

**BYLAWS
OF
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WINNEBAGO
WINNEBAGO, IL**

ARTICLE I – DEFINITION AND NAME

The name of this church is First Presbyterian Church of Winnebago, incorporated under the law of the State of Illinois.

The church consists of professing Christian people, with their children, voluntarily associated in fellowship to worship and work as a witness to our faith.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The First Presbyterian Church of Winnebago has been called by God and organized to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, to minister to the needs of members of the congregation and residents of the community, and to promote justice and peace in the world.

ARTICLE III – GOVERNANCE OF THE CHURCH

The denominational status of this church is maintained with Blackhawk Presbytery, Synod of Lincoln Trails, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Bylaws of this church shall at all points be in harmony with and obligatory to the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. ~~*Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised)*~~ (*Book of Order 2015-2017*) shall be used for parliamentary guidance.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Membership in this church is open to all those professing faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and who are received, admitted, and maintained in communicant status by the Session.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

Section 1 – The annual meeting of the congregation shall be called by the Session in January or February of each year, for the purpose of receiving annual reports and transacting other business pertaining to the congregation and corporation.

Section 2 – Special congregational meetings shall be called in one of the following ways [~~*Book of Order G-7.0303*~~] [*G-1.0502 revised*]

1. By the Session whenever it determines such a meeting is necessary.
2. By the Presbytery whenever it determines such a meeting is necessary.
3. By the Session upon receipt of a written request from one fourth (1/4) of the active members.

Section 3 – Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation shall include the following: [~~*Book of Order G-7.0304*~~] [*G1.0503 revised*]

1. Matters related to the electing of Elders, Deacons, and Trustees.
2. Matters related to the calling of a pastor or pastors.

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3. Matters related to the pastoral relationship, such as changing the call or requesting or consenting or declining to consent to dissolution.
4. Matters related to buying, mortgaging, or selling real property.
5. Matters related to the permissive powers of a congregation.

Business at congregational meetings shall be limited to the forgoing matters 1-5. Both ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same congregational meeting.

Section 4 – Public notice of regular and special meetings shall be read from the pulpit of the church at the regular hour of worship for two consecutive Sundays previous to the meeting. The meeting may be convened following notice given on the second Sunday. In the case of a special meeting, the notice shall indicate the business to be brought before the meeting. [*Book of Order G-7.0303*] [*G – 1.0502 revised*]

Section 5 – A quorum of any congregational meeting shall consist of not less than one tenth (1/10) of the active members. [*Book of Order G-7.0305*] [*G – 1.0501 revised*]

Section 6 – Reports of work of the church shall be made in writing and made available to the members at the annual congregational meeting.

Section 7 – The pastor shall be the moderator at all meetings of the congregation. When the church is without a pastor, the moderator of the Session appointed by the Presbytery shall preside at all congregational meetings. If it is impractical for the pastor or moderator of the Session appointed by the Presbytery to preside, he or she shall invite with concurrence of the Session, another minister of the Presbytery to preside. When this is not expedient, and when both the pastor or the moderator of the Session and the Session concur, a member of the Session may be invited to preside, [*Book of Order G-7.0306*] [*G – 1.0504 revised*] except that, at all meetings where spiritual officers are to be elected, or where the dissolution of pastoral relationship or election of a pastor is considered, the moderator shall be an ordained minister designated by Blackhawk Presbytery.

ARTICLE VI – ELECTIONS

Section 1 – The election of elders to the Session and members to the Board of Trustees and Board of Deacons shall be at a meeting of the congregation in the last quarter of the calendar year. When vacancies occur, an election to fill an unexpired term shall be held by a special congregational meeting called by the Session for that purpose. This church shall be subject to the election provisions of the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. [*Book of Order G-14.0204*] [*G – 2.0401 revised*]

Section 2 – Ruling Elders, Trustees, and Deacons shall be elected to a term of three (3) years, except when chosen to fill a vacancy. A youth elder shall be elected annually to

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Session for a one (1) year term. A member who has filled only a partial term is eligible to succeed to a full term as long as the length of service will not be more than six (6) consecutive years. An Elder or Deacon having served a total of six (6) years shall be ineligible of re-election for a period of at least one year. The Session and the Board of Deacons shall be divided into three (3) equal classes. The Board of Trustees shall have two (2) equal classes and one (1) unequal class. For all boards one class will be elected each year. A youth elder shall be elected annually. Terms of office shall commence immediately following ordination and installation of those elected. [*Book of Order-G-14.0201f*] [*G. - 2.0404 revised*]

