

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Of

**FIRST SOCIETY OF
STATE SPIRITUALISTS OF
WELLS, OTTAWA COUNTY, KANSAS**

Revisions of 2020
(Incorporated — April 23, 1881)

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the First Society of State Spiritualists, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation of the State of Kansas, decree the following to be the Constitution and Bylaws of The First Society of State Spiritualists, Inc., of the State of Kansas, otherwise known as Sunset Spiritualist Church, and that the doctrine and creed of this Society/Church are the teachings of Jesus, The Christ, and the belief in the continuity of life and communication with the so-called dead. The mission of this Society/Church is to provide for the establishment of arts and practices that promote religiously and scientifically the existence of life after death, to further the practice of mediumship, to teach, counsel, guide and prophesy, and to promote the Doctrines of Divine Healing as demonstrated by Jesus, The Christ.

ARTICLE I

Sec. 1 The First Society of State Spiritualists, located at 103 Hanes, Wells, Ottawa County, Kansas, has been duly incorporated and properly filed as a not-for-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Kansas. The original Charter was filed on April 23, 1881 with the State of Kansas. The First Society of State Spiritualists is otherwise known as Sunset Spiritualist Church, and is hereby established as one and the same.

Sec. 2 Sunset Spiritualist Church shall be under the direct jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees and shall be governed by this Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE II

Sec. 1 The following Declaration of Principles is published to the world, not as a creed binding on the conscience of the individual, but as the consensus of a majority of our members, and in accordance with American Spiritualists in general, on the fundamental teachings of Spiritualism.

1. We believe in Infinite Intelligence.
2. We believe that the phenomena of nature, both physical and spiritual, are the expression of Infinite Intelligence.
3. We affirm that a correct understanding of such expression and living in accordance therewith, constitute a philosophy of life or true religion.
4. We affirm that the existence and personal identity of the individual continue after the change called death.
5. We affirm that communication with the so-called dead and other spiritual beings is a fact proven by the phenomena of Spiritualism.
6. We believe that the highest morality is contained in the Golden Rule: "Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye also unto them".
7. We affirm the moral responsibility of individuals. They make their own happiness or unhappiness as they obey or disobey Nature's physical and spiritual laws.
8. We affirm that the doorway to reformation is never closed against any soul, here or hereafter.
9. We affirm that the precepts of Prophecy and Healing contained in the Bible continue through Spiritualism.

Sec. 2 DEFINITIONS: The following definitions are published to the world, not as all-inclusive or all-conclusive, but as comprehensive and concise statements, having the sanction of Sunset Spiritualist Church, for use in court and in practical affairs.

1. Spiritualism is the science, philosophy and religion of continuous life, based upon the demonstrated fact or communication, by means of mediumship, with those who live in the spirit world.
2. A spiritualist is one who believes, as the basis of his or her religion, in the communication between this and the spirit world, by means of mediumship, and who endeavors to mold his or her character and conduct in accordance with the highest teachings derived from such communication.
3. A medium is one whose organism is sensitive to vibrations from the spirit world, and through whose instrument intelligences in that world are able to convey messages and produce phenomena of Spiritualism.
4. A spiritualist healer is one who, through mediumship, is able to impart vital curative energy to counteract unhealthy conditions.
5. The phenomena of Spiritualism consist of prophesy, clairvoyance, clairaudience, gift of tongues, laying on of hands, healing, vision, trance, apports, levitations, raps, automatic writings and art, voice materialization, photography, psychometry, and any other manifestations proving the continuity of life as demonstrated through the physical and spiritual senses.

ARTICLE III

Sunset Spiritualist Church may receive members as its Bylaws provide.

ARTICLE IV

This real estate and personal holdings of the First Society of State Spiritualists of Wells, Ottawa County, Kansas, and any other real or personal property purchased or obtained by this Society at any later dates, "Cannot be sold, mortgaged, or disposed of in any way. Must be kept for the use of Spiritualist's religion". No Bylaws shall be made at any time, that in any way will make disposal of said properties in any manner whatsoever. Items which have worn out their use may be disposed of properly.

ARTICLE V

Sec. 1 The elective officers of Sunset Spiritualist Church shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer who, together with five additional elected members, shall constitute a Board of nine Trustees.

Sec. 2 All nine Trustees shall be elected individually by ballot by the members of Sunset Spiritualist Church each year at the Business Meeting on the first Sunday of August and shall be installed and take office at the Business meeting on the first Sunday of October.

Sec. 3 The President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected for a term of one year. The five additional elected members shall be elected for a term of two years, alternating with two being elected one year and the other three the next.

Sec. 4 Vacancies from death, incapacity, removal or resignation shall be appointed by a vote of the Board of Trustees to fulfill the rest of the term.

Sec. 5 All other representatives of Sunset Spiritualist Church including attorneys, agents, etc. shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Sec. 6 The President shall appoint a Parliamentarian and may appoint an official Recorder who are members in good standing but do not hold an elected position on the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall have final approval of appointees.

