

**Lake  
Orthodox  
Presbyterian  
Church**

**Constitution  
and Bylaws**

Adopted On  
January 29, 2012

## **ARTICLE I    NAME**

The name of this congregation shall be the Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church (O.P.C.).

## **ARTICLE II    PURPOSE**

Lake (OPC) being established by God's sovereign grace as a body of orthodox Christian believers under the headship of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:18; 2:19) seeks to promote Christian worship, fellowship, evangelism, and growth in the reformed tradition.

## **ARTICLE III    ECCLESIASTICAL CONSTITUTION & GOVERNMENT**

### ***Section 1.        Ecclesiastical Constitution***

The ecclesiastical constitution of the Lake OPC, subordinate to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, consists of The Westminster Confession of Faith with its Larger and Shorter Catechisms as adopted by the 1936 General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Book of Church Order, including the Form of Government, Book of Discipline, and Directory for the Public Worship of God as adopted by the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

### ***Section 2.        Constitutional Authority***

The provisions of the constitution shall control over any provisions of the bylaws that may be in conflict with it.

## **ARTICLE IV    AMENDMENTS**

This constitution may be amended only at a properly called Congregational Meeting. The proposed amendment shall be distributed in writing to each voting member by personal delivery, email, or regular US mail at least five (5) days prior to the called meeting. The proposed amendment shall be adopted by at least three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote. A chronology of all amendments shall be attached to this Constitution and Bylaws to provide historical documentation of all revisions.

## **ARTICLE I DOCTRINAL AND GOVERNMENTAL STANDARDS**

In order to direct and maintain the Christian faith and worship, the doctrinal standards of Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church shall be and are the Holy Scriptures and as they are summarized in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, as adopted by its 1936 General Assembly. Further, Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church shall be and is governed by The Book of Church Order of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and by the following by-laws which shall be and are subordinate to The Book of Church Order.

## **ARTICLE II THE CONGREGATION AND CORPORATION**

### ***Section 1. Membership***

The congregation shall consist of all members of the church, both communicant and non-communicant (Form of Government XIII.1.).

### ***Section 2. Purpose of the Corporation***

The purpose of the corporation shall be limited to (1) matters of the ownership and management, sale and purchase of all property both real and personal and; (2) all matters of liability, claim, and lawsuits.

## **ARTICLE III MEETINGS**

### ***Section 1. Annual Meeting***

The annual Congregational and Corporation Meeting shall be held during the month of January each year as determined by the Session. The fiscal year shall be the calendar year.

### ***Section 2. Quorum***

The quorum for Congregational Meetings shall be one-third (1/3) of the voting members.

### ***Section 3. Eligible Voters***

Voting in Congregational Meetings shall be limited to communicant members in good standing. Voting on issues of the Corporation shall be further limited to those members who are at least eighteen (18) years of age as the laws of the State of Ohio require.

**Section 4.      Officers**

Ordinarily the Moderator and the Clerk of Session shall serve as Moderator and Clerk respectively in Congregational Meetings.

**Section 5.      Notice of Meetings**

Public notice of all meetings of the congregation must be announced from the pulpit on two consecutive Lord's Days prior to the meeting and shall be placed in the church bulletin on the same dates. A circular letter delivered by postal mail or email may also be used if sent out ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

**Section 6.      Special Meetings**

Special meetings may be called by the Session or on petition signed by one quarter (1/4) of the voting members.

**ARTICLE IV    ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**Section 1.      Nominations**

Nominations for candidates for the offices of Ruling Elder and Deacon must be submitted to the Session by the first week of June. The Session shall announce on the last Lord's Day of June those men whom it has approved to enter a period of training for church office. These men shall then be trained and certified by the Session, normally in time to be presented to the congregation for election at its annual meeting in January. They shall be elected by two-thirds (2/3) vote.

**Section 2.      Term of Service**

Ruling Elders and Deacons shall be elected for indefinite tenure.