Section 3 – The congregation shall form a nominating committee of ~~nine (9)~~ (6) members with the following composition: [*Book of Order-G-14.0201b*] [*G - 2.0401 revised*]

1. ~~Three (3)~~ Two (2) members shall be elders designated by the Session, at least two of whom shall be currently serving on the Session. Of those members currently on the Session, one shall be the currently serving youth elder, and (the personnel chair) who shall also serve as moderator of the committee.
2. One (1) member shall be designated from the Board of Deacons.
3. Other members, in sufficient numbers to constitute a majority thereof (exclusive of the pastor) shall be chosen by the congregation or by such organizations within the church as the congregation may designate, none of whom may be in active service on the Session or Board of Deacons. In this church, designated organizations shall be the Board of Trustees, the Christian Education Committee, and the Presbyterian Women. ~~and the Fellowship Supper Club~~. One at-large member of the congregation shall also be selected from the floor at a congregational meeting.
4. The pastor shall be a member of the committee ex-officio and without vote.

The nominating committee shall be chosen annually and no member of the committee may serve more than three years consecutively. If a member of this committee resigns or is unable to serve during the year, that member shall be replaced as soon as possible by another person representing the same organization as the resignee.

The nominating committee shall present to the congregation nominees for election to the Session, the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Deacons. The shall nominate three (3) elders, one (1) youth elder, two (2) or three (3) Trustees, depending on which class is being elected, and three (3) Deacons. They may also nominate committee members if requested to do so by a committee chairperson. If a vacancy occurs during the year, the nominating committee shall present a new nominee to the congregation as soon as possible.

Full opportunity shall always be given to the congregation for nominations from the floor. [*Book of Order-G-14.0201e*] [*G - 2.0401 revised*]

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At the request of the Session, the nominating committee may nominate members for a Pastor Nominating Committee. The congregation must approve the formation, membership of, and dissolution of a Pastor Nominating Committee.

Section 4 – The congregation may vote by a voice vote or show of hands. When the number of nominees is greater than the number of elders, Trustees and Deacons to be elected, the congregation shall vote by a secret ballot. A majority of all the voters present and voting shall be required to elect. [~~Book of Order-G-14.0204b~~] [G – 2.0401 revised]

ARTICLE VII – THE SESSION

Section 1 – The Session is the supreme ruling body in all matters ecclesiastical and civil, and is responsible for the whole life of the church. Its powers are those accorded to it by the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. Its responsibilities are those spelled out in section [~~G-10.0102~~] [G – 3.02 revised] of the *Book of Order*. These consist, in part, of:

1. Maintaining the spiritual government of the congregation, using its powers of discipline to do so.
2. Receiving and dismissing members.
3. Overseeing Christian instruction.
4. Directing and guiding the societies and organizations of the congregation.
5. In consultation and cooperation with the pastor, exercising authority over the worship and music of the church.
6. Appointing delegates to higher judicatories of the church.
7. Assisting the pastor in serving Holy Communion.

Section 2 – There shall be ten (10) ruling elders serving actively on the Session together with the moderator. These shall be established in three (3) equal classes of three (3) persons serving three (3) year terms along with one (1) youth elder serving a one (1) year term.

Section 3 – The pastor shall be the moderator of the Session [~~Book of Order-G-10.0103a~~] [G- -3.0201 revised]

Section 4 – The clerk of Session shall be an elder elected annually from the church's membership. If the clerk is not a member of the Session, he or she shall be without a vote. [~~Book of Order G-9.0203b~~] [G – 3.0104 revised]

Section 5 – The treasurer shall be elected annually by the Session to serve a term of one (1) year, subject to renewal. [~~Book of Order-G-1.0401~~] [G – 3.0205 revised]

Section 6 – Committees necessary for the work of the Session and not defined elsewhere in these bylaws shall be determined and approved by the Session. Also, committees such as Worship, Christian Education, Christian Living and Outreach, Personnel, and Memorials and those that shall be formed for specific purposes from time to time shall be approved by Session and their duties defined by Session. They shall be related to Session for administrative purposes. The pastor (**Session member**) shall be an ex-officio member of these committees.

