

Draft of Proposed Bylaws Changes

Information Booklet
January 2020

First Presbyterian Church, Evanston

CONTENTS

<i>Frequently Asked Questions.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Letter from FPCE Session.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Summary of Proposed Bylaws Changes.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Governance Model of FPCE 2020 and Beyond</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>EXHIBIT A: Reorganized Councils at-a-glance</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>EXHIBIT B: Councils & Committees supported by FPCE staff.....</i>	<i>11</i>

Frequently Asked Questions **about the proposed FPCE bylaws changes**

What are we doing?

With approval from the congregation, change our church's structure and bylaws from bicameral to a unicameral structure.

Bicameral defined: Elders and trustees lead the church.

Unicameral defined: Session leads the church made up of 16 elders, four of whom are leaders of the First Presbyterian Society. The Society will continue as a legal entity with four officers, who will become ruling elders and members of the new, unified Session. Our deacons will continue their current role.

Why are we making this change (what's in it for FPCE)?

- To provide a more efficient structure that facilitates timely communication and decision making for our church.
- To combine the faith and business aspects of the church.
- To make the oversight of FPCE both more streamlined and effective by reducing the number of meetings and improving communication among leaders.
- To improve communication among councils and committees.
- To better fulfill our church's mission: *to know Jesus Christ and to grow in Him as we serve and make disciples in Evanston, the Chicago area, and the world.*

If approved by the congregation, when would these changes take place?

- January 2021

What's next?

- Attend one of two informational forums sponsored and led by Session in the dining room. Forums will be between services on January 12 and 19.
- Bring your questions to any member of Session, LeRoy Klemt (clerk of Session), or Rev. Hylton (moderator of Session).
- If the way is clear, call a special congregational meeting later in the summer.

Proposed Restructuring of the Governance of the First Presbyterian Church of Evanston

Introduction

The First Presbyterian Church of Evanston congregational landscape has changed substantially over the past thirteen years. As our congregation has changed, so too have the available human and financial resources to maintain our church's ministries, which serve our members and reach out to the nearby community and the world beyond our doors. The questions before our church are whether our current governance structure fits this new reality and whether that structure is appropriate for the future. After much prayerful discussion and discernment, the Session has concluded that the answer to both questions is no. Thus, it is recommending to the congregation that it approve amending the church bylaws to provide for a simplified unicameral (one board) structure for managing the spiritual and business affairs of our church.

Our Changing Church Family

In 2006, the year our current bylaws were adopted, our church had 1,515 members. As of November, 2019 church membership has declined to 687. Likewise, giving at our church also declined from \$1.8 million in 2006 to \$1.2 million in 2018. These contractions have created challenges for funding our church's ministries, in recruiting church members to serve on boards, councils and committees, and in hiring and compensating the staff needed to support these ministries.

In 2018, in response to these changes, the Session commissioned a Design Team from members of the congregation to work with Ministry Architects, a consulting firm that advises churches to examine our councils and committees and recommend consolidation where practical and elimination where advisable. The report of Ministry Architects is available in digital and hard copy; but simply put, the recommendations suggest moving from a bicameral (two board) governance structure to a unicameral (one board) governance structure. It also recommended reducing our nine councils to eight councils, and that three of the trustee committees (budget, building and finance and endowment) be established under the new Resource Steward Council. The Session believes that this new configuration will not only improve communication and decision making within the Session, but also improve communication among the councils and committees, and ultimately to the congregation. The Session also believes that these changes will enable us to better fulfill the church's mission and grow our membership.

Why the Bylaw Revisions?

Under our current 2006 bylaws, our church structure is established to have a Session of eighteen elders. Traditionally, the Session has concerned itself with worship, pastoral care, education, mission and other ecclesiastical matters. Thirty-six deacons are designated to care for those in need. Twelve trustees operating under the delegated authority from the Session are responsible for managing the church's property and finances. A fourth entity, the corporation of the church called the First Presbyterian Society of Evanston, deals with civil/legal matters. The Society has four officers: president, vice president, treasurer and secretary, and functions under the auspices of the Trustees. Together the Session and the Board of Trustees form what is termed a bicameral structure of church governance.

