manner provided in Article XIII.

ARTICLE XV AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

SECTION 1. GENERAL

The establishment of all auxiliary organizations of the church shall require the approval of the Church Council. Such organizations shall elect their own officers and manage their own affairs. They shall submit written reports of their activities at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church.

SECTION 2. EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS

Existing auxiliary organizations include the following:

- a) Community circle
- b) Junior Circle

ARTICLE XVI DELEGATES

The Church Council shall name the official delegates of the church to established denominational and interdenominational meetings. When no quota for attendance is assigned, the Pastor or Moderator may call upon the membership for an indication of interest in participation.

ARTICLE XVII STAFF POSITIONS

SECTION 1. GENERAL

The staff shall consist of such positions as prove necessary in maintaining the operation of the church. All positions shall be approved by the Church Council and authorized by the church membership. A brief description of required duties shall be prepared for each position, and the cost of implementation shall be shown in the annual operating budget of the church. The officer, board, or committee having supervision of a staff position shall be responsible for the preparation of the position description, the annual budget request, and the recruitment and selection of the incumbent. With the exception of the Youth Fellowship Director(s) and the Administrative Assistant to the Pastor, staff members need not be members of the church. The performance of all staff personnel shall be subject to semiannual evaluation, during which process the opinion of the Pastor shall be requested. The assistance of the Pastor may also be requested during the recruitment and selection of personnel. Employment of any staff member may be terminated by the church upon thirty-days notice.

SECTION 2. ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO PASTOR

As needed, this position shall be activated in response to the requirements of the Pastor. Although the duties of the position may be expected to vary from time-to-time, the following tasks will serve to illustrate its character:

- (a) Prepare weekly bulletin containing order of worship and notices concerning events of interest to church membership.
- (b) Reply to correspondence, as specifically requested by Pastor.
- (c) Assume responsibility for coordinating memorial floral displays at worship services.
- (d) Recruit volunteers to decorate church for special occasions and to distribute flowers to appropriate members and friends of the church.
- (e) Serve as point-of-contact when Pastor cannot be reached.
- (f) Prepare notices of church services and publicity news items for release to area newspapers.
- (g) Plan or coordinate social activities of church membership.
- (h) Serve as coordinator of office volunteer workers.

SECTION 3. YOUTH FELLOWSHIP DIRECTOR(S)

The Youth Fellowship Director(s) shall be responsible to the Board of Christian Education for the organization and implementation of a program comprising the following objectives:

- (a) Creation of an environment for Christian fellowship and growth.
- (b) Encouragement of an atmosphere of interpersonal acceptance, sharing, and support.
- (c) Maintenance of close communication with member's parents, as a means of building cooperation and mutual understanding in working toward program objectives.
- (d) Presentation of a balance of experiences to nurture enthusiasm for service to God, church, community, and one another.
- (e) Development of awareness of relationship between work and reward, through self-supporting fund-raising projects and recreational activities.

SECTION 4. DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

The incumbent of this position shall be responsible to the Music Committee for implementing the musical program of the church. Included within the scope of this responsibility are the following:

- (a) Assist the Music Committee in recruitment and selection of organist/choir director and accompanist.
- (b) As approved by the Music Committee, plan and direct special musical events at the church.
- (c) Assist the Pastor in the selection of vocal and instrumental music to be sung or played during worship services.
- (d) Coordinate requests and proposals for the presentation of musical programs at convalescent hospitals, retirement homes, and custodial institutions.

(e) Prepare and submit annual budget to the Music Committee for approval and forwarding to Board of Finance. Budget shall include all salaries incidental to music program, maintenance of church-owned musical instruments, purchase of printed music, and care of choir robes.

(f) Prepare written year-end report to be presented at Annual Business Meeting.

(g) Serve as ex officio member of Music Committee.

SECTION 5. CUSTODIAN

The custodian shall be responsible to the Board of Trustees for the performance of routine housekeeping functions incidental to the maintenance of the church and adjacent grounds. In the alternative, the Board of Trustees may make separate arrangements for interior housekeeping and maintenance of church grounds.

ARTICLE XVIII THE CHURCH YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall be the Calendar year.

ARTICLE XIX PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the parliamentary conduct of the church membership, officers, boards, and committees in all cases to which they are applicable and not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules which the church may adopt.

ARTICLE XX AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

These bylaws may be amended or revised by affirmative vote of the Church Council, provided that the amendments or revisions are subsequently ratified by at least two-thirds of the church members present at any Quarterly or Annual Business Meeting duly warned and assembled in accordance with the provisions of Article XII, Section 2. Prior to such action, a copy of the proposed changes or revisions shall be mailed or handed to each member of the Church Council at least ten days before that body is scheduled to convene. Following approval by the Church Council, copies of the amendments or revisions shall be made available to individual church members for review not less than two weeks prior to the date of the Quarterly or Annual Business Meeting at which they are to be presented for adoption.

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