

**CONSTITUTION  
OF  
TRINITY CHRISTIAN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
SKIPPACK, PA**

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

1. The name of the church shall be Trinity Christian United Church of Christ located in the village of Skippack, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, originally established on September 17, 1863, and incorporated with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1868 as Trinity Christian Church of Skippackville.

**ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

1. The avowed purpose of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ shall be to worship God; to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and celebrate the Sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church Universal; to render loving service toward mankind; and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace.

**ARTICLE III. 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 Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, adopted July 4, 1961, and as subsequently amended, relating to local churches.
2. The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of Pennsylvania relating to ecclesiastical corporations.
3. This Constitution of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ of Skippack, written in accordance with the United Church of Christ, is adopted this 10<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2004.

**ARTICLE IV. FAITH AND COVENANT**

1. FAITH
  - a. This church acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of man. 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 and power 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 basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, it recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.

## 2. COVENANT

- a. We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and the will of God. We propose to walk together in the ways of the Lord and make Him known as has been taught to us. We hold it to be the mission of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshiping God and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As did our fathers and mothers, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

## ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

1. One becomes an active member of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ by confirmation, affirmation of faith, or a letter of transfer from another church. Membership shall be open to faithful people of all ages, tongues and races who have been baptized, and have made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

### 2. ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

- a. Members shall commit to attend the regular worship of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ, celebrate the Lord's Supper, live the Christian life, share in the life and work of the church, contribute to its support and benevolence, and seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and the community.
- b. Members are entitled to the sacraments and rites of the church, may vote, and hold office.
- c. Any member may request and be granted a letter of transfer. Should a member request in writing to have his/her membership with the church terminated, the Consistory shall grant the request.

### 3. INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

- a. Members are considered inactive who have not received Holy Communion nor supported this congregation during the previous calendar year.
- b. Inactive members remain welcome to take communion and receive the fellowship and support of the active members and the Pastor of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ.
- c. Members with inactive status who have not joined another church may reactivate their membership at Trinity Christian United Church of Christ by meeting the requirements of active members.
- d. Those who have joined another church may rejoin Trinity Christian United Church of Christ by transferring.

## ARTICLE VI. GOVERNING BODY

1. The governing body of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ shall be the active members assembled in the church meeting. The vote of a majority of

active members present at the meeting shall be the action of the church. A quorum shall consist of 15% of the active members.

## ARTICLE VII. CONSISTORY

1. The Consistory shall be the executive body of this church. It shall be composed of the Pastor, and two (2) Elders and four (4) Deacons. Four (4) of its members constitute a quorum.
2. Members of the Consistory must be active members of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ for at least one (1) year before they are eligible to serve on the Consistory.
3. The Consistory shall organize itself each year, electing a President, Vice President, Financial Secretary, and Recording Secretary.
  - a. Duties of the President
    - 1) Conduct all meetings of the Congregation and the Consistory
    - 2) See that all meetings of the Congregation and Consistory are duly announced
    - 3) Be a member ex-officio of all committees and organizations
    - 4) Meet with committee chairs as needed
    - 5) Sign official corporate papers with the Recording Secretary
    - 6) Oversee that accurate records of the membership of the congregation are kept
  - b. Duties of the Vice President
    - 1) Function in the place of the President, in the absence of the President, in the pursuance of his or her duties
    - 2) Be a member ex-officio of all committees and organizations
    - 3) Serve as advocate for all church personnel excluding the Pastor as head of the Personnel Committee
  - c. Duties of the Recording Secretary
    - 1) Keep a record of all transactions at the meetings of the Congregation and the Consistory
    - 2) Issue the call to all meetings at the request of the President
    - 3) Attend to all Consistory correspondence
    - 4) Sign all official corporate papers, with the President
    - 5) Provide the church office with a summary of the actions taken by the Consistory within seven days after each meeting
    - 6) Assist the Pastor in counseling families regarding the use of the memorial gifts
    - 7) Send thank you notes to all memorial donors
  - d. Duties of the Financial Secretary
    - 1) Keep proper records of the funds contributed and deposit them in the bank