What is being proposed are changes to the bylaws which would change our church governance into a unicameral structure. What this new configuration does is to fold the trustees and the officers of the Society into the Session. Under the unicameral structure, the work of the current Session and the Board of Trustees would be performed by a single body, the new, unified Session. The Society will continue as a legal entity with four officers, who will become ruling elders and members of the new, unified Session. Our deacons will continue their current role.

As part of this recommended consolidation of governance, the proposed bylaws also recommend adding flexibility in the number of ruling elders and deacons. Currently eighteen elders are required. The proposed bylaws establish a range from twelve to eighteen elders. In addition, thirty-six deacons are currently called for. The proposal is to authorize between eighteen and thirty-six deacons. The deacons currently have twenty-six members serving in 2020. The church recently has had difficulty in attracting enough members to fill these boards, and the Session believes these new ranges will better accommodate the needs of the church in carrying out crucial ministries.

In the Presbyterian Book of Order, it states that "the fellowship of the congregation rests on trust and love." The Session is asking the congregation, in a spirit of trust and love, to have trust and belief that the new, unified Session will continue to faithfully devote its prayers and energies to the spiritual needs of our fellowship, as they conserve and protect the resources, which God has so abundantly provided, in carrying out His mission for our church.

What's Next?

Copies of the new bylaws highlighting the proposed changes will be made available at the informational forums on January 12 and 19 and also in the Literature Racks. Please take and read these documents and raise any questions or suggestions that you may have with elders, the church staff, or the trustees. We are looking forward to congregational input at the all church education classes on January 12 and 19, and we would welcome improvements to these proposals. It is the hope of the Session to bring this matter before the congregation at a future congregational meeting. If this form of unicameral church government and its attending bylaw changes are approved, these changes will become effective January 1, 2021.

Thank you for considering these proposals. The Session believes that these changes will create a better structure for our church today and in the future. Change is never easy, but with prayerful reflection and discussion, we are confident that God will continue to lead our church to the greater glory of His kingdom.

The Session of First Presbyterian Church of Evanston

First Presbyterian Church of Evanston
Summary of the Proposed Changes to the 2006 Bylaws

Article I - Name, Seal and Corporate Identification - No Change.

Article II - Members - No Substantive Changes.

Article III - Meetings - No Substantive Changes, Eliminates references to the Board of Trustees and a co-pastor, which are continued throughout the bylaws.

Article IV - Officers and Boards

Sec. 1 changes the number of elders from 18 to a range of 12 to 18 and the number deacons from 36 to a range of 18 to 36,

Sec. 4 eliminates the Board of Trustees and creates the Board of the Society, which is composed of the members of the Session, and

Sec. 5 enables the Session to change the number of serving elders and deacons within the ranges in

Sec. 1 by a 2/3 vote.

Article V - The Session

Sec. 1 Adds to the powers of the Session: the powers to act as the Board of the Society, to establish Councils, Committees, Sub-Committees and Task Forces, and to delegate to and supervise the work of the Board of Deacons, Councils, Committees, Sub-Committees and Task Forces.

Sec. 6 Establishes and sets forth the duties of the Personnel Council.

Article VI - The Board of Deacons - No Substantive Changes, adds service on Councils.

Article VII – The Board of the Society and Property

Sec. 1 Changes Board of Trustees to Board of the Society.

Sec. 2 Retains language concerning ownership of church property, established in 1986 bylaws.

Sec. 5, Sec. 6, Sec.7 and Sec.9 Establish the duties of the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary, respectively, all of whom are elected as elders for three year terms.

Sec. 8 Retains language concerning financial standards

Sec. 10 Establishes the Resource Steward Council and its committees: the Budget Committee, the Facilities Management Committee and the Finance and Endowment Committee.

Sec. 11 Establishes the duties of the Budget Committee.

Article VIII Elections - No Substantive Changes.

Article IX Amendment to the Bylaws- No change in the 2/3 majority vote requirement to amend the bylaws. Councils, Committees, Sub-Committees and Task Forces may change the number of their members with the approval of the Session.

