

CONSTITUTION 2nd Amendment (1983)

Article I: Name. The church shall be known as The Chapelgate Presbyterian Church, Inc., organized under the laws of the State of Maryland, (hereinafter designated "church").

Article II: Doctrine. The church shall adhere to belief in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the infallible Word of God written, and as the only rule of faith and life; and subordinate to those Scriptures this church shall also adhere to the Reformed Faith as expressed in the Westminster Confession of Faith together with the accompanying Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

Article III: Government. The church shall be Presbyterian in form of government; that is, the government of this church shall be vested in its membership but executed through the Session in all matters pertaining to the affairs of the church. The corporate affairs of the church shall be administered by Trustees in conformance with the laws of the State of Maryland. The Treasurer of the church shall be the Treasurer of the corporation. The communicant members of the congregation shall be The Corporation.

Article IV: Rights of the Church. The Corporation of the church, through its duly-elected trustees, shall have sole title to its real property and shall be the sole owner of any equity it may have in any real estate. No superior court shall have any claim whatever upon any real property or any equity in any real estate, or any funds or property of any kind held by or belonging to this church, or any board, society, committee, Sunday School, class or branch thereof. Superior church courts may receive monies or properties from this local church only by free and voluntary action of ourselves.

Article V: Denominational Relationship. As long as this congregation is related to a denomination, the Constitution, except Article II and IV, and Bylaws of this church shall be subject to and in conformity with the Confession of Faith, the Form of Government and the Book of Discipline of that denomination.

Article VI: Amendments. The Constitution of this church, except Articles II and IV, may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the communicant members of the church present and voting at any regular or special meeting, provided the proposed amendment(s) has(have) been presented to the congregation for discussion at a congregational meeting held at least one week prior to the meeting at which the voting will take place, and provided the congregation has been duly notified of the proposed amendment(s) in the call of the meeting of the corporation. At all congregational meetings called specifically for amending the Constitution as herein provided, one-sixth (1/6) of the resident communicant members of the church shall constitute a quorum. There shall be no voting by proxy.

BYLAWS

Introduction to the Bylaws

So long as The Chapelgate Presbyterian Church shall be a member of the Presbyterian Church in America, or its successor, the Book of Church Order of the PCA or its successor shall be used as the general directive by which it shall be governed. The Bylaws, as set forth herein, and as may be duly amended from time to time, are intended only as a supplement to said Book of Church Order, and if there is any conflict between these Bylaws and the Book of Church Order, then the Book of Church Order shall govern.

Article I: Membership

Section I: Members. Communing members are those who have made a profession of faith in Christ, have been baptized, and have been admitted by the Session to the Lord's Table. Those only who have made a profession of faith in Christ, have been baptized, and admitted by the Session to the Lord's Table, are entitled to all the rights and privileges of the Church.

Article II: The Pastors

Section 1: Definition. The pastors of the Church shall be ones who are duly ordained, called by the congregation of this Church, and installed in accordance with the Book of Church Order.

Article III: The Session

Section 1: Structure and Tenure. There shall be three classes of Ruling Elders on the Session, one class of which shall expire each year. The number of Elders shall be determined by the congregation, after hearing the recommendation of the Session. Terms shall always be for three years, except when it is necessary to elect some for shorter terms in order to equalize the numbers in the classes, or to fill vacancies. No Ruling Elder shall be elected to serve on the Session for consecutive terms aggregating more than six (6) years. A Ruling Elder shall be ineligible for re-election to the Session having served six (6) years on the Session for consecutive terms, until at least one (1) year has elapsed from the expiration of this service of the last term for which he was elected.

Section 2: Meetings. The Session shall hold stated meetings at least quarterly. Moreover, the pastor has power to convene the Session when he may judge it requisite; and he shall always convene it when requested to do so by any two (2) of the Ruling Elders. When there is no pastor it may be convened by two (2) Ruling Elders. The Session shall also convene when directed to do so by the Presbytery.

Section 3: Moderator. The pastor is, for prudential reasons, Moderator of the Session. The Moderator has all authority necessary for the preservation of order and for the proper and expeditious conduct of all business before the court, and for convening and adjourning the court according to its own ruling.

Section 4: Clerk. A Clerk or Clerks shall be elected by the Session. It is the duty of the Clerk, besides recording the transactions, to preserve records carefully, and to grant extracts from them whenever properly required. Such extracts under the hand of the Clerk, shall be evidence to any ecclesiastical court, and to every part of the church.

Section 5: Committees. The Session may establish standing and special committees and determine their composition, functions and terms of service; committee members may include members of the congregation.

Section 6: Limitation of Obligations. The Session shall adhere to the Book of Church Order of the PCA, the Constitution and Bylaws of The Chapelgate Presbyterian Church, and to the corporate laws of the State of Maryland. The Session shall have no authority to financially obligate the church or congregation in any manner not specifically provided for in the Book of Church Order without first obtaining the approval thereof from the congregation at a duly-constituted meeting.

Article IV: The Board of Deacons

Section 1: Structure and Tenure. The structure and tenure of the Deacons shall be the same as for the Ruling Elders (Article III, Section 1.) The number of Deacons shall be determined by the congregation, after hearing the recommendation of the Session. The Board shall elect its own Chairman, Vice-chairman and Secretary. These officers shall be the Trustees of the Corporation and as such shall hold title to all real estate and personal property owned by the Church. It is the duty of the Deacons to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress. It is their duty also to develop the grace of liberality in the members of the church, to devise effective methods of collecting the gifts of the people, and to distribute these gifts among the objects to which they are contributed. They shall have the care of the property of the congregation, both real and personal, and shall keep in proper repair the church edifice and other buildings belonging to the congregation. In matters of special importance affecting the property of the church, they cannot take final action without the approval of the Session and consent of the congregation. In the discharge of their duties the Deacons are under the supervision and authority of the Session.