- 2) Present receipts to the Treasurer for the monthly report
  - 3) Submit an income report quarterly to the Finance Committee
  - 4) Order and distribute offering envelopes
  - 5) Prepare a year end statement
  - 6) Record memorial gifts received in memory of loved ones and inform the families accordingly
  - 7) Inform the Recording Secretary who has donated money for a memorial
4. The Consistory shall annually appoint an active member of the congregation to serve as the Treasurer. If the Treasurer is not an elected member of Consistory, the Treasurer will serve as a non-voting member of Consistory. Their duties shall consist of the following:
- a. Oversee all monies held, received and dispersed
  - b. Attend the Finance Committee meetings
  - c. Render a monthly report to the Consistory and the church office
  - d. Submit a quarterly report to the Stewardship Committee
  - e. Submit an annual report for the Congregation by January 14<sup>th</sup>
  - f. Submit to all committees' income and expenses for the period January 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> so they may prepare their budgets for the next year
  - g. Prepare a report to be distributed with the proposed budget to the Congregation reflecting income and expenses for the period of January 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> prior to the annual budget meeting
  - h. Submit the Treasurer's monthly report of income and expenses to the church office to be published in the bulletin and the newsletter
  - i. Keep a permanent record of what has been purchased with memorial money
5. Consistory shall review the active and inactive member lists by January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year and change the status of individuals as appropriate.

#### ARTICLE VIII. PASTOR

1. Serves as the chief shepherd and overseer of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ, feeding, leading and nurturing the Congregation.

## ARTICLE IX. PROPERTY & CEMETERY

1. For incorporated churches – The church may in its corporate name sue or be sued, acquire by purchase, gift, devise, bequest or otherwise and own, hold, invest reinvest or dispose of property both real and personal for such work as the church may undertake and may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for and transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer and convey such property for the general purposes of the church; it may receive and hold in trust both real and personal property and invest and reinvest the same and make any contracts for promoting the objects and purposes of the church.
2. Upon dissolution of the Trinity Christian United Church of Christ, its assets and all property and interests of which it shall then be possessed, including any devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise, made before or after such dissolution, as directed by the governing body of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ, but under the Internal Revenue Service regulations, if there is not a specific disavowal that the assets on the dissolution will be distributed to the membership the church will not qualify as an exempt organization. (See Internal Revenue Code Sec. 501 (c) (3) and the regulations there under.)
3. The operation and management of the cemetery shall be vested in the Consistory of the church, which is the trustee of the cemetery. The Cemetery Committee will be responsible for accomplishing the routine business associated with the property maintenance, funds, and records associated with the cemetery.

## ARTICLE X. RULES OF ORDER

1. Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by this Constitution and Bylaws.

## ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS OF CONSTITUTION

1. Amendments to this Constitution may be made at any duly called church meeting by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the active members present, public announcement of the text of the proposed amendment(s) having been made two weeks prior to the meeting.

Adopted October 10, 2004, amended February 13, 2005, amended December 4, 2011, amended November 20, 2016, amended February 12, 2017.

**BYLAWS  
OF  
TRINITY CHRISTIAN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
SKIPPACK, PA**

**ARTICLE I. MISSION**

1. Our mission at Trinity Christian United Church of Christ is to:
  - a. Serve God by spreading His good Word
  - b. Minister to all in our church family and in our community
  - c. Educate our children about God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit
  - d. Continually nurture our faith
  - e. Be a prayerful congregation
  - f. Be a Christ-centered church with the Bible as our foundation

**ARTICLE II. CONSISTORY**

1. The Consistory shall:
  - a. Regularly attend Worship Services, Consistory, and Congregational meetings
  - b. Be the policy making body and transact the business of the church
  - c. Oversee the creation of the current expense budget as well as Our Church's Wider Mission and benevolence giving
  - d. Distribute copies of the next year's proposed budget to the Congregation at least two weeks prior to the November Budget meeting
  - e. Provide for the audit of financial accounts
  - f. Provide adequate support for the staff
  - g. Keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings
  - h. Be the custodian of all church records
  - i. Report to the church at its regular and special meetings
  - j. Instruct the proper officers on all fiscal matters, including the payment of bills, with monthly review by the Consistory
  - k. Authorize any extraordinary expense if funds are available; any extraordinary expenses of \$4000.00 or more must receive the approval of the Congregation
  - l. In addition to the stated boards or committees appoint or combine committees as it may deem necessary
  - m. Meet monthly for the transaction of business
  - n. Have meetings that include prayer, study and emphasis of policy deliberations

