

SECTION VI: CONSTITUTION

Article I NAME

This church shall be called the United Church of Christ, Honeoye, New York.

Article II COVENANT

The covenant by which this church exists as a distinct body, and which every member accepts, is as follows:

Acknowledging Jesus Christ to be our Savior and Lord, and accepting the Holy Scriptures as our rule of faith and practice, and recognizing the privilege and duty of uniting ourselves for Christian fellowship, the enjoyment of Christian ordinances, the public worship of God, and the advancement of His kingdom in the world, we do now, in the sight of God, and invoking His blessing, solemnly covenant and agree with each other, to associate ourselves to be a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, as warranted by the Word of God.

We agree to maintain the institutions of the gospel, to submit ourselves to the orderly administration of the affairs of the church, and to walk together in brotherly love.

And this we do depending upon the aid of our heavenly Father, who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son for our salvation, and of Jesus Christ, who hath redeemed us, and of the Holy Spirit, our comforter and guide.

Article III CHARACTER

Section 1. Polity. Its government is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body; but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among United Church of Christ churches; and it is in fellowship with all churches which acknowledge Jesus Christ to be their divine Redeemer and Lord, and never comes under any ecclesiastical control, without a vote by the congregation for this purpose, legal notice having been given to its members.

Section 2. Doctrine. It receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in accord with the belief of the statement of faith as set forth by the General Synod of the United Church of Christ at Philadelphia in July 1961, which statement is appended to the by-laws.

Article IV MEMBERSHIP

The members of this Church shall be persons who have discussed membership with the Pastor and been welcomed by the Board of Deacons and have been received by vote of the Church and public acceptance of its covenant on (a) presentation (of satisfactory letters of transfer, or (b) by reaffirmation of faith, or (c) confession of faith and baptism.

Article V MEETINGS

Section 1. Services

- a. Services of worship
- b. Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
- c. Baptism of adults
- d. Baptism or consecration of children
- e. Reception of new members

Section 2. Business Meetings

- a. The Annual Meeting to elect officers, hear annual reports, transact business, adopt the annual budget, and set up plans for the new year shall be held usually the second week in January.
 1. The official year of the Church shall begin at the Annual meeting, and all officers, boards, and committees shall assume their duties at that time, and continue in office until their successors are elected and qualified.
 2. The fiscal year of the Church shall be from January 1 to December 31.
- b. A Semi-Annual meeting may be held in the month of June when called for by the Church Council, Trustees, Church Moderator, Deacons or Pastor.
- c. Meetings of Church Council
- d. Regular worship services as business meetings
- e. Special meetings

Article VI OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the Church shall be a Pastor, Church Moderator, Church Clerk, **seven** Deacons, Church Treasurer, Financial Treasurer, Benevolence Secretary, Coordinator(s) of the Church School, **six** Trustees, **three** members of the Memorial Committee, **nine** members of the Board of Christian Education, **nine** members of the Board of Community Life, Church Historian, **six** members of the Board of Christian Stewardship and chairpersons of the Nominating Committee, Floral Committee and any chair persons of special task forces or other committees created by the congregation or Church Council.

Section 2. The term of office for all officers shall be the term stated in the by-laws, or until their successors are elected.

Article VII BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Section 1. The administrative body of the Church shall be the Church Council.

Section 2. The standing boards of the Church shall be: the Board of Trustees, the Board of Deacons, the Board of Christian Education, the Board of Christian Stewardship, and the Board of Community Life.??????????

Section 3. The standing committees of the Church shall be: Memorial, and Nominating. Earthcare?

Section 4. Such committees as may be deemed necessary to carry on the various activities of the Church shall be appointed by the Church, the Pastor, Church Moderator, or the Church Council.

Article VIII CHURCH EDIFICE

Section 1. The Pastor shall have the liberty to use the Church edifice to promote the spiritual interests of the Church and congregation. The Church may also use the same for any meetings of a spiritual or social nature.

