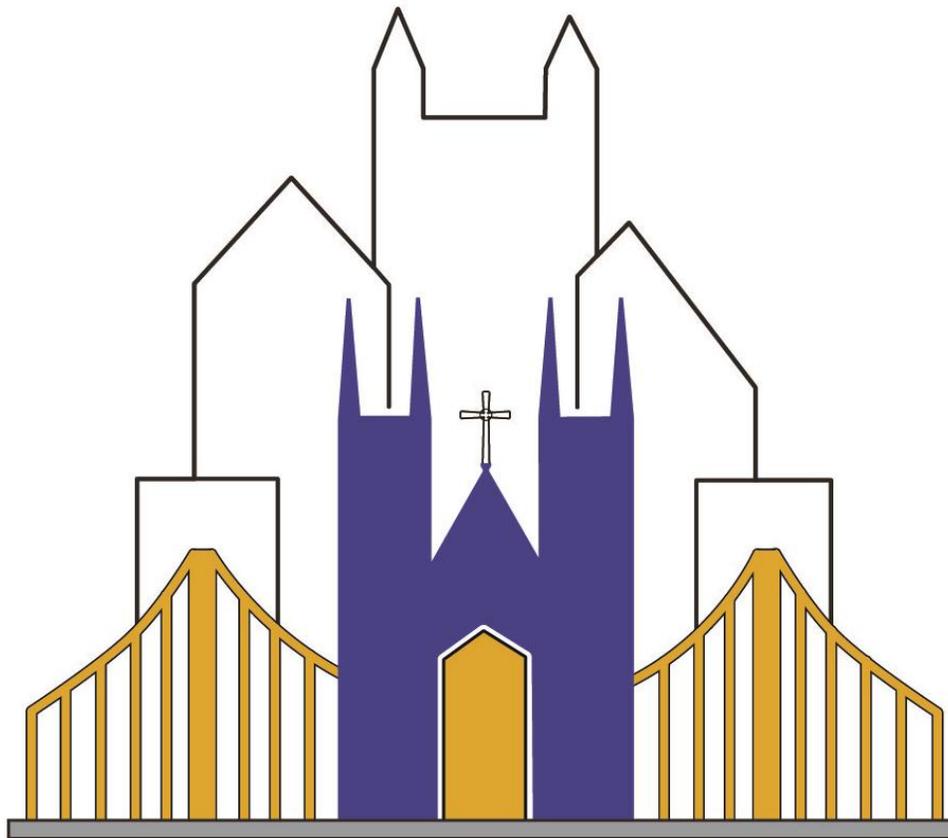


**First Presbyterian Church
of Pittsburgh**

OFFICER HANDBOOK

Revision 3, May 2, 2021



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PITTSBURGH

awakening a new generation to life in Christ

Officer Handbook

Table of Contents

BACKGROUND

Tab 1 – Trends the Church is Facing

- 21st Century Reformation
- *Kentucky Today*: “End of an Era,” 3/28/2018
- Reggie McNeal – The Future of the Church as a Movement

Tab 2 – Basics of Leadership in the Church

- Church Leadership 101 – Biblical basis, God’s Call, Form of Government
- Presbyterian Beliefs for Church Officers
- The Creeds & Confessions of the PCUSA
- Essential Tenets

Tab 3 – What Officers Do

- Church Polity and the Session
- What Do Elders Do?
- Deacons: What’s Expected of Me?

Tab 4 - Worship

- Evangelistic Worship
- Top Ten Challenges Facing Worship Leaders in 2014
- Helpful Guidelines for Leading Worship at FPCP

Tab 5 - Discipleship

- Discipleship for Officers
- Discipleship Declaration
- Assessment Tool

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Tab 6 – Practical Matters

- Church Officer Nominations and Development, 2019-2020
- Links and Readings
- Nuts and Bolts
- Walk-In Ministry Schedule

Tab 7 – By-Laws of FPCP

- By-Laws of First Presbyterian Church

Tab 8 – Pastor Vision Report

- Senior Pastor Vision Report, May 2012 (*See separate link*)
- Senior Pastor Vision Report, April 2019 (*See separate link*)
- [Economic Halo Effect - FPCP](#)
- [FPCP Capital Campaign Prep Packet](#)
- [FPCP Town Hall Presentation - 1/19/2020](#)

Tab 9 – Leaders as Shepherds

- 21st Century Shepherds
- Elder Business Plan
- Processing the ELI Retreat

Tab 10 – Membership Rosters

- Session, Deacon, Staff Rosters*
- Member Data*
- Church Directory*
- Shut-Ins*
- Officer Nominees for 2020*

* *available from church office*

21st Century Reformation

“Eight trends that are changing and challenging the church.”

Officer Training

April 2018

NOTE: If it's still available online, watch the YouTube video by Rodger Nishioka, “21st Century Reformation.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-mo4rtZdKk>

This was recorded in May 2013, but it's still one of the best overviews of the challenges facing the church today. The rest of this paper outlines the presentation and attempts to apply it to FPCP.

Source: *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why*, by Phyllis Tickle.

Tickle's thesis: Every 500 years, the church appears to go through a great transition. This happened around 590 AD with the fall of Rome and the beginning of the Dark Ages; it happened again around 1054 AD with the schism between Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches; and it happened again in 1517 with the Protestant Reformation. Each great transition was a difficult time for people in the church. They were fearful whether the church would even survive. It's painful to “go through the attic” and throw out things that are no longer needed. But Tickle says that God doesn't abandon the church. God was in each transition, and the church emerged stronger and more faithful.

The church today is in another one of these transitions. What the church is experiencing is not new; we think it's new, because it's new to us. But it's not new to God, and God is faithful. So it's necessary for the church to go through one of these periods to determine what is still relevant and what is not. The “21st century reformation” is evidenced by eight trends:

- From Tribal Education to Immigrant Education
 - Visitors to church today are probably not familiar with our hymns, customs traditions, names of Biblical characters, or even the basic language of the church.
 - Examples: *Gloria Patri*, “familiar” hymns, “Paul”
 - If a kid from The Cellar came to church, would they understand what was going on? *How will they understand what's going on unless we teach them?*
- From Mission “Out There” to Mission “Right Here”
 - Countries where we sent missionaries to are now sending missionaries to us.
 - Do we understand that the mission field is right here?
 - Young adults want to participate in hands-on mission.
- From Reasoned Spirituality to Mystery-filled Spirituality
 - We as Presbyterians do “reason” well, but increasingly young adults are looking more for an “experience.”
 - They say they are “spiritual.” Can we show them what real spirituality is all about?
- From Official Leadership to Gifted Leadership
 - People today are less concerned about credentials, and more concerned about your ability to do ministry.
 - Do we model the life of Christ?
 - Do we live out the things we say in a way that is *obvious to outsiders?*

- Would our neighbors miss us if we were no longer here?
- No one likes to sit in long meetings. People do like to *take part* in things that matter to them; they want to make a difference.
- From Long-Term Planning to Short-Term Planning
 - The culture is changing rapidly. Do we know what’s happening around us? Do we know who our neighbors are; what they need; what they believe?
 - 20 years ago, we thought the only creature who could make website was a spider. Three years ago, we thought the only creature who could tweet was a bird. Children today don’t remember a time without Facebook.
 - How agile are we? How agile do we need to be?
 - How often do we assess what we do? Can we learn to say “no” to time wasters and things that are no longer effective?
- From Mass Evangelism to One-on-One Evangelism
 - People are attracted more by the quality of our lives and how we live out our faith, than on the quantity and quality of our programs.
 - Billy Graham Ministries is moving away from big crusades to equipping people in congregations to talk about Jesus Christ.
 - Can we just talk about Jesus in a way that’s not coercive or manipulative?
 - Can we learn to just invite people we know to church?
 - What do our non-churched friends think if we don’t invite them?
- From “Traditioning” to “Experience”
 - The whole idea of “membership” (in anything) is changing.
 - People still value tradition, but want to know the truth on which the tradition is based.
 - “EPIC.” Worship must be Experiential, Participatory, Image-driven, and Communal.
 - What sense do worshippers here primarily use?
 - Almost everyone relies on devices with screens today. People are increasingly visual learners. They are less interested in *sitting through* a traditional service and more interested in *taking part* in worship.
- From Discipleship to Apostleship
 - Traditional churches tend to think our job is just to nurture and care for each other.
 - The reality is that we need to equip people to be sent out.

So what do these trends mean to us today. How do we respond at FPCP?

First, let’s affirm what we’re doing right.

- In 2012, we did an excellent job of visioning and planning.
- Wide participation across the church.
- Affirmed our strengths and what was right about us.
- New mission statement: *Transforming Pittsburgh by awakening a new generation to life in Christ.*
- Values:
 - Confident in God’s Word – *Biblically grounded*
 - Holding God’s faithfulness in trust – *Sacred anchor in the city*
 - Committed to the city – *FPCP and the city are joined at the hip*
 - Going where God leads – *Mission minded*
 - Neighboring through connection and care – *Authentic and compassionate*

- Initiatives:
 - Arts Ministry – Music Guild, concerts
 - Recreation Ministry – Some events with the camp and the Cellar
 - Education Ministry – GED classes via Goodwill Industries
 - Third Place – Café Team, non-member weddings
- Our unofficial strategy in a word: **Relationships**

This was exactly the right response to the changing times in which we've been called to serve!

But now, it's 2018. Over six years have passed since we did all that planning and discernment. Given the rate of change today, six years can seem like sixty.

- How do we build on the work we did so we can respond to the trends that are shaping the church?
- We must revisit our mission and values to ensure they are still they the right ones.

Consider our “strategy,” **RELATIONSHIPS**, in light of the 21st century reformation.

- From Tribal Education to Immigrant Education
 - We love this church, its people, and our building, but the church can be inscrutable to outsiders.
 - Can we imagine what the church/worship look like to the unchurched and biblically illiterate? Example: What's a “narthex?”
 - We need folks who are passionate about shaping worship for the “immigrants” who live in our neighborhood.
 - People today are suspicious about giving out their personal information.
 - From “Friendship Pads” to an information kiosk?
 - Our hospitality time is a great strength. Or is it? Can we shift our focus to our visitors?
 - What if we saw our role as making visitors feel welcome *in a way that makes sense to them*?
 - Do visitors “see themselves” when they enter?
 - Could we have a demographically diverse group of greeters whose focus is on visitors?
- From Mission “Out There” to Mission “Right Here”
 - The recent Pew study (May 2015) shows the sharpest decrease ever in mainline churches.
 - If we don't understand that the mission field starts here, and that we all are now missionaries, the end of this church may not be far off.
 - I believe a key to our future is to tap into the natural altruism of our neighbors by offering them many ways to serve here, through the church.
 - We absolutely, positively must offer service projects which people understand and can get involved in here in Pittsburgh. A good start is the Outreached Arms meals on Tuesday nights.
 - Both mission “Out There” and mission “Right Here” are important. We must have a kingdom mindset. And...
 - It's getting harder and harder to support so many mission “partners.” (We still have about 30 “partners” as of the spring of 2018.
 - The traditional understanding of stewardship, and mission giving, are fading, even among church members.
 - Today people want to give to causes that are important to them.

- All this points to the need to focus on missions that people can understand, identify with, and get involved in, no matter if they are here or elsewhere.
 - We must be able to tell the stories of our mission partners in a way that is understandable and resonates with members and visitors alike.
- From Reasoned Spirituality to Mystery-filled Spirituality
 - Music, sermons, and worship must draw people into the mystery of God, not just give rational explanations.
 - We need to tell our stories. We need to give more testimonials; stories of how God has moved in our lives.
- From Official Leadership to Gifted Leadership
 - Everyone must be free to use their gifts here in the church.
 - You don't need to be a deacon to serve coffee.
 - You don't need to be an elder to chair a committee.
 - You don't need to be an officer to serve.
 - The problem: when you invite someone new to serve, they might do things differently than you; they might mess things up; you might lose control.
 - We must value experimentation and risk taking more than procedure.
 - We must give ourselves permission to try new things and fail.
- From Long-Term Planning to Short-Term Planning
 - We've got to end long, boring, unproductive meetings.
 - Many officers get frustrated and are glad when their terms are up. New members are afraid to serve.
 - We spend a lot of energy "keeping the church going," when we should be living out our call as Compassionate Servants and Spiritual Leaders.
 - We are primarily structured to deliberate, not to act.
 - We're still structured as if we are a big, staff-driven, program church.
 - But we have not been a big church for a long time. Nor can we afford a big staff.
 - We've got to organize for the opportunities and challenges of today.
- From Mass Evangelism to One-on-One Evangelism
 - Can we just talk to our friends and invite them to church?
 - What do we learn when we do that?
 - Can we cultivate relationships with non-Christians with no agenda other than just being their friend?
 - Can we each walk with one or two people at a time, invest in and disciple them?
- From "Traditioning" to "Experience"
 - This doesn't mean giving up our traditions—people still need and want to connect to something that's authentic and that lasts.
 - This means interpreting our traditions for the "immigrants" in our neighborhood.
 - Who will think we with me about what "membership" means today, (when private clubs are struggling), when people are suspicious about joining anything?
 - Who will imagine with me how worship can be more "EPIC."
 - Experiential, Participatory, Image-driven, and Communal.

- From Discipleship to Apostleship
 - And, oh by the way, the 20th century church wasn't all that great at making disciples. It did OK offering programs and bringing in members, but not so good in making disciples, people who are apprenticed to Jesus over a long time.
 - Do we really believe in our mission...transforming the city...awakening a new generation?
Do we really believe we are part of the Great Commission?
 - NOTE: At the April 2018 session meeting, there was strong sentiment that the mission statement isn't quite right; that it doesn't help us differentiate between the things we should be doing and the things we should stop doing. We've got to revisit the mission statement this year.
 - Can we meet the needs of non-members with the same energy and passion with which we meet our own needs?
 - People need to connect via relationships outside the normal church structure.

The following article appeared in Kentucky Today online on March 18, 2018.
<http://kentuckytoday.com/stories/end-of-an-era-once-vibrant-kentucky-church-closing-its-doors,12568>

End of an era: Once vibrant Kentucky church closing its doors

**‘It’s like taking care of your mother with dementia;
We did everything we could’**



Pollard Baptist Church in Ashland, Ky., will be closing its doors on May 1 after 126 years in the northeastern Kentucky community. (Kentucky Today/Mark Maynard)

Posted Wednesday, March 28, 2018 11:10 am

By **MARK MAYNARD**, Kentucky Today

ASHLAND, Ky. (KT) – Once a bustling congregation of nearly 1,500 members, Pollard Baptist Church is closing its doors.

Decades of decline had taken their toll at Pollard, leaving five faithful members to make the heart-wrenching decision to pull the plug.

The final worship service will be May 1.

“We grieve over what has come to pass,” said Wes Smith, Pollard’s pastor for the last six years. “We understand every living organism does die eventually. As great as the churches listed in the New Testament were, none of those are around today.”

For the tiny remnant of believers, the closing creates a deafening silence from the pulpit where God’s Word had been proclaimed for the past 126 years.

“It’s heartbreaking; it really is,” said 70-year-old Linda Cornwell, who has known no other church. She was enrolled in the “cradle roll” as a baby and committed her life to Christ at age 15. “It was August 1962,” she said. “Twenty-five people were saved on the same night.”

Churches close every single day in America and even though some have been around for more than a century, like Pollard, they fade from existence due to irrelevance, population shifts, societal changes and poor church leadership.

Churches, like human beings, are born and they live and they die.

“During the past 75 years we’ve been in a gradual decline,” Smith said of Pollard.

The pastor had a sobering message thought for pastors and other church leaders.

“If you’re not careful, it can happen to you,” he said. “If there are seeds of death, they must be replaced with seeds of life.”

The 71-year-old Smith said the remaining members are at peace with the decision to disband.

“You need to understand, disbanding or the reasons for it don’t occur overnight,” he said. “As God was glorified during those times, we will also give Him glory in these times. As the last pastor, my major concern is that God receives the glory.”

Pollard had its heyday in the first half of the 20th Century, experiencing rapid growth that brought two new buildings. The structure where the church stands today was built in 1925. By 1929, membership reached 512 and during the next 30 years the membership soared to nearly 1,500.

Rev. William K. “W.K.” Wood was a powerhouse minister and state evangelist for 70 years. He came from western Kentucky to Ashland to be the pastor of Pollard Baptist Church in 1923 and spent 21 years preaching powerfully to a full sanctuary. He was one of the first pastors in northeastern Kentucky to have his own radio show that aired every Sunday night.

Fred Boggs, 87, was a young boy who heard the news blaring over the radio that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. He was also a member of Pollard Baptist Church, having been going there since he was 5 at the invitation of a neighbor who lived behind his family’s home.

“I remember that day,” he said. “I was going from the church to the grocery store and they announced over the radio that war broke out. Men were leaving for war and people were scared. That’s when people flocked back to the church.”

