

CONSTITUTION (01/27/2002 Approved)

ARTICLE I: NAME

The Church shall be known as Union Center Christian Church of Union Center, New York. It shall be an independent body of believers with no organizational ties with any denomination. This Church is a duly organized corporation under the laws of the State of New York.

ARTICLE II: OBJECT

1. To provide Biblical instruction and Christian fellowship for believers, to enable them to fulfill the Great Commission as given to the individual believers in Matthew 28:19-20.
2. To promote and support locally through the departments of Union Center Christian Church, the preaching of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to young and old, both home and abroad.

ARTICLE III: DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

The Bible

We believe the Scripture of the Old and New testaments, (consisting of 66 books), though written by man, is entirely, absolutely, without reservation inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, and to be of supreme and final authority in faith and life. II Peter 1:20-21; II Timothy 3:16-17.

God, The Tri-unity

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who in respect of office, are three distinct personages, equally Divine; each having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections and are worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence, and obedience. Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Genesis 1:26; Romans 1:7; Hebrews 1:8; Acts 5:3-4; John 14:16,26.

God, The Father

We believe in God the Father, Holy and Just and the Justifier, Sovereign of all creation, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who wills to have all men to be saved and reconciled to Himself for eternity. I Corinthians 8:6; John 6:37-40; John 14:6; Romans 3:24-26; Ephesians 3:14-15; Colossians 1:12-13.

God, The Son

We believe in Jesus Christ, perfect God and perfect man; the Creator becoming Savior to reveal God and redeem man. John 1:1-3; 3:14-18; Colossians 1:15-19; 2:9-10.

God, The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Personality -- the third Person of the Tri-Unity. His main purpose to the world in this age is to reveal Jesus Christ by convicting men of sin, righteousness, and of judgment. Due to man's universal depravity and spiritual death in sin, none can perceive or enter the Kingdom of God unless born from above by the Spirit, becoming a new creation by God's Grace. We believe that every child of God possesses and should be infilled by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, who

reveals Christ and empowers the believer for victorious living and effective service. John 16:7-15; 3:3-8; 14:16-17; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 5:18; Romans 8:9.

Man

A. Fall

We believe that man, originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, fell from his high and holy estate through disobedience, by eating the forbidden fruit, and in consequence, the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted, so that he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil. Genesis 1:26; 2:17; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10-20, 23; Ephesians 2:1-3; I John 3:8; Genesis 3:1-7.

B. Total Depravity

We believe that this spiritual death, or total corruption of the human nature, has been transmitted to the entire race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone excepted by His Virgin Birth; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a sinful nature. Genesis 5:1-31, 6:5; Psalms 14:1-3, 51:5; Romans 5:12-19; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6.

Redemption

We believe, that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary, becoming God manifested in the flesh, to die as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sin of all mankind according to the Scriptures. He is the only sufficient mediator between God and man and there is no other way of salvation or deliverance from sin except through personal faith in and reception of the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, whereby we become the sons of God. We believe that this redemption is solely accomplished by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe in the physical resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ into heaven where He continues His effective ministry in the presence of God as our High Priest and advocate and in the resurrection of the believer at His return. Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:25, 24:46-47; I Timothy 2:5,6; I Peter 1:18-20; Acts 1:9, 2:24; Hebrews 7:25; I Thessalonians 4:16; Acts 4:10-12.

The Believer's Security and Assurance

We believe in the Eternal Security of all who are ACTUALLY born again by the Spirit of God through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. It is the privilege of all such to be assured of their present salvation and eternal safety through the evidence of their perseverance. John 5:24, 10:28,29; Romans 8:33-39; Phillipians 1:6; II Timothy 1:12; I John 5:10-13, Matt. 24:13

Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a created being; that originally he was the Angel of Light; but fell through pride and rebellion against God. He is the father of lies, a murderer from the beginning and the great deceiver of all men. He was defeated at the cross by our Lord Jesus Christ and he will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit during the millennium and finally committed to the Lake of Fire with all he fallen angels to be tormented forever and ever. He is the arch-enemy of the believer. Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:13-19; Luke 10:18; John 8:44; II Corinthians 11:3, 13-15, 4:4; Ephesians 6:12-18; I Peter 5:8,9; Job 1:6,; Jude 9; Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10.

