

1 **CONSTITUTION OF COMMUNITY CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
2 **379 S. Main St., Amherst, Ohio 44001**
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6 **ARTICLE I NAME**
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8 The name of this Church shall be Community Congregational United Church of Christ (hereinafter referred
9 to as the "Church"), located in the city of Amherst, Ohio and incorporated according to the laws of the
10 state of Ohio.
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13 **ARTICLE II PURPOSE AND MISSION**
14

15 The purpose of the Church is to promote, foster and conduct Christian worship, education, mission and
16 fellowship among its members and the community, and to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to
17 the Vision and Mission statements of the Church.
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20 **ARTICLE III DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION**
21

22 Although the Church is autonomous and answerable to no other ecclesiastical body, it shall be a part of
23 the United Church of Christ and shall sustain its relationship with the United Church of Christ described in
24 those portions of the Constitution of the United Church of Christ relating to local churches. The Church
25 affirms the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ.
26

27
28 **ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP**
29

30 Persons become members by baptism and either (a) confirmation; (b) profession of faith; (c)
31 reaffirmation of faith; or (d) letter or certificate of transfer from any Christian church.
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34 **ARTICLE V ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP**
35

36 The Congregation is defined as the members of the church. The governance of the Church is vested in its
37 members and organized as set forth in the adopted Bylaws of the Church.
38

39 There shall be at least one congregational meeting annually.
40

41 The Fiscal Year of the Church shall be the Calendar Year.
42

43
44 **ARTICLE VI DECISIONS**
45

46 A quorum as defined in the Bylaws is required for official action at all duly called congregational
47 meetings.
48

49 A majority vote of all members present, inclusive of any votes by proxy, is required for elections and
50 passage of business unless directed otherwise in this Constitution and Bylaws.
51

52 Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically
53 covered by the Constitution and Bylaws.

54 **ARTICLE VII PROPERTY RIGHTS AND DISSOLUTION**

55
56 In addition to the rights granted by Ohio law, the Church may in its corporate name, sue or be sued;
57 acquire by purchase, gifts, devise, bequest or otherwise; and own, hold, invest, reinvest or dispose of
58 property both real and personal, for such work as the Church may undertake. The Church may purchase,
59 own, receive, hold, manage, care for and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell,
60 assign, transfer and convey such property for the general purpose of the Church. It may receive and hold
61 in trust both real and personal property and invest and reinvest the same and make any contracts for
62 promoting the objects and purposes of the Church.

63
64 Dissolution of the Church shall require a three-quarters (3/4) majority vote of the members voting in
65 person or by proxy at a duly called congregational meeting. Upon dissolution of the Church other than by
66 merger or consolidation, its assets and all property and interests of which it shall be possessed, including
67 any devise, gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or
68 after such dissolution, shall be transferred to Western Reserve Association of the Ohio Conference of the
69 United Church of Christ or successors thereof.

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72 **ARTICLE VIII SUPERSEDES PREVIOUS CONSTITUTION**

73
74 This Constitution supersedes the Constitution of Amherst Congregational United Church of Christ as
75 adopted January 29, 2012 and further adopted by the Congregation in the merger effective July 1, 2017.

76
77
78 **ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

79
80 This Constitution may only be amended by a three-quarters majority vote of the members voting in
81 person or by proxy at a duly called congregational meeting. The final text of any proposed
82 amendment(s) as prepared and approved by the Governance Board shall be distributed to the members
83 of the Congregation no later than two weeks prior to the meeting.

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89 Adopted by Community Congregational United Church of Christ on January 28, 2018

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97 Marcia Miller, Moderator

Karin Crivel, Recording Secretary

98 **BYLAWS OF COMMUNITY CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
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103 **ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP**
104

105 Membership in this Church is open to all who fulfill the requirements as set forth in the Constitution. No
106 one will be denied membership because of race, color, class, national origin, gender, age, sexual
107 orientation, gender identification, marital status, disability or any other reason that implies discrimination
108 in any form.
109

110 Members will strive to attend worship and celebrate Holy Communion regularly; to live the Christian life; to
111 share time and talent in the life and work of the church; to contribute to its financial support and
112 benevolences as able; and to participate diligently in the spiritual welfare of the membership and the
113 community.
114

115 Any member who requests in writing to transfer their membership to another church will be granted a
116 letter of transfer and released from membership. Any member who requests in writing to be released from
117 his or her membership obligations for any other reason will be granted release from membership.
118

119 Any person whose membership has been terminated for any reason may have their membership restored
120 at the person's own request upon action of the Governance Board.
121

