

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ANCHORAGE
Bylaws

(Consult with Presbytery G-1.0201)

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OR MISSION

The First Presbyterian Church of Anchorage has been called by God and organized to SERVE: Seek God's vision, Emulate Christ's compassion, Reconcile community of Christ, be a Voice for the unheard and Empower people to be sent forth.

II. RELATION TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

The First Presbyterian Church of Anchorage is a member church of the Presbytery of Yukon in the Synod of Alaska-Northwest of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

III. GOVERNANCE OF THE CHURCH

This church shall be governed in accordance with the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. Consistent with that *Constitution*, these bylaws shall provide specific guidance for this church. The most recent edition of *Roberts Rules of Order (Newly Revised)* shall be used for parliamentary guidance. **(G-3.0105)**

IV. THE CONGREGATION

A. Membership (G-1.0402 and 2.0102)

The membership of the church consists of baptized members, active members and affiliate members who have been received into membership by session. Only active members may be counted for a quorum and vote at congregational meetings; only active members may be elected to ordered ministries, clerk of session or other office of the church, except treasurer.

B. Meetings of the Church (G-1.0501 & 1.0502)

There shall be an annual meeting of the congregation on the third Sunday in January. Special meetings may be called as necessary by the session, by the Presbytery or by the session upon request in writing of one-fourth of the active members. Such calls shall state clearly the purpose of special meetings, and business shall be restricted to that which is specified in the call.

C. Notice of Meetings (G-1.0502)

Adequate written public notice sent by U.S. postal service or electronic communication, or both, of the time and place of all congregational meetings and the purpose(s) of all special congregational meetings shall be given at least two (2) weeks in advance, including notice given at regular services of worship on two (2) successive Sundays prior to the day of the meeting.

D. Moderator (G-1.0504)

The installed pastor shall moderate all congregational meetings. When the church is without an installed pastor, a moderator appointed by the Presbytery shall preside. If it is impractical for the pastor or a moderator appointed by the Presbytery to preside, he or she shall invite, with the concurrence of the session, another minister of the Presbytery to preside. When this is not expedient, and when the pastor or the moderator concur, a member of the session may be invited to preside.

E. Secretary and Minutes (G-1.0505)

The clerk of session shall serve as secretary for all meetings of the congregation. If the clerk is not present or is unable to serve, the congregation shall elect a secretary for that meeting. Minutes of the meeting shall be recorded by the secretary and attested to by the moderator and the secretary.

F. Business Before Congregational Meetings (G-1.0503)

Business to be transacted at any annual or special meeting of the congregation shall be limited to the following:

- (1) Election of ruling elders and deacons (**G-2.0401**);
- (2) Calling a pastor or associate pastor (**G-2.08**);
- (3) Changing pastoral relationships, including changes to the terms of call (**G-2.0502 and 2.0804**) and dissolution of the relationship (**G-2.0901**);
- (4) Buying, mortgaging, selling or otherwise acquiring or disposing of real property (**G-4.0206**); and
- (5) Such other matters authorized by the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, the articles of incorporation or these bylaws.

Business to be transacted at annual meetings shall include at least the following:

- (1) Approval of minutes of previous congregational meeting;
- (2) Presentation of annual reports of session and its committees (information only);
- (3) Presentation of a financial report for the preceding year and a budget for the current year (information only) **(G-3.0205 and 3.0113)**;
- (4) Election of ruling elders and deacons **(G-2.0401)**;
- (5) Election of members of the nominating committee **(G-2.0401)**; and
- (6) Election of members of the audit committee. **(G-3.0113)**.

Both ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same meeting of the congregation.

G. Quorum for the Meeting; Voting (G-1.0501, AS 10.20.076)

The quorum necessary for a meeting of the congregation shall be the moderator and ten percent (10%) of the active members of the congregation, EXCEPT twenty percent (20%) of the active members of the congregation is required for a quorum at a congregational meeting to consider either dissolution of a pastoral relationship or acquiring, mortgaging or disposing of real property. The secretary shall determine whether a quorum is present. All active members of the congregation present at meetings are entitled to vote. Voting by proxy is not allowed. If a quorum is present, the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast at the meeting on any subject matter is the act of the membership, unless the vote of a greater number is required by the articles of incorporation, these bylaws or the laws of the state of Alaska.

