

The CONSTITUTION OF
The United Church of Mapleton
Mapleton, Minnesota

AMENDED January 17th 2016

ARTICLE I — NAME, MISSION STATEMENT AND AFFILIATION

1. The name of the Church shall be "The United Church of Mapleton, Minnesota."
2. The United Church of Mapleton is a Christian fellowship of mission, worship, and faith formation dedicated to the Maple River community.
3. The United Church of Mapleton shall be affiliated with the Mid-American Baptist Churches Region of the American Baptist Churches and the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE II — MEMBERSHIP

1. The membership shall consist of the following:
 - a. those persons who shall be received by letter from any Christian church with which they are in good standing.
 - b. those persons who shall seek admission by profession of faith and are in agreement with all articles of faith in this Church, confessing Jesus Christ as the Lord and Master of their lives, and promising to observe the rules and faith of the Church.
2. Members shall be elected to the membership of the Church by vote of the Board of Deacons at any regular meeting or special meeting called for that purpose upon the recommendation of the minister.
3. Members shall be dismissed from the Church by vote of the Board of Deacons upon the recommendation of the minister.
4. Members are those members who, according to their own personal evaluation, maintain an active interest in the life and ministry of the Church. Such interest may include, but is not

limited to, regular worship attendance, participation in the Church's program, mission, and ministry, and financial support of the church's mission. Members may hold office and shall be counted in the statistical reports of the Church roll. They may vote in Church meetings. Members shall automatically receive a copy of the Church newsletter via postal mail or via email, per their preference as communicated to the Church Office.

c. Inactive Members are those members who have not, indicated an interest in the Church or contributed financially to the support of the Church. Inactive members shall not be counted in statistical reports. The Board of Deacons shall review and update this list every January.

d. A person's right to receive ordinances, or have a wedding or funeral at the Church shall not be affected by one's particular membership status.

5. The membership of this Church is open to all persons who accept the obligations of membership and acknowledge the Statement of Faith contained in Article III.

ARTICLE III — FAITH

The United Church recognizes the Bible, especially the New Testament, as the sufficient rule of faith and practice, and holds that living in accordance with the teachings of Jesus is the true test of fellowship, with each member, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, having the right to interpret the Bible according to the dictates of his own conscience. The following statement of faith, or principles, therefore, is not a test but an expression of the spirit in which the Church interprets the Word of God: "We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, goodness, and love, Who is the Lord of all; in Jesus Christ His Son, Whom He sent to redeem us from sin and death, Who for us and our salvation lived, died, rose again, and lives evermore; and in the Holy Spirit Who through Christ reveals the will of God to us, moves in the hearts of men, and through the Gospel calls them to repentance and faith. "We believe the Church to be a spiritual fellowship of which Christ is the Head, and is composed of those who through faith are the children of God. For our comfort and our faith, Christ has given to His Church the sacred ordinances of Baptism and Holy Communion. "We hold it to be the mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to all mankind, exalting the worship of the one true God, and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of human brotherhood. "We believe that Baptism, immersion or sprinkling, shall be left to the free choice of the individual."

ARTICLE IV — CHURCH LEADERSHIP

1. The Church Council officers shall be the Moderator, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Clerk, Property Coordinator, Congregational Relationships Coordinator, Christian

- Education Coordinator, Community Outreach Coordinator, and Pastor.
2. The Covenant Committee members shall be the Pastoral Relations Committee of three members, the Personnel Committee of three members, the Talent Team of three members, and the Called to Care Team of as many members as determined to be necessary by the Pastor and/or Church Council.
 3. All officers and Covenant Committee members, except the Pastor, shall be elected from the membership of the United Church of Mapleton.
 4. Election of Officers and Covenant Committee Members will be held at the Annual Budget Proposal/Election Meeting, to be held the second Sunday in November.
 - a. Nominations may be submitted by the Talent Team, Church Council, or made from the floor at the time of the election.
 - b. Officers and Covenant Committee members elected to serve will begin their terms on January 1 following elections.
 - (1) Officers and Covenant Committee members are encouraged to attend meetings between the Annual Budget Proposal/Election Meeting and January 1 in order assist in transition and to become acquainted with their ministry.

