

**The Rehoboth Congregational Church, U.C.C.**  
**THE CONSTITUTION**

Article I - NAME

The name of this Church is the Rehoboth Congregational Church, Inc.

Article II - MISSION, GOVERNMENT AND FELLOWSHIP

A. The Rehoboth Congregational Church -United Church of Christ is a traditional Congregational Church body, enriched by the influence of members through the ages with varied Church backgrounds. We believe in God, recognize Jesus Christ as the Son of God, are empowered by the Holy Spirit. Our Mission is to be a significant witness to Jesus Christ in our geographic area - providing Spiritual Leadership, practicing moral responsibility and reaching out with compassion to all God's Children in our Town, our State, our Country and in our World.

B. The government of this Church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs. It is amenable to no other religious body; but it accepts the obligations of mutual covenant, counsel, comity and co-operation involved in the free fellowship of congregational churches, and pledges itself to share their common aims and work. This Church is in direct fellowship with the Old Colony Association, United Church of Christ; the Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ; the General Synod of the United Church of Christ; and with all Churches which seek to promote the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Article III - FAITH, FIELD OF SERVICE AND COVENANT

A. Faith

We believe in the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul and the right of private judgment.

Declaring our steadfast allegiance to the faith which our forebears confessed, which from age to age has found its expression in the historic creeds of the Church Universal and of our Communion, and affirming our loyalty to the basic principles of our representative democracy, we hereby set forth the doctrines most surely believed among us concerning faith, policy and fellowship.

(Statement of Faith, as approved by the Executive Council of the UCC in 1981)

B. Field of Service

This Church shall recognize as its field of service and concern not only its own members, but the Community, the State, the Nation and the World.

Covenant Revised: January 2003

C. The Constitution

We covenant with the Lord and one with another and do bynd our selves in the presence of God, to walke together in all his waies, according as he is pleased to reveale himself unto us in his blessed word of truth. (Salem Church Covenant, 1629)

The Constitution

Article IV - MEMBERSHIP

A. Qualifications

1. This Church will welcome into its membership any person who loves the Lord Jesus Christ, and who proposes to live according to His Law and Love.

2. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS - Members of other Churches, who for exceptional reasons (other than sentimental) wish not to sever their relationship with their home Churches, may join this Church as Associate Members. They shall be entitled to all privileges and rights of full membership, excepting the right to vote in business meetings. They shall not be counted on the roll of as Church members nor so reported.

B. Conditions

The Membership of this Church shall consist of all who present satisfactory letters of transfer from other Churches, or who confess their Christian faith, and receive baptism when not previously baptized. They shall be accepted by vote of the Church and give public assent to Article III of the Constitution.

C. Reception

All desiring to become members of this Church shall be examined by the Pastor and/or Deacons, who shall submit the names of the persons they recommend at a regular or special business meeting.

D. Duties

Members are expected to be faithful to all duties essential to the Christian life; to attend regularly the services of the Church; to give systematically for its support and its benevolences; to share in its organized work; and to seek diligently the spiritual welfare for the Church and the winning of others to Christ.

E. Termination

1. By Letter of Withdrawal

A member may on request and by vote of the Church

(a) be granted a letter of transfer to any Christian Church

(b) be given a certificate of church membership and have their name removed from the roll, if they wish to join a body not in fellowship with this Church.

(c) be released from membership if, after due conference and deliberation, the person is insistent in the request for such release.

2. By Retirement

Members who for a period of three years or more, in spite of kindly reminders, have not communicated with the church or have not contributed to its support, may be transferred to the inactive list by the Deacons. From the time of such transfer these persons shall cease to be reported on the active membership roll. Action on transfers will be reported to the church clerk immediately. They will be ineligible to vote at Church meetings. The committee shall restore inactive members to the active roll where the members' actions demonstrate renewed interest. Should these persons become interested in some other church, and request letters of transfer, such letters shall be granted.

3. Restoration

Any person whose membership has been terminated, may, for good and sufficient

reasons, be restored to membership by vote of the Church.

