

**Lake
Orthodox
Presbyterian
Church**

**Constitution
and Bylaws
(Revised)**

Adopted January 21, 2018

BYLAWS
of the
Congregation of Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church
Lake County, Ohio

Article I: Preface

The mission of this church being to propagate and maintain the Christian faith and worship as it is set forth in the Holy Scriptures, and defined in the *Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church* as adopted by the 1936 General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church (in Lake County, Ohio), was established by God's sovereign grace as a body of orthodox believers, and determines to be governed by *The Book of Church Order of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church* (inclusive of *The Form of Government*, *The Book of Discipline*, and *The Directory for the Public Worship of God*), by *The Bylaws of the Presbytery of Ohio of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*, and by the following *Bylaws*.

Article II: Constitutional Authority

The *Confession of Faith and Catechisms* and *The Book of Church Order* are the ecclesiastical constitution of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, but are subordinate to the Holy Scriptures (which alone are the written Word of God, the church's only infallible rule and final standard); the provisions of this ecclesiastical constitution shall control over any provisions of these *Bylaws* which may be in conflict with it.

Article III: Membership

The membership of Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church shall consist of communicant and noncommunicant members, all of whom have the right and privilege of pastoral care, instruction in the faith, and government by the church. Communicant members are those who have been baptized, have made credible profession of faith in Christ, and have been enrolled and admitted to all the rights of full communicant membership by the Session, including the right to partake of the Lord's Supper. The baptized children of communicant members shall be enrolled as noncommunicant members by the Session.

Article IV: Meetings of the Congregation

- A. The annual congregational meeting will be held during the month of January each year as determined by the Session.
- B. The quorum for congregational meetings shall be one-third (1/3) of the voting members.
- C. Voting in congregational meetings shall be limited to communicant members in good standing. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.
- D. Ordinarily the Moderator and Clerk of Session shall serve as the Moderator and Clerk respectively in congregational meetings.

E. Public notice of all meetings of the congregation shall 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.

F. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Session or on petition to the Session signed by one quarter (1/4) of the voting members. No business may be conducted not specified in the call.

G. The annual meeting of the corporation will follow the congregational meeting on the same day as the annual congregational meeting.

Article V: Election of Officers

A. Nominations for candidates for the offices of Ruling Elder and Deacon must ordinarily 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, upon examination approved by the Session, certified to stand for election, 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.

B. Ruling Elders and Deacons shall be elected for indefinite tenure.

C. A church officer may request to be temporarily 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.

D. A church officer who demonstrates over time that he lacks either the character or the gifts, or both, to continue serving in office; or who commits a scandalous sin which would bring reproach upon the reputation of the church and dishonor to the name of Christ were he to continue in office; or whose services simply do not appear to be edifying to the congregation; may be divested from his office. This may be done either with or without church discipline, as the circumstances may require, and as outlined in the provisions of chapter XXVI ("Divesting from Office") of the OPC's *Book of Church Order*.

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: Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern meetings of the congregation so long as they are not inconsistent with the Standards referred to in the Preface to these *Bylaws* ("Article I: Preface").

Article VIII: Pastoral Relations

A. 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 (3) communicant members in good and regular standing to serve on the committee. In addition, the Session and the Diaconate shall each appoint one of its members to 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.).

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

C. At its annual meeting the congregation will vote on the pastor's compensation for the coming year as part of its discussion of the annual budget.

Article IX: Use of a Church Building

A. If the church should purchase a building, said building shall be used solely and exclusively for purposes that comport with the mission of the church as defined in the Preface to these *Bylaws* ("Article I: Preface").

B. Outside groups or organizations, and any non-members, wishing to use the church facilities must apply directly to the Session for permission to use said facilities. The Session has authority to approve or deny such an application, and later to revoke approval once granted, at its sole discretion.

C. Marriage ceremonies may be conducted in the church building only for members of the church in good and regular standing, and for those in the process of becoming members. Exceptions to this limitation may be made at the sole discretion of the Session. The Pastor and other Ministers of the Word have full liberty to decide whether or not they will officiate at wedding ceremonies.

D. Trustees will have responsibility to manage and administer details for non-members and outside organizations granted permission by the Session to use the building, under the authority of the Session.

Article X: Dissolution of Lake Orthodox 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 liabilities of the corporation, transfer or convey all remaining assets to the Presbytery or any other entity which adheres to 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 XI: Amendments

A. 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.

B. 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

A. Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church Constitution and Bylaws (original version) was adopted on January 29, 2012.

B. 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.”

C. The original Lake OPC Constitution and Bylaws (adopted 1/29/12, revised 1/25/15) were repealed, and the above 1/21/18 revised Lake OPC Constitution and Bylaws (both *Congregational* and *Corporation* Bylaws) were adopted in their place, at the January 21, 2018 annual meeting of the congregation of Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

BYLAWS
of the
Corporation of Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church
Lake County, Ohio

Article I: Purpose

Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Lake County, Ohio, shall be incorporated in accordance with the laws of the State of Ohio. The corporation shall be organized according to the *Form of Government* of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The purpose of this corporation is to act as the agent of the congregation to handle affairs pertaining to the property and other temporal matters as required by the civil authorities. Therefore its functions are limited to (1) matters of ownership and management, sale and purchase of all property both real and personal; and (2) all matters of liability, claim and lawsuits.

Article II: Eligible Voters

Only those and all those who are communicant members of Lake Orthodox Presbyterian Church and who are eighteen (18) years of age or older shall be entitled to vote at corporation meetings, as required by the laws of the State of Ohio. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted, nor shall anyone be allowed to vote except when the vote is being taken.

Article III: Meetings of the Corporation

- A. The annual meeting of the corporation will follow the congregational meeting on the same day as the annual congregational meeting.
- B. One-third (1/3) of the voting members will constitute a quorum at a corporation meeting.
- C. Special meetings of the corporation may be called at any time by the Board of Trustees or by one-fourth (1/4) of the members of the corporation. No business may be conducted not specified in the call for the meeting.
- D. Public notice of a special meeting will be announced from the pulpit on two consecutive Lord's Days prior to the date of 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.

Article IV: Trustees and Treasurer

A. The Board of Trustees shall ordinarily be chosen from among the Ruling Elders and Deacons of the Church. They shall serve for a term of three (3) years. In addition, the corporation may elect other communicant members of the church in good and regular standing for a term of three (3) years, if it seems desirable; provided, however, that the number of such members shall be less than one-half the total membership of the Board of Trustees, as required by OPC *Form of Government* XXXI.3. Under ordinary circumstances the Board of Trustees shall have at least three Trustees serving on the Board at any given time. All Trustees, whether church officers or non-officers, may be reelected after the completion of their term of service to

serve additional consecutive terms.

B. 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 corporation the purchase, sale, rent, or lease of properties, real or otherwise, and shall call corporation meetings to act on such recommendations. The Trustees shall be responsible for the execution of all legal instruments for the 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, or other such services.

C. The Board of Trustees 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 and the Session in writing on the regular funds of the Church. (The Deacon(s) shall report 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.

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

Article V: Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern meetings of the corporation so long as they are not inconsistent with the Standards of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church or to these *Bylaws*.

Article VI: Amendments

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 corporation 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.