

Articles of Association

**CONSTITUTION AND
BY-LAWS**

Amended: September 2016

LAKEVIEW UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

PO Box 559, Lakeview, MI 48850

989-352-6022

Articles of Association, Constitution and By-laws for the

**Lakeview United Church of Christ
Lakeview, Michigan**

Amended: September 2016

Article I. NAME

This Church shall be known in law as: Lakeview United Church of Christ

Article II. LOCATION

The location and principle place of worship shall be in the village of Lakeview, County of Montcalm, State of Michigan.

Article III. DURATION

This Church shall be continuous.

Article IV. PURPOSE

The purpose for which this Church is organized is to be the Church... the People of God, and to celebrate the Gospel of Jesus Christ, according to the faith and usage of the Churches which make up the United Church of Christ.

Article V. DOCTRINE AND COVENANT

This Church accepts the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice, and the freedom of every member to diligently study and interpret the Scriptures. As a member Church of the United Church of Christ of the United States, we accept the following Statement of Faith:

We believe...

In God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our Brother, and to whose deeds we testify: God calls the world into being, creates humankind in the divine image and sets before us the ways of life and death.

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

God judges all nations and all humanity by that will of righteousness declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the Man of Nazareth, and our crucified and risen Lord:

God has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit: creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant, faithful people of all ages, tongues and races.

God calls us into the Church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the Gospel to the entire 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.

God promises to all who trust in the Gospel: forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing and eternal life in that Kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God. Amen.

Article I. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of our Church is to provide spiritual ministry through effective worship and religious education emphasizing Bible Study leading to:

1. Increased involvement from community members not affiliated with a church into the Lakeview United Church of Christ;
2. Social interactions including intergenerational relationships;
3. An active ministry to community needs;
4. Participation in and support of governmental and service agencies at all levels by Church Members;
5. Financial support for local and world missions;
6. The provision of adequate facilities for religious and social activities.
7. **Sharing the love of Jesus for all.**

Article II. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CHRISTIAN BODIES

This Church recognizes an obligation to counsel and cooperate with the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, in accord with its Constitution and By-laws, with the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ, the West-Michigan Association of the Michigan Conference and with other churches with whom it may cooperate from time to time.

Article III. DISSOLUTION

Section A. Should there be a dissolution, at any time of the ecclesiastical body heretofore formed on the 25th day of June, 1957, by the merger and union of the Evangelical and Reformed Church with the Congregational Christian Churches in the United States, under the name of the United Church of Christ, such dissolution shall not ipso facto, terminate the corporate existence or effect a dissolution of the Lakeview United Church of Christ.

Section B. In the event that the Lakeview United Church of Christ of Lakeview, Michigan should be dissolved, discontinued, or cease to function, title to all of the property and possessions of such shall thereupon be held in trust by the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ or its successors, if either are then existent, or such other trustee or trustees as may be appointed by the court, for the use and benefit of the membership and/or its regularly elected incumbent trustee at the time of its dissolution or discontinuance, and for such further use and disposition as may be ordered by the court or authorized by law.

Article I. RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedures not specifically covered by these Articles, Constitution and Bylaws. The attitude in all matters of procedure shall be in harmony with the spirit of Jesus Christ, which includes the mutual respect of one another's opinions and feelings, a cooperative spirit, and daring, honest and hopeful vision.

Article II. MEMBERSHIP

Section A. Reception:

1. Membership in this Church shall consist of persons who have been baptized and confirmed, or made confessions of faith in Christ as Lord and Savior, or presented a satisfactory transfer of member from another church.
2. Members shall pledge themselves to attend the regular worship of the Church and Holy Communion, as regularly as possible, to strive to become increasingly Christian, to share in the total life of the Church, to contribute to the support of the Church's Mission, to seek diligently the welfare of the membership, persons of the community and everywhere, and to abide by the discipline of this Church.
3. Any person who accepts the above mentioned faith and practice will be cordially received into the membership of this Church.
4. Affiliate Members are those who choose to be welcomed into membership of this Church while maintaining a covenant relationship with another church. Affiliate Members have no voting privilege.