GOVERNANCE MODEL OF FPCE 2020 AND BEYOND

First Presbyterian Church of Evanston
exists to know Christ and to grow in him
as we serve and make disciples in Evanston,
the Chicago area, and the world.

The purpose of this document is to clearly define the roles of Session, Church Councils and Committees and the Board of Deacons at FPCE, how they interact and how to run the governance of the Church, in order to deliver our Strategic Plan Goals and live our mission

1. Session Responsibilities as defined by PCUSA Book of Order

The session shall have responsibility for governing the congregation and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation is and becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness. In light of this charge, the session has responsibility and power to:

- a. Provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard.
- b. Provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received.
- c. Nurture the covenant community of Disciples of Christ.
 - receiving and dismissing members
 - reviewing the roll of active members at least annually and counseling with those who have neglected the responsibilities of membership;
 - providing programs of nurture, education, and fellowship;
 - training, examining, ordaining, and installing those elected by the congregation as ruling elders and deacons;
 - encouraging the graces of generosity and faithful stewardship of personal and financial resources;
 - managing the physical property of the congregation for the furtherance of its mission;
 - directing the ministry of deacons, trustees, and all organizations of the congregation;
 - employing the administrative staff of the congregation;
 - leading the congregation in participating in the mission of the whole church;
 - warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the congregation and community; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline

2. Implications for governance

- Session must be able to exercise their responsibilities which are large in number and depth
- This exercise requires spiritual maturity, discernment, humility, but also a broad set of capabilities, from caring, to education, biblical knowledge, finances, human resources, ...
- Session is therefore accountable to ensure that all the gifts bestowed by God to the Congregation are dedicated to becoming a community of faith, hope, love and witness

As a result, the work of the Church shall be governed as follows:

- Session is the governing body of the Church, as defined above
- 8 Councils, each chaired by an Elder, are charged with coordinating and enabling the work and life of the Church in a specific area of ministry
- Committees, teams (permanent or project based) manage and organize the ministerial work and activities of the Church

- The purpose of Councils is to
 - o Oversee and coordinate the work of the Committees it is accountable for
 - o Communicate and operationalize decisions from Session to Committees and programs they oversee
 - o Ensure human, physical and financial resources are adequately deployed for the mission in their area of oversight
- The purpose of Committees is to
 - o Plan, execute and serve the activities, efforts, initiatives they are in charge of
 - o Coordinate the deployment of volunteers, staff, physical and financial resources

3. **Composition and responsibilities of Councils**

The Councils are (for detailed descriptions, see below #6)

- Community Life and Pastoral Care
- Discipleship
- Our Families Our Children
- Worship
- Mission
- Personnel
- Leadership
- Resource Steward

While there may be some variability between Councils, the general organizational principles are as follows:

Composition:

- 1 council chair (can be, but does not have to be elder)
- 1-2 Elders
- 1 lead staff member
- If multiple Committees are overseen by the Council, each Committee leader
- As needed, a few volunteers who provide expertise, continuity or support

Responsibilities:

- Provide guidance, strategic direction and leadership to all activities, Ministries and Committees under its area of responsibility
 - o Define and review metrics of stewardship of each Ministry overseen
- Ensure good communication by:
 - o Helping Committee or Project leaders understand the link between their area of focus and the mission of the Church
 - o Helping Committee or Project leaders understand the link between their area of focus and other “adjacent” Committees and projects (ie Worship and Hospitality)
 - o Practicing transparency and collaboration with areas of responsibility with the Resource Stewards council, to ensure RSC understands the plans and needs of their Ministries
- Review time, talent, physical and financial resources dedicated by each Ministry / Project under their oversight
- Prepare any decision, information for Session to review, if Session approval is required
- Prepare any decision, information for the Officers of the Society to review, if Officer approval is required

4. **Composition and responsibilities of Committees**

Committee responsibilities and composition will vary based on their area of focus and Ministry.