ARTICLE V — CHURCH COUNCIL

1. Membership:
 - a. There shall be a Church Council consisting of the Moderator, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Clerk, Property Coordinator, Congregational Relationships Coordinator, Christian Education Coordinator, Community Outreach Coordinator, and Pastor.
 - b. The Financial Secretary and the Pastor shall serve on the Church Council as *ex officio* members. *Ex officio* defined as with voice and without vote for this document.
2. Duties:
 - a. The Church Council shall meet monthly to consider the work of the Church.
 - b. The Church Council shall review all items of business and recommendations that are to be brought to the Church for action.
 - c. The Church Council shall appoint the Pastoral Search Committee and such special committees as may be required for the work of the Church. The right to interpret the purpose and function of a Church office or committee shall be vested in the Church Council.
 - d. The Church Council may request the resignation of any officer or replace a Church Council officer by a unanimous vote of the remaining Church Council officers.
 - e. The Church Council shall manage the business affairs of the Church, including making provision for the determining and raising of the current expense budget or calling for a capital campaign.
 - f. The Church Council shall receive a report from the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer at each regular meeting of the Church Council and shall provide for an annual audit of their books by a qualified independent bookkeeping professional at the close of each fiscal year.

- g. The Church Council shall be responsible for setting and reaching goals related to the Church's health, vitality, growth, and spiritual life.
 - h. Any Church Council officer must recuse him/herself from any vote in which there is a conflict of interest.
 - i. Church Council members are permitted to designate an alternate in case of their absence at a Council or Congregational meeting or when needed in order to carry out Council work by communicating this representation in advance to the Moderator.
 - j. The Church Council shall be responsible for convening the Stewardship Team to direct stewardship programming and plan annual budget.
 - i. The Stewardship Team must include, but is not limited to, the Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Clerk, and Congregational Relationships Coordinator.
 - k. The responsibilities of Church Council Members shall include:
 - i. Signing off on all bills associated with their specific areas of oversight
 - ii. Compiling annual budget requests for the Stewardship Team related their areas of responsibility by the end of October
 - iii. Facilitating coordination of the ministry team members and volunteers within their areas
 - iv. Facilitating good communication among the ministry team members, the Church Council, and the congregation at large
3. Meetings:
- a. The Church Council may meet at other times upon the call of the Moderator.
 - b. The Church Clerk shall keep the records of the meetings.
 - c. The Church Moderator shall preside, or, if absent, a chairman may be elected from those present for the particular meeting.
 - d. A quorum shall consist of five members.
 - e. Church Council meetings can be called electronically to facilitate immediate church business when necessary.
 - f. Physical presence of Church Council members at Council meetings is preferred, but Council members can participate, including vote, by phone or electronically when necessary (e.g. Skype, remote meeting software).
 - g. The Church Council shall elect officers to fill out unexpired terms in case any elected officer is unable to continue service.
4. Terms:
- a. All elected positions of the Church Council shall be elected to a single three-year term.
 - b. After a three-year term, an individual cannot hold an elected Church Council position until at least one year has elapsed.
 - c. In the third year of a term, each elected Church Council member shall work with the Talent Team to find a potential successive nominee and to help train that individual for the next year upon their election to Church Council office.
 - d. As paid church staff positions, Financial Secretary and Treasurer are exempt from term limitations and can be elected for unlimited terms.

