

To our Hope Church community:

We present to you this document reflecting the Responsibilities and Charges of those who serve on the Leadership Circle of our Church. This is a “living document,” imperfect as we are, so please feel free to share with us your comments or suggestions. This year, we are looking to nominate three people to fill three (3)-year terms. The Nominating Committee is recommending that we put forward a slate of two Hope Church Covenant Partners and one Central Congregational Church member. **We invite you to prayerfully consider if you or someone you know is equipped and willing to be nominated. Please contact any one of the Nominating Committee members to suggest yourself, a friend, or simply discuss how your time and talents can be used to help our Church.** Nominations are open as of Sunday November, 15 2009 and will remain open for three weeks, ending on **Sunday December 6, 2009**. To ensure that everyone in our community is aware of this process, this document will be available at worship on Sundays, posted on the website and emailed to the congregation. We hope these multiple forms of communication demonstrate our commitment to open and shared process for guiding our common life at Hope.

Thank you for considering this.

In Peace,

The Nominating Committee of Hope Church.

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**The Leadership Circle of Hope Church
Responsibilities and Charges**

Gifts to share for the building up the Church: Hope Church Covenant Partners on the Leadership Circle are serving on behalf of the entire congregation. The Congregation empowers the Leadership Circle to make decisions on our behalf and the Leadership Circle covenants to keep the best interests of the congregation at heart, listening for where the Spirit may be leading us. Serving on the Leadership Circle is a gift to our congregation and the entire Church, as we seek to be a welcoming community dedicated to bringing God's peace and justice into the world. This unique ministry calls for specific skills and talents for those charged with the well-being of our Church:

- dedication to the mission and vision of Hope Church as expressed in our welcoming statement
- regular prayers for the life and work of Hope Church
- gifts of time, talent and treasure for the good of the Church
- trustworthiness in helping to oversee the financial, administrative and overall well being of our community
- an ability to empower all leaders in our Church and support our pastor(s) and staff
- a desire to build and foster community through various ministries
- a sense of integrity and respect for every child of God
- a passion for Hope Church and the ability to vision and dream for our future
- the capacity to listen, participate in a group, and work towards consensus
- the ability to keep confidences
- the patience to wait for the movements of the Spirit and an eagerness to spread God's love
- an intention to practice the spiritual disciplines of open communication and cultivating active listening in the midst of conflict
- diplomacy in discussing sensitive topics and a commitment to speaking the truth
- an ability to see the broad view of the church's life and mission
- a commitment and openness to taking leadership as the communities of Hope Church and Central Congregational work to unite as one congregation

Charges to the Leadership Circle:

1. Pray for the life and work of Hope Church

- With open minds, open hands and open hearts, pray for the congregation that we may be a source of healing to a broken world

2. Uphold Hope Church's vision and mission in all settings of our community

- Welcome "all who have no church home, need strength, want to follow Christ, have doubts, or do not believe."
- Encourage people to become Covenant Partners of Hope Church

3. Lead by example, sharing time, talent, and treasure

- Be visible and an active participant in our shared worship
- Attend Leadership Circle meetings and all-church meetings
- Be available to pastor(s), team leaders, and the congregation
- Pledge, as able, to the financial well being of Hope Church as we all strive to tithe
- Cultivate your own individual spiritual disciplines, including participating in small groups of fellowship, bible study and prayer

4. Oversee the financial and administrative health of the Church

- Support the work of the Finance and Stewardship team by preparing, vetting, and submitting the organizational budget to the congregation for approval
- Work to Ensure adequate resources for the budget
- Support the annual stewardship drive in partnership with the Finance and Stewardship team
- Work with pastoral staff to write grants and make special appeals for ad hoc funding
- Make major business, financial, facility and legal decisions with the guidance of the pastor(s) and finance committee
- Manage corporate business and the physical plant of our church building
- Oversee the stewardship of our worship, fellowship and office space, making sure all are adequate and well-used
- Assign responsibility for review of the financial records by persons outside the Leadership Circle and leadership of the church, following generally accepted accounting principles being sure to adhere to the relevant Massachusetts law(s) pertaining to religious organizations

5. Encourage faithful and honest communication between all parts of the Church

- Listen to the joys and concerns of the congregation for whispers of where God might be calling us.
- Keep confidences as appropriate
- Facilitate open communication with leadership, pastor(s) and congregants, building up the body by speaking the truth in love
- Cultivate a sense of congregational trust by posting the agenda and minutes of the Leadership Circle meetings
- Call regular all-church meetings in accordance with our bylaws
- Keep the congregation apprised of the financial health of our church

6. Support and empower our pastor(s) to lead the congregation effectively and to help them manage church staff according to best fiscal and human resources practices

