

# **CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF UNION BAPTIST CHURCH**

## **PREAMBLE**

The church is comprised of all who confess Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and willingly submit to Him as the Lord of their lives. Members and attendees of Union Baptist Church acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ and submit to the authority of God as recorded in His written word. We seek harmony and fellowship with all who are redeemed children of God and endeavor to serve God faithfully until He returns or calls us home.

This document was revised by vote of the congregation of The Union Baptist Church of Miami County, Ohio on December 10, 2023.

## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of this church shall be the Union Baptist Church of Miami County, Ohio located at 1833 East Peterson Road, Troy, Ohio 45373. (hereafter referred to as Union Baptist Church)  
This is a religious corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio.

## **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE, MISSION, AND SCOPE**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of Union Baptist Church is to glorify God through the transformation of lives by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**MISSION:** Our mission is to reach out to our world; locally and worldwide, proclaiming the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, teaching and training disciples, loving and caring for the family of God while helping those in need, and to humbly worship our Lord as we grow in grace, love, and in the unity of His Spirit.

**SCOPE:** This Constitution is designed to serve a body of believers who are committed to the triune God: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

This Constitution presumes those who attend Union Baptist Church, be they members or non-members, willingly submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and acknowledge the church as Christ's vehicle on earth, intended to encourage and teach believers and to preach the gospel message of salvation to the world.

## **ARTICLE III: STATEMENT OF FAITH AND DOCTRINE**

**The Scripture:** We believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to man and thus the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitutes the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God.

1 Corinthians 2:7-14, 1 John 5:13, 2 Timothy 3:16

God the Father: We believe that God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace. He is the creator of all things, the only absolute omnipotent ruler in the universe, and is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption.

Genesis 1:1-31, Psalm 135:6-7, Ephesians 3:9

God the Son: We believe that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies and in this, He is coequal and coeternal with God the Father.

John 10:30, John 14:9, Colossians 2:9

We believe in the virgin birth, death, burial, and physical resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Luke 1:26-38, 1 Peter 1:18-21, 2:24, Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24

God the Holy Spirit: We believe that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is a divine person, coeternal and coequal with God the Father and God the Son. We believe that the Holy Spirit possesses all the attributes of deity. We believe that His role in our lives is Comforter and Convicter of Truth; indwelling us to empower each believer for Christian life and service.

Matthew 28:19, 1 Corinthians 12:4-13, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Hebrews 10:15-17

Salvation by Grace: We believe that salvation is granted by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Grace is rooted in God's promise of a Redeemer (Jesus Christ). Salvation is based upon faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Salvation is rooted in the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ (death, burial, and physical resurrection). The salvific work of Jesus Christ and his cross has paid the debt for man's sin.

Salvation is not based upon man's good works, nor any other human effort.

2 Samuel 7:12-13, Matthew 2:1-12, Romans 10:17, John 1:12, Hebrews 2:8-9, John 19:17-37, Mark 16:1-8, John 3:16, Romans 5:8

Security of the Believer: We believe that all of those redeemed by the blood of Christ are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever.

John 5:24, 6:37-40, 10:27-30, Romans 5:9-11, 8:1, 8:31-39, 1 Corinthians 1:4-9, Ephesians 4:30, Hebrews 7:25, 13:5, 1 Peter 1:4-5, Jude 1:24

The Church: We believe that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body (the Church, the Bride of Christ) of which Jesus Christ is the sacred head.

1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 2 Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 1:22, 5:23-32, Colossians 1:18, Revelation 19:7-8

**Second Coming of Jesus Christ:** We believe in the return of Jesus Christ to the earth and the reign and rule of Christ occupying the throne of David and the establishment of His messianic kingdom for a thousand years.

Matthew 25:31, Luke 1:32-33, Acts 1:10-11, Revelation 19-20

**The Eternal Judgment of the Lost:** We believe that lost man (the unsaved) will be resurrected physically and judged. They will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the Lake of Fire.

Matthew 25:41, Hebrews 9:27, Revelation 20:11-15

**Eternity for Believers:** We believe that the eternal destination for believers (the church, the Bride of Christ) is Heaven and the new earth. It is eternal life with our Eternal God and the Saints of God who have been redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ.

John 14:1-3, John 17, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Revelation 21

**Marriage:** We believe that "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Genesis 1:27

We believe marriage is a union between one man and one woman ordained by God.

