

BYLAWS  
**Westminster Presbyterian Church**  
2701 Cameron Mills Road  
Alexandria, Virginia 22302

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this church shall be Westminster Presbyterian Church. Westminster Presbyterian Church is a member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

The purpose of Westminster Presbyterian Church is to proclaim the Gospel of the salvation of humankind; to shelter, nurture and provide spiritual fellowship for the children of God; to maintain divine worship; to celebrate the Sacraments; to preserve the truth; to promote social righteousness; and to exhibit the Kingdom of God to the world.

ARTICLE III

CONGREGATION

The Congregation is made up of all members on the active roll. A faithful member shall accept Christ as Lord and Savior and shall be involved responsibly in the ministry of Westminster Presbyterian Church.

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS

Section 4.1. Church Officers and Officials

The officers of Westminster Presbyterian Church are:

- Twenty-seven elected Elders plus one or two elected youth Elders (See Section 4.6)
- Thirty or more elected Deacons
- Moderator who will be the Pastor

Other officials include:

- Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer
- Clerk and one or more Vice Clerks
- Three Trustees of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Alexandria, Inc. (The "Corporation")
- Twelve Directors of the Westminster Foundation

Section 4.2. Elections by Session

(a) Each year the Session shall elect:

- a Clerk and one or more Vice Clerks (See Section 5.2)
- a Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer who shall have been nominated by the Administration and Finance Committee

(b) At one of its stated fall meetings, the Session shall elect:

- Directors of the Westminster Foundation Board

Section 4.3. Annual Elections by the Congregation

During the Fourth Quarter of the Calendar Year:

- a class of Elders
- a class of Deacons
- four members of Nominating Committee at-large
- one or two youth Elders

Section 4.4. Nominating Committee

(a) Nominations. The Nominating Committee shall nominate:

- a class of Elders
- one or two youth Elders
- a class of Deacons
- a Trustee of the “Corporation”
- four members of the Nominating Committee at large
- The congregation shall be informed of the names of the members currently serving on the nominating committee and given the opportunity to suggest nominees at least ten weeks prior to the election. The committee shall make its report and publish it at least two weeks prior to the election.

(b) Composition of Nominating Committee. The church nominating committee shall consist of two Elders designated by the Session at least one of whom will be currently serving on the Session, one member designated by and from the Board of Deacons and at least four members elected by the congregation at large, none of whom may be in active service in the Session nor in the Board of Deacons. The Pastor or Associate Pastor shall be a member of the committee serving ex-officio and without a vote. The names of the church officer nominating committee shall be published in church publications.

(c) Moderator of the Committee. In accordance with church law, the committee members designated by and currently serving on the Session will be named by the Session to serve as Moderator of the Committee.

(d) Election to Nominating Committee for One-Year Term. The at-large members of the church officer nominating committee shall be elected annually and serve for a renewable term of one year. No member shall serve more than two years consecutively.

(e) Consent. In all elections the consent to be nominated and an indication of a willingness to serve if elected must be secured in advance from each nominee.

(f) Limitations on Nominees. No committee member or his or her immediate family (husband, wife, son, daughter, father or mother) shall be eligible for nomination to the office of Elder or Deacon. All other active members shall be eligible for office.

(g) Number of Nominees. The committee shall nominate the number of nominees equal to those to be elected—

(h) Election of Officers. On a Sunday in the fourth quarter of the calendar year a congregational meeting shall be called-for the purpose of electing Elders, Deacons, and four at-large members of the Nominating Committee. Youth Elders will be elected to terms as provided in Section 4.6.

(i) Nominations from Floor. Nominations from the floor must be allowed.