The Blessedness of the Believer, and the Punishment of the Unbeliever

We believe that the attitude either of reconciliation or enmity toward God is fixed eternally at death, and that the saints of all the ages will be forever with the Lord and will become joint heirs with Him as their redeemer in His inheritance. We further believe that, for the unbeliever there is an appointment day for the Great White Throne Judgment of the wicked when they will be cast into the Lake of Fire, there to remain forever and ever, in varying degrees of torment according to their works.

The present state of a departed Believer is absent from the body and present with the Lord in heaven in a state of continuing bliss. The present state of a departed unbeliever is in Hades awaiting the Great White Throne Judgment. Luke 16:23; John 5:28-29; Romans 8:17; Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15, 21:1-8; II Corinthians 5:6-9; I Thessalonians 4:17; II Peter 2:9

Second Coming of Christ

We believe the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ will be fulfilled in His personal, imminent and premillennial return for his own, called the Rapture of the Church. Following the seven years of great tribulation, our Lord with His resurrected saints will establish His glorious kingdom on the earth. John 14:3; Acts 1:10,11; Hebrews 9:28; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Jude 14; Revelation 19:11-16.

The Church, The Body of Christ

The Church, Universal

We believe in one true Church, the Body of Christ, invisible, composed of all who have been born again through faith in Christ Jesus, and only of such. As members of the one body, all members are united by the Holy Spirit to one another and all to Christ, who is the Head of the Body, the Church. Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; I Corinthians 12:12,13.

The Church, Local

We believe the local, visible assembly is ordained of God for the fellowship of believers in doctrine, ordinances, and godly endeavor. We believe and observe two Scriptural ordinances; the Lord's Supper, and Baptism by single immersion. We also believe in the dedication of the children to the Lord by believing parents, who in actuality are dedicating themselves to their God given responsibilities. Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 11:23-31, 16:1,2; Philemon 2; Hebrews 10:25.

The Walk and Life of the Believer

We believe in righteous living and good works which, however, do not procure salvation in any sense but are proper evidence and fruit of the new birth. Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:7,14; I John 2:6.

We believe that all Christians are called with a holy calling to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live surrendered to and empowered by the Spirit, that they should not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; for the flesh being still in us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage; that is, not eradicated; needs to be kept constantly in subjection to Christ or it will surely manifest its presence to the dishonor of His Name. Romans 8:12,13; 13:14; 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:1-10; I Peter 1:14-16.

We believe that a Christian is called to lovingly live in such a manner as to not bring reproach upon our Savior the Lord, and that separation from all sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and from definite religious apostasy as revealed by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is commanded by God. Romans 12:1,2; I John 2:15-17; James 4:4; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; II Timothy 3:1-5.

ARTICLE IV: DOCTRINAL INTEGRITY

All stated offices and ministering staff must, within ten (10) days of assuming their position, (and annually thereafter) heartily, without reservation, sign and endorse this Constitution.

THEREFORE, be it resolved, that NO ONE shall occupy the pulpit of the Union Center Christian Church, unless he accepts unreservedly the above stated doctrinal statement and preaches these truths dutifully.

ARTICLE V: COVENANT

Having been led by the Holy Spirit of God to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, through whose shed blood alone we are redeemed, we as members of the Union Center Christian Church, Union Center, New York, do now most solemnly enter into covenant with God and with one another.

We solemnly promise that, by the aid of the holy Spirit, we shall love one another as becometh brethren, watch for one another's welfare, and bear one another's burdens, thus fulfilling the law of Christ; that we will remember one another in prayer, comforting a one another in sickness and distress, being slow to take offense, and striving for immediate reconciliation.

We solemnly promise that we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but will regularly attend services of worship unless providentially hindered; that we will regularly give of our substances as the Lord prospers us for the support of the church and for the spread of the Gospel throughout the whole world; that we will subscribe to the doctrines of the church, its ordinances and discipline, and pray and labor together for the salvation of souls.

