

THE CONSTITUTION  
Trinity United Church of Christ, Waynesboro, PA  
(Approved, December 2018)

ARTICLE I

Name

1. The name of this church shall be Trinity United Church of Christ of Waynesboro, Franklin County, State of Pennsylvania.

ARTICLE II

Mission

2. Trinity Church, as part of the “Body of Christ,” strives to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ by sharing his love and teachings with everyone. We are committed to the worship of the Triune God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit; **Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer**), growing in faith, proclaiming the Word of God, thanking God through prayer and worship, learning to live as God directs, caring for God’s creation and responding to the needs of the world; all through the guidance of God’s Holy Spirit, thus advancing God’s Kingdom.

ARTICLE III

Affiliation

3. This congregation shall be a member of the United Church of Christ or its continuing body and shall be governed by its constitution and by-laws. The congregation shall be a member congregation of Penn Central Conference, Mercersburg Association, or any named designated association.

ARTICLE IV

Doctrine

4. The articles of faith of the congregation shall be those of the United Church of Christ or its continuing body.

5. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are recognized as the Word of God, and the ultimate rule of Christian Faith and Practice.
6. The doctrinal standards of the United Church of Christ include the Heidelberg Catechism, Luther's Catechism and the Augsburg Confession. They have been traditionally accepted as an authoritative interpretation of the essential truth taught in the Holy Scriptures and continue to provide a doctrinal foundation when used in conjunction with the most recent writings, teachings and confirmation literature of the United Church of Christ.
7. Wherever these doctrinal standards differ, individual believers, in accordance with the conscience inherent in the Gospel, are allowed to adhere to the interpretation of these confessions; however, in each case the final norm is the Word of God and the individual conscience.

## ARTICLE V

### Faith and Covenant

8. We maintain that persons are saved by living faith and by the recognition of the personal experience of a living Savior.
9. We also accept the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers.
10. Our expression of this faith is embodied in those ancient creeds and the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith.

## ARTICLE VI

### Sacraments and Rules

11. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, Trinity United Church of Christ recognizes the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. This Church also devoutly observes the sacred rites of Confirmation, Ordination, Marriage and Burial.

## Baptism

12. The Sacrament of Baptism has historically been the act marking entrance into both Christian life and membership in the Christian church, which respectively are the individual and corporate aspects of one reality. Children of Christian parent have been baptized into the church's fellowship because of the belief that God does include a child from a Christian home within God's covenant of grace. Jesus Christ Himself was baptized and He commanded His disciples "to go into all the world and baptize."
13. This church acknowledges and accepts as valid the several modes of baptism practiced among the major Christian communions. It does encourage and provide for the baptism of infants by sprinkling. Whenever baptism is administered, either to infants or adults, it should be administered by an ordained minister and at a time when the congregation is gathered for worship.
14. Children, one or both of whose parents are members of the Christian Church, may be brought forward to receive the Sacrament of Baptism. Sponsors, one or both whom are communicant members of a Christian congregation, may participate in baptism, but the parents themselves, except in cases of extremity, must be present and answer to the questions in the service. Members of the Christian Church, who are guardians of children, may present them for baptism assuming the proper vows.
15. Before adults are baptized, the Pastor shall be satisfied that they understand the fundamental truths of the Christian religion and promise to be governed by them.
16. It is preferred that adults be baptized in the presence of a worshipping congregation, except in cases of extremity, when the Sacrament may be administered in the presence of one or more church leaders.

## Holy Communion

17. The Sacrament of Holy Communion, or the Lord's Supper, was instituted by Jesus Christ on the Thursday evening before He was led away to be crucified. The reenactment of this meal has always been an important

event for the Christian and provides one more instrument through which the Holy Spirit can effectively touch a person's life.

18. The Lord's Supper is the one repeatable sacrament in which church members renew their relationship to the Head of the Body and to their fellow members. It is thus the central act of renewal in the church's life and in the life of the church's members. In it, members receive anew God's love and Spirit which first came to them in their baptism, and in it they gratefully renew their life dedicated to Christ and His cause.
19. In this congregation this sacrament shall be open to members of any Christian church and shall be observed at least four times a year: World Communion Sunday, Christmas Eve, Easter, and Pentecost. Special occasions of Christian celebration may dictate additional times for the administration of this sacrament. It shall be made available to the sick and shut-ins of the congregation. This sacrament should be administered by an ordained minister or another individual designated by the leadership of the church.

