

CURRENT PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGES – FALL 2022

Bicameral to Unicameral Leadership Structure

(NOTE: Deacons are not included or impacted in this proposal)

Nominating Committee of the Session proposes ALL candidates, and the congregation is asked to ratify them

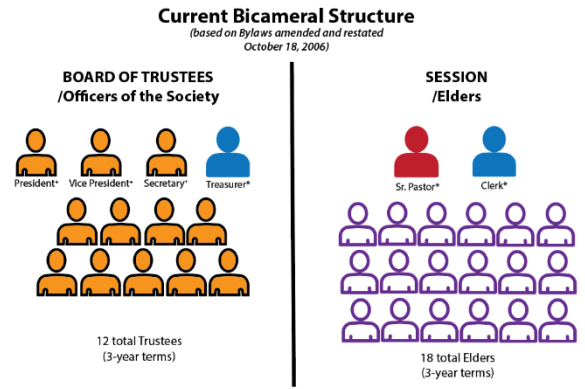
CURRENT BICAMERAL STRUCTURE

SESSION:

- 18 Elders elected by the congregation (6 each year for 3-year terms)
- Senior Pastor (Non-voting member)
- Clerk of Session (Non-voting member)

TRUSTEES:

- 12 Trustees elected by the congregation (4 each year for 3-year-terms)
- Officers of the First Presbyterian Society:
 - President is elected by Trustees
 - Vice President is elected by Trustees
 - Secretary is elected by Trustees
 - Treasurer (a non-voting advisor to the Trustees) is elected by Session



BUDGET COMMITTEE:

Made up of lay leaders, at least one Elder, at least one Trustee, and the Treasurer

PERSONNEL MINISTRY COUNCIL (PMC):

Made up of lay leaders, at least one Elder and at least one Trustee (in equal number), moderated by an Elder

PROPOSED UNICAMERAL STRUCTURE

SESSION/BOARD OF TRUSTEES (One body):

12-15 Elders elected by the congregation (with 15 recommended)
(4-5 each year for 3-year terms)

- **All Elders would also be members of the Board of the First Presbyterian Society**

- Senior Pastor (Non-voting member)
- Clerk of Session (Non-voting member)

Officers of the Society would be:

- **President** is elected by Session
- **Vice President** is elected by Session
- **Secretary** is elected by Session
- **Treasurer** (a non-voting advisor to the Session & Board of the Society) is elected by Session

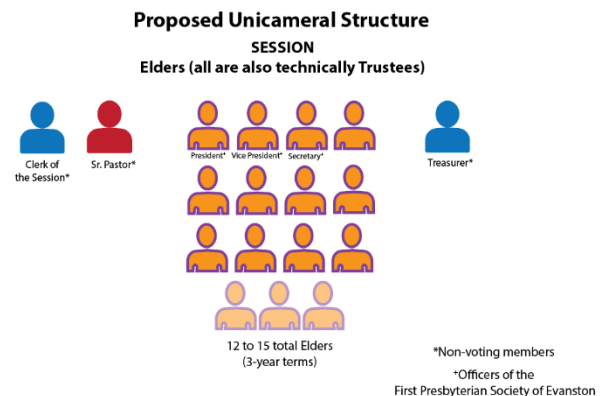
A Resource Management Council (RMC) would be formed:

All Officers of the Society (President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer) would be RMC members;
Additional Elders and lay people would be assigned as members

The RMC would oversee the work of the three Committees currently overseen by the Trustees:

- Budget Committee
- Finance and Endowment Committee
- Building Committee

- RMC would also work closely with the Personnel Ministry Council and the Stewardship Committee



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE 2022 BICAMERAL TO UNICAMERAL PROPOSAL

In summary, what are the proposed changes to the First Pres Bylaws (last amended in October 2006)?

1. Combining the Session (the Board of Elders) and the Board of Trustees into one elected decision-making body (still called the Session), eliminating the need for separate meetings and making decision making more efficient.
2. Reducing the total number of church members needed to serve from 30 to 12-15.
3. The Building Committee, the Budget Committee and the Finance and Endowment Committee will continue with the same responsibilities they currently have. However, those Committees will now be chaired by any one of the four Officers of the Board of the Society.
4. Creating a new Resource Management Council (tentative name) to oversee and coordinate the financial, human and property resources of the church. The Building Committee, the Budget Committee and the Finance and Endowment Committee will make up the Resource Management Council, which will be chaired by the President of the Board of the Society. In addition, this Council will work closely with the Personnel Ministry Council and the Stewardship Committee.

What is the real purpose for these proposed changes?

There are three main improvements these changes would offer:

- Reducing the number of lay leaders needed to administer the spiritual and financial needs of First Presbyterian Church of Evanston.
- Streamlining the decision-making process so that it does not depend on two different boards meeting at different times to reach financial decisions for the church.
- Improving the focus of leadership on shared priorities and eliminating the inevitable communication delays and confusion caused by having two different bodies with significant areas of shared oversight.

How do these proposed changes reflect the priorities brought forth recently by the Strategic Planning Task Force?

Three areas of concern that members expressed in the recent survey were the following:

- Healthy Organization
- Thriving Membership
- Financial Health

It is believed that these three areas of concern will be addressed more effectively in a unicameral structure. It will allow for improved communication among the councils, thereby reducing delay and enabling FPCE to more effectively fulfill its mission.

Don't we have more important issues facing us as a church? Why are we doing this now?

There are absolutely many serious issues facing First Pres, the PC(USA), and the body of Christ as a whole! Session and Trustees voted to move forward with these changes now for the following reasons:

- These are relatively simple, easy changes even though they require a vote of the congregation
- Improving the efficiency of lay leadership decision making will make us better prepared to deal with the major issues we face
- By integrating Session and the Trustees, those with past church experience on both bodies will be able to provide their wisdom and expertise toward a broader range of issues.

Would any of the current councils or committees dealing with church finances be eliminated?

No. Budget Committee, Finance and Endowment Committee, and Building Committee would continue to exist, allowing for those members with specialized skills, experience, and interest in these areas to continue to serve where they best believe they can contribute. **It is within committees where most of the work is done.**

Does this kind of change run counter to the current trend among the Chicago Presbytery?

No. A unicameral structure is being used by many churches of similar size throughout the Presbytery.

I want to provide feedback on these proposals.

Great! Come join us at information gathering meetings on Wednesday September 21 (7 p.m.), Sunday, September 25 (after the service), or Sunday, October 2 (after the service) to learn more and provide your thoughts.