Boggs said the church was so crowded from 1942 to 1944 that on Sunday night those who couldn’t get into the main auditorium went into the basement to listen to Wood preach on the radio.

Wood was popular and wielded great influence in the community. But that didn’t prevent his deacons from

asking him to resign, a pivotal moment in the church's history, one that may have triggered the decline that led to the decision close all these years later.

"The theory is that God was doing some great things and there were some deacons there who decided he had more influence and control than they thought he needed to have," said Rose Hill Pastor Matt Shamblin, whose church was planted by Pollard. "Six deacons asked him to resign. Legend goes, within the year, all six of them were dead."

Wood left Pollard in 1944 to begin training as a city missionary in northern Kentucky. He was named state evangelist for Kentucky, working for the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board.

"He was so popular," said Kentucky Baptist Convention consultant Paul Badgett, who has walked Pollard through the process of closing its doors. "Everywhere I go, I find people who knew about W.K. Wood."

There was no compromise with Wood, who preached God's word with fire and fury, and never minded stepping on toes if necessary. He preached with conviction against cigarettes, alcohol, mixed bathing and other social issues of the time. Among church keepsakes is an exchange of letters between Wood and the late Sen. Robert Kennedy.

Badgett, the son of a barber in Ashland, said men would come to father's shop and ask for a "haircut like W.K. Wood. Dad would tell them few people had a head of hair like W.K. Wood!"

Pollard's power struggle continued even after Wood left the church. A disagreement in 1955 led to a church split. Many of the members left to start Thirteenth Street Baptist Church a few blocks away. Over the next few decades the community around Pollard shifted from one of largely middle-class residents to lower income. Housing projects were built nearby.

While the problems from the mid-1940s to 1955 may have been the beginning of the end, it wasn't that Pollard was an ineffective church for the next 50 years. Church attendance wasn't as steady and several pastors came and went. They always preached the Bible, but it also fell more out of touch with the community it served.

"Communities are going to constantly change," Shamblin said. "If you have the mentality this is who we are and who you are is not who the community needs you to be, you will lose the community. If you have a drive-in congregation in the middle of a neighborhood, you're in trouble."

Shamblin said Pollard resisted making changes that would have been necessary to reach the people living around the church.

"The community changed around them," he said. "If they were going to be the church for the community of Pollard, that required them to change. If there's a mentality that the community exists for the church and not the church for the community, that's certain death. The community around them changed and unfortunately the church never did. Even when they made overtures of trying to change, that was resisted as well."

Jamie Lester's grandfather, A.N. Lester, preached five years at Pollard from 1985 to 1990 before retiring. Jamie was going to college in Ashland and lived with his grandparents in the Pollard parsonage for several years. He said the church was mostly full in the lower level with about 200 regularly in attendance, many of them well into their 80s.

Lester said he became involved in church life through Pollard's influence and credits the church with having a huge part in leading him to salvation. He was married at Pollard in 1989. He also was involved with the youth program, called Pollard Pals, during some of his time there.

John Black was the youth pastor who had the attention of that segment of the church. He tried out to be the pastor after Lester's grandfather retired but was voted down.

"People who had not been there in years showed up just to vote against John Black," Lester said. "He didn't fit the mold of that generation of people, so they rejected him. I don't know what might have happened there if John had been chosen pastor. It might have been different."

Lester said Black went on to success at churches in Ohio and Pollard stayed on a downward trend. Black tried to explain to the older generation that the world is changing and wasn't like in the 1940s and 1950s when everybody had a job and life was much simpler, Lester said.

"He told them kids have different problems now than they did then," Lester said. "Nobody honors the 'Greatest Generation' any more than I do, but that generation of people was not open to following that type of leadership at that time. You can't help but think that might have had a real negative impact on the next 30 years."

Studies have documented the life cycles of churches. Some that have been on the verge of closing have been revived to find a whole new life. Others disband and dissolve. Some limp along for decades until their stalwart generation is gone, leaving no option other than to close the doors.

"Pollard Baptist was no longer the church that community needed and instead of changing, they chose death," Shamblin said. "I've done a lot of church consultation. Churches are making that decision all across America. 'I will not change, even for my grandchildren.' They won't say it that way, but their actions will say that."

Cornwell, who said she always appreciated going to a church where everybody knew her name, where people were concerned about her, and where the Word was preached, has grieved over the death of Pollard.

"It's like taking care of your mother with dementia, but you can't put a church in a nursing home," she said. "It's like losing a family member. We did everything we could."

Reggie McNeal – The Future of the Church as Movement

Reggie McNeal is a pastor, author, lecturer, and church consultant whose education includes a BA degree from the University of South Carolina and MDiv and PhD degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Watch Reggie's 20-minute lecture at <https://vimeo.com/328041589>

Notes:

Something epic is underway.

- Church as institution is in trouble and should be.
- Church as movement is like a “party” that is underway worldwide.
- God is calling us together for a kingdom party.

Three big shifts are underway.

- Shift in the story. The narrative has long been “church centric.”
- For the last 500 years it's been about “getting the church fixed.”
 - But now we have the best churches we've ever had.
 - If having great churches was going to bring in the kingdom, it would already have happened.
- Today, things are moving to a “kingdom centric” story.
 - “Missional church” movement was a “bridge” to get us to the discussion we are having today.
 - Jesus was obsessed with the “Kingdom.” He mentioned it 100 times more than he mentioned the church.
 - The church is not the point. The Kingdom of God is the point.
 - The Kingdom is the source of the life God intends.
 - God's gifts to us are eternal; the kingdom is irrevocable, and the church has a role to play.
 - The church is the “hub” to get to the life God intended. The church was never meant to be the destination.
 - The story was never meant to be about us.
 - It's possible to have a relationship with a church, and not have a relationship with Jesus.
- There is a shift in the “scorecard.”
 - We've got to measure the impact we have in the community.
 - Jesus has given to us, the church, the responsibility for the shape, tenor, texture, and the impact on the community around us.
 - We need to consider stewardship as stewardship of the community.
 - Are we making a difference in Pittsburgh?
 - Are we making “epic wins” in Pittsburgh?
 - Celebrate the impact you are making in the community.
- Stewardship shift. There is a shift in what we should think our stewardship is.
 - We're called to a larger stewardship than just our church.
 - Stewardship of the church vs. stewardship of the community.
 - Church leaders who get this are on fire.
 - What is the size of your dream? Save the church or transform the community?
 - Leaders need to go first and take someone with us.

Bottom line: God's kingdom is going forth, and God has been good enough to cut us in on the deal?

Questions for reflection:

1. Is Reggie correct? Has our focus been too church-centric?
2. In what ways can First Church have an impact on the kingdom downtown?

Church Leadership 101

Basics from the Bible and the Book of Order

Biblical Basis

God's Call

Form of Government

Church Leadership 101

Read the following passages about elders and deacons and answer the questions that follow.

Exodus 18:13-24. The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening. ¹⁴ When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, "What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?" ¹⁵ Moses answered him, "Because the people come to me to seek God's will. ¹⁶ Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God's decrees and laws." ¹⁷ Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. ¹⁸ You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. ¹⁹ Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. ²⁰ Teach them the decrees and laws, and show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform. ²¹ But select capable men from all the people--men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain--and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. ²² Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. ²³ If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied." ²⁴ Moses listened to his father-in-law and did everything he said.

Acts 6:1-7. In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." ⁵ This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ⁶ They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. ⁷ So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

1 Timothy 3:1. Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. ² Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵ (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷ He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. ⁸ Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁹ They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰ They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. ¹¹ In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. ¹² A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. ¹³ Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

Titus 1:6-9. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. ⁷ Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless--not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁸ Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

1 Peter 5:1-9. To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ² Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. ⁵ Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." ⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. ⁸ Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

1. From these passages, list some of the qualities of church officers.

2. Which qualities are most important?

3. Think of someone you knew who was an exceptional church officer. Describe that person. What made him/her so special?

Exploring the Meaning of “Call”

Read and reflect on these “call stories:”

Genesis 12:1-4. The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. ² "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." ⁴ So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.

Exodus 3:1-12. Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.

³ So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight--why the bush does not burn up."

⁴ When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am."

⁵ "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."

⁶ Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. ⁷ The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. ⁸ So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey--the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. ⁹ And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰ So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

¹¹ But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" ¹² And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

Matthew 4:18-20. ¹⁸ As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

Matthew 19:16-22. ¹⁶ Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

¹⁷ "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."

¹⁸ "Which ones?" the man inquired. Jesus replied, " 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, ¹⁹ honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.' "

²⁰ "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"

²¹ Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

²² When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Matthew 28:18-20. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Acts 16:12-15. ¹² From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

¹³ On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there.

¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. ¹⁵ When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

1. In reading these stories, do you get the sense that God had been searching for just the right person with the right qualifications?
2. What do you think was the main qualification of those whom God called?
3. Describe your own sense of call from God.

Form of Government – *Open Book*

This exercise is designed to get you familiar with the Book of Order. Using the *Book of Order*, 2017/2019 edition, answer the following questions. Include paragraph reference.

1. What does the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) consist of? (Preface)

2. What are the meanings of the following terms? (Preface)
 - a. SHALL and IS TO BE/ARE TO BE
 - b. SHOULD
 - c. IS APPROPRIATE
 - d. MAY

3. Who is head of the church? (F-1.02)

4. The church is faithful to the mission of Christ as it: (F-1.0303)

5. What is the purpose of Confessional Statements? (F-2.01)

6. What are the eight “Historic Principles of Church Order? (F-3.0101-F-3.0108)

7. What is the Mission of the Congregation? (G-1.0101)

8. How do persons enter into membership in the congregation? (G-1.0303)

9. Who or what is the basis for the Ordered Ministries of the Church? (G-2.0101)

10. Where does the call to Ordered Ministry come from? (G-2.0103)

11. Those called to exercise special functions in the church—deacons, ruling elders, and teaching elders—are expected to have certain gifts and qualifications. What are they? (G-2.0104)

12. Describe the ministry of Deacon. (G-2.0201)

13. Describe the ministry of Ruling Elder. (G-2.0301)

14. What are the councils of the church? (G-3.0101)

15. Councils of the church exist to help congregations and the church be more faithful participants in the mission of Christ. In doing this they: (G-3.0101)

16. What is the composition of the session? (G-3.0201)

17. What are the three areas of session responsibility and power? (G-3.0201)

18. What are the powers of trustees? (G-4.0101)
19. The power of the trustees is subject to _____? (G-4.0101)
20. What is the purpose of the property of the church? (G-4.0201)
21. Church property is held in trust for the use and benefit of whom? (G-4.0203)
22. Space that is set apart for worship should encourage community, be accessible to all, and open us to reverence for God. What three things should the worship space include? (W-1.0203).
23. In a particular congregation, ruling elders shall provide for the church's worship and encourage the people's participation. Specifically, when serving together on the session, what responsibilities do ruling elders share with ministers of the Word and Sacrament? (W-2.0303)
24. The minister of the Word and Sacrament has specific responsibilities for worship. What are they? (W-2.0304)
25. Following Jesus' example, the Church proclaims the fullness of the gospel in Word and Sacrament on the Lord's Day. What other actions does the Service for the Lord's Day include? (W-3.0102).
26. God's faithfulness to us is sure, even when human faithfulness to God is not. God's grace is sufficient; therefore, Baptism is _____. (W-3.0402)

27. Baptism shall be authorized by the session and administered by a minister of the Word and Sacrament. The session's responsibilities for Baptism include: (W-3.0403)

28. The session may authorize the celebration of the Lord's Supper at events other than the Service for the Lord's Day. What are they? (W-3.0410)

29. Briefly describe the purpose of church discipline. (D-1.0101)

30. What are the two types of disciplinary cases in the church? (D-2.0201)

Form of Government – Open Book Answer Key

This exercise is designed to get you familiar with the Book of Order. Using the *Book of Order*, 2017/2019 edition, answer the following questions. Include paragraph reference.

1. What does the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) consist of? (Preface)
The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as defined in F-3.04, consists of the Book of Confessions (Part I) and the Book of Order (Part II).

2. What are the meanings of the following terms? (Preface)

- a. SHALL and IS TO BE/ARE TO BE signify practice that is mandated,
- b. SHOULD signifies practice that is strongly recommended,
- c. IS APPROPRIATE signifies practice that is commended as suitable,
- d. MAY signifies practice that is permissible but not required.

3. Who is head of the church? (F-1.02)

JESUS CHRIST IS HEAD OF THE CHURCH

4. The church is faithful to the mission of Christ as it: (F-1.0303)

Proclaims and hears the Word of God, responding to the promise of God’s new creation in Christ, and inviting all people to participate in that new creation;

Administers and receives the Sacraments, welcoming those who are being engrafted into Christ, bearing witness to Christ’s saving death and resurrection, anticipating the heavenly banquet that is to come, and committing itself in the present to solidarity with the marginalized and the hungry; and

Nurtures a covenant community of disciples of Christ, living in the strength of God’s promise and giving itself in service to God’s mission.

5. What is the purpose of Confessional Statements? (F-2.01)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states its faith and bears witness to God’s grace in Jesus Christ in the creeds and confessions in the Book of Confessions. In these statements the church declares to its members and to the world who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do. These statements identify the church as a community of people known by its convictions as well as by its actions. They guide the church in its study and interpretation of the Scriptures; they summarize the essence of Reformed Christian tradition; they direct the church in maintaining sound doctrines; they equip the church for its work of proclamation. They serve to strengthen personal commitment and the life and witness of the community of believers.

6. What are the eight “Historic Principles of Church Order? (F-3.0101-F-3.0108)

F-3.0101 God Is Lord of the Conscience

F-3.0102 Corporate Judgment

F-3.0103 Officers

F-3.0104 Truth and Goodness

F-3.0105 Mutual Forbearance

F-3.0106 Election by the People

F-3.0107 Church Power

F-3.0108 The Value of Ecclesiastical Discipline

7. What is the Mission of the Congregation? (G-1.0101)

The congregation is the church engaged in the mission of God in its particular context. The triune God gives to the congregation all the gifts of the gospel necessary to being the Church. The congregation is the basic form of the church, but it is not of itself a sufficient form of the church. Thus congregations are bound together in communion with one another, united in relationships of accountability and responsibility, contributing their strengths to the benefit of the whole, and are called, collectively, the church.

Through the congregation God's people carry out the ministries of proclamation, sharing the Sacraments, and living in covenant life with God and each other. In the life of the congregation, individual believers are equipped for the ministry of witness to the love and grace of God in and for the world. The congregation reaches out to people, communities, and the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, to gather for worship, to offer care and nurture to God's children, to speak for social justice and righteousness, to bear witness to the truth and to the reign of God that is coming into the world.

8. How do persons enter into membership in the congregation? (G-1.0303)

- a. Public profession of faith, made after careful examination by the session in the meaning and responsibilities of membership; if not already baptized, the person making profession of faith shall be baptized;**
- b. Certificate of transfer, when a person is a member of another Christian church at the time of transfer;**
- c. Reaffirmation of faith, for persons previously baptized in the name of the triune God and having publicly professed their faith.**

9. Who or what is the basis for the Ordered Ministries of the Church? (G-2.0101)

Jesus Christ.

10. Where does the call to Ordered Ministry come from? (G-2.0103)

The call to ordered ministry in the Church is the act of the triune God. This call is evidenced by the movement of the Holy Spirit in the individual conscience, the approval of a community of God's people, and the concurring judgment of a council of the Church.

11. Those called to exercise special functions in the church—deacons, ruling elders, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament—are expected to have certain gifts and qualifications. What are they? (G-2.0104)

a. To those called to exercise special functions in the church—deacons, ruling elders, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament—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 in the world. They must have the approval of God's people and the concurring judgment of a council of the church.

b. Standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (F-1.02). The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G-2.0402; G-2.0607; G-

3.0306) shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.0404). Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.

12. Describe the ministry of Deacon. (G-2.0201)

The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress . Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.

13. Describe the ministry of Ruling Elder. (G-2.0301)

As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons 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 ministers of the Word and Sacrament, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a 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 ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and they are eligible for any office.

14. What are the councils of the church? (G-3.0101)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is governed by councils composed of presbyters elected by the people (F-3.0202). These councils are called the session, the presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church.

15. Councils of the church exist to help congregations and the church be more faithful participants in the mission of Christ. In doing this they: (G-3.0101)

**Provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard;
Provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received;
Nurture a covenant community of disciples of Christ.**

16. What is the composition of the session? (G-3.0201)

The session is the council for the congregation. It shall be composed of those persons elected by the congregation to active serviced as ruling elders, together with all installed pastors and associate pastors. All members of the session are entitled to vote. The pastor shall be the moderator of the session, and the session shall not meet without the pastor or designated moderator.

