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**CONSTITUTION OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SAUGATUCK, MICHIGAN**

VISION STATEMENT

The vision God has given our church:

We the people of First Congregational Church are a joyous people of all ages who celebrate God in vibrant, participatory worship through fervent prayer, zestful music, and the proclamation of the word. We are not afraid to take risks following Christ's path.

We are involved in one another's lives in a caring manner and provide support, understanding and encouragement through Christian fellowship. We welcome any and all people who care to join us.

We are committed to personal growth through high quality, challenging Christian Education programs.

We are a vital part of our communities and play an important role in their spiritual and social development.

COVENANT

We covenant with the Lord and one with another, and do bind ourselves in the presence of God, to walk together in all His ways, according as He is pleased to reveal Himself unto us in His blessed word of truth.

--1629 Salem Covenant

Article I. Name, Affiliation, Fellowship

- 1) The name of the church is: The First Congregational Church of Saugatuck, Michigan. (The Church)
- 2) The Church is located in the City of Saugatuck, County of Allegan, State of Michigan.
- 3) The members of The Church do agree to worship and labor together as a church according to the faith and practices of the Congregational Way and as shown in the 1629 Salem Covenant.
- 4) The Church is incorporated as a Congregational Church under Act 53 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1901 as amended.
- 5) The government of The Church is vested in her members.
- 6) The Church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligation of mutual counsel and cooperation as is commonly expressed by Congregational Christian Churches through the fellowship of the Regional Association, the State Association, and the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches and to share their common aims and work.
- 7) The Church shall not merge with any non-Congregational denomination. In case of doubt as to the meaning of the word "Congregational," the Article of Association, Constitution and By-Laws of The Church shall be accepted as setting forth the basic principle of Congregationalism.
- 8) The church is in direct fellowship with all churches that seek to promote the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Church shall cooperate with other denominations, Ministerial Associations, Councils of Churches, and other joint efforts in such ways and at such times as the membership of The Church may determine.

Article II. Pastor

- 1) The Pastor shall have in his/her charge the spiritual welfare of The First Congregational Church of Saugatuck. (The Church) To this end he/she shall preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments, have under his/her care all services of public worship, be active in pastoral services to the members of the Church, and administer the activities of The Church in cooperation with the various boards and committees of The Church. He/she shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of all boards and committees. The Pastor shall be responsible to the members of The Church through the Prudential Board.
- 2) There shall be a Pastoral Committee, which shall consist of the Moderator and the Chairperson and a representative from both the Diaconate Board and the Board of Trustees. This committee shall meet with the Pastor to discuss matters of common interest and concern quarterly. The Moderator shall act as Chairperson of the Pastoral Committee and arrange meetings.

- 3) A Pastor may be called or dismissed by a majority of the members of The Church present at a congregational meeting called for that purpose. If the call is for an indefinite period, the Pastoral Committee may be dissolved by either the Pastor or The Church giving three (3) months written notice, unless the requirement of such notice shall be waived by mutual consent.
- 4) Within two (2) weeks of the notification of a vacancy in the pulpit, the Prudential Board shall call for a special congregational meeting for the purpose of electing a Pastoral Search Committee. This committee shall consist of no fewer than nine (9) members. The Prudential Board shall select a slate of candidates for the Pastoral Search Committee and present it to the membership for approval.

The Pastoral Search Committee shall solicit candidates, review candidates' qualifications and recommend a candidate(s) to the Congregation for approval.

- 5) The calling of full-time associate Pastors shall follow the procedures specified in Section 4 above. The Diaconate Board with the approval of the Prudential Board may appoint part-time assistant Pastors or student Pastors.