- Familiarize yourself with the Hope Church bylaws
- Establish a Search and Call committee for the hiring of new pastor(s)
- Constitute a Pastoral Relations Committee, enabling support for the pastor(s) and staff, conducting annual reviews, and facilitating communication between the pastor(s) and the congregation
- Receive the annual performance reviews from the Pastoral Relations Committee and take appropriate action as warranted
- Support the pastor(s) by encouraging opportunities for continued education, rest, and reflection
- Approve adequate discretionary spending for the pastors and making funds available when needed within the limits of the budget approved by the congregation
- Lead the interviewing and hiring process of staff
- Assist the pastors in management oversight of staff
- Work to ensure fair and competitive salary packages for the pastoral and church staff
- Work with pastor(s) to prescribe powers and duties for employees as are consistent with the law, the articles of incorporation, and our bylaws

7. Help build a church where everyone is empowered to serve and encouraged to fulfill their call as Christians, promoting peace and justice in the world

- Support Christian Education for children, youth, and adults
- Approve and strive to provide adequate funding for Christian Education

- Work with the denominations to provide training and support to equip the congregation for leadership within and beyond the church community

8. Build and foster the formation of various ministries in our community

- Empower small group ministries to work faithfully, efficiently, and effectively
- Support the formation of small groups
- Assist small groups in identifying their specific ministry and constituency
- Guide small groups to remain faithful to Hope Church vision and mission
- Authorize the affiliations and organizations Hope Church may align with
- Work to help Hope Church be a good and faithful neighbor
- Coordinate the work of the other committees of Hope Church, including but not limited to: the Nominating Circle, the Pastoral Relations Committee, the Pastoral Care Team, the Seminarian Support Group, the Social Justice Team, the Stewardship and Finance Committee, and the Welcome Wagon
- Serve as a liaison and ex-officio member of another committee of the church

9. Tend to and deepen Hope Church's relationship with our denominations: the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ

- Share Hope Church's joys and struggles with our respective judicatories, relying on our denominations for counsel and support.
- Authorize the returning of financial resources to our denominations for the building up of our common ministry.
- Appoint Hope Church Covenant Partners to various denominational committees, with the counsel of the pastor(s) and the Nominating Committee

10. Unify the Ministries of Hope Church

- Work to ensure effective communication between team leaders and small groups
- Create opportunities for effective ministry through cooperation

11. Change course as necessary to reflect the growing and dynamic nature of Hope Church.

- Continue to faithfully negotiate the relationship between Hope Church and Central Congregational Church, with an eye to how we can work with Iglesia Hispanica in our shared space to further our common ministries.
- Receive and evaluate new program proposals and relate them to existing program and budget capabilities.
- Evaluate existing programs for their appropriateness and stewardship of Hope's resources, ending programs no longer serving the mission of the church
- Amend the bylaws as necessary; amendments may be proposed by the Leadership Circle or by written petition of any 10 Covenant Partners. The process for amending the bylaws is detailed in the bylaws.

Responsibilities of the Leadership Circle

The Congregation entrusts the Leadership Circle to carry out the vision of Hope Church. The Leadership Circle advises the pastor(s) on the general direction of Hope Church's activities, and collaborates with the Pastor in the formulation of a well-rounded community life. The Leadership Circle may act for the members of Hope Church in minor matters, always mindful that unless such action is taken with consensus, it must have the confirmation of the Covenant Partners of Hope Church. We hold to the core mission and vision of Hope Church as shared in the welcoming statement read every time we gather for

worship. This remains constant. Yet, as we seek to be faithful to God, we acknowledge that there are ways we may need to change. Thus, the Hope Church bylaws and other documents detailing our common life are to be considered 'living documents,' open to revision and change. As we ourselves are works in progress, so to are the structures of our common life together. The Leadership Circle will approve any new program initiatives. The Covenant Partners of Hope Church shall ratify policy changes, bylaw revisions or major items.

With the duty to act on behalf of the Covenant Partners of Hope Church, the Leadership Circle is responsible for maintaining good communication between the Leadership Circle and the wider congregation. Such frequent practices may include: verbal updates, announcements in the church bulletin, newsletter or email group, posting to church webpage.

The Leadership Circle is a unique call and ministry in the life of our congregation, with both the need for continuity and new energy. There will be nine (9) members of the Leadership Circle serving three staggered (3) year-terms.

The Nominating Committee shall put forward a slate of nominees to the all-church meeting based upon the number of vacant Leadership Circle positions, potentially including nominees to finish the remaining year(s) on unexpired terms. Covenant Partners at the all-church meeting shall each receive the slate of nominees on a ballot with space for write-in alternates.

Responsibilities of the Congregation:

In empowering the Leadership Circle to be responsible for the administration, care and stewardship of Hope Church, the congregation also has responsibilities. Covenant Partners and other parishioners commit to:

- Pray for the Leadership Circle and the whole church
- Attend all-church meetings when called by the Leadership Circle
- Give faithfully of our time, talent and treasure to the building up of the body of Christ
- Communicate joys and concerns directly to the Leadership Circle
- Participate in small groups and ministries as able
- Listen to the joys and concerns of the congregation for whispers of where God might be calling us
- Keep confidences as appropriate
- Facilitate open communication with leadership, pastor(s) and congregants, building up the body by speaking the truth in love
- Prayerfully consider what individual gifts and talents God may be calling you to share for the good of our community

Together, we covenant to do what we understand to be required of us- to “do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God” (Micah 6:8).