

CONSTITUTION

Of

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

Article I. NAME

The name of this church shall be St. Paul's United Church of Christ, located at 300 West First Street, Birdsboro, Pennsylvania. The church office is located in the Christian Education Building at 235 West Second Street, Birdsboro, Pennsylvania.

Article II. PURPOSE

We are a welcoming, Christ centered community, called to embody, nurture, and share God's Loving Light, both within St. Paul's and our wider community.

Article III. POLITY

1. This church shall be part of the United Church of Christ and it shall sustain its relationship to the United Church of Christ as described in those portions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ adopted July 4, 1961, and as subsequently amended, relating to local churches.
2. The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs; it is, subject; however, to the laws of the State of Pennsylvania relating to corporations not-for-profit or ecclesiastical corporations.

Article IV. FAITH

1. This church acknowledges as its sole head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior and Lord of all creation. It acknowledges as brothers and sisters in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Holy Bible as the inspired and infallible word of God, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper His-God's creative and redemptive work in the world. It claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds (such as the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed) and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own under the guidance of Scripture and the Holy Spirit. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, it recognizes two Sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

“Statement of Faith”

We believe in you, O God, the Eternal Spirit, Father-God of our Lord-Savior Jesus Christ and our FatherGod, and to His-your deeds we testify:

~~He-You~~ calls the worlds into being,
creates ~~man~~persons in ~~His~~your own image
and sets before ~~him~~each one the ways of life and death.
~~He~~You seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.
~~He~~You judges ~~men~~people and nations by ~~His~~your righteous will declared through the prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen ~~Lord~~Savior,
~~He~~has you have come to us and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to ~~Himself~~yourself.
~~He~~ascended into Heaven and will return again in glory.—

~~He~~You bestows upon us His Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the ~~C~~church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

~~He~~You calls us into ~~His~~your Church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be ~~His~~your servants in the service of ~~men~~others,
to proclaim the Gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil,
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at ~~H~~his table,
to join ~~H~~him in ~~H~~his passion and victory.

~~He~~You promises to all who trust ~~Him~~you
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
~~His~~your presence in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in ~~His~~kingdom your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto ~~Him~~you. Amen.

Article V. MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership into the life and ministry of this church is understood as a sacred covenant established between an individual, congregation, and God for the expressed purpose of entering into committed Christian community for the furtherance of God's mission and work within this world and one's personal life.
2. Membership in this church shall be open to any person who has been baptized into Christ and has made a public confession of faith, while desiring to further grow in discipleship to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.
3. To grow in Christian discipleship and fulfillment of their covenantal promises, members shall pledge themselves to strive to follow in the way of Jesus: regularly participateing in corporate worship, daily prayer, and the reading of Holy Scripture; ~~to strive to live the Christian life;~~ to shareing in the life and work of theis congregation as it lives out its call to be Christ's body; ~~to~~generously contributeing ~~their~~tithes, time, talents and offerings toward ~~its~~this congregation's local and wider ministries and mission; proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed that others might know of God's redeeming works and be saved

unto Christ's Body; and ~~to~~ working for justice and peace in ~~our~~ this world ~~through God's~~
grace as ambassadors of the living God.

4. Any member may, on his or her request, be granted a letter of transfer to another congregation or may be dismissed with a certificate of church membership, so long as the member is in good standing of their covenantal vows at the time of their request.
5. All changes to membership shall be approved by Consistory and be in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and standing policies of the church.

Article VI. INCORPORATION

1. The church may in its corporate name sue or be sued, acquire by purchase, gift, devise, bequest or otherwise, and own, hold, invest, reinvest or dispose of property both real and personal for such work as the church may undertake and may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer and convey such property for the general purpose of the church; it may receive and hold in trust both real and personal property and invest and reinvest the same and make any contracts for promoting the objectives and purposes of the church.
2. Upon dissolution of the church, its assets and all property and interests of which it shall then be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after such dissolution, shall be transferred to the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The Bylaws of St. Paul's United Church of Christ

Article I. GOVERNANCE

1. The governing body of this church shall be the membership assembled in church meeting. Written public notice shall be given to the membership at least two weeks before the meeting is scheduled, indicating the time, place and purpose of the meeting. The vote of a majority of members present at the meeting shall be the action of the church. A quorum shall consist of 10% of the members. A complete and accurate account of all its proceedings shall be kept.
2. The membership shall elect: ~~Deacons, Elders, Secretary and Treasurer to 3 year terms to~~ Consistory Elders and Deacons to serve for 2 year terms, as well as individuals to serve 2 year terms as Treasurer and Secretary. Nominations shall be made for the offices by a nominating committee appointed by the Consistory President and shall consist of one Consistory member and at least one at-large member of the congregation. Public notice of the nominations shall be given from the pulpit, by bulletin or by other written correspondence to the membership at least two weeks before the meeting is scheduled. Other nominations, provided the persons to be nominated have given their prior consent, may be made at the meeting at which the election is held.

3. Two annual meetings shall be held each year. Unless otherwise noted, the first meeting shall be held on the third Sunday of January primarily to review and approve the budget and to present ministry updates. The second meeting shall be held on the first Sunday of June primarily for the election of Consistory members and ministry reports.
4. Special congregational meetings shall be called by the Consistory as may be deemed necessary. The Consistory shall also issue a call for a special meeting within three weeks after having received a written and signed request of one-tenth of the membership for such a meeting.