17. What are the three areas of session responsibility and power? (G-3.0201)

The session has responsibility and power to:

Provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard. This responsibility shall include providing a place where the congregation may regularly gather for worship, education, and spiritual nurture; providing for regular preaching of the Word by a minister of the Word and Sacrament or other person prepared and approved for the work; planning and leading regular efforts to reach into the community and the world with the message of salvation and the invitation to enter into committed discipleship; planning and leading ministries of social healing and reconciliation in the community in accordance with the prophetic witness of Jesus Christ; and initiating and responding to ecumenical efforts that bear witness to the love and grace of God.

Provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received. This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord's Supper at least quarterly and the administration of Baptism as appropriate, in accordance with the principles of the Directory for Worship; and exercising pastoral care among the congregation in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the congregation may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.

Nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ. This responsibility shall include receiving and dismissing members; reviewing the roll of active members at least annually and counseling with those who have neglected the responsibilities of membership; providing programs of nurture, education, and fellowship; training, examining, ordaining, and installing those elected by the congregation as ruling elders and deacons; encouraging the graces of generosity and faithful stewardship of personal and financial resources; managing the physical property of the congregation for the furtherance of its mission; directing the ministry of deacons, trustees, and all organizations of the congregation; employing the administrative staff of the congregation; leading the congregation in participating in the mission of the whole church; warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the congregation and community; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.

18. What are the powers of trustees? (G-4.0101)

The corporation so formed, or the individual trustees, shall have the following powers: to receive, hold, encumber, manage, and transfer property, real or personal, for the congregation, provided that in buying, selling, and mortgaging real property, the trustees shall act only after the approval of the congregation, granted in a duly constituted meeting; to accept and execute deeds of title to such property; to hold and defend title to such property; to manage any permanent special funds for the furtherance of the purposes of the congregation....

19. The power of the trustees is subject to _____? (G-4.0101)

... the authority of the session and under the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The powers and duties of the trustees shall not infringe upon the powers and duties of the session or the board of deacons.

20. What is the purpose of the property of the church? (G-4.0201)

A tool for the accomplishment of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world.

21. Church property is held in trust for the use and benefit of whom? (G-4.0203)

All property held by or for a congregation, a presbytery, a synod, the General Assembly, or the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), whether legal title is lodged in a corporation, a trustee or trustees, or an unincorporated association, and whether the property is used in programs of a congregation or of a higher council or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

22. Space that is set apart for worship should encourage community, be accessible to all, and open us to reverence for God. What three things should the worship space include? (W-1.0203).

Space for Christian worship should include a place for the reading and proclamation of the Word, a font or pool for Baptism, and a table for the Lord's Supper.

23. In a particular congregation, ruling elders shall provide for the church's worship and encourage the people's participation. Specifically, when serving together on the session, what responsibilities do ruling elders share with ministers of the Word and Sacrament? (W-2.0303)

Specifically, when serving together on the session, ruling elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament: make provision for the regular preaching of the Word and celebration of the Sacraments, corporate prayer, and the offering of praise to God in song; oversee and approve all public worship in the congregation, with the exception of responsibilities reserved for the minister of the Word and Sacrament; determine occasions, days, times, and places for worship; and have responsibility for the arrangement of worship space, the use of special appointments (flowers, candles, banners, paraments, and other objects), and the ministries of music, drama, dance, and visual arts.

24. The minister of the Word and Sacrament has specific responsibilities for worship. What are they? (W-2.0304)

Specifically, ministers of the Word and Sacrament are responsible for: the selection of Scriptures to be read, the preparation of the sermon, the prayers to be offered, the selection of music to be sung, printed worship aids or media presentations for a given service, and the use of drama, dance, and other art forms in a particular service of worship.

25. Following Jesus' example, the Church proclaims the fullness of the gospel in Word and Sacrament on the Lord's Day. What other actions does the Service for the Lord's Day include? (W-3.0102).

The Service for the Lord's Day also includes: gathering and singing, confession and pardon, prayer and offering, blessing and sending. Through all of these actions, we are drawn into Christ's presence and sent out in the power of the Spirit.

26. God's faithfulness to us is sure, even when human faithfulness to God is not. God's grace is sufficient; therefore, Baptism is _____. (W-3.0402)

Not repeated.

27. Baptism shall be authorized by the session and administered by a minister of the Word and Sacrament. The session's responsibilities for Baptism include: (W-3.0403)

The session's responsibilities for Baptism include: encouraging parents (or those exercising parental responsibility) to present their children for Baptism without undue haste or undue delay; encouraging new believers to be baptized; examining candidates for Baptism, or their parents, and instructing them in the significance of the Sacrament; enrolling those who are baptized as members of the congregation; and providing for their ongoing nurture and formation for baptismal life in the world. The congregation as a whole, on behalf of the universal Church, is responsible for nurturing baptized persons in Christian life. The session may designate certain members of the congregation as sponsors or mentors for those who are baptized or for their parents.

28. The session may authorize the celebration of the Lord's Supper at events other than the Service for the Lord's Day. What are they? (W-3.0410)

Services of Christian marriage, ordination and installation, services of wholeness, ministry to the sick, and services of witness to the resurrection. At all such events, the Word is to be read and proclaimed. When the

Lord's Supper takes place apart from public worship, the congregation shall be represented by one or more members.

29. Briefly describe the purpose of church discipline. (D-1.0101)

The purpose of discipline is to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ; to preserve the purity of the church by nourishing the individual within the life of the believing community; to achieve justice and compassion for all participants involved; to correct or restrain wrongdoing in order to bring members to repentance and restoration; to uphold the dignity of those who have been harmed by disciplinary offenses; to restore the unity of the church by removing the causes of discord and division; and to secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings.

30. What are the two types of disciplinary cases in the church? (D-2.0201)

Remedial and disciplinary.



Presbyterians Beliefs for Church Officers

April 2018

The Good News



The Gospel

What is the Gospel?

“Even angels long to look into these things.”

1 Peter 1:12

- The “Good News” of what God has done in Jesus Christ.
- In a nutshell, the news is: Jesus Christ, God’s one and only Son, came from heaven to earth. He lived the life we were meant to live; died the death we deserve, paying the price for our sin. He was raised from the dead, ascended to heaven, and reigns in power with God the Father. When we believe, we are reconciled to God for all time.
- The church’s core competency; the thing on which everything else depends.

What is the Gospel? (cont’d.)

“Even angels long to look into these things.”

1 Peter 1:12

- Astonishingly simple; infinitely complex.
- The thing that makes Christianity different from any other faith.
 - We are saved by God’s grace alone; there is nothing we can do to save ourselves or earn God’s favor.
 - The Gospel says that we are more evil than we dare to imagine, and more loved than we dare hope, at the same time. All of life is meant to be a grateful response to what God has done.
 - To the extent we understand it, the Gospel will rewire our heart.

Foundations of Presbyterian Polity

- God's Mission
 - The triune God creates, redeems, sustains, rules, and transforms all things and people
 - Christ's mission is our mission
- Jesus Christ is Head of the Church
 - Jesus Christ has all power in heaven and on earth
 - Christ calls and equips the church
 - Christ gives the church its life
 - Christ is the church's hope
 - Christ is the foundation of the church
 - God alone is worthy of worship

Foundations of Presbyterian Polity

- The church is the Body of Christ
 - A community of faith, hope, love, and witness
- The Marks of the Church
 - The unity of the church
 - The holiness of the church
 - The catholicity of the church
 - The apostolicity of the church

Foundations of Presbyterian Polity

- The Notes of the Reformed Church
 - The Word of God is truly preached and heard
 - The Sacraments are rightly administered
 - Ecclesiastical discipline is uprightly ministered
- In our time, the church is faithful to the mission of Christ as it:
 - Proclaims and hears the Word of God
 - Administers and receives the Sacraments
 - Nurtures a covenant community of disciples of Christ

What does the Constitution of the PC USA consist of? (F-3.04)

Book of Confessions

- Nicene Creed
- Apostles' Creed
- Scots Confession
- Heidelberg Catechism
- 2nd Helvetic Confession
- Westminster Confession of Faith
- Larger Catechism
- Shorter Catechism
- Barmen Declaration
- Confession of 1967
- Confession of Belhar
- Brief Statement of Faith

Book of Order

- Foundations of Presbyterian Polity
- Form of Government
- Directory for Worship
- Rules of Discipline

A “Confessional Statement” is:

- a. Something we ought to say to our parents or to our spouse when we’ve done something stupid.
- b. Something we say to God to acknowledge our sinful nature.
- c. Something the church declares to its members and the world, stating who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do.
- d. All of the above.

A “Confessional Statement” is :

- a. Something we ought to say to our parents or to our spouse when we’ve done something stupid.
- b. Something we say to God to acknowledge our sinful nature.
- c. Something the church declares to its members and the world, stating who and what it is, what it believes, and what it resolves to do.

➔ d. All of the above. (F-2.01)

Confessional Statements...

- a. Are subordinate standards to the Bible.
- b. Take precedence over the Bible.
- c. May not be ignored or dismissed.
- d. Both a and c.

Confessional Statements...

- a. Are subordinate standards to the Bible.
- b. Take precedence over the Bible.
- c. May not be ignored or dismissed.
- ➡ d. Both a. and c. F-2.02

Essential Tenets

- Authority of Scripture
- Nature of God
 - Triune, sovereign, creator and sustainer of all things.
 - God alone is worthy of worship
- Human beings
 - Created in God's likeness, and...
 - All are sinners who deserve death
- Jesus Christ
 - Fully human and fully God
 - Jesus alone is Head of the Church
 - His death on the cross is sufficient once and for all
- Salvation is by grace through faith

Presbyterian Distinctives

Reformed Tradition

- 16th century protestant reformation
 - esp. Calvin's Geneva
- God is sovereign
- Our purpose is to *glorify God* and enjoy God forever
- Emphasis on God's grace, not our works
 - God *chooses us* for salvation and to serve him
- Authority of scripture
- Jesus is Lord

Church Government

- Government by *presbyters* who are elected by the people
 - Represent will of Christ
- Basic unit of government is the *session*
- Hierarchy of inter-related governing bodies
 - Higher governs lower
- 2 Sacraments
- Equal status for women

Who is the head of the church?

- a. The Senior Pastor
- b. The Session
- c. Jesus Christ
- d. Each person acting within in their own conscience

Who is the head of the church?

- a. The Senior Pastor
- b. The Session
- ➔ c. Jesus Christ (F-1.02)
- d. Each person acting within in their own conscience

The PCUSA is governed by councils elected by the people (G-3.0101). The session is the council for a congregation, which shall be composed of:

- a. Installed pastors and associate pastors
- b. Ruling elders in active service
- c. Deacons
- d. Both a and b above.

The PCUSA is governed by councils elected by the people (G-3.0101). The session is the council for a congregation, which shall be composed of:

- a. Installed pastors and associate pastors
- b. Ruling elders in active service
- c. Deacons
- d. Both a and b above. G-3.0201

What does the term “polity” mean?

- a. To be polite
- b. Synonym for “policy”
- c. A form of church government
- d. Synonym for “politics”

What does the term “polity” mean?

- a. To be polite
- b. Synonym for “policy”
- ➔ c. A form of church government
- d. Synonym for “politics”

The Presbyterian Church gets its name from its form of government. What is a “presbyter?”

- a. A delegate to the Presbytery
- b. A ruling elder
- c. A Minister of Word and Sacrament (teaching elder)
- d. Both b. and c.

The Presbyterian Church gets its name from its form of government. What is a “presbyter?”

- a. A delegate to the Presbytery
- b. A ruling elder
- c. A Minister of Word and Sacrament (teaching elder)

➡ d. Both b. and c. F-3.0202

Presbyterians get their name from their form of government.

- Presbyterian churches are governed by councils composed of elders.
- The council of a local church is called the session.
- The Greek word for “elder” is πρεσβύτερος, or spelled phonetically, *presbuteros*.
- Ministers of Word and Sacrament are often called “teaching elders.” The other members of the session are called “ruling elders.”

Presbyters are not simply to seek the will of the people, but rather...

- a. Seek to follow their own conscience
- b. Follow the principle of majority rule, while protecting the rights of the minority
- c. Seek together to find and represent the will of Christ
- d. None of the above.

Presbyters are not simply to seek the will of the people, but rather...

- a. Seek to follow their own conscience
- b. Follow the principle of majority rule, while protecting the rights of the minority
- ➔ c. Seek together to find and represent the will of Christ
F-3.0204
- d. None of the above.

After they are received and examined by the session, new church members are presented in worship. As part of their public welcome, it is appropriate for them to reaffirm the commitments made in
Baptism by:

- a. Professing their faith in Jesus Christ
- b. Declaring their intention to participate actively and responsibly in the worship, life, governance, and mission of the church
- c. All of the above.

After they are received and examined by the session, new church members are presented in worship. As part of their public welcome, it is appropriate for them to reaffirm the commitments made in
Baptism by:

- a. Professing their faith in Jesus Christ
- b. Declaring their intention to participate actively and responsibly in the worship, life, governance, and mission of the church

➔ c. All of the above. W-4.0204

Membership in the church means a commitment to participate in Christ's mission. Membership involves:

- a. Proclaiming the good news; taking part in the life and worship of the congregation.
- b. Praying; studying Scripture; giving of money, time, and talents.
- c. Participating in church government; demonstrating a new quality of life; serving others
- d. Living responsibly; working for peace, justice, and freedom.
- e. All of the above.

Membership in the church means a commitment to participate in Christ's mission. Membership involves:

- a. Proclaiming the good news; taking part in the life and worship of the congregation.
- b. Praying; studying Scripture; giving of money, time, and talents.
- c. Participating in church government; demonstrating a new quality of life; serving others
- d. Living responsibly; working for peace, justice, and freedom.

→ e. All of the above. G-1.0304

What do Presbyterians believe about Baptism?

- a. The Baptism of young children witnesses to the truth that God's claims people in love even before they are able to respond in faith.
- b. The Baptism of believers (adults) and children are one and the same Sacrament.
- c. Baptism is not repeated.
- d. Baptism is ordinarily celebrated on the Lord's Day in the gathering of the people of God.
- e. All of the above.

What do Presbyterians believe about Baptism?

- a. The Baptism of young children witnesses to the truth that God's claims people in love even before they are able to respond in faith.
- b. The Baptism of believers (adults) and children are one and the same Sacrament.
- c. Baptism is not repeated.
- d. Baptism is ordinarily celebrated on the Lord's Day in the gathering of the people of God.

→ e. All of the above. W-3.0402

What do Presbyterians believe about Baptism? (continued)

- a. The PC USA recognizes all baptisms by other Christian churches administered with water and performed in the name of the triune God.
- b. When a child is presented for Baptism at least one parent should be an active member of a Christian church.
- c. The congregation as a whole, on behalf of the universal Church, is responsible for nurturing baptized persons in Christian life.
- d. Candidates for Baptism, or their parents, shall renounce evil and profess their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
- e. All of the above.

What do Presbyterians believe about Baptism? (continued)

- a. The PC USA recognizes all baptisms by other Christian churches administered with water and performed in the name of the triune God.
- b. When a child is presented for Baptism at least one parent should be an active member of a Christian church.
- c. The congregation as a whole, on behalf of the universal Church, is responsible for nurturing baptized persons in Christian life.
- d. Candidates for Baptism, or their parents, shall renounce evil and profess their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

➔ e. All of the above. W-3.0402/3/4/5

What do Presbyterians believe about the Lord's Supper?

- a. The Lord's Supper is the sign and seal of our communion with the crucified and risen Lord.
- b. When we gather at the Lord's Supper, the Spirit draws us into Christ's presence and unites us with the Church in every time and place.
- c. Even those who doubt may come to the table in order to be assured of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.
- d. We reaffirm the promises of our Baptism and recommit ourselves to love and serve God, one another, and our neighbors.
- e. All of the above.

What do Presbyterians believe about the Lord's Supper?

- a. The Lord's Supper is the sign and seal of our communion with the crucified and risen Lord.
 - b. When we gather at the Lord's Supper, the Spirit draws us into Christ's presence and unites us with the Church in every time and place.
 - c. Even those who doubt may come to the table in order to be assured of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.
 - d. We reaffirm the promises of our Baptism and recommit ourselves to love and serve God, one another, and our neighbors.
- ➡ e. All of the above.

Ministers are have certain responsibilities for worship. What are they?

- a. Selection of hymnals to be used; choice of choir robes; method of communion; selection of Bibles; time of worship
- b. Arrangement of worship space; arrangement of flowers; overall music program; overall worship leadership; placement of banners, flags, art,
- c. Selection of Scriptures to be read; preparation of the sermon; prayers to be offered; the selection of music to be sung; printed worship aids or media presentations, and use of drama , dance, or other art forms. W-2.0304
- d. None of the above.

Ministers are have certain responsibilities for worship. What are they?

