

CONSTITUTION
OF
ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF INDIANAPOLIS
(Amended October 1, 2023)

PART 1

NAME

The name of this church shall be ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF INDIANAPOLIS. (Adopted July 4, 1961)

PART 2

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 abroad.

AFFILIATION

This church shall be a part of the United Church of Christ and it shall sustain that relationship to the United Church of Christ described in those portions of the Constitution and By - Laws of the United Church of Christ, relating to local churches.

The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject, however, to the Laws of the State of Indiana relating to ecclesiastical corporations.

DOCTRINE

Faith -- This church acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of humankind. It acknowledges as brothers and sisters in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world. It claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds 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. 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 or Holy Communion.

One expression of this faith is:

"STATEMENT OF FAITH"

"We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his deeds we testify:

He calls the worlds into being,
creates man in his own image

and sets before him the ways of life and death.

He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

He judges humankind and nations by his righteous will
declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, of Nazareth, our crucified
and risen Lord, He has come to us
and shares our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the world to himself.
He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages,
tongues, and races.
He calls us into his Church
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be his servants in the service of men,
to proclaim the gospel to all the world
and resist the powers of evil,
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
to join him in his passion and victory.
He promises to all who trust him
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
his presence in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end.
Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen.

Covenant --We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and the Will of God. We purpose to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshiping God, and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As did our fathers, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

PART 3

MEMBERSHIP

All baptized persons who have indicated an intent to join the membership of the Church are eligible for membership of the Church.

Persons who have been duly received into its communion confirmation, by letter of transfer, or by profession of faith or renewal of their faith, and have not been excluded by the process of Christian discipline, shall be communicant members of this congregation and shall be entitled to all its rights and privileges.

Communicant members shall have the right to voice and vote in the congregation, and also to represent the congregation on the Council or other judicatories of the Church, as provided in the By-Laws.

MEETINGS

The congregation shall have an Annual Meeting and such other meetings as provided for in the By-Laws.

QUORUM

20% of communicant members shall constitute a quorum.

PART 4

COUNCIL

The congregation shall have a Council which shall have jurisdiction and oversight of the congregation and all its organizations. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. It shall organize as provided for in the By-Laws.

The Council shall have the care and control of the property of the congregation as a sacred trust, whether real or personal, in accordance with the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, and the By-Laws.

PART 5

ADMINISTRATION

The Congregational Meeting

The legislative and administrative power of the congregation is vested in the congregation itself, assembled in meeting duly and legally called as provided in the By-Laws.

Congregational Prerogative

It is the prerogative of the congregation to decide such questions as the buying and selling of property, building projects, extensive repairs of church property, the call and rejection of a pastor, and questions of the policy of the congregation, as well as changes in the Constitution and By-Laws. For the transaction of all other business, the administration of the church is entrusted to the Council, chosen and composed as provided for herein and in the By-Laws.

PART 6

THE PASTOR

The congregation will elect as a pastor only a minister who has been identified through the Pastoral Search and Call Process of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference. The congregation shall consider only one candidate at a time and vote for or against the candidate's election. If the candidate is elected, the council will then tender a call. The church and new pastor will work with the Southeast Association Committee on Ministry and the Indiana-Kentucky Conference to assure all provisions of the call and all requirements of ministerial standing are satisfied. The new pastor, the church, the Southeast Association Committee on Ministry and the Indiana-Kentucky Conference shall each receive a copy of the call agreement.

PART 7

PROPERTY

The congregation may, in its corporate name, sue and be sued; hold, purchase, and receive title by gift, grant, or other conveyance of and to any property, real or personal, with power to mortgage, sell, lease or convey the same, providing the State laws permit, and make any contracts for promoting the objects and purposes of the church.

In case of a division in the membership of the congregation, both parties shall submit the question of the right to the property to the Indiana-Kentucky Conference, and the decision of said judiciary shall be binding on all members of the congregation. In case of a dissolution of the congregation, it may do so without forfeiture of ownership or control of any real or personal property owned by it.

CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

All church organizations are subordinate to the Council and shall report annually to the congregation.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline in case of un-Christian conduct or other actions for discipline lies in the hands of the Council, as provided for in the By-Laws, except in the case of the Pastor when the Council should seek advice from the Southeast Association Committee on Ministry.

AMENDMENTS

Additions and alterations to this Constitution may be proposed to and by the Council. The Council shall consider the same and report to the next duly called meeting of the congregation. Said additions and alterations can be adopted only by a two-thirds majority of all voting members present. The By-Laws may be amended in any duly called meeting of the congregation by a majority vote of the members present and voting.

PART 8

RULES OF ORDER

ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of the procedure not specifically covered by this Constitution and the By-Laws of the Church.