A few organization principles should apply to most, as a reference:

- A designated clear leader, who commits for at least 1 year to the role
- A clear definition of the purpose of the Ministry or activity, Who is served or supported and through which main activities (processes)
- A clear definition and tracking of staff resources assigned to the Committee's area of Ministry / Activity

Resource management:

- If session has assigned a budget to a Committee, quarterly tracking and reporting to the Finance Committee is required
- Time and talent shall be tracked and reported
- Metrics of delivery shall be defined and tracked

5. Effective use of our time, talent and money

One of our goals in the Strategic Plan is to reduce the hours of internally focused meetings, to release the wonderful love and energy of our active volunteers and staff to know and grow in Christ, serve him and make disciples.

Therefore, all Session, Council and Committee meetings shall have OPTIC:

- **Objectives and Outcome (Chair)**
 - o Define objective and expected outcome of meeting in the invitation
- **Process management**
 - o Assign 3 roles at beginning: Chair, Time Keeper, Minute Taker
 - o Agenda sent out in advance (Chair)
- **Time management**
 - o Start and finish on time (Time Keeper)
- **Inclusion (Chair)**
 - o Ensure all participants feel included, voice their thoughts
 - o In case of divergence, encourage respectful listening and debate
- **Communication (Minutes Taker & Chair)**
 - o Clear advance notice of why, when, where, who
 - o Relevant pre-meeting information made available to all participants, so that time is used to discuss and decide
 - o Minute taking, with action items, recording and sharing

6. Descriptions of New Councils

1. **Community Life and Pastoral Care Council** (Hospitality, Pastoral Care) is designed to help new attendees find connection in the church and link to our caring ministries for all who walk through our door. These include TCC, Pastoral Care, Friends in Christ, Parish Nurse, Stephen Ministry and all aspects of member care and work collaboratively with Deacons to coordinate services.
2. **Discipleship Ministry Council** (Small Groups, Stewardship, Membership, Adult Education): focusing on holistic perspective of stewardship that includes time, talent and gifts; participate with other ministry councils in the development of the budget considering both revenue and expenses, promotion of adult education, new and existing membership development based on spiritual gifts, promotion of the growth of small groups and oversight of special events (i.e. Pilgrimage, retreats etc.).

(Continued on next page)

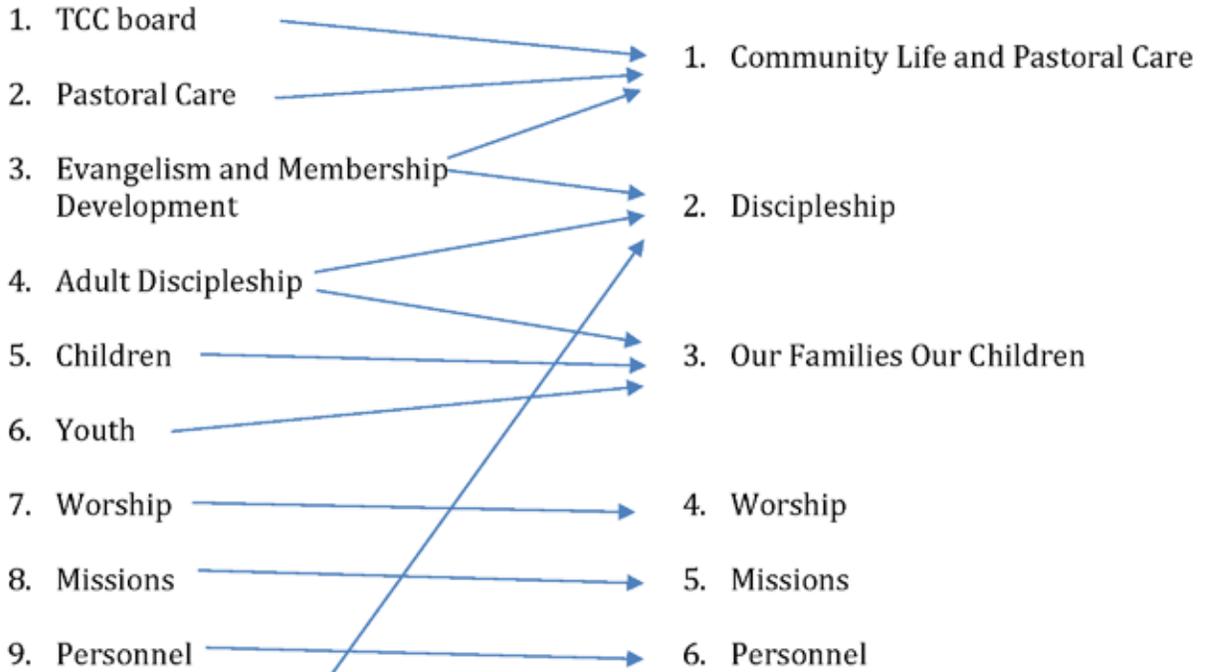
3. **Our Families Our Children Ministry Council** (Children, Youth, Library): As identified in our Visioning Summit, it is important to the life of our church to continuously infuse our membership with young families. By linking our education and family ministries, we can more effectively support our members through life stages and spiritual maturity. This ministry council includes Children, Youth, and Library committees. The leadership from each team are expected to meet at least quarterly to harmonize the programs into an intentional journey of biblical knowledge and spiritual growth through our life journeys.
4. **Worship Ministry Council** - no changes recommended other than to continue close coordination with Christian Education Ministry Council.
5. **Mission Ministry Council** - (now directly responsible for Great Commission Fund awards within the financial guidelines provided by the Endowment & Investment Committee.) Participate in the development of the budget for mission. Coordinate services and use of volunteers with Deacon's surrounding our local mission work for the poor and homeless.
6. **Personnel Ministry Council** - (PMC) Continues to manage personnel matters. If we change to unicameral governance, we recommend that the President of the Society replace the current trustee participation to assist with benefits administration.
7. **Leadership Ministry Council** - Expanding the focus of the current Nominating Committee to incorporate intentional focus on preparing members to take on leadership roles in the future through training, mentoring, and personal engagement.
8. **Resource Steward Council** (RSC) - Detailed in By-laws.

