

**Bylaws**  
for  
**The Gilbert Presbyterian Church**  
of  
**Gilbert, Arizona**

Adopted: March 31, 1985  
Revised February 16, 1992  
Revised February 20, 1994  
Revised February 22, 1998  
Revised August 26, 2001  
Revised February 26, 2012  
Revised December 2, 2018

**ARTICLE I**

**GOVERNMENT**

The Gilbert Presbyterian Church, being a particular Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), recognizes that the Constitution of said Church, is in all its provisions, obligatory upon it and its members; the Bylaws of the Church as a Congregation shall always be subordinate to the said Constitution and the laws of the State of Arizona.

Therefore, the members of this congregation put themselves under the leadership of a Session, (elected by the members), as well as higher councils (presbytery, synod and General Assembly) of the church. The Session is to lead the congregation in fulfilling its responsibilities for the service of all people, for the up building of the whole church, and for the glory of God.

**ARTICLE II**

**MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION AND CORPORATION**

- A. There shall be an Annual Meeting of the congregation and Corporation in the appropriate place on a Sunday in February for the transaction of any business properly coming before such meeting. The congregation shall meet to receive reports pertaining to the ministry of the Church. The Corporation shall meet to carry out business pertaining to the finances and property of the Church, and to elect the following officers of the Corporation:
1. Chair—usually the chair of the Finance Committee.
  2. Vice Chair—usually the vice chair of the Finance Committee.
  3. Secretary—usually the Clerk of Session.
  4. In accordance with the “Book of Order” (G-3.0205), the Session will annually elect a Treasurer.

- B. Acting as officers of the Corporation, the Session shall be responsible for the duties delegated by the laws of the State of Arizona, the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), by the Session of this Church, and by formal action of this Corporation, reporting annually on the following:
1. The receipts and payments for the previous fiscal year.
  2. Provide an estimate of expense and income for the year ahead and report them to the Corporation at the Annual Meeting.
  3. An exhibit of the real property, trust funds, and other resources of the Congregation.
  4. New business undertaken for the welfare of the Corporation.
- C. Special meetings may be called by the Session or by the Presbytery. Such calls shall state clearly the purpose of the special meeting, and no other matter, save that specified in the call, may be considered. A special meeting shall be called for a Sunday in October for the purpose of electing Deacons and Ruling Elders for terms beginning the following year; for presentation of the budget; and for other business which the Session may deem necessary. Only business announced in the call may be conducted. No new business can be considered.
- D. Public notice of the time, place, and purpose of all meetings of the Congregation shall be given from the pulpit at least one Sunday prior to the meeting, plus a church-wide electronic notification at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.
- E. The Pastor shall preside. If the church Pulpit is vacant, or if the Pastor and the Ruling Elders agree that the subject to be discussed requires it, or if the Pastor is ill or is otherwise unable to be present, a minister of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon shall be invited by the Session to preside. This invitation shall be cleared through the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon.
- F. The Clerk of Session shall be Secretary of the Meetings of the Congregation and Corporation. If unable to attend, the Session shall designate a Secretary in his or her stead.
- G. The members of the Church shall be active members in good standing as defined by the usages and rules of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), regardless of age.
- H. As required by the laws of the State of Arizona, only members of full age of maturity (21) shall be eligible to vote on questions dealing with property and matters that are strictly the business of the Corporation. Otherwise, all active members of the Church are eligible to vote at all stated and special meetings of the Church. Voting by proxy is not allowed.
- I. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the General Rules for Judicatories adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), so far as they apply, and when they do not apply, according to usual legislative rules of order.
- J. All meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer.

- K. A quorum shall consist of the Moderator, Secretary/Clerk of Session, and fifteen percent (15%) of the eligible voters.

## ARTICLE III

### OFFICERS (ELECTION AND TERM)

**A. Ruling Elders**

There shall be a Session made up of a minimum of twelve (12) Ruling Elders who shall also serve as Trustees. Their terms shall be divided into three (3) equal classes; one class to be elected each year for a three-year term. No Ruling Elder shall serve on the Session for more than two consecutive three-year terms (six years), and shall be ineligible to be elected to a new term until two (2) years have elapsed.

1. The session shall annually elect a Clerk of Session, usually from its own membership. However, the Form of Government provides that the Session may elect a Clerk from among the qualified members of the Congregation. In such case, they shall have voice but no vote in the proceedings.
2. The Pastor or Moderator shall be of the Session as provided by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
3. When required, the Session shall assemble as a Board of Trustees; the presiding officer shall be the Chairperson elected by the congregation at its Annual Meeting.

**B. Deacons**

There shall be a Board of Deacons with a minimum of twelve (12) Deacons divided into three (3) equal classes, one class of whom shall be elected each year for a three-year term. No Deacon shall serve on the Board of Deacons for more than two consecutive three-year terms, and shall be ineligible to be elected to a new term until two (2) years have elapsed.