Marriage is a typology of Christ and the Church. As such, the Church views marriage as a profound spiritual institution established by God.

Genesis 2:24-25, Matthew 19:4-5, Romans 7:2

**Submission to Civil Authority:** Christians and the church are instructed to submit to civil authority in all matters unless such matters are contrary to the inerrant Word of God.

Luke 20:15, Acts 5:29, Romans 13:1-7

**Ordinances:**

**Baptism:** We believe in the baptism of the believer. Baptism is not a work of redemption but is symbolic of the new life in Jesus Christ. Baptism is an act of obedience and a testimony that the believer has been forgiven of sin and is trusting Jesus Christ and Christ alone for salvation. We believe that baptism by its definition is by immersion.

Acts 8:38, Romans 6:1-4

**Communion:** We believe that Scripture teaches that we are to observe the Lord's table (communion). Communion is the observance of the Lord's death until He returns. As with baptism, communion is a testimony of the believer, providing witness that the believer is in a right relationship with God as well as other believers. Communion at Union Baptist Church is open to all believers.

Romans 12:18, 1 Corinthians 11:24-28, 1 John 1:9



#### **ARTICLE IV: COVENANT**

Having been led by the Spirit of God to profess our faith in Jesus Christ, and having been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we do now solemnly and joyfully affirm our covenant with God and with each other. Romans 8:14, Mark 16:16a, Deut. 7:9, John 13:34-35, 1 Peter 1:22

We pledge to serve Christ in the fellowship of this congregation. We shall endeavor to love one another, to remember one another in prayer, to share in each other's joy, and to sustain each other in times of distress. We aspire to be a fellowship of the concerned, where the lost may find Jesus Christ, sinners may find pardon, seekers may find meaning for their lives, and where all who come may find welcome. We shall strive to be responsible church members, through faithful attendance, study and giving. John 12:26, Matthew 22:37-39, Hebrews 10:24-25

We shall seek to be obedient to Christ in our daily living. Within our homes, in our labor, and while at leisure, we shall strive for attitudes and actions which will reflect God's spirit working through us. Believing that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, we shall strive to honor God with our bodies. Psalm 128:1, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Bound together in a fellowship of faith with all who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we shall pray and labor for a spirit of unity among all Christians.  
1 Corinthians 1:10, Ephesians 4:3-6

Believing that our call to be a church is a call to witness in the world, we dedicate ourselves anew as servants of the Lord of all. Whenever people are in bondage to ignorance, poverty, fear, or prejudice, we shall strive for justice, freedom, dignity, and peace. Whenever people are separated by barriers of hostility and distrust, we shall be ministers of God's reconciling love. As we pledge our support to the work of our missionaries throughout the world, we commit ourselves to the mission to which God calls us all.  
2 Corinthians 4:5, 2 Timothy 2:15, Colossians 3:12-14

Acknowledging our human frailties and ever seeking forgiveness, profess our need of the Holy Spirit, and commit our lives to Jesus Christ, and through Him to the care, the judgement, the deliverance, and the mercy of Almighty God. 1 John 1:9, Colossians 3:16-17



## **ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP**

Membership to Union Baptist Church is open to all who have professed a believing faith in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, accepting Him as their personal Lord and Savior, and accepting the Purpose, Mission, Scope, Statement of Faith and Doctrine, and Covenant of Union Baptist Church.

All requests for admission to membership shall be made to the Board of Deacons whose recommendation to the church shall be necessary before a vote is taken by the congregation. Membership may be accomplished by any of the following means:

**By Baptism:** Any person professing faith in Jesus Christ, giving evidence of a change of heart, and accepting the Purpose, Mission, Scope, Statement of Faith and Doctrine, and Covenant of Union Baptist Church may be baptized by immersion (or by other means, if immersion is not possible) and received into membership. Baptism is a requirement for membership. Baptism represents an outward sign of the new nature present within the heart and soul of the believer.

**By Letter:** Members of other churches, who upon their profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and have previously been baptized by immersion, and accepting the Purpose, Mission, Scope, Statement of Faith and Doctrine, and Covenant of Union Baptist Church may be received by virtue of their letters duly granted by said churches.

