

# CONSTITUTION

Grace United Church of Christ

Uniontown, OH

Approved by the Congregation, September 17, 2023

## ARTICLE I IDENTITY

- 1) The name of this Church shall be Grace United Church of Christ, Uniontown, Ohio.
- 2) The principal location of this Church shall be 13275 Cleveland Avenue NW, Uniontown, Ohio 44685.
- 3) Grace United Church of Christ is a part of the United Church of Christ and shall sustain that relationship described in those portions of the Constitution and by-laws of the United Church of Christ adopted July 4, 1961, relating to local churches.

## ARTICLE II PURPOSE

- 1) The purpose of this Church is to
  - a) provide a place of worship for its members;
  - b) conduct the same in accordance with the rules, regulations, and customs of the United Church of Christ; and
  - c) to promote the cause of Christianity, Christian Education, Mission, and Christian recreation.
- 2) The Mission Statement of the Church as adopted and modified by the Church's Congregation is incorporated by reference herein.

## ARTICLE III FAITH AND COVENANT

### Section 1 Faith

- 1) This Church:
  - a. Acknowledges Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of humanity, as its sole head. We acknowledge as brothers and sisters in Christ all who share in this confession. We look to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, in order to further God's creative and redemptive work in the world;
  - b. Claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers;
  - c. Affirms the responsibility of each generation to make this faith its own in reality of worship, in honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart before God;
  - d. Recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion, both of which we

make available to all who will receive in faith;

- e. Recognizes five rites: Confirmation, Ordination, Consecration, Marriage, and Burial.

## Section 2 Covenant

Having each entered into covenant with God, we solemnly covenant with each other to unite in establishing a Christian Congregation in this community. Grace United Church of Christ will seek God's will and be faithful to God's mission, attending to its responsibilities in relation to all expressions of the Church. Its decisions will be made in consultation and collaboration with other parts of the structure, including its Association, Conference, and the General Synod. Grace United Church of Christ is called to honor and respect the work and ministry of each other part.

## Article IV Membership

- 1) The Church is composed of its members. Membership in this Church is open to any person who:
  - a) Has been duly received into this Church's Communion by Confirmation, Letter of Transfer, or by public confession or reaffirmation of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;
  - b) Has been baptized;
  - c) Accepts the Church covenant.
- 2) Members shall endeavor within their own conscience:
  - a) To regularly attend the worship of this Church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper;
  - b) To live ever increasingly the Christian Life, at home and in society;
  - c) To share in the life and work and prayer of this Church;
  - d) To contribute to God's mission through the Church with their time, talents, and treasures;
  - e) To seek diligently the well-being of the membership and the community, both spiritually and otherwise;
  - f) To participate and vote at all Church meetings.

## Article V Ministry and Pastoral Call

- 1) Grace United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls the whole Church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the Gospel in Church and society.
- 2) Grace United Church of Christ also recognizes that God calls certain individuals to forms of ministry in and on behalf of the Church for which ecclesiastical authorization is

required. The Call of an Ordained Minister to Grace United Church of Christ establishes a covenantal relationship with both the authorized minister and the United Church of Christ as represented by the Living Water Association, Ohio Northeast.

- 3) In case of pastoral vacancy, a search committee shall be appointed by the Consistory. The committee will be responsible to seek candidates for the ministry of the Congregation. Such candidates shall be ministers who have been approved by the Living Water Association, Ohio Northeast.
- 4) The Consistory shall nominate one and only one candidate at a time, to be voted upon by the Congregation at a duly-called meeting by ballot with a three-fourth (3/4) majority voting needed to be elected.
- 5) If elected by the Congregation, a call shall be made, according to the Association procedure and the terms of the relationship or agreement between the Congregation, the Association, and the minister. It is Consistory's responsibility to approve the agreement between the Congregation and the ministerial candidate (the "terms of call") prior to the congregation's vote to extend a pastoral call.

#### Article VI Organization and Governance

- 1) The government of this Church is vested in its members who exercise the right of control in all its affairs; subject to all civil laws and regulations of the State of Ohio relating to ecclesiastical corporations.
- 2) The Officers of the Church shall be the Consistory President, the Consistory Vice President (both of whom shall be ordained to the office of Elder or of Deacon), the Consistory Secretary and the Treasurer.
- 3) The Consistory shall be the executive body in this church and have jurisdiction and oversight of the church, its organization and its vision.
  - a) It shall be composed of the four Officers of the Church, a Deacon representative for each of the four areas of ministry, and the senior pastor;
  - b) All members of Consistory shall be members of the congregation.
- 4) The Spiritual Council shall consist of the Pastor and the acting Elders of the Congregation.
- 5) The Consistory President, Vice President, and Treasurer, any two of which, shall sign all legal papers as required by law.
- 6) The Isabelle Carl Warden Fund shall be described and administered in accordance with the By- Laws.

- 7) The finances of the Church shall be administered by the budget system.

#### Article VII Church Meetings and Quorum

- 1) All Congregational Meetings shall be approved by the Consistory.
- 2) Twelve percent (12%) of the members shall constitute a quorum for any Congregational Meeting.

#### Article VIII Property

- 1) The Congregation may, in its corporate name, sue and be sued, hold, purchase, and receive title by gift, grant, or other conveyance of and to any property, real or personal, with power to mortgage, sell or convey the same, providing the State and local laws permit.
- 2) In case of a division in membership of the Congregation, all parties shall submit the question of the right of property to the Association and the decision of the Association shall be binding on all members of the Congregation.
- 3) In the case of a dissolution of the Congregation, the title of the property shall vest in the Living Water Association, Ohio Northeast, of the Heartland Conference, United Church of Christ.

#### Article IX Rules of Order

The most recent edition of Roberts Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for all Congregational Meetings.

#### Article X Amendments

- 1) This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting at a duly-called Congregational Meeting provided the proposed Amendment has been stated in the call for that Meeting.
- 2) The By-Laws of the Church may be amended by a majority vote of members present and voting at a duly-called Congregational Meeting provided the proposed Amendment has been stated in the call for that Meeting.
- 3) Any Amendments to the Constitution or By-Laws shall be reviewed and approved by Consistory prior to presentation to the Congregation.

#### Article XI Implementation

Thirty (30) days following an affirmative vote taken at a duly called Congregational

Meeting, this document becomes the Constitution of Grace United Church of Christ, and replaces any and all previous Constitutions.