Article III. Election of Officers and Boards

1) Elections:

- A) At each Annual Meeting there shall be elections to fill vacancies among the various offices and boards of The Church.
- B) Those elected at the Annual Meeting shall take office immediately following the conclusion of the Annual Meeting and shall serve until their successors take office.
- C) After serving two (2) successive terms in one office or on one board, that person shall not be eligible for re-election to that same office or board until the expiration of at least one (1) year. A full term is 50% or more of the period of office established by these by-laws.
- D) The unexpired term of any vacancy on a board may be filled by the respective board. The Prudential Board may fill vacancies among the officers of The Church until the next Annual Meeting or until a special meeting duly called for that purpose can be held.
- E) All persons elected as officers of The Church must be members of The First Congregational Church of Saugatuck.

2) Officers:

At appropriate Annual Meetings, there shall be elected to serve for a term of two (2) years the following officers:

- a) Moderator
 - b) Clerk
 - c) Treasurer
 - d) Financial Secretary
 - e) Delegate to the National Association (NACCC)
 - f) Delegate to both the state and regional association.
- 3) Boards:
- A) At each Annual Meeting there shall be elected to serve for a term of three years:
 - a) Two(2) or Three(3) members to the Diaconate Board, for a total of nine (9)
 - b) One (1) or Two (2) members to the Board of Trustees, for a total of five (5)
 - c) One (1) member at-large to the Prudential Board every three years
 - B) Board Chairs must be members of The First Congregational Church of Saugatuck.
- 4) Nominations:
- A) The Prudential Board shall act as the annual Nominating Committee for the purpose of presenting a slate of officers and board members to be voted upon at the next Annual Meeting.
 - B) Nominations presented by the Prudential Board to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting will be for the sole purpose of filling vacancies created by the term expirations.
 - C) Nominations for any vacancies created by term expiration may also be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting during the nominations phase of the meeting, with the consent of the nominee.
 - D) In the event that multiple nominations are made for any particular office or the board position a paper ballot vote will be taken to determine the winner for that particular office or board position.
 - E) The nomination process shall start no later than the November Prudential Board meeting and conclude no later than the December meeting.
 - F) Names of the candidates to be presented at the Annual Meeting shall be posted two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. This does not preclude any nominations from the floor.

- G) Positions open for any office or board shall be posted by November 1st in an appropriate area. Any church member should contact a Prudential Board member if interested in an open position.

Article IV. Duties of Officers and Boards

1) General Provisions:

- A) Each board will normally meet on a schedule to be determined annually by the individual boards. This schedule shall be communicated to the Prudential Board, the Moderator and the Pastor.
- B) All elected officers and board members of The Church, as well as those appointed to committees, are required to attend all meetings required by their office regularly. With the unexcused absence from two (2) successive regular meetings, an officer or board member may be dropped from that office or board at the discretion of the board or committee affected.
- C) In any event that any board, standing committee or ad hoc committee of any board fails to function and does not do so for three (3) months, the Prudential Board shall seek to activate that body or may replace it.
- D) Each board and committee shall make such provisions as it considers necessary for its organization and for the conduct of its business as long as these are consistent with these by-laws.
- E) A quorum shall consist of 60% of the number of members elected to a board or appointed to a committee.

2) Duties of Officers:

- A) Moderator: The Moderator shall preside over all business meetings of The Church and shall be the chairperson of the Prudential Board, and shall serve as “year-round Delegate” to the NACCC. He/she shall also be an ex officio, non-voting member of all other boards and committees. In the absence of the Moderator, the Clerk shall be Moderator pro tempore.
- B) Clerk: The Clerk shall keep a written record of all congregational meetings of The Church, have charge of the non-financial records, and shall be responsible for the official correspondence of The Church. He/she shall make a written report at the Annual Meeting of the numerical strength of The Church and the changes during the preceding year: including the number of additions by confession of faith, by reaffirmation of faith or by letter of transfer; the number of names removed from the roll during the year by granting of letters of transfer, death, or by other reasons; and the number of infant and adult baptisms. The Clerk shall give legal notice of all meetings, when such notice is necessary, and report all communications. The Clerk shall be a voting member and keep the record at all meetings of the Prudential Board. The Clerk shall keep in his/her charge and maintain a current list of all members of The Church, and shall forward letters of transfer.
- C) Treasurer