We solemnly promise to maintain daily devotions, to search the Scriptures, "rightly dividing the Word of Truth;" to train our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to walk circumspectly in the world, being just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, "looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ."

ARTICLE VI: ORGANIZATION

THE BOARD OF ELDERS

The Board of Elders shall maintain general stewardship over the spiritual resources of the church. It shall safeguard the doctrinal position of the church and enforce church discipline. It shall assist the pastoral staff in providing spiritual leadership to the congregation in the development and execution of church policy and in planning and coordinating church ministries. The Chairman of the Board of Elders will be the Senior Pastor. If the office of the Senior Pastor is vacant, the Executive Pastor shall serve as chairman until the position of Senior Pastor is filled. If the Senior Pastor and Executive Pastor positions are vacant at the same time, the remaining lay members shall vote upon a chairman.

Qualifications:

- 1) Elders must demonstrate the qualifications described in I Timothy 3:1-7; 5: 19-20 and Titus 1: 6-9.
- 2) Members of UCCC for a minimum of 3 years.
- 3) Elders who fail to live consistently with number 1 will be disciplined consistent with article VII number 4 and in line with I Timothy 5:19-20.

Selection:

All lay elders will be approved by election of the membership at a duly called meeting of the membership after the review and recommendation by 7/8 of the sitting Board of Elders. Their term of service will be indefinite.

Specific Duties

- 1) To elect person(s) to membership in the church as per Article VII
- 2) To serve as the pulpit committee with congregational input.
- 3) To call special meetings of the membership as provided in Article VIII
- 4) Provide for the establishment of boards, committees and structures necessary for the carrying out of the ministries of the church.
- 5) Recommend trustees for approval by congregation.
- 6) Provide spiritual direction and accountability for each ministry area of the church
- 7) Provide a spiritual covering for the Pastors of the church.
- 8) Provide shepherding for the congregants of UCCC

TRUSTEES:

The Trustees shall maintain general stewardship over the temporal resources of the church. They will meet in that capacity as required by New York State Law. The trustees will consist of the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, and no more than seven (7) lay elders

Qualifications:

1. Elder of Union Center Christian Church
2. A United States citizen

Selection:

All trustees will be approved by election of the membership at a duly called meeting of the membership after the review and recommendation by 7/8 of the sitting Board of Elders. Their term of service will be for 3 years. The initial terms maybe staggered to allow for one third of the trustees to be elected annually

Specific duties:

- 1) Call special meetings of the church membership as provided in Article VIII section 3 for proposals involving the incurring of debt or the purchase, lease, sale, or mortgage of real property.
- 2) To interpret the constitution and the certificate of incorporation of the church
- 3) To approve the annual budget prior to its presentation to the membership. They may exceed the approved budget without congregational approval if the current years income supports the excess expenditures
- 4) Provide for the corporate treasurer and clerk functions of the church.

The Executive Pastor shall serve as the corporate Treasurer and Clerk and oversee each of the functions.

Treasurer duties: The Treasurer shall ensure that full and accurate accounts of general receipts and disbursements are kept and all money and valuable effects are deposited in the name and to credit of the church and in such depositories as may be designated by the trustees. Disbursements of funds shall be made as ordered by the trustees. Accounting shall be rendered to the trustees at its regular meetings, the annual congregational meeting and whenever requested. The financial records shall be subject to audits as directed by the trustees.

Clerk duties: The Clerk shall ensure that complete minutes, properly indexed, of all business proceedings of the Trustees are kept. The Clerk shall have custody of the corporate seal and shall affix it to any instruments as may require it. The Clerk shall ensure that the records of the church are maintained; including the current membership roll in which shall be recorded their names, addresses, and non-current membership roll including the date of the expiration of their membership; as well as the manner of dismissal.

By-Laws of the Trustees

- 1) A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- 2) All votes will require a two-thirds majority for approval.
- 3) The Trustees shall meet as necessary, but not less than once a quarter, at a time designated by them. All members are required to attend the meetings unless providentially hindered. These meetings are open to the congregation unless confidential matters are being discussed. All such meetings will be noted in the church bulletin and on the church calendar.
- 4) The revised Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail at all meetings.
- 5) The records and books kept shall be considered church property. These records with the exception of those for personal contribution records shall be available for inspection to any church member and shall be kept on file in the church office.

