

**The Constitution of
The First Union Church of Cedarville, Michigan**
Revised July 2021

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this church shall be the First Union Church of Cedarville, Michigan.

ARTICLE II. OBJECT

The object of our existence as a body shall be for the assembling of ourselves and others together for the public worship of God the Father to the praise of Jesus Christ, His Son and our Savior, the salvation of the lost, the edification of believers, and the propagation throughout the world of the Gospel as set forth in God's Word (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19-20).

ARTICLE III. COVENANT

Affirming our membership in the Holy Church throughout all the world and our fellowship in this congregation with those who share like precious faith, we renew our vows of fidelity to our Lord Jesus Christ and solemnly covenant and promise:

- That we will walk together in brotherly love as is becoming for members of a Christian Church.
- That we will exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.
- That we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.
- That we will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and holy example to win our kindred and acquaintances to the Savior, to holiness and eternal life.

ARTICLE IV. FAITH ARTICLES

1. Belief in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ His Son and our Savior and in regeneration of the believer by the Holy Spirit.
2. Belief in the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice.
3. Belief that repenting one's sins and asking forgiveness from our Heavenly Father, is essential to any who would receive Jesus as Savior.
4. Belief that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him has everlasting life.

5. Belief that all persons shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and that all who are redeemed will be raised to everlasting life and blessedness in Heaven (II Corinthians 5:10), and the unsaved will be raised to everlasting punishment in hell (Revelation 20: 11-15).

In accepting and subscribing to the above Articles of Faith we by no means set aside or undervalue any Scriptures of the Old or New Testaments, but believe all to be God's own written Word, given to us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The knowledge and belief of the truth as stated in our Articles of Faith is necessary to sound doctrine and requisite Christian fellowship. In addition to accepting and subscribing to these Articles of Faith, we agree to obey the rules of the Church, to contribute to its support according to ability, attend services of the Church and to promote its peace, purity and welfare as long as we are members.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

Persons desirous of uniting with First Union Church shall profess their faith as expressed in the Articles of Faith set out in Article IV of this Constitution, and they shall meet and be recommended by the Elders for membership. Such persons as are so recommended shall be publicly received into the Church at such regular service as the Pastor shall arrange.

The First Union Church of Cedarville has two categories of membership. They are regular membership and associate membership.

A **Regular Member** is an individual who professes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, agrees with our Articles of Faith, has been baptized, is living a Christian life, regularly participates in the life of First Union Church, and regularly contributes to the maintenance of the church. Regular members who have attained at least 18 years of age are able to hold office in the church and vote at congregational meetings.

An **Associate Member** is an individual who considers First Union their church but, for various reasons, cannot or does not attend services regularly or participate regularly in the life of the church. They profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, agree with our Articles of Faith, have been baptized, and are living a Christian life. Associate members are not able to hold office in the church or vote at congregational meetings. They may request Regular Membership status by notification to the board of elders.

Letter of Transfer

Upon the approval of the Elders, persons who wish to unite with the Church, who are members of another protestant church, may be received into the church upon the presentation of a letter of dismissal or transfer from the church of which they are a member, showing that they are in good and regular standing in said church; and, by their agreement with Articles of Faith of this Church. Such members may join as either a regular member or associate member.

A member of the Church desiring to be released from membership or wishing to transfer their membership to another church shall make application to the Elders as to their desire. If the party is in good and regular standing in the Church, the Elders may instruct the

Secretary or Membership Coordinator to remove the name of said party from the membership roll, and/or issue a letter of dismissal or transfer to another named church.

The Elders shall review the membership list on a regular basis. A member who has moved from the area and does not return seasonally, whose address has long been unknown, or who for a period of two years has not attended the Church's worship or contributed to its support, may be removed from the regular membership roll and placed on the associate membership roll. Individuals on the associate roll may periodically be asked if they wish to retain their membership at First Union Church. The Elders shall encourage associate members to become more active in their walk with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Elders may recommend at the annual congregational meeting during the yearly membership report, that certain individuals be changed in status or dropped from the membership rolls due to prolonged inactivity.