- o. Hold special meetings, which are subject to the President's call

2. Consistory Members

- a. Two (2) Elders and four (4) Deacons shall be elected by majority vote cast at the second semi-annual Congregational Meeting. They shall be elected for three (3) years and shall normally not serve more than two (2) successive terms. If no replacement has been found for an outgoing member, an existing outgoing Consistory member may stand for reelection of 1 term. In order to provide continuity, the office of only one (1) Elder and two (2) Deacons may become vacant in any one year. Starting with the 2016 November Congregational Meeting, every third year would be a non-election year with no Elders or Deacons ending a term
- b. The Consistory shall make nominations for the offices of Elders and Deacons (or appoint a committee to do so) at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting each year
- c. A public notice of all nominations shall be given in the bulletin, from the pulpit and at the meeting at which the election is held
- d. Nominees for Elders must have some previous or current experience on Consistory
- e. After serving two (2) successive terms, Consistory Members shall not be eligible for election or eligible to be appointed to fill a vacancy for a minimum of one year except as provided in Article 11.2.a
- f. Newly elected Elders and Deacons shall be publicly ordained or installed in their respective offices prior to the January Consistory Meeting
- g. Resignations from Consistory must be submitted to the consistory President in writing
- h. Any vacancies of an unexpired term shall be posted in the bulletin and announced from the pulpit, and shall be filled within 60 days by nomination and election by the Consistory
- i. At the termination of any officer's term, all records and materials accumulated during his or her term shall be turned over to the successor or the church office immediately
- j. All acts and deliberations of the Consistory are subject to revision by the governing body

3. Elders

- a. Are active members of the church and have previously served on Consistory. The congregation affirms their call and they are ordained or installed in their office
- b. Shall assist and support the Pastor in the spiritual affairs of the church
- c. Shall distribute the elements for the Lord's Supper when invited to do so by the Pastor, the President of the Consistory, or designee
- d. Shall have jurisdiction in matters of discipline of the members of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ except in the case of the Pastor

- e. Shall take heed to the high calling of their office, guarding faithfully all the spiritual edification and comfort of all .
  - f. Shall oversee the Grace Rader Fund
4. Deacons
- a. Are active members of the church
  - b. Shall have the care and custody of the property of the church as a sacred trust, whether real or personal, in accordance with the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation and this Constitution
  - c. Shall distribute the elements for the Lord's Supper when invited to do so by the Pastor, the President of Consistory, or designee

### ARTICLE III. PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

1. Pastor's Duties
- a. Be accountable to God and the Consistory
  - b. Provide leadership and vision for the church, directing plans for ministry and church growth
  - c. Motivate, equip and nurture the people of the church through example
  - d. Preach and teach God's Word.
  - e. Spend significant time in prayer and Bible study
  - f. Contact/visit hospitalized, shut-ins, grieving, inactive members
  - g. Officiate at weddings and funerals
  - h. Perform sacraments of baptism and communion
  - i. Provide premarital counseling, counseling for salvation and spiritual issues and other counseling needed by church members
  - j. Be a member ex-officio of all committees and organizations
2. Vacancy
- a. As soon as a pastoral vacancy occurs, it shall be reported to the Conference Minister by the Consistory
3. Termination
- a. In order to terminate the relationship, either party shall provide a three month written notice unless otherwise agreed upon by both parties
  - b. In the event the pastor's ministerial standing is revoked by the Association/Conference for ethical misconduct, Consistory shall terminate the relationship immediately. In the event the pastor's ministerial standing is suspended by the Association/Conference for ethical misconduct, Consistory may terminate the relationship immediately or suspend the relationship until such time as their standing is restored by the Association/Conference
  - c. Other than for the above reason, when the church decides to terminate the relationship the termination shall be by the recommendation of the Church Consistory and approved by the Congregation. The President of the Consistory shall send a notice of such termination to the Association