Section 2. For all other purposes, the control of the building shall be with the Trustees, who shall not, however, allow it to be used for unworthy purposes, nor put it to any use which shall interfere with the arrangements of the Church.

Article IX AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a three-fourths vote of the members present and voting, at any Annual Meeting of the Church, or at a meeting specially called for that purpose, the proposed amendment being inserted in the call; but no change shall be made in ARTICLES II AND III, entitled COVENANT AND CHARACTER except at an Annual Meeting; and by a three-fourths vote of all members of the Church entitled to vote, said proposed change having been laid before the Church in writing at a Business Meeting, not less than one month before time for the proposed action, and read from the pulpit on the Lord's Day next succeeding such proposal.

BY-LAWS

Article I MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualifications. The members of this Church shall be persons who have been received by vote of the church, who have made public acceptance of its covenant, and who have received the Right Hand of Fellowship by complying with the qualifications stated in Article IV of the Constitution. Members of the confirmation class shall be at least twelve years of age unless an exception is made by the Board of Deacons.

Section 2. Reception. Persons having qualified for membership shall be received at a Communion Service, or at some other time as agreed upon by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons, the form of reception shall be left to the discretion of the Pastor of the Church.

Section 3. Duties. Members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all the spiritual duties essential to the Christian life, and also to attend habitually the services of this Church, to give regularly for its support and its charities, and to share in its organized work.

Section 4. Such members as are in full standing, and do not hold letters of dismissal and recommendation, may vote legally in the transactions of the Church, according to the State Law.

Section 5. Termination. The continuance of membership shall be subject to the principles and usage of the United Church of Christ.

- a. Any member of good and regular standing, who desires a letter of transfer and recommendation to any other church, is entitled to receive it upon his or her written request or that of another church. This letter shall be valid as a recommendation for one year from its date, and this restriction shall be stated in the letter. Active membership shall be suspended when a letter is issued. General letters addressed to no particular church shall not be granted.
- b. If a member in good standing requests to be released from his or her covenant obligations to this Church for reasons which the Church may finally deem satisfactory, after it shall have patiently and kindly endeavored to secure his or her continuance in its fellowship, such request shall be granted, and his or her membership terminated.
- c. Members whose addresses have been long unknown, who for a period of two years, in spite of kindly approaches, have not communicated with the Church or contributed to its support, may be transferred, by vote of the Church, to an inactive list and may still receive letters in good standing. From the date of such transfer such persons shall cease to be reported on the Active Membership Roll.

Article II MEETINGS

Section 1. For worship.

- a. Services of worship shall be held at given hours each Sunday, except when temporarily suspended by vote of the Church.
- b. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at such times as the Deacons and the Pastor may determine.
- c. The Baptism of adults and the Baptism or Consecration of children shall be administered at such time as the Minister, or in his or her absence, the Deacons may appoint.
- d. Other services of worship, inspiration, prayer, and study may be determined by the Deacons or the Pastor.

Section 2. For Business Meetings.

- a. The Annual Meeting shall be held as provided in the Articles of Incorporation of the Church to hear the yearly reports of the officers, organizations, and committees, to elect officers, to transact business, adopt the budget, and to set up plans for the new year. This meeting shall be called usually the second week in January of each year by letter or Pastor's newsletter.
- b. The Semiannual Meeting shall be held as provided in the Constitution, Article V, Section 2, b.
- c. At the meetings of the congregation for business called by letter or Church publication, the Church Moderator shall preside. Regular services as business meetings. The regular Sunday service of the Church shall be considered competent, in case of necessity, to transact business, except corporate action requiring legal notice and business specifically referred to other meetings.

Section 3. Rules and Regulations.

- a. Notices for the annual, semiannual and other corporate meetings shall be given in accordance with the requirements, as stated in Article II, Section 2a, b, and c.
- b. A quorum shall consist of fifteen voting members.
- c. Voting. The method of voting shall be by show of hands unless otherwise requested. Unless required, a majority vote is decisive, and unless restricted by law, all members of the Church are entitled to vote.

