

# By-laws of First Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield

## I. Relation to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

First Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield, New Jersey (hereafter referred to as FPC), is a particular church of the Presbyterian Church, (U.S.A) and a member church of the Presbytery *for* Southern New Jersey. As such, it recognizes that the Constitution of that Church is in all its provisions obligatory upon FPC and its members. Moreover, FPC has caused a corporation to be formed and maintained under the laws of the State of New Jersey, known as the First Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield, a corporation; and, insofar as these by-laws relate to that corporation, they are subject to the Constitution and laws of the State of New Jersey.

## II. Meetings of the Church

There shall be an annual meeting of the congregation of FPC after the end of the fiscal year, typically held in February (but before the end of March), to consider such business as receiving reports of the Session along with plans for the coming year, receiving reports of the Board of Deacons and of other organizations of the church, and transacting other business as appropriate. (G-1.05)\*

A special meeting of the congregation shall be called annually (typically held in December) to receive the report of the Nominating Committee, to elect members of the Session, the Board of Deacons, and the members of the Nominating Committee to be elected from the congregation. Other special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Session or by the Presbytery *for* Southern New Jersey and shall be called by the Session when requested by one-fourth of the members on the active roll of the church. The business to be transacted at any special meeting of the congregation shall be limited to the items specifically listed in the call of the meeting (G-1.0503).

All meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer. They shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except in those cases

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\* All Book of Order references are to the 2019-2021 edition.

where the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or the laws of the State of New Jersey provide otherwise.

The congregation may meet by electronic means if all members have a reasonable notice of the electronic meeting and the ability to discuss and discern the will of God, and vote on business items. The meeting may be hybrid, combining in-person and electronic elements.

Any congregational meeting which uses an electronic means, either fully or partially, shall include at a minimum simultaneous aural communication among all participating members. The quorum for any such congregational meeting shall be one-tenth of current members.

### III. Notice of Meetings

Public notice of the time, place and purpose of each meeting of the congregation shall be given on two successive Sundays.

### IV. Moderator

The pastor (either senior or associate pastor) shall be the moderator of 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 the moderator of the Session appointed by presbytery) to preside, he or she shall invite a teaching elder of the presbytery to preside. (G-1.0504)

### V. Secretary

The clerk of the Session shall be the secretary of all meetings of the congregation. If the clerk is unable to serve, the assistant clerk or recording clerk shall serve. If neither the clerk, recording clerk, nor assistant clerk is able to serve, the congregation shall elect a secretary.

The minutes of any meeting of the congregation shall be attested by the moderator and the secretary and recorded in the minute book of the Session (G-1.0505).

### VI. Quorum for the Meeting

The congregation is made up of all members on the active roll of the church. All such members who are present at a congregational meeting regardless of age, may vote except that the laws of the State of New Jersey require that only such members who are at least 18 years of age shall be entitled to vote for trustees (elder-trustees) and on questions dealing with property and matters that are strictly the business of the corporation. Voting by proxy is not allowed. The quorum for a meeting of the congregation shall be one-tenth of the active members.

## VII. The Session

The Session shall consist of thirty active ruling elders divided into three classes of ten persons each, one class of whom shall be elected each year for a three-year term. No ruling elder shall serve for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. A ruling elder having served a total of six years shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of one year. Every effort should be made to include at least one member of each class to be under 25 years of age when elected. Members of the Session 18 years of age and older shall serve as elder-trustees. (G-4.01)

The Session, at its first meeting, after the installation of new officers, shall elect ruling elders as clerk of Session, recording clerk and/or assistant clerk, for a one-year term, with unlimited number of terms. At the same meeting, the Session shall elect the officers of the Corporation (president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer) for a one-year term, with unlimited number of terms. The president or vice president and the secretary shall execute such legal documents as are required, affixing their signatures and the corporate seal, when authorized by the elder-trustees. The Session may also elect annually an active member of the congregation as assistant treasurer and such other officers of the Corporation as may be needed.

The quorum for a meeting of the Session shall be the pastor or other presiding officer and one-third of the currently serving elders, except for the reception of members, when the quorum shall be the moderator and two members of the Session.

## VIII. The Board of Deacons

The Board of Deacons shall consist of thirty members divided into three classes,

as nearly equal in number as possible, one class of whom shall be elected each year to serve for three years. Every effort should be made to include at least one member of each class to be under 25 years of age when elected.

No member of the Board of Deacons shall serve for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. A deacon having served a total of six years shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of one year.

#### IX. Vacancies

Each vacancy on the Session or on the Board of Deacons may be filled for the unexpired term by election at a special meeting or at the annual meeting of the congregation as the Session may determine.

#### X. Finances

A full financial review of all financial books and records shall be conducted every year by a public accountant or committee of members versed in accounting procedures. Reviewers should not be related to the treasurer(s) or the financial secretary. Terminology in this section is meant to provide general guidance and is not intended to require or not require specific audit procedures or practices as understood within the professional accounting community (G-3.0113), though a full audit should be done at least every five years.

#### XI. Nominating Committee

There shall be a representative Nominating Committee of active members of the church, consisting of seven members. Two members of this committee shall be designated by and from the Session, one of whom shall be named by the Session as moderator. One member shall be designated by and from the Board of Deacons. Four members shall be elected by the congregation from the active members of the congregation. Only the members designated by the Session may be in active service on the Session. The pastor shall also be a member of this committee, serving ex officio and without vote.

The Nominating Committee shall be chosen annually, and no member of the

committee shall serve for more than three years consecutively. The committee shall present to the meeting of the congregation at which the election is scheduled one nomination for each office to be filled. Public notice of the names of the nominees to be proposed shall be given at least one week prior to the election. Additional nominations may be made from the floor by any active member of the church at the meeting at which the election takes place. All nominees, whether presented by the Nominating Committee or by a member, shall be active members of the church and shall have agreed to serve if elected. (G-2.0401)

## XII. Amendments

These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present at any meeting of the congregation provided that the proposed changes have been set out in the notice of the meeting and are consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the certificate of incorporation and the laws of the State of New Jersey.

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--Presented to Session by the Governance Committee on October 15, 2018 and approved by Session on November 19, 2018. Adopted at a Congregational Meeting on February 10, 2019.

--Section II Revised by Governance Committee August 18, 2020 and adopted by Session on September 21, 2020 to permit Electronic Meetings in an emergency. Adopted at a Congregational Meeting on XXXX.

--Section X Revised by Governance Committee on November 17, 2020, and adopted by Session on January 18, 2021 to clarify Annual Financial Reviews. Adopted at a Congregational Meeting on XXXX.

--Section V and VII revised for new Recording Clerk position. Changed name of Presbytery. Approved by Governance Committee March 16, 2022. Adopted by Session, April 11, 2022. Adopted at Congregational Meeting on XXXX.

--Section II revised by Governance Committee on November 15, 2022, and adopted by Session on December 5, 2022 to allow for electronic or hybrid meetings at any time. Adopted at a Congregation Meeting on XXXX.