ARTICLE VI

Sec. 1 The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees, countersign all papers authorized by the Board of Trustees, have general supervision over the Board of Trustees and affairs of the Church, report to the membership at the October Business Meeting regarding said affairs and recommendations for the future, and perform such other duties as the By-laws of Sunset Spiritualist Church may require.

Sec. 2 The Vice-President shall perform all duties of the President in the absence, death, removal or disability of the President.

Sec. 3 The Secretary shall have charge of the secretarial work at all Business Meetings and at all meetings of the Board of Trustees, and perform such other duties as the Bylaws of Sunset Spiritualist Church may require.

Sec. 4 The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds, bonds, notes, securities and evidences of property belonging to Sunset Spiritualist Church, and shall deposit funds and pay debts as directed by the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer shall furnish a statement of accounts at the monthly meetings of the Board of Trustees, and perform such other duties as the Bylaws of Sunset Spiritualist Church may require.

Sec. 5 The Board of Trustees shall have the power to accept or reject such parties as may make application to the Secretary for licentiate or ordination, manage all property, have general management over all affairs, constitute the official Financial Board, and perform such duties as the Bylaws of Sunset Spiritualist Church may require.

Sec. 6 The Board of Trustees shall manage all property of Sunset Spiritualist Church and shall have the general management not otherwise provided for by this Constitution and Bylaws. The Board of Trustees shall constitute the official Financial Board.

Sec. 7 A quorum shall consist of at least five members of the Board of Trustees. At least five members must concur in every act of the Board. The Board of Trustees may act between sessions, if the need arises. Each Board member should be contacted by the Secretary and a response received and recorded in the Secretary's minutes.

Sec. 8 The decisions of the Board of Trustees shall be final in all matters pertaining to the welfare of Sunset Spiritualist Church.

Sec. 9 The Board of Trustees shall sit in a judicial capacity as a court of first instance to hear and give first and final decision in all cases affecting persons commissioned by it, and shall sit in a judicial capacity as an Appellate Court to hear and give final decision in all cases on appeal from actions or decisions of persons commissioned.

ARTICLE VII

The Articles of this Constitution, except Article IV, may be amended at any October Business Meeting by the majority of members present, providing all said members are in good standing, having been notified in writing thirty (30) days before the proposed amendment is voted on.

ARTICLE VIII

After approval, the revised Constitution and Bylaws of the First Society of State Spiritualists, Wells, Ottawa County, Kansas, otherwise known as Sunset Spiritualist Church, that are not in the revision of the 2020 Constitution and Bylaws, become null and void.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

Sec. 1 Robert's Rules of Order shall be authority and govern Sunset Spiritualist Church in all matters not provided for by the Constitution and Bylaws, with the exception of Article IV of the Constitution and Article VIII of the Bylaws.

Sec. 2 Sunset Spiritualist Church shall hold a Business Meeting on the first Sunday of August for election of officers and Trustees.

Sec. 3 The officers and Trustees shall be elected by ballot and the person receiving the highest number of ballots cast shall be duly elected. One may hold office for as many terms as elected. If a member, due to circumstances not of their control, cannot attend the meeting, they may be nominated and elected to office if they have stated their willingness to serve to the Board. Only voting members in good standing of Sunset Spiritualist Church shall be placed on the ballot for any office. In case of a tie, there will be a run-off vote. If the tie is not broken, the Board of Trustees will decide in an Executive Session.

Sec. 4 The President shall be presiding officer, and in his/ her absence the Vice-President shall perform all such duties. In the absence of both of these officers, the Secretary shall preside. In the absence of all three of these officers, the Treasurer shall preside.

Sec. 5 The Secretary shall keep regular records in which shall be entered full proceedings of all meetings, all motions adopted, the names of individuals offering motions and seconding the same, yeas and nays, and shall keep on file all letters or special papers of value to this Church for ready reference.

Sec. 6 The Treasurer shall receive and hold all finances and valuables of this Church, and shall submit a written report at each monthly Business Meeting. The Treasurer's books must be submitted to an Auditor in time for them to be presented at the October Business Meeting.

ARTICLE II

Sec. 1 Special meetings shall be called by the Secretary at least seven days prior to the meeting.

Sec. 2 The President or Pro-tem may call a meeting of the members any time it is deemed necessary, or at the request of the Trustees.

ARTICLE III

Sec. 1 All persons applying for Licentiate or Ordination shall apply to the Board of Trustees, in writing, through the Secretary. The applicant must be a voting member of the church in good standing for at least one year. The Board of Trustees shall make the decision whether, in their judgment, it would be advisable to grant these requests.

Sec. 2 The successful candidate will be interviewed by a Monitor and begin their service as Licentiate immediately. The Monitor will assign the Licentiate a curriculum designed to prepare the Licentiate for ordination. The Licentiate will continue to be active in the Church. The Licentiate will serve the Church, including Church services, projects, classes, circles, anything which demonstrates their dedication to Spiritualism.

