

C O N S T I T U T I O N

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ST. JOHN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Reading Ohio

Revised, 2004

ARTICLE I

Name

1. The name of this church shall be “St. John United Church of Christ of Reading, Ohio” and is incorporated as such under laws of the State of Ohio.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

1. The avowed purpose of this church is to maintain in the community a Christian congregation for the worship of God as revealed in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. This church seeks to proclaim in the world the Good News of God’s love in word and deed, in fellowship with the universal Christian Church and the United Church of Christ. It further seeks to provide to people of all ages opportunity to worship, to learn and grow in their faith, to serve and be served, to enjoy fellowship with others, and to exercise their stewardship in support of the church and its work.

ARTICLE III

Affiliation

1. This church shall be a part of the United Church of Christ and it shall sustain that relationship to the United Church of Christ described in those portions of its Constitution and By-Laws relating to local churches.

ARTICLE IV

Faith and Covenant

1. In fellowship with the United Church of Christ, this church acknowledges as its sole head Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Savior of humankind and acknowledges as one in Christ all who share in this confession.

Constitution of St. John United Church of Christ, Reading, Ohio

2. This church accepts the sacred scriptures of the Old Testament and the New Testament as the Word of God and as the sole and infallible guide of Christian faith and life.
3. The sacraments of this church are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
4. The "Mission Statement" of this church is:

"Called to the worship of God as revealed in the Scriptures, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, our mission is to enable all people to experience God's love through Our Lord Jesus Christ."

ARTICLE V

Membership

1. Persons who have been duly received into its communion by baptism and confirmation, by letter of transfer, or by profession of faith, shall be entitled to all its rights and privileges as provided in the By-Laws.
2. Any member may, on request, be granted a letter of transfer. If wishing to join a body not in fellowship with this church, the member may be dismissed with a certificate of church membership.
3. Any member who persistently does not reflect the purpose of the church may come under the church discipline category covered by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE VI

Governing Body

1. The government of this church is vested in the congregation itself, assembled in meeting duly and legally called, as provided in the By-Laws.
2. The membership of this church shall decide such questions as the buying and selling of property, building projects, extensive repair or renovation of church property, the call or dismissal of the Pastor(s), questions of church policy, and amendments to the constitution and By-Laws. For the transaction of all other business, the administration of the church is entrusted to the Council with proper in-put from the four main Boards.

Constitution of St. John United Church of Christ, Reading, Ohio

3. Thirty members in good standing shall constitute a quorum, and the vote of a majority of members present at a duly called congregational meeting shall be the action of the church except in the case of the Constitution and By-Laws, which require a two-thirds vote for amendment.

ARTICLE VII

Organization – General

A. OVERVIEW:

The activities of the church shall be conducted by four Boards: The Board of Christian Nurture, The Board of Property & Finance, The Board of Elders, and The Board of Deacons. Each Board shall have full authority over and responsibility for its scope of activity as delineated in the By-Laws. Each Board shall present a written report of its activities at each meeting of the Church Council.

The Church Council is the elected representative body of the congregation. As such, it has the right to approve or veto any action of any Board. Notwithstanding, the purpose of the council is to provide an oversight and review function of the Board's activities. It is anticipated that the Boards will accomplish their duties on their own.

B. ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES:

With the sole exception of the Pastor, Treasurer, **and paid Staff**; all Officers of the church, Board members and Council members, shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee. **Paid Staff may serve but not as Chairperson.** These nominations shall be presented to the Church Council prior to the Annual Meeting for endorsement. The congregation may nominate candidates for any office at said meeting. Voting by hand or by ballot will proceed. In the event that a vacancy occurs, at whatever time, a replacement shall be appointed by the Church Council to serve until the next **fiscal year**. In the event of repeated absences by a Board or Council member, the chair-person may declare the position vacant.

C. PROCEDURE:

Upon the call of the retiring chairperson, each Board shall meet within thirty days of the Annual Meeting, the agenda being to organize and elect a chairperson and secretary for the ensuing year. Thereafter each Board shall

Constitution of St. John United Church of Christ, Reading, Ohio

meet on an appointed date monthly or at the call of the chairperson, the Minister, or any three members. The secretary of each Board shall keep accurate records of all business transacted at Board meetings. The Minister is to be notified of all Board meetings and serve ex officio on each. Members of the congregation may attend Board meetings with voice, without vote.