122 A member shall be notified in writing of any change in his or her membership status.
123
124

125 **ARTICLE II CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS**
126

127 The Annual Meeting of the Congregation shall be held on a Sunday in October or November to approve
128 the annual budget; to elect Officers and Governance Board members; and to transact any other business
129 that may come before the Congregation.
130

131 Special Meetings for the transaction of business may be called by the Pastor, President, Governance
132 Board, Ministry Board, or by five members of the Congregation. A written request for such a meeting
133 shall include the specific purpose of the meeting and will be presented to the President. The President
134 shall set a date for such meetings to be convened no later than the fourth Sunday following the receipt of
135 the written request, and proper notification shall be given to the membership. Only such business as has
136 been named in the call to a Special Meeting may be transacted at that meeting.
137

138 All congregational meetings must be duly called by announcing time, place and purpose a minimum of
139 two weeks prior to the meeting during regular Sunday Services and/or appropriate electronic or print
140 media. The final text of any written documents to be voted upon shall be distributed to the Congregation
141 no later than two weeks prior to the meeting.
142

143 A quorum, consisting of at least fifteen percent (15%) of the membership reported on the membership
144 rolls at the last annual meeting, is required for official action at annual or special congregational
145 meetings. Votes must be made in person or by proxy, consistent with the policy established by the
146 Governance Board.
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151 **ARTICLE III GOVERNANCE**

152
153 **Governance Board**

154
155 **Members:**

156 The Governance Board shall consist of four Officers – President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer,
157 and five at-large members. The Pastor is an ex-officio member of the Governance Board without vote.

158
159 **Duties:**

160 The Governance Board shall be the executive body of the Congregation. The Governance Board is
161 responsible for setting the vision and mission of the congregation; establishing policies for the work of
162 ministry; assuring the financial, property and human resources to implement the ministry of the
163 church; and evaluating the Pastor on achievement of annual goals and overall effectiveness. The
164 Governance Board shall oversee the Ministry Board.

165
166 The Governance Board shall appoint the chairperson of the standing committees of the Governance
167 Board with the exception the Nominating Committee.

168
169 It shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, be the custodian of all Church
170 records, and report to the Congregation at its regular and special meetings through the Governance
171 Board President. It will provide a written annual report to members of the Congregation that provides
172 a historical summary of the previous year’s ministry and articulate the goals for the ensuing year.

173
174 It shall determine the acceptance and allocation of major gifts and bequests.

175
176 The Governance Board may not buy, sell, mortgage, enter into a long-term lease, or otherwise
177 encumber or transfer any real property owned by the Congregation without having been granted
178 specific authority by a vote of the Congregation.

179
180 The Governance Board may remove anyone in an elected or appointed position for cause.

181
182 All acts and deliberations of the Governance Board are subject to the will of and revision by the
183 congregation.

184
185 **Officers**

186
187 **President:**

188 The President shall officially call and conduct all meetings of the Governance Board and Congregation.
189 On behalf of the Governance Board, the President shall form ad hoc committees, teams and task
190 groups that further the purpose of the Congregation and is an ex-officio non-voting member of each
191 except in case of a tie vote. The President shall do all in his/her power to assist the Pastor to facilitate
192 the ministry and mission of the Congregation. In the absence of the Pastor, the President shall
193 coordinate the spiritual welfare of the Congregation and work closely with the Ministry Board to
194 ensure the spiritual and worship needs of the Congregation are met.

195
196 **President-Elect:**

197 The President-Elect shall assist the President in all duties as the President sees fit and preside in the
198 absence of the President at all required functions. S/He shall be responsible for ensuring that the
199 process specified in the Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention is followed and that the
200 associated records and files are maintained. S/He shall chair the Nominating Committee.

204 **Secretary:**

205 The Secretary shall keep a record of all business conducted at Congregational Meetings and
206 Governance Board meetings; shall issue the call to all regular meetings at the request of the
207 President, and attend to all correspondence. The Secretary shall maintain a register of the members
208 of the Church, including date of reception and removal, and record baptisms, marriages and deaths.
209

210 **Treasurer:**

211 The Treasurer shall be responsible for the oversight of the financial accounting and tax reporting of
212 the Congregation. The Treasurer will provide a monthly report to the Finance Committee and
213 Governance Board as well as an annual report to the congregation.
214

215 **Additional Duties:**

216 Any officer is authorized to sign legal documents, contracts and leases on behalf of the Congregation
217 as directed by the Governance Board.
218