- a. Selection of hymnals to be used; choice of choir robes; method of communion; selection of Bibles; time of worship
- b. Arrangement of worship space; arrangement of flowers; overall music program; overall worship leadership; placement of banners, flags, art,
- ➔ c. Selection of Scriptures to be read; preparation of the sermon; prayers to be offered; the selection of music to be sung; printed worship aids or media presentations, and use of drama , dance, or other art forms. W-2.0304
- d. None of the above.

According to the Book of Order, all church property is held in trust. For whom is the trust held?

- a. The congregation of each particular church.
- b. The presbytery.
- c. The General Assembly.
- d. The entire PCUSA.

According to the Book of Order, all church property is held in trust. For whom is the trust held?

- a. The congregation of each particular church.
- b. The presbytery.
- c. The General Assembly.
- d. The entire PCUSA. (G-4.0203)

Ordination Questions

(Ruling elders, deacons, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and Christian educators)

See W-4.0404.

Note that affirmative answers are required to all questions.

Constitutional Questions

Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

Constitutional Questions

Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you?

Constitutional Questions

Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?

Constitutional Questions

Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?

Constitutional Questions

Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?

Constitutional Questions

Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?

Constitutional Questions

Do you promise to further the peace,
unity, and purity of the church?

Constitutional Questions

Will you pray for and seek to serve the
people with energy, intelligence,
imagination, and love?

Constitutional Questions

(Ruling Elder)

Will you be a faithful ruling elder, watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service? Will you share in government and discipline, serving in councils of the church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

Constitutional Questions

(Deacon)

Will you be a faithful deacon, teaching charity, urging concern, and directing the people's help to the friendless and those in need and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

Constitutional Questions

(Teaching Elder)

Will you be a faithful teaching elder, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the councils of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

***Transforming Pittsburgh by awakening a
new generation to life in Christ***

THE CREEDS and CONFESSIONS of the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

Ecumenical Creeds: Ecumenical because they are the work of all the ancient churches. They represent the common root from which later confessions and creeds have grown. Since they contain the most basic articles of the Christian faith, they are an expression of the fundamental points of agreement that are shared among various Christian churches and denominations.

1. **The Apostles' Creed.** By legend attributed to the original apostles, Rome. The present form cannot be verified before the sixth or seventh century, but it probably dates back to an ancient Roman baptismal creed of the second century. Used most widely in the Western or Roman churches.
2. **The Nicene Creed.** As we recite it now, formulated at the Council of Nicea in 325 CE and was adopted in its final form at the Council of Constantinople in 381 CE. This Creed carefully defined the relationship between the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Used most widely in the Eastern Orthodox church. Primary theme: strives to clarify the orthodox understanding of the Trinitarian Nature of God.

Reformation Confessions: The Sixteenth Century confessions and catechisms were usually composed primarily as personal affirmations of faith. They are distinctive for their obvious feeling of involvement between the composers and the reader.

3. **The Scots Confession.** Scotland, 1560, by John Knox and a commission. Clear, fresh, sweet-spirited summary of Reformed faith as held in common by Protestants of England, Switzerland, France, and Holland. Primary theme: Clearest contrast between Reformed faith and Roman Catholic doctrine.
4. **The Heidelberg Catechism.** Germany, 1563, by Zacharia Ursinus and Casper Olevianus. A guide intended for instruction of youth, preachers, and teachers, and for use in public worship. Most widely accepted of all Reformed confessions. Primary theme: The essential tenets of Reformed faith.
5. **The Second Helvetic Confession.** Switzerland, 1566, Heinrich Bullinger, a reformer from Zurich. One of the two most widely adopted of all continental Reformed confessions. A moderate summary of central affirmations. Primary theme: Contrasts Reformed Belief with Lutheran Belief.

Reformed Creed of the Seventeenth Century: written in a more impersonal, rationalistic style. They were more concerned with right thinking about 'truth' than with personal involvement in it. This was the era of "Protestant Orthodoxy" or "Protestant Scholasticism."

6. **The Westminster Confession;** along with the **Larger and Shorter Catechisms:** 1646, came from the combined work of the Assembly called by Parliament at Westminster Cathedral in London, England, which met from 1643-1649. This Assembly was called to deal with issues raised by the Puritan Conflict. This is the most influential confessional standard in the English-speaking Reformed churches. The emphasis of the Westminster Confession is on the doctrines of the church; the Catechisms were for the education of children and adult confirmands. Primary theme: The Sovereignty of God and our response to God.

Contemporary Creeds and Confessions

7. **The Barmen Declaration:** Written to contradict the nationalist 'German Christian Party', which was a perverted blend of historic Christianity and Nazi Nationalism. The 'Confessing Church' gathered in Barmen to compose this document in 1934. Primary theme: Jesus Christ is sole Head of the Church.
8. **The Confession of 1967:** Composed by Presbyterians from the former Northern branch of American Presbyterianism, its aim was to restate the historic positions of the Reformed church in light of the secular upheavals of the 1960's. Primary theme: Reconciliation of People in Christ.
9. **A Brief Statement of Faith:** Composed as part of the Re-unification process between the former United Presbyterian Church USA (Northern) and the former Presbyterian Church US (Southern) became part of the Book of Confessions in 1990 Primary theme: Nurturing commitment to Christ's mission for the church in the world.



Essential Tenets

Presbyterians have been of two minds about essential tenets. We recognize that just as there are some central and foundational truths of the gospel affirmed by Christians everywhere, so too there are particular understandings of the gospel that define the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition. All Christians must affirm the central mysteries of the faith, and all those who are called to ordered ministries in a Presbyterian church must also affirm the essential tenets of the Reformed tradition. Recognizing the danger in reducing the truth of the gospel to propositions that demand assent, we also recognize that when the essentials become a matter primarily of individual discernment and local affirmation, they lose all power to unite us in common mission and ministry.

Essential tenets are tied to the teaching of the confessions as reliable expositions of Scripture. The essential tenets call out for explication, not as another confession, but as indispensable indicators of confessional convictions about what Scripture leads us to believe and do. Essential tenets do not replace the confessions, but rather witness to the confessions' common core. This document is thus intended not as a new confession but as a guide to the corporate exploration of and commitment to the great themes of Scripture and to the historic Reformed confessions that set forth those themes.

The great purpose toward which each human life is drawn is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. Each member of the church glorifies God by recognizing and naming His glory, which is the manifestation and revelation of His own nature. Each member of the church enjoys God by being so united with Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit as to become a participant in that divine nature, transformed from one degree of

glory to another and escorted by Christ into the loving communion of the Trinity. So we confess our faith not as a matter of dispassionate intellectual assent, but rather as an act by which we give God glory and announce our membership in the body of Christ. We trust that when God's glory is so lifted up and when His nature is thus made manifest in the life of the body, the church will be a light that draws people from every tribe and tongue and nation to be reconciled to God.

God's Word: The Authority for Our Confession

The clearest declaration of God's glory is found in His Word, both incarnate and written. The Son eternally proceeds from the Father as His Word, the full expression of the Father's nature, and since in the incarnation the Word became flesh all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are offered to His disciples. The written Word grants us those treasures, proclaims the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, and graciously teaches all that is necessary for faith and life. We glorify God by recognizing and receiving His authoritative self-revelation, both in the infallible Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and also in the incarnation of God the Son. We affirm that the same Holy Spirit who overshadowed the virgin Mary also inspired the writing and preservation of the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit testifies to the authority of God's Word and illumines our hearts and minds so that we might receive both the Scriptures and Christ Himself aright.

We confess that God alone is Lord of the conscience, but this freedom is for the purpose of allowing us to be subject always and primarily to God's Word. The Spirit will never prompt our conscience to conclusions that are at odds with the Scriptures that He has inspired.

The revelation of the incarnate Word does not minimize, qualify, or set aside the authority of the written Word. We are happy to confess ourselves captive to the Word of God, not just individually, but also as members of a community of faith, extending through time and around the globe. In particular, we join with other members of the Presbyterian and Reformed community to affirm the secondary authority of the Book of Confessions as a faithful exposition of the Word of God.

Trinity and Incarnation: The Two Central Christian Mysteries

Trinity

The triune nature of God is the first great mystery of the Christian faith. With Christians everywhere, we worship the only true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – who is both one essence and three persons. God is infinite, eternal, immutable, impassible, and ineffable. He cannot be divided against Himself, nor is He becoming more than He has been, since there is no potential or becoming in Him. He is the source of all goodness, all truth and all beauty, of all love and all life, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. The three persons are consubstantial with one another, being both coeternal, and coequal, such that there are not three gods, nor are there three parts of God, but rather three persons within the one Godhead. The Son is eternally begotten from the Father, and the Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son. All three persons are worthy of worship and praise.

God has no need of anyone or anything beyond Himself. Yet in grace this Triune God is the one Creator of all things. The ongoing act of creation is further manifested in God's gracious sovereignty and providence, maintaining the existence of the world and all living creatures for the sake of His own glory. He is the Holy One, the ground of all being, whose glory is so great that for us to see Him is to die. Yet He has made the creation to reflect His glory, and He has made human beings in His own image, with a unique desire to know Him and a capacity for relationship with Him. Since our God is a consuming fire whom we in our sin cannot safely approach, He has approached us by entering into our humanity in Jesus Christ.

Incarnation

This is the second great mystery of the Christian faith, affirmed by all Christians everywhere: that Jesus Christ is both truly God and truly human. As to His divinity, He is the Son, the second person of the Trinity, being of one substance with the Father; as to His humanity, He is like us in every way but sin, of one substance with us, like us in having both a human soul and a human body. As to His divinity, He is eternally begotten of the Father; as to His humanity, He is born of the virgin Mary, conceived by the Holy Spirit. As to His divinity, His glory fills heaven and earth; as to His humanity, His glory is shown in the form of a suffering servant, most clearly when He is lifted up on the cross in our place.

We confess the mystery of His two natures, divine and human, in one person. We reject any understanding of the communication of attributes that must result in a blending of the two natures such that Jesus Christ is neither truly God nor truly human. We insist upon sufficient distinction between the two natures to preserve the truth of the incarnation, that Jesus Christ is indeed Immanuel, God-with-us, not one who used to be God, nor one who has merely been sent from God. Rather, in His coming we have seen God's glory, for Jesus is the exact imprint of God's very being and in Him the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. The divinity of the Son is in no way impaired, limited, or changed by His gracious act of assuming a human nature, and that His true humanity is in no way undermined by His continued divinity. This is a mystery that we cannot explain, but we affirm it with joy and confidence.

This mystery of the incarnation is ongoing, for the risen Jesus, who was sent from the Father, has now ascended to the Father in His resurrected body and remains truly human. He is bodily present at the right hand of the Father. When we are promised that one day we will see Him face to face, we acknowledge that it is the face of Jesus of Nazareth we will someday see. The one who, for us and for our salvation, was born of Mary, died at Calvary, and walked with disciples to Emmaus is the same Jesus Christ who is now ascended and who will one day return visibly in the body to judge the living and the dead.

Jesus promised His disciples that He would not leave them comfortless when He ascended into heaven, but would ask the Father to send them the Holy Spirit as a comforter and advocate. We are able to confess Jesus Christ as Lord and God only through the work of the Holy Spirit. He comes to us as He came to the gathered disciples at Pentecost: to kindle our faith, to embolden our witness, and to accompany us in mission.

Essentials of the Reformed Tradition

God's Grace in Christ

God declared that the world He created was good and that human beings, made in His own image, were very good. The present disordered state of the world, in which we and all things are subject to misery and to evil, is not God's doing, but is rather a result of humanity's free, sinful rebellion against God's will. God created human beings from the dust of the earth and His own breath, to be His images and representatives, conduits of God's grace to the creation. Since the fall our natural tendency is to abuse and exploit the creation, preferring evil to goodness. God also created human beings to speak His grace and truth to one another, to be helpers who are fit for one another, so that our social relationships would strengthen our ability to serve and obey Him. Since the fall, our natural tendency is to engage in relationships of tyranny and injustice with one another, in which power is used not to protect and serve but to demean. God further created human beings with the capacity for relationship with Him, with His law written on our hearts so that we had the ability to worship Him in love and obey Him by living holy lives. Since the fall, our natural tendency is to hate God and our neighbor, to worship idols of our own devising rather than the one true God.

As a result of sin, human life is poisoned by everlasting death. No part of human life is untouched by sin. Our desires are no longer trustworthy guides to goodness, and what seems natural to us no longer corresponds to God's design. We are not merely wounded in our sin; we are dead, unable to save ourselves. Apart from God's initiative, salvation is not possible for us. Our only hope is God's grace. We discover in Scripture that this is a great hope, for our God is the One whose mercy is from everlasting to everlasting.

This grace does not end when we turn to sin. Although we are each deserving of God's eternal condemnation, the eternal Son assumed our human nature, joining us in our misery and offering Himself on the cross in order to free us from slavery to death and sin. Jesus takes our place both in bearing the weight of condemnation against our sin on the cross and in offering to God the perfect obedience that humanity owes to Him but is no longer able to give. All humanity participates in the fall into sin. Those who are united through faith with Jesus Christ are fully forgiven from all our sin, so that there is indeed a new creation. We are declared justified, not because of any good that we have done, but only because of God's grace extended to us in Jesus Christ. In union with Christ through the power of the Spirit we are brought into right relation with the Father, who receives us as His adopted children.

Jesus Christ is the only Way to this adoption, the sole path by which sinners become children of God, for He is the only-begotten Son, and it is only in union with Him that a believer is able to know God as Father. Only in Jesus Christ is the truth about the Triune God, fully and perfectly revealed, for only He is the Truth, only He has seen the Father, and only He can make the Father known. Only Jesus Christ is the new Life that is offered, for He is the bread from heaven and the fountain of living water, the one by whom all things were made, in whom all things hold together. The exclusivity of these claims establishes that God's love is not impersonal, but a particular and intimate love in which each individual child of God is called by name and known as precious; that God's love is not only acceptance, but a transforming and effective love in which His image within us is restored so that we are capable of holy living.

Election for Salvation and Service

The call of God to the individual Christian is not merely an invitation that each person may accept or reject by his or her own free will. Having lost true freedom of will in the fall, we are incapable of turning toward God of our own volition. God chooses us for Himself in grace before the foundation of the world, not because of any merit on our part, but only because of His love and mercy. Each of us is chosen in Christ, who is eternally appointed to be head of the body of the elect, our brother and our high priest. He is the one who is bone

of our bone, flesh of our flesh, our divine Helper who is also our Bridegroom, sharing our human nature so that we may see His glory. We who receive Him and believe in His name do so not by our own will or wisdom, but because His glory compels us irresistibly to turn toward Him. By His enticing call on our lives, Jesus enlightens our minds, softens our hearts, and renews our wills, restoring the freedom that we lost in the fall.

We are all sinners who fall short of God's glory, and we all deserve God's eternal judgment. Apart from the saving work of Jesus Christ, we are incapable of being in God's presence, incapable of bearing the weight of His glory. We rejoice that Jesus Christ offers us safe conduct into the heart of God's consuming and purifying fire, shielding us with His perfect humanity and transforming us by His divine power. Having received such grace, we extend grace to others.

We are not elect for our own benefit alone. God gathers His covenant community to be an instrument of His saving purpose. Through His regenerating and sanctifying work, the Holy Spirit grants us faith and enables holiness, so that we may be witnesses of God's gracious presence to those who are lost. The Spirit gathers us in a community that is built up and equipped to be light, salt, and yeast in the world. Christ sends us into the world to make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that Christ has commanded us. We are now in service to God's plan for the fullness of time: uniting all things in heaven and earth to Himself. To this end, we preach Christ, calling all persons to repent and believe the gospel. We also care for the natural world, claim all areas of culture in the name of Jesus, serve the poor, feed the hungry, visit the prisoner, and defend the helpless. We do this work not with any thought that we are able to bring in the kingdom, but in the confident hope that God's kingdom is surely coming, a day when suffering and death will pass away and when God will live among His people.

Covenant life in the church

We are elect in Christ to become members of the community of the new covenant. This covenant, which God Himself guarantees, unites us to God and to one

another. Already in the creation, we discover that we are made to live in relationships to others, male and female, created together in God's image. In Christ, we are adopted into the family of God and find our new identity as brothers and sisters of one another, since we now share one Father. Our faith requires our active participation in that covenant community.

Jesus prays that His followers will all be one, and so we both pray and work for the union of the church throughout the world. Even where institutional unity does not seem possible, we are bound to other Christians as our brothers and sisters. In Christ the dividing wall of hostility created by nationality, ethnicity, gender, race, and language differences is brought down. God created people so that the rich variety of His wisdom might be reflected in the rich variety of human beings, and the church must already now begin to reflect the eschatological reality of people from every tribe, and tongue, and nation bringing the treasures of their kingdoms into the new city of God.

