

THE FIRST CHINESE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW YORK CITY
BY-LAWS

1. **NAME:** The name of the church is 'The First Chinese Presbyterian Church', hereinafter abbreviated as 'FCPC'. FCPC is a member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
2. **MISSION:** The mission of FCPC is to nurture the spirituality of its members, the people of God; to serve God faithfully; to spread the Gospel; and to service the community that God's great love may be manifested.
3. **ORGANIZATION:** The organization and administration of FCPC are in accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): Part I - Book of Confessions and Part II - Book of Order. Except for items explicitly stated in these By-Laws, for all other matters, the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church is the authoritative document which FCPC follows. In the case of any inconsistency between the By-laws and the Constitution, the Constitution shall control. (For procedural matters not included in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, nor in these By-Laws, "Robert's Rule of Order" is to be followed.)
4. **MEMBERSHIP:** A person may be admitted as a member of FCPC in one of the following ways:
 - 4.1 **Adult Baptism:** A person who is ready to be baptized must file an application to the church, and having been recommended by the Minister and approved by the Session will then be publicly baptized and admitted as a member of FCPC.
 - 4.2 **Affirmation:** A person who had been baptized as a child and is ready to be confirmed must file an application to the church, and having been recommended by the Minister and approved by the Session will then be publicly confirmed and admitted as a member of FCPC.
 - 4.3 **Re-affirmation:** A baptized Christian who has been a member of another church, and is ready to transfer to FCPC must file an application to the church, and having been recommended by the Minister and approved by the Session will then be publicly admitted as a member of FCPC.
5. **THE SESSION:** The Session is responsible for the mission and government of FCPC. It consists of the Senior Pastor, who is the Moderator of the Session, Associate Pastor, and nine (9) elected elders.
6. **THE BOARD OF DEACONS:** The Board of Deacons supports and assists the Session to fulfill the mission of FCPC. In particular, it is responsible for ministering to those who are in need. It consists of 9 elected deacons, with the Ministers and Missionary Assistants as ex-officios.
7. **THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** The Board of Trustees is responsible for the fiscal matters, property and physical maintenance of FCPC. It consists of nine (9) elected trustees, with the Ministers as ex-officios.
8. **NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** The responsibility of the Nominating Committee is to nominate candidates for election to the Session, Board of Deacons, and Board of Trustees.
 - 8.1 The Nominating Committee shall consist of one (1) representative nominated by the Session; one (1) by the Board of Deacons; one (1) by the Board of Trustees; and at least four (4) elected by members at a Congregational Meeting called by the Session by the end of November each year. These elected members cannot be current members of the Session, Board of Deacons, or Board of Trustees.
 - 8.2 The Nominating Committee shall hold office for one (1) year only, beginning on January 1 and ending December 31.
 - 8.3 A member may serve in the Nominating Committee for three (3) consecutive years, after which at least one (1) year must lapse before the member can serve again.
 - 8.4 Members of the same immediate family (spouses, parents, children, siblings) cannot serve in the same Nominating Committee.
 - 8.5 The Session shall appoint one of its Nominees to be the moderator of the Nominating Committee.

9. ELECTIONS: Elections of elders, deacons and trustees shall be held at Congregational meetings only.
- 9.1 QUORUM: The quorum for a congregational meeting shall be 70 members or 30% of the active membership roll, whichever is the lesser.
- 9.2 NOMINATIONS: a) Prior to the election, the Nominating Committee should have nominated a number of eligible candidates equal to or greater than the number of vacancy for each board. (This number is at the Committee's discretion.)
b) Nominees for the Session must have received at least two-thirds (2/3) of the votes in the Nominating Committee before they can be placed on the ballot
c) Nominations from the floor at the time of election must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the members present before they are added to the ballots.
- 9.3 ELIGIBILITY: a) A candidate for election must be a member of FCPC for at least two (2) years.
b) A candidate for election to the Session must have served at least one term in the Board of Deacons or Board of Trustees.
c) A member may be elected to serve in the same board for a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms, after which at least one year must lapse before the member is eligible to serve in the same board.
d) Members of the same immediate family (spouses, parents, children, siblings) cannot serve in the same board at the same time.
- 9.4 VOTING: a) Only members of FCPC have voting rights at a congregational meeting.
b) Voting shall be by secret ballot, except when the number of candidates equals the number of vacancy, in which case voting may be by voice vote or show of hands. A majority of all the voters present and voting is required to elect.
- 9.5 TERM OF OFFICE: a) A term of office is defined as three (3) consecutive calendar years.
b) A member may not serve in the Session and the Board of Deacons concurrently.
c) Any member absent without excuse for three (3) consecutive board meetings will be deemed to have resigned from the board.
d) In the event a member leaves a board prior to the fulfillment of his/her term, his/her seat will be filled at the next regularly scheduled Congregational meeting and the elected candidate will serve the remaining period of the term of this member. In such an election, the candidate with fewer votes will assume the term with fewer years remaining. Irrespective of the length of the remaining period of the term, the replacing member is considered to have completed one term of service.
10. AMENDMENTS: Proposals to amend these By-laws are to be made in writing to the Session which will discuss these proposals within 60 days of their receipt. If the Session approves these proposed amendments by a two-thirds majority, they will be tabled at the next Congregational meeting. If the proposed amendments passed by a two-thirds majority at the Congregational meeting, they will be made part of these By-laws and take immediate effect.
11. DISSOLUTION: FCPC shall not be dissolved except by a resolution made by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the current membership roll at a special Congregational meeting called by the Session for such a purpose. If such a resolution is passed, the Moderator shall inform the Presbytery of New York City to appoint an Administrative Commission to the church for the takeover.