- (j) Majority. A majority of all voters present and voting shall be required to elect. If more than one ballot is required for election, subsequent balloting will be held the following week.
- (k) Vacancies. The decision whether to fill vacancies will be made by that board on which the vacancies occur. Vacancies will be filled by election at a special congregational meeting called for that purpose, or in conjunction with the regularly scheduled election of officers in the fourth quarter of the calendar year.
- (l) Implementing Session Size Increase. Beginning with the Session of 2013, the size of Session will be increased from twenty-four to twenty-seven Elders (see Section 4.1), plus one or two elected youth Elders. The additional one elder nominated, elected, ordained (as appropriate) and installed in each of the Classes of 2013 and 2014, shall be considered for all purposes hereunder (including, without limitation Section 4.5), as being elected to fill a vacancy and serve an unexpired term.

Section 4.5. Elders (except youth Elders) and Deacons shall be elected for a term of three years except when filling a vacancy.

Section 4.6. There shall be one or two Elders elected to the Session who shall be chosen from high school students who are members of the congregation. These youth Elders shall be elected to terms of at least one, and preferably two years each. The terms shall be staggered to the extent feasible. Youth Elders shall be elected in the fall, and ordained and installed in the first quarter of the calendar year. Youth Elders so elected shall be in addition to the other serving Elders, but all other aspects of the qualification, nomination and election, and duties of service of the youth Elders shall be as provided in the Book of Order. Youth Elders shall have all the privileges and duties of serving Elders, but shall not be required to chair or serve on a regular committee of the Session.

Section 4.7. Officer training shall be held prior to ordination and installation of newly elected officers.

Section 4.8. Ordination and installation of officers shall be on a Sunday in the first quarter of the calendar year.

Section 4.9. Termination of each class of officers shall be the Sunday the newly elected class is ordained and installed.

## ARTICLE V SESSION

Section 5.1. The Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church shall consist of the Pastor, Associate Pastors, and the elected Elders in active service [see Section 4.3]. All members of the Session, including the Pastors, are entitled to vote.

Section 5.2. Each year the Session shall elect a Clerk and Vice Clerk. A vacancy in either office shall be filled by election at a regular or special meeting.

Section 5.3. The regular monthly meeting of the Session shall be held on the fourth Wednesday of each month, unless otherwise ordered by the Moderator. Special meetings may be called by the

moderator. In addition, the moderator shall call a special meeting of the Session when requested to do so in writing by two members of the Session. Session shall meet when directed to do so by the National Capital Presbytery. The Session and its committees may act on matters via email, or other electronic means, provided that no member of the group objects to voting by email or wishes to discuss the matter being voted upon. Such votes must have a reasonable and established deadline and agreement by at least half of the members of the group eligible to vote.

Section 5.4. Standing committees of the Session shall be Administration and Finance, Building and Grounds, Christian Formation, Church HOME, Congregational Life, Digital Ministries, Local Mission, National Mission, International Mission, New Member, Personnel, Stewardship, and Worship and Music. Attached to the bylaws are the charges for these committees.

The Moderator of the Session shall appoint each elder to serve as the chair or vice-chair of a standing committee or sub-committee, and shall ensure that each standing committee is chaired by an elder except in unusual circumstances. In addition, one elder serving on the Session shall chair the Nominating Committee. Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Standing Session Committees shall normally be members of the Session. However, if the Moderator determines special circumstances warrant, the Moderator may appoint a church member who is not a Session member to serve as chair or vice-chair of a Session committee. Such other committees may be proposed by the Moderator as deemed necessary to carry on the work of Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Section 5.5. A staff liaison shall be designated for each committee. The Pastor and Associate Pastors shall be ex-officio members of all committees.

Section 5.6. Membership on all committees shall terminate at noon on the day of ordination and installation of officers.

Section 5.7. There shall be a Coordinating Committee of the Session, composed of serving elders who are the chairs of committees, the Clerk of Session and the Moderator. The Coordinating Committee shall meet when necessary upon the call of the Moderator for the following purposes: for consultation and coordination; to devise omnibus motions for approval of the Session; and to assist the Moderator in setting agendas for meetings of the Session. The Moderator may ask other members of the congregation to attend meetings of the Coordinating Committee, as the Moderator deems appropriate.

