

Church Constitution
The United Church of Granville
Granville, Ohio

Previously Revised, May 26, 1985

Article XI, Section 6(a) and (b) Revised, October 3, 2004

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Articles III and VII Revised, February 3, 2013

Article VI Revised, January 19, 2014

Article V and VII Revised, November 1, 2015

Articles IV, V, VI, VII Revised, January 29, 2017

Article I Name & Affiliations

Effective September 18, 2011, the name of this church shall be The United Church of Granville, in the State of Ohio.

Because we wish to collaborate and cooperate with other religious bodies who share our general objectives, we are affiliated with the Rochester/Genesee Region of ABC/USA, The American Baptist Churches USA, the Central Southeast Ohio Association of the Ohio Conference of the United Church of Christ, the United Church of Christ, the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists, the Alliance of Baptists and the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

Article II Purpose, Vision & Mission

In 2009, the members of the First Baptist Church of Granville adopted the statements which follow.

“For 191 years—since 1819—The First Baptist Church has been a pioneering congregation that helped establish Denison University and has supported peace, justice and human rights around the world, including the movements to abolish slavery, emancipate women and establish rights for people of color and LBGT (Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, Transgender) people.” The United Church of Granville hereby affirms its intention to honor this congregation’s history as we create our future.

Purpose: “We seek to embody God’s word and Jesus’ example to love and serve one another and all creation by inviting all people to join our diverse and inclusive community; by coming together in worship to encounter God within and among us; by providing sanctuary to and nurturing one another, the earth and all life; by honoring children, who remind us to live in the spirit of joy and playfulness; and by engaging one

another and the larger community in education, dialogue and action on both local and global issues of faith, peace and justice.”

Vision: “As a community, we aspire to be welcoming, caring and joyful, nourished and empowered by spiritual practice and worship; and to be a thoughtful, informed witness to our faith by committing our resources and energy to build a world community that supports human rights, justice, peace and a healthy environment for all living things.”

Mission: “Our mission is to build on our legacy as pioneers to create a ministry with innovative leadership, sufficient financial resources and an effective organization to bring our vision to life.”

Article III Membership

All who are members of Christ’s Body are welcome to our fellowship irrespective of opinion on matters wherein we are all learners. We seek the unity of faith in Christ, relying upon the love of God to keep us in a spirit of Christian community.

Persons may be received into membership by baptism, by letter of transfer from another church or by statement of Christian experience. Persons who want to maintain membership in a “home church” and wish to affiliate with this church may be accepted as associate members by the same process.

Members are expected to be faithful to the essentials of Christian life and to the life of the church community, e.g., to attend regularly the church’s services and events, to give regularly for its support and benevolences, and to share in its organized work.

After repeated and reasonable attempts to contact members who have not participated for a protracted length of time, inactive members may be removed from the membership rolls by a majority vote of the board.

Article IV Meetings of the Church & Voting

Worship services shall be held regularly throughout the year. The ordinance of Communion shall be observed at least once a month.

Business meetings may be called by the Board as needed, typically to precede or follow the Sunday-morning worship service. In any instance where a congregational vote will be needed, the membership must be notified of the time, place and purpose of the meeting by the Board at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Such notice may come by public announcement from the pulpit at regular Sunday worship services, and by any other reasonably adapted means such as via print or electronic communication

The church shall hold an Annual Meeting, preceded by a notification of the congregation as to its time and place as specified above, to adopt the annual budget for the coming year, receive annual reports from the year just concluded (by the Pastor, all officers and committees, networks, task groups, and the Board), elect the officers of the church and transact any business that may properly come before this meeting.

Only active members and associate members may vote at business meetings or the annual meeting. No vote may be taken in either circumstance without a quorum equal to or greater than 25% of the average worship attendance of the previous year, as stated in the most recent Annual Report. The affirmative vote of a majority of voting members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be necessary for the authorization or taking of any action voted on by the members, including the adjournment of the meeting. Voting shall be by voice or raised hand unless any member or associate member requests a secret ballot. Abstentions shall not be counted as votes for or against any matter on which a vote is taken. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

Article V Officers of the Church

The officers of the church shall be Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk/Corporate Secretary, and Treasurer. Each officer shall be elected by a congregational vote for a term of one year, and shall take office upon completion of the outgoing officer's term of service. All officers shall be eligible for re-election with the caveat that the Moderator shall be limited typically to three consecutive years of office.

Moderator:

The Moderator shall

- act as and be the president of this corporation;
- preside at meetings of the Board;
- advise newly elected officers and committees/networks of their duties;
- establish task groups;
- be responsible for the proper transfer of records and equipment from retiring officers to their successors; and
- be an ex officio member of all committees/networks.

Vice Moderator:

The Vice Moderator shall serve in all capacities of the Moderator in that person's absence, death or disability.

Clerk:

The Clerk shall

- keep an accurate record of the proceedings of all meetings of the membership and of the Board;

- maintain accurate membership rolls, including a complete record of members who have departed by death or by decision;
- maintain records of all members baptized, including their date of birth and date of baptism;
- present at the Annual Meeting a written report of the activities of the church for the previous year; and
- perform such other duties as the Pastor and/or Board may direct.