- a) The Treasurer shall be a member of the Board of Trustees. He/she shall oversee receipts and safely oversee all monies of The Church and shall oversee such account or accounts of them in a depository or depositories as designated by the Board of Trustees. Records of such monies for general expenses, benevolences and missions, and any other purposes as may be designated by the donors, the Board of Trustees, or the membership shall oversee in a manner deemed feasible and appropriate by the Treasurer and the Board of Trustees.
- b) The Treasurer shall oversee payment for budgeted and non-budgeted general expenses, benevolences and missions of the Church on the order of the Board of Trustees.
- c) The Treasurer shall oversee and give a monthly written report of receipts and disbursements of general and special expense monies to the Board of Trustees and the Prudential Board. This report shall also be made available to the Congregation.
- d) The Treasurer shall oversee a year-end financial report of The Church and present it to the Board of Trustees and the Prudential Board and to the membership at the Annual Meeting.
- e) The Treasurer shall oversee appropriate corporate and tax documents as may be required by Michigan law.
- f) The Treasurer shall be bonded in an amount set by the Board of Trustees.

D) Financial Secretary

- a) The Financial Secretary shall keep detailed records of all income from all sources to the general fund and all special funds. He/she shall acknowledge in writing all special donations and send statements at the end of the second, third, and fourth quarter to all persons making periodic payments on pledges showing the status of their accounts. He/she shall prepare quarterly reports showing the amount of the income received and present these to the Board of Trustees and shall also prepare such a report at the end of the fiscal year and present it at the Annual Meeting.

E) Delegates

- a) Members elected as Delegates to the regional, state, or national association meetings shall represent The Church, and shall vote and speak for the policies of The Church, wherever such policies have been established. The membership or the Prudential Board may charge Delegates with specific instructions as necessary or desired. In the absence of the Delegate, an Alternate shall be appointed and serve in their place.

3) Duties of Boards:

A) Prudential Board

- a) The Prudential Board shall consist of six (6) members. The Moderator, as chair the Clerk, and the representative of each of the following - The Diaconate Board, the Board of Trustees; one (1) member elected at-large from the congregation, and the Pastor, who shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member.
- b) The Prudential Board shall be the Executive Committee of the membership and act on behalf of the membership between congregational meetings.
- c) The Prudential Board shall coordinate all ministries, activities and functions of The Church.
- d) The Prudential Board shall focus annually on the planning needs of the church.
- e) The Prudential board shall evaluate the need for an internal audit annually to be performed by the appropriate officer(s) appointed by the Prudential Board. If at any time an external audit is deemed necessary, the Prudential Board will appoint a committee to retain a CPA to perform said audit.
- f) The Prudential Board shall approve the proposed annual church budget before it is presented to the members of The Church at the annual meeting.
- g) The Prudential Board shall have the authority to interpret these bylaws and shall settle cases of dispute or argument concerning these **by-laws or** other matters according to Christian principles and the practices of the Congregational Church.
- h) The Prudential Board shall be responsible for the cultivation, promotion, and procurement of church stewardship resources.
- i) The Prudential Board shall conduct or oversee the training of church leaders as needed.

B) The Diaconate Board

Responsibilities

- a) The Diaconate Board shall have charge, with the Pastor, of all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of The Church and its members, officers, and Pastors, and serve the spiritual welfare of the congregation.
- b) The Diaconate Board shall assist the Pastor in administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. In consultation with the Pastor, the Diaconate Board shall also be responsible for the form and scheduling of the communion service, sacrament of baptism, and worship services.
- c) The Diaconate Board shall supply the pulpit in the absence of the Pastor.