Section 5.8. The duties of the Session shall be in accordance with the Book of Order and the Job Descriptions for Elders as approved by the Session.

Section 5.9. The quorum of the Session shall be the Moderator and one-third of the serving elders. The quorum for the Session when receiving new members will be the Moderator and two serving Elders.

Article VI  
BOARD OF DEACONS

Section 6.1. The Board of Deacons shall consist of elected Deacons in active service. The Pastor and Associate Pastors shall serve as advisory members. [See Section 4.3]

Section 6.2. The Board of Deacons shall elect a Moderator and a Secretary from among its members.

(a) Election of a Moderator and a Secretary shall follow the ordination and installation of officers.

(b) A vacancy in office shall be filled by election at a regular or special meeting.

Section 6.3. The Board shall meet at least quarterly or when directed to meet by the Session. There shall be an annual joint meeting with the Session for the purpose of planning and coordination.

Section 6.4. The primary task of the Board is to minister to the pastoral needs of the church, and carry out other activities as assigned by the Session.

Section 6.5. The quorum of the Board of Deacons shall be one-third of serving Deacons.

ARTICLE VII  
NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Section 7.1. Trustees shall be nominated by the Church Nominating Committee pursuant to, Section 4.4, above.

Section 7.2. Trustees shall serve for terms of three years, with the term of one of them expiring each year. Trustees may also be elected for shorter terms to fill vacancies. No Trustee shall be elected for a term of more than three years, nor shall a Trustee serve for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. A Trustee having served for a total of six years shall be ineligible for reelection as Trustee for a period of at least one year.

Section 7.3. Trustees shall be members of the Congregation, residents of Virginia, of legal age, highly qualified individuals of maturity and sound judgment, with experience in business management.

Section 7.4. Trustee nominees may be reported with the church officer nominees and the annual meeting of the "Corporation" may be called in the announcement of the Congregational meeting to elect officers.

Section 7.5. Concurrent with the annual Congregational meeting to elect officers as provided in Section 4.4(h) above, a meeting of the Congregation as the membership of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Alexandria, Inc., shall be convened for the purpose of electing Trustees and transacting other business as appropriate.

ARTICLE VIII  
MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

Section 8.1. The congregation shall hold an annual meeting for the purpose of electing Elders, Deacons, four members of the Nominating Committee, and transacting other business as appropriate. A meeting shall be held for the purpose of electing one or two youth Elders.

Section 8.2. The congregation shall hold an annual meeting in the first quarter of the calendar year for the purpose of approving the revised terms of call for the Pastor and Associate Pastor(s), for receiving the Annual Report of the Session, and, if necessary, conducting other business as appropriate.

Section 8.3. Those entitled to vote shall be the active members of the church in attendance. In all disputes about membership status and the right to vote, the Clerk of Session's list of the active membership shall be determinative.

Section 8.4. The Pastor or an Associate Pastor shall be the Moderator of all meetings of the congregation.

Section 8.5. The Clerk or a Vice Clerk of the Session shall be secretary of meetings of the congregation. If the Clerk or Vice Clerk is unable to serve, the congregation shall elect a secretary.

Section 8.6. Special meetings may be called by the Session, by the Presbytery, or by the Session when petitioned in writing by one-fourth of the members on the active roll of the church. Public notice of the meeting shall be given on two successive Sundays, except when the purpose of the meeting is to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee or to hear the recommendation of the Pastor Nominating Committee. In those situations, notice will be given ten days in advance, which shall include two successive Sundays.

Section 8.7. One-tenth of the active members of the church shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE IX  
PROCEDURAL RULES

Section 9.1. The order of precedence for procedural rules shall be as follows:

- The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), Part II, Book of Order
- The Bylaws, Westminster Presbyterian Church
- Robert's Rules of Order, the most recent edition

Section 9.2. Except for rules set forth in Section 9.1, no other procedural rules adopted by a Session shall be binding upon or control the actions of subsequent Sessions.