Article II. CONSISTORY

1. The Consistory shall be invested with fiduciary and spiritual responsibility for the ongoing governance of the church between meetings of the membership. It shall be composed of the Pastor(s), Consistory Secretary, Treasurer and up to a total of 12, but no less than 7, Elders and Deacons comprising the policy-making and leadership body. All ~~individuals-members~~ shall have voice, with only the duly elected Elders and Deacons having both voice and vote. -Consistory reserves the right to grant voice to additional individuals. One-half of the voting members of Consistory shall constitute a quorum.
2. The Consistory shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings. All acts and deliberations of the Consistory are subject to the will of and revision by the governing body.
3. The Consistory shall organize itself each year, electing a President and Vice-president, who shall serve as duly elected officers of the church, and it shall form such committees and task groups as needed to further the purposes of the church. These officers are subject to a term limit of 2 consecutive one year terms in the same office, with the President prohibited from succeeding the Vice-President.
 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Consistory and congregation.
 - ~~2.~~The Vice-President shall assist the President in the President's duties and shall preside at meetings in the absence of the President. The Vice-President will assume the role of the President at the end of the President's term(s), with the consent of the Consistory.
- ~~3.4.~~When elected, the President, Vice-president, Treasurer, Secretary, Elders and Deacons shall be publicly ordained and/or installed in their respective offices.
- ~~4.5.~~No Consistory person may serve more than ~~two-three~~ consecutive 2 year terms. A member is subject to re-nomination after remaining out of office for one year. The Consistory may appoint a member to fill an unexpired term. The ~~s~~Secretary and ~~€~~Treasurer are subject to re-nomination without term limits.
- ~~5.6.~~The Consistory shall ~~meet~~conduct business at least once every month. Special meetings are subject to the call of the President or Vice-president indicating to all Consistory

members the applicable the time, purpose and location ~~to all Consistory members of the meeting.~~

~~6.7.~~ The Consistory shall ~~elect~~ annually appoint delegates and alternates to represent the church at the meetings of the Association and the Conference and shall insure the payment of the expenses of the delegates to said meetings.

~~7.8.~~ The Consistory shall provide for the preparation of an annual budget for the church which shall be approved by the congregation, arrange for the promotion of Christian stewardship among the members, and shall manage the financial assets of the congregation. The Consistory may not borrow any money without the approval of the congregation.

~~8.9.~~ The Consistory shall provide ensure for adequate support for and supervision of the staff.

~~9. The Consistory shall oversee the Spiritual Council and act upon its recommendations. The Spiritual Council shall consist of the Pastor(s), Consistory President and three non-Consistory Elders elected to three-year terms by Consistory. The Elders may not serve more than two consecutive terms. The Spiritual Council is charged with the responsibility of providing for the spiritual oversight and encouragement of the congregation's members and visitors, and with providing recommendations of Christian discipline to the Consistory for those individuals who remain willfully negligent of their vows after repeated and consistent attempts of encouragement and support.~~

Article III. PASTORS & LICENSED & COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

1. Any Pastor serving this congregation shall have ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ, dual standing, or ordained ministerial partner standing in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. Any Licensed and/or Commissioned Minister shall have standing in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ and any policies of the local Association and/or the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference.
2. The authorization and discipline of Pastors and Licensed and Commissioned Ministers of this church shall be accomplished by the procedures of the United Church of Christ and carried out by the duly authorized bodies of the Association and/or the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference.
3. The Pastor(s) shall be elected by the membership at a duly called meeting of the congregation for an indefinite period of time in accordance with the procedures of the United Church of Christ, the Association, and the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference. In order to terminate the relationship, 90 days notice shall be given by either party in accordance with the procedures of the United Church of Christ, the Association, and the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference. The termination shall be by action of the Consistory, and notice of such termination shall be given by the Consistory President to the Conference Minister and to the Association for appropriate action, including seeking candidates to fill the vacancy and in securing interim and/or supply pastors.

4. When a vacancy in the pastoral office occurs, or when an additional Pastor is to be called, it shall be the responsibility of a Search Committee, appointed by the Consistory to seek a candidate. The Consistory shall appoint the chair of the Search Committee who will inform the Conference Minister and seek the guidance of the Conference Staff in the search and call process which shall be conducted according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ and any policies of the local Association and/or the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference.
5. Licensed Ministers shall be elected by the Consistory for renewable one- year terms in this congregation according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ and any policies of the local Association and/or the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference.
6. Commissioned Ministers shall be elected by the Consistory for specialized ministry in this congregation according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ and any policies of the local Association and/or the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference.
7. When a minister accepts a call to this church, the church and the Pastor- Elect shall join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of installation or recognition. A report of the service shall be signed by the proper officers of the Association and by the Conference Minister.
8. The Pastoral call shall contain the terms of the Pastoral relationship including the agreement of the church to participate in the Pension Fund of the United Church of Christ, the Minister's Health Insurance Program and other terms agreed upon between the Pastor-Elect and the committee. [\(The clergy compensation guidelines set forth by the Association and/or the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference shall set the basis for all discussions of clergy compensation agreements and future adjustments.\)](#) The Minister, the church, the Association and the Conference Minister shall each receive a copy of the call.

Article IV. AMENDMENTS

1. Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws may be made at any duly called church meeting by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present. Public announcement of the text of the proposed amendment(s) shall be made at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
2. A proposed amendment, to be considered, must be co-signed by ten members of the congregation.
3. This Constitution shall be reviewed by a Consistory approved committee in intervals of 5 years or less, after the adoption of said Constitution.

Article V. AUTHORITY

1. This Constitution having been duly adopted at a stated meeting of the congregation hereby supersedes all previously adopted Constitutions and Bylaws.