V. NOMINATING COMMITTEE (G-2.0401; OldFoG ¶ G-14.0223)

A nominating committee shall nominate persons for election as members of session, the board of deacons and the nominating and audit committees. Full opportunity shall always be given for nominations from the floor by any active member of the congregation.

- (1) There shall be at least seven (7) active members of the congregation on the nominating committee.

- (2) At least two (2) members of the nominating committee shall be ruling elders designated by session, one of whom shall be currently serving on the session and serve as moderator of the committee.
- (3) At least one (1) member shall be designated by and from the board of deacons.
- (4) Other members of the committee, in sufficient number to constitute a majority thereof (at least four), shall be elected each year at the annual meeting of the congregation. None of the elected members may be in active service on session or the board of deacons.
- (5) The pastor shall be an ex officio member and without vote.

The nominating committee shall be representative of the congregation. Members of the nominating committee shall serve one-year terms commencing March 1. No member of the nominating committee who has served three consecutive full one-year terms shall be eligible to serve for a period of one (1) year.

VI. AUDIT COMMITTEE (G-3.0113 and G-3.0205; Bylaws § 21)

The congregation shall elect an audit committee to review the management of the church's finances and accounting procedures, complete an audit of all books and records relating to finances once each year, and report any recommendations, concerns, discrepancies or exceptions in a timely manner to the session. The audit committee shall consist of three persons, not necessarily members of the church but versed in accounting procedures, each serving staggered three-year terms commencing March 1, with at least one person elected each year at the annual meeting of the congregation. No member of the audit committee who has served two consecutive full three-year terms shall be eligible for reelection for a period of one (1) year.

VII. RULING ELDERS (G-2.04, Article VII)

A. Ruling Elders (G-2.0301)

Ruling elders are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with teaching elders, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the session.

B. Election of Ruling Elders (G-2.0401 and 2.0404)

The congregation will elect thirteen (13) ruling elders as members of Session, twelve of the elders will be divided in the three (3) equal classes, serving a three year term, and the one (1) will be a younger member serving a one-year term. The elders will be elected at the annual meeting of the congregation. Terms shall commence March 1.

A transition period would occur through the Class of 2016, such that previously elected ruling elders would serve their terms to completion. In 2017, reference to the transition period will be automatically deleted. In addition, the Congregation will elect one additional ruling elder for a one year term. The age of the ruling elder with the one year term shall be no less than sixteen and no more than twenty-three. The nomination and election of ruling elders shall express the rich diversity of the congregation's membership and shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness as expressed in the mission of the Church. No elder who has served one full term shall be eligible for reelection to the Session for a period of one year.

C. Election of Officers (G-3.0104 and G-3.0205)

The session, at its first meeting in March, shall elect a ruling elder as clerk of session and a person, not necessarily an active member or ruling elder, as treasurer. The clerk and treasurer shall serve one-year terms commencing upon election and shall hold office until their successors shall have been duly elected and qualified.

(1) The clerk of session shall record minutes of all meetings of session and the congregation, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, preserve its records and furnish extracts from them as may be required by other councils.

(2) The treasurer shall manage all church funds (ensuring all offerings are counted and recorded by at least two ruling elders or by one fidelity bonded person), maintain books and records properly reflecting all financial transactions, and periodically report, not less frequently than annually, all financial activities to session.