MINISTERS

The Board of Elders shall provide for the office of Senior Pastor and Executive Pastor.

Senior Pastor: The Senior Pastor shall provide the spiritual leadership and vision for the church. He shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees of the church and a non-voting member of the Trustees.

1. The Senior Pastor shall have spiritual oversight of the church and shall be responsible for its spiritual administration. He shall function as under shepherd of the flock, preaching the Gospel, ever seeking to win the lost to Christ; teaching the believers, he shall ever seek to present them faultless before the Throne of God
2. The Board of Elders shall act as the formal pulpit committee. If a candidate is acceptable to the Board, it shall be determined whether he will consider a call, after which he will be presented to the congregation as a candidate. Following this, a special meeting will be held for congregational action.
3. The Senior Pastor's services may be terminated for cause by a two-thirds vote of all members of the Board of Elders and two-thirds vote of the membership at a special congregational meeting.
4. The Senior Pastor and his wife, when called and the call accepted, are automatically members of the Union Center Christian Church with all the privileges and responsibilities of said membership, while ministering on this field.

Executive Pastor: The Executive Pastor shall provide the administrative leadership and ensure that the various ministries of the church are integrated into the vision and focus given by the Senior Pastor and approved by the Board of Elders. He shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees of the church and a non-voting member of the Trustees.

1. The Executive Pastor shall function as a helpmate for the Senior Pastor. All ministry areas and leaders, both paid and volunteer shall report to him on their activities and budgets. The Executive Pastor is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the administrative function as well as the ministry integration.
2. The Board of Elders in support of the Senior Pastor shall serve in the selection of the Executive Pastor. If a candidate is acceptable to the Board, it shall be determined whether he will consider a call, after which he will be presented to the congregation as a candidate. Following this, a special meeting will be held for congregational action.
3. The Executive Pastor's services may be terminated for cause by the Senior Pastor with the support of the Board of Elders.
4. The Executive Pastor and his wife, when called and the call accepted, are automatically members of the Union Center Christian Church with all the privileges and responsibilities of said membership, while ministering on this field.

Other Ministerial Staff - The Board of Elders may approve, from time to time, other staff positions to fulfill the work of the ministry. The selection of staff members shall be under the oversight of the Senior Pastor and the Executive Pastor with the advice and consent of the Board of Elders. These staff members will report administratively to the Executive Pastor and spiritually to the Senior Pastor.

ARTICLE VII MEMBERSHIP AND DISCIPLINE

1. Any person who has repented of his sins and accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior and has testified to this fact in the waters of baptism, and who subscribes to our Doctrinal Statement and Constitution, and who is faithfully endeavoring by the grace of God to make his life conform thereto, is eligible for membership. Such eligibility and acceptance are to be determined unanimously by the Board of Elders after soliciting congregational input. Persons must have attained the age of 18 years to be admitted to membership. The privilege of voting shall be extended per New York State requirements.
2. It is required that a member support the church by prayer, loving fellowship, regular attendance, and gifts as God prospers and, in reliance upon God and His Word, lie in the Spirit of the Doctrinal Statement.
3. From time to time the Board of Elders shall review the church membership to determine the eligibility of each member.
4. Members will submit themselves to the authority of the Board of Elders in matters of discipline. The goal of discipline is protection, reconciliation and restoration; however, in some cases, the result may be suspension or removal of membership by the Board of Elders. Biblical principles shall be followed in all matters of discipline.
5. A representative of the Board of Elders will inform any member of any change in membership status.