ARTICLE VI — COVENANT COMMITTEES

1. There shall be such committees as are expedient for the work of the Church and such special committees as needs arise.
 - a. The standing Covenant Committees of the Church shall be the Pastoral Relations Committee, the Personnel Committee, the Talent Team, and the Called to Care Team.
 - b. The committees shall report to the Church Council in an acceptable manner at least quarterly if they met during that time frame.
2. Pastoral Relations Committee
 - a. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall consist of three members, one member elected annually for a three-year term.
 - b. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall elect a Chairperson at their first meeting of each year. The Chair shall provide a report to the Clerk after each meeting of the Pastoral Relations Committee and shall be the representative to the Church Council when the Moderator requests his/her attendance.
 - c. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall meet at such times as the Committee and the Pastor deem suitable, but not less than three times a year.
 - d. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall report its activities to the Church Council at least quarterly.
 - e. The Pastoral Relations Committee is charged with the following functions:
 - i. To understand the roles of ministry
 - ii. To provide an additional communication link between the Congregation and the Pastor
 - iii. To help the Church and the Pastor deal with conflict
 - iv. To counsel with the Pastor regarding continuing education
 - v. To monitor the evaluation process for fairness
 - vi. To review and make recommendations for the compensation for the Pastor annually
 - vii. To assist in start-up procedures
 - viii. To assist in termination procedures
 - ix. To understand and facilitate the roles of ministry of the Pastor and members of The United Church
 - x. To counsel and assist in initiation, continuation or termination of a Pastor's service to The United Church
 - xi. To provide an additional confidential communication and promote harmony between committees, Pastor, and members of The United Church
 - xii. To partner with the Personnel Committee in the annual performance assessment process of the Pastor and the Pastor's continuing education, including setting and regularly reviewing the Pastor's annual pastoral and professional development goals
3. Personnel Committee
 - a. The Personnel Committee shall consist of three members, one member elected annually for a three-year term.
 - b. The functions of the Personnel Committee are to:

- i. Provide current job descriptions for all church staff
 - ii. Manage hiring and termination of church staff in coordination with Church Council
 - iii. Provide for and oversee annual performance assessments of all staff members
 - iv. Administer salaries, benefits, pastoral covenants, and personnel policies
 - v. Recommend staff salaries, wages, and benefits to the Church Council for approval
 - vi. Handle any other personnel issues that may arise
 - c. The Personnel Committee shall elect a Chairperson at their first meeting of each year. The Chair shall provide a report to the Clerk after each meeting of the Personnel Committee and shall be the representative to the Church Council when the Moderator requests his/her attendance.
 - d. The Personnel Committee shall provide a supply list for the Pulpit in the absence of the Pastor, and, when a vacancy occurs, shall provide a supply list for the Pulpit until a new Pastor has been installed.
- 4. Talent Team
 - a. The Talent Team shall consist of three members, one member elected annually for a three-year term.
 - a. The Talent Team shall elect a Chairperson at their first meeting of each year. The Chair shall provide a report to the Clerk after each meeting of the Talent Team and shall be the representative to the Church Council when the Moderator requests his/her attendance.
 - b. The Talent Team shall consider the giftedness, effectiveness, and availability of possible candidates for offices and committees and nominate at least one able and willing United Church member for each office to be vacant at the Annual Budget Proposal/Election Meeting of the Church held on the second Sunday in November.
 - a. The list of nominations will be posted at least two weeks before the Annual Budget Proposal/Election Meeting.
 - b. The Talent Team shall work with the Church Council to ensure proper term rotation.
 - c. The Talent Team shall assist the Moderator and/or the Church Council in finding members for such committees or unexpired officer terms as may be requested.
 - d. The Talent Team shall regularly assist all members of the congregation in identifying their spiritual gifts and passions for ministry and finding ways to pursue those passions.
 - e. The Talent Team shall report its activities to the Church Council at least quarterly.
- 5. Called to Care Team
 - a. Called to Care Caregivers shall assist the Pastor in providing trained lay pastoral visitation to Church members, including but not limited to those who are homebound, nursing homebound, coping with chronic illness, grieving, dealing with life changes, isolated, or lonely.