/Conference Minister for appropriate action. When the Pastor decides to terminate the relationship, the termination shall be acted upon by the Consistory. The Pastor and Consistory shall jointly inform the Congregation in a timely manner

4. Search Committee

- a. Shall be appointed by the Consistory to seek a candidate, with the help of the Conference, for a vacancy in the office of Pastor
- b. Shall secure an interim minister for the period of the vacancy
- c. May seek the counsel of the Conference Placement Committee
- d. Shall invite ordained ministers to have further dialogue with them
- e. Shall present to the Congregation the name of the candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy

5. The Call

- a. A favorable vote of the church membership present at a meeting to consider a new Pastor shall constitute a call.
- b. In the call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated, including the agreement of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ to participate in the Pension Fund of the United Church of Christ, the Ministers' Health Insurance Program, and other terms agreed to between the candidate and the committee. Trinity Christian United Church of Christ, the candidate, the Association, and the Conference Minister each shall receive a copy of the call
- c. When a pastor accepts a call to this church, Trinity Christian United Church of Christ and the Pastor shall join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of installation or recognition. A report of this service shall be signed by the proper officer of the Association and by the Conference Minister, and copies shall be sent to the Secretary of the United Church of Christ and the Council for Church and Ministry

6. Discipline of the Pastor

- a. Discipline shall be in conformity with Section One of the Manual of Ministry of the United Church of Christ

7. Additional Pastors

- a. The church may, at its discretion, choose an Associate or Assistant Pastor(s)

ARTICLE IV. COMMITTEES

1. There shall be Standing Committees which carry out the specific functions listed below. They shall have a chairperson who is selected annually at the first meeting of the year and as large a membership as needed.
2. Chairpersons shall report to the Consistory following each committee meeting and shall prepare an annual written report at the request of the President which the Consistory shall distribute to the members and which shall become a part of the continuing committee records.

3. All committees are responsible for recruiting their own committee members. Resignations from a committee by a member must be in writing to the committee chair.
4. All committees shall schedule regular meetings, at any interval which supports and facilitates their work. Meetings shall be called by the chair of each committee who shall give at least one (1) week notice, and who shall provide a written agenda with the call to the meeting.
5. All committees shall be responsible for monitoring their expenditures and submitting a yearly budget to the Finance Committee as requested by the Financial Committee.
6. All committees are requested to submit articles for the newsletter
7. A quorum for any committee shall be at least one-half (1/2) of the committee's total number of voting members. All decisions shall be by majority affirmative vote.
8. Standing Committees and Duties
  - a. Archives
    - 1) Work in conjunction with the Church Secretary to maintain and preserve the historical records of the church and do relevant research maintaining records regarding the history of the church
    - 2) Report to the congregation as deemed necessary
  - b. Cemetery
    - 1) Maintain accurate records of all cemetery property and Financial Accounts
    - 2) Supervise upkeep of the cemetery
    - 3) Propose to Consistory improvements to cemetery property
    - 4) Establish and publish dates for two workdays a year
  - c. Christian Education
    - 1) Review and evaluate the work of the teaching/nurturing organizations of the church, including and not limited to the church school, youth fellowship, and all nursery activities
    - 2) Provide whatever additional programs of Christian education as it sees fit
  - d. Finance
    - 1) Meet with the Treasurer to monitor church investments and specific endowments, making recommendations to the Consistory regarding allocation of funds. If deemed necessary, seek outside assistance to ensure proper management of funds
    - 2) Ensure that donor-restricted contributions are properly used as the donor intended
    - 3) Oversee all financial activities of Trinity Christian UCC, including a yearly audit of the Treasurer 's books
    - 4) Review quarterly investment earnings

