

The Fulton Congregational Church Constitution

Article I: Name and Affiliation

The legal title of this organization is The Fulton Congregational Church (commonly known as "Fulton Church"), as incorporated under chapter 187 of the laws of the State of Wisconsin, September 12, 1961. Volume 24 Records, P. 396, Rock County Court House, Janesville, Wisconsin.

Article II: Purpose Statement

We are a church that seeks to be a "light in the country" by focusing on the following three aims:

- Growing in Christ: We desire to see and follow Christ more clearly and to understand his grace more deeply.
- Connecting as a multi-generational church family: we seek to connect together as the body of Christ.
- Reaching out to our World: Aligned with Christ's mission, we aim to reach our local and global community with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Article III: Church Government

1. Fulton Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head and finds in the Holy Scripture, interpreted by the Divine Spirit through reason, faith and conscience, its guidance in matters of faith and discipline.
2. The government of Fulton Church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject in legal matters to the laws of the State of Wisconsin.

Article IV: Affirmation of Faith

1. The Word of God – We believe the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21; I Corinthians 2:12-13; John 10:35; Hebrews 1:1-2; Mark 12:36; Acts 3:18.
2. The Trinity – We believe there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons: God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit; that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinctly but harmoniously in the work of creation, providence and redemption. Matthew 3:16-17; John 14:16-17; John 15:26; Hebrews 9:14; I Corinthians 12:4-6; Ephesians 2:13-18; Jude 20-21; Matthew 28:19.
3. God the Father – We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer when offered in faith, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. Galatians 3:26; Psalms 90:1-2; John 4:24; Psalms 99:5,9; Job 37:15; I John 4:8-16; John 3:16;

Nehemiah 9:16-19,31; Proverbs 15:29; II Chronicles 7:14; Psalms 66:18; Romans 3:5-26.

4. Jesus Christ – We believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit, one mediator, true God and true man. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, burial, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and visible return to earth. Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; I Corinthians 15:1-4; II Corinthians 5:19-20, Hebrews 7:25-27; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; John 14:1-3; Revelations 20:4-6; John 1:14; Matthew 1:20; Philippians 2:5-11.
5. Holy Spirit – We believe in the Holy Spirit who convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment, who also regenerates, sanctifies, and empowers all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, guide, and comforter. John 14:16-18; John 16:7-14; Romans 8:9,14,16,26,27; Ephesians 1:13-14; Luke 12:12; John 3:18.
6. Humankind - We believe that all humans, men and women, are created in the image of God. They were created in a state of original righteousness, but broke covenant from God and became the subject of divine judgement. All humankind are unable to bring about their own redemption and are in need of a redeemer. Genesis 1 and 2. Romans 3:23.
7. Regeneration – We believe that all humankind are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5; II Corinthians 5:17; I Peter 1:23; Ephesians 4:24; Ephesians 2:10; Galatians 6:15; Colossians 3:10.
8. The Church – We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world. Matthew 16:15-16; Acts 2:37-47; Romans 12:15; I Corinthians 12:10-12; Ephesians 1:22,23; Ephesians 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14-17; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 1:7-8; Luke 24:46-49.
9. Christian Conduct – We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of his or her fellow brother/sister; that his/her conduct should be blameless before the world; that he/she should refrain from unchristian activities; that he/she should be a faithful steward of his/her possessions; that he/she should seek to realize for himself/herself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ. We believe that every Christian should practice compassion, forbearance, and patience toward his/her brethren in the Lord, forgiving and forgetting any wrongs done against him/her, refraining from all gossip and unkind criticism, and always seeking to help the weak and to correct the erring. We believe that his/her conduct toward all who are outside the assembly of believers should be honest and above all reproach at all times. The financial giving shall be in accordance with the teachings of the scripture, whereby

each one is instructed to give as the Lord has prospered. Colossians 3:1-17; Ephesians 4; Titus 2; Hebrews 10:24-25; Isaiah 47:11-14; Leviticus 19:26,31; Leviticus 20:26-27; Deuteronomy 18:10; Galatians 5:20; Revelation 21:8; Revelation 22:15.

10. The Ordinances – We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of the believer in water to show forth in a solemn and meaningful emblem his faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior and his identification with Him in death to sin and resurrection to new life. We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of the Lord's death until He comes again and should always be preceded by solemn self-examination. Acts 8:26-39; John 3:23; Romans 6:3-5; Matthew 3:13-17; Colossians 2:12; I Corinthians 11:23-28; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:7-20; Matthew 26:26-30.
11. The Last Things – We believe in the imminent, personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to call for His own who will appear before Him, and to establish His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the bodies of all mankind, the final judgment, the eternal bliss of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked. Luke 12:35-40; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; John 14:1-6; I Corinthians 15; I Corinthians 3:10-15; I Corinthians 5:1-11; Matthew 13:36-43; Matthew 22:11-14; Revelation 20:11-15; 21:1-6; 22:1-5.

