

**Constitution and By-Laws
Of
Grace United Church of Christ
100 Fourth Street
Hanover, Pennsylvania**

**Article I
Name**

The name of this Church shall be Grace United Church of Christ, at the corner of Fourth and North Franklin Streets, Hanover, Pennsylvania, successor to Grace Evangelical and Reformed Church, and to Grace Reformed Church.

**Article II
Purpose, Affiliation, Confession & Meetings**

Section 1. Purpose

It shall be the purpose of this organization to establish in its community a Christian congregation for worship, to promote the Christian life and to advance the Kingdom of God by all available means, both at home and around the world.

Section 2. Affiliation

This congregation (Grace United Church of Christ) shall be a covenant member of the United Church of Christ and shall be governed by the constitution, laws, and rules of this church.

Section 3. Doctrine

The Articles of Faith of the congregation shall be those of the United Church of Christ, in which we acknowledge Jesus Christ as the soul head of the church and accept the Old and New Testament as the work of God and the ultimate rule of Christian faith and practice.

Section 4. Meetings

The Congregation will have an Annual Meeting, and other such meetings as required.

Section 5. Seal

The Congregation being duly incorporated under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania, having an appropriate seal bearing the title, and date of incorporation, the same to be affixed to all official documents as evidence of official authority.

**Article III
Membership**

Section 1.

All baptized persons are members of the Church Universal.

Section 2.

Persons who have been duly received into the congregation by Confirmation, Letter of Transfer or Profession of Faith will be covenantal members of Grace United Church of Christ.

Article III Continued

Section 3.

Grace United Church of Christ has a Safe Church Policy and a Membership Policy in place, in which members and non-members must adhere to. Both Policies are available to be viewed in the Church Office. The Pastor will review both with all of its perspective new members.

Article IV Officers

Section 1. Officers

The officers of Grace United Church of Christ shall be the Minister, Consistory and Trustees. The duties shall be specified in Article V, VI and VIII.

Section 2. Nominating

The Nominating Committee for Consistory members is made up of two members of Consistory and one member of the Congregation. The Nominating Committee will accept names offered from the congregation and the Pastor. The Committee will report back to Consistory and the nominees will be announced three weeks in advance of the Annual Meeting.

Article V The Consistory

Section 1.

Grace United Church of Christ will have a Consistory. The business of the church will be handled by the Consistory.

Section 2. Elections

Consistory members shall be elected by the majority of the votes at the Annual Meeting. Members shall be elected for a term of three years. Any elected member can be elected for an additional three-year term, but such member cannot be re-elected after the second three-year term for at least the period of three years.

Section 3.

The Consistory is composed of a minister and 9 members. A representative of our Youth may participate. It shall have jurisdiction and oversight of the congregation and all of its organizations. Five members will constitute a quorum. It shall be organized as provided for in the By-laws, Article VI.

The balance between age, gender AND service attendees shall be considered. Only one person per immediate family can serve at one time. No employee of Grace United Church of Christ shall be a voting member or officer of Consistory.

Section 4 Elders, Deacons and Spiritual Council

An Elder is a member of the church and is chosen, ordained and installed by the congregation to assist and support the Pastor in the spiritual affairs of the church. All Deacons are members of Consistory and installed by the congregation with the expectation that each one will serve on a committee of the Consistory for the church. The expectation for both Elders and Deacons is that they will attend a minimum of 10 meetings out of 12.

Article V continued

Section 5 Spiritual Council

The Spiritual Council shall consist of the Pastor and active Elders of the congregation that are active in the spiritual needs of the church. Some of their responsibilities are outlined in the Membership Policy and as other needs arise in the church and community where a spiritual council might be helpful.

Section 6 Trustees

Grace United Church of Christ shall have three Trustees who shall be appointed by the President of Consistory and the Pastor with at least two being from Consistory. The Trustees shall have authority, along with those on the Property Committee, to do repairs to the church property up to \$5,000.00 without congregational approval. Any repair costing \$3,000 or more, the Congregation and Consistory will be made aware of in a timely manner.

Section 7. Vacancies

In case of a vacancy occurring before the expiration of a term, the then current members of Consistory shall appoint a member of the congregation to fulfill the position.

The person fulfilling the term needs to have a majority vote of the Consistory.

Section 8. Organization of Consistory

The Consistory shall organize itself. All positions need a majority vote of the Consistory. A president, vice president, secretary, assistant secretary, treasurer, assistant treasurer, Trustees, and each other office as may be found necessary shall be elected for a term of one year. The President of the Consistory of Grace United Church of Christ shall be a lay person rather than a member of the clergy. The treasurer may be elected from outside of consistory and may or may not be a member of the congregation.

Section 9.

The Consistory shall transact the business of the church, make provisions for the preparation and assembly of the budget for the congregation. The budget will include benevolent purposes, distribution of funds, auditing the financial accounts and making complete provision for the adequate support of the staff of employees. The Consistory shall keep accurate records of its proceedings and be the custodian of all congregational records. The Consistory shall direct the Pastor to keep a complete record of baptisms, confirmations, reception of new members, transfers, erasure of names, suspensions, marriages and deaths. All records shall be the property of the congregation. Upon dissolution of the congregation, its records shall become the property of the Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ. The Consistory and the Pastor shall appoint such committees as it may find necessary to accomplish its work.