Each Board shall consist of not less than four nor more than six persons (the Treasurer becomes a seventh member of the Board of Property & Finance). All Elders, Deacons, Property & Finance members, and the chairperson of the Board of Christian Nurture shall be members of the church. At each Church Annual Meeting two persons shall be elected to each Board on a plan of rotation for a term of two years. After serving two full terms on any Board/**Council**, a member must step down for a year, although he or she may be elected to another position in the church.

A quorum for the conducting of formal Board business is defined as a majority of elected members.

The President, Vice President, Board members and **Council** members at large shall be members of this church, except as noted above, and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve for two years.

ARTICLE VIII: OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

1. The Officers of the church shall be:

Pastor
President of the Church Council
Vice President of the Church Council
Secretary of the Church Council
Treasurer

2. Duties:

President of the Church Council: The President of the Church Council shall preside at all Council meetings and business meetings of the Congregation and shall have authority to sign all orders, contracts and other legal documents as approved by the Church Council. **The President** shall also have authority to sign checks and other orders for payment of money. **The President** shall advise the nominating committee of vacancies to be filled.

Constitution of St. John United Church of Christ, Reading, Ohio

Vice President of the Church Council: The Vice President of the Church Council shall, in the absence of the President of the Church Council, perform all the duties of the President, and at all times such duties as may be assigned by the Church Council.

Secretary of Church Council: The Secretary shall keep a record of all the proceedings of the Church Council and Congregational Meetings and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Church Council.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall keep a complete record of all receipts and disbursements and an accurate account of all funds. **The Treasurer** shall make a detailed report of all transactions at the Annual Meeting of the church, and at such other times as directed by the Church Council. **The Treasurer** shall deposit all funds in such depositories as designated by the Church Council, sign all checks, and other orders for the payment of money, and perform such other duties as directed by the Church Council. **The Treasurer** shall be ex officio member of the **Council** and shall advise, plan and report on financial matters. **The Treasurer** shall have authority, in conjunction with the President of the Church Council, to sign all orders, contracts, and other legal documents as approved by the Council and shall do other such duties as designated by the Board of Property & Finance in consultation with the Church Council.

3. Appointed Officials:

Delegates: The Church Council shall appoint delegates as required to represent this church at official United Church of Christ functions, including SONKA **and/or Cluster 3**, or other Conference functions.

The Secretary/Treasurer, President, Pastor and other paid staff as may be appointed shall be considered staff support to the Council and not members thereof. They shall not have vote in the Council.

ARTICLE IX

Pastor

1. This church shall have one Pastor, duly ordained, licensed, holding standing with the United Church of Christ, and selected with the assistance of the

Constitution of St. John United Church of Christ, Reading, Ohio

Association Minister of the Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association of the United Church of Christ, in accordance with the By-Laws.

2. The Pastor is responsible for pastoral duties and is entitled to the rights of the Pastor as outlined in the By-Laws.
3. The church, at its discretion, may choose Assistant Pastor(s) and/or Lay Assistants. Such staff personnel shall be supervised by the Pastor.

ARTICLE X

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 and personal, with power to mortgage, sell or convey the same, providing state laws permit; borrow funds and contract debts to accomplish the purposes of this congregation.
2. In case of a dispute within the congregation concerning the selling or disposal of the church property, the congregation shall submit the question of the right to the property to the Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association of the United Church of Christ, or the Association or Conference of which it is a member, and the decision of the said judicatory shall be binding on all the members of the congregation.
3. Whoever withdraws from membership of the congregation loses all right upon its property.
4. In case of a dissolution of the congregation, the title to the property shall vest in the Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE XI

Meetings

1. The congregation shall have an annual meeting and such other meetings as are provided for in the By-Laws.
2. At all annual and special meetings of the congregation, as well as all Board meetings, Robert's Rules of Order shall be the basis of conduct.

Constitution of St. John United Church of Christ, Reading, Ohio

ARTICLE XII

Amendments

1. This Constitution may be amended at any properly called meeting of the congregation providing that the proposed amendment has been placed before the congregation at the previous meeting, or has been called to the attention of the membership at least two months prior to such meeting.

Proposed amendments shall be referred to the Church Council, which shall consider them and report to the next duly called congregation meeting.

2. A two-thirds vote of the members present will be required to adopt an amendment.