**By Experience:** Persons who are not members of other churches but have been immersed upon profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and accepting the Purpose, Mission, Scope, Statement of Faith and Doctrine, and Covenant of Union Baptist Church may be received by virtue of their experience.

**By Restoration:** Former members may be restored to membership upon accepting the Purpose, Mission, Scope, Statement of Faith and Doctrine, and Covenant of Union Baptist Church.

## **ARTICLE VI: GOVERNMENT**

The final governmental authority of Union Baptist Church shall be the body of believers who comprise its congregation. It shall be a locally autonomous body under the jurisdiction of no other ecclesiastical (church or religious) authority. It acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as its only Head, and the Scriptures as its supreme guide in all matters of faith and government. The system of government and church officers shall be described in the Bylaws under Government. 1 Peter 2:9-10, Ephesians 4:11-13

## **ARTICLE VII: DISSOLUTION**

Members of Union Baptist Church have no church property rights, and upon termination of membership, they shall be entitled to no personal interest in the church's assets.

The congregation has the authority to dissolve the assets of the church by a 75% vote of a quorum of 65% of the average worship attendance (age 18 and older) of the previous 6 weeks.

In the event of the dissolution of the corporation, the law of the State of Ohio for the dissolution of a church will be followed and the property of the church shall be distributed as follows: All property, real or personal, owned by this corporation shall be and hereby is irrevocably dedicated to Christian purposes and uses, and upon liquidation, dissolution, or abandonment of the corporation, shall not ensue to the benefit of any private person, except a fund, foundation, or corporation organized and operated for evangelical Christian purposes consistent with the Statement of Faith in Article III of this Constitution.

## **ARTICLE VIII: BYLAWS**

The bylaws are adopted, ordained, and established for government, plan of worship, and service. In case of conflict, the Constitution takes precedence over a Bylaw.

## **ARTICLE IX: MODIFICATION AND AMENDMENT**

- This Constitution may be modified or amended at the request of the church congregation.
- In such cases, the Board of Deacons will appoint a committee to examine the reason(s) for the desired changes(s) and draft recommendations accordingly.
- Proposed changes will be brought before the congregation and are subject to review, discussion, modification, and final ratification. Changes require agreement by 75% of the members and the active attendees that have attended for a minimum of 6 months present at the time of voting. A quorum of 65% of the average worship service attendance (age 18 and older) of the previous 6 weeks is required for voting.
- If there is a revision of, or an amendment to the bylaws of this church, the revocation date stated in the Preamble of the Constitution shall change accordingly.
- The Statement of Faith and Doctrine in this Constitution may not be altered or amended to weaken the Biblical and evangelical standards.

This Constitution was

Adopted 1977

Amended 1991

Revised 2018

Revised 2023

## **BYLAWS OF UNION BAPTIST CHURCH**

### **ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Section 1: Membership Duties**

Members should familiarize themselves and accept the Statement of Faith and Doctrine, Purpose, Mission and Scope and Covenant of Union Baptist Church.

Members should attend the services of this church, as much as possible, contribute to the support of church programs through prayer, time, and offerings, and participate in the work of the church to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### **Section 2: Voting Qualifications**

Qualification for voting on all matters shall be for members and for active attendees that have attended for a minimum of 6 months, age 18 and older, and is under the purview (responsibility) of the Board of Deacons.

### **ARTICLE II: GOVERNMENT**

#### **Section 1: Officers**

The church government of Union Baptist Church is comprised of the Pastor, Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Secretary, Board of Deacons, Board of Deaconesses, Board of Trustees, Board of Christian Ed/Higher Ed, and Board of Missions.

**Pastor:** The Pastor is the shepherd of the Church, preaching and teaching the Word of God and administering to the spiritual needs of church members and attendees. He accepts and supports the Purpose, Mission, and Scope and Statement of Faith and Doctrine of Union Baptist Church. He will serve as an ex-officio member of all Boards and Committees. The Pastor has shared oversight over the Secretary with the Trustees.

**Moderator:** The Moderator conducts church business meetings and oversees special functions such as petitions for membership, special sessions to discuss short-notice needs, etc. The Moderator identifies the need for potential replacements/backfills for all boards or church support positions and coordinates with that board for replacement candidates for review and approval as needed.