219 **Election of Officers and Governance Board**

220
221 The President and President-Elect shall be elected to two-year terms by the Congregation and assume
222 office on January 1st following the Annual Meeting. To be eligible for election, a candidate must have
223 had formal membership in the Congregation for a minimum of one year. Election to the office of
224 President-Elect is intended to begin four years of total service, with two years each as President-Elect
225 and President.
226

227 The Secretary and Treasurer shall be appointed annually by the Governance Board and assume office
228 on January 1st following the Annual Meeting.
229

230 At-Large members of the Governance Board shall be elected to two-year terms at the Annual Meeting
231 of the Congregation and assume office on January 1st following the Annual Meeting. To be eligible for
232 election, a candidate must have had formal membership in the Congregation for a minimum of one
233 year. If elected to two consecutive two-year terms, a member shall be ineligible for re-election or
234 appointment to a vacancy until one year has passed.
235

236 Vacancies on the Governance Board shall be filled by the Governance Board for the current year. At
237 the next Annual Meeting, an election shall be held to fill the unexpired term.
238

239 The Nominating Committee shall circulate a list of persons nominated for elected office at least two
240 weeks in advance of the Annual Meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor and
241 such nominations shall be recognized by the President. Voting may be by voice or show of hands, with
242 a majority of votes cast being sufficient for election. Voting shall be by written ballot only if there are
243 multiple candidates for a position.
244

245 **Standing Committees, Teams, Task Groups of the Governance Board**

246
247 The Governance Board will have a minimum of six standing committees: Finance Committee, Buildings
248 and Grounds Committee, Investment Committee, Memorials Committee, Nominating Committee and
249 Pastoral Relations Committee. It may authorize any additional committees, teams, or task groups
250 necessary for orderly governance of the congregation (e.g. Personnel, Audit).
251

252 To ensure proper expertise to carry out the duties, the chairpersons of all standing committees with
253 the exception of the Nominating Committee will be appointed by the Governance Board. All standing
254 committees, teams and task groups of the Governance Board are under the oversight of and shall
255 report to the Governance Board.
256

257 The chairpersons of the standing committees shall appoint a sufficient number of persons to serve on
258 the committee and fulfill its duties. Committee members shall be limited to four consecutive years of
259 service on the committee, and must be off a committee for one year before being considered for
260 reappointment.

261
262 **Duties of Standing Committees:**

263
264 Finance Committee shall have charge of the financial affairs of the Church, subject to regulations
265 prescribed by law. They shall be responsible for creating, funding, and monitoring the budget adopted
266 by the congregation. If funds are available in the General Fund, unbudgeted expenses may be
267 approved when consistent with the policy established by the Governance Board. It shall recommend
268 to the Governance Board the payment or transfer/reimbursement of qualifying expenses from
269 restricted funds, if necessary.

270
271 Buildings and Grounds Committee shall have the care and custody of the property of the Church as a
272 sacred trust, and shall be responsible for providing for adequate maintenance and upkeep of these
273 properties at all times. They shall establish, publish, and update periodically a list of rules and fees for
274 use of Church property and equipment.

275
276 Investment Committee shall oversee and invest the Congregation's Endowment Funds and other
277 investible assets in accordance with the wishes and restrictions of the donors. They shall exercise all
278 fiduciary responsibility in managing the funds in accordance with policies approved by the Governance
279 Board.

280
281 Memorial Committee shall administer memorial funds received by the Congregation. In consultation
282 with appropriate ministry teams, it shall be responsible for planning for, selecting and securing
283 suitable memorials when no specific memorial is designated by the donor. Money given for designated
284 memorials may not be used for any other purpose. The Memorial committee shall acknowledge
285 individual donors' donations with a receipt, and provide next-of-kin with the names and addresses of
286 the individual donors as well as the aggregate amount received in a loved one's memory.

287
288 Nominating Committee shall present to the Governance Board the names of candidates for President,
289 President-Elect and sufficient names to fill expiring terms and vacancies for the At-Large Governance
290 Board. It shall present only one name per position. It is chaired by the President-Elect, who will
291 recommend to the Governance Board for its confirmation two members annually to serve on the
292 Nominating Committee.

293
294 Pastoral Relations Committee provides support for the Pastor and creates an open relationship
295 between the Pastor and the Congregation, helping all to share ideas, hopes, dreams and
296 interpretations of mission. As the Pastoral Relations Committee may deal with sensitive and
297 confidential matters, it shall record and report only broad categories discussed in its conversations and
298 will keep all names and details confidential. To ensure the bonds of trust and openness that they are
299 to create, the Pastoral Relations Committee shall not meet if the Pastor is not in attendance. After
300 candid conversation with the Pastor, the Pastoral Relations Committee shall recommend any
301 adjustments to the Pastor's financial package to the Finance Committee for inclusion in the annual
302 budget.

