

STAMFORD LANE UNITED CHURCH, NIAGARA FALLS

CONSTITUTION

I THE CHURCH COUNCIL

1. The governing body of the Congregation will follow the organizational model of a council structure, called the Church Council. It shall possess all powers of the Congregation except for matters dealing with the pastoral relationship and membership of the Board of Trustees as outlined in The United Church Manual (*The Manual*).
2. The Church Council shall carry out the duties as outlined herein and govern the affairs of Stamford Lane United Church in accordance with this Constitution and in accordance with *The Manual*.
3. The elected members to the Church Council shall be known as Elders and shall be elected by the Congregation from among its members at its Annual Meeting or at such other meetings as may be determined by the Congregation.
4. The following shall also be full members of the Church Council by virtue of their office:
 - All Members of the Order of Ministry
 - The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees
 - The Superintendent of Sunday School
 - The Lay Representative(s) to Presbytery as per Manual.
5. The regular term of office for Elders shall be three years with one-third to retire each year to retain continuity. If one or more vacancies exist for one or two years, replacements shall be elected for those terms.
6. The term of office will begin following the Annual Meeting.
7. The number of Elders shall not normally exceed 50.
8. The Church Council shall normally meet monthly from September to June and at other times at the call of the Chair or at the request of the Executive or at the request of five members of the Council.
9. A quorum shall be 50% plus one of the members including one member only of the Order of Ministry.
10. The Church Council shall appoint annually or arrange to have the Congregation appoint auditor(s) to review the Congregation's financial records. The Finance Committee will provide a nominee or nominees.
11. The Church Council shall hear, receive and act upon recommendations of its Standing Committees, as necessary.

12. The Church Council shall act upon matters affecting the Church which are not assigned to committees.
13. The Church Council shall give lawful order to the Trustees concerning matters of property as required by *The Manual* and approved by the Congregation.
14. The Church Council shall consider and act upon, as necessary, long range planning.
15. It is the duty of the Church Council to establish the goals and objectives of the Congregation which guide the work of the church staff.
16. The Church Council shall present annual reports of Standing Committees, organizations and program groups to the Congregation prior to its Annual Meeting.
17. When required, additional Congregational Meetings may be called by the Settled Minister, Chair of the Church Council or at the written request of ten members of the Congregation. The date, time, and purpose of the meeting will be publicized for at least two Sundays prior to the meeting, as per *The Manual*.
18. The Church Council shall receive a proposed budget from the Finance Committee and recommend a budget to the Annual Meeting of the Congregation.
19. The Church Council shall receive reports, as necessary, from Congregational Representatives to Presbytery, Conference, Camp, etc.

II ELDERS

1. Elders will be expected to attend Council Meetings and share in its general responsibilities.
2. Elders will be expected to attend Church regularly.
3. Elders will be asked to assist in serving communion, as required.
4. Elders will be asked to serve as visiting Elders and those who agree to do so will assume responsibility for liaison and visitation of members within certain designated districts.
5. Elders will be expected to assist in the recording of the offering, as assigned.

III THE EXECUTIVE

1. The Church Council shall have an Executive consisting of: a Member of the Order of Ministry, Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chairpersons of Standing Committees.

2. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer(s) shall be elected annually from a slate prepared by the Nominating Committee at the Annual General Meeting of the Congregation. Nominees will be from among those nominated as Council Members.
3. The Chairperson may be re-elected to a second, one-year term but will be considered ineligible to serve a third consecutive term.
4. The Executive shall act on behalf of the Church Council between its regular meetings, if necessary.
5. The Executive shall be responsible for long range planning, assigning to committees work which comes to their attention and recommending changes in the duty and/or structure of the Church Council or its Committees when and as needed for approval by the Congregation and by Niagara Presbytery. They shall form the nucleus of the Long Range Planning Committee, adding members of the Congregation as needed.
6. The Executive may authorize unforeseen, non-budgeted expenses up to but not exceeding 2½% of the Total Annual Budget.