Article V - Officers and Committees

The Officers of this Church shall be a Pastor, twelve Deacons, twelve Trustees, a Clerk, a Treasurer, an Assistant Treasurer, a Financial Secretary, an Assistant Financial Secretary, and a

A. . No person can serve in more than one Office at a time.

B. This Church shall have the following standing Committees: Fellowship, Christian Education, Missions, Music, Flower, Nominating, Pastoral Relations, Pastoral Review, Endowment and Stewardship Drive. There shall be an ad hoc committee known as the Pulpit Call Committee, whose membership and duties shall be stipulated in the By-Laws.

C. Position of Elder to Honor the Dedicated Servants of this Church

Acts 14:23:I Peter 5:1-3

The elder is an experienced or wise member of the church who is an example for others and gives oversight to the ongoing life, work and ministry of this church.

The duties of elders, deacons, and trustees are closely related. All functions of elders demand close open interaction with the pastor.

Responsible for matters of church membership, guiding church administration, reconciling conflict over doctrine, visiting and praying for the sick, watching over the spiritual interests of its church, maintaining order, edifying and consoling its members.

Elders join the pastor in helping the Rehoboth Congregational Church know the faith, determine its ministry, organize and discipline its life and assist in providing elements for communion and aide in the distribution.

An elder is an undoubtedly respected male or female of sufficient age and experience to be carefully chosen by the Board of Deacons to be recommended for approval to the church cabinet and a church meeting for their acknowledged wisdom, proven uprightness, and Christian character.

Elders are appointed and inducted by the congregation for a life term, they are voting members of the Board of Deacons and Trustees and may serve as non voting members ex officio in other church committees such as Music, Lay Shepherds, Christian Education and Missions.

There will be no more than (4) appointments in any one year beginning in 1992 at the Fall Annual Meeting. Total of Elders serving will at no time be greater than 10.

D. There shall be six Church Delegates.

E. Church Cabinet

The Church Officers and the President/Chairperson or two representatives of each committee and organization of the church and the delegates shall constitute the Church Cabinet. All Members of the Cabinet shall be members of the Church. Non-members of the Church may be elected to serve on committees.

F. All Officers and Committees will be for the calendar year January to December. If appointed for three year terms it would be from January to December of those following years.

## Article VI - CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

### A. Administration

All Church organizations shall be regarded as integral parts of the Church. They shall be under the general oversight of the Church, to which they shall make annual reports. From time to time they may present their activities and needs to the Cabinet for review, counsel and suggestive help.

### B. Audit

All organizations which have been recognized by vote of the Church shall have their accounts audited by the church auditor. A list of these organizations shall be kept by the church clerk.

### C. Institutional Representative - BSA/GSA

The Church also may provide an institutional representative to the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts of America, accepting sponsorship as a mission of the Church.

## Article VII - ANNUAL MEETING

The Church shall be called to a business meeting annually, as provided in the by-laws.

## Article VIII - ELECTIONS

The Officers and the Committees shall be elected by ballot at the Annual Meeting, or, in the case of a vacancy, by a properly called special meeting.

## Article IX - TENURE OF OFFICE

The normal church year for service as an officer or a member of a committee is January 1 to December 31. For the CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE the term of office shall run from July 1 to June 30. At the time this change is accepted all committee members shall serve until July 1 before new members start their service.

(ie an extra 6 months)

All members of committees shall serve as designated. They shall be ineligible for re-election after having served two terms until one year has lapsed (see exceptional conditions under Deacons and Trustees)

## Article X - AMENDMENTS

A. This Constitution may be amended by a two thirds majority of the members present and voting at any Annual Meeting or at a meeting specially called for that purpose. The proposed amendment shall be inserted in the call.

B. No change shall be made in Articles II or III except at an Annual Meeting, and by a two-thirds vote of all the members present. The proposed amendment shall be laid before the Church in writing at a business meeting not less than one month before the time of the proposed action, and shall be read from the pulpit on the Lord's Day next succeeding such proposal.

## Article XI - CHURCH SEAL

The seal of the Rehoboth Congregational Church shall be the United Church of Christ Crowned Cross and Orb emblem, with a background of the map of Rehoboth and the lettering R E H O B O T H underneath.

## *STATEMENT OF FAITH*

adapted by Robert V. Moss

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our Brother and to whose deeds we testify: God calls the worlds into being, create humankind in the divine image, and sets before us the ways of life and death.

God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, God has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its creator.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues and races.

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

God promises to all who trust in the gospel forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God.