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Constitution and By Laws

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Friedens (Peace) United Church of Christ
New Melle, Missouri
Constitution

Preamble

Mindful of the admonition in the Holy Scriptures, as it is stated by the Apostle Paul, “Let all things be done decently and in order,” we hereby faithfully submit ourselves to the following constitution with the hope that it may serve as a means to keep *the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*.

Article 1: Name

The name of this church shall be **Friedens (Peace) United Church of Christ**, located in New Melle, Missouri.

Article 2: Purpose

The avowed purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the church universal; to render loving service toward all people; and to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.

Article 3: Policy

- A. This church will sustain a covenantal relationship with the United Church of Christ.
- B. The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its’ affairs subject, however, to the Laws of the State of Missouri relating to corporations not-for-profit.

Article 4: Faith and Covenant

Faith

This church acknowledges as its sole head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the savior of all people. We acknowledge all people gathered in Christ who share in this confession. We will look at 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. We claim as our faith, the historic church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. We further reaffirm the responsibilities of the church in each generation to make this faith their own. We recognize two sacraments: Baptism and Communion. We express our faith in numerous ways: Statement of Faith, Apostles Creed, Nicene Creed and others that our church may adopt.

Statement of Faith

We believe in God, the eternal spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to His deeds we testify: He calls the world into being, creates man in His own image and sets before him the ways of life and death. He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

He judges men and nations by His righteous will declared through prophets and apostles. In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord.

He has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to himself. He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit, creating in renewing the Church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues and races.

He calls us into His church---to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the power of evil, to share in

Christ's baptism and to eat at His table, to join Him in his passion and victory.

He promises to all who trust Him---forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, His presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in His kingdom which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto Him. Amen.

Covenant

We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the world and the will of God. We propose to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and yet to be made known to us. We subscribe to the mission of the Church as being that of witnessing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. While worshipping God and striving for truth, justice and peace, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us as we strive to become that which God has intended for us to become. We look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

Article 5: Membership

1. Membership in this church shall be open to any person who has been baptized, confirmed, or made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, which may include letter of transfer or reaffirmation of faith. Membership within our faith family is nondiscriminatory.
2. Members will agree to attend the regular worship service and the celebration of Communion. Further, we ask that all members live the Christian life, sharing in the life and work of this church through the sharing of their time, talents and tithing. We ask that all members seek diligently the spiritual welfare of this church, our community and the church worldwide.
3. Any member may, upon request, be granted a letter of transfer.

4. Should any member choose to leave our congregation, by their own validation, we shall make every effort to reconnect our detached brothers and sisters. Should our fellowship be unsuccessful, we will honor the request by providing a letter to the member, signed by the President of our Church Council.
5. The Church Secretary shall gather attendance for the year and give the inactive list to Council by the November meeting for review of the membership roll. Inactivity by a member for a two-year period will result in personal contact by a member of the Church Council to ascertain how our congregation might reengage the member in the life of the church. Annual activity in the life of the church is defined as participation in two of the three criteria listed below:
 - A. Church worship attendance (minimum of twice);
 - B. Regular tithing and giving of offerings in continued support of the church's mission; and
 - C. Volunteering in the life and activities of the church (i.e., suppers, sales, etc.).

Article 6: Governing Body

1. The governing body of this church shall be the membership assembled in church meetings. The vote of the majority of members present at the meeting shall be the action of the church. The majority is defined as more than 50% in attendance at a congregational meeting. A quorum is defined as 20% of the voting membership as reported in the annual report to the Association.
2. Following confirmation, all rights and privileges will be extended to the new members of our congregation; One member/one vote representation within the church, as well as responsibilities including stewardship, tithing and other duties that are outlined in Article 5 of this Constitution.