Article III CHURCH COUNCIL

Section 1. The Church Council shall consist of

- a. All elected officers of the congregation: the Pastor, the Church Moderator, who shall serve as Chairperson (in his/her absence, the Chair of the Board of Trustees shall serve as Chairperson of the Church Council), Church Clerk, Church Treasurer(s), Financial Secretary(s), Church School Coordinator(s), Historian, and Publicity Chairperson.
- b. The chairpersons of each of the five Boards, Deacons, Trustees, Christian Stewardship, Christian Education and Community Life or a special designated Church Council representative from that board,
- c. The heads of all auxiliary church organizations or a special designated Church Council representative from that organization),
- d. All chairpersons of any standing committee (e.g. Floral, Memorial, Music, Nominating) or a designated Church Council representative from that committee,
- e. The chairperson of any elected or appointed committee or task force (e.g. Financial, Building, Fundraising) or a designated Church Council representative from that committee or task force,
- f. Delegates to the G.V.A. and New York Conference
- g. Any special temporary officers elected or appointed by the Church Council
- h. Any other persons that the congregation desires to elect at the Annual Meeting of the congregation.

Section 2. The Church Council shall meet in February, April, June, September, and November. Council Meetings may be called by the Pastor, the Church Moderator and the Clerk, or on petition of ten members of the Church, at a time agreeable to the Pastor, Moderator, and Clerk.

- a. They shall advise with the Pastor, hear reports, and transact all business not within the province of the Board of Trustees.
- b. When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate, the Church Council shall elect a Pulpit Committee to secure a new Pastor with the cooperation of the executive head of the State Conference and others.
- c. A quorum shall consist of nine members.
- d. Any member of the congregation is welcome to attend a Church Council Meeting with voice but not vote.
- e. A Church Council member only has one vote at its business session, regardless of how many offices, boards, organizations, or committees he or she may represent at a Church Council meeting.

Article IV OFFICERS - FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

Section 1. Elective

- a. All officers shall be active members of the Church unless otherwise stated and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting.
- b. Pastor

1. Shall be called to serve for an indefinite period of time by at least two-thirds vote of the active members of the Church present and may be installed by a Council when the Church and Pastor so agree.
 2. Shall be spiritual leader of the Church and community.
 3. Shall be an ex-officio advisory member of the boards and committees.
 4. The Church may at any time, by a majority vote, at a meeting called for the purpose, request a pastor's resignation with the expectation that it will be presented within sixty days. On the other hand, the Pastor shall give at least sixty days notice in case he/she wishes to leave of his/her own volition; but in case of loss of standing (ministerial) on the part of the Pastor, relations cease at once.
- c. Church Moderator
1. Shall be elected annually for a one-year term
 2. Shall preside over all Congregational Meetings except those called during worship services unless requested to do so by the Pastor.
 3. Shall preside over all Church Council Meetings.
- d. Church Clerk
1. Shall be elected each year for a one-year term.
 2. Shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of the Church and of the Church Council, and shall be its Secretary.
 3. Shall keep a register with addresses of the members of the Church, with dates and mode of their reception and removal; also, a record of baptisms, marriages, and deaths.
 4. Shall issue letters of transfer, notify all persons elected to offices and committees, give legal notices of all meetings of the Church when such notices are necessary, conduct all correspondence so far as this is not otherwise provided for, and perform such other duties as are prescribed by law, or usually pertain to the office of a clerk or secretary of an assembly.
 5. All duties formerly performed by the Society Clerk shall be assumed by the Church Clerk.