Within the covenant community of the church, God's grace is extended through the preaching of the Word, the administration of the Sacraments, and the faithful practice of mutual discipline. First, through the work of the Holy Spirit, the word proclaimed may indeed become God's address to us. The Spirit's illuminating work is necessary both for the one who preaches and for those who listen. Second, the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are signs that are linked to the things signified, sealing to us the promises of Jesus. In the Baptism of infants, we confess our confidence in God's gracious initiative, that a baby who cannot turn to God is nonetheless claimed as a member of the covenant community, a child of God, cleansed by grace and sealed by the Spirit; in the Baptism of adults, we confess our confidence that God's grace can make us new creations at any stage of our lives. In the Lord's Supper, we confess that as we eat the bread and share one cup the Spirit unites us to the ascended Christ, so that His resurrection life may nourish, strengthen, and transform us. Third, the community of the Church practices discipline in order to help one another along the path to new life, speaking the truth in love to one another, bearing one another's burdens, and offering to one another the grace of Christ.

Faithful Stewardship of All of Life

The ministries of the church reflect the three-fold office of Christ as prophet, priest, and king – reflected in the church’s ordered ministries of teaching elders, deacons, and ruling elders. We affirm that men and women alike are called to all the ministries of the Church, and that every member is called to share in all of Christ’s offices within the world beyond the Church. Every Christian is called to a prophetic life, proclaiming the good news to the world and enacting that good news. Every Christian is called to extend the lordship of Christ to every corner of the world. And every Christian is called to participate in Christ’s priestly, mediatorial work, sharing in the suffering of the world in ways that extend God’s blessing and offering intercession to God on behalf of the world. We are equipped to share in these offices by the Holy Spirit, who conforms us to the pattern of Christ’s life.

Jesus teaches us that we are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind. There is no part of human life that is off limits to the sanctifying claims of God. We reject the claim that love of any sort is self-justifying; we affirm that all our affections and desires must be brought under God’s authority. We reject the claim that human souls are unaffected by the fall and remain naturally inclined to God; we affirm that soul and body alike must be cleansed and purified in order to love God properly. We reject the claim that the life of the mind is independent from faith; we affirm that unless we believe we cannot properly understand either God or the world around us. Historically, the Presbyterian tradition has been especially called to explore what it is to love God with all our minds, being committed to the ongoing project of Christian education and study at all levels of Christian life.

Living in obedience to the Word of God

Progress in holiness is an expected response of gratitude to the grace of God, which is initiated, sustained, and fulfilled by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. The first response of gratitude is prayer, and the daily discipline of prayer – both individually and together – should mark the Christian life. The life of prayer includes praise to God for His nature and works, sincere confession of our sin, and intercession for the needs of those we know and for the needs of

the world. As we practice the discipline of regular self-examination and confession, we are especially guided by the Ten Commandments. We therefore hold one another accountable to:

1. **worship God alone**, living all of life to His glory, renouncing all idolatry and all inordinate loves that might lead us to trust in any other help;
2. **worship God in humility**, being reticent in either describing or picturing God, recognizing that right worship is best supported not by our own innovative practices but through the living preaching of the Word and the faithful administration of the Sacraments;
3. **eliminate** from both speech and thought any blasphemy, irreverence, or impurity;
4. **observe** the Sabbath as a day of worship and rest, being faithful in gathering with the people of God;
5. **give honor** toward those set in authority over us and practice mutual submission within the community of the Church;
6. **eradicate** a spirit of anger, resentment, callousness, violence, or bitterness, and instead cultivate a spirit of gentleness, kindness, peace, and love; recognize and honor the image of God in every human being from conception to natural death.
7. **maintain chastity** in thought and deed, being faithful within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman as established by God at the creation or embracing a celibate life as established by Jesus in the new covenant;
8. **practice right stewardship** of the goods we have been given, showing charity to those in need and offering generous support of the Church and its ministries;
9. **pursue truth**, even when such pursuit is costly, and defend truth when it is challenged, recognizing that truth is in order to goodness and that its preservation matters;
10. **resist the pull** of envy, greed, and acquisition, and instead cultivate a spirit of contentment with the gifts God has given us.

In Jesus Christ we see the perfect expression of God’s holy will for human beings offered to God in our place. His holy life must now become our holy life. In Christ, God’s will is now written on our hearts, and we look forward to the day when we will be so confirmed in holiness that we will no longer be able to sin. As the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, Jesus leads us along the path of life toward that goal, bringing us into ever deeper intimacy with the Triune God, in whose presence is fullness of joy.

Church Polity and the Session

Purpose: To foster a better understanding of Session roles and responsibilities to improve Session efficiency and effectiveness.

General

Section G-2.03 is headed, “Ruling Elders: The Ministry of Discernment and Governance.

- Congregations are to 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, 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 ministers of Word and Sacrament, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church.... G-2.0301.
- Ruling elders, ministers of Word and Sacrament, and deacons answer the same ordination questions. These are covered in section W-4.4003. Note that you have to give an affirmative answer to all questions in order to be ordained.

The PCUSA is governed by “councils.” There are four types/levels of councils: session, presbytery, synod, and the General Assembly. This council structure expresses how the PCUSA understands church government. As the session, we’re accountable to higher governing bodies in the church, and folks within the church are accountable to us.

G-3.0101 says, “[Councils] are called to share with others both within and beyond the congregation the task of bearing witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the world.”

“Councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church.” This is why all officers (pastors, elders, and deacons) answer the same questions at ordination.

Councils exist to help congregations and the church as a whole to be more faithful participants in the mission of Christ. They do so as they

- Provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard.
- Provide that the Sacraments be rightly administered and received.
- Nurture a covenant community of disciples of Christ.

Note the language in the paragraph above. The session “provides” and “nurtures.” The Book of Order gives councils considerable latitude in the way particular councils “provide” and “nurture.”

“The pastor of a congregation shall be the moderator of the session....”

“The moderator possesses the authority necessary for preserving order and for conducting efficiently the business of the body.” G-3.0104.

“Meetings of council shall be opened and closed with prayer. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised.... Councils

may also make use of processes of discernment in their deliberation prior to a vote as agreed upon by the body.” G-3.0105.

Section G-3.0109 describes the role of committees: “Councils may designate by their own rule such committees and commissions as they deem necessary and helpful for the accomplishment of the mission of the church....” In general, committees “study and recommend action or carry out decisions already made by a council.” A committee is to make a full report to the council that created it, and “its recommendations shall require action by that body.”

Alternatively, a commission is “empowered to consider and conclude matters referred to it by a council.” An example is an Administrative Commission is one established for the purpose of “receiving and dismissing members.” G-3.0109b(1)

The Book of Order describes the role of the session in section G-3.02.

- “The session is the council for the congregation. It shall be composed of those persons elected by the congregation to active service as ruling elders, together with all installed pastors and associated pastors. All members of the session are entitled to vote.” G-3.0201.

All session members should be familiar with the “Composition and Responsibilities” of the session in section G-3.0201. While certain things are prescribed, the intent is to give each session considerable latitude in how to best carry out its responsibilities in its particular setting. Note the language which says, “provide for.” The session does not carry out every responsibility itself, but “provides for” those things to be carried out.

- For example, under section G-3.0203, sessions are only required to meet quarterly. Only “reasonable notice” of meetings is required for special meetings. Sessions can set their own quorum.

An example: Marriage.

Responsibilities for marriage are discussed in sections W-4.0601 thru W-4.0605. Here are some key provisions.

- If they meet the requirements of the civil jurisdiction in which they intend to marry, a couple may request that a service of Christian marriage be conducted by a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is authorized, though not required, to act as an agent of the civil jurisdiction in recording the marriage contract.
- A couple requesting a service of Christian marriage shall receive instruction from the minister of the Word and Sacrament, who may agree to the couple’s request only if, in the judgment of the minister of the Word and Sacrament, the couple demonstrate sufficient understanding of the nature of the marriage covenant and commitment to living their lives together according to its values. In making this decision, the minister of the Word and Sacrament may seek the counsel of the session, which has authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service.
- The marriage service shall be conducted in a manner appropriate to this covenant and to the forms of Reformed worship, under the direction of the minister of the Word and Sacrament and the supervision of the session (W-2.03). In a service of marriage, the couple marry each other by exchanging mutual promises. The minister of the Word and Sacrament witnesses the couple’s promises and pronounces God’s blessing upon their union. The community of faith pledges to support the couple in upholding their promises; prayers may be offered for the couple, for the communities that support them, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness.

- Nothing herein shall compel a minister of the Word and Sacrament to perform nor compel a session to authorize the use of church property for a marriage service that the minister of the Word and Sacrament or the session believes is contrary to the minister of the Word and Sacrament's or the session's discernment of the Holy Spirit and their understanding of the Word of God.

Note: The session's responsibility for weddings is found under the pastor and session's shared responsibility for worship. The session does not have to approve every wedding. The session can delegate that to the pastors, who can then inform the session when a wedding is scheduled. The focus of the Book of Order is to care for the couple.

Application

As pastor, I am moderator of the session and have the right to vote and make motions. Having said that, I generally don't exercise those rights because I think it's best for the moderator to focus on leading the meeting. (I sometimes make a minor motion to keep the meeting moving along.) If the session is deadlocked on an important issue, it would usually seem prudent for me not to vote, and to postpone a decision until more clarity is reached.

I invite all officers to read all of the Book of Order, not just the parts I've listed here. Three things stand out to me:

- The scope of our responsibilities.
- The orderliness with which we're to carry them out.
- The freedom that we have to organize ourselves and to delegate responsibilities. "Providing for" is not the same as doing everything ourselves.

"Decently and in good order" have long been watchwords of the Presbyterian Form of Government. In my view, we don't honor God, our responsibilities, or each other's time when we spend too much time on routine matters. When folks "burn out" during their time of service, it's usually because the session gets bogged down in minutia, and fails to "keep the main thing the main thing."

A key for us is to build an atmosphere of trust so that:

- We can delegate work to teams/committees to allow us to concentrate on higher order issues.
- When a duly constituted committee comes to us with recommendations, our "bias" should be to accept their recommendations.

Our polity requires us to follow Roberts Rules, hence we make decisions by a majority vote. Having said that, this isn't a democracy. Our role is to discern and follow the will of Christ. Our polity is the framework given to us (and that we have sworn to uphold) as the means of discerning Christ's will. However, close votes may mean that we haven't really discerned God's will.

Closing thoughts

When you cannot attend a meeting, it is your responsibility to find out what happened by asking someone who attended and/or by reading the minutes.

When the session reaches a decision, the decision effectively becomes “unanimous” for all practical purposes. What I mean is that our vote is our collective judgment of God’s will for us on a particular matter. It’s our collective wisdom as the session, therefore, we agree that we will not second guess decisions outside session meetings.

What Do Elders Do?

Notes, FPCP Officer Retreat, June 11-12, 2016

What does the Bible say that elders do?

Numbers 11:16-17: ¹⁶ The LORD said to Moses: “Bring me seventy of Israel’s elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. Have them come to the Tent of Meeting, that they may stand there with you. ¹⁷ I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them. They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone.”

1 Peter 5:1-3: To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ² Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

- Elders bear the burdens of the people along with the pastor
- Stand with the pastor
- Witness to Christ sufferings and share in Christ’s glory
- Shepherd the flock, care for it
- Are willing overseers
- Eagerly serve those entrusted to them
- Are examples to the flock

Elder defined: Representative of the people.

- Comfortable with spiritual authority
 - Build relationships/servant leaders
- Discipleship – proactively leads the flock to grow into the image of Jesus
 - Creates a discipleship culture
 - Intercessory prayer
- Teamwork with pastors
 - Discusses what we’re doing together
 - Builds koinonia – Holy Spirit filled community
- Session becomes a small group where elders and pastors rely on each other.

How can we come 21st century shepherds?

- Changing church culture by fostering community, accountability, and authority through relationships.
- Elders are representatives of the people, enmeshed in their lives.
 - The question then is how do you structure the church to do this?
 - Elders should not be committee chairs, but should be the shepherds of the committee chairs.
- The goal is to create a church government led by the Holy Spirit rather than church polity.
- The priority is to create disciples rather than build institutions.
 - If elders are about bureaucracy, that is what the church will be about.
 - Most churches don’t have a structured way to create disciples.

- Need to build a team approach with the pastors
- Need to create a missional mindset among members so that the mission of God (“Misseo Dei”) takes root.
- Forces leaders into a life of transparency, integrity, scholarship, and discipleship because there is no room to “hide behind doing.”
 - We’re all like Martha

Seven Steps to Creating Change

1. Live out the change personally.
2. Let scripture lead and history inform.
3. Leaders focus on the idea, empower others to think through the details.
4. Let the change process model what you want to become. (Like sitting in silence, lectio divina, etc).
5. Empower deacons to manage mission, trustees handle business.
 - a. It’s easier to be Martha!
 - b. Our hearts always run to do the easy thing, rather than do the strange work of discipling people.
6. Create clear lines of responsibility.
 - a. If you have a hard problem in your life, you go to the elders.
 - b. If you want to start a small business, you go to the trustees.
 - c. If you want to organize a block party, you go to the deacons.
7. Pray for patience (like three years’ worth). Allow people to move at the speed of trust.

The Holy Spirit and Elders

A session is a koinonia community charged with being salt and light to the community around it.

1 Timothy 3:1-7: Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task.

² Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect.

⁵ (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)

⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷ He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

- Being a leader is supposed to be hard. God calls us to do things that are so hard that we cannot possibly do them on our own, because God wants to this with us.

2 Corinthians 3:17: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

- The goal is a permission giving culture rather than a permission seeking culture.
- If you are truly a Spirit-led culture, people will give you grace.
- What is God asking you to be open to in your meetings each month?
- You do your best and most important work outside of meetings
- Meetings are for you to be edified.

Meetings

- Everyone has permission to call time out, and to pray or read scripture
 - “Can we just stop for a moment...?”
 - “Would this be a good time to...?”
 - Two people should arrive ten minutes early each time to pray. Anyone can join.

What’s Expected of Me?

Deacons: The Ministry of Compassion and Service

G-2.0201 Deacon Defined

- Scripture says the office of deacon is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love the Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress.
- Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.

Ruling Elders: The Ministry of Discernment and Governance

G-2.0301 Ruling Elder Defined

- Both the Old and New Testaments recognize the office of elder, people chosen for particular gifts to share in the discernment of God’s Spirit and the governance of God’s people
- Congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit
- Ruling elders don’t “lord it over” the congregation, but discern and *measure* its fidelity to the Word of God
- Ruling elders, along with teaching elders, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline
- Ruling elders have responsibility for the life of the congregation, as well as *the whole church*, including ecumenical relationships
- When elected to higher councils, ruling elders participate and vote with the same authority as teaching elders

G-2.0402 Preparation for Ministry as Ruling Elder or Deacon

- The session shall provide for a period of study and preparation, after which the session shall examine them as to their personal faith; knowledge of the doctrine, government, and discipline contained in the Constitution of the church; and the duties of the ministry.

The Session

G-3.02 The Session

- The session is responsible governing the congregation and guiding it’s witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world
- It leads and guides the witness of the congregation, keeping before it the marks of the church (F-1.0302) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304)
- The session has the responsibility and power to:
 - Provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard:
 - This includes...providing a place where the congregation may regularly gather for worship, education, and spiritual nurture; providing for regular preaching of the Word; planning and

leading efforts to reach into the community; planning and leading ministries of social healing and reconciliation in the community; and initiating and responding to ecumenical efforts that bear witness to the love and grace of God.

- Provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received:
 - This includes...authorizing the celebration of the Lord's Supper at least quarterly and the administration of Baptism as appropriate; and exercising pastoral care among the congregation.
- Nurture the covenant community of the disciples of Christ:
 - This includes receiving and dismissing members; reviewing the roll of active members at least annually and counseling those who have neglected the responsibilities of membership; providing programs of nurture, education, and fellowship; training, examining, ordaining, and installing those elected by the congregation as ruling elders and deacons; encouraging the graces of generosity and faithful stewardship of personal and financial resources; managing the physical property of the congregation for the furtherance of its mission; directing the ministry of deacons, trustees, and all organizations of the congregation; employing the administrative staff of the congregation; leading the congregation in participating in the mission of the whole church; warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the congregation and community; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.

Stewardship

W-1.0204

- The offering of material gifts in worship is an expression of our self-offering, as an act of gratitude for God's grace. We give our lives to God through Jesus Christ, who gave his life for us. The practice of offering also reflects our stewardship of God's good creation. Mindful that the earth and everything in it belong to God, we present tithes and offerings for us in Christ's ministry and mission.

W-5.0103 Other Practices of Discipleship

- We respond to God's grace through other practices of discipleship: keeping sabbath, studying scripture, contemplation and action, fasting and feasting, stewardship and self-offering. All of these practices are meant to help us attend to the presence and action of God in our lives.