**Section 3.      Sabbatical Leave**

A church officer may request to be relieved from the duties of his office for a time only with the approval of the Session. In his inactive status the officer remains installed in his office. The Session may at any time reactivate the individual with his consent to full service.

**Section 4.      Trustees (see OPC Form of Government XXXI)**

The Board of Trustees shall consist of the Session. The Congregation may elect one communicant member of the church in good standing to also serve as Trustee for a term of three (3) years.

## **ARTICLE V TRUSTEES AND TREASURER**

### ***Section 1. Responsibilities***

The Board of Trustees shall be charged with ensuring that the church's financial records are audited annually. The trustees shall be charged with proposing to the congregation the purchase, sale, rent, or lease of properties, real or otherwise, and shall call congregational/corporation meetings to act on such recommendations. The trustees shall be responsible for the execution of all legal instruments for the congregation/corporation and shall also act as the custodian of the church's legal documents. In addition, the trustees shall be responsible for the supervision of those who may be employed by the church for custodial, secretarial, and other such services.

### ***Section 2. Meetings and Quorum***

The Board of Trustees shall meet at least once annually. A quorum shall be a majority of its members.

### ***Section 3. Officers and Treasurer***

The board shall choose its own officers of which shall at least be president and secretary. The board shall also choose the Treasurer of the church. Unlike its other officers, the treasurer need not be a member of the Board of Trustees. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep the funds of the church in a banking institution approved by the board, including the regular funds and, when there are no Deacons serving in the Church to oversee them, the benevolent funds. The treasurer shall report to the board in writing on the regular funds of the church, and to the Session on the benevolent funds of the church. The treasurer shall also provide a summary report on all church funds on a monthly basis for publication to the congregation.

## **ARTICLE VI BUDGET**

The budget shall be assembled by a committee appointed by the Session. The budget shall be presented to the Session for review and approval at least four (4) weeks before the annual Congregational Meeting. The congregation shall vote on the proposed budget at its annual Congregational Meeting for the purpose of making its recommendation to the Session. Upon receipt of the congregation's recommendation by majority vote, the Session shall adopt a final budget.

## **ARTICLE VII PASTORAL RELATIONS**

### ***Section 1. Pulpit Committee***

When the church is without a pastor, the congregation shall elect a pulpit committee at a called Congregational Meeting. The congregation shall elect any three communicant members in good standing to serve on the committee. The Session and Diaconate shall each appoint one of its members to also serve on the committee. If there are no Deacons then the Session shall appoint two (2) Ruling Elders to serve on the committee. The committee shall elect a chairman and a secretary. The committee shall operate under the oversight of the Session (Form of Government XXII.3.).

### ***Section 2. Pastoral Severance***

If the pastoral relationship is dissolved because of censure or by the church's request, the church shall provide to the pastor severance pay including medical benefits up to sixty (60) days from the date of severance.

## **ARTICLE VIII DISSOLUTION OF LAKE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

In the event that Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church elects to dissolve, the Session shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, transfer or convey all remaining assets to the presbytery or to any other entity which adheres and promotes the doctrines as set forth in its constitutional standards. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the session shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered.

## **ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS**

### ***Section 1. Procedure***

These bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by a simple majority of eligible voting members present at a properly called Congregational Meeting. The alteration, amendment, repeal or new bylaws shall be distributed in writing to each voting member by personal delivery, email, or regular US mail at least five (5) days prior to the called meeting.

### ***Section 2. Chronology of Revisions***

A chronology of all amendments shall be attached to the bylaws to provide historical documentation of all revisions.

## **Chronology of Revisions to the Lake OPC Bylaws**

1. Revision # 1: At the January 25, 2015 annual meeting the congregation of Lake OPC approved a revision of Bylaws Article V.3., third sentence (which prior to revision had read, "It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep the funds of the church in a banking institution approved by the board, including both regular and benevolent funds."), to read as follows: "It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep the funds of the church in a banking institution approved by the board, including the regular funds and, when there are no Deacons serving in the Church to oversee them, the benevolent funds."