

BY-LAWS
OF
THE RIVERSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Approved by Session – May 17, 2006
Approved by Congregation – September 10, 2006
Amended by Congregation – September 12, 2010
Amended by Congregation – December 9, 2012
Amended by Congregation – November 22, 2015
Amended by Congregation – December 4, 2016
Amended by Congregation – September 23, 2018
Amended by Congregation – December 16, 2018
Amended by Congregation – December 3, 2023

ARTICLE I – ORGANIZATION

1. The Riverside Presbyterian Church is a particular congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) and the constitution of said church is, in all its provisions, obligatory upon it and its members.

2. The Session of the Riverside Presbyterian Church shall be responsible for the whole life of the church and shall be the governing body of the church, subject to the provisions of these bylaws, the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* (hereinafter called the *Constitution*) and other superior Presbyterian authority.

3. The Board of Deacons, subject to the direction and supervision of the Session, shall have the responsibility for the ministry to those in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress, and such other duties as may be delegated to it by the Session, or by the congregation with the approval of the Session.

4. The Riverside Presbyterian Church maintains a religious corporation of the same name under the laws of the State of Illinois. The ruling elders on the session of a congregation, who are eligible under the civil law, shall be the trustees of the corporation. Clerk of Session, through the corporation, shall hold legal title to the church property and shall manage it under the direction of the Session. The Session shall have the responsibility for maintenance of the church property and payment of the church liabilities.

ARTICLE II – THE SESSION

1. The Session shall consist of the Pastor, as moderator, and nine (9) ruling elders, who shall be elected by the congregation.

2. There shall be three classes of three (3) members each, and the terms of office of each class shall be for three years, with the terms of one class expiring each year, except when it is necessary to elect an elder for a shorter term in order to fill vacancies. A term of office shall not expire until an elder's successor has been elected and installed. After serving two consecutive terms, an elder is not eligible for re-election until one year has elapsed.

3. The Clerk of Session shall be an elder, in either active or inactive service, elected by the Session annually. The clerk shall be responsible for recording Session transactions and preserving church records carefully, and shall perform such other duties as the Session may direct.

4. The Session shall hold stated meetings at least quarterly each year at such times as the Session may

select. Special meetings of the Session shall be held whenever requested by the Pastor, by written request of any two members of the Session, or by the Presbytery.

5. One-third of the ruling elders in active service, along with the moderator, shall constitute a quorum.
6. The Session shall be divided into such committees with such areas of responsibilities as the Session may from time to time determine. These committees shall administer the programs established by the Session. Membership on these committees may include, in addition to elders, the following: deacons; and members of the congregation-at-large.
7. The Session may conduct voting by email when necessary.

ARTICLE III – CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

1. The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held in the church building, normally during the month of January at a time previously specified by the Session at its December meeting, for the purpose of the presentation of annual reports of all church organizations and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting.
2. A called meeting for the election of officers shall normally be held during the month of November, on a date set by the Session.
3. There shall be a Nominating Committee composed of three (3) members. One member shall be designated by and from the Session and will serve as chairperson. Two members shall represent the congregation-at-large, none of such members being in active service on one of the official boards. The Pastor shall be a member ex-officio of the committee, but without vote. The Nominating Committee shall present to the called meeting for the election of officers a slate of nominees to fill vacancies on the Session, and the Board of Deacons. It shall also present nominations for the next year's Nominating Committee from the congregation at large. Full opportunity shall always be given for nominations from the floor.
4. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Session or the Presbytery. Such calls shall state clearly the purpose of such special meeting, and no other matter may be considered.
5. Public notice of the meeting shall be given on two successive Sundays. The meeting may be convened following the notice given on the second Sunday.
6. Any meeting of the congregation, properly called, shall also constitute a meeting of the corporation; any meeting of the corporation, properly called, shall also constitute a meeting of the congregation, if a moderator or legal substitute is present.
7. The Pastor shall preside at all meetings of the congregation. When the church is without a Pastor, the moderator of the Session appointed by the Presbytery, or another minister of the Presbytery, shall preside at all congregational meetings.
8. When the congregation is reviewing the Pastor's compensation, the Pastor may be excused, and the Clerk of Session may preside for this purpose only.
9. The Clerk of Session shall be the secretary of the meetings of the congregation. If the clerk is absent, the moderator shall designate a secretary pro tem.
10. All communicant members in good and regular standing shall be entitled to vote at congregational meetings. Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

11. A quorum for a congregational meeting shall consist of the moderator, a secretary and not less than one tenth of the members.
12. All meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer.

ARTICLE IV – THE BOARD OF DEACONS

1. The Board of Deacons shall consist of nine (9) deacons, who shall be elected by the congregation.
2. There shall be three classes of three (3) members each. The terms of office of each class shall be for a three-year period, with the terms of one class expiring each year, except when it is necessary to elect a deacon for a shorter term to fill vacancies. A term of office shall not expire until a deacon's successor has been elected and installed. After serving two consecutive terms, no deacon shall be eligible for re-election until one year has elapsed.
3. The Board of Deacons shall carry out the responsibilities delegated to it in Article 1 of these bylaws and such other responsibilities as may be delegated to it from time to time by the Session, subject to the direction and supervision of the Session.
4. The Board of Deacons shall elect a moderator and a secretary from among its members. It shall determine its own quorum.
5. The Board of Deacons shall hold at least four (4) stated monthly meetings each year at such times as the board may select. Special meetings shall be held whenever requested by the moderator, any two deacons or the Session.
6. The Board of Deacons shall be divided into such committees with such areas of responsibility as the board may from time to time determine.

ARTICLE V – YOUTH OFFICERS

1. Confirmed members age eighteen (18) or under may be elected to serve as youth deacons and elders.
2. Terms for such youth officers shall be determined on a case by case basis, considering the availability of qualified individuals and the needs of the church
3. No board shall contain more than one youth officer at any time.

ARTICLE VI – JOINT MEETING OF THE ELDERS AND DEACONS

1. The Session and the Board of Deacons may meet jointly to confer on matters of common interest.
2. The moderator of the Session shall preside at the joint meeting.
3. No binding decision may be reached in such joint meetings, but the Session and the Board may act separately on matters committed to their care.

ARTICLE VII – FINANCES

1. At the beginning of each year, the Session shall organize a Finance Committee of five members. The church treasurer shall be an *ex officio* member without a vote.

2. The Finance Committee shall present a proposed church budget for the next calendar year to the Session for approval.
3. It shall be the duty of the Session, as administrator of the budget, to supervise expenditures based on the approved budget.
4. The Session shall elect a church treasurer annually whose work shall be supervised by the Session.
5. The Finance Committee shall appoint a Stewardship Committee each year of such size and representation as it deems desirable. The committee shall be charged with encouraging Christian stewardship of time, talent and finances.

ARTICLE VIII – USE OF CHURCH PROPERTIES

The Session shall be responsible for approving and keeping current the *Building Use Policy*, which shall be a guide for all procedural matters pertaining to use of the building and care of properties by all organizations and members of the church as well as outside users.

ARTICLE IX – RULES OF ORDER

All meetings of the congregation, the Session and the Board of Deacons shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* except in cases where the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* provides otherwise.

ARTICLE X-- AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these bylaws which will not be in contravention of the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* may be made at a congregational meeting provided prior notice of the substance of the proposed amendment has been given with the call of the meeting. A majority vote of members present is necessary to approve amendments.