IV DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE

1. CHAIRPERSON: The duty of the Chairperson shall be to call meetings as required for the Church Council to fulfill its functions, prepare agendas for the proper functioning of such meetings, preside over and preserve order of such meetings, take the vote and announce decisions of the Church Council. The Chairperson shall vote only in the event of a tie.
2. VICE-CHAIRPERSON: The Vice-Chairperson shall fulfill the duties and obligations of the Chairperson should the Chairperson be unable to do so and shall observe the functioning of the Chairperson so as to be prepared to fill such office. The Vice-Chairperson shall form and chair the Nominating Committee and chair the Long Range Planning Committee.
3. SECRETARY: The Secretary shall be responsible to keep records of proceedings of the Church Council and its Executive, compile and oversee distribution of same, conduct correspondence on behalf of the Church Council, and preserve the necessary documents.
4. TREASURER: It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to be responsible for the receiving of all monies for the support of the Congregation from envelopes, collections and other sources, and to disburse them under the direction of the Church Council, and to record all receipts and expenditures, and to present a statement of accounts at each Finance Committee Meeting of the Church Council. At the end of the financial year, the Treasurer shall present an audited statement, certified by the auditor(s) appointed by the Congregation at the Annual General Meeting, and shall attend to such other duties as the Executive or the Church Council or the Congregation shall direct.
These duties may be divided between two or more persons. When such duties are divided between two or more persons, both (all) shall be responsible to the Finance Committee who shall oversee and co-ordinate their duties and responsibilities.

V STANDING COMMITTEES

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1. The Church Council will function through a system of Standing Committees which may be changed as to number and/or function as circumstances require.
 2. Elders will be assigned to one or more of the Standing Committees of the Church Council and normally will work within that Committee in addition to sharing the general responsibilities and duties of the Church Council.
 3. Each Committee will elect a Chairperson annually from among its members. The Chairperson must be a member of the Church Council.
 4. Committees may add on active members or adherents to their numbers. They shall be voting members at the committee level.
 5. Standing Committees may spend up to approved budgeted amounts subject to availability of funds.
 6. Each committee shall be given an opportunity at each Church Council Meeting to submit verbal and/or a written report regarding its activities and plans.
 7. Each committee shall submit annually, by December 1st, to the Finance Committee, a budget for required financing for its work.

B Christian Education and Development Committee

1. The Christian Education and Development Committee shall endeavour to unify and guide in planning, the total educational program of the Congregation including the Sunday School and all other Sunday and weekday Christian education activities, to improve their educational standards to reach all families, adults, young adults, youth and children; and to deepen congregational concern for the educational tasks of the Church.
2. The Christian Education and Development Committee shall have responsibilities which will include the choosing of curriculum, selection, training, support and oversight of leaders, teachers and co-ordination of related events and programs.
3. The Christian Education and Development Committee shall have oversight and responsibility for confirmation classes, and share responsibility for initiating contact and providing opportunity and encouragement for attendees.
4. The Christian Education and Development Committee shall integrate and co-ordinate music education into the Christian education programs of the Congregation.
5. The Christian Education and Development Committee shall appoint annually the Superintendent of Sunday School. The Superintendent of Sunday School will be responsible for all children's programs and the leadership of these programs.

6. The Christian Education and Development Committee shall maintain the Library and adequate resources for Christian education and development.
7. The Christian Education and Development Committee shall assume responsibility for any additional educational programs.
8. The Christian Education and Development Committee shall nominate a committee member to the Ministry and Personnel Committee.

C Mission and Outreach Committee

1. The Mission and Outreach Committee shall be responsible to ensure that adequate publicity, information and knowledge of the Church's mission is available to all.
2. The Mission and Outreach Committee shall give leadership in making known the Church's mission work and the needs of those programs.
3. The Mission and Outreach Committee shall suggest ways in which the Congregation, its resources and facilities may better serve the needs of the community at large.
4. The Mission and Outreach Committee shall suggest an appropriate goal for our Mission and Service Fund and community Outreach Target Groups. The Mission and Outreach Committee shall recommend to the Council the disbursement of funds to the wider community and is responsible for the oversight of missions for all groups, including the choir, the sewing group and the men's and women's groups.
5. The Mission and Outreach Committee shall nominate a committee member to the Ministry and Personnel Committee.

D Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee

1. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall be responsible for the records of the Congregation including Registers of Baptism, Marriage, Burial, Membership Rolls, Congregational and Church Council Minutes. It shall ensure they are maintained as required by The United Church Manual and shall have oversight of these office procedures.
2. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall be responsible for maintaining, revising and updating membership rolls of the Congregation as required.
3. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall be responsible for proposing appropriate initiatives in reaching and integrating both new and potential members.
4. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall establish, encourage and co-ordinate suitable methods of communication within the Congregation.
5. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall plan and make arrangements for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation as directed by the Church Council or the Executive.

6. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee, in co-operation with the Minister and Music Director, shall have oversight of the congregational worship including music, preaching, liturgy, physical appearance and decor of the Sanctuary.
7. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall have oversight of the appearance of the Sanctuary for worship including the placement of flowers, candles, banners, flags, seasonal decorations or items which would change the appearance of the Sanctuary.
8. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall be responsible for coordinating and scheduling greeters and ushers for Sunday morning worship services.
9. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall arrange and oversee the preparation, celebration and administration of the Sacraments including the frequency and timing.
10. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall be responsible for the care and use of communion vessels including the storage and cleaning of same.
11. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall assist in planning and arranging of special worship services such as Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, etc.
12. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall assist in making arrangements for summer worship.
13. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall be responsible for the pulpit supply on such Sundays as the Minister(s) may be absent.
14. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall be responsible for the maintenance of the organ and pianos of the Congregation, under the oversight of the Music Director.
15. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall maintain contact and support those candidates for Ministry of The United Church of Canada who are members of Stamford Lane United Church.
16. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall keep a Memorial Book and shall make recommendations to the Church Council regarding appropriate expenditures of Memorial Funds.
17. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall nominate a member to the Ministry and Personnel Committee.
18. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall be informed of vacation, personal development and sick leave for the Senior Minister, Music Director, Associate Music Director, and Church Administrative Assistant and assist in coordinating coverage during the absence of these staff members.

19. The Worship/Congregational Concerns Committee shall act as a consultative body to the Ministry and Personnel Committee in the hiring of a Music Director, an Associate Music Director and a Church Administrative Assistant.

E Finance Committee

1. The Finance Committee shall have oversight of the securing of funds for the total work of the Congregation and shall maintain the necessary records for the efficient recording of such contributions and issuing receipts for same.
2. The Finance Committee shall disburse monies in payment of current expenses, salaries, pension payments, Presbytery and Conference allocations, and other legitimate expenses as shall occur, in accordance with The Manual.
3. The Finance Committee shall present to the Church Council or its Executive monthly or, upon request, an up-to-date, accurate statement of receipts and expenditures of the Congregation.
4. The Finance Committee shall present to the Annual Congregational Meeting a detailed statement of receipts and expenditures after it has been independently reviewed.
5. The Finance Committee shall forward quarterly to the Treasurer of The United Church of Canada all monies which have been contributed to the Mission and Service Fund of the Church.
6. The Finance Committee shall receive annually from other Standing Committees of the Church Council and from other organizations and groups within the Congregation, estimates of their budgetary requirements for the ensuing year, and shall prepare a budget of estimated expenses for the ensuing year and present same to the Church Council.
7. The Finance Committee shall receive and administer all memorial bequests and donations.
8. The Finance Committee shall suggest the name(s) of persons for the position of Treasurer to the Nominating Committee annually.
9. The Finance Committee shall recommend an auditor or auditors for the next year to the Church Council prior to the Annual General Meeting of the Congregation.
10. The Finance Committee shall nominate a member to the Ministry and Personnel Committee.

F Property Committee

1. The Property Committee shall have oversight of the care and maintenance of the congregational property including the Church buildings.

2. The Property Committee shall have oversight and responsibility for the cleaning and caretaking of the Church and the maintenance of the Church grounds.
3. The Property Committee shall nominate a member to the Ministry and Personnel Committee.
4. The Property Committee shall be informed of vacation and sick leave for the Church Custodian and assist in coordinating coverage during the absence of this staff member.
5. The Property Committee shall act as a consultative body to the Ministry and Personnel Committee in the hiring of a new Church Custodian.
6. The Property Committee is designated to oversee all issues relating to accessibility in consultation with the Church Council.
7. The Property Committee will consult with congregants with disabilities or family members as accessibility issues arise.
8. The Property Committee has established and sought approval of these policies on providing accessible programs in compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.
9. The Property Committee will monitor our accessibility programs and services to ensure that practices and procedures are consistent with our governing policies.
10. The Property Committee will coordinate accessibility training and training materials for staff and the Church Council.
11. The Property Committee will work to ensure that assistive devices provided by our Church are in good working order and that requests for assistive devices are met.
12. The Property Committee will be responsible for reviewing feedback on accessibility responding to any complaints or concerns which are to be directed to them through the office.

G Ministry and Personnel Committee

1. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall, as required by the Manual, consist of not fewer than three or more than seven members representative of the Pastoral Charge. Members of the church staff, including members of the Order of Ministry, shall not be members of this Committee and it shall not replace the Joint Pastoral Relations Committee in the event of a change or vacancy in the Pastoral Relationship.
2. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall provide support and facilitate two-way communication between all staff and the Congregation and between staff members.

3. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall, prior to the beginning of the regular budgeting process of the Congregation, review with all staff members their salaries, allowances, benefits, honoraria and working conditions, and make an appropriate recommendation to the Finance Committee by their suggested date.
4. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall clarify the relationship of church staff regarding their responsibilities and the lines of authority and accountability.
5. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall be responsible for recommending to the Church Council the hiring of support staff in consultation with the appropriate committees.
6. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall consult with all staff regarding continuing education and make recommendations to the Church Council to ensure that time and money are available.
7. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of all church staff as their work relates to the ministry of the Congregation as identified by the goals and objectives established by the Church Council.
8. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall become aware of the role of the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee and maintain regular communication with it.
9. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall become familiar with the resources available through Presbytery and Conference to enhance the effectiveness of the work of the Committee.
10. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall educate the Church Council and its Committees as well as the Congregation as to the nature of its role.
11. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall review regularly the responsibilities of all staff and maintain and revise position descriptions as required or requested.
12. The Ministry and Personnel Committee shall be responsible for recommendations to the Church Council regarding staff vacations, personal development and sick leave and shall inform the respective Committee Chairs.
13. The Ministry and Personnel Committee will encourage all workers' cooperation to minimize harassment in the workplace and create a safe and secure work environment.
14. The Ministry and Personnel Committee will implement safety and security responses should harassment or the threat of harassment occur.
15. The Ministry and Personnel Committee will ensure risk assessments are implemented and will survey and assess workplace vulnerabilities annually through safety and procedural checklists relating to harassment and violence issues as well as employee surveys.
16. The Ministry and Personnel Committee will make resources available in the workplace regarding violence and create a safe and secure work environment.

17. The Ministry and Personnel Committee will implement emergency procedures should violence or the threat of violence occur.
18. The Ministry and Personnel Committee will review the results from risk assessments and areas identified to be of concern must be reported to Hamilton Conference.
19. The Ministry and Personnel Committee will take actions to address areas of risk identified in the assessments.
20. The Ministry and Personnel Committee will provide workers with a list of Committee members to contact should an incident of harassment occur.

H In-Touch Committee

1. The In-Touch Committee shall have oversight of a program of pastoral care visitation including that carried out by the Minister(s) and Elders and shall remember our members through gifts and cards.
2. The In-Touch Committee shall provide opportunities for the Congregation to gather aside from regular worship services.
3. The In-Touch Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that a catering group is available for funeral receptions.

I Audio-Visual Committee

1. The Audio-Visual Committee shall provide support for Sunday services and other events with sound reinforcement, video projection, and audio and video recording.
2. The Audio-Visual Committee is responsible for the Church's website and online presence.
3. The Audio-Visual Committee shall be responsible for the maintenance of the audio and visual equipment of the Congregation.
4. The Audio-Visual Committee will work to ensure that assistive devices provided by our Church are in good working order and that requests for assistive devices are met.

VI TRUSTEES

1. The Congregation shall elect, from time to time, Trustees to fulfill the requirements set out in and in accordance with the requirements of the Manual of The United Church of Canada. A Trustee, after his/her election, shall remain a Trustee until he/she is no longer able to continue his/her duties, or is unwilling to do so and so notifies the Church Council in writing, or is removed as Trustee by a majority vote of the Congregation at a Congregational Meeting.

2. The Board of Trustees shall fulfill the duties and obligations as required by the Manual of The United Church and as required by this Constitution.
3. The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for developing an investment plan for money gifted or directed to Stamford Lane United Church or the former Stamford United Church or the former Lundy's Lane United Church, and shall invest or withdraw such money as requested by the Church Council.
4. The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for all property deeded to Stamford Lane United Church, including purchase or sale of any properties with approval from Niagara Presbytery of The United Church of Canada.

VII **OTHER COMMITTEES**

A. Nominating Committee

1. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Vice-Chairperson of the Church Council (who will act as chair) and up to three other members of the Congregation.
2. The Nominating Committee's task will be:
 - i. to present to the Council or to the Annual Congregational Meeting, names of persons to fill vacancies on the Church Council.
 - ii. to present a slate of officers, (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer) to the Annual Congregational Meeting.
 - iii. to present names of people willing to serve as Congregational Representatives to Presbytery and Conference to the Annual Congregational Meeting.
 - iv. to present names of people willing to serve as Cave Springs Representative(s) and Church Extension Council Representative(s) to the Annual Congregational Meeting.

B. Long Range Planning Committee

1. The Long Range Planning Committee shall be comprised of the Executive of the Church Council and other interested members of the Congregation, as needed.
2. The Long Range Planning Committee shall be chaired by the Vice-Chairperson of the Church Council and shall meet as necessary.
3. The Long Range Planning Committee shall meet at the call of the Vice-Chairperson to establish and prioritize goals for Stamford Lane United Church. These should include objectives that should be fulfilled: a) in the next year, b) in the next five years, and c) in the next ten years.

C. Rental Committee

1. The Rental Committee shall consist of up to three interested members of the Church along with the Minister and Administrative Assistant as ex- officio members.
2. The Rental Committee shall have oversight of the use and/or rental of Church buildings, property or furnishings and shall determine appropriate rents for the use of same.