310 **ARTICLE IV MINISTRY**

311
312 **Ministry Board**

313
314 **Members:**

315 The Ministry Board shall be chaired by the Pastor and consist of three members selected by the Pastor
316 and approved by the Governance Board. Ministry Board members may not be related and may not
317 serve on the Governance Board simultaneously. To be eligible, a candidate must have had formal
318 membership in the Congregation for a minimum of one year. The President is an ex-officio member of
319 the Ministry Board without vote.

320
321 **Length of Service:**

322 Ministry Board members shall be limited to four consecutive years of service on the committee, and
323 must be off the Board for one year before being considered for reappointment.

324
325 **Duties:**

326 The Congregation entrusts the responsibility for the congregations' spiritual needs and its outreach
327 ministries to the Pastor, who works through the Ministry Board and its teams. The Ministry Board shall
328 work in collaboration with the Pastor in overseeing and unifying Ministry Teams, directing their efforts
329 toward the fulfillment of the Congregation's mission and goals. It shall ensure Ministry Teams comply
330 with the bylaws, policies, and applicable laws and regulations.

331
332 The Ministry Board shall be responsible for developing the goals created from the vision and mission
333 of the Congregation and encouraging the fulfillment of these goals, and reviewing and prioritizing
334 budgetary needs submitted by the Ministry Teams to be forwarded to the Finance Committee during
335 each budget planning cycle.

336
337 The Ministry Board shall ensure the Pastor's duties, related to the Ministry Teams, are fulfilled in
338 his/her absence.

339
340 It shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings and provide a written report of its
341 meetings and the activities of its Ministry Teams to the Governance Board. It will provide a written
342 annual report to members of the Congregation that provides a historical summary of the previous
343 year's ministry and articulate the goals for the ensuing year.

344
345 **Ministry Teams**

346
347 The Congregation is organized to encourage all members and friends to be actively engaged in the
348 ministries and programs of the Congregation, both to receive and share the blessings of being
349 disciples of Jesus Christ. Ministry Teams are the way that individuals in the Congregation participate
350 and engage in the various ministries and programs in accordance with their passions and abilities for
351 serving God, God's Church, and God's world.

352
353 Ministry Teams are not elected, but live out their ministries on a volunteer basis based on interest and
354 passion. Actively functioning Ministry Teams self-designate their team leaders to call meetings for
355 planning, coordinating, and implementing its programs and ministries. Team leaders must be a
356 member of the Church.

357
358 Budget needs of Ministry Teams are forwarded to the Ministry Board during each budget planning
359 cycle. Once the annual budget is approved by the Congregation, a Ministry Team is free to implement
360 its programs and ministries within its approved budget with no further approvals necessary.

362 Written reports (e.g. minutes) shall be submitted to the Ministry Board through the Church Office
363 immediately after its meetings but no later than one week prior to the next meeting of the Ministry
364 Board.
365

366 The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all Ministry Teams and will offer guidance and oversight in
367 working with them. The Pastor empowers and encourages Ministry Teams in the ministries they
368 undertake; advises Ministry Teams on best practices and other practical matters; assists in
369 coordinating activity schedules to avoid conflicting events; and, in consultation with the Ministry
370 Board, holds all Ministry Teams accountable to the goals of their areas of ministry.
371

372 **Standing Committees, Teams, Task Groups of the Ministry Board**

373

374 The Ministry Board will have a minimum of six standing committees: Christian Education Committee,
375 Communications Committee, Congregational Care Committee, Hospitality Committee, Social Action
376 and Mission Committee, and Worship and Music Committee. It may authorize any additional
377 committees, teams, or task groups necessary to carry out the ministry of the congregation (e.g. Adult
378 Education).
379

380 To ensure proper expertise to carry out the duties, the chairpersons of all standing committees will be
381 appointed by the Ministry Board. All standing committees, teams and task groups of the Ministry
382 Board are under the oversight of and shall report to the Ministry Board.
383

384 The chairpersons of the standing committees shall appoint a sufficient number of persons to serve on
385 the committee and fulfill its duties.
386

387 **Duties of Standing Committees:**

388

389 Christian Education Committee shall have charge of the educational and faith formation activities for
390 children and youth, creating opportunities for Christian growth, service and discipleship.
391