Section B. Termination:

1. **Letter:** A letter of transfer of membership shall be granted by the Church Clerk or Pastor to another church upon written request.
2. **Retirement:** Any member, who for two years is inactive in the faith and practice of this church and/or whose address this Church is unable to find, may be placed on a retired or inactive list. After one or more years, the conditions remaining unchanged, their name may be dropped from the roll only by recommendation of the Diaconate and the approval of the Church Council. Here let it be known that there has and will always be unique circumstances concerning many inactive members. Thus, the Diaconate and the Church Council are expected to thoughtfully review each situation before recommending and approving the dropping of such a member from this Church's membership. Inactivity for two (2) years does not mean automatic dismissal.
3. **Exclusion:** Any member who persistently breaches membership vows after due notice has been given by the Diaconate, a hearing before the Church Council has been offered, and faithful efforts have been made to bring them to amendment in accordance with the Spirit of Christ, may be censured, suspended or dismissed upon recommendation of the Diaconate and the approval of the Church Council.

Article III. OFFICERS

Section A. Executive Officers

The Executive Committee of the Church Council shall consist of the Pastor, Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary. This committee shall function as an interim committee between meetings of the Church Council and may take immediate action in the event of an emergency on matters coming before it. Any such action is subject however, to ratification or revocation by the Church Council and/or Congregational Meeting at its next session. This committee shall also be responsible, in cooperation with the Search Committee or the Pastoral Relations Chair, in writing the Pastor's contract. They shall review the contract annually prior to July 1. This committee shall meet monthly in the absence of a regular Church Council meeting. The Executive Committee will be the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee shall present to the membership a proposed budget for the oncoming year at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting.

The Executive Officers of this Church shall be:

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|------------------------|------------------------|
| A. Pastor, Ex-Officio | B. Moderator |
| B. Assistant Moderator | D. Clerk |
| E. Treasurer | F. Financial Secretary |

Section B. Pastor:

1. **Duties:** The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the Church and be charged with the spiritual welfare of the Congregation. To this end, the Pastor will preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments, have care for the services of public worship, be active in pastoral service to the members of the Church and be the general supervisor and administrator of the Church.

The Church Council shall, in cooperation with the Pastor, modify (if necessary) and approved in writing these agreements made when called, to the best interest of both parties. The Pastor's performance shall be evaluated at least annually by the congregation.

The Pastor shall serve as member ex-officio without vote on all the Committees of this Church, except the Pastoral Relations Committee. The Pastor shall become a member of the Lakeview U.C.C. as soon as feasible upon election and would have voting rights at Congregational meetings as a member.

2. **Dismissal:** When not installed by the Church & Ministry Committee of the West Michigan Association of the United Church of Christ, the pastoral relationship may be dissolved either by the Church upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of a duly called Congregational Meeting or by the Pastor. In either case, the Church or the Pastor must give written notice of such intention as per contract.
3. **Election:** Whenever a vacancy shall occur in the office of Pastor, the Executive Council shall appoint a Search Committee consisting of an equal representation from each organization and one or more members at large, who shall review the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, make a canvass of available pastors, settle upon the one who in their judgment should be called to the Pastorate, introduce them to the Church, and at a duly called Congregational Meeting propose election. Any Pastor receiving a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Congregational Meeting shall be declared elected to the Office of Pastor. The Pastor shall hold the office without limitation of time and may be installed (or recognized) by the Church & Ministry Committee of the West Michigan Association of the United Church of Christ, when both the Pastor and this Church so desire. At the Congregational Meeting called for the purpose of electing a Pastor, the Search Committee shall present in writing the proposed terms of relationship agreed upon between the candidate and the Search Committee. The vote to call the Pastor shall include approval of the above mentioned proposed terms of relationship, or a modified form thereof. Upon the Pastor's acceptance of the call and its terms, the duly elected Pastor shall begin the pastoral relationship.