Responsibilities of Membership

G-1.0304 What It Means to be a Member

- Proclaim the good news in word and deed
- Take part in the common life and worship of the congregation
- Lift up one another in prayer, mutual concern, and active support
- Study Scripture and issues of Christian life and faith
- Support the work of the church through giving of money, time, and talent
- Participate in the governing responsibilities of the church
- Demonstrate a new quality of life in and through the church
- Respond to what God is doing by serving others
- Live responsibly
- Work for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment
- Renewing and evaluating regularly the integrity of one's membership, and considering ways in which one's participation in the worship and service of the church may be increased and made more meaningful

EVANGELISTIC WORSHIP

THE WORSHIP WARS

June 2001, Tim Keller

One of the basic features of church life in the U.S. today is the proliferation of worship and music forms. This in turn has caused many severe conflicts both within individual congregations and whole denominations. Most books and articles about recent worship trends tend to fall into one of two broad categories.¹ "Contemporary Worship" (hereafter CW) advocates often make rather sweeping statements, such as "pipe organs and choirs will never reach people today." "Historic Worship" (hereafter HW) advocates often speak similarly about how incorrigibly corrupt popular music and culture is, and how they make contemporary worship completely unacceptable.²

Contemporary Worship: Plugging In?

One CW advocate writes vividly that we must 'plug in' our worship in to three power sources: "the sound system, the Holy Spirit, and contemporary culture."³ But several problems attend the promotion of strictly contemporary worship.

First, some popular music *does* have severe limitations for worship. Critics of popular culture argue that much of it is the product of mass-produced commercial interests. As such, it is often marked by sentimentality, a lack of artistry, sameness, and individualism in a way that traditional folk art was not. Second, when we ignore historic tradition we break our solidarity with Christians of the past. Part of the richness of our identity as Christians is that we are saved into a historic people. An unwillingness to consult tradition is not in keeping with either Christian humility or Christian community. Nor is it a thoughtful response to the post-modern rootlessness which now leads so many to seek connection to ancient ways and peoples.

Finally, any worship that is *strictly* contemporary will become 'dated' very, very quickly. Also, it will necessarily be gauged to a very narrow 'market niche.' When Peter Wagner says we should 'plug in' to contemporary culture, *which* contemporary culture does he mean? White, black, Latin, urban, suburban, 'Boomer,' or 'GenX' contemporary culture? Just ten years ago, Willow Creek's contemporary services were considered to be 'cutting edge.' Today, most younger adults find them dated and 'hokey.'⁴

Hidden (but not well!) in the arguments of contemporary worship enthusiasts is the assumption that culture is basically neutral. Thus there is no reason why we cannot wholly adapt our worship to any particular cultural form. But worship that is not rooted in any particular historic tradition will often lack

¹ As one of many examples, see Michael S. Hamilton, "The Triumph of the Praise Songs," *Christianity Today* (July 12, 1999) vol.43, no.8, p.28. He speaks of 'Reformers' who value tradition and look for greater unity among churches through common liturgical forms and of 'Revolutionaries' who promote contemporary music and who encourage broad diversity in worship style. ² Representative figures who emphasize historic continuity, tradition, high culture, and theological exposition in worship are Marva Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down* (Eerdmans, 1995) and David Wells, "A Tale of Two Spiritualities" in

Losing Our Virtue (Eerdmans, 1998.) (See also the web page for "Church Music at a Crossroads": <http://www.xlgroun.net/cmac>.) Examples of those urging a move to contemporary worship with emphasis "visual communication, music, sensations, and feelings" are Lyle Schaller "Worshipping with New Generations" in *21 Bridges to the 21st Century* (Abingdon, 1994) and C.Peter Wagner, *The New Apostolic Churches* (Regal, 1998.)

³ See C.Peter Wagner, who says that contemporary worship: "is 'plugged in' to three important power sources: the sound system, the Holy Spirit, and contemporary culture" p.3 of "Another New Wineskin--the New Apostolic Reformation" in Next (Leadership Network: Jan-Mar, 1999.) That is a good description of tradition-eschewing contemporary worship.

⁴ The critique of Willow Creek as a 'dated' and 'Boomer' model can be found in Sally Morganthaler, "Out of the Box: Authentic Worship in a Postmodern Culture," *Worship Leader*, May-June, 1998, p.24ff. This and an interview with musician Fernando

Ortega in *Prism* Nov/Dec 1997 are indications of some major cracks in the foundation of evangelical assumptions about what kind of services will reach young secular people. However, if a church abandons 'Boomer' contemporary music for more alternative rock, won't it be in the same position in another 10-15 years that Willow Creek is in now? More historic worship forms have a better claim to durability.

the critical distance to critique and avoid the excesses and distorted sinful elements of the particular surrounding,

present culture. For example, how can we harness contemporary Western culture's accessibility and frankness, but not its individualism and psychologizing of moral problems?

Historic Worship--Pulling Out?

HW advocates, on the other hand, are strictly 'high culture' promoters, who defend themselves from charges of elitism by arguing that modern pop music is inferior to traditional folk art.⁵ But problems also attend the promotion of strictly traditional, historic worship.

First, HW advocates cannot really dodge the charge of cultural elitism. A realistic look at the Christian music arising from the grassroots folk cultures of Latin America, Africa, and Asia (not commercially produced pop music centers) reveals many of the characteristics of contemporary praise and worship music--simple and accessible tunes, driving beat, repetitive words, and emphasis on experience.⁶ In the U.S., an emphasis on strictly high culture music and art will probably only appeal to college educated elites. Second, any proponent of 'historic' worship will have to answer the question--'whose' history? Much of what is called 'traditional' worship is rooted in northern European culture. While strict CW advocates bind worship too heavily to one present culture, strict HW advocates bind it too heavily to a *past* culture. Do we really believe that the 16th century Northern European approach to emotional expression and music (incarnate in the Reformation tradition) was completely Biblically informed and must be preserved?

Hidden (but not well!) in the arguments of traditional worship advocates is the assumption that certain historic forms are more pure, Biblical, and untainted by human cultural accretions. Those who argue against cultural relativism must also remember the essential relativity of all traditions. Just as it is a lack of humility to disdain tradition, it is also a lack of humility (and a blindness to the 'noetic' effects of sin) to elevate any particular tradition or culture's way of doing worship. A refusal to adapt a tradition to new realities may come under Jesus' condemnation of making our favorite human culture into an idol, equal to the Scripture in normativity (Mark 7:8-9)⁷ While CW advocates do not seem to recognize the sin in all cultures, the HW advocates do not seem to recognize the amount of (common) grace in all cultures.

Bible, Tradition, and Culture

At this point, the reader will anticipate that I am about to unveil some grand 'Third Way' between two extremes. Indeed, many posit a third approach called "Blended" worship.⁸ But it is not so simple as that. My major complaint is that both sides are equally simplistic in the process by which they shape their worship.

⁵ Marva Dawn does an excellent job of distilling Ken Myer's concerns about pop music in her chapter "Throwing the Baby Out with the Bath Water" in *Reaching Out*, p.183ff.

⁶ See "The Triumph of the Praise Songs," *ibid.*

⁷ Too often, advocates for 'high culture' or 'pop culture' worship music try to make their advocacy a matter of theological

principle, when their conviction is really more a matter of their own tastes and cultural preferences. For example, when pressed, HW advocates admit that jazz is not really a product of commercial pop culture, but qualifies as a high culture medium which grew out of genuine folk roots and requires great skill and craft and can express a fuller range of human experience than rock and pop music. (See Calvin M. Johansson, *Music and Ministry: A Biblical Counterpoint* (Hendrickson, 1984) pp.59-62 on "Folk Music and Jazz.") On their own principles, then, there is no reason for traditionalists not to allow jazz music in worship, yet I see no Tradition-worship proponents encouraging jazz liturgies! Why not? I think that they are going on their own aesthetic preferences.⁸ Unfortunately, for many people 'blended' worship consists of a simple, wooden 50-50 division between contemporary songs and traditional hymns. This is often quite jarring and unhelpful. It is more of a political compromise than the result of reflection about your community's culture and your church's tradition. A far better example of a 'Third Way' is Robert E. Webber, *Blended Worship: Achieving Substance and Relevance in Worship* (Hendrickson, 1996.) Webber is talking of a more organic blend of liturgical elements, content-ful preaching, and a variety of music forms. In many ways my essay agrees with Webber's basic thrust. We would not use the term 'blended worship,' however, because it usually connotes the political compromise mentioned above. On the problems of 50-50 music division, see comments at end of the paper, under "Selecting Worship Music".

CW advocates consult a) the Bible and b) contemporary culture, while HW advocates consult a) the Bible and b) historic tradition. But we forge worship best when we consult a) the Bible, b) the cultural context of our community,⁹ and c) the historic tradition of our church.¹⁰ The result of this more complex process will not be simply a single, third "middle way." There are at least nine worship traditions in Protestantism alone.¹¹ That is why the book you are reading provides examples of culturally relevant worship that nonetheless deeply appreciates and reflects its historic tradition.

This more complex approach is extremely important to follow. The Bible simply does not give us enough details to shape an entire worship service. When the Bible calls us to sing God's praises, we are not given the tunes nor the rhythm. We are not told how repetitive the lyrics are to be or not to be, nor how emotionally intense the singing should be. When we are commanded to do corporate prayer, we are not told whether those prayers should be written, unison prayers or extemporary prayers.¹² So to give any concrete form to our worship, we *must* "fill in the blanks" that the Bible leaves open. When we do so, we will have to draw on a) tradition, b) the needs, capacities and cultural sensibilities of our people, and c) our own personal preferences. Though we cannot avoid drawing on our own preferences, this should never be the driving force (cf. Romans 15:1-3.) Thus, if we fail to do the hard work of consulting both tradition and culture, we will--wittingly or unwittingly--just tailor music to please ourselves.

THE SEEKER-SENSITIVE WORSHIP MOVEMENT

Sally Morgenthaler's interview with young pastors (Chris Seay, Mark Driscoll, Ron Johnson, Doug Pagitt, Clark Crebar) in *Worship Leader* (May/June 1998) "Authentic Worship in a Postmodern Culture" and Fernando Ortega's interview in *Prism* in Nov/Dec 1997 are indications of some major cracks in the foundation of evangelical assumptions about what kind of services will reach 'secular' people.

⁹ A good case for a balanced view of consulting culture within an evangelical view of the authority of Scripture is made by Andrew F. Walls in "The Gospel as Prisoner and Liberator of Culture" and "The Translation Principle in Christian History" in his *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of the Faith* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996.)

¹⁰ A good case for a balanced view of consulting tradition within an evangelical view of the authority of Scripture is made by Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon for Evangelical Theology* (Eerdmans, 1993), pp.83-101. He writes that Christian humility makes us recognize the reality of our biases and prejudices when coming to Scripture. This means it is unbiblical (in our doctrine of sin) to think we can find the Biblical "way" without consulting our own tradition and other tradition to check our own Scriptural findings. See also John Leith, *Introduction to the Reformed Tradition*, (John Knox, 1981) Chapter I - "Traditioning the Faith."

¹¹ James F. White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Abingdon, 1993) p.107, identifies the Protestant worship traditions as follows:

16th cent:	Anabaptist, (Continental) Reformed, Anglican, Lutheran	17th cent:	Quaker, Puritan/Reformed
18th cent:	Methodist		
19th cent:	Frontier		
20th cent:	Pentecostal		

¹² John M. Frame (*Worship in Spirit and Truth*, Presbyterian and Reformed, 1996) does a good job of showing how great a variety of forms the basic Biblical elements can take. Some have argued against the use of choirs and solos on the basis of the

'Regulative Principle', namely, that they are not prescribed by Scripture. But Frame asks, if some are allowed to pray aloud, while the rest of the congregation meditates, why can't some be allowed to sing or play aloud, while the rest of the congregation meditates? (p.129) Why would song be regulated in a different way than prayer and preaching? Some have argued against using hymns and non-Scriptural songs on the basis of the Regulative Principle. But Frame asks, if we are allowed to pray or to preach using our own words (based on Scripture), why can we not sing using our own words (based on Scripture)? (p.127) Why would song be regulated in a different way than prayer and preaching? Some have argued against the use of dance in worship, but aside from many apparent references to dance in worship in the Psalter, Frame asks, if we are exhorted to raise hands (Neh.2:8; Ps.28:2; 1 Tim.2:8), clap hands (Ps.47:1), and fall down (1 Cor.14:25) is it not expected and natural that we accompany words with actions? (p.131) We can't preach, surely, without using our bodies to express our thoughts and words, so how can we arbitrarily 'draw the line' to exclude dance? Frame points out that the real way to make decisions about these issues (such as dance) is wisdom and love--namely, what will edify? In other words, if you think that dancers in leotards will be too distracting and sexually provocative for your congregation, just say so--don't try to prove that the Bible forbids it. It is a bad habit of mind to seek to label "forbidden" what is really just unwise.

The crisis (that is here? coming?) in the church growth movement due to the fact that the attack on seeker-sensitive worship is coming from inside, that is, from the pastors of fast growing 'mega-churches' (though the name and category is eschewed) filled with under-30's. These pastors claim that the Willow Creek inspired services supposedly adapted for the unchurched were calibrated for a very narrow and transitory kind of unchurched person: namely, college educated, white, Baby Boomers, suburbanites. The increasingly multi-ethnic, less rational/word-oriented, urban oriented and more secular generations under the age of 35 are not the same kind of 'unchurched' people. The critique is that Willow Creek 'over- adapted' to the rational, a-historical 'high modern' world-view.

The younger pastors say that Willow Creek services do several things that alienate the seekers of *their* generations.

- a) It removed transcendence from its services by utilizing light, happy music and tone, complete accessibility of voice, using dramatic sketches that create a nightclub or TV-show atmosphere. But their generations hunger for awe.
- b) It ditched connection to history and tradition and went completely contemporary in all cultural references, from sermon illustrations to decoration to antiseptic 'suburban mall/office building' setting. But their generations hunger for rootedness, and love a pastiche of ancient and modern.
- c) It emphasized polish and technical excellence and slick professionalism and management technique, while their generations hunger for authenticity and community rather than programs.
- d) It emphasizes rationality and practical 'how-to' maps, while their generations hunger for narrative and the personal.

A SOLUTION: EVANGELISTIC WORSHIP

Two models, with problems

The most thoughtful members of the Seeker Friendly Service movement agree that the straight "seeker service" is not really worship, and therefore new believers are brought out of the seeker service into a weekly worship service for believers. The critics, on the other hand, generally see the worship service as the place for renewing and edifying believers who then go out into the world to do evangelism. The two models then, seem to be:

Seeker service (evangelism)--> Worship service (edification) Worship service (edification)--> World (evangelism)

There are pragmatic problems with both models. The SFC model is financially very expensive, it is hard to assimilate new Christians out of seeker services into real worship services. And if the main worship service is very oriented toward seekers, the Christians often feel under-fed.¹³ On the other hand the critics

¹³ Some disadvantages of the SFC approach:

1) Expense issue. It is extremely expensive and difficult to do seeker services well. Essentially, they don't "work" unless the unchurched person feels the art is as good as what they could pay to see in a theater. Many SFC attempts are mediocre, and unless you hit a "home run" every time, the effect is quite discouraging.

2) Sunday issue. Also, when Sunday is the day for seeker-focused services, it gives the world the impression that this is the people of God in worship, that "this is all there is." And it isn't good for Christians to have to squeeze their weekly worship into a weeknight evening, between two busy days of labor. It robs Christians of a whole day for worship and renewal (I Cor 16:1.)

3) Assimilation issue. Regular weekly seeker-focused services can also create a large assimilation problem. If a person comes to Christianity through a seeker service, he or she may settle into that environment for weekly worship. Supposedly, the new Christian is to be invited out of the "seeker" service into worship, but the jump is not easy to accomplish. In one church, new believers through the seeker service could not be assimilated into the regular worship, because the "believers worship" was so

cannot avoid the charge that they are not proposing any alternative to the current evangelistically ineffective church. One critic is very typical when he writes: ""While we [the seeker-friendly church] try to entice the world to come to church to hear the Gospel, the New Testament proclaims a powerful church worshipping God going out into the world in order to reach the lost (cf. The book of Acts.) True revivals have historically proved...that a revived and healthy church reaches a dying and lost world through its own awakened people."¹⁴ This view says, "evangelism will take care of itself as long as we have great worship". But the history of revivals also shows us innovations in outreach.

The Great Awakening was marked by two men who were remarkable innovators--George Whitefield in evangelism and John Wesley in organization. Many criticize seeker services because they are "not worship" and contain many elements of "entertainment". Often they call us to look, instead at the revivals of the past. But they do not criticize George Whitefield for attracting huge crowds to his own "seeker programs". He drew people into open air meetings with a kind of preaching that was unparalleled at the time in its popular appeal--his humor, his stories, his dramatically acted-out illustrations, and his astounding oratorical gifts drew tens of thousands.¹⁵ At the time he was labeled an "entertainer". His meetings were *not* worship nor did they replace worship, but they were certainly critical to the revival.

