

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
of the
ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
La Pointe, Wisconsin 54850
Revised July 2023
PREAMBLE**

Whereas, this church was organized on November 11, 1921 as St. John's Evangelical Church of La Pointe, Wisconsin by Confession of Faith and Covenant of the Evangelical Synod of North America entered into and signed by Richard J. Russell, Leonard Seeburger Sr., Andrew Siem, Emma Cuff, Mrs. Peterson, Victor Hultquist, Gust Erickson, Carl Myhre, Charles J. Van Voris, Alice Van Voris, Wilma Farr and Rev. Wm. Diehl as minister and,

Whereas, this church was later known as St. John's Memorial Church in the 1930's and

Whereas, this church affiliated with the United Church of Christ in 1957 and became known as St. John's United Church of Christ; now, therefore, in accordance with those articles

We, the members of this church, recognizing our unity in Christ and our common practices in the Christian faith, desiring to express our fellowship in worship and work, knowing our spiritual needs and being mindful of our Christian privileges and obligations, (since God's Word demands that "all things be done devoutly and in order" 1Cor 14:40), do herewith set forth this Constitution and By-laws to serve as a guide in all matters pertaining to congregational life.

ARTICLE I. Name

The name of the congregation shall be St. John's United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE II. Confession

This church acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus

Christ the Son of God and Savior of humanity. It acknowledges as brothers and sisters in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence of the Holy Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world. It claims as its own the faith of the historic church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibilities of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own.

In accordance with the teachings of our Lord and practices prevailing among evangelical Christians, it recognizes two Sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion.

The "Statement of Faith" of the church shall be that of the United Church of Christ. We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being,
create persons in your own image,
and set before each one the ways of life and death,
You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.
You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.
In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior,
you have come to us
and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the world to yourself.
You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,

creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church

to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the 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.

You promise to all who trust you

forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you.

Amen.

Statement of Faith revised 1981 in the form of a

Doxology

Each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of God as it is made known to them under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.

The Congregation will affiliate with the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ. The books and literature of the United Church of Christ are recommended for use in the Sunday School and Church services.

ARTICLE III. Membership

A. Categories

1. Members.

Membership consists of all persons who

- a.. Are duly baptized and confirmed;
- b. Lead a corresponding Christian life;

c. Attend church services and partake of the Holy Sacraments regularly as possible;

d. Contribute to the best of their ability to the support of the church;

e. Submit to the prevailing church discipline and

f. Subscribe to this constitution.

All persons affiliated with the Church on or before November 11, 1921 shall be considered chartered members.

Persons who have been communicant members of other churches and denominations without being confirmed or baptized are eligible for membership, so long as the remainder of the membership requirements are complied with.

Applications for membership may be made to the Pastor or the Church Council and shall be voted on at any one of the Church Council meetings following the application and accepted at a regular service of worship.

2. Associates

Associates are those who want to formally associate with St. John's, while maintaining their primary membership in another church or denomination.

They affirm this Church's Confession of faith and agree to abide by the Church's Constitution and By-Laws.

B. Voting Privileges

1. All members and associates may vote in congregational meetings.
2. All members and associates eligible to vote may vote for Council members, committee members, and the budget by absentee ballot under the following circumstances:

- a. The council shall provide absentee ballots for all members and associates upon written request to the church council two weeks prior to the business meeting;
- b. attendance at the business meeting in question is not possible;
- c. the absentee ballot is presented to the president of the council prior to the meeting in written and sealed form, and is submitted by the president to the recording secretary for inclusion in the voting;
- d. the absentee ballot clearly states the individual's vote for specific candidates and budgets being placed before the congregation;
- e. it is the responsibility of the absent voter to assure the timely arrival of their ballot prior to the meeting in question.

C. Eligibility for Council

Members and associates with at least one year of worshipping attendance shall be eligible for election to the Church Council.

D. Termination of Membership

1. A member in good standing may, on request and by a vote of the Church Council,

- (a) be granted a letter of transfer to any Church in fellowship with the United Church of Christ,

- (b) be granted a certificate of membership, and have their name removed from the roll, if they wish to join a body not in fellowship with the United Church of Christ.

2. Members or Associates whose addresses are unknown, or who for a period of two years, in spite of kindly reminders, have not communicated with the Church shall be removed from the membership roll upon the recommendation of the Church Council and the vote of the Church.