Treasurer:

The Treasurer, with the cooperation of the Church Administrator, the supervision of the Finance & Endowment Committee, and in conformity with accepted bookkeeping practices, shall

- keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements;
- have custody of all monies of the church; and
- disburse same only upon written authorization of the Board or by vote of the church.

Article VI The Church Board

The voting membership of the Board shall consist of

- the officers of the church,
- the chairs and facilitators of the standing committees and networks (a chair or facilitator may designate a committee or network member to attend a board meeting or meetings and vote)
- representatives of any active task groups, and
- at least one, but no more than three members at large.

The pastor and any other full-time ministerial staff shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board. All members of the Board shall be active members/associate members of the church. Board members, including the Moderator, are elected for a one-year term and may be re-elected typically for a maximum of three consecutive one-year terms. Mid-term vacancies on the Board shall be filled for the unexpired term of the retiring member by recommendations from the Nominating Task Group and approval by the Board.

The Board shall attend to the spiritual life of the church and be responsible for its temporal affairs. Attentive to the leading of God's Spirit, members of the Board shall work with the pastor in developing and implementing the various ministries of the church, and by majority vote shall appoint the members of various standing committees/networks after considering the recommendations of the Nominating Committee. Temporally, the Board shall have the authority to act for the church between congregation business meetings on all matters except the call/dismissal of a pastor, the purchase/sale of real property, or loans on real estate.

The Board shall

- receive and hold for the use of the church all real estate, real and personal, which at any time becomes the property of the church;
- keep the properties in repair;
- exercise supervision over all matters relating to the operation and maintenance of the church property, including the placing of adequate insurance coverage against fire, casualty, liability, etc.; and
- authorize the payments of all expenses incurred for the carrying out of the general work of the church within the budget.

Any proposed expenditures in excess of \$5,000, or expenses for items not already authorized by the budget, shall require the approval of the members of the congregation.

The Board shall meet monthly to hear reports from standing committees/networks and the pastor, and to discuss other matters of concern. A quorum of a majority of the Board membership is required to conduct any business that requires a vote.

The Board shall report to the membership at each Annual Meeting on the effectiveness of the church's ministries, the status of its finances, the goals for ministry in the coming year and the projected budget to support those goals.

Article VII Standing Committees (or Networks) & Task Groups

The Board shall carry out its work, whenever possible, through standing committees, networks and/or task groups. Task groups are groups appointed by a majority vote of the Board to complete a particular task during a specified period of time. Typically, the committees/networks and their duties include:

Christian Education:

- Work with a Sunday School superintendant and/or Christian Education director, when available, to plan, implement, supervise and evaluate the educational programming of the church;
- enlist, train and support Sunday School teachers and others who work with youth;
- participate, when possible, with ecumenical educational endeavors such as a neighborhood Vacation Bible School;
- be responsive to meet the needs of the church for occasional, short-term, or small group educational experiences; and,
- though not directly responsible, shall support the leaders of programming for adults.

Congregational Care:

- Work with the pastor to develop a program for caring for the membership (examples of such care include: visitation of the sick and shut-ins, groups that support each other and processes to provide support when a death or tragedy occurs).

Finance & Endowment:

- Exercise supervision over all financial matters, including the investment of endowment funds;
- Supervise the Financial Secretary, who with the cooperation of the Church Administrator, shall receive and record all pledges and all monies from all sources for church purposes; deposit the receipts to the credit of the church each week; make a report when called upon by the Finance & Endowment Committee; and send quarterly statements of account to each contributor.
- arrange for an annual audit of the records of the Financial Secretary and Treasurer;
- prepare a budget for review by the Board and presentation to the membership at the Annual Meeting;
- act upon monthly bills as needed;
- set up a system of receiving, counting and depositing all monies received by the church;
- in consultation with each committee/network responsible for staff employment and performance, review, consider suggestions and correlate recommendations for salaries in preparation of the annual budget;
- consult with the pastor to make recommendations to the Board concerning the Church Administrator, and interview candidates for that position, as needed.

Mission & Social Action/MSAN:

- In conjunction with the pastor, encourage interest and participation in the national and world missions of entities with which the church is affiliated;
- initiate projects by which members of the congregation may engage in Christian mission by standing in solidarity with and caring for those in need;
- serve as UCG representatives to local organizations that help those in need; and
- allocate the missions budget and arrange for its dispersal to recipients by the Church Administrator.
- initiate projects and actions that further UCG's mission to work for peace and justice in the world.

Nominating:

- In consultation with the congregation, prepare a slate of nominees for officers, committee/network chairs/facilitators and members at-large, to be presented to the Board, published two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting and voted on by the membership at the Annual Meeting; and
- consult with the pastor and the Board and fill vacancies whenever they occur.

Outreach:

- Work with the pastor and the Board to develop and implement approaches to identify and reach out to potential new members.
- Organize, carry out, and maintain a system of greeting members and visitors as they enter or leave the sanctuary for Sunday services.