ARTICLE VII — CHURCH COUNCIL OFFICERS

1. Pastor

- a. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at a meeting called for that purpose.
- b. The Pastor shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the Church with the assistance of the Church Council. He or she, together with other members of the Church, shall seek to enlist folk as followers of Christ. He/she shall preach the Gospel, administer the ordinances, and have under his or her care all services of public worship. In cooperation with the boards, officers, committees, and members, he/she shall administer the activities of the Church. He/she shall be an *ex officio* member of every board, committee, and group in the United Church.
- c. An outside pastor shall not conduct any religious service, or any part of a religious service, in the United Church, or on its premises, unless he/she has been invited to do so by the resident Pastor or by a majority vote of the Church Council.
- d. When a vacancy occurs in the Pastorate, a Pastoral Search Committee of seven members shall be elected by the Church Council from a list of at least fourteen names which have been nominated by the Church Council. This Committee shall consist of one of the three members of Personnel plus six other members as described: one person selected from two nominated by Congregational Relationships Chair, one person selected from two nominated by Talent Team Chair, one person selected from two nominated by Community Outreach Chair, two at-large members as nominated by the Church Council as a whole, and one young person as nominated by the Church Council as a whole. Of these seven, there cannot be more than four members of the same gender. The Pastoral Search Committee shall consider such candidates as are recommended by the Mid-American Baptist Churches Region of the American Baptist Churches and the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ who are qualified by training, experience, and Christian character to be Pastor of this Church. The Pastoral Search Committee shall recommend only one candidate for the Pastorate of this Church. Any candidate for Pastor of this Church must be willing and able to achieve dual standing of ordination in the American Baptist Churches, USA and the United Church of Christ. An additional recommendation shall be made only if the previous recommendation fails to receive the required two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting called for that purpose.
- e. The term of the Pastor shall be indefinite, but may be terminated by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at a meeting that has been called for that purpose by the Church Council. Following such action by the Church, the Pastorate shall be terminated within sixty days, or earlier if mutually agreed.
- f. This office may be terminated by the Pastor after a notice of thirty days has been given.

2. Moderator

- a. The Moderator shall preside at the Annual Meeting, the Annual Budget Proposal/Election Meeting, and Church Council meetings.

- b. The Moderator is an *ex officio* member of each committee or board of the Church.
 - c. The Moderator shall see that the necessary committees are appointed for the work of the Church. This duty may be delegated to the Church Council or Talent Team.
 - d. The Moderator shall convene such special Church Council meetings as are deemed necessary.
 - e. The Moderator shall appoint necessary committees to fulfill the Church's mission.
 - f. The Moderator shall oversee the Church Council in fulfilling its duties, including but not limited to setting and reaching goals related to the Church's health, vitality, growth, and spiritual life.
2. The Clerk
- a. The Clerk shall keep on file all official Church communications and written reports presented at any congregational Business Meeting or Church Council Meeting.
 - b. The Clerk shall give the required notice of meetings of the Congregation or Church Council Meetings.
 - c. The Clerk shall be prepared to report such information to any Church Council or Congregational Business Meeting.
 - d. The Clerk shall be a member of the Church Council.
 - e. The Church Council shall approve requests for membership and dismissal from membership.
 - (1) The Clerk shall coordinate with the Church Office for the proper maintenance of Church membership records.
3. The Treasurer
- a. The Treasurer shall make a record of all income deposited to the account of the Treasurer by the Financial Secretary and of the expenditures.
 - b. The Treasurer shall disburse money upon the orders of the Church Council.
 - c. The Treasurer shall make a report at each regular meeting of the Church Council and at the Annual Meetings of the Church.
 - d. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Church Council.
4. The Financial Secretary
- a. The Financial Secretary shall be fully bonded at the expense of the Church.
 - b. The Financial Secretary shall receive all moneys of the Church, keep an accurate record of all receipts, and deposit them in the appropriate bank account as directed by the Church Council or Treasurer.
 - c. The Financial Secretary shall make a report at each regular meeting of the Church Council and at the Annual Meetings of the Church.
 - d. The Financial Secretary shall be *an ex officio* member of the Church Council.
5. Property Coordinator
- a. The Property Coordinator shall be entrusted with the care, custody, and security of the property of the Church.
 - b. The duties of the Property Coordinator include:
 - (1) Maintain the physical buildings and grounds of the Church
 - (2) Assemble volunteers and/or staff to assist in maintenance, training, and daily upkeep of the infrastructure of the Church, including HVAC and A/V systems
 - (3) Recommend to Church Council any replacements or upgrades of Church