- 5) Monitor quarterly income expenditures of all committees in light of the budget and report budget concerns to the Consistory president
- 6) Submit a copy of the current budget versus actual expenditures to the Consistory and each committee chair no later than July 20<sup>th</sup>
- 7) Assemble the initial proposed budget on the basis of the information submitted by the committees and Consistory prior to its September meeting
- 8) Assist the Treasurer in maintaining and overseeing the Memorial Fund Account

e. Human Services

- 1) Respond to emergency and special needs of the church members, friends, relatives and neighbors, and develop a network to meet those needs
- 2) Make referrals and serve as liaison in other cases or in cases beyond our means to assist
- 3) Educate the Congregation on the services available from area agencies and provide the Congregation with detailed information on those services. Secure literature and materials from such agencies
- 4) Encourage participation in charitable activities
- 5) Examine the needs of the community at large to determine where our church can be helpful
- 6) Administer the Gregory's Kids Fund

f. Outreach

- 1) Provide workshops, adult classes, or other activities to encourage the congregation to take seriously its commitment to hospitality and evangelism
- 2) Schedule reports from missionaries and service projects during the worship services
- 3) Welcome new neighbors to Trinity Christian United Church of Christ
- 4) Advertise our worship services, especially at Christmas and Easter
- 5) Maintain the church brochure
- 6) Oversee maintenance of the church web site
- 7) Encourage new people to join Trinity Christian UCC
- 8) Encourage non-attendeess to become more active
- 9) Increase the visibility of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ to the community
- 10) Support missions and other programs that help to introduce Jesus Christ to those who do not as yet profess Him as Lord and Savior

g. Pastoral Relations Committee

- 1) Review the Division of Church and Ministry of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference guidelines for annual salary and continuing education opportunities
  - 2) Maintain communication among the Consistory, Congregation, and Pastor through meetings, annual reports and news articles
  - 3) Meet with the Pastor as needed and submit information regarding the pastoral call through the Annual Report
  - 4) Prepare and distribute a questionnaire with respect to the directions of the church and Pastor's performance meeting the needs of the body as the committee deems necessary. The creation of the questionnaire shall be accomplished in conjunction with the Pastor
- h. Property
- 1) Supervise maintenance of church buildings and grounds
  - 2) Propose to Consistory improvements and alterations of church building and grounds
  - 3) Be responsible for establishing and publishing dates for two workdays a year
  - 4) Inspect the interior and exterior of the parsonage and property around the parsonage annually. A two-week notice of such inspection should be given to the family
- i. Stewardship
- 1) Encourage members to increase their support of the church
  - 2) Oversee fund raising efforts for the church
- j. Worship
- 1) Review and evaluate the worship service
  - 2) Help the Pastor arrange for special services as the need arises
  - 3) Present to Consistory a candidate for organist or choir director when the position becomes vacant
  - 4) Prepare the Sanctuary for worship
  - 5) Oversee preparation and setup for communion and baptisms
  - 6) Arrange for acolytes and ushers
  - 7) Arrange for flowers for the Sanctuary

#### ARTICLE V. CHURCH MEETINGS

1. The first semi-annual Congregational Meeting of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ shall be held on the second Sunday of February. The Consistory, the Pastor, and all church organizations shall submit in writing their yearly reports to the church office by January 14<sup>th</sup>. Any report not received in time must be presented at the meeting.
2. The second semi-annual Congregational Meeting shall be held between November 1<sup>st</sup> and December 15<sup>th</sup> for the purpose of the approval of the budget, election of Consistory members, and doing the business of the church.

3. Special church meetings may be called by the Consistory or by a petition to the Consistory signed by not less than 15% of the active members. The Consistory shall call such meetings within three (3) weeks from receipt of the petitions, and the Recording Secretary shall send adequate notice of such meeting to the membership.

#### ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

1. The Bylaws of Trinity Christian United Church of Christ can be amended by a two-thirds vote of the active members present at a Congregational meeting. Such meetings must have a two week notice. Proposed changes to the Bylaws may be made during the meeting.
2. Adopted October 10, 2004, amended February 13, 2005, amended March 13, 2008, amended September 19, 2010, amended December 4, 2011, amended November 20, 2016, amended February 12, 2017.