

Constitution
First Congregational United Church of Christ
Grand Marais, MN

I. Name

The Name of this organization, a nonprofit religious organization, shall be the First Congregational United Church of Christ (also referred to as this church) and located in Grand Marais, Minnesota.

II. Polity

1. This church shall be a part of the United Church of Christ and it shall sustain that relationship to the United Church of Christ described in those portions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ relating to local churches.
2. The government of this church is vested in its members who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, including the authority to acquire, hold title to, sell, transfer, convey and otherwise dispose of property--real, personal, and mixed.

III. Purpose and Mission

First Congregational United Church of Christ is an open, inclusive church that exists to worship God and practice the gospel of Jesus Christ. We welcome all people of goodwill who seek to share the love of God and honor the diversity of creation in the spirit of tolerance and flexibility. As a Just Peace Church, we invite all who seek the reign of God to join us in reaching out in healing ministry, working for justice, witnessing for peace and striving to overcome all forms of oppression. We recognize two sacraments: Baptism and Communion.

IV. Membership

1. Membership is open to all people of good will who affirm the mission and purpose of this church and is mutually agreed upon.
2. We covenant to be an accessible, open and affirming community of faith, committed to peace and justice, reaching out in healing love to all of creation. We exist to worship God and practice the gospel. We welcome all persons, including those of all races, ethnicities, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, family structures, faith backgrounds, abilities and economic circumstances to fully share and participate in leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings and joys of our church family.
3. Any member may, on her or his own request, be granted a letter of transfer to another church.
4. All conflict and grievance in this congregation will be managed in accordance with the Board of Directors' Grievance Policy.

V. Property Rights

1. Division within the congregation
If, at any time, a separation shall take place within this congregation, the advice of the officers of the Minnesota Conference and/or the General Synod of the United Church of Christ shall be sought. If, despite all efforts to resolve differences in peace and love, a division into factions of the congregation shall occur, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected shall remain with the United Church of Christ.
2. Dissolution of the congregation

If the congregation is dissolved, after settling all debts, the remaining assets shall be transferred to the United Church of Christ.

VI. Government

This church shall remain free and self-governing. The government is vested in its membership and administered by its officers. In function, final authority shall reside in the membership. They shall approve and/or affirm qualified leadership to carry out God's purposes.

All congregational matters shall be decided by a simple majority of the voting members present at a properly convened meeting of the congregation, except as otherwise provided in this constitution and ByLaws. Procedural questions will be decided by following *Robert's Rules of Order*.

VII. Minister

The Minister is the principal administrator of the church and is in full standing in the United Church of Christ and serves with professional freedom as a spiritual leader of the congregation in pastoral, priestly, and prophetic roles.

VIII. Board of Directors

1. The Board of Directors shall be elected by the congregation.
2. The Board of Directors shall be the governing body of the congregation and is responsible to administer all the congregation's affairs except the following matters for action only by the congregation:
 - A. Call or remove a called worker.
 - B. Purchase or sell church property or buildings valued over 10% of the annual operating budget.
 - C. Incur a non-budgeted emergency expense of over 5% of the annual expense budget of the congregation.
 - D. Adopt an annual financial plan.
 - E. Dissolve the congregation.

IX. Provision for ByLaws

A supplement to this constitution known as the ByLaws shall provide a vehicle to implement and carry out the principles out-lined in this constitution.

X. Amendments

1. This constitution may be amended by the vote of not less than two-thirds majority of the voting members present at a duly constituted congregational meeting. Rules of quorum apply.
2. Notice of any such meeting and text of amendments shall be made available not less than two weeks before the meeting to each voting member of the congregation.