Section 7 – The Session shall hold stated meetings at least quarterly. Special meetings may be called by the moderator, or any two Session members at any time. The Session shall also meet when directed to do so by Presbytery. The moderator and one third (1/3) of the members of the Session shall constitute a quorum. [*Book of Order-G-01.0201 and G-10.0202*] [*G – 3.0203 revised*]

Section 8 - The Board of Session shall have the following powers: [*Book of Order G-7.0402*]

- 1. Received, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property real or personal, for the church.**
- 2. Accept and execute deed of title to such property.**
- 3. Hold and defend title to such property, in trust for the Presbytery.**
- 4. Manage any special and permanent funds for the furtherance of the purposes of the church.**

ARTICLE VIII – BOARD OF TRUSTEES

~~Section 1—The Board of Trustees shall consist of seven (7) members, divided into two classes of two (2) persons and one class of three (3) persons. A Trustee having served a total of six (6) years shall be ineligible of re-election for a period of at least one year. The board is under the direction of the Session.~~

Section 1 – The Board of Trustees shall consist of six (6) members, divided into three classes of two (2) persons. A Trustee having served a total of six (6) years shall be ineligible of re-election for a period of at least one year. The board is under the direction of the Session.

~~Section 2—The Board of Trustees shall have the following powers: [*Book of Order G-7.0402*]~~

- ~~1. Received, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property real or personal, for the church.~~
- ~~2. Accept and execute deed of title to such property.~~
- ~~3. Hold and defend title to such property, in trust for the Presbytery.~~

~~4. Manage any special and permanent funds for the furtherance of the purposes of the church.~~

*Refer to section 8 page 5.

Section 2. The Board of Trustees has the following responsibilities:

- a. Oversee activities related to the operation, maintenance, safety and security of the church and grounds.
- b. Specific examples include, but not limited to:
 - Review, recommend, and coordinate the decorating, painting, structural changes or remodeling of the church.
 - Comply with code compliance (for example, elevator and boiler inspection)
 - Arrange for mowing of church lawn, maintenance of landscape, and snow and ice removal from sidewalks.

All actions of the Board of Trustees are subject to the authority of the Session and under the provisions of the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, ~~provided further that in buying, selling and mortgaging real property, the Trustees shall act only after the approval of the congregation granted in a duly constituted meeting.~~

Section 3 – The Board of Trustees shall annually elect a moderator and secretary from among its members. The pastor shall be an advisory member of the Board of Trustees.

Section 4 - The Board of Trustees shall hold at least four (4) stated meetings per year. Special meetings may be called by the moderator, the pastor, or at the request of two members of the board. The moderator and one third (1/3) of the members of the board shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5 - The Board of Trustees shall keep a record of its proceedings and of all funds at its disposal and their disposition. **Minutes shall be distributed to its members, filed with the church office and to the Session.** These records shall be subject to review by the Session.

ARTICLE IX – BOARD OF DEACONS [*Book of Order G-6.0400*] [*G – 2.02 revised*]

Section 1 – The Board of Deacons shall consist of nine (9) members, divided equally into three (3) classes of three (3) persons each. This board is under the direction of the Session.

Section 2 – The duties of the Board of Deacons shall embrace the general responsibility of the care of the congregation. Specific responsibilities will be determined in consultation with the Session. Other functions may be delegated to the Deacons by the Session in consultation with the Board of Deacons.

Section 3 – The Board of Deacons shall annually elect a moderator, secretary, and treasurer from among its members. The pastor shall be an advisory member of the board.

Section 4 – The Board of Deacons shall hold at least four (4) stated meetings per year. Special meetings may be called by the moderator, the pastor, or at least any two members of the board. The moderator and one third (1/3) of the members of the board shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5 – The Board of Deacons shall maintain a fund for the purpose of their work. ~~This fund shall be derived from special offerings.~~

This fund shall be derived by a line item in the church budget, recommended by the budget committee and approved at the annual meeting.

Section 6 – The Board of Deacons shall keep a record of its proceedings and of all funds at its disposal and their distribution. These records shall be subject to review by the Session.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended subject to the Articles of Incorporation, the laws of the state of Illinois, and the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* at any regular or special meeting of the congregation by two thirds (2/3) of the members present, provided notice of such amendments shall have been presented in writing to the clerk of Session and shall have been announced from the pulpit at the regular worship service on the two Sundays immediately preceding the meeting.

Approved by Session: December 29, 1996

Approved by the Congregation: January 19, 1997

Amended with approval of the Congregation: January 20, 2002

Amended updates by Session August 2016