**Clerk:** The Clerk will keep an accurate permanent record of all business meetings of the church and take charge of all church records. The Clerk will maintain a register of all members, living and deceased. The Clerk shall enter upon the records of the church, current events in the life of the church that are likely to be of historical value, thus making church record a continuous story of the history of the church.



**Treasurer:** The Treasurer is the custodian of all church funds. The Treasurer shall pay all expenses of the church designated in the church budget or approved by the Board of Trustees.

The Treasurer shall keep an itemized account of receipts and disbursements, showing the actual financial condition of the church. The Treasurer will prepare statements, pay all expenses, record all donations, and prepare records for tax purposes and Workers Compensation.

The Treasurer is an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees.

**Secretary:** The Secretary preserves and prepares church information. The Secretary prepares and prints the weekly bulletins and inserts, church newsletters, and membership and baptism certificates. The Secretary maintains office supplies, serves the printing needs of the pastor, boards, and committees. The Secretary orders flowers for hospital patients, funerals, and shut-in when appropriate. The Secretary maintains records of current addresses, birthdays, and wedding anniversaries of the members and active attendees of the church.

**Deacons:** The Deacons lead and direct the spiritual welfare of the church in cooperation with the Pastor and are charged with maintaining the highest possible spiritual leadership in all ministries within Union Baptist Church. The Deacons lead or assist the Pastor in the following ministries:

- Oversight of the spiritual life of the church and the Pastor, in performance of his duties
- Observance of the church ordinances
- Oversight of the church membership and attendees
- Visitation of seniors and shut-ins
- Missions of the church
- Children/Teens ministries
- All facets of the worship service
- Sunday School
- Outreach ministries
- Responsible for pulpit supply in the absence of the Pastor
- Oversight of the Pastoral Search Committee in the event of the need of that committee
- Control the distribution of any deacon funds

The Deacon Board has oversight over Christian Education/Higher Education Board, Music Committee, and the Clerk.

**Deaconesses:** The Deaconesses support the assorted physical needs of the church and assist where needed in the outreach of the church.

- Assist Deacons and Pastor with baptisms
- Prepare the elements for communion
- Assist Trustees in workdays
- Coordinate preparation and serving of funeral dinners
- Decorate the sanctuary and fellowship hall for special occasions
- Oversee the kitchen and kitchen supplies
- Assist Pastor and his wife with the needs of the parsonage

**Trustees:** The Trustees shall hold in trust all property and finances of Union Baptist Church and be responsible for the upkeep and management of the same. The Board shall not sell or encumber the real estate of property of the church unless authorized to do so by a 75% vote of the members and the active attendees that have attended for a minimum of 6 months (age 18 and older) present at a meeting of the church called for the consideration of such transaction. Such transactions require a quorum of 65 % of the average worship service attendance (age 18 and older) of the previous 6 weeks.

Trustee responsibilities:

- Trustees have oversight over the Treasurer, Custodian, and Secretary, all paid positions.
- The Board shall prepare an annual budget for the church for approval by the congregation.
- The Board shall authorize the payment of all bills Included in the budget, and any bills not exceeding \$1000 not included in the budget. All other allocations over \$1000 shall come before the congregation for consideration.
- The Board shall employ, define, and supervise the duties of all employees hired by the church. All salaries of employees shall be reviewed annually.
- The Board shall solicit bids as required from reputable vendors for maintenance, repair or replacement of materials and equipment associated with church property.
- The Board shall appoint a Building Committee in the event any construction project would be undertaken. This committee shall remain intact until completion of said project.

**Christian Education/Higher Education:** The Board oversees the educational programs of the church. The Board maintains contact with college students, military service personnel, and first responders.

**Missions:** The Board promotes missions programs in the church, overseeing mission activities.

- Prayerfully oversees missions operations of Union Baptist Church
- Maintains awareness of current missions (local, national, international)
- Manage missions budget as proposed in the annual church budget
- Review missions proposals, including disbursement of directed funds



## **Section 2: Officer and Board Participation**

Church members and active attendees that have attended for a minimum of 6 months (age 18 and older) and who accept the Purpose, Mission and Scope, Statement of Faith and Doctrine, and the Covenant of the church can serve as an officer or on a board in any of the following methods:

- By volunteering to serve by contacting the moderator or any officer or member of any board and be elected by the vote of the congregation.
- By invitation to serve as an officer or member of a board by an officer or member of any board and be elected by the vote of the congregation.
- By appointment by the moderator to serve in a vacancy in an office or on a board, subject to the vote of the congregation.
- By election at the fall annual meeting to serve a term of service as detailed under Terms of Office.