ARTICLE X  
AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

These bylaws may be amended at a stated meeting of the Session by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted to the Session in writing. Written notice of the proposed amendment must be provided to the members of the Session at least two weeks prior to the stated meeting.

Originally adopted by the Congregation April 24, 1988.

Amended by the Session March 17, 1993.

Amended by the Session August 24, 1994.

Amended by the Session October 28, 1998.

Amended by the Session February 23, 2000.

Amended by the Session January 27, 2002.

Amended by the Session April 23, 2003.

Amended by the Session January 28, 2004.

Amended by the Session September 25, 2006.

Amended by the Session November 29, 2006.

Amended by the Session January 27, 2011.

Amended by the Session November 30, 2011.

Amended by the Session April 25, 2012.

Amended by the Session July 23, 2014.

Amended by the Session December 3, 2014.

Amended by the Session January 30, 2016.

Amended by the Session January 24, 2018.

Amended by the Session May 22, 2019.

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Larry Hayward, Moderator

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Eileen Denne, Clerk

## ATTACHMENT: CHARGES TO SESSION COMMITTEES

The ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE Committee (1) has general oversight responsibility for all church financial matters; (2) develops procedures for handling of church funds and supervises the work of all persons involved therein; (3) nominates, annually, a church treasurer and an assistant treasurer to be elected by the Session; (4) prepares the church's annual budget for the Session's approval; (5) conducts not less than annually a review (or if A&F deems appropriate, an audit) of the financial records of the church; (6) conducts not less than annually a review of the church's insurance coverage, and supervises the purchase of appropriate insurance coverage; (7) periodically develops long-range financial plans for the church; (8) oversees the purchase and operation of computer systems and office equipment; and (9) oversees church vehicle needs and usage. A&F reports annually to the Session that the church has appropriate insurance coverage, and that A&F has conducted a review of the church's financial records. A&F reviews the annual church statistical report prepared by the church administrator, and forwards it to the Session. A&F reviews requests for Special Offerings and other fundraising requests, as required by the Policy on Gifts and Fundraising Activities, and forwards to the Session the requests that A&F has approved that also require Session approval. The Chair of A&F serves on the Gifts and Bequests Committee. Pursuant to the church's bylaws, the Chair of A&F also serves as president of the church corporation, Westminster Presbyterian Church of Alexandria, Inc.

The BUILDING AND GROUNDS Committee is responsible for overseeing the maintenance of the church buildings, equipment and furnishings, the outside grounds, and for providing recommendations on capital improvements and the annual operating budget.

The CHRISTIAN FORMATION Committee is responsible for the Christian nurture of the congregation. It provides for formal Christian instruction for all age groups through the Church School program and special events; recruits and trains teachers and provides them with support and recognition; provides oversight and coordination with youth ministries; and is responsible for the church library. The Christian Formation Committee may address the needs of members of different ages through subcommittees (for example, an Adult Formation Subcommittee, a Youth Formation Subcommittee and/or a Children's Formation Subcommittee). The Weekday Preschool is responsible to the Session through the Christian Formation Committee.

The CONGREGATIONAL LIFE Committee organizes and coordinates all-church events throughout the year that provide fellowship opportunities for the Westminster Congregation, seeking to involve all members in the life, work, and worship of the Church. The Committee serves as a liaison between the Session and singles programs, seniors ministries, The Presbyterian Women, The Men of Westminster, faith groups, Tables for Eight, the Westminster Craft Group, the Women's Shanghai Card Group, young adults and sponsored Scouting organizations. The committee develops ways to enhance the church's sense of community by planning and implementing special activities for the entire church family. The Committee submits to Session requests for special events when Session approval is required. (See the Policy on Gifts and Fundraising Activities.)