Sec. 3 To become an Ordained Minister, one must serve as a Licentiate for a minimum of two years. The current Monitor must agree the candidate is prepared.

Sec. 4 All Ordained Ministers of Sunset Spiritualist Church must be members in good standing, are required to submit an annual report of their activities to the Board of Trustees on or before December 31 of each year. Each Minister's annual report shall be reviewed by the Board of Trustees who shall, at their discretion, accept, reject, or set forth additional requirements to be fulfilled before acceptance is granted. Should the annual report not be received by December 31, the Minister shall be contacted and have their credentials reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

Sec. 5 Any person may become a member of Sunset Spiritualist Church by declaration of the belief in the Principles of Spiritualism as set forth in this Constitution and Bylaws, and pledging their support for the welfare of the Church. Said declaration shall be made before the congregation at any regular service. The Board of Trustees shall provide guidelines for this procedure.

Sec. 6 Being a member of at least 18 years of age and in good standing of Sunset Spiritualist Church for one full year as per date of their membership to the Church, and yearly thereafter, shall entitle said member to one vote in the election of officers and voice in any business meeting. A credentials committee shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees before each election to verify membership. Members must be present to vote.

ARTICLE IV

Sec. 1 Any person holding a Licentiate Certificate or Ordination Papers from Sunset Spiritualist Church, or holding any office or position under or membership in Sunset Spiritualist Church, may have his or her Licentiate Certificate or Ordination annulled or be removed from office or expelled from membership upon being found guilty of any of the following:

- (a) Willfully violating the Constitution and Bylaws of Sunset Spiritualist Church.
- (b) Such conduct, professional or personal, as is likely to bring the cause of Spiritualism or the reputation of Sunset Spiritualist Church into public disrepute.
- (c) Publicly advocating doctrines antagonistic to, or inconsistent with the fundamental teachings of Spiritualism or the principles of the Constitution of the United States.

Sec. 2 Any person having grounds for grievance or complaint under Sec. 1 of this Article, or under Article 6, Sec. 7 and 8 of the Constitution of the First Society of State Spiritualists, may file a complaint in writing, signed by the complainant, briefly setting forth the facts relied on to sustain the charge.

Sec. 3 The Secretary of the Board of Trustees about to conduct a trial shall give notice in writing thirty (30) days in advance, to all parties concerned, of the time and place of hearing and at the time of giving such notice shall furnish the accused a written copy of the complaint or petition filed against them.

Sec. 4 Any party to the grievance or complaint may employ counsel and summon witnesses if requested by either side. The Board shall exclude from the hearing all persons except the parties, their counsel, and witnesses. Witnesses may be sequestered if deemed necessary by either side.

Sec. 5 A verdict must be reached by a two-thirds majority vote of the full nine members of the Board of Trustees to be valid. If the verdict be guilty, the penalty shall be immediately fixed by a two-thirds majority vote of the full Board of Trustees and both verdict and penalty announced. It is hereby made mandatory that the Board of Trustees, having authority to act in the removing of the accused from office or by imposing such other penalty as the case may require, shall do so.

ARTICLE V

Sec. 1 Speakers, Mediums, and classes shall be approved by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE VI

Sec. 1 The Charter of the First Society of State Spiritualists was renewed in perpetuity with the State of Kansas in 2012.

ARTICLE VII

Sec. 1 The auditors shall audit the books of the Treasurer before the first Sunday of October each year, sign and date all audited books, and give a full report in writing to the Secretary. This report shall be read at every October Business Meeting.

Sec. 2 The revisions of this Constitution and Bylaws go into full effect on October 4, 2020.

ARTICLE VIII

Sec. 1 History: Among the people who moved the Sunset Camp cabins from Delphos to Wells were Clarence and Viola Whitley. They and their children, Eugene, Leo, and Irene, helped gather and set the stones of which our church is made. Clarence and Viola earmarked \$75,000.00 to go to the Church when the last of their children passed and the estate was liquidated. Irene passed first, then Eugene, leaving Leo as the last. He fulfilled his parent's wishes. This money was to sustain the Church in perpetuity.

Sec. 2 The principal fund is only to be used in dire emergency. \$10,000.00 must remain in the fund at all times. If the Church is ever unable to sustain itself after all contributions are in, the fund may be tapped. The interest may be used for maintenance or capital improvements upon a vote in accordance with Sec. 3 below.

Sec. 3 In case of dire emergency, an Executive Board meeting must be called. The entire Board, Officers and Trustees, must be present. The vote of the Board must be unanimous. This is not something that can be done with a telephone poll. All members must be physically present.

Sec. 4 In order to retrieve funds from this bequest, notify the Ottawa County Community Foundation for current rules.

Sec. 5 If circumstances arise, such as purchasing desirable properties, where it is necessary to access these funds, a loan from the fund may be made, to be repaid as contributions come in.

ARTICLE IV

Sec. 1 These Bylaws, except Article VIII, may be amended at any October Business Meeting by the majority of members present, providing all said members are in good standing, having been notified in writing thirty (30) days before the proposed amendment is voted on.