ARTICLE VI. CONDUCT

We shall require of each other in our daily walk and conversation loyal obedience to all those moral precepts laid down in the word of God so plainly as to need no definition.

We also assert our conviction of proportionate giving as laid down in Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter 16, Verse 2.

ARTICLE VII. GOVERNMENT

The government shall be vested in the body of believers constituting the membership of this church, exercised at regular or special meeting, or through officers elected, or other duly constituted agencies, and according to these rules and regulations as amended from time to time; and in all matters pertaining to our Church as a Corporation organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Michigan, we shall be governed by the laws of the State of Michigan in such case made and provided.

ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS

1. There shall be one (1) meeting held annually by the congregation, on the last Sunday of August each year for the receiving of annual reports, and the annual audit, the election of officers and transaction of general business. A minimum of twelve (12) members present at any such meeting shall constitute a quorum. The church will operate under a fiscal year basis, September 1 to August 30.
2. All congregational meetings, special meetings and Official board meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of order unless otherwise provided in the Constitution.
3. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Pastor, the President of the Official Board, a majority of the Official board, or by any twelve (12) members. Notice of such meeting including a statement of the purpose for which the meeting is called must be given at two (2) regular church services preceding the day

appointed for the meeting; a minimum of twelve (12) members present at any such meeting shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE IX. BOARD MEMBERS

1. The elected board of the congregation shall be made up of the following when qualified candidates are available:

The Pastor (voice but no vote)
The Deacons, up to four (4) in number
The Elders, up to four (4) in number
The Christian Education Committee Representative
The Women's Association of First Union Church Representative

2. From this group shall be chosen officers for the board.
3. The Pastor. The Pastor shall be approved by two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting duly called for that purpose. No person shall be eligible for election to the pastorate of the Church until he shall signify with his signature his acceptance of the Articles of Faith and of our Constitution. The Pastor, shall by virtue of his office, facilitate all the functions of the Church' ministry in accordance with the written contract between the Pastor and the Board. The Pastor may be dismissed by a two-third vote of the members present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering the matter of dismissal in accordance with the written contract between the Pastor and the Board.
4. The Deacons. Their qualifications for office shall be as given in Paul's First Epistle to Timothy, Chapter 3, Verses 8-13. There may be up to four (4) in official service, elected for four (4) year terms each, each having one vote on board matters. The term of office is ideally arranged so that there will be one term expiring each year. It shall be the duty of the Deacons to have oversight of the temporal affairs of the Church, to keep the property in good condition, to make whatever repairs, alterations or additions as may be considered necessary; but undertaking no large non-emergency expenditures without the consent of the members of the congregation.
5. The Elders. Their qualifications for office shall be as given in Paul's First Epistle to Timothy, Chapter 3, verses 1-7. Among the church's qualified elders, there may be up to four (4) in official board service, elected for four (4) year terms, each having one vote on board matters. The term of office is ideally arranged so that there will be one term expiring each year. It shall be their duty to assist the Pastor in the shepherding of the Church. General further duties shall be to facilitate Bible study, visit the sick, prepare and serve the elements of the Lord's Supper, exercise a special Christian care and watchfulness over the members of the congregation and all functions of the church, and to cooperate with and assist the Pastor in his duties.

6. Election of Board Members shall be at the annual meeting of the congregation. Nominations will be received during the month of July. Voting may be done by secret ballot. Only regular members may vote.
7. All of the Board members shall be residents of the communities served by the Church and shall be members of the Church and in good and regular standing.
8. Resignations of Board members shall be acted upon by the elders who may nominate a replacement for the balance of the vacated term. Nominations are confirmed by the congregation.
9. In the interest of respite and shared burdens, all who serve on the official board may exercise a time of inactivity. A year's respite between terms is generally encouraged and, in some cases, may be recommended by the pastor and elders.

