

## **BYLAWS OF THE CONGREGATION FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOWARD**

- I. CONGREGATION AND CORPORATION. These Bylaws govern both the congregation and Corporation of FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOWARD COUNTY of Columbia, Maryland, acting as a particular congregation of the Presbytery of Baltimore of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and as a corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of Maryland on January 17, 1843. These Bylaws are an amplification of the authority and provisions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) which are stated in the Book of Order, and which authority and provisions shall govern all matters except those specifically stated in these Bylaws. In cases where provisions of these Bylaws and the Book of Order conflict, the Book of Order shall prevail.
- II. ANNUAL MEETING. The congregation will meet annually in the period between the fourth Sunday and the *eighth* Sunday of each calendar year, inclusive, to review the adequacy of the compensation of the pastor(s) upon report of the prior review by the session, and to conduct such other business as may properly come before the congregation. Other congregational meetings may be called as necessary; business to be transacted shall be limited to items specifically listed in the call of the meeting. Public notice of all congregational meetings shall be given on two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. All members on the Active Members' Roll are eligible to vote. A quorum shall consist of the moderator, secretary, and not less than one tenth of the eligible voters.
- III. SESSION. The session will consist of eighteen ruling elders in addition to the pastor and any co-pastors or associate pastors. *The congregation may choose to add a youth ruling elder as a nineteenth ruling elder for any given year for a one-year term, eligible for a second one-year term.* The quorum for the session shall be the moderator(s) and one third of the active ruling elders, except for the reception of members, when the quorum shall be the moderator and two members of the session.
- IV. TRUSTEES. *The ruling elders in active service on the session who have reached the age of eighteen will be the trustees of the corporation.* The quorum for the trustees will be the same as the quorum for the session, and the convening of a session meeting will convene a meeting of the board of trustees. The minutes of the session will be the minutes of the board of trustees. The moderator of the session will preside over the meetings of the trustees. The board of trustees will elect a president of the corporation at the June session meeting. The clerk of session will be the secretary of the corporation. *The session will elect, for a one-year term, a treasurer who will be the treasurer of the corporation; such election will take place no later than June of each year.*
- V. DEACONS. There will be a board of deacons consisting of fifteen persons. *The congregation may choose to add a youth deacon as a sixteenth deacon for any given year for a one-year term, eligible for a second one-year term.* The congregation will elect the members, and the board will have those duties and responsibilities assigned by the session, consistent with the Book of Order.

- VI. ELECTION OF OFFICERS. The election of ruling elders and deacons shall take place at a meeting of the congregation called for that purpose by the session. A representative nominating committee of active members of the church shall make nominations. Members of the nominating committee are to be at least two ruling elders designated by the session (one active ruling elder to serve as moderator), one deacon designated by and from the board of deacons and not fewer than *four* members from the congregation at large. These members-at-large shall be proposed by the existing nominating committee for election by the congregation. The pastor(s) shall be *ex officio* member(s) of the nominating committee, without vote.
- VII. FISCAL YEAR. *The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be January 1 – December 31.*
- VIII. ADOPTION, SUSPENSION, AND AMENDMENT. These Bylaws will be considered adopted when approved by a two-thirds vote of the membership present at a meeting, the call of which included advice that Bylaws were to be considered, provided that copies of the Bylaws are made available to all eligible voters during the time required for the call of the meeting. The Bylaws may be amended in the same manner in which they were adopted.
- IX. INDEMNIFICATION. *Each trustee and officer of the Corporation shall be indemnified by the Corporation against expenses reasonably incurred in connection with any action, suit, or proceeding to which the trustee or officer may be made a party by reason of being or having been a trustee or officer of the Corporation (whether or not he or she continues to be a trustee or officer at the time of incurring such expenses), except in relation to matters as to which he or she shall finally be adjudged in such action, suit, or proceeding to be personally liable. The foregoing right of indemnification shall not be exclusive of other rights to which any trustee or officer may be entitled as a matter of law.*
- X. These Bylaws, adopted April 10, 2011, supersede all previous Bylaws of this congregation.