Article 7: Church Council

1. The Church Council is the executive body of this church. It is composed of six (6) duly elected members, age 18 or older, the pastor as non-voting and two-thirds of its members constitute a quorum. In 2014 the executive body will be reduced by 1 person each year by voting in only two (2) new members until a total of six (6) members are reached.
2. The church council will be responsible for nominating candidates to fill open seats on the Church Council. Any member of the church may offer suggestions for possible Council candidates to any church council member. A public notice of such nominations will be made to the congregation at least one week before the election. Church members may make nominations from the floor of the 4th quarter meeting.
3. Council members will be elected by a majority vote at the 4th quarter congregational meeting. Their term will be for three years and a rotation will be established to ensure that not more than two Council positions will be voted upon each year.
4. The Council will organize each year within four weeks following the annual meeting. An election of president, vice-president and secretary will occur at the first meeting following the 4th quarter meeting. Boards and committees shall be formed by the Council as seen fit to further the life and work of the church.
5. The church treasurer and financial secretary will be appointed by the Council and the treasurer will be required to attend Council meetings as directed by the president.
6. In case a vacancy occurs during the year, the Council will call a special congregational meeting to elect a congregant to fill the remainder of the vacant term.

7. No Council member shall succeed himself/herself after having served a full term, until one (1) year has passed. If he/she is completing an un-expired term, he/she shall be eligible for election to a full term.
8. Members of the Council will be publicly installed and new Council members will assume responsibilities as of January 1.
9. The Council is the policy-making body and will transact the business of the church; including but not limited to: payment of church bills and reviewing of monthly fiscal matters; making provisions to determine and raise the current expenses and for our world mission and benevolence; providing for the auditing of the financial accounts and providing adequate support for the church staff. Further, they will be expected to keep a complete and accurate record and make available these records to congregants at congregational meetings. All actions taken by the Council will be subject to the will of the congregation.
10. The Council may authorize any extraordinary expense so long as it does not exceed \$1,500.00. An expenditure of funds in excess of \$1,500.00 must be approved by the congregation. In a like manner, the Council may not borrow money without approval at a congregational meeting.
11. The Council will meet monthly to conduct business of the church. All meetings should begin and end with prayer or scripture. The President may call special meetings as needed.
12. Council members assist and support the Pastor in the spiritual affairs of the church. This covenantal relationship is exemplified by the Council's participation in the worship service, assisting in the Holy Communion, liturgy, etc. The Council will have disciplinary jurisdiction over all staff, with the exception of the

Pastor. The Church Council shall enter into a consulting relationship with the Associate Conference Minister in cases of Pastoral discipline. The Church Council shall guard faithfully all the spiritual interests of the church, maintain order in the house of God, visit the sick, and minister to the edification and comfort of all. They shall have custody of the property of the church as a sacred trust, whether real or personal, in accordance with the provisions of the Missouri Articles of Incorporation and the Constitution and By Laws.

13. The Council will be responsible for the call of a temporary or interim pastor.

Article 8: Church Cabinet

The Church Cabinet consists of the Church Council, Director of Christian Education and the chairpersons from all church authorized committees. The Cabinet will convene a minimum of annually. This meeting could be combined with monthly Council meetings if the president so desires. Additional meetings may be called as circumstances indicate by either the President of the Church Council or the Pastor. The Church Cabinet shall coordinate and promote the entire program of the church and nominate candidates for Church Council membership. See Article 7, Section 2 of these by-laws for additional responsibilities of the Cabinet.

Article 9: The Pastor

1. The Church Council will ask for volunteers to serve on the pastoral search committee when the pastorate becomes vacant. It will be the responsibility of the search committee to work in covenant with the Association's Conference Minister in preparing a church profile and selecting profiles of possible candidates for review. When the process has proceeded to a point of calling a full-time pastor, a search committee will be recommended to the Council. If the Council had not previously been involved in

negotiations with the candidate, they are to now interview and negotiate all benefits prior to calling the candidate for a congregational trial sermon. Immediately following the candidate's trial sermon, a special congregational meeting will take place (See Article 11: Congregational Meetings - #3 referring to announcements of meeting). A ballot vote will occur and the congregation will proceed with the call based upon the outcome of this vote. The minimum approval vote for new pastor is 90% in favor.

2. The Church Council is encouraged to enter into dialogue with the conference staff, as they are to be considered consultants, with additional resources not readily available to the local congregation. The church realizes that they are voluntarily bound to the conference or the national body of the United Church of Christ.
3. Prior to calling a candidate, the conference is to be notified, so that process of seeking standing for the candidate might begin prior to the call. This provides for a process where all people know what is expected and the process might be expedited. Likewise, following the call of a candidate, the church will be in conversation with the conference staff for the planning of the minister's service of installation.
4. The Pastor will serve for an indefinite period of time. When the relationship is to be terminated, a three (3) month notice is to be given by either party. Should disciplinary procedures be necessary, the Church Council will consult the *Manual on Ministry (MOM): The Oversight of Ministers—Code of Ethics*. Following this review of *MOM*, the Council may choose to engage the consulting services of the conference, which may include but are not limited to, the conference and National UCC legal services departments.

