

The Background for Proposed Changes to Our WPC Bylaws

In accordance with the Bylaws of Worthington Presbyterian Church, a committee was appointed by Session to determine if our Bylaws needed to be updated. In September of 2025 **Ruling Elders Bob Freed and Larry Case and Pastor Tom Rice** were appointed. During their work, they met with **Pastor Matt Reeves** and Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, **Bill Gause**.

The proposed changes to the WPC Bylaws are below, highlighted in red or blue. **These proposed changes will be voted on at our congregational meeting on Sunday, August 30, 2026, following the 10AM service.** We hope you will attend this meeting at which we'll also elect new elders and deacons and members of the nominating committee.

The proposed changes address:

- Need for consistency in wording and spelling.
- Amendments to the *Book of Order*, such as removal of “inactive” as a membership category.
- Technological developments that allow for electronic or hybrid meetings.
- The requirement of 21 days’ notice to the Clerk of Session and 14 days’ notice to the congregation for a member to introduce a motion to dissolve a pastoral relationship at the annual meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose. This change would protect the right of the congregation to dissolve a pastoral relationship while providing members with enough notice (at least two weeks) to allow the members of the congregation to learn about the issues and prayerfully discern how they might vote.
- Allocation of time during congregational meetings. Consistent with the practice of Presbytery and other congregations in our Presbytery, this change allows the moderator of congregational meetings to grant up to 3 minutes for each speaker. If time permits and everyone who wishes to speak has had a chance to do so, the moderator may grant another 3 minutes for a church member to speak again. This change will ensure that every church member who wants to speak has the opportunity to do so.

The Session and Bylaws Committee are proposing these changes to protect the rights of church members, help us love one another, and enable us to live as a church “reformed and always reforming.” If you have questions or concerns about our Bylaws, you are welcome to contact any of the committee members or Pastor Matt.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Tom Rice
trice@wpcnow.org

Bob Freed
rbfreed2@gmail.com

Larry Case
ldcase550@gmail.com

Bylaws of Worthington Presbyterian Church
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Worthington, Ohio

These ~~b~~Bylaws, having been adopted by the action of the Session of Worthington Presbyterian Church and ratified by the congregation of Worthington Presbyterian Church shall be effective on ~~September 19, 2021~~~~February 22, 2026~~August 31, 2026. They replace and supersede any and all other ~~b~~Bylaws and regulations of the Worthington Presbyterian Church in Worthington, Ohio.

I. Organization

1. Worthington Presbyterian Church (the “church”), being a particular congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is incorporated under the laws of the ~~s~~State of Ohio. As these laws pertain to the organization of religious institutions, they are obligatory upon it and its members.
2. These ~~b~~Bylaws shall, to the extent possible, be interpreted to maintain consistency with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including any amendments thereto. To the extent these ~~b~~Bylaws cannot be interpreted consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including any amendments thereto, the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall control the proceedings of the church. At each annual meeting of the congregation, the Clerk of Session, after review and approval by the Session, shall report whether any amendments of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are inconsistent with these ~~b~~Bylaws, and if so propose appropriate amendments to insure consistency between the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and these ~~b~~Bylaws.

II. Membership and the Congregation

1. Membership in the congregation shall be determined by the Session consistent with the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). ~~Rolls shall be maintained for each category of membership~~A membership roll shall be maintained.
2. Annual Meeting: There shall be an Annual Meeting of the congregation at a time and place designated by the Session for the transaction of business.
3. Special Meetings: Special meetings may be called by the Session, the Presbytery or in any other manner authorized by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Such calls shall state clearly the purpose of the meeting.

4. Moderator: The Pastor (Head of Staff) shall be the Moderator of all congregational meetings. If the church is without a Pastor, the Moderator of Session appointed by the Presbytery shall preside at all congregational meetings. The Moderator shall grant up to three (3) minutes for a member to speak at an annual or special meeting of the congregation.
5. Secretary: The Clerk of Session shall be the Secretary at all congregational meetings. If the Clerk is unable to serve, the congregation shall elect a Secretary.
- ~~5.6.~~ Notice: The Clerk of the Session shall give the congregation adequate public notice of (a) the time and place of the annual meeting, and (b) the time and place of and the items to be voted on during a special meeting. Any motion to dissolve a pastoral relationship must be submitted a minimum of twenty-one (21) days in advance of a meeting to the Clerk of the Session so that a minimum of fourteen (14) days' notice can be given to the congregation. No motion to dissolve a pastoral relationship may be made from the floor during a meeting of the congregation without the minimum of 14-day notice to the congregation.
- ~~6.7.~~ Participation: All persons on the Active Mmember Roll of the congregation shall have voice and vote at all meetings to the congregation. This includes Active Mmembers physically present and those participating remotely in real time.
- ~~7.8.~~ Robert's Rules of Order: Meetings of the congregation shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except in cases in which the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provides otherwise. The congregation and its committees may meet electronically or in hybrid fashion at the discretion of the Session, provided, that the technology employed allows for all members present to hear and be heard simultaneously. This includes joining one or more persons electronically to an otherwise in-person meeting.
- ~~8.9.~~ Opening and Closing with Prayer: All meetings of the congregation shall be opened and closed with prayer.
- ~~9.10.~~ Quorum: A quorum of a meeting shall be one-tenth of the active members of the churchcongregation.
- ~~10.11.~~ Business of the Corporation: At any meeting of the congregation, the congregation may constitute itself as a meeting of the members of the corporation and conduct such business on behalf of the Corporation as is proper under the laws of the state of Ohio and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); provided, that if the proposed business to be conducted is the dissolution of a pastoral relationship, such business may not be conducted at a meeting of the congregation unless the notice requirements above have been met.

