

**BYLAWS OF
HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF MITCHELLVILLE, MD, INC.**

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I. Mission Statement

Being ever thankful for the wonder and generosity of God's love, our prayerful hope is to proclaim the living Christ in worship, in nurture, in fellowship, serving joyfully, all to the glory of God.

II. Relation to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Hope Presbyterian Church is a member church of the Presbytery of the National Capital in the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

III. Governance of the Church

This church shall be governed in accordance with the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. Consistent with that constitution, these bylaws shall provide specific guidance for this church. *Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised)* shall be used for parliamentary guidance.

IV. Meetings of the Church

There shall be an annual meeting of the congregation in the church building on a Sunday in January, at which at least the following business shall be presented: annual reports from organizations and the session (information only), financial report for the preceding year, budget for the current year (information only), changes in the terms of call for the pastor(s), election of members to serve on the nominating committee. The report of the nominating committee and election of officers (elders, deacons and trustees) shall take place at another stated congregational meeting to be held in the late fall.

Special meetings may be called by the session. Such calls shall state clearly the purpose of such special meetings, and business shall be restricted to that which is specified in the call. (G-1.0501 *Book of Order*)

V. Notice of Meetings

Public notice of the meetings shall be given in printed and verbal form on at least two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. When the meeting is called for the purpose of electing a pastor, the notice shall be given in printed and verbal form with adequate public notice, which shall include two successive Sundays. (G-1.0502 *Book of Order*)

VI. Moderator

The installed pastor shall ordinarily moderate all meetings of the congregation. If it is impractical for the pastor to preside, he or she shall invite another teaching elder who is a member of the presbytery or a person authorized by the presbytery to serve as moderator. If there is no installed pastor, or the installed pastor is unable to moderate and/or to name another moderator, the presbytery shall make provision for a moderator. (G-1.0504 *Book of Order*)

VII. Secretary

The clerk of session shall serve as secretary for all meetings of the congregation. If the clerk of session is unable to serve, the congregation shall elect a secretary for that meeting. The secretary shall record the actions of the congregation in minutes of the meeting. (G-1.0505 *Book of Order*)

VIII. Minutes of the Meeting

The minutes of the meeting recorded by the secretary shall be attested to by the moderator and the secretary and recorded in the minute book of the session.

IX. Quorum for the Meeting

The quorum of a meeting of the congregation shall be the moderator, the secretary, and ten percent of the active members of the congregation. A quorum shall be ten percent of the active members on corporate matters. The secretary shall determine that a quorum is present. Only active members may vote, regardless of age.

X. Incorporation

In accordance with the laws of the State of Maryland, the congregation shall cause a corporation to be formed. Consistent with the laws of this state, both ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same meeting of the congregation.

(G-1.0503 *Book of Order*)

XI. Nominating Committee

The congregation shall form a nominating committee in the following manner:

- There shall be a minimum of seven members on the nominating committee.
- Two of the members shall be elders designated by the session, one of whom shall be currently serving on the session and shall serve as chairperson of the committee.
- One of the members shall be designated by and from each of the boards of the church.
- A majority of members, not persons currently serving on the session or on other boards shall be nominated and elected at the annual meeting of the congregation.
- Members of the committee shall be elected annually, and no member shall serve more than three years consecutively.
- The pastor shall be a member ex officio and without vote.
- The nominating committee shall bring to the congregation nominations only for the number of positions to be filled.
- The floor shall be open for nominations at the annual meeting.

XII. Elders

The congregation shall elect nine elders divided into three equal classes, one class of whom shall be elected each year at the annual meeting for a three-year term. No elder shall serve for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. An elder having served a total of six years shall be ineligible for reelection to the session for a period of at least one year. (G-2.0404 *Book of Order*)

The session, at its first meeting following the annual meeting, shall elect an elder to serve as clerk and shall form such committees as necessary to carry out its work. At the same

meeting of the session, the session shall annually elect a treasurer. A quorum for the session shall be the pastor or other presiding officer and one third of the elders.

XIII. Vacancies

Vacancies on the session may be filled at a special meeting of the congregation or at the annual meeting, as the session may determine.

XIV. Amendments

These bylaws may be amended subject to the Articles of Incorporation, the laws of the state of Maryland, and the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* by two-thirds of the voters present, provided that the proposed changes in printed form shall have been distributed at the same time as the call of the meeting at which the changes are voted upon.