The CHURCH HOME (Helping Our Members Engage) Committee is responsible for integrating, assimilating, or otherwise involving new members in the life, work and worship of the church, and encouraging existing members to stay actively involved in the church community. The committee annually reviews the roll of members and “counsels those who have neglected the responsibilities of membership.” Each fall it reports to Session those members of the church to be deleted from rolls, citing applicable passage/reason in the Book of Order for constitutional authority. Biennially it reviews and recommends to Session continuation of affiliate members.

The DIGITAL MINISTRIES Committee is responsible for oversight of the internet and social media presence of Westminster Presbyterian Church. The committee will continually assess the communications needs of the church, working with other Session committees and staff to search for new ways to tell Westminster’s story; will research and make recommendations regarding digital hardware, software and service providers; and is responsible for developing and enabling the implementation of the church’s social media and online communications policy and strategy.

The LOCAL MISSION Committee identifies and publicizes needs of the community to the congregation; provides liaison between community agencies and the congregation; directs the work of church volunteers to community agencies, publicizes the work done by church members; and recommends budgetary support. The Committee submits to Session requests for special offerings. A list of agencies receiving support is on the WPC website.

The NATIONAL MISSION Committee is responsible for keeping the congregation informed of the national mission of the church and provides liaison with and recommends budgetary support for same. The Committee submits to Session requests for special offerings and mission trips.

The INTERNATIONAL MISSION Committee is responsible for keeping the congregation informed of the international mission of the church, and it provides liaison with and recommends budgetary support for same. The Committee submits to Session requests for special offerings and mission trips.

The NEW MEMBER Committee oversees the church's outreach to visitors, conducts membership classes, provide initial liaison between new members and the church. It collects the full names of new members (first, middle, last), how they joined and from where (name of church, town and state), if by letter of transfer.

Members of the NOMINATING Committee are elected by (1) the congregation (2) the Session and (3) the Diaconate (see the bylaws and the Book of Order for details). The committee presents nominees for church officers, including elders, deacons, trustee, and Nominating Committee members, to be elected at a fall congregational meeting called for that purpose, and for youth elders to be elected at a late spring congregational meeting.

The PERSONNEL Committee oversees all personnel employed by the church; meets annually with each staff member for performance evaluation; is available to staff for support with work-related problems; oversees job descriptions and makes annual salary recommendations to the Administration and Finance Committee and conducts searches for new and vacant positions. It annually recommends to Session any changes in terms of call of installed pastors for congregation’s approval (including vacation time, continuing education, allowances, etc.) and submits a report at annual congregational meeting. The Committee maintains the Westminster Personnel Manual including new policy changes. It annually reviews compensation of lay employees, including changes in position descriptions, and

reports to Session. It reports to Session all actions taken to hire, compensate, evaluate, discipline or terminate non-ordained staff. In the event of termination of an employee, the committee reports to Session that the relevant provisions of the personnel policies have been followed; Session action is to be taken in a legal meeting with a quorum present, voting to terminate the employee. The Committee reports to Session any severance agreement or terms. The Personnel Committee works pro-actively to demonstrate congregational appreciation for staff on an annual basis.

The STEWARDSHIP Committee plans and conducts the annual pledge drive and implements any special fund drives; secures member pledges; and encourages membership to give of their time, talents and material possessions to the work of Christ.

The WORSHIP AND MUSIC Committee organizes all aspects of church worship including special services, guest ministers, music, ushers and their training, preparation of the communion elements and arrangements for their distribution; it oversees any use of the Sanctuary or Chapel, including seasonal decoration; it develops policies concerning funerals, memorial services and weddings; it oversees the use of the Westminster Concert Series fund and other dedicated funds; and coordinates any changes to Sanctuary and Chapel with the Buildings and Grounds Committee for all aspects of Christian worship as described in the Book of Order. The Committee submits to Session dates for communion service for Session approval. It also submits to Session requests for approval of preachers who are not Westminster pastors. The committee arranges for elders and deacons to serve communion. The committee reviews requests for use of the chapel and sanctuary outside of worship, and oversees use of these worship spaces by non-Westminster groups approved by the committee.