

**BY-LAWS**  
**of the**  
**First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls, Iowa**

**Article I – Name and Location**

The name of the Corporation shall be First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls, Iowa, said Church being a part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The said Church is incorporated under Chapter 504A of the Code of Iowa.

**Article II – Purpose**

The purpose of this church is to provide for the worship of Almighty God, to proclaim the gospel of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, to seek God’s guidance through prayer and fellowship, to provide for an understanding of Christian faith through Christian education, to maintain a ministry of care and concern for all of God’s people, to promote social justice, and to exhibit the truth of God’s Kingdom and obedience to God’s will as one of the congregations of Christ’s church in the world.

***Mission Statement***

*Believe the Good News of Jesus Christ. Respond with Love, Commitment, and Service.*

***Our Vision***

*In response to our relationship with Jesus Christ, we commit to grow in our personal faith unite in love as a family of faith and reach out in service to others.*

**Article III – Affiliation and Authority**

This church is a congregation within the Presbytery of North Central Iowa and the Synod of Lakes and Prairies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This congregation is incorporated under Chapter 504A of the 1966 Code of Iowa and conducts its civil business in accordance with those laws. These By-Laws shall be subject on all points to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

**Article IV – Membership**

Categories of membership in this church include baptized members, active members, affiliate members, and others. Members in all categories of membership are entitled to the pastoral care and instruction of the church, to participate in the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, and to present children for baptism. Members who are categorized as active members are also entitled to take part in meetings of the congregation and to vote and hold office.

**Article V – Meetings of the Congregation**

**Section 1. Annual Meeting**

The congregation shall hold an annual meeting in January of each year to receive reports of the Session, the Board of Deacons and other organizations of the church, and to conduct ecclesiastical and corporate business as is appropriate. The congregation shall review the adequacy of the compensation of the pastor at this meeting.

**Section 2. Election Meeting**

The congregation shall hold a special meeting each year to elect elders, deacons, and members of the Nominating Committee. Other business proper for congregational consideration may be conducted, but business to be transacted shall be limited to items specifically listed in notices for the meeting.

**Section 3. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the congregation may be called to conduct business proper for congregational consideration. Special meetings may be called by the Session as it deems necessary, by the Session when requested in writing by one-fourth of the active members and by the North Central Iowa Presbytery whenever it determines such a meeting in notices of the meeting, and business to be transacted shall be limited to these items.

**Section 4. Notice of Meetings**

Public notice of annual, election and special meetings of the congregation shall be given on two successive Sundays preceding the meeting. Notice of meetings which include election of a Pastor Nominating Committee shall be given at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting.

**Section 5. Presiding Officer**

The pastor shall be moderator of all meetings of the congregation. If the pastor is unable to preside, he or she shall invite, with the concurrence of the Session, another minister of the Presbytery to preside. When the pastorate is vacant, a moderator appointed by the Presbytery shall preside.

**Section 6. Secretary of Meetings**

The Clerk of Session shall be secretary of meetings of the congregation. If the clerk is unable to serve, a secretary shall be elected by the congregation.

**Section 7. Rules of Meetings**

A quorum shall consist of the moderator, secretary, and members totaling at least ten (10) percent of the active church membership. Only active members present at meetings of the congregation may vote. As required by the laws of the State of Iowa, only those members eighteen (18) years of age or older may vote on questions related to property and the business of the corporation.

**Article VI – The Session**

**Section 1. Authority**

The Session has authority over this church in all matters ecclesiastical and civil in accordance with Chapter X “The Session” of the Form of Government within the book of Order of the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

**Section 2. Membership, Elections and Terms of Office**

The Session shall consist of nine (9) ruling elders who shall be active members elected by the congregation and pastor who is moderator, or a pastor appointed by presbytery to be the moderator. Ruling elders shall serve for a term of three (3) years and shall assume office in June following their election. One-third of members shall be elected annually. No person shall be elected to serve on the Session for more than two consecutive full terms. Vacancies shall be filled by election of an active member to complete the unfinished term.

**Section 3. Clerk of the Session**

The Session shall elect annually a Clerk of Session. The Clerk shall carry out the several duties as described in the Book of Order and shall also serve as secretary for the congregation.