3. The membership of no person shall be terminated (other than by letter of transfer) except by recommendation of a 2/3rds vote of the Church Council and based on principles outlined in Matthew 18. 15-21.

E. Restoration of Membership

Any person whose membership has been terminated, may for good and sufficient reasons be restored on recommendation of the Church Council and vote of the Church.

ARTICLE IV. Administration

The executive power of the congregation shall rest in

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a Church Council which, besides the Pastor, ex-officio, shall consist of the ten members elected by the congregation at a regular meeting of the congregation. At least two members of the Church Council are to be elected each year. No more than three associate members may be on the Council at the same time.

No member of the Church Council may be elected to more than two consecutive terms of three years each. Any person filling a term with less than three years remaining at the time of their appointment or election may be elected to two consecutive terms of three years each following their initial term. A member prevented from serving another term pursuant to this paragraph may be elected to Council again following a one-year lapse in service.

Following the congregational meeting at which they were elected, the Council members shall meet and select their officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Council members will also assign one member to serve as liaison to the Woods Hall Board. The chair of the congregational meeting shall serve as moderator of this organizational meeting.

Any vacancies arising within the term of office of

any one member of the Church Council shall be filled by a vote of the Council, upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee, until approved or rejected at the next congregational meeting.

B. Council Meetings

Council meetings may be conducted when a quorum is present, with at least one officer present and the pastor.

All Church Council meetings shall be conducted as follows:

- Prayer
- Approval of the minutes of the last meeting
- Report of the Treasurer
- Pastor's Report
- Committee Reports
- Unfinished Business
- New Business

C. Duties and Responsibilities

Duties and responsibilities of the Church Council are as follows:

The **President** shall preside over all business meetings of the congregation and Church Council.

The **Vice-President** shall assume all rights and privileges of the President in the latter's absence.

The **Secretary** shall record all business transactions

of all business meetings of the Church Council and congregation.

The **Treasurer** shall oversee the work of the bookkeeper and present to the council meeting the prepared reports.

The **Woods Hall Board liaison** shall attend all Woods Hall Board meetings, provide written & oral reports as necessary to keep Council and Woods Hall Board abreast of issues and opportunities important to each.

The **Church Council** members shall also act in the capacity of **Trustees** for the congregation.

D. Nominating Committee

There shall be a **Nominating Committee** consisting of the Pastor and two others who shall be nominated and elected from the floor at a meeting of the congregation. This Committee shall be responsible for nominating persons to fill vacancies as they occur during the year and shall prepare a list of nominations of candidates for the Council and the appropriate committees for the new year be presented at the annual meeting. The work of this committee shall in no way limit the right of any member to make nominations from the floor.

ARTICLE V. The Pastor

The pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church and shall be its chief administrative officer. They shall have freedom of the pulpit and shall lead the church in public worship, preach, lead the teaching ministry, administer the sacraments, have central responsibility to lead the church in accomplishing its mission and purpose.

A. Credentials

The Pastor of the congregation must be a duly ordained or licensed minister, preferably of the United Church of Christ. The congregation's call for any such minister must be effected through the appropriate channels, viz. through the Minister of the Northwest Association of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ.

B. Duties

The Pastor shall perform all such duties consistent with the office, viz. conduct church services, administer the Holy Sacraments, provide for the religious training of the children of the congregation, prepare all children of the congregation at the proper time for confirmation, visit the sick, and administer the affairs of the Church in conjunction with the Church Council.

C. Call Committee

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When a ministerial vacancy occurs, or is anticipated, the Council shall appoint a search committee whose duties shall include contacting the Northwest Association Office to initiate the process and ultimately recommending a minister to the council and congregation.

D. Election of the Pastor

The election of the Pastor must take place in a regular or special congregational meeting per ballot.

E. Severance of Relations.

A 90-day written notice must be given by either party in case of severance of relations between the Pastor and the Church Council.

ARTICLE VI. Congregational Meetings

A. Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting shall be held on the fourth Sunday in July to conduct church business, elect Council and committee members, present financial reports, adopt budgets and to design long-range plans for the church and its mission. A winter informational meeting will be held in January of each year.

B. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the congregation may be called by a petition to the Church Council signed by ten

(10) voting members. Otherwise, the calling of special meetings, if such be found necessary, is left to the discretion of the President or the Pastor.