Section C. Moderator:

1. The Moderator shall be the chief lay administrative officer of the Church. The Moderator shall preside over the Congregational Meetings and all meetings of the Church Council or Executive Committee thereof. The Moderator shall be a member ex-officio and without voice of all committees, excepting the Congregational Meeting, cooperation with the Pastor, the Moderator shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Church through the Congregational Meeting or Church Council. It shall be the special duty of the Moderator to see that the provisions, purposes, and intent of the Constitution and Bylaws are fulfilled in the activities, decisions, and life of the Church. The Moderator will appoint a nominating committee consisting of five (5) members. This is to be done in July of each year. The Committee is to present a slate of officers and Board members to the membership at the Annual Meeting.
2. The Moderator shall hold no other office in the Church while holding the Office of Moderator.
3. The Moderator's term of office shall be two years.

Section D. Assistant Moderator:

1. The Assistant Moderator shall cooperate with the Moderator by assisting in all duties. In case the Office of Moderator shall become vacant, or in case of the absence of the Moderator, or his/her inability to discharge the duties of the office, such duties shall, for the time being, devolve upon the Assistant Moderator.
2. The Assistant Moderator's term of office shall be two years. The Assistant Moderator shall advance to the position of Moderator upon completion of their Assistant term.

Section E. Clerk:

The Clerk shall keep or cause to be kept, a record of all Congregational Meetings of the Church Council and the Executive Committee, shall provide the Moderator and Pastor with copies of the minutes of all meetings. The Clerk shall keep a register of the membership of the Church with date of their reception and removal. In the above-mentioned register, the Clerk shall also record baptisms, marriages and funerals administered by the Church. The Clerk shall issue letters of transfer of Church Membership when requested by a member desiring such, notify all persons elected to office and/or to one of the Church's organizations. The Clerk shall give legal notice of all meetings when such notice is necessary, and report all communications addressed to the Church along with conducting correspondence as may be necessary.

Section F. Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall receive and disburse all moneys except endowment funds as directed by the Executive Council. The Treasurer shall keep a record thereof in a suitable book provided for that purpose and report same to the regular meetings of the Congregation and Church Council. The Treasurer may appoint an Assistant Treasurer upon approval of the Church Council, or the Church Council may appoint an Assistant Treasurer.

Section G. Financial Secretary:

This Secretary shall assist the Treasurer and may be delegated the responsibility of recording sources and purposes of all moneys received, under the direction of the Treasurer. The Financial Secretary shall also assist the Church Council as they or their proper officers direct. It is the Financial Secretary's responsibility to obtain an audit from a qualified auditor for the financial records at least annually with the approval of the Church Council.

Section H. Other Chairpersons:

Chairpersons of the Church, not mentioned above, include the elected heads of all the Church's organizations, boards or committees whether elected by the Congregation or the organization, board or committee which they head.

Section I. Vacancies:

All vacancies in offices elected in the Congregational Meeting may be filled by a majority vote of the Church Council for the remainder of the elective term, excepting the Pastor.

Section J. Term of Office:

All Committee Chairpersons elected by the Church Council or their respective Board or Committee, shall be eligible to serve successive terms of office. A term of office shall be one (1) year. This term of office does not apply to the Pastor and the Officers of the church as defined in **Article III. Officers, Section A. Executive Officers, Moderation.**

Article IV. BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Section A. General Provisions

In order that the Church may more effectively fulfill its single purpose to be the Gospel of meeting persons at their point of need through Jesus Christ, there shall be boards and committees to participate in the major areas of concern in the Church's one purpose. There shall be a Diaconate, a Pastoral Relations Committee, a Board of Stewardship, a Board of Christian Education, a Board of Property, a Music Committee, and a Memorial Committee. Each Board must organize itself and appoint such committees, etc., as it feels necessary to fulfill its task, and present a yearly budget by **August 1st.**