#### Confirmation

20. The Rite of Confirmation admits persons into communicant membership. Before admitting applicants for Confirmation into the Church, the Consistory shall be satisfied that the candidates understand the fundamental truths of the Christian religion and are governed by them in their life and conduct.
21. Confirmation shall be administered publicly by an ordained minister in the presence of a worshipping congregation, except in cases of extremity, when the Rite can be administered privately in the presence of one or more church leaders. Confirmation shall be administered by prayer and the laying on of hands according to the order of the Book of Worship of the United Church of Christ, or its continuing body.

#### Ordination or Consecration

22. The Rite of Ordination or Consecration is the act of setting persons aside for special Christian Service. This rite shall be administered in a public service of worship and by an ordained minister. All church leaders shall be installed publicly by prayer and the laying on of hands.

### Marriage

23. The Rite of Marriage is an ordinance of God and shall be solemnized in accordance with the law of the Church as well as the State. A minister shall confer beforehand with the contracting persons, counseling them in the meaning of Christian marriage. Parties wishing to enter into this rite are encouraged to contact the minister well in advance so that all necessary details can be worked through with regard to a Christian marriage and use of the church. A minister has the right to refuse to marry any couple if the minister feels circumstances warrant such action.

### Burial

24. The Rite of Burial is the act by which people are reminded of the power and promises of God and the nature and hope of humanity. It should be conducted in accordance with the customs and usage of the Church and in a manner that ministers to the needs of the bereaved. The minister should be contacted immediately concerning a death and consulted in preparations for burial. Families are encouraged to make use of the church for memorial services.

## ARTICLE VII

### Membership

25. Membership in this church shall be open to any person who has been baptized and has made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
26. Members shall pledge themselves to attend the regular worship of the church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper; to live the Christian life; to share in the life and work of the church; to contribute to its support and benevolent work; and to seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and the community.
27. Persons shall be received into membership in this church by confirmation, letter of transfer, or re-profession of faith, and shall be received during a regular service of worship wherever possible. All persons desirous of becoming members of this congregation by adult baptism, letter of transfer, profession of faith or re-profession of faith shall be asked to attend a class

of instruction in basic beliefs and practices. This class should help all who become members to enter more fully into the life and work of this church.

28. Members who have permanently changed their residence shall be encouraged to transfer their membership to a Christian congregation in their neighborhood. Letters of Transfer will be sent for any member in good standing to any Christian congregation upon the request of that congregation and the approval of the members.

## ARTICLE VIII

### Administration

29. The supreme legislative and administrative body of this Church shall be the membership in good standing assembled in a duly called congregational meeting.
30. It shall be the prerogative of the congregation to decide such questions as the buying and selling of real estate property, building projects, extensive repairs of Church property, the call of a Pastor, the direction of the work of the congregation, and such powers and prerogatives as may be herein set forth. For the transaction of all other business, the administration of the Church is entrusted to the Consistory chosen and composed as provided for in the By-Laws.
31. The dates of the fiscal year of the congregation shall be determined by the bylaws. The budget will be presented to the congregation for adoption at a meeting in accordance with the bylaws at a date to be determined by church leaders.
32. The Nominating Committee will present their slate of officers for election to the congregation at the annual meeting on a date to be determined by church leaders.
33. The congregation shall hold an annual and semi-annual meeting each year and such other meetings as are provided for in the By-Laws. The semi-annual meeting shall include reports made concerning past accomplishments and projected goals.

34. A quorum shall consist of 10% of the membership in good standing. Decisions shall be made by a majority vote of those present and voting.

## ARTICLE IX

35. Amendments to the Constitution may be presented in writing at any regularly called meetings of the congregation after having first been presented to the Consistory. Such proposed amendments may be changed, adopted or rejected by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at a subsequent regular or special congregational meeting, provided the membership has been notified in writing of the proposed changes two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.