They provided Christians with a remarkable place to do friendship evangelism. His meetings were all over the city on virtually everyday of the week. Whitefield's evangelism was enormously aggressive and passionate. His preaching was racy and popular yet pointed toward the transcendent and holy God. Yet his public meetings shared many of the characteristics (and criticisms) of seeker services today.

Whitefield and Wesley did not become instruments of revival by simply being great expository preachers and renewing historic worship.

My main problem with the two models, however, is *theological*. They both assume that worship cannot be highly evangelistic. I want to show that this is a false premise. Churches would do best to make their "main course" an evangelistic worship service, supplemented by both a) numerous, variegated, creative, even daily (but not weekly) seeker-focused events, and b) intense meetings for Bible study and corporate prayer for revival and renewal.

Theological basis

God commanded Israel to invite the nations to join in declaring his glory. Zion is to be the center of world-winning worship (Isaiah 2:2-4; 56:6-8.) "*Let this be written for a future generation, that a people not yet created may praise the Lord...so the name of the Lord will be declared in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem when the peoples and the kingdoms assemble to worship the Lord*" (Psalm 102:18.) Psalm 105 is a direct command to believers engage in evangelistic worship. The Psalmist challenges them to "*make known among the nations what he has done*" (v.1.) How? "*Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of his wonderful acts*" (v.2) Thus believers are continually told to sing and praise God before the unbelieving nations. (See also Psalm 47:1; 100:1-5.) God is to be praised **before all the nations**, and as he is praised by his people, the nations are summoned and called to join in song.

totally oriented toward long-time Christians who are immersed in the evangelical sub-culture and inhabit a very different world than the new Christian. (See Ed Dobson, *Starting a Seeker Sensitive Service* (Zondervan, 1993), p.83) And if the seeker service becomes the worship service of the new believers, either those new Christians will not be fed properly, or the service will inch over into becoming more of a contemporary worship service, and will lose its effectiveness in outreach.

4) Friendship evangelism issue. The most effective way to reach a non-believer is for a Christian to share the gospel with him or her in the context of a friendship. But if a Christian wants to bring a non-Christian friend to a seeker-focused weekly service, he or she will have to come out twice a week, once to take the friend to church, and once to get his or her own nurture.

5) Nurture issue. We said a church may have one seeker-sensitive service that is heavily focused on the unchurched, but which serves as the weekly worship for believers. As time goes on, however, the Christians often hunger for something "deeper". In response to complaints, the pastor often "gets more meaty" and begins to lose the non-Christians.

¹⁴ John H. Armstrong, "The Mad Rush to Seeker Sensitive Worship", *Modern Reformation*, Jan/Feb 1995, p.25.

¹⁵ Harry S. Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism*. (Eerdmans, 1991.)

Peter tells a Gentile church, "*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*" (1 Peter 2:9.) This shows us that the church is challenged to the same witness that Israel was called to--evangelistic worship. A key difference: in the Old Testament, the center of world-winning worship was Mt. Zion, but now, wherever we worship Jesus in spirit and in truth (John 4:21-26) we have come to the heavenly Zion (Heb.12:18-24.) In other words, the risen Lord now sends his people out singing his praises in mission, calling the nations to join both saints and angels in heavenly doxology.

Jesus himself stands in the midst of the redeemed and leads us in the singing of God's praises (Hebrews 2:12), even as God stands over his redeemed and sings over us in joy (Zeph. 2:17.)

Biblical cases

I Corinthians 14:24-25.

Paul is addressing the misuse of the gift of tongues. He complains that tongues speaking will cause unbelievers to say they are out of their minds (v.23.) He insists that the worship service must be comprehensible to them. He says that if an unbeliever "*or unlearned one*" (an uninitiated inquirer) comes in, and worship is being done "unto edification", "*he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all*" (v.24.) Of what does this conviction consist? "*The secrets of his heart will be laid bare*" (v.25.) It may mean he realizes that the worshippers around him are finding in God what his heart had been secretly searching for, but in the wrong ways. It may mean the worship shows him how his heart works. The result: "*so falling on his face, he will worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you'*" (v.25.)

Acts 2

When the Spirit falls on those in the upper room, a crowd gathers (v.5) because a) they are hearing the disciples praising God ("*we hear them declaring the wonders of God*" v.11), and b) and also because this worship is "*in our own tongues*" (v.11.) As a result, they are first made very interested ("*amazed and perplexed they asked one another, 'what does this mean'*" v.11), and later they are convicted deeply ("*they were cut to the heart and said... 'Brethren, what shall we do?'*" v.37.)

Comparison

There are obvious differences between the two situations. I Cor 14 pictures conversion happening on the spot (which is certainly possible.) In Acts 2 the non-believers are shaken out of their indifference (v.12), but the actual conversions (v.37-41) occurred at the end of an "after meeting" in which Peter explained the gospel (v.14-36) and showed them how to individually receive Christ (v.38-39.) It is often pointed out that the tongues in the two situations are different. But students usually are looking so carefully at what the two passages teach about tongues and prophecy that they fail to note what they teach about worship and evangelism. We can learn this:

1. Non-believers are expected to be present in Christian worship. In Acts 2 it happens by word-of-mouth excitement. In I Cor 14 it is probably the result of personal invitation by Christian friends. But Paul in 14:23 expects both "*unbelievers*" and "*the unlearned*" (literally "a seeker"-- "one who does not understand") to be present in worship.
2. Non-believers must find the praise of Christians to be *comprehensible*. In Acts 2 it happens by miraculous divine intervention. In I Cor 14 it happens by human design and effort. But it cannot be missed that Paul directly tells a local congregation to adapt its worship because of the presence of unbelievers. It is a false dichotomy to insist that if we are seeking to please God we must not ask what the unchurched feel or think about our worship.
3. Non-believers can fall under conviction and be converted *through* comprehensible worship. In I Cor 14 it happens during the service, but in Acts 2 it is supplemented by "after meetings" and follow-up evangelism. God wants the world to overhear us worshipping him. God directs his people not to simply worship, but to sing his praises "before the nations." We are not to simply communicate the gospel to them, but celebrate the gospel before them.

Three practical tasks

2. Getting unbelievers into worship.

The numbering is not a mistake. This task is actually comes second, but nearly everyone thinks it come first! It is natural to believe that they must get non-Christians into worship before they can begin "doxological evangelism". But the reverse is the case. Non-Christians do not get invited into worship unless the worship is already evangelistic. The only way they will have non-Christians in attendance is through personal invitation by Christians. Just as in the Psalms, the "nations" must be directly asked to come. But the main stimulus to building bridges and invitation is the comprehensibility and quality of the worship experience.

Christians will instantly sense if a worship experience will be attractive to their non-Christian friends. They may find a particular service wonderfully edifying for *them*, and yet know that their non-believing neighbors would react negatively.

Therefore, a vicious cycle persists. Pastors see only Christians present, so they lack incentive to make their worship comprehensible to outsiders. But since they fail to make the adaptations, Christians who are there (though perhaps edified themselves) do not think to bring their skeptical and non-Christian friends to church. They do not think they will be impressed. So no outsiders come. And so the pastors respond only to the Christian audience. And so on and on. Therefore, the best way to get Christians to bring non-Christians is to worship as if there are dozens and hundreds of skeptical onlookers. And if you worship as if, eventually they will be there in reality.

1. Making worship comprehensible to unbelievers.

Our purpose is not to make the unbeliever "comfortable". (In I Cor. 14:24-25 or Acts 2:12 and 37--they are cut to the heart!) We aim to be *intelligible* to them. We must address their "*heart secrets*" (I Cor 14:25.) That means we must remember what it is like to not believe; we must remember what an unbelieving heart is like. How do we do that?

a) *Worship and preaching in the "vernacular"*. It is hard to overstate how ghetto-ized our preaching is. It is normal to make all kinds of statements that appear persuasive to us but are based upon all sorts of premises that the secular person does not hold. It is normal to make all sorts of references using terms and phrases that mean nothing outside of our Christian sub-group. So avoid unnecessary theological or evangelical sub-culture "jargon", and explain carefully the basic theological concepts, such as confession of sin, praise, thanksgiving, and so on. In the preaching, showing continual willingness to address the questions that the unbelieving heart will ask. Speak respectfully and sympathetically to people who have difficulty with Christianity. As you write the sermon, imagine a particular skeptical non-Christian in the chair listening to you. Add the asides, the qualifiers, the extra explanations necessary. Listen to everything said in the worship service with the ears of someone who has doubts or troubles with belief.

b) *Explain the service as you go along*. Though there is danger of pastoral verbosity, learn to give 1 or 2 sentence, non-jargony explanations of each new part of the service. "When we confess our sins, we are not groveling in guilt, but dealing with our guilt. If you deny your sins you will never get free from them." It is good to begin worship services as the Black church often does, with a "devotional"--a brief talk that explains the meaning of worship. This way you continually instruct newcomers in worship.

c) *Directly address and welcome them*. Talk regularly to "those of you who aren't sure you believe this, or who aren't sure just what you believe." Give them many asides, even expressing the language of their hearts. Articulate their objections to Christian living and belief better than they can do it themselves. Express sincere sympathy for their difficulties, even when challenging them severely for their selfishness and unbelief. Admonish with tears (literally or figuratively.) Always grant whatever degree of merit their objections have. It is extremely important that the unbeliever feel you understand them. "I've tried it before and it did not work." "I don't see how my life could be the result of the plan of a loving God." "Christianity is a straightjacket." "It can't be wrong if it feels so right." "I could never keep it up." "I don't feel worthy; I am too bad." "I just can't believe."

d) *Quality aesthetics*. The power of art draws people to behold it. Good art and its message enters the soul through the imagination and begins to appeal to the reason, for art makes ideas plausible. The quality of music and speech in worship will have a major impact on its evangelistic power. In many churches, the quality of the music is mediocre or poor, but it does not disturb the faithful. Why? Their faith makes the words of the hymn or the song meaningful despite its artistically poor expression, and further, they usually have a personal relationship with the music-presenter. But any outsider who comes in, who is not convinced of the truth and who does not have any relationship to the presenter, will be bored or irritated by the poor offering. In other words, excellent aesthetics *includes* outsiders, while mediocre or poor aesthetics *exclude*. The low level of artistic quality in many churches guarantees that only insiders will continue to come. For the non-Christian, the attraction of good art will have a major part in drawing them in.

e) *Celebrate deeds of mercy and justice*. We live in a time when public esteem of the church is plummeting. For many outsiders or inquirers, the deeds of the church will be far more important than words in gaining plausibility. The leaders of most towns see "word-only" churches as costs to their community, not a value. Effective churches will be so involved in deeds of mercy and justice that outsiders will say, "we cannot do without churches like this. This church is channeling so much value into our community through its services to people that if it went out of business, we'd have to raise everybody's taxes." Mercy deeds give the gospel *words* plausibility (Acts 4:32 followed by v.33.) Therefore, evangelistic

worship services should highlight *offerings* for deed ministry and should celebrate through reports and testimonies and prayer what is being done. It is best that offerings for mercy ministry be separate, attached (as traditional) to the Lord's Supper. This brings before the non-Christian the impact of the gospel on people's hearts (it makes us generous) and the impact of lives poured out for the world.

f) Present the sacraments so as to make the gospel clear. Baptism, and especially adult baptism, should be made a much more significant event if worship is to be evangelistic. There may need to be opportunity for the baptized to offer personal testimony as well as assent to questions. The meaning of baptism should be made clear. A moving, joyous, personal charge to the baptized (and to all baptized Christians present) should be made. In addition, the Lord's Supper can become a converting ordinance. If it is explained properly, the unbeliever will have a very specific and visible way to see the difference between walking with Christ and living for oneself. The Lord's Supper will confront every individual with the question: "are you right with God *today? now?*" There is no more effective way to help a person to do a spiritual inventory. Many seekers in U.S. churches will only realize they are not Christians during the fencing of the table after an effective sermon on the meaning of the gospel. (See below for more on addressing unbelievers during communion.)

g) Preach grace. The one message that both believers and unbelievers need to hear is that salvation and adoption are by grace alone. A worship service that focuses too much and too often on educating Christians in the details of theology will simply bore or confuse the unbelievers present. For example, a sermon on abortion will generally assume the listener believes in the authority of the word and the authority of Jesus, and does not believe in individual moral autonomy. In other words, abortion is "doctrine D", and it is based on "doctrines A, B, and C." Therefore, people who don't believe or understand doctrines ABC will find such a sermon un-convicting and even alienating. This does not mean we should not preach the whole counsel of God, but we must *major* on the "ABC's" of the Christian faith.

If the response to this is "then Christians will be bored", it shows an misunderstanding of the gospel. The gospel of free, gracious justification and adoption is not just the way we enter the kingdom, but also the way we grow into the likeness of Christ. Titus 2:11-13 tells us how it is the original, saving message of "grace alone" that consequently leads us to sanctified living: "*For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "no" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in the present age, while we wait for the blessed hope--the appearing of our great God and savior Jesus Christ.*" Many Christians are "defeated" and stagnant in their growth because they try to be holy for wrong motives. They say "no" to temptation by telling themselves "God will get me" or "people will find out" or "I'll hate myself in the morning" or "it will hurt my self-esteem" or "it will hurt other people" or "it's against the law--I'll be caught" or "it's against my principles" or "I will look bad". Some or all of these may be true, but Titus tells us they are inadequate. Only the grace of God, the logic of the gospel will work. Titus says it "teaches" us, it argues with us.

Therefore, the one basic message that both Christians and unbelievers need to hear is the gospel of grace. It can then be applied to both groups, right on the spot and directly. Sermons which are basically moralistic will only be applicable to either Christians OR non-Christians. But Christo-centric preaching, preaching the gospel both grows believers and challenges non-believers. If the Sunday service and sermon aim primarily at evangelism, it will bore the saints. If they aim primarily at education, they'll bore and confuse unbelievers. If they aim at *praising the God who saves by grace* they'll both instruct insiders and challenge outsiders.

3. Leading to commitment.

We have seen that unbelievers in worship actually "close with Christ" in two basic ways. Some may come to Christ during the service itself (I Cor. 14:24-25.) Others must be "followed up" very specifically.

a) During the service. One major way to invite people to receive Christ during the service is as the Lord's Supper is distributed. We say: "if you are not in a saving relationship with God through Christ today, do not take the bread and the cup, but, as they come around, take Christ. Receive him in your heart as those around you receive the food. Then immediately afterwards, come up here and tell an officer or a pastor about what you've done, so we can get you ready to receive the Supper the next time as a child of God." Another way to invite commitment during the service is to give people a time of silence after the sermon. A "prayer of belief" could be prayed by the pastor (or printed in the bulletin at

that juncture in the order of worship) to help people reach out to Christ.¹⁶ Sometimes it may be good to put a musical interlude or an offering after the sermon but before the final hymn. This affords people time to think and process what they have heard and offer themselves to God in prayer. If, however, the preacher ends his sermon, prays very briefly, and moves immediately into the final hymn, no time is given to people who are under conviction for offering up their hearts.

b) After meetings. Acts 2 seems to show us an "after meeting." In v.12 and 13 we are told that some folks mocked upon hearing the apostles praise and preach, but others were disturbed and asked "what does this *mean?*" Then Peter very specifically explained the gospel, and, in response to a second question "*what shall we do?*" (v.37), explained very specifically how to become Christians. Historically, it has been found very effective to offer such meetings to unbelievers and seekers immediately after evangelistic worship. Convicted seekers have just come from being in the presence of God, and they are often most teachable and open. To seek to "get them into a small group" or even to merely return next Sunday is asking a lot of them. They may be also "*amazed and perplexed*" (Acts 2:12), and it is best to "strike while the iron is hot". This is not to doubt that God is infallibly drawing his elect! That knowledge helps us to

¹⁶ An example: "Heavenly Father, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but, through your Son Jesus, I can be more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you that he lived the life I should have lived, and paid the debt and punishment I owed. Receive me now for his sake. I turn from my sins and receive him as Savior. Amen."

relax as we do evangelism, knowing that conversions are not dependent on our eloquence. But the Westminster Confession tells us that God ordinarily works through secondary causes, normal social and psychological processes. Therefore, to invite people into a follow-up meeting immediately is usually more conducive to "conserving the fruit of the Word."

After meetings may consist first of one or more persons who wait at the front of the auditorium to pray with and talk with any seekers who come forward to make inquiries right on the spot. A second after meeting can consist of a simple question-and-answer session with the preacher in some room near the main auditorium or even in the auditorium (after the postlude.) Third, after meetings should also consist of one or two classes or small group experiences targeted to specific questions non-Christians ask about the content, relevance, and credibility of the Christian faith. After meetings should be attended by skilled lay evangelists who can come alongside of newcomers and answer spiritual questions and provide guidance as to their next steps.