**C. Vacancies**

Vacancies on the Session and the Board of Deacons shall be filled by election at a Special Meeting of the Congregation not more than ninety (90) days after the vacancy occurs. Nominees for vacancies shall be provided by the current Nominations Committee (see Article VI).

**D. Election (Ordination and Installation)**

A Congregational Meeting for the purpose of election of Ruling Elders and Deacons and presentation of the proposed budget for the coming year shall be held in October each year. Officers shall be ordained and/or installed within twelve (12) weeks following the date of election.

**E. Quorum**

A quorum to conduct business at a meeting of the Session shall consist of fifty percent (50%) of its members.

## ARTICLE IV

### BUDGETARY PROCEDURES

- A. The Finance Committee of the Session shall prepare each fall a proposed budget to be used in connection with the Annual Financial Campaign, for which the Stewardship Committee shall be responsible. The proposed budget shall be submitted to the Session for approval prior to the October meeting of the Corporation. The Congregation may *offer* recommendations for the Session to consider in finalizing the budget.
- B. This proposed budget shall be reported to the Corporation in a Congregational Meeting prior to the Annual Financial Campaign.
- C. Authority to exceed the total budget, to an extent not greater than ten percent (10%), is vested in the Session. Congregational approval must be secured before the budget may be exceeded by more than ten percent (10%).
- D. Any accrued cash surplus at the end of the fiscal year may go into the Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) or may be used to pay off mortgage indebtedness. If there is no CIF or indebtedness, the surplus may be disposed of upon recommendation of the Session.
- E. There shall be a complete audit of all books and records relating to finances once each year by a public accountant or public accounting firm or a committee of at least two (2) members of the Congregation appointed by the Session who are versed in accounting procedures. Said audit shall be conducted prior to the Annual Congregational Meeting and reported to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting by affixing the signatures of the auditors to the Annual Treasurer's Report. The auditors shall not be related to the Treasurer or members of the Finance Committee.
- F. The Fiscal Year of the Corporation shall be the calendar year.

## ARTICLE V

### SESSION POLICIES

- A. The Session shall keep a record of Session Policies. These policies shall not in any way conflict with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or the local Church Bylaws.
- B. These policies shall be binding on succeeding Sessions and the members of the Congregation. The policies shall be published and distributed to the membership by the Clerk of Session as established, discontinued, or amended.

- C. Session policies may be amended, suspended or revoked by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present at any regular Stated Session Meeting or Special Meeting called for that purpose, providing notice is properly given to all members at least one week prior.

## ARTICLE VI

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- A. A representative Nominating Committee shall be constituted annually as follows: two (2) members *designated* by and from the Session, one of whom shall serve as Chairperson, and one (1) member designated by and from the Board of Deacons; four (4) members and two (2) alternates shall be elected at-large from the Congregation at the Annual Meeting, none of whom shall be active members of the Session or Board of Deacons. If there are more than six (6) nominees, provision will be made for election by ballot. The Pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member, without vote. Alternates should be designated Number One and Number Two and shall be called on to serve only when one of the committee members cannot fulfill his or her duties or term of office. Care shall be taken so that no two (2) members of the Nominating Committee are members of the same household.
- B. The Committee shall bring to the October Congregational Meeting nominations for Deacons and Ruling Elders, of one (1) eligible person for each office to be filled. The Nominees shall consist of both men and women, giving fair representation to the constituency. Additional nominations of qualified persons may be made from the floor by eligible voters, provided the person nominated has expressed a willingness to serve if elected. When additional nominations are made, ballots will be provided. Care shall be taken so that nominees to the Session will not serve with members of their household. Care shall also be taken so that nominees to the Board of Deacons will not serve with members of their household.
- C. No person shall serve on the Nominating Committee for more than one (1) year consecutively.
- D. The term of office of the Nominating Committee shall run from one Annual Meeting to the next Annual Meeting.
- E. At the first called meeting of the Nominating Committee each year, the chairperson shall read or have read Chapter II of the Form of Government as found in the “Book of Order” (*G-2.01—G-2.0407*), for use as guidelines in seeking nominees for Ruling Elders and Deacons.
- F. The two Ruling Elders designated by the Session and the representative from the Board of Deacons shall not be individuals who are eligible for re-election.
- G. No member of the Nominating Committee or member of his/her immediate family shall be considered by the committee for nomination as a Ruling Elder or Deacon—unless the nomination is for a second (consecutive) term.

- H. Members of the same household shall not serve concurrently on any one board; members of the same household may serve on separate boards at the same time.

## ARTICLE VII

### AMENDMENTS

- A. These Bylaws may be amended subject to the Charter of the Corporation, the laws of the State of Arizona, and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), at any annual meeting or at any special meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the eligible voters present, provided a printed distribution of the same has been made to the active membership in connection with the call to the meeting.
- B. These Bylaws or the Charter of the Corporation may not be amended contrary to, or so as not to include, the provisions to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- C. These Bylaws may be suspended by a three-quarters (3/4) majority vote of those members present at any regularly convened Meeting of the Congregation insofar as it does not conflict with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), or the laws of the State of Arizona.