- facilities to maintain or enhance the Church's mission
 - (4) Maintain, recommend and publish any Church Building Use policies to Church Council
 - (5) Maintain a use calendar of Church buildings with the assistance of the Church staff
 - (6) Report and recommend any requests for use of Church facilities by members, non-members and community organizations to the Church Council
 - c. The Property Coordinator and/or Church Council shall have no authority to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer Church property without a specific vote by the Church.
- 6. Congregational Relationships Coordinator
 - a. The Congregational Relationships Coordinator shall cooperate with the Pastor in administering the spiritual interests of the Church and community.
 - b. The Congregational Relationships Coordinator shall assist in the preparation and the administration of the Ordinances, and in caring for the poor, the sick, aged, and sorrowing, the indifferent, and the stranger.
 - c. The Congregational Relationships Coordinator duties include:
 - (1) Provide for the worship life of the Church, including:
 - 1. Provide for the preparation of communion and all related elements, including communion servers
 - 2. Coordinate sign-ups for lay leaders, ushers, and greeters
 - 3. Coordinate with Pastor for special worship services and service elements, including baptisms, dedications, weddings, and funerals
 - 4. Coordinate A/V media specialists for regular and special services
 - (2) Provide for opportunities of spiritual growth and formation for all members of the Church, including but not limited to the prayer chain, special seasonal or topical worship services, and special seasonal or topical faith formation small groups
 - (3) Provide for opportunities that nurture the Christian fellowship of the Church
- 7. Christian Education Coordinator
 - a. The Christian Education Coordinator shall have under their supervision the full program of Christian Education in the Church.
 - b. The Christian Education Coordinator duties include:
 - (1) Advise the Youth Group and provide for assistants
 - (2) Oversee Confirmation and provide for assistants
 - (3) Coordinate Bible Study group(s)
 - (4) Provide for a liaison to the Mapleton Community Vacation Bible School and/or provide for summer children's Christian Education for the Church as deemed appropriate.
- 8. Community Outreach Coordinator
 - a. The Community Outreach Coordinator is charged to coordinate and facilitate the greater mission of the Church.
 - b. The Community Outreach Coordinator duties include:
 - (1) Promote Christian missions, including projects from the American

Baptist Churches, USA and the United Church of Christ denominations and other mission projects as determined by the Church and Church Council

- (2) Create, facilitate, and coordinate events to promote the Church's mission in the Maple River community, including mission fundraising, meals, educational events, forums, etc., seeking the help of the Talent Team in focusing on congregants' passions
 - (3) Assemble ministry teams to promote and enjoy the fellowship of our Maple River community
 - (4) Promote The United Church of Mapleton in the Maple River community and develop new opportunities to promote church membership
- c. The Community Outreach Coordinator shall serve as the liaison and point of contact with Church Council for the Women's Fellowship and any other similarly defined church groups whose purpose aligns with the areas of responsibility of the Community Outreach Coordinator.

The Community Outreach Coordinator shall oversee, in coordination with the Pastor and with the approval of the Pastor and another Church Council member for any disbursement, the United Church Assistance Fund to provide financial and referral assistance to those in need.

ARTICLE VIII — MEETINGS

1. **The Annual Meeting** - The Annual Meeting of the United Church shall be held no later than the third week following the last Sunday of December, on a date set by the Official Board. Notice of the Annual Meeting shall be made two weeks prior to the meeting, indicating the nature of the business to be transacted.

2. **The Annual Budget Proposal/Election Meeting** -The Annual Meeting of the United Church shall be held on the second Sunday of November for the purpose of reviewing and adopting the proposed budget for the New Year, to elect officers for the New Year, and to consider any other items of business which may be brought up at the meeting. Notice of the Annual Meeting shall be made two weeks prior to the meeting, indicating the nature of the business to be transacted.

3. **Nominations** - Nominations may be made from the floor in addition to any brought in by the Talent Team Committee.

4. **Special Meetings** - Special meetings may be called by the Pastor or by any Board of the United Church, provided notice has been given two weeks in advance, indicating the nature of the business to be transacted.

5. **Qualified Voters** - All United Church members shall be qualified voters.

6. **A Quorum** - A quorum shall consist of thirty members.

7. **Rules of Order** - The rules of order shall be those provided by Robert's Rules of Order, the revised edition.

ARTICLE IX — CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

1. Proposals for a constitutional amendment may be initiated by any United Church member. Such proposals may be accepted for consideration by a majority vote of any congregational business meeting or by a majority vote of the Official Board.

2. Those proposals accepted for consideration can be ratified by two thirds of the members present and voting at a Congregational Business Meeting. Notice of such a meeting and the proposed amendment must be published to the United Church members no less than sixty days in advance of the meeting.