5. The duties of the Pastor are to guide the congregants on their spiritual pilgrimage. This can be accomplished in many ways, some of which are: conducting worship services, assisting with guidance in the Christian education programs, providing the administration of the Holy Sacraments and providing pastoral care for the congregation. See: “Pastoral Duties and Responsibilities” as outlined in *MOM*. A record of all services performed along with the annual reports will be kept under the direction of the pastor and presented annually to the congregation.
6. The Pastor is a non-voting member of all committees and organizations. It is the Pastor who is responsible for all religious ceremonies within the church for as long as (s)he is the Pastor. No other minister is to provide any services to the Friedens Family without the consent of the Pastor. To invite a speaker, either in the absence of the Pastor or for special occasions, the consent of both Pastor and Church Council is necessary.
7. The Pastor’s contract is to be negotiated by the Council and approved by the congregation on an annual basis.

Article 10: Property

1. 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 or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer and convey such property for the general purposes of the church. The church 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 church, a conversation with the United Church of Christ Conference should occur to help the

congregation explore all of the possibilities involved with said dissolution.

3. In case of dissolution of the church, the cemetery shall be excepted in Section 2 and the cemetery fund shall be used to make perpetual care arrangements. Additionally, the United Church of Christ Conference will be notified, so that the church may utilize all of the expertise afforded to them through the covenantal relationship.

Article 11: Congregational Meetings

1. The annual meeting of this congregation will be held in January each year with the President of the Church Council presiding over the meeting. Prior to this meeting all church organizations, boards, cabinets and Pastor will submit an annual report in writing.
2. Special congregational meetings may be called by the Church Council or the Pastor at any time during the year. Additionally, if a petition is provided by the congregation, having been signed by one third of the active members, stating the rationale for a special congregational meeting, a meeting will be called within two weeks of submission of the petition.
3. All regular and special congregational meetings of the congregation shall be announced on two consecutive Sundays. Under unusual circumstances, the meeting may be called immediately following the second announcement. Along with the pulpit announcement, the church secretary, under the guidance of the Pastor will prepare a notification to be sent to all active members of the congregation.

Article 12: Rules of Order

Robert's Rule of Order will be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by the constitution and or by-laws.

Article 13: Amendments

Amendments to the constitution may be made at any duly-called congregational meeting by an affirmative vote of over 75% of those in attendance after quorum has been met. All proposed amendments are to be distributed to the congregation two weeks prior to the meetings.

BY LAWS

Part 1

Official Year

The Official year of the congregation shall be from January 1st to December 31st.

Part 2

Cemetery

1. The cemetery board shall consist of three church members. All matters pertaining to the cemetery shall come under the jurisdiction of this board, subject, however, at all times to the Church Council.
2. One member of this board shall be elected annually by the congregation for a term of three years and may succeed him/herself in office for up to three consecutive terms.
3. All funds donated to the cemetery fund shall be used exclusively for the care and maintenance of the cemetery, and remain separate of any funds of the church. Said care and maintenance shall be accomplished if possible with the interest earned by the cemetery fund.

4. Each member of this church and their immediate family has a gravesite in the cemetery, a burial fee of \$300.00 will be assessed and paid into the cemetery fund.
5. Non-members may not be buried in the cemetery without the approval of the Church Council in which case a minimum charge of \$600.00 will be made, to be paid into the cemetery fund and an annual maintenance fee paid. This fee is to be set and reviewed by the Church Council every three years beginning in 2009.
6. The cemetery board shall keep an accurate record of all gifts and transactions and report to the annual meeting of the congregation.
7. The cemetery board shall establish and maintain an accurate plot plan of the cemetery. Plot plan is to be kept on file in the church office.

Part 3

Christian Education

1. The Church Council vests the authority for the promotion of the work of religious education into the hands of a constituted committee, known as the Board of Christian Education.
2. The Board of Christian Education shall be organized each year. This board shall consist of the following: Director of Christian Education, Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School Teachers, Director of Children's Music, and Youth Leader, one Church Council member (appointed by the Church Council) and the Pastor non-voting member.
3. The Board of Christian Education shall give suggestions and guidance for the activities of the Church School and shall generally oversee the Christian Education program. This board shall meet on call of either the Pastor or the Director of Christian Education.

4. The Director of Christian Education shall be nominated and elected by the congregation. He or she shall hold office for three years, beginning in 2007, and eligible for only 2 consecutive terms.
5. By Virtue of this office, the Director of Christian Education shall be the Chairman of the Board of Christian Education.
6. The Sunday School Superintendent shall be nominated and elected by the congregation. He or she shall hold office for three years, beginning in 2006, and eligible for only 2 consecutive terms.

Part 4

Music and Worship

1. The Church Council vests the authority for the promotion of the work of religious Music and Worship into the hands of a constituted committee, known as the Board of Music and Worship.
2. The Board of Music and Worship shall be organized each year. This board shall consist of the following: Director of Music and Worship Committee, Director of Choir, Organist, 3 lay church members, one Church Council member (appointed by the Church Council) and the Pastor non-voting member.
3. This board shall meet on call of either the Pastor or the Director of Music and Worship.
4. The Director of Music and Worship shall be nominated and elected by the congregation. He or she shall hold office for three years and eligible for re-election only 2 consecutive terms.
5. By Virtue of this office, the Director of Music and Worship shall be the Chairman of the Board of Music and Worship.

6. The Choir Director and the Organist shall be elected annually by the congregation. These positions are to be paid and supervised by the Church Council. Both positions and salaries will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Part 5

Pastoral Relationship Committee

1. The Church Council vests the authority for the promotion of the work of Pastoral Relationship into the hands of a constituted committee, known as the Pastoral Relationship Committee.
2. The Pastoral Relationship Committee shall be organized each year. The church committee shall elect a member to serve as chairperson. This committee shall consist of five church members and the Pastor non-voting member.
3. Two members of this committee will be nominated and elected each year by the Council. He or she shall serve a term of 3 years and eligible for only 2 consecutive terms. Due to the number of members, there may be a year where only one member is elected or term ended.

Part 6

Fundraising /Fellowship Committee

1. The purpose of the Fundraising/Fellowship Committee is to act as coordinator and gatherer of all fundraising and fellowship ideas. The committee takes and develops these ideas into events, keeps records and provides liaisons to assist chairperson & co-chairperson of annually repeated events.
2. The Fundraising/Fellowship Committee shall consist of a minimum of 5 members. During the 6 months preceding fundraiser events the chair and co-chair of these events will participate as additional members of this committee. Terms for

- committee members shall be 3 years with no more than 3 consecutive terms. Two members will be elected annually. Due to the flexible member limit, some years only one member will be elected.
3. The Fundraising/Fellowship committee shall organize itself each year electing a Chair and Secretary. Meetings shall be held bi-monthly or more often if needed.

Part 7

Committees, Boards and Organizations

As of January 1, 2008, recognized committees, boards and organizations include: Endowment Committee, Women's Fellowship, Building/Grounds, Evangelism/Outreach/ Shepherding, Stewardship, Budget, Fundraising/Fellowship, Christian Education, and Music and Worship. Any committee, Board or Organization that wishes to be recognized, must be nominated through the Church Cabinet and approved by a majority vote of the congregation in a duly called meeting.

1. All Committees, Boards and Organizations funded by the church, are subject to the budget process. Any expenditure not budgeted requires approval of the Church Council.
2. All Committees, Boards and Organizations are required to maintain purpose statement, active membership, functions and meeting minutes in designated binder. All committees shall consist of a minimum of 3 voting members.
3. Church Council has final jurisdiction over all Committees, Boards and Organizations.
4. All Committees, Boards and Organizations should prepare a report for the congregation to be presented at the annual meeting.

Part 8
Use of Church and Facilities

The Church and all its facilities may be used for any reasonable function by the members and friends of the church, subject to the approval of the Church Council. The Council will also approve scheduling and appropriate charges. Those using the church and its facilities for such events are to leave the premises in the condition in which they were found. Alcohol is permitted by those of legal age, but reasonable consumption is encouraged. Alcohol not permitted in Sanctuary excluding Communion.