- e. Church Treasurer
 1. Shall be elected each year for a one-year term.
 2. Shall receive and deposit all monies designated for current expense in a bank authorized by the Church Council in the name of the United Church of Christ of Honeoye.
 3. All bills shall be paid by check as authorized by a designated member of the Board of Trustees.
 4. Shall keep accurate account of all receipts and disbursements and give such bonds as the Trustees shall prescribe.
 5. May, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, contract with some trust company, national bank, the State Conference, or the corporation for the General Council, to invest endowments, legacies, trust funds and securities (in such funds as are legal investments for trust fund of the State of New York) and to pay the regular income from the same to the Treasurer in regular installments.
 6. Shall make a quarterly financial statement to be presented to the members and friends of the church through a simple publication.
 7. Shall make an annual report in detail of receipts and expenditures, properly audited, and shall prepare reports for each Church Council Meeting when requested.
- f. Secretary and Treasurer of Benevolence
 1. Shall be elected each year for a one-year term.
 2. Shall receive all monies for Benevolence and shall keep separate accounts of all monies raised for the objects of Christian Benevolence, to be paid to the several persons or societies entitled thereto.
 3. Shall make an annual written report in detail of receipts and expenditures, properly audited and shall prepare a report for each Church Council Meeting when requested.
 4. These duties may be assumed by the Treasurer and Financial Secretary.
- g. Financial Secretary
 1. Shall be elected each year for a one-year term.
 2. Shall receive all monies for current expense and benevolence of the Church, prepare weekly records to them, and turn the money over to the respective Treasurer.
 3. Shall send a list of back pledges to the Christian Stewardship Board on request.
 4. Shall prepare and distribute quarterly statements to all recorded contributors.
- h. Church Sunday School Coordinator(s)
 1. Shall be elected each year for a one-year term. The Nominating Committee shall consult the Board of Christian Education in making the nominations.
 2. Shall be responsible for the organization and administration of the Church School and shall cooperate with the Board of Christian Education in arranging the curriculum and advising with respect to teaching.
 3. Teachers shall be appointed by joint action of the Coordinators and the Board of Christian Education.
 4. Shall cooperate in carrying out the Board's programs.
- i. Historian
 1. Shall be elected each year for a one-year term.
 2. Shall be responsible for an accumulative account of special Church functions, the highlights of each Sunday service, and all matters of interest.

3. Shall keep a clipping file of articles about the Church and its activities.
- j. Auditors
1. There shall be two Auditors elected annually by the congregation at the annual congregational meeting.
 2. They shall examine the accounts of the Financial Secretary, the Church Treasurer, the Benevolence Secretary and Treasurer, and the Memorial Committee Treasurer.
 3. They shall make a written report thereon as required by the Church or the Trustees.
- k. Publicity Chairperson
1. Shall be elected annually by the congregation at the annual congregational meeting.
 2. Is responsible for continuous publicity of the Church's activities.

Section 2. Elected indefinitely

- a. These offices shall be elected by the annual congregational meeting, or a special congregational meeting, and persons remain in office until the person resigns or is dismissed by the Church Council or a congregational vote.
- b. Organist
 1. There shall be an Organist elected by the congregation upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons.
 2. The Organist shall play at all worship services of the Church, unless otherwise arranged.
- c. There shall be a Music Director elected by the congregation by recommendation of the Board of Deacons who is in charge of the music ministry of the congregation.
- d. The Music Director appoints with the recommendation of the Board of Deacons such persons as needed to assist the Congregation's Music Ministry such as Bell Choir Director, and assistant directors.
- e. The Music Director and music staff shall direct the choirs and purchase such music as needed. All music thus purchased shall be the property of the church and shall be added to the Music library.

Article V BOARDS - FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

Section 1. All members of the Church Boards shall be active members of the Church unless otherwise stated and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting.

Section 2. Board of Trustees

- a. There shall be **six** members: 2 elected each year for a three year term. A majority must be members of the Church.
- b. The Board shall elect its own officers and appoint its sub-committees and determine its own mode of procedure. A quorum shall consist of five members. The officers of said Board will be and shall serve as the officers of the Corporation of the Church.
- c. Trustee shall not be eligible for re-election after serving two consecutive terms until after the expiration of one year.
- d. The Board shall meet regularly each month of the year, and when called for a special meeting by the Pastor or the Chairperson of the Board.