ARTICLE X. OFFICIAL BOARD

1. The Official Board of the congregation shall be made up of the congregationally elected positions identified in Article IX, section 1.
2. The Official Board shall exercise executive authority and supervision over the entire work of the congregation on both spiritual and business sides.
3. The Official Board shall, at the next regularly scheduled meeting, after the annual meeting, meet and determine the following positions from its own members.
 - a. The President shall hold office for one year and/or until a successor is elected. He/She shall preside at meetings of the Board and the meetings of the congregation and shall be from among the elected board officers.
 - b. Vice President, shall hold office for one year and/or until a successor is elected. The Vice President shall fulfill the duties of the President during an absence.
 - c. The Secretary shall hold office for one year and/or until a successor is elected. The Secretary shall keep a record of all Church Board meetings. It shall be the Secretary's duty to take charge of the Church Board records, to preserve a correct record of the business transactions of the Church Board and other items of interest that occur in its history, to attend to correspondence of the Church Board, and to perform such further duties as are entrusted to the Secretary by the Church Board.
 - d. The Treasurer shall hold office for one year and/or until a successor is elected. The Treasurer will oversee the activities of the bookkeeper. The Treasurer and/or bookkeeper will give the church's financial status to the church board at its regularly scheduled meetings. The Treasurer participates in the budget committee and prepares an annual budget for the congregation. The Treasurer and/or bookkeeper will give the church's

financial status to the congregation at the annual meeting. The board treasurer may or may not be an official board member. In such case he or she would not be a voting member of the board. Should the treasurer elected also be a board member, he or she would have one vote.

4. The Christian Education Committee Representative and the Representative of the Women's Association of First Union Church shall be nominated annually by each respective organization at the regular meeting immediately preceding the annual August meeting of the Church. Each organization's representative shall have one vote.
5. Meetings of the Official Board shall be held at regular monthly intervals and at the call of the President. Six members of the Official Board shall constitute a quorum. All Board meetings are open to the members of the Church.
6. No person shall hold more than one position on the Official Board of the Church.

ARTICLE XI. DISCIPLINE

The discipline of the congregation shall be exercised by the Official Board according to the following principles (Matthew 18:15-17):

1. Suspension: In any case of offense the offender will be summoned before the Pastor and the Elders and dealt with according to the Word of God; and if, after full inquiry and prayer and counsel together, the offender does not repent and ask God for forgiveness the said committee may suspend him or her from the privileges of membership. Any such member may appeal to the Official Board.
2. If the offense be such as calls for removal from the membership of the Church, or if the offender refuses to comply with the provisions of the Word of God in such case, the matter may be brought before the Official board and the said Board, by a two-third vote, shall have the power to strike the offender's name from the roll of membership of the Church. The offender may appeal to the congregational membership.

ARTICLE XII. ORDINATION OF LAYMEN

As it has happened before and may happen again that consecrated laymen have been raised up among us who have talent to preach. Such men may be ordained to preach and administer the ordinances by a two-third vote of the membership at any regular or special meeting, providing the Official Board is unanimous in their conviction that the candidate has the suitable gifts, and provided that their judgment is based upon his actual experiential success rather than upon their hopes of what he may do, and provided that his experience shall have covered a period of at least one (1) year of public teaching.

ARTICLE XIII. CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

The members of this Church, meeting together at a duly constituted congregational meeting, may make any changes they see fit in this Constitution providing written notice is given to the members at least 30 days previous to the meeting held for that purpose and such changes may be made only by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at the meeting.

ARTICLE XIV. CHURCH YEAR

The financial affairs of the church shall be on a fiscal year basis beginning September 1 and ending August 31 each year.

ARTICLE XV. DISSOLUTION

In the event that this church (association) and its membership should be dissolved, the Board of Directors shall donate, after paying or providing for payments of all liabilities of the church (association), to such organization, or organizations within Clark Township. These organizations or organization within Clark Township and which operate exclusively for charitable and or educational purposes and shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization under Article c (3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or its equivalent then in effect), and as the Board of Directors of the First Union Church determines can best achieve the purposes of the Church. If there is no such organization in existence, the assets shall be distributed to Clark Township, Mackinac County, Michigan.

This Constitution adopted the 11th day of July in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-one, becomes this day effective and supersedes all former Constitutions and other governing articles heretofore in force and effect.

Michael Davis
President of the Church Board