1. The membership of each board/committee will be elected at the Annual Meeting. Each board shall consist of not fewer than three (3) members, but may consist of more, and may include one (1) youth member.
2. Each committee shall elect committee chairs from among its members.
3. Committees shall recruit new members or replacement members when necessary.
4. Boards, Committees, Organizations and Fellowship Groups may be made up of both members and nonmembers of this church. The Church Council, the Executive Committee, and the Diaconate must be made up of church members only. Voting rights at Congregational Meetings are reserved for church members only.
5. Each board shall endeavor to meet at a regularly appointed time and place to create and carry out its unique part in the Church's total program. Such meetings shall be called by the Chairperson or any three (3) members of the respective board. Notice of proposed meetings shall be given at least seven (7) days in advance either from the Pulpit at the Sunday Worship Service, by telephone, or by mail. A quorum is those present at any such duly called meeting.
6. An elected Church board member is to serve until another is elected to take their place.
7. Any committee or board member considered unproductive or uncooperative may be relieved of his or her responsibilities or removed from the committee/board by a 2/3 vote of the council.

Section B. The Diaconate:

The Diaconate shall consist of persons who are church members. The general responsibility of this board shall include:

- Overall planning and executing of an effective program of ministering to the spiritual welfare of the Church
- Taking an active interest in the sick and needy
- Securing supply pastors for pulpit
- Providing for meaningful worship
- Sacramental settings and rites
- Reviewing the membership rolls at regular intervals
- Encouraging activity and participation by those who are inactive, and if necessary recommending removal of a member
- Other related concerns with the approval and direction of the church
- The Diaconate Board shall meet monthly.

Section C. Board of Christian Education:

This board will include Sunday School personnel. The general responsibility of this board shall include the overall planning and executing of an effective program of religious education for the entire Church, and such other related concerns as may from time to time be assumed with the approval and/or direction of the Church. This board shall meet at least quarterly.

Section D. Board of Stewardship:

This board shall include the overall planning and executing of effective programs or social concerns, stewardship, mission work and financial support plans as described by the church budget. This Board shall meet monthly.

Section E. Board of Property:

The general responsibility of this board shall include the overall planning and executing of an effective program of providing for the administration, supervision, oversight and care of any, and all, of the Church's property and grounds for use, benefit, and enjoyment of the Church in accordance with these Articles, Constitution and bylaws, and such other related concerns as may from time to time be assumed with the approval and/or direction of the Church. The Board shall meet monthly.

Section F. Music Committee:

The person(s) holding the position of Organist and/or Choir Director, shall be a voting member of this committee during their term of service. The responsibility of this committee shall:

- Provide support for the church musicians and music program
- Review music program policies regularly
- They shall help the congregation to understand the value and place of music in the Church
- Prepare a budget for the Budget Committee
- Make recommendations for major purchases of hymnals, instruments, and the maintenance and repair thereof
- Work under the direction of the Pastor and cooperatively with the Diaconate Committee, and others who plan and lead worship
- The committee shall meet at least quarterly.

Section H. Pastoral Relations Committee:

This committee shall include at least one member nominated by the Pastor and shall include one person, if possible, who served on the Search Committee for the present pastor. The general responsibility of this committee shall be to meet with the Pastor at least quarterly, to discuss the "workings the Church," and any other concerns of the Church. They will communicate their findings to the Church Council at the next regular meeting. The Pastor's performance will be evaluated at least annually by the congregation, prior to June 1.

Section I. Memorial Committee:

The general responsibility of this committee is to administer the memorial moneys, to acknowledge the families of the deceased within a period of two weeks, and they shall be counseled to the needs of the Church by the Committee or the Pastor. This Committee shall meet four (4) times a year and/or as otherwise needed.

Article V. ORGANIZATIONS

Section A. Recognition: All groups or organizations may be recognized by requesting such from the Congregational Meeting or Church Council and upon receiving a two-thirds (2/3) vote of acceptance from either of these bodies.

Section B. Dissolution: Any organization that the Congregational Meeting or Church Council deems as an obstruction to the welfare of the Church may be suspended or terminated only after due notice has been given it; a hearing offered; a faithful effort has been made to bring it to amendment; and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of approval.