- e. They shall have charge of all buildings, property, and serve as custodians of bonds, mortgages, etc. They shall be charged with the responsibility for keeping the Church and Parsonage, and all other property in a good state of repair. They shall keep the property properly insured.
- f. By a legal vote of the Church, the Board shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, or transfer property.
- g. They may borrow money up to \$500 in an emergency and in the name of the Church and for which the Church will be responsible.
- h. They shall receive all legacies and hold same in trust according to law.
- i. They shall make an annual written report to the Church of all the transactions during the year, and shall be responsible to the Church Council and/or the Church.
- j. They may, at their discretion, call meetings of the Church for matters with which they are concerned, and shall hold in trust any property so required to be held by the laws of the State, and make an annual inventory of the same.
- k. They shall be responsible for the finances of the Church including authorization of payment of all bills.
- l. They shall have the responsibility for recommending appointment of, supervising and establishing the salary of the Custodian.

Section 3. Board of Deacons

- a. There shall be seven Deacons, two elected each year for three year terms, and one additional Deacon elected for a three year term every third year. A Deacon must be a formal member of the congregation.
- b. A Deacon shall not be eligible for re-election after serving two consecutive terms until after the expiration of one year.
- c. The Board shall elect its own officers and appoint its subcommittees and determine its own mode of procedure. A quorum shall consist of one more than half of the members.
- d. It is their duty to cooperate with the Pastor in ministering to the spiritual interests of the Church and community. They shall assist in the administration of the ordinances, in caring for the poor, the sick, the sorrowing, the indifferent, and the stranger. They shall prepare for the Communion Service, visit the sick and shut-ins, maintain the altar and provide greeters for each worship service.
- e. They shall receive applications by letter or otherwise for admission to Church membership, and examine all applicants for membership on confession of faith, with respect to their fitness thereof.
- f. They shall give attention to discipline as provided for in these by-laws.
- g. They shall make an annual survey of the Church Rolls and at the Annual Meeting submit recommendations to the Church regarding the necessary revisions.
- h. They shall provide for the supply of the Pulpit in case of a vacancy, and in the absence of the Pastor; however, not when the Pulpit Committee desires the Pulpit for a candidate.
- i. They shall be responsible for proposing the salary of the Pastor annually, after consulting with the Board of Trustees.

Section 4. Board of Christian Education

- a. There shall be nine members, three elected every year for a three-year term. A majority, including the Chairperson, shall be active members of the Church. Members should represent the children, youth, adults, music, hobbies, and missions.
- b. The Board shall elect its own officers and determine its own mode of procedure. A quorum shall consist of five members.
- c. A member shall not be eligible for re-election after serving two consecutive terms until after the expiration of one year.
- d. The Church School Coordinator(s) and the Pastor shall be ex officio members of the Board.
- e. They shall have supervision and direction of all distinctly religious educational activities of the Church except the Pastor's class of membership. It shall make specific provision for the following:
 - 1. Sessions of the Church School. It shall determine the appropriation of funds contributed to the Church School and it shall be the duty of this Board to appoint and remove teachers and other officers (except the Coordinator(s) of the Church School.
 - 2. The Board shall cooperate in the educational aspects of social services and benevolence and other activities, including projects such as Vacation Bible School, nursery, young peoples' organizations, and Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts if sponsored by the Church.