- d) Members of the Diaconate Board may, along with the Pastor, meet with all candidates for membership. The Diaconate Board, in cooperation with the Pastor, may hold membership classes to instruct prospective members in the Congregational way.
- e) The Diaconate Board shall assist the Pastor in caring for and visiting the sick, the sorrowing and the stranger.
- f) The Diaconate Board shall submit a proposed budget to the Board of Trustees.
- g) The Diaconate Board may appoint a liaison to attend community interdenominational groups and activities in order to foster better cooperation and understanding.
- h) The nine (9) member Diaconate Board shall function within this structure:
 - One (1) – Chair - coordinates and assists these groups as well as be a part of the Prudential Board.
 - Two (2) – Focused on coordinating worship. This will include working with the Pastor, music directors and Beadle. This will also include overseeing the care of the musical instruments, choir robes, music, etc.
 - Two (2) – Focused on Congregational Care. This will include gathering shepherding groups and working with the Parish Nurse and Pastor.
 - Two (2) – Focused on Christian Education. This will include organizing Sunday School curriculum, recruiting Sunday School teachers and working with the Pastor on an adult education programs.
 - One (1) – Focused on Fellowship. Develop teams to organize fellowship events for the congregation.
 - One (1) – Focused on Outreach. Develop teams to organize service activities for the congregation.

C) The Board of Trustees

Responsibilities

- a) The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for overseeing and maintaining the resources and facilities needed to serve and provide the ministries of The Church.
- b) The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for maintaining The First Congregational Church of Saugatuck as a corporation in good standing according to the laws and requirements of the State of Michigan.
- c) With regard to the finances of The Church, the Board of Trustees shall:

- i) Propose a budget based on the needs of The Church and the recommendations submitted by the various boards and committees of The Church. The proposed budget shall be reviewed by the Prudential Board before being submitted to the membership at the Annual Meeting for amendment and approval. The Board of Trustees shall then carry out the intent of the budget.
 - ii) Hold, manage, invest and reinvest all funds of The Church for which no other provision is made by these by-laws, or by action of the Prudential Board, or by vote of the membership, including but not limited to the operating finances or any other fund established by The Church, or by gifts, legacies, and bequests.
 - iii) Pay the bills of The Church in a timely fashion and review all outstanding bills monthly.
 - iv) See that a year-end financial statement is posted within 60 days of the end of the fiscal year.
- d) The Board of Trustees shall see that all properties of The Church are properly and sufficiently insured and protected and, in case of loss, make adjustments with the insurance companies.
 - e) The Board of Trustees shall manage all real and personal property of The Church and be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date inventory of all church property.
 - f) The Board of Trustees shall provide for the appointment or employment of such persons other than the Pastor, associate Pastors, assistant or student Pastors, Youth Director (s) and Music Director(s) as may be deemed necessary for the proper conduct of the programs and business of The Church and as has been authorized in the budget or by the Prudential Board or by the membership.
 - g) The Board of Trustees shall procure or authorize the procurement of supplies, furnishings and equipment as necessary for operation of the programs of The Church and as recommended by the appropriate board or committee.
 - h) The Board of Trustees shall have in its charge and care such legal documents, insurance policies, deeds, titles, claims, etc., as pertain to the legal operation of The Church.
 - i) The five (5) member Trustee Board shall function within this structure:
 - One (1) - Chair - coordinates and assists these groups as well as be a part of the Prudential Board.
 - One (1) – Focused on Building Maintenance. Work with maintenance contractor, custodians, and volunteers to keep the building and **grounds** maintained. Organize and anticipate building needs and funds.

One (1) – Focused on Financial. Handle the endowment with the Treasurer, assist the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, oversee all church finances and organize the budget.

One (1) – Focused on Benevolence. Discover, discern and promote giving projects for the church. Also act as supervisor of the Love Fund with the assistance of the pastor.

One (1) – Handle the Publicity of Church events and maintain Church Website and Facebook.

