

## **Worthington Presbyterian Church**

### **Position Description for RULING ELDER**

#### From the PC(USA) *Book of Order*, G-2.0101. Ordered Ministries

The Church's ordered ministries described in the New Testament and maintained by this church are deacons and presbyters (teaching elders and ruling elders). Ordered ministries are gifts to the church to order its life so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish. The existence of these ordered ministries in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church. The government of this church is representative, and the right of God's people to elect presbyters and deacons is inalienable. Therefore, no person can be placed in any ordered ministry in a congregation or council of the church except by election of that body. Ordination to the ministry of teaching elder, ruling elder, or deacon is unique to that order of ministry.

#### From the PC(USA) *Book of Order*, G-2.0104. Gifts and Qualifications

To those called to exercise special functions in the church –deacons, ruling elders, and teaching elders – God gives suitable gifts for their various duties. In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and the world.

#### From the PC(USA) *Book of Order*, G-2.0301. Ruling Elder Defined

As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided person with particular gifts to share in discernment of God's Spirit and governance of God's people. Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. Ruling elders are so named not because they "lord it over" the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with teaching elders, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of the congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the session. When elected as commissioners to higher councils, ruling elders participate and vote with the same authority as teaching elders, and they are eligible for any office.

## **Specific responsibilities and duties of an Active Ruling Elder**

- Regular worship attendance and participation in the life of the church.
- Faithful participation in the Christian education program as a learner, leader or helper.
- Conscientious financial support of the congregation.
- Regular attendance and thoughtful participation at session meetings.
- Dedicated service and leadership on ministries, committees and/or task forces.
- Encouragement of the people in the worship and service of God.
- Willingness to be governed by the church's polity and to abide by its discipline.
- Willingness to be a friend to colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Will and Spirit.
- Joyful service of the people with energy, intelligence, imagination and love.
- Faithful participation in the serving of the Sacrament of Communion.

## **Terms of Service**

- Once ordained, one is a ruling elder whether serving on Session (active ruling elder) or not.
- Ruling elders are elected for a three-year term on Session.

## **Time Investment and Technical Skills needed**

- During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, prior to the start of the three-year term, training will be provided.
- While serving on Session, a ruling elder can ordinarily expect:
  - Eleven (11) regular Session meeting per year (90 – 120 minutes)
  - An occasional special meeting
  - An occasional half-day weekend retreat
  - Ten to twelve (10 – 12) committee meetings per year (60 – 90 minutes)
  - Currently, Session meets at 7pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month (recess in July); Ministries/Committee meet at various times on a monthly basis
  - Ability to use email and open attachments
  - Access to the internet and to a printer