Article V: Fulton Church Membership

Fulton Church shall receive as members those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior, being born again, manifesting the fruits of the Spirit in their lives, and are in agreement with the doctrine and governance of this church. Please see bylaws on the process.

Article VI: Business Meetings of the Congregation

Fulton Church will conduct regular business meetings.

1. Notice - Proper notification of regular or special Fulton Church business meetings will be published and announced two weeks prior, with an agenda, along with any related constitutional wording changes, ballots, reports or financials being voted upon. Matters not included in the written agenda may be discussed at the meeting. An opportunity to add additional items to the agenda should be offered at the beginning of the meeting.
2. Quorum - A quorum is required for any business meeting of the Fulton Church Membership for the resulting actions of those present to constitute the acts of the entire Corporation. A quorum is defined as 25 members.
3. Regularly Scheduled Business Meetings

- a. Annually, Fulton Church will conduct elections, approve annual budgets, and conduct business in an open business meeting forum with the Congregation.
 - b. Fulton Church may meet quarterly to discuss business, provide updates and solicit input from the Fulton Church members.
 - c. Special meetings of Fulton Church members may be called by the Church Council at its discretion with proper notification (see Article VI paragraph 1).
4. Voting. Business reports, including financial statements of income or expenditures, shall be voted on for approval. Elections shall be conducted by ballot. Each member shall vote in person and shall have one vote. All members are entitled to vote. All votes are majority rules, with exceptions for the following items which require a two-thirds majority to pass:
 - A. Approval of the annual budget
 - B. Amendment of this constitution
 - C. Hiring or dismissing of pastoral staff
 - D. Buying or selling of church property
 - E. Taking or accepting any indebtedness
 - F. In rules of procedure of deliberative assemblies
5. Elections Process. Those members interested in running for Church Council shall complete a form outlining their interest and qualifications for the position. All submitted forms will be published one (1) month in advance as the final panel of all candidates published prior to the vote.
6. Record of Meetings. All business meetings of the Congregation are open to all congregants. Minutes of Fulton Church business meetings shall be submitted for communication and retention.
7. Parliamentary Rules. Roberts' Rules of Order or Sturgis' Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure shall be the standard for matters being deliberated or requiring a vote.

Article VII: Leadership Goals, Values and Structure

- 1) Leadership Goals:
 - a) Fulton Church leadership's goal is to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach a unity in faith and knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:12-13).
- 2) The Leadership Values within Fulton Church

- a) We value servant leadership modeled on the person of Christ in the gospels (Matthew 12:18) that is humble and transparent, built on trust and unity through the wisdom and inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the scriptures.
- b) We value shepherd leadership modeled on the person of Christ (John 10:1-21) that seeks to put the needs of others above the needs of themselves.
- c) We value personal leadership that employs methods of coaching, mentoring, facilitating, and consensus-building.
- d) We value leadership empowering individuals with God-given talents in ownership of their roles and responsibilities (as outlined below).
- e) We DO NOT value leadership styles that rely on command and control, which is autocratic in nature, and based on positional (or personal) power and authority.
- f) We DO NOT value leadership that sees any person as something less than God's creation - seeing others as "something to be managed" rather than a fellow sister or brother in Christ.

3) The Leadership Structure of the church consists of:

- The Congregation
- Church Council
- Pastoral Staff Team
- Ministry Teams

a) Congregation: Fulton Church members are expected and encouraged to:

- i) Actively participate in and support the ministries of Fulton Church.
- ii) Participate in regularly scheduled or special business meetings.
- iii) Elect representatives to the Church Council who exhibit Godly lives, with personal and leadership traits that align with scripture, the Affirmation of Faith, and Leadership Values as stated above.
- iv) Provide constructive feedback to the appropriate parties, when asked, or as needed, to continually improve the ministries of Fulton Church.

b) Church Council:

- i) Is made up of Fulton Church members who are elected by the Fulton Church membership through an open process to a two-year term.
- ii) Shall consist of 8 members, 4 men and 4 women.
- iii) Is a self-governed body for conducting its internal business and structure.
- iv) Shall select officers as they deem necessary. At minimum, there shall be a president (commonly known as chair) and secretary.
- v) Shall act as the legal officers and final authority of Fulton Church, and as such, shall be empowered to do all things necessary or convenient for the orderly and efficient administration of the affairs and the business of Fulton Church, under the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit within the framework of this constitution and its intent.

