

Congregational Bylaws

Alpharetta Presbyterian Church

Approved by Session 10.27.11

I. Statement of Purpose

Alpharetta Presbyterian Church has been called by God and organized to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, to minister to the needs of the congregation and the community, and to promote peace and justice.

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

Alpharetta Presbyterian Church is a member church of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta in the Synod of the South Atlantic of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

III. Governance of the Church

The *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* shall govern Alpharetta Presbyterian Church. Consistent with that *Constitution*, these bylaws provide specific guidance for this church. *Roberts Rules of Order* shall guide its parliamentary procedure.

IV. Meetings of the Church

The congregation shall hold an annual meeting (G-1.0501) in the first quarter of the calendar year. At least the following business shall be presented:

- A. Annual reports from the Session, the Diaconate and organizations (information only)
- B. Financial report for the preceding year (information only)
- C. Budget for the current year (information only)
- D. Any changes in the terms of call for the pastor(s)

The Session may call special meetings (G.1.0501). The Session shall clearly state the purpose of such meetings. Business shall be restricted to the called purpose.

V. Notice of Meetings

Notice of annual and special congregational meetings (G-1.0502) shall be given during regular worship services at least the Sunday prior to and of the meetings. In addition, notice may be given via other means the Session desires.

VI. Moderator

The pastor of Alpharetta Presbyterian Church shall moderate all congregational meetings. If this is impractical, the provisions of G-1.0504 shall apply.

VII. Secretary

The clerk of session shall serve as secretary of all congregational meetings. If the clerk is absent or is unable to serve, the congregation shall elect a secretary for that meeting. The secretary shall record the actions of the congregation in the minutes.

VIII. Minutes of Congregational Meeting

The minutes of congregational meetings shall be attested by the secretary, approved by the Session, and recorded in the minute book of the Session.

IX. Quorum for Congregational Meetings

The quorum for all congregational meetings shall be the moderator, the secretary and ten percent of the active members. The secretary shall determine a quorum is present. All active members of the congregation present at annual or special meetings are entitled to vote. Voting by proxy is not allowed.

X. Incorporation

In accordance with the laws of the state of Georgia, the congregation shall form a corporation. Also consistent with Georgia statutes, both ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same congregational meeting. Since the pastor is not a member of the corporation, a Session member or an officer of the corporation shall be invited to moderate the corporate portion of the meeting. The Session members shall also serve as trustees.

XI. Nominating Committee

The congregation shall elect a nominating committee (G-2.0401), usually in November, at a special meeting called for electing ruling elders, deacons and a successor nominating committee. The Nominating Committee shall be elected for a one-year term beginning the following January. The Nominating Committee shall submit to the Session the candidates for election to its successor committee when requesting that special meeting.

- A. There shall be seven active members on the Nominating Committee.
- B. Two of the members elected by the Session shall be ruling elders currently serving on the Session. Each term shall be two years; the first year he or she shall serve as vice chair and the second as chair.
- C. One of the members elected by the Diaconate shall be a deacon currently serving on the Diaconate.
- D. The four remaining members shall not be currently serving on the Session or the Diaconate. These members shall be nominated by the current nominating committee and elected by the congregation.
- E. The pastor shall be a member *ex officio* and without vote.
- F. Any active member of the congregation shall be given full opportunity to nominate from the floor.
- G. A majority of active members present and voting shall be required to elect.

XII. Ruling Elders

The congregation shall elect twenty-one ruling elders divided into three classes. One class shall be elected each year, usually in November, for a three-year term beginning the following January. No ruling elder shall serve consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. A ruling elder having served six years shall be ineligible for reelection to the Session for one year. In addition, the congregation may elect one ruling elder each year who is currently enrolled in high school. This ruling elder should usually serve a two-year term prior to graduation.

The Session, at its first meeting following installation of the new class of ruling elders, shall elect a ruling elder to serve as clerk and shall form committees as necessary. At the same meeting, the Session shall elect the treasurer from the church's active membership. He or she shall serve a one-year term. A quorum for the Session shall be the moderator and seven of the ruling elders. (Note: The Session shall provide by rule a quorum for special meetings that receive new members.) (G-3.0203)

XIII. Deacons

The congregation will ordinarily elect thirty-six deacons divided into three classes. One class shall be elected each year, usually in November, for a three-year term beginning the following January. No deacon shall serve consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. A deacon having served six years shall be ineligible for reelection to the Diaconate for one year. In addition, the congregation may elect one deacon each year who is currently enrolled in high school. This deacon should usually serve a two-year term prior to graduation.

The Diaconate, at its first meeting following installation of the new class of deacons, shall elect a moderator, a moderator-elect and a secretary from among its members and shall form committees as necessary. A pastor shall serve as an advisory member of the Diaconate. A quorum for the Diaconate shall be twelve members including the moderator.

XIV. Ordination and Installation of Ruling Elders and Deacons

Following a period of instruction and examination by the Session, ordination and installation of newly elected ruling elders and deacons will usually take place during a regular Sunday worship service in January.

XV. Vacancies

Vacancies on the Session or the Diaconate may be filled at a special congregational meeting as the Session may determine.

XVI. Amendments

Subject to the Articles of Incorporation, the laws of the state of Georgia, and the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*, these bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the active members present providing that the proposed changes shall be printed and distributed when the meeting is called.