Section 2: Meetings. The Board of Deacons shall hold regular meetings at least once a quarter, and whenever requested by the Session.

Section 3: Committees. The Board of Deacons may establish standing and special meetings and determine their composition, functions and terms of service; committee members may include members of the congregation.

Section 4: Limitation of Obligations. The Board of Deacons shall adhere to the Constitution and Bylaws of The Chapelgate Presbyterian Church and to the Book of Church Order of the PCA, and to the corporate laws of the State of Maryland. The Board of Deacons shall have no authority to financially obligate the church or congregation in any manner not specifically provided for in the approved budget of the Church, except for reasonable and necessary expenses not to exceed 10% of the budget line item or \$1,000.00, whichever is greater, without first obtaining the approval of the Session.

Section 5: Treasurer. The Treasurer of the Church shall be appointed by the Board of Deacons, and this person need not be a member of the Board of Deacons. The Treasurer shall draw checks against the church funds as directed by the Board of Deacons and/or Session. There shall be kept under the Treasurer's direction a ledger showing the cash amount of all funds and a balance taken at the close of each month. These books shall at any time be available to the Board of Deacons and the Session, and may be submitted to an independent audit at least once a year, if directed by the Board of Deacons or the Session.

Article V: Nomination, Election and Installation

Section 1: Qualification of Nominees. All nominees shall be members of the church at the time of nomination. No member who is serving on the Session shall be considered for nomination to the Board of Deacons unless his present term is in its last year.

Section 2: Preparation of Nominees. All nominees, who are willing to serve in the office for which they are nominated, may be required to take a series of preparatory classes, to be established by the Session.

Section 3: Formal Subscription. All nominees who are candidates for office shall subscribe to the doctrine and polity of the PCA. The Session shall examine each nominee on the constitutional requirements, and upon approval the Session shall present his name for election.

Section 4: Congregational Meetings for Election. There shall be annually at least one Congregational Meeting for the purpose of election to the Session and to the Board of Deacons. The Congregational Meeting for Election shall be held at a time to be established by the Session. Additional special congregational meetings for election may be held if vacancies need to be filled.

Section 5: Election of Officers. Election of officers shall be by written ballot and be established by majority vote of those persons present. Where term of office is less than a normal three-(3)-year term, the determination shall be made by the count of votes cast for particular nominees.

Section 6: Ordination and Installation. All Elders and Deacons shall be ordained and installed, as may be appropriate, at a service to be held following their election.

Section 7: Failure to Hold Elections. Should the congregation or corporation fail to hold elections at the regular time, all Elders and Deacons, as well as other officers whose terms expire, shall hold office until their successors are elected.

Article VI: Congregational Meetings

Section 1: Powers of the Congregation. The powers of the congregation shall be, in addition to other authority herein expressed as follows:

- A. To elect a Pulpit Committee for the purpose of nominating a pastor for election by the congregation.
- B. To elect a pastor or pastors.
- C. To approve the terms of call to a pastor.

- D. To change the terms of call to a pastor.
- E. To authorize all financial indebtedness of the church.
- F. To amend the Charter and Bylaws.
- G. To authorize the Trustees to acquire, mortgage, lease, assign, transfer, or otherwise dispose of real property.

Section 2: Time. There shall be an annual Congregational Meeting at a time to be established by the Session.

Section 3: Nature of Business. The congregation may consider ecclesiastical or corporate matters duly referred to it.

Section 4: Corporation Meetings. The Congregational Meetings shall also be Corporation Meetings when corporation matters are considered. Procedures of the corporation shall be in accordance with the laws of the State of Maryland. The fiscal year of the corporation shall be the calendar year.

Section 5: Call of Meetings. Special congregational meetings can be called by the Session or the Presbytery which duly possesses such jurisdiction. The Session shall also call a Special Congregational Meeting upon the written request of twenty-five (25%) percent of the communicant members. Such meeting and its purpose shall be announced as noted in Section 6 of this Article and convened within four (4) weeks after filing the request with the Session.

Section 6: Notice of Meeting. Whenever it may seem for the best interests of the church that a congregational meeting be held, the Session shall call such meeting and give public notice of at least one (1) week. No business shall be transacted at such meeting except what is stated in the notice.

Section 7: Quorum. At all congregational meetings, other than those called specifically for the purpose of amending the Constitution of the Church, one-sixth (1/6) of the resident communicant members shall constitute a quorum. There shall be no voting by proxy.

Section 8: Moderator. The pastor shall be the Moderator of congregational meetings by virtue of his office. If it should be impractical or inexpedient for him to preside, or if there is no pastor, the Session shall appoint one of their number to call the meeting to order and to preside until the congregation shall elect their presiding officer, who may be a minister of the Presbyterian Church in America, or any male member of that particular church.

Section 9: Order. In the conduct of meetings any parliamentary questions not covered by this Constitution and Bylaws shall be decided by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

Article VII

Section 1: Amendments. The Bylaws of the church may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the communicant members of the church present and voting at any regular or special meeting, provided the proposed amendment(s) has(have) been presented to the

congregation for discussion at a congregational meeting held at least one (1) week prior to the meeting at which the voting will take place, and provided the congregation has been duly notified of the proposed amendment(s) in the call of the meeting of the Corporation. The Charter of this church may be amended in accordance with the requirements as set forth in the general laws of the State of Maryland.