III. The Session

1. Size and Terms: The Session shall consist of the ministers of the church and three classes of Elders. No Ruling Elder shall be elected for a term of more than three years. Having served a total of three years a Ruling Elder shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of at least one year. A youth representative may also be elected to serve a one-year term. A quorum shall consist of the Moderator and not less than one third of the Ruling Elders.
2. Meetings: Regular stated meetings of the Session shall ordinarily be held monthly. Special meetings of the Session may be called in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). All meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer. The Session and its committees may meet electronically or in hybrid fashion, provided, that the technology employed allows for all members present to hear and be heard simultaneously. This includes joining one or more persons electronically to an otherwise in-person meeting.
3. Moderator: In accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church(U.S.A.), the Pastor (Head of Staff) shall be the Moderator of the Session. If the Pastor is unable to moderate a meeting of the Session, he or she shall appoint another minister who is a member of the Presbytery to moderate that meeting of the Session. If the Pastor is unable to appoint a replacement to moderate a meeting of the Session, the Presbytery shall appoint the Moderator. If the church is without a Pastor, the Presbytery shall appoint the Moderator of the Session.
4. Clerk: The Clerk of the Session shall be a Ruling Elder and may, but need not be, a member of Session. The Clerk shall be elected to a one-year term by the Session. A Clerk who is not a member of the Session shall have voice but not vote at Session meetings.
5. Liaison with Board of Deacons: The Board of Deacons shall appoint one of its members to be liaison to the Session. The Deacon liaison to the Session shall have voice but not vote at meetings of the Session.
6. Treasurer: The Session shall elect a Treasurer for the congregation.
7. Committees: The Session shall establish such committees as it determines are necessary to carry out its duties under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Chair of the committees established by the Session shall ordinarily be a member of the Session.

IV. The Board of Deacons

1. Size and Term: The Board of Deacons shall consist of three classes of Deacons.

Deacons shall be elected for a term of no more than three years. Deacons may serve a second consecutive term for a total of six consecutive years. Having served a total of six consecutive years, a Deacon shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of at least one year. Up to two youth representatives may also be elected to serve a one-year term. A quorum shall consist of the Deacon Moderator (or his/her designee from the current Board) and not less than one third of serving Deacons.

2. Meetings: Regular meetings of the Board of Deacons shall ordinarily be held monthly. All meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer.
3. Moderator: The Board shall elect a Moderator for a one-year term.
4. Secretary: The Board shall elect a Secretary for a one-year term.
5. Committees: The Board of Deacons shall establish such committees as it determines are necessary in order to carry out its duties under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Chair of committees established by the Board of Deacons shall ordinarily be a member of the Board of Deacons.

V. The Elders function as Trustees

In a unicameral system, the Session holds the following responsibilities and is authorized to spend such funds as approved in the annual budget in the following areas:

1. To receive, hold, encumber, manage, and transfer property, real or personal for the church, and to accept and execute deeds of title to such property and to hold and defend title to such property, consistent with provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
2. To maintain the property of the church and to approve capital improvements contained in the annual budget or existing reserves of the church.
3. To account for the income and expenses of the church in conjunction with the Treasurer and ~~Business Manager~~Executive Administrator of the church, and to provide regular reports of such income and expenses.
4. To manage the funds of the church in conjunction with the Treasurer and, within the policies adopted by the Session, ~~and~~ to provide the Session with regular reports of the balance of such funds.
5. To obtain liability coverage to protect the facilities, programs, and officers of the church.

VI. Nominations and Elections

1. All persons on the ~~Active Member~~ ~~R~~oll of the congregation shall be eligible to be elected to offices of Ruling Elder or Deacon as consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
2. There shall be a representative Nominating Committee of ~~active~~ members of the congregation elected by the congregation. The Nominating Committee shall consist of nine ~~active~~ members of the congregation and shall include ~~at least~~ two Ruling Elders who are currently serving on the Session and one Deacon who is currently serving on the Board of Deacons. The Session shall recommend to the ~~Nominating Committee~~ congregation two of its current members to serve on the Nominating Committee, one of whom shall be the Chair~~person~~, and the Board of Deacons shall recommend to the ~~Nominating Committee~~ congregation one of its current members to serve on the Nominating Committee. None of the six at-large members of the Nominating Committee may be in active service on the Session or the Board of Deacons. At large members shall serve terms of 3 years in staggered classes. The Pastor (Head of Staff) or his/her designee shall be an *ex officio* member of the committee.
3. The Nominating Committee shall bring to the Annual Meeting, or to any meeting called for the purpose of election, a slate of nominees for each office to be filled. Any eligible voter may make additional nominations of qualified persons from the floor.

VII. Miscellaneous

1. Review: The Session shall appoint a committee to review the efficacy of the provisions of these Bylaws not less than every three years.
2. Amendment:
 - a) These Bylaws may be amended, subject to the Charter of the Corporation, the laws of the ~~s~~State of Ohio and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), by approval of the Session and of the congregation.
 - b) These Bylaws may not be amended contrary to or so as not to include the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).