Boards may have individual budgets, and any unplanned expenditure must be approved by members present on the board with oversight by the Trustees.

## **Section 3: Terms of Office**

Each board member shall be selected for a term of three years and cannot succeed himself/herself on that board unless there is a vacancy that has not been filled and he/she is willing to continue to serve, subject to the vote of the congregation. The Moderator and the Clerk shall be selected for a term of one year and shall not be eligible to serve more than three consecutive terms in the same office, unless the office cannot be filled and he/she is willing to continue to serve, subject to the vote of the congregation.

If there is a vacancy in the voluntary positions of any board, or the office of Moderator or Clerk or in the paid positions of Custodian, Secretary, or Treasurer, it must be presented to the congregation for 2 weeks for consideration by interested church members or active attendees that have attended for a minimum of 6 months (age 18 and older).

The Board of Deacons have oversight over the Moderator and Clerk positions and the Board of Trustees have oversight over the paid positions of Custodian, Secretary, and Treasurer.

## **Section 4: Method of Selection**

In addition to the methods described in **Section 2: Officer and Board Participation**, a Nominating Committee will be formed prior to the fall annual meeting. The Nominating Committee is composed of a member of each board and the Moderator and the Clerk. This committee will prepare a list of one or more candidates for each office and an appropriate number of candidates for each board, leaving space for additional names to be added by the church congregation.

This list shall be presented to the congregation at least four weeks prior to the annual meeting. Further nominations can be made to the Committee prior to or at the annual meeting, but consent must be secured from the candidate before his/her name is placed on the ballot.

65% of affirmative votes, is required for the selection of each officer and each board member, providing a quorum is present. A quorum is 65% of the average worship service attendance (age 18 and older) of the previous 6 weeks.



## **Section 5: Meeting Protocol**

- Each board will determine optimal meeting dates/times and coordinate with board members.
- The Moderator will schedule periodic meetings of the entire church that will be conducted following Robert's Rules of Order.
- Announcement to be made at least 2 weeks prior to scheduled business meetings.
- Voting is open to all members and to active attendees that have attended for a minimum of 6 months, 18 years old and older, who are present at the meeting.
- 65% affirmative votes cast shall determine any issue that comes before the church body except where otherwise stated.
- A quorum of 65% of the average worship service attendance (age 18 and older) of the previous 6 weeks is required for voting on any issue that comes before the church body.

## **Section 6: Committee Protocol**

**Ad Hoc:** Various groups will meet at irregular intervals as the need arises. These include but are not limited to the Pastoral Search Committee (in coordination with the Deacons), the Building Committee (in coordination with the Trustees), the Nominating Committee, the Music Committee, and the Constitution Committee.

## **Section 7: The Pastorate**

The Pastor will be a man of true Christian experience and established character. He will qualify for the office according to the standards of I Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He will, upon accepting the call of the church, become a member of the church and be in full accord with the Constitution and Bylaws of Union Baptist Church. The Pastor is accountable to the Board of Deacons and ultimately, the congregation.

The call of a pastor shall be brought before the congregation at a business meeting, after notice of such meeting has been published before the church on two successive Sundays. He shall be selected by a 75% vote of members and of active attendees who have attended for a minimum of 6 months, 18 years and older, present at the time of voting. A quorum of 65% of the average worship service attendance (age 18 and older) of the previous 6 weeks is required for voting. Selection shall take place by written ballot. The call of the Pastor shall be for an indefinite time. His salary and benefits shall be reviewed annually by the board of Trustees and voted upon by the congregation.

If the Pastor desires to resign, a 30 day written notice must be given.

No accusation will be brought against the Pastor except on the witness of at least two members or of active attendees that have attended for a minimum of 6 months. If the accusation is not resolved by the Board of Deacons, either the Board of Deacons or the Pastor may request consideration at a special business meeting for final decision regarding the issues.

If the congregation desires the Pastor's termination, it will be decided by a 75% vote of members and of active attendees that have attended for a minimum of 6 months, 18 years and older, present at a regular or special business meeting. A quorum of 65% of the average worship service attendance (18 years and older) of the previous 6 weeks is required.