Article VI. CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Section A. The Congregational Meeting shall be composed of the members of this Church. A quorum is those present and voting at any duly called meeting.

Section B. As the governing body of the Church, the Congregational Meeting shall be the final authority in all matters pertaining to the Church.

Section C. Meetings:

- 1. Annual Meeting:** The Annual Meeting for the election of officers and the transaction of such other business as shall properly come before it shall be held on, or as close as possible, to the fourth Sunday in September each year. The same notice shall be given for said meetings as is provided for Special Congregational Meetings. The date, time and place of the Annual Meeting shall be designated by the Church Council unless a previous Congregational Meeting made such provisions.
- 2. Notice:** Notice of a Special Meeting specifying the date, time, place, and object thereof shall be read from the pulpit during the Church Worship Service on three (3) successive Sundays preceding such meeting ... provided however, that incase it is proposed to amend the Articles, Constitution or Bylaws, the proposed meeting shall be announced on four (4) successive Sundays immediately preceding such meeting. If there should be no public church services at which the notice may be given, such notice may be posted on the Church door, or published in the newspaper whose circulation among the members is greatest for three (3) weeks preceding such meeting.
- 3. Special Meetings:** Special Congregational Meetings shall be called by the Church Council, Congregational Meeting, or upon written request of ten (10) members of the Church specifying the object thereof.
- 4. Voting:** The vote of a simple majority shall constitute the vote of the Church unless a vote by a larger proportion is required by law or these Articles, Constitution or Bylaws.

Article VII. CHURCH COUNCIL

Section A. The Church Council shall be made up of all officers of this Church and Chairpersons of its organizations, boards, and committees and the immediate past moderator. Each chairperson is granted the power to appoint, from respective organizations, someone to represent and vote for the Chairperson, should he/she be unable to attend. This Council shall meet monthly.

Section B. Function:

1. The Church Council shall be the executive body of this Church, empowered to act on behalf of, and in the name of the Church during interim periods between Congregational Meetings. Any decision or action of the Church Council is subject to review by the Congregational Meeting. Its interim powers do not include the authority to modify or amend these Articles, Constitution or Bylaws, sell, mortgage or purchase real estate, call a pastor, or rescind any previous legislation or decisions of the Congregational Meeting. It may organize such committees as may be needed to affect a broad coverage of the manifold interests of the Church's single purpose. Under the direction of the Congregational Meeting, it shall supervise and coordinate the work of the whole Church and endeavor to preserve the harmonious relationship which should exist in the Church.
2. Nominations shall be made under the direction of the Church Council. Public notice of such nomination shall be given at least three (3) weeks prior to the election.
3. Denominational and interdenominational activities and functions shall be the province of the Church Council. Delegates to the Church conferences and to other denominational and inter-denominational meetings shall be named by the Church Council unless some have been named by the Congregational Meeting.

Section C. Meetings of Church Council:

1. As a center of the ongoing work of the Church, the Church Council shall endeavor to meet monthly at a regularly appointed time and place to receive and act upon reports from all the organizations represented and from such other officers as may be required or requested. Such meetings may be called by the Chairperson or any three (3) members of the Church Council.
2. Notice of date, time, and place of meetings shall be given to the members at least five (5) days in advance from either the pulpit during the Sunday Worship Service, by telephone, or by mail.
3. A quorum shall consist of five (5) people.
4. All meetings of the Church Council shall be open to the Church's general membership, who, without vote, may be granted the right to the floor by the presiding officer.

Article VIII. FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Section A. Fellowship groups organized within the Church for the purpose of worship, education, fellowship, recreation, etc., shall be regarded as integral parts of the Church and shall be recognized as organizations. Such organizations include the Women's Fellowship, Men's Fellowship, Youth Fellowship, and Lay Ministry of Pastoral Care, along with any other Fellowship(s) which may be organized and desire to be known as an organization of this Church.

Section B. The Fellowships have all the rights and privileges as organizations of the Church with provision that they create their own purpose, policy, etc., in harmony with these Articles, Constitution and Bylaws.