Section 10. Altar Guild

The Altar Guild is responsible for the keeping the oil candles filled on the Altar in the Sanctuary; care and changing of the Paraments, preparation of the elements for Communion and Altar decorations.

Section 11. Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee is established by Consistory. The committee will consist of two Consistory members and two congregation members. Employees, and their family members, will not be chosen to serve on this committee. This committee will handle performance reviews, sign payroll time sheets bi-weekly and other human resource responsibilities.

Section 12. Meetings

The Consistory shall hold at least 10 regular meetings during each year at a place and time convenient to the members for the transaction of such business as may properly come before it. Special meetings are subject to the call of the President or the Pastor. Proper notice of special meetings shall be given to all members.

Article VI

Duties of Officers

Officers are elected by Consistory during the reorganization meeting in February of each year.

Section 1. President

It is the duty of the President to see that all meetings of the Consistory are regularly called by the secretary, to open and conduct the meetings and to see to the executions of all resolutions. The President shall remind the Pastor to announce all regular and special meetings of the congregation on two successive Sundays, or in case it is so decided by Consistory, instruct the secretary to send a call to such meetings to every member by e-mail and/or mail. The President shall with the secretary, have the minutes approved by the majority of the Consistory. The President and/or Vice President is also empowered, with the Treasurer, to sign all contracts, loans, vouchers and deeds in the name of Grace United Church of Christ.

Section 2. Vice President

The Vice President shall preside at all meetings where the President is not present and also when business pertaining to the president and administration is before the congregation. The Vice President shall assist the President as needed.

Section 3. Secretary

The Secretary and/or Assistant Secretary shall keep a record of all transactions at the meetings of the congregation and of the Consistory. The Secretary shall issue the call to all regular and special meetings at the request of the President and attend to all correspondence. They shall with the President sign all contracts.

Section 4. Treasurer

The Treasurer and/or Assistant treasurer shall be responsible for all monies for congregational support. The Treasurer shall provide a monthly report to the Consistory and annual reports to the congregation after recording all monies received and all expenditures. The Treasurer has responsibility, with the President, to review investments with the Financial Advisors. The Treasurer is empowered, with the President, to sign all contracts, loans, vouchers and deeds.

Section 5. President & Pastor

The President and the Pastor are ex-officio members of all committees of the congregation and Consistory.

Article VII

Meetings

Section 1. Congregational Meeting

Grace United Church of Christ shall have an **Annual Meeting** that will be announced 2-3 weeks in advance of the actual date. The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to approve the yearly budget and vote on the nominated slate of persons for Consistory. And any other business as deemed necessary. The Annual Meeting will be the third Sunday of November each year. No quorum of membership is required; majority will be considered an affirming vote. Any other Congregational Meeting will be called by Consistory. These meetings will be announced 2-3 weeks in advance with the sole exception of keeping the congregation informed about, and get approval by vote, of any repairs and expenditures that exceed \$3,000.00 - \$5,000.00. When the cost is a Contract price the total dollar amount cannot fluctuate more than 3-5% of the original estimate. Any such meeting will be announced by various forms of communication.

Any other **Congregational Meetings** will be called by Consistory. These meetings will be announced 2-3 weeks ahead with the sole purpose of keeping the Congregation informed about, and to get approval by vote, of any repairs and expenditures that exceed \$3,000.00 - \$5,000.00. When the cost is a Contract price the total dollar amount cannot fluctuate more than 3-5% of the original estimate.

Article VIII

Pastor

Section 1. Term of Office

The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by a vote of the Congregation. In order to terminate this relationship due notice will be given as outlined in the Pastoral Call Agreement/Contract.

Section 2. Duties of the Pastor

It shall be the duty of the Pastor to set a good example to the Consistory and Congregation. The Pastor shall conduct the services on Sundays, Holidays and such other days as the congregation may desire. The Pastor will direct the work of religious education, administer the Sacraments, visit the sick, comfort the distressed, and perform all such duties as belonging to the pastor's office according to the Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ. The Pastor shall keep a record of all services performed and make a report for the Annual Meeting of their work to the Congregation.

Section 3. Rights of the Pastor

The Pastor is an ex-officio member of the Consistory and all organizations within the church. The Pastor will perform all religious ceremonies in the church. The only exception to this will be if the Pastor is away and approves another minister performing a ceremony. To invite a speaker either during the temporary absence of the pastor, or for a special occasion, the consent of the Pastor is necessary. The Pastor's salary shall be paid bi-weekly and be based on the guidelines of Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Article VIII

Additions and alterations to the By-Laws may be proposed to Consistory. The Consistory shall consider the proposal and if approved the proposal will go to a Congregational Meeting for a vote. Majority vote will constitute an approval.

UPDATED/REVISED - 5/21/2025