D. Meetings (G-3.0104, 3.0201 and 3.0203)

The installed pastor shall be the moderator of session, except as provided in the *Constitution*. The session shall hold stated meetings monthly, and the moderator shall call special meetings when he or she deems necessary or when requested in writing by any two members of session. A quorum for all meetings of session shall be the moderator and a majority of session members. Installed pastors are members of session entitled to vote. Affirmative votes of a majority of session members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present are required for session action, unless the vote of a greater number is required by the articles of incorporation, these bylaws or the laws of the state

of Alaska. The session shall provide by rule for the manner of voting, except the session may not provide for voting by proxy. Time sensitive actions may be taken without a meeting on written consents, with the action(s) taken being identical in content and approved by a majority of session members. The actions taken by written consent shall be recorded in the minutes.

E. Executive Session

The question of holding an executive session shall be determined by motion approved by the session. A subject may not be considered at an executive session unless it is mentioned in the motion calling for the executive session or is auxiliary to a subject mentioned. Minutes shall be recorded, and action may be taken, while in executive session; PROVIDED minutes recorded while in executive session shall be retained separately from other minutes of meetings of the church.

Only the following subjects may be discussed in an executive session:

- (1) Matters the immediate knowledge of which would clearly have an adverse effect upon the finances or legal position of the church;
- (2) Subjects that tend to prejudice the reputation and character of a person, unless the person has requested to have the subjects discussed in public;
- (3) Matters pertaining to personnel; and
- (4) Matters that, by law, are required or permitted to be kept confidential.

F. Minutes (G-3.0107 and 3.0204)

Minutes of all meetings of the session (including executive session) shall be recorded by the clerk and attested to by the moderator and the clerk. If the clerk is not present or is unable to serve, the session shall elect a secretary for that meeting.

VIII. COMMITTEES (G-3.0103 and 3.0109)

Session may designate by resolution committees for trustees, worship, education, membership and outreach, mission and such other committees as necessary to carry out its work. Committees do not have, and may not exercise, the authority of session; rather, committees shall bring their recommendations to session for approval. Prior to session's first meeting in March of each year, the chairs of each committee of session shall appoint those ruling elders currently serving on session and those elected to serve on session to committees, designating the in-coming chair of each committee. The in-coming chairs may appoint additional active members of the congregation to their

committees and shall report all names of committee members to session. Any member of any committee may be removed by session whenever in its judgment the best interests of the church shall be served by such removal.

Each member of a committee shall continue as a member until the last day of February, unless the committee shall be sooner terminated or unless such member shall be removed from such committee or cease to qualify as a member thereof.

Unless otherwise provided in the resolution of session designating a committee, a majority of the whole committee shall constitute a quorum, and the act of a majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee. All members of the committee shall be entitled to vote.

Each committee of session shall record minutes of its meetings.

IX. DEACONS (G-2.04)

A. Deacons (G-2.0201 and 2.0202)

The ministry of deacons is one of compassion, witness and service, and sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures or anyone in distress. Deacons may also be given special assignments in the congregation, such as caring for members of the congregation, and such other duties as may be delegated by the session, including assisting with the Lord's Supper. The ministry of deacons is under the supervision and authority of the session.

B. Election of Deacons (G-2.0401)

The congregation shall elect nine (9) active members to the board of deacons, divided into three (3) equal classes with one class elected each year at each annual meeting of the congregation for a three-year term commencing March 1. Deacons should be persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion and sound judgment. No deacon who has served one full three-year term shall be eligible for reelection to the board of deacons for a period of one (1) year.

The board of deacons, at its first meeting in March, shall elect a moderator from among its members and shall form such committees as necessary to carry out its work. A quorum for board of deacons shall be a majority of its members, including the moderator.

The pastor shall be an advisory member of the board of deacons.

X. VACANCIES (Article VII)

Vacancies on the session or the board of deacons may be filled at an annual or special meeting of the congregation, as determined by session. Persons elected to fill a vacancy shall serve for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor in office.

XI. AMENDMENT (Article VIII {"elders"})

These bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new bylaws adopted by a majority vote of the active members present at an annual or special meeting of the congregation, provided the proposed changes to the bylaws shall have been distributed at the same time as the call of the meeting at which the bylaws are to be voted upon.

DATED: October 20, 2013

MARCUS GEIST, Clerk of Session

APPROVED by Congregation – October 20, 2013