392 Communications Committee shall help the congregation communicate its vision, mission and core
393 values through a consistent message shared through internal and external communications. It shall
394 collaborate with other Committees and Teams to promote current and upcoming ministries and
395 programs.
396

397 Congregational Care Committee shall nurture the spiritual life of the congregation through caring for
398 congregation members in times of need, assisting the Pastor with hospital and shut-in visitations, and
399 being prepared to respond to special concerns that arise from time to time. It shall engage in all
400 appropriate practices of friendship and kindness.
401

402 Hospitality Committee shall create opportunities for congregational fellowship and offer hospitality, not
403 limited to food and drink, to the congregation and its guests. It will have primary responsibility for the
404 kitchen, including equipment and supplies.
405

406 Social Action and Missions Committee shall promote the social witness of the congregation by
407 identifying local, national and world-wide social and religious ministry opportunities that are consistent
408 with the vision, mission and core values of the congregation. It shall provide opportunities for both
409 direct service to the community through hands-on ministry and for other ministries where financial
410 support may be appropriate. It shall ensure that all United Church of Christ special offerings are
411 supported.
412

413 Worship and Music Committee shall work closely with the Pastor and music staff in focusing on the
414 broader content and spiritual aspects of the worship and music ministries. It will have responsibility

415 for schedules of greeters, communion preparation and servers, acolytes, and any other lay assistance
416 needed for all worship services. Working with the Pastor and President, it will ensure there is
417 appropriate pulpit supply in the Pastor's absence. It shall ensure that appropriate liturgical decorations
418 (e.g. paraments, banners, flowers) are in place.
419

420 **ARTICLE V PASTORAL LEADERSHIP**

422
423 The Pastor shall preach the gospel, be responsible for worship services, administer the sacraments,
424 promote the spiritual welfare of the Church and of those whom it serves, be responsible for the Ministry
425 Board and its work, and perform the other duties usual to the office as outlined in the job description and
426 Call Agreement. He/she shall be an ex-officio member of and collaborate with all Boards, Committees,
427 and Teams and, with the exception of the Pastoral Relations Committee, shall recuse herself/himself
428 when matters directly pertaining to the minister are to be discussed or acted upon.
429

430 The Pastor shall be called by vote of the Congregation at a special congregational meeting called for this
431 purpose. A three-quarters majority vote by written ballot, either present or by proxy, shall constitute a
432 call. The call shall be for an indefinite time unless otherwise specified in the Call Agreement.
433

434 The Pastor shall hold ministerial standing within the Western Reserve Association of the Ohio Conference
435 of the United Church of Christ. In case of loss of ministerial standing on the part of the minister, the
436 pastoral relationship must be terminated immediately.
437

438 As long as s/he is the Pastor, no other minister shall perform any religious ceremony in the Congregation
439 or on behalf of its members without his/her consent. In the event of the Pastor's temporary absence (e.g.
440 vacation, illness), either the Pastor or the President in consultation with the Pastor shall arrange for
441 coverage of pastoral needs .
442

443 A Pastor shall be terminated by a vote of simple majority vote by written ballot at a special meeting
444 called for this purpose. The special meeting for dismissal shall be called by the President upon receipt of
445 a written petition calling for such a meeting and signed by ten percent of the members of the Church.
446

447 When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate, the Governance Board shall appoint a Pastoral Search
448 Committee to conduct a search for a new Pastor in consultation with the Western Reserve Association of
449 the Ohio Conference of the United Church of Christ. For the interim time, the Governance Board shall be
450 responsible for contracting with an Interim or Designated Pastor to serve as the Pastor and fulfill the
451 Pastor's responsibilities during the transition .
452

453 **ARTICLE VI CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

454
455
456 Any Board, Committee or Team member, whether elected, appointed, volunteer or ex-officio, shall recuse
457 themselves from any vote if there is the potential for conflict of interest, consistent with the policy
458 established by the Governance Board.
459

460 **ARTICLE VII SUPERCEDES PREVIOUS BYLAWS**

461
462
463 These Bylaws supersedes the Bylaws of Amherst Congregational United Church of Christ as adopted
464 January 29, 2012 and further adopted by the Congregation in the merger effective July 1, 2017.
465
466
467

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

468
469
470 These Bylaws may only be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members voting in person or by
471 proxy at a duly called congregational meeting. The final text of any proposed amendment(s) as prepared
472 and approved by the Governance Board shall be distributed to the members of the Congregation no later
473 than two weeks prior to the meeting.
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