

## Constitutional Task Force

As directed by last year's Annual Meeting and appointed by the Church Council, the Constitutional Task Force began meeting in early October to revise the constitution in accordance with the new governance model. We were assisted by Pastor Todd, Dan Hotchkiss' book, *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership*, A Suggested Format for the Constitution and Bylaws of a Local Church from the MN UCC Conference office, The Constitution of St. Peter United Church of Christ, Bylaws of Mayflower Community Congregational Church, First UCC Church Northfield Council Policy and Procedures, our current Constitution and the diagram created by the Governance Task Force illustrating our current governance model.

The draft constitution is a slim document that provides a framework for the governance and the ministry of the First UCC and leaves the operational procedures to be created by the Council, Standing Committees and Ministry Teams. While not permanent, constitutional language provides on-going principles and structure with provision for revision by congregational vote. Policies and procedures such as those adopted by the Council, Standing Committees and Ministry Teams are more organic and may change as the work of those groups evolves.

Unlike the folks in Philadelphia in 1787, the Task Force had an established constitution to work with, and the Northfield UCC Congregation's new governance structure already in place. This facilitated our work of study, consultation and lively conversations. On January 10, 2016, the Council approved the draft constitution and recommended it for the approval by the congregation.

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