C. Announcement of Meetings

Announcement of all congregational meetings shall be made in two Sunday worship services preceding the meeting. Special congregational meetings shall consider only items listed in the call for the meeting.

D. Meeting Agenda

Annual Congregational meetings shall be conducted as follows:

- Prayer
- Approval of minutes of last meeting
- Report of the Treasurer
- Pastor's Report
- President's Report
- Report of Committees
- Christian Education Report
- Reports of all affiliated organizations
- Unfinished business
- New business

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ARTICLE VII Committees

Committee formation: The council may create ad hoc committees as needed, such as religious education, fellowship, etc. Standing committees shall include, but are not limited to: Facilities

Committee, Finance Committee, Stewardship Committee, Worship Committee and Bazar Committee. The council president appoints all committee chairs.

A. Facilities Committee

The Facilities Committee shall consist of three (3) persons appointed by council president and pastor. The committee is charged with the responsibility to care for the physical plant of St. John's UCC and its properties (the church, the garage, the parsonage and the surrounding grounds and the parking lot).

B. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall consist of at least three (3) persons selected, including one church council member and the treasurer. This committee manages the financial matters of the church by creating the budget, monitoring expenses, and making recommendations to the church council as needed. They are charged with the responsibility of recording memorials, bequests, and planned gifts, keeping the donor's intentions if a designated gift. They will meet once a year to do a full review and audit. They shall review quarterly investment statements and make recommendations to the Church Council. In conjunction with the Stewardship committee, they shall support the annual giving campaign and seek gifts to grow the principle of the endowment.

C. Worship Committee

The Worship Committee works with the Pastor to ensure that our acts of worship are in accordance with the United Church of Christ book of Worship; that our services are devotional, interesting, relevant and inclusive. The committee consists of the following positions: a representative of the Altar Guild, the church musician, and the pastor. There are no term limits.

The Altar Guild is an extension of the Worship Committee. The Altar Guild shall consist of three (3) members or associates from the congregation. The altar guild is responsible for having paraments appropriate to the church year calendar and for preparation of elements for Holy Communion.

D. Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee shall consist of at least four persons: the Council Treasurer, a member or associate member of the church, a Woods Hall board member, and an at large member. Their responsibility focuses on the fall stewardship campaign and fund-raising efforts and advising the council as to long-term assets and financial opportunities. There are no term limits.

F. The Bazaar Committee

The Bazaar Committee is composed of any number

of interested persons for the purpose of setting up, organizing and staffing the annual church bazaar. Proceeds from the bazaar are placed in the General Fund.

ARTICLE VIII Woods Hall Gallery and Studios

A. Woods Hall Gallery and Studios was established in 1955 as a community ministry of St. John's United Church of Christ. It is a cooperative of weavers and other artisans. It exists in a covenanted relationship with the Church. Its mission is to provide opportunities for the creation and sale of crafts in order to provide income for craftspeople associated with the Island; to provide opportunities for the teaching of handicraft skills; and to nurture community relationships and fellowship on Madeline Island around the creation of crafts.

B. Woods Hall is governed by a Board of nine members. The ex-officio members will have voice and vote and will include St. John's Pastor, Woods Hall Retail Manager, and the Artisan Management Committee (AMC) Chair. Six additional members will be elected, two from the Church and four from the community. The Woods Hall Board shall elect from the Board membership a secretary, a treasurer, a vice-chair, and a chair. The Woods Hall Board

guides the development of the gallery & studios, and oversees the budget.

C. A covenant statement between Woods Hall Craft Shop and St. John's United Church of Christ is entered into annually by vote of each respective annual meeting. The agreement recognizes the mission of the Craft Shop, its ministry in partnership with St. John's and its use of and care for the facility.

ARTICLE IX Church Property

All church property remains the undivided possession of the congregation, so long as six (6) voting members hold fast to this constitution.

Should disputes or divisions arise among members of the congregation, touching the rights of property, that cannot be allayed to the Pastor or Church Council, appeal may be made to the proper authorities of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ for settlement through the Church Council or by a petition signed by ten (10) members in good standing in the congregation.

The congregation seeks the lawful recognition of the state through incorporation.

ARTICLE X Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution and By-Laws may be effected by a majority vote of the congregation.

The text of any proposed amendments must be publicized with the official call for the meeting where the proposed amendment is to be presented.

Any amendment or change in the constitution must be approved by a majority of the congregation at two consecutive congregational meetings.