Membership:

- Work with the pastor to shepherd each new member through the membership process; and
- provide new members' contact information to the Church Administrator.

Property:

- Have charge of the property of the church, supervising all maintenance, improvements, repairs and additions thereof;
- determine what purposes other than regular church programming the property may be used for and report that to the Board;
- determine the fee structure for those other uses for members and non-members;
- see that all church property is adequately covered by insurance (e.g., fire and allied lines, public liability, theft, employer's liability and worker's compensation, etc.);
- take turns locking the buildings after Sunday worship and associated activities.
- may not perform any act that will create a lien upon any church property or expend more than \$2,500 for any item not in the church budget without the express approval of the Board.

Congregational Life:

- Provide social fellowship and recreational activities for the membership, including events intended to integrate new members into congregational life

Staff Relations:

- Be on call for input and assistance with the working relationships among pastor, staff, officers and congregation;
- serve as a liaison between congregation, pastor and staff and help resolve conflicts as needed;

- after consultation with the appropriate committees, evaluate the performance and accountability of pastor and staff;
- facilitate the writing of job descriptions in partnership with the pastor and/or chairs of hiring committees;
- review and renew contracts annually, revising as necessary;
- make recommendations to the Finance & Endowment Committee concerning salaries and other compensation; and
- treat confidential matters accordingly.

Stewardship:

- Assure funding for the annual budget;
- coordinate a 12-month stewardship effort to educate the congregation on an ongoing basis about the details of church financing;
- conduct the annual stewardship drive to obtain pledges, typically during the last two months of each calendar year;
- inform the Board and congregation about pledge commitments and the progress of pledge payments through the course of the year.

The Stewardship chair or a designee will also serve as a member of the Finance & Endowment committee and keep the committee apprised of Stewardship plans and progress.

Worship:

- Exercise creative and practical supervision of the church services, music, ushering, baptisms, communion, and providing a count of attendance each Sunday;
- advocate for the needs of the congregation and plan worship experiences that respond to their input;
- serve in turn as worship leaders and enlist other laity for the rotation;
- engage in theological reflection;
- help link worship experiences to the mission and social action work of the church;
- provide/obtain leadership for worship services in the event that the pulpit should become vacant for any reason; and
- care for the communion equipment and prepare the elements for all communion services.

Article VIII Pastor & Staff

The pastor shall be a regularly ordained minister whose credentials are recognized by ABC/USA, UCC, or any other religious body whose values are compatible with those of UCG. He/She shall

- serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of the Board and all committees/task groups;
- watch over and guide the religious interests of the church; and
- perform all duties inherent in the office of the pastor included in the job description determined by the Board.

When needed, a pastoral search shall be conducted, and the Board shall determine its form and process. When a finalist has been selected according to the Board's process, the membership will vote on the question of calling the candidate at a business meeting. An affirmative vote by $\frac{3}{4}$ of the quorum of active members/associate members present is needed to confirm the call. The Finance & Endowment Committee shall provide a written agreement between the new pastor and the church, covering such matters as salary, vacation, pension plan, and all other relationships of the pastor and the church. The new pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period of time. However, the pastoral relationship may be terminated upon 60 days' prior written notice either by the pastor or, in the case of the congregation, by majority vote of a quorum as defined above at a congregational business meeting.

The number and job descriptions of church staff needed to carry out the functions of the church shall be determined by the Board and the pastor. Terms of employment shall be set forth by the Board in writing.

Article IX Amendments to the Constitution

This document may be amended at any regularly called business meeting of the church by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of members present and voting. Proposed changes must have been posted and publicized a minimum of two weeks in advance of the meeting. Approved amendments become effective upon adoption.

ORIGINAL ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

An act to incorporate the First Baptist Society in Granville, Licking County, passed by special act of the Legislature on the 25th day of January, 1832, in Vol. 30, page 32 of the Laws of Ohio.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, that Daniel Shepardson, Alanson Sinnet and Daniel Ducenbury, and their associates, with such other persons as may hereafter be associated with them, by, and they are hereby created a body corporate and politic, by name and style of the First Baptist Society in Granville, Licking County, with perpetual succession, and by their corporate name may sue and be sued, plead and by impleaded in all courts of law in equity, in this State and elsewhere; may have a common seal, and alter the same at pleasure; shall be capable of holding real or personal estate, by purchase, gift or devise; and may sell, dispose of, and convey the same, and shall have power to form and ratify a constitution, and make and ordain by-laws for the government of said corporation; provided, the clear annual income of said Society shall not exceed one thousand dollars.

Section 2. That the members of said corporation and their associates may meet at any time, on or after the first Tuesday in October next, and when so convened, or at any other time to which such meeting may be adjourned, may elect by ballot, such officers as they think necessary for carrying into effect the object of their corporation, fix the time of future meetings, and do all other things consistent with the well-being of said corporation, or that like incorporations may do.

Section 3. That any future Legislature shall have the power to alter or repeal this Act, but which alteration shall not affect the title to any real or personal estate acquired or conveyed under the provisions of the Act, or divert the same to any other use than that originally intended.