

Sample Bylaws for Presbyterian Women in the Congregation (PWC)

Article I—Name

The name of this organization is Presbyterian Women in the _____ Church.

Article II—Purpose

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves:

- to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,
- to support the mission of the church worldwide,
- to work for justice and peace, and
- to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

Article III—Membership

Anyone who chooses to participate in, or be supportive of, PW in any way may be a member. The membership is divided into circles to form small groups that gather regularly to provide an inclusive, caring community of women.

Article IV—Coordinating Team Election and Term of Office

Section 1.

The elected leaders form a coordinating team for conducting the business of Presbyterian Women in the Congregation.

Section 2.

The search committee presents names of women to be elected to the coordinating team to the members of Presbyterian Women in the Congregation. Ordinarily, elected leaders of Presbyterian Women groups will be members of the PC(USA). The moderator(s), vice moderator (if there is one), treasurer, and at

least two-thirds of the coordinating team members shall be members of PC(USA).

Section 3.

The term of office is for one year (or the term of office determined by Presbyterian Women in the Congregation) with the privilege of reelection for one additional term.

Section 4.

The leaders of Presbyterian Women in the Congregation are moderator and vice moderator (or co-moderators), secretary and/or historian, treasurer and moderator of the search committee. Additional leaders could be a representative from each circle, members-at-large with specific responsibilities or members-at-large to provide intentional inclusion of the diversity of women in the church. Leaders shall work to fulfill the purpose and principles of PW.

Article V—Duties of Leaders

Section 1.

The moderator, or one of the co-moderators, presides at all meetings of the coordinating team and at all gatherings of Presbyterian Women in the Congregation. She receives communications on behalf of the organization. She or her designee is the direct link to Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery.

Section 2.*

The vice moderator presides in the absence of the moderator or at her request. If the office of moderator becomes vacant between elections, she will complete the moderator's term. She assists the moderator as requested.

Section 3.

The secretary and/or historian maintain and preserve the working and historical records of Presbyterian Women in the Congregation.

Section 4.

The treasurer has knowledge and understanding of all procedures regarding the receipts and disbursements of the operating funds of

* **Note:** Article V, Section 2 is used when moderator and vice moderator serve in lieu of co-moderators.

Presbyterian Women in the Congregation. She also receives and sends to the treasurer of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery monies for all Celebration Giving (except Leadership Endowment Fund and Widening the Circle Fund, which women send to the Presbyterian Foundation on their own) *except the amount designated for the operating expenses of PW in the Congregation*. She makes an annual financial report available to the session of the church.

Section 5.

The moderator of the search committee is chair of the search committee and presents the names of women nominated for leadership positions to Presbyterian Women in the Congregation.

Section 6.

The circle leaders bring their circles' needs and concerns to the coordinating team.

Section 7.

Members-at-large with specific responsibilities may be appointed as necessary to perform the work of Presbyterian Women in the Congregation.

Article VI—Duties of the Coordinating Team

The coordinating team:

- conducts an annual review and evaluation based on goals of the program year just completed
- sets goals and objectives for the new program year
- discovers and utilizes the gifts of members
- provides an ongoing educational program for women based on their spiritual needs
- provides an opportunity to support the mission of the PC(USA) through giving, education, global awareness and other means
- prepares an annual budget and authorizes expenditures
- maintains accountability to and relationships with the session through an annual report, which includes a financial report, and

establishes a fiscal year consistent with that governing body

- maintains an ongoing, working relationship with the PW in the Presbytery leadership
- maintains relationships with Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery and facilitates communication of information and resources from and to PW at all levels and in the wider church
- identifies and appoints candidates to serve in special roles in the PWC, e.g., *Horizons* reps and Celebration Giving representatives
- relates to any other women's groups that may exist in the congregation
- maintains relationships with ecumenical women's groups, such as Church Women United, other ecumenical groups and community and advocacy networks, as appropriate

Article VII—Search Committee

The search committee consists of a moderator and two or more members elected by Presbyterian Women in the Congregation at an annual gathering. The term of office is the same as other members of the coordinating team. The responsibility of this committee is to recommend persons to be called to leadership positions in Presbyterian Women in the Congregation.

Article VIII—Finances

The program of Presbyterian Women in the Congregation is financed by supporting the Celebration of Mission through women's pledges. Each woman is encouraged to pledge through Presbyterian Women in the Congregation for

- women's support for the mission of the church worldwide and
- the basic operating budgets of Presbyterian Women at the congregation, presbytery, synod and churchwide levels.

Presbyterian Women in the Congregation supports the operating budget of Presbyterian

Women in the Presbytery and Presbyterian Women in the Synod by sending the recommended amount to the treasurer of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery.

Articles IX—Gatherings

Presbyterian Women in the Congregation meets regularly for fellowship, inspiration, information, advocacy and to conduct business. Leaders are elected and may be installed in the context of one of these gatherings.

Article X—Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any annual gathering by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided notice of the proposed amendments have been submitted, in writing, to the members at least 30 days prior to the gathering at which they will be voted on.

They may also be amended by a three-fourths vote without prior notice. These bylaws may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided notice of such suspension has been submitted in writing to the members 30 days prior to the gathering at which it will be voted on.

Article XI—Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order* (Newly Revised) govern PW in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in all cases to which they are applicable and to which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The body may choose to use a consensus method of decision making, when appropriate (see 9-13 and 11-7).