EXHIBIT A: Re-organized Councils "At-a-Glance"

Former Bicameral Structure
Session (9 councils + 3 committees)
+ Trustees

New Unicameral Structure
Session (8 councils)

Councils



Committees



Trustees



EXHIBIT B: Councils & Committees supported by FPCE staff

COUNCIL	COMMITTEES & MINISTRIES	STAFF
Our Children/Our Families	Children's Ministries (includes Sunday AM)	Amanda
	Children's Ministry Week Long Camp: Bible Camp Week (June)	
	Children's Vacation Bible School (VBS)	
	Christmas Around the World Potluck	
	First Kids Choir and Chimes	
	Youth Ministry (Includes NUBS and PYGS)	
	Church Library	
Discipleship	Adult Education Committee	Henry
	Small Groups Committee: all small groups will be overseen under this committee, including Young Adult SG, Young Family SG, Nourish, Singles Together in Christ, Men's and Women's Bible studies etc.	
	Special events (church retreats, special speakers, Pilgrimage)	
	Stewardship	
	Men's Fellowship and Prayer Breakfast (Saturday Morning)- <i>currently pending- may be folded under small groups</i>	
Mission	Arts Ministry	Caryl
	Build Congo Schools	
	Deacon's Clothes Closet	
	First Friends	
	Great Commission Fund	
	Mission Prayer	
	New Life Shelter & Outreach (New Life Ministry/Good News Partners)	
	Open House Chicago	
	Overnight Shelter	
	Prison Ministries	
	Prison Ministries: Juvenile Detention	
	Rebuilding Together	
	Souper Saturday	
Tumekutana		
Warming Center		
Community Life & Pastoral Care	Knit, Eat, Laugh, Pray	Henry
	Family Open Gym	
	Friends in Christ	
	international Friends	
	Stephen Ministry	
	Sunday Fellowship - Board of Deacons	
	The Counseling Center	
	Women's Pick-Up Basketball	
Worship	Christmas Pageant	Hannah
	Worship: Altar Guild	
	Worship: Audio/Visual	
	Worship: Chancel Bells	
	Worship: Chancel Choir	
	Worship: Chancel Decorations	
	Worship: Hospitality (ushers/greeters)	
	Worship: Pop-Up Choir	
	Worship: Praise Band	
Resources/Steward	Finance	Ray
	Facilities	
	Endowments	
Leadership	Nominating Committee	Ray
Personnel		Ray



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