**Section 4. Trustees of the Corporation**

The Session shall serve as trustees of the corporation and shall handle all matters of this church pertaining to the corporation. The Session shall annually elect, either from its

membership or from the active membership of the congregation, a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the corporation.

### **Section 5. Meetings**

The Session shall hold regular meetings at least quarterly and special meetings called by the moderator or at the request of at least two elders. One-third of the elders shall constitute a quorum, except for the reception or dismissal of members, when the quorum shall be the moderator and two members of the Session.

Meetings may be held electronically and are subject to the same requirements as those held in person. Notice of such meetings shall be given in writing electronically or via regular mail not less than one week prior there to. Voting at a meeting by an absent Elder, Deacon, or Ministry Team/Committee member shall be allowed via an electronic presence (real-time video or telephone), e-mail, or written communication.

### **Section 6. Duties**

The duties of the Session shall be in accordance with the Book of Order. These duties shall include;

- A. Responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the congregation.
- B. Authority over worship services, including music, as well as assisting in serving Communion and in Baptism.
- C. Responsibility for the financial affairs of the church.
- D. Reception and dismissal of members and maintenance of required church rolls.
- E. Annual review of compensation for the church staff.
- F. Responsibility for the real property and tangible assets of the church, including the use of the building in keeping with the mission of the church.
- G. Authority over the education program of the church, including the curriculum and appointment of teachers and youth leaders.
- H. Representation to higher judiciaries.
- I. Authority over the organizations of the church.
- J. Assistance to the professional staff in their ministry to the congregation.
- K. Annually review and update as necessary the Strategic Plan.

### **Section 7. Organization**

The Session shall organize itself so that the duties of the Session may be executed efficiently and responsibly. Ministry Teams of the Session may be formed and members of the congregation may serve on these committees. Ministry Teams of the Session shall be chaired by Session members. Special committees for particular tasks may be appointed, with members and chairperson to be recommended by the Moderator and approved by the Session. Minutes of Ministry Team recommendations shall be kept and reported to the Session for action.

## **Article VII – The Board of Deacons**

### **Section 1. Membership, Elections and Terms of Office**

The Board of Deacons shall consist of fifteen (15) active members in good standing elected by the congregation. The pastor shall serve as an advisory member. Deacons shall serve for a term of three (3) years and shall assume office in June, following election and installation. No person shall be elected to serve on the Board of Deacons for more than two consecutive full terms. One-third of the members of the Board of Deacons shall be elected annually. Vacancies shall be filled by election at a congregational meeting.

**Section 2. Officers and Meetings**

Regular meetings of the Board of Deacons shall be held at least quarterly. The members of the Board shall elect a moderator and a secretary from among its members. The Board shall determine its quorum. The Board shall report regularly to the Session and to the Congregation at the annual meeting.

**Section 3. Duties**

The responsibilities of the Board of Deacons shall include:

- A. Caring for the congregation in such ways as shall express the compassion of Christ. This would include particular attention to the needs of the elderly, needy, hospitalized, and sick or shut-in.
- B. Assisting with the distribution of the elements during Communion services at the request of the Session.
- C. Performing additional services which the board may initiate or accept upon suggestion by the Session.

**Section 4. Deacons Fund**

To help support the responsibilities of the Board of Deacons, a Deacon's Fund shall be maintained through contributions received during the year. Disposition of the funds shall be at the discretion of the Board.

**Article VIII - Nominations**

**Section 1. Nominating Committee**

A Nominating Committee shall be formed annually with the following membership:

- A. One Elder selected by the Session, whom will be designated chair of the committee.
- B. One Deacon member from the Board of Deacons, selected by the Board of Deacons.
- C. Three members from the congregation elected at the annual meeting.
- D. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member.

**Section 2. Duties of the Nominated Committee**

The Nominating Committee shall present nominations for vacancies existing on the Session and the Board of Deacons and for members who will serve on the Nominating Committee for the ensuing year. Nominations may be presented at the annual meeting or any special meeting of the congregation called for the purpose of electing officers.

**Section 3. Additional Nominations**

Additional nominations may be made from the floor by any eligible voter.

**Article IX – Amendments**

These By-Laws may be amended at any stated or special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the members present and qualified to vote. Publication of the proposed changes shall be made at least one full week prior to such a meeting.

**Approved 31 January 2021  
Approved 30 January 2022**