Section 5. Board of Christian Stewardship

- a. There shall be six members, two elected each year for a three year term. A majority, including the chairperson, shall be members of the Church. The Treasurer, Pastor and Benevolence Secretary-Treasurer shall be ex officio members.
- b. The Board shall elect its own officers and determine its own mode of procedure. A quorum shall consist of five members.
- c. A member shall not be eligible for re-election after serving two consecutive terms until after the expiration of one year.
- d. The Board shall be responsible for a carefully planned and integrated program of Christian Stewardship and mission education, and promotion in all departments of the Church, including all age levels, throughout the year.
- e. It shall specifically promote missionary interest and systematic giving on the basis of Christian Stewardship, cooperating with the other Boards and Church organizations in their part of Christian Stewardship and mission education program.
- f. It shall recommend to the Church Council and then the Church an annual budget for current expenses and for Our Church's Wider Mission, together with objectives for regular or special offerings during the year.
- g. The Board shall be responsible for the selection, organization, and instruction of enlistment workers, supervision of the activities of Enlistment Sunday, and completion of the enlistment follow-up before the end of the current year, and collection of back pledges.
- h. The Board shall present final budgets based on final figures from the enlistment drive to the November Church Council Meeting, and the Annual Meeting.

- i. The Board shall keep itself fully informed in its field through attendance of relevant meetings sponsored by the denomination, and through resource material stressing Christian Stewardship and describing current mission emphases.

Section 6. Board of Community Life

- a. There shall be nine members, three elected every year for a three-year term. A majority, including the Chairperson, shall be active members of the Church.
- b. The Board shall elect its own officers and determine its own mode of procedure. A quorum shall consist of five members. A member shall not be eligible for re-election after serving two consecutive terms until after the expiration of one year.
- c. The Board shall be responsible for the promoting of Christian community and fellowship among the members of the Congregation on a regular basis.

Article VI COMMITTEES - FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

Section 1. Floral Committee

- a. The Chairperson shall be elected each year for a one-year term.
- b. Shall choose a Committee of at least two to work with him/her.
- c. The Committee shall be responsible for placing flowers in the Church for worship services.

Section 2. Memorial Committee

- a. There shall be three members; one elected each year for a period of three years. A majority shall be active members of the Church.
- b. They shall appoint their own Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- c. The Treasurer shall be an active member of the Church and shall receive and deposit in a special fund all monies given as a memorial.
- d. The Secretary shall be responsible for making the recordings in the Memorial Book and acknowledging memorial contributions.
- e. The Committee shall act as an advisory committee to all desiring to give memorial gifts or contributions to the Church.
- f. The Committee shall make an annual report to the Church.

Section 3. Nominating Committee

- a. The Nominating Committee shall consist of six active members of the congregation. Five of the members to be elected will be from those persons who have completed one or two terms on one of the boards, one person from each of the five boards. In addition, there shall be one person elected at large from the congregation. They shall be elected annually by the congregation for a one year term. The at-large member will serve as chairperson of the Nominating Committee.
- b. A member shall not be eligible for re-election to the Committee after serving two consecutive terms until after the expiration of one year.
- c. The Committee shall prepare nominations for all elective offices, boards and committees. The slate shall consist of one nomination for each position to be filled.

- d. When a vacancy occurs in an elective position, the Nominating Committee shall make a nomination to the Church Council to fill the vacancy until the end of the current year. The vacancy shall then be filled in the usual manner for the duration of the unexpired term.

Article VII DELEGATES AND ALTERNATIVES

Section 1. To the State Conference

- a. One delegate and one alternate shall be elected by the congregation at the annual congregational meeting to attend the Annual New York Conference.
- b. They shall make a report to the congregation.

Section 2. To the Genesee Valley Association

- a. The appropriate number of delegates and alternates shall be elected by the congregation to attend the meetings of the Genesee Valley Association.
- b. They shall also represent the Church at ecclesiastical functions in the Association.
- c. They shall report important decisions of the Association meetings to the Church Council.

Article VIII FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Church, through the Board of Christian Stewardship, shall seek support by contributions of individuals and organizations. Opportunity shall be given to all members and friends of the Church to make a written Pledge annually and to new members upon joining the Church.

Article IX AMENDMENTS

All amendments to the by-laws shall be subject to the same provisions as those regulating the constitution.