Helpful Guidelines for Leading Worship at First Presbyterian Church

Believing in the “priesthood of all believers” proclaimed by the Apostle Paul, we encourage leadership in all facets of the church, including the leadership of worship. This is an opportunity for those who have the gift of public speaking to glorify God and share their gift with the congregation. Leading can provide a new perspective on the act of worship.

Some elements of worship you may be asked to lead:

- Call to Worship
- Prayer of Confession and Assurance of God’s Grace
- Children’s Message
- Call for Offering and Prayer of Dedication
- Confession of Faith
- Pastoral Prayer

General Advice

- **Important:** We work very hard to make worship accessible for all people, especially those who are not familiar with the church. We try to make a brief statement in plain English before each segment of worship to explain why we do what we do. You should expect that people will be present who have no idea of the meaning behind the elements of worship, including people who have been attending church for a long time.
- Remember that the majority of what we communicate comes from things other than the actual words we use. We communicate far more through our tone, inflections, posture, facial expressions, and overall attitude than we do by our words alone. In a sense, how we speak is just as important—if not more—than what we say.
- Attitude is important! People will take their cues from you. If you are pleased to be there, let your joy shine through. Enthusiasm is contagious.
- Take plenty of time to prepare. Begin by praying for the Holy Spirit to guide you. You’ll be helping proclaim the Word of God, an awesome and exciting responsibility!
- If you’re writing something for the bulletin, remember to get the information in a week before the service.
- Practice. If you’re reading scripture, please make sure you know how to pronounce each word. If you’re not used to public speaking, you might read it to someone else to get ideas for improvement.
- Personalize it. Please consider taking a moment of personal privilege and explaining why some part of the service is meaningful to you. Why is the Confession or Assurance of God’s Grace meaningful to you personally? Why do you offer yourself to God? Surely this will connect with some people and make worship more meaningful to them.
- Please come and pray with the pastors at 10:35 AM in the chapel before the service.
- Try to speak without notes if possible. It’s fine to speak extemporaneously, but be sure to practice first so you don’t sound like you’re winging it. If you do use notes, that’s fine, but try not to be tied to them.
- Make sure you understand where your parts come in the service. Try to be ready to speak as soon as the preceding element is completed to avoid “dead time” and preserve the “flow” of worship.
- If you’re speaking from the microphone on the low pulpit, make sure that it is level with your mouth.
- Be “present in the moment.” For example, you should be aware if people are supposed to be standing or sitting. Don’t ask them to stand if they are already standing. In the same way, if people are to be seated when you are done, remember to ask them to be seated before you sit down. Maybe you’ll be following a great or moving message or piece of music. Perhaps you want to acknowledge in some way, the excellence or power of what just occurred. In this case, you might also give the congregation a moment to process what just happened before moving on to the next thing. Remember: Be present in the moment.

Call to Worship

- This segment of the service gathers people together, gets their attention, and focuses it on God.
- Ask people to stand if they are able (if they are not standing already). Say a few words about the purpose of the Call to Worship. Again, it's best to personalize this, but here are some examples:
 - “Friends, Jesus Christ once told the religious insiders of his day that if people failed to praise him, “the stones would cry out.” That reminds us that we were created for worship. In fact, all of life was meant to be one great act of worship to God. But here in this moment, God calls us together so that we may experience the wonder of God’s presence among us, and then take His presence out into the world. Please stand and join me in the responsive call to worship.”
 - “The call to worship comes from God. God made us in God’s image so that we might reflect back to God a bit of his goodness, joy, love, and mercy. Let’s go now together into the presences of a Holy God.”
 - “We begin our service this morning by reflecting on who God is. God is holy, perfect, loving, and just. Please stand for the Call to Worship as we consider who God is and all that God has done for us.”
 - “The God who created the millions of galaxies also created us in God’s image. So consider this: since God created us, God has the owner’s manual on us. We may think we know what is best for us, but God really knows. God’s knowledge of us; God’s plans for us, are a source of wonder and a call to us to worship. Friends, the one who knows us better than we know ourselves has invited us to reflect and wonder on the infinite care he has for us. Please stand and join me in the responsive call to worship.”
 - “All of creation is based on God’s wisdom and delight. This means that there is meaning and purpose and order to life. And so, as God calls us into God’s presence this morning, we come, seeking to draw closer to the source of wisdom and life. Let’s come together into the presence of our wise, holy, and loving God. Please stand if you are able and join me.”
 - “Friends, God gives us the choice of whether to worship God or not. We all could have been someplace else this morning. We are all busy. Sunday mornings are the only free time many of us have. And yet here we are, choosing to come into the presence of the God of the Universe. Many say that there is no God or that they don’t need God. We know that we can’t live without God. Now the one, true, holy God calls us to worship. Would you rise and join me in the responsive reading in the bulletin?”
- The Call to Worship is often a praise psalm or a segment of a psalm. Usually, it is written by a pastor, but you may be asked sometime to write it yourself. It can be taken from another part of scripture, or it can be something you create yourself. For example, Psalm 150 makes an excellent Call to Worship:

¹ Praise the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.

² Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.

³ Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet; praise him with the harp and lyre,

⁴ praise him with tambourine and dancing; praise him with the strings and flute,

⁵ praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals.

⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD.

Or the same psalm in a challenge and response format as a Call to Worship:

Leader: Praise the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.

People: Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.

Leader: Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet; praise him with the harp and lyre,

People: Praise him with tambourine and dancing; praise him with the strings and flute,

All: Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.

- The Call to Worship should be brief—no more than one minute. It should reflect some aspect of who God is—God’s power, majesty, holiness, faithfulness, grace, etc. As the example suggests, it should explicitly call people to praise and worship. It should usually end with something like, “Let us worship God.”

Prayer of Confession, Silent Confession, and Assurance of God’s Grace

- Be in place ready to speak as the last note of the preceding hymn sounds.
- If appropriate, ask the congregation to be seated.
- Say a sentence or two in your own words about why we need to confess. Such as:
 - “Friends, no matter who we are or what we’ve done; no matter how young or how old; we need the grace of God. The good news is that God has provided a way for his grace to flow into our lives. It’s through confession. It is when we admit that we could never deserve or earn God’s grace that God pours out his grace on us. Let us go before the throne of grace as we say together the prayer of confession.”
 - “We live in a world which is always trying to pull us away from God. There are a hundred other places we could be this morning. But here’s the amazing thing. Jesus Christ knows all this. He made us; he gave us freedom; and then he became one of us. He experienced all the temptations we do. But yet he’s eager to forgive us and restore us to a right relationship with him. All he asks is that we confess our brokenness, and he will forgive us and credit his perfect record to us. Let us go before the throne of grace as we say together the prayer of confession.”
 - “Why do we have a Unison Prayer of Confession? Many people think we confess so that God might forgive us. But that is not what we believe. We confess because we believe God is loving and gracious, and because while we were sinners, God sent Jesus Christ to die for us. We confess because we are confident that we have already been forgiven. We would not even be able to confess, unless God had first put his faith in our hearts. Confession is one way we acknowledge our need for God’s grace and forgiveness. Confession allows God’s grace to flow into our lives. Join me as we say together the prayer of confession.”
 - “Christians understand that if we say we have no sin, we’re just deceiving ourselves. But God is faithful; if we confess our sins, God is eager to forgive us. Join me as we say together the prayer of confession.”
 - “We live in a world which says “Life is all about you.” The world says, “Pamper yourself.” The world says “have it your way.” The world is always trying to get us to focus on our own needs; what’s good for us; what makes us happy. Yet that’s not how God works at all. The universe belongs to Jesus. He made it. But he gave it all up for our sake. So we take a few moments every week to remind ourselves that life is not about us.”
 - “The proof of God’s amazing love is this. While we were sinners Christ died for us. Because we have faith in Him, we are to approach God with confidence. In faith and penitence, let us confess our sin before God.”
- As in the examples above, note that you are inviting people to confess and to pray. For example, “In humility and faith, let us confess our sins to God. Let us pray.”
- If you are writing the Prayer of Confession, try to craft the prayer around some aspect of the sermon for the week. There is usually some particular sin or sins that the scripture brings to mind. If you mention these particular sins, it can remind people of what they thought, said or did, or failed to think, say, or do during the last week.
- If you write a Prayer of Confession for people to say in unison, or responsively, practice reading it aloud as if you were a member of the congregation. Be conscious of the flow and rhythm of the words. Consider adding extra commas to invite people to pause as they read.
- Always be clear in saying “we confess...” This is not a generic prayer.
- Allow a few moments at the end of your spoken words to allow people to confess silently. You may explicitly invite them to do this.
- After allowing people time to confess silently, you may conclude the prayer by saying “Amen.” Then say the

Assurance of God's Grace. Write your own in plain English, or you can say something like one of the following:

- “Friends, a life of faith does not depend on us being smart or wise. It only depends on God’s grace. When we confess our sins, as you and I just did, God forgives us, and credits the perfect record of Jesus Christ to us. It may sound like foolishness to the world, but that’s the wisdom of God. Believe the Good News, in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.”
 - “Friends, Jesus Christ emptied himself of all that was God and became a human being. He didn’t do that just to be our moral example; he did it so that we could have a personal relationship with him, the living God. Friends, Jesus Christ has wiped your record clean and credited his perfect record to you. Now choose life! Worship him, follow him, serve him. Make him the center of your life. Amen.
 - “This saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, that we might be dead to sin, and alive to all that is good. Friends, believe the good news of the gospel, in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.”
 - “Friends, Jesus Christ is far more eager to hear our confession than we are to give it. In humbling ourselves, by the grace of Jesus Christ, we are lifted up before the throne of grace. We have been brought near to God by the blood of Christ. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.”
 - “Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ. And Christ lived for us; Christ died for us; Christ rose for us; Christ reigns in power over us. Christ prays for us. Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life is gone, and the new creation has begun. Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen.
- The Assurance of God’s Grace is a good thing to have committed to memory. It sounds much better if you don’t have to read it.

Children’s Sermon

- The Children’s Sermon seems to stress the worship leader more than any aspect of the service. This is because people try to do too much. It is not as hard as it seems.
- **Important:** This is the time for the children. It is not a roundabout way of speaking to the adults. We highly value children in worship, so we focus the message solely on them. This relieves your stress, since the message doesn’t need layers of meaning and cleverness to entertain adults. Children know when you talk over their heads.
- Basically, *all you have to do is tell the children a Bible story* about Jesus or God or someone in the Bible. Children can remember stories.
- Smile, relax; be happy and enthusiastic.
- The message should be short—about two minutes maximum. It should be in the language a five-year-old can understand. The message could bring out one point from the scripture lesson for the day, but that is not required.
- Speak in concrete terms only; children don’t understand high concepts. Little children don’t understand that one thing is “like” another. Avoid theological language. Again, focus on the children, not the congregation.
- Avoid asking them questions, especially open-ended ones that might get them started talking. If you do ask a question, it should be something that invites a one-word answer, like, “What is something you love?” (Pet, school, toys).
- Avoid using props and passing out candy or stuff. They will remember the prop or what you gave them instead of what you wanted to teach them about God.
- Pray a short prayer with them at the end. For example. “Let us pray. Dear God, we love you. We thank you that you love us. Teach us to be nice to everyone, just as you are nice to us. In Jesus name, amen.” There is no need to make them stand and hold hands when you pray; this just adds extra complexity.

Call for the Offering and Prayer of Dedication

- Be prepared to speak as soon as the previous element of worship is complete.
- Say a sentence or two in plain English about what is about to happen. For example, “We now have the

privilege to respond to God's grace, and return a portion of the blessings he has given to us."

- People today increasingly want to give to things that matter to them. They don't care so much about giving to programs. Try to relate a specific example of how their gifts made a difference.
 - "Thanks to your generosity, 80 hurting people were fed in our cafeteria last week."
 - "Your faithfulness helped us move a homeless woman into her very own apartment."
 - "Thanks to you, women at Bethlehem Haven, the city's leading women's shelter and our ministry partner, are gaining the skills they need to live independent lives."
 - "Thank you for providing the resources that allow our ministry partner, Goodwill Industries, to teach GED classes in the church. Last week, 6 students received their GED degree."
 - "Because of you and your support of Youth for Christ, the Cellar after school ministry provides a safe place for 50 high school kids to relax after school,"
- The Prayer of Dedication is a short prayer, asking God to accept our gifts to further God's kingdom. Again, *your own words* are most effective. For example, "Gracious and loving God, we return to you a small portion of your gifts to us. We dedicate them to you, along with our time, our talents, and our very lives, because we know that they all come from your goodness to us. Multiple these gifts, that your will might be done on earth. In Jesus' name, amen."

Affirmation of Faith

- The Affirmation of Faith is usually the first opportunity for the people to respond to God's Word proclaimed in the sermon. While our custom is to recite the Apostles' Creed in unison, it is possible to use other creeds and affirmations. Saying a creed together serves to ground us in the faith and remind us of things that don't change.
- Invite the people to stand and respond to what they heard in the sermon and to what God is doing in their lives by saying what they believe.

Pastoral Prayer

- The pastoral prayer is also a response to the Word of God proclaimed in the sermon. This is the opportunity to lift up to God the joys and concerns of the congregation. Other than ending with the Lord's Prayer said in unison, there is no right or wrong way to say a pastoral prayer.
- The person speaking the pastoral prayer is standing between the people and God, and so the prayer may be prophetic, reminding people of God's goodness, justice, love, and mercy. Since this prayer usually follows the sermon, it can pick up the Biblical text and theme of the sermon.
- We try to pray expansively, looking beyond the immediate needs of the congregation to the needs of the world, praying from the "greater to the smaller." We remember Christians around the world, especially missionaries supported by this church. We pray for God's mercy on people suffering in other lands, even our "enemies." We pray for the nation and its leaders; for the city, especially the other downtown churches. And of course we do pray for the people in our own church.
- We pay attention to current events, checking the news the morning before the service, to be aware of events, often tragic, that people will be thinking about when they come to church.
- The pastoral prayer may be written out before the service, but it doesn't have to be.

Here is a memorable Call for the Offering, delivered by Youth Director Katie Peffer, on January 22, 2017:

I believe in the importance of quality time.

On light up night, the cellar was open beginning at 4:00. Students dropped in, came and went. One student, however, remained. She came through the doors right when we opened. She stayed with us until midnight. That's 8 hours. We had a fantastic night with her. We laughed, we ventured around the city's happenings. April, the cellar director, and I were reflecting after it was over. What makes a 15 year-old girl stay downtown for 8 hours with two adults? Who are we to her?

Within a few days we understood.

That quality time changed our relationship with this student. The next Monday, she came into the cellar looking heavy. She shared details about her home life. It isn't a nice story. There isn't love there.

We thought back on it. This 15 year-old girl was out with us all night – for 8 hours – and her mother hadn't checked in on her once.

It became obvious who we were to her. We were a source of light and love. She wanted, needed, craved that quality time.

Our relationship has been different since that night. She shares freely. There is a level of trust that was created. I truly believe that she is in a place where she could be open to accepting the love of Christ.

Just a few days ago, we talked with a different student. He said "it's been a hard week... a really hard week. But I'm still hoping for a good year." I asked him, "what can we do here at the cellar to help you have a good year?" He replied, "Just exist."

The cellar is one of the places that your tithe goes. We are so grateful for your generosity. It allows us to "just exist." It enables us to spend quality time with these students. To be the light of Christ in their lives.

Paul Detterman

Calvin Symposium on Worship 2014

Seminar B-9 – “Top Ten Challenges Facing Worship Leaders in 2014”

FROM 2003

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP – the art of worshipping God in the presence of God’s people in such a way that others are prompted to overcome their personal preoccupations and distractions and, through the power and prompting of the Holy Spirit, offer their prayer and praise as well. In order to design and lead authentic worship, the worship leader must:

- Discover what is “Good News” for the congregation, and the ways in which the Good News is most clearly heard;
- Discover the authentic “voice” of the congregation’s praise and nurture it;
- Discover the source of the congregation’s most profound joy and return there frequently;
- Determine the lesser gods competing for the congregation’s attention to present a compelling case for the Triune God.

The ten challenges we identified were these:

10. **Worship Style**

- Traditional / Non-traditional
- Formal / Informal
- Choir / Praise Team
- Printed Order / Spirit Led

9. **Five Distinct Generations Worshipping Together**

- G.I. Generation, 1900-1924, (mostly deceased)
- Silent Generation, 1925-1945
- Boomer Generation, 1946-1964
- Generation X, 1965-1985
- Generation Y or Millennials, 1986-2000, (many disenchanted)
- (Generation Z, a.k.a. iGeneration, GenWii, GenNext)

8. **Cultural Expectations**

- The “keepers of the way things ought to be”
- Ghosts of Christendom looking for a familiar place to haunt
- Permutations in secular culture

7. **Competing “religions”**

- The plethora of “religious” options
- Confronting secular expectations and demands
- Trivialization of the Gospel

6. **The Demise of Musical Training & Group