Article V. Meetings

- 1) Public worship shall be held on Sundays. Prayer services and other worship events shall be held on other days and times as directed by the Diaconate Board.
- 2) The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, as amended, shall govern the conduct of the business, board and committee meetings of The Church in all cases where they are not inconsistent with either the Constitution or By-Laws of The Church.
- 3) Annual Meeting:
 - A) The Annual Meeting of the members of the First Congregational Church of Saugatuck shall be held on the third Sunday in January for the purpose of receiving annual reports, electing officers and boards members, and approving the budget for the new fiscal year. All business that may properly come before the members shall be transacted at the Annual Meeting.
 - B) The order of business at the Annual Meeting, unless changed by the Moderator with the consent of the members present shall be as follows:
 - a) Call to order by the Moderator
 - b) Devotions and prayer by the Pastor or Moderator
 - c) Memorial service by the Pastor, Moderator or Clerk
 - d) Approval of the minutes of the previous Annual Meeting
 - e) Reports of the Pastors, officers, boards and committees
 - f) Consideration and approval of the budget
 - g) Election of officers and board members

- h) Old business
 - i) New business
 - j) Benediction and adjournment
- C) Ten percent (10%) of the total membership of The Church or forty (40) members, whichever is less, shall constitute a quorum for the Annual Meeting.
- D) Notice of Meetings: Notice of Congregational meetings specifying the time, place and object thereof shall be read from the pulpit on the two (2) successive Sundays preceding such meeting on which services are held. However, if the Congregational meeting is to amend the Constitution or Articles of Association, the proposed amendment and the notice of the meeting called for its consideration shall be read from the pulpit on three (3) successive Sundays immediately preceding such a meeting on which services are held. The proposed amendment shall not itself be amended in any material point in the meeting called for its consideration. If there are no public services at which the required notice of a Congregational meeting can be given, the notice may be posted on the church door or published in a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Saugatuck for three weeks prior to the meeting. (Sec. 21,1885 p.942 of state law).
- E) Special meetings shall be called by the Clerk at the request of the Pastor, the Prudential Board, the Diaconate Board, the Board of Christian Education, the Board of Trustees, or upon the written request of ten (10) members of The Church specifying the purpose for the meeting. The quorum necessary for all special Congregational meetings shall be ten percent (10%) of the total membership or forty (40) members, whichever is less.

Article VI. Membership

- 1) The Church welcomes into membership all who accept its principles and who will join in its covenant. Membership in The Church shall be of two kinds: Members and Dual-Members.
- 2) Applications for membership may be made through either the Pastor or the Diaconate Board.
- 3) Applicants and transferees of the age of 12 years or over shall become members of The Church when they are received into membership at a service of worship by publicly accepting its covenant and by affirmation of faith, or when they are received into membership in absentia or when by reason of illness, disability or otherwise, they are received into membership by the Pastor at some other time or place. All persons admitted into membership shall be registered on the membership roll of The Church.
- 4) Dual-Members of The Church shall be persons who are members of some other church and wish to retain that membership, and who have been received into membership by this church as provided in Section 3 above.

- 5) The members of The Church are expected to share in its services of worship, to contribute to its support, missions and benevolence, to help in its organized work, and to be faithful to the duties essential to the Christian life.
- 6) All members of The Church shall have the right to vote on matters facing The Church, however, the right to vote on questions involving the acquisition and disposition of property and the expenditure of money shall be confined to the members of The Church who have reached legal age. There shall be no voting by proxy.
- 7) Letters of transfer shall be issued at the request of members of The Church by the Clerk and shall be in the customary form.

Article VII. Amendments

- 1) These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of The Church present at a meeting duly called for that purpose.

Article VIII. Adoption

- 1) These by-laws, when adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of The Church present at a meeting duly called for the purpose, shall replace all previous by-laws of The Church.

Adopted January 20, 2013

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

296 HOFFMAN STREET

P. O. BOX 633

SAUGATUCK, MI 49453

CONSTITUTION ADOPTED

JANUARY 20, 2013