ARTICLE VIII CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

1. The active voting membership of the church in this Constitution referred to as the congregation, shall meet within 60 days of the close of the fiscal year. Notification of the time and place shall be given to the congregation at the two successive weekend worship services immediately preceding the meeting. The purpose shall be the election Elders, Trustees, to pass an annual budget, to hear reports of various departments of the church, and any other matters that may be properly presented.
2. Ninety days prior to the Annual Congregational Meeting, the Board of Elders shall determine possibilities of Elder Board membership from the congregation and Trustees from among their own number. All candidates approved and recommended by the Board of Elders shall be submitted to the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting. An elder must be a voting member for a minimum of three years before nomination. There will be no other nominations from the floor during the Annual Congregational Meeting.
3. The Board of Elders may call special meetings of the congregation by their own motion or by the Senior Pastor or the Executive Pastor. Special meetings shall be called on the written request to the Board of Elders of at least ten (10) of the active voting members of the church. Notification of the time, place and business to be transacted shall be given to the congregation in writing and at the two successive weekend worship services immediately preceding such meeting.
4. The active membership present at a duly called business meeting shall constitute a quorum to conduct business. All matters or questions (except Constitutional Amendments) shall be decided by a majority of the members present.

5. The fiscal year of the church shall be from September first to August thirty-first.
6. All voting shall be by secret ballot counted by four tellers appointed by the Executive Pastor.
7. The Executive Pastor shall act as chairman for all congregational meetings. If the position is vacant the Board of Elders shall elect from among their number a person to serve as chairman of the meeting.
8. The Board of Elders by their own motion may request that the church transact business through a mail ballot. This will be accomplished by the following:
 - a. A congregational information meeting will be held prior to the mailing of the ballots. Notification of the meeting shall be the same as in section 3 above
 - b. After the meeting, each member will receive a ballot. Each ballot will be uniquely identified.
 - c. The ballots must be returned to the church by the close of services the second Sunday following the information meeting. At that time the balloting will be closed.
 - d. The ballots will be verified and the results will be announced at the following Sunday Services.
 - e. The Board of Elders is responsible that the implementation of this process conforms to Robert's Rules.

ARTICLE IX PROPERTY & MISC.

1. This church shall have the right to own, buy, or sell tangible properties, both real and personal, in its name.
2. No profit shall accrue to the benefit of any person or persons from the assets, holdings, or other transactions in which the church may be involved.
3. In the event of the dissolution of this church, all of its tangible assets and holdings shall be distributed to such other existing non-profit religious corporations as would be in full agreement with the letter and spirit of this Constitution.
4. Indemnification. The church shall grant to its Elders, Ministers, and officers (indemnified parties) indemnification to the fullest extent permitted by law, all in accordance with such policy or policies as the Board of Elders may establish. (No amendment to this provision or to any such policy will be effective to decrease the amount or terms of indemnification of indemnified parties who took office prior to such change.)

ARTICLE X: ORDINATION

1. When, in the judgment of the Board of Elders and the Senior Pastor, a man in this membership, or in special cases, a non-member, is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within the power of the Board of Elders to call and host an Ordination Council. This Council shall consist of Ordained Christian Ministers and up to two lay representatives from each church invited to participate in the Council and who are present at the time designated for its meeting. The Council must be evangelical and in agreement with the spirit of our church.
2. The Ordaining Council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for ordination as to their call to the Christian ministry, qualifications, character, doctrine conversion and experience in Christian service.
3. The following shall not be ordained to the ministry:

- a. One who has not served at least six months as a Pastor, ministry staff or in definite vocational Christian work in such manner as to convey evidence of God's call to the ministry.
 - b. One who would bring disrepute upon his ministry.
 - c. One who is not in agreement with evangelical Christianity.
4. It shall be within the province of the Board of Elders of the Church to discipline, even to the revoking of ordination credentials, of any minister ordained or licensed under this constitution, if the said minister is found guilty of the above practices after an impartial trial conducted in the spirit of I Corinthians 13. The minister under trial shall have the privilege of appealing his case to the congregation within sixty days after the decision of the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended in the following manner:

1. Proposed amendments may be submitted in writing to a regular meeting of the Board of Elders by any member of the congregation
2. If approved by the Board of Elders, the proposed amendments shall be submitted to the congregation at a congregational meeting. Due notice of this meeting shall be given beforehand at two weekend services prior to the Congregational Meeting.
3. Any amendment must be endorsed by a 51% majority of the active voting membership before ratification, except Articles I, II, III, IV, V which need a two-thirds majority vote.