- vi) Is responsible for the vision and strategies for Fulton Church aligned with the values and objectives of scripture, taking into consideration the desires of the membership, as well as the needs of our membership, surrounding communities, and our world.
 - vii) Oversees the process of calling, hiring, performance evaluation, and dismissal of Pastoral Staff Team members.
 - viii) Partners with the Pastoral Staff Team, and current Ministry Team members, in the selection and transition of Ministry Team leaders.
 - ix) Partners with the Pastoral Staff Team, to oversee, encourage, and support the Ministry Teams and ensure alignment with Fulton Church's values, purposes, vision and strategies set forth.
 - x) Shall oversee any issues of discipline and reconciliation among Fulton Church congregants.
 - xi) Will meet, as needed, in partnership with the Pastoral Staff Team, with members of the Congregation to provide encouragement and biblical guidance.
 - xii) Will call, schedule and conduct all regular, scheduled and special congregational business meetings.
 - xiii) Will, in partnership with the Pastoral Staff Team, approve and support a proposed annual budget, drafted by the Finance Ministry Team, prior to congregational vote/approval.
 - xiv) Will partner with the Finance Ministry Team, to oversee the collection, use and distribution of Fulton Church's finances in an ethical and transparent fashion according to scripture and the laws of the state.
- c) Pastoral Staff Team: Pastoral Staff Team are employees of Fulton Church with the title of "Pastor." The Pastoral Team is a self-governed body for conducting its internal business and structure. The Pastoral Staff Team shall:
- i) Teach the Word of God in its entirety.
 - ii) Minister to the spiritual needs of the membership, attendees, and community.
 - 1) Invest in individual discipleship and leadership development.
 - iii) Oversee the plans and work of the ministries, in tandem with the Church Council.
 - 1) Oversee the hiring, performance, and dismissal of paid employees of Fulton Church, under the guidance of the Church Council.
 - 2) Provide guidance and accountability to the Ministry Teams and their leadership in alignment with the purposes and plans of Fulton Church.
 - 3) Identify and propose new ministry opportunities.
 - 4) Partner with the Church Council, and current Ministry Team members, in the selection and transition of Ministry Team leaders.
 - 5) Partner with the Finance Ministry Team in the process of forming the annual budget with the Ministry Teams.
 - 6) Provide regular assessment and updates on the ministries' health.

- iv) The term of office shall begin with their hiring, with approval of the Church Membership, and continuing while it is mutually agreeable to the Pastor and Fulton Church.
- d) Ministry Teams and Leaders
- i) Each ministry team will establish a written charter, with approval of the Church Council and Pastoral Staff Team, outlining at minimum:
 - 1) The mission and purpose of the ministry, and targeted audience(s).
 - 2) Guiding principles, values and leadership characteristics.
 - 3) Measures of success.
 - ii) Ministry Team leaders will be appointed and, if necessary, dismissed under the oversight of the Pastoral Staff Team and Church Council. A spirit of partnership (between Pastoral Staff Team/Church Council) with current Ministry Team members is expected in leadership appointments and transitions. Although encouraged, Ministry Team leaders, with exception of the Finance Ministry Team, are not required to be Fulton Church members.
 - iii) Finance Ministry Team
 - 1) Fulton Church shall always have a Finance Ministry Team whose primary functions are to:
 - (a) Serve as an independent resource to the Church Council, providing financial insights and realities.
 - (b) Manage the day-to-day finances of Fulton Church.
 - (c) In partnership with each Ministry Team, and the Pastoral Staff Team, create an annual budget for Ministry Teams that advances the mission of Fulton Church, as set by the Church Council.
 - 2) The Chair of the Finance Ministry Team will be appointed by the Church Council and will be a member of Fulton Church.
 - 3) An official Treasurer of Fulton Church shall be appointed by the Church Council, who will be a member of the Finance Ministry Team and will be a member of Fulton Church. The Treasurer shall serve a 3 year term. The Treasurer may serve as the Chair of the Finance Ministry Team.
 - iv) Ministry Team leaders are responsible to build their Ministry Team and coordinate the ministry. Each Ministry Team is a self-governed body which conducts its internal business and organizes its structure and work, with the exception of the following items:
 - 1) Develop and maintain operating procedures and annual operating plans and related budgets for transparency and continuity.
 - 2) Provide quarterly reports on the activities and effectiveness of ministry.

3) Solicit guidance and support from the Pastoral Staff Team and Church Council.

e) Church Conflict and Churchwide Policies

- i) Church Conflict: Fulton Church leadership (Church Council, the Pastoral Staff Team and Ministry Teams) should seek to work together and in unity as much as possible towards the main aims of Fulton Church. When there is disagreement on decisions, practices, etc. the parties involved should seek resolutions that honor all involved. When a disagreement cannot be resolved after good faith attempts, the Church Council will provide final direction.
- ii) Church Wide Policies: Various bodies of leadership within Fulton Church may propose policies that impact multiple ministries. Such proposals must be reviewed by the Pastoral Staff Team with final approval given by the Church Council.

Article VIII: Amendments

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of those present at any regular or special Fulton Church meeting provided that the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at any previous regular meeting and that all active, resident members shall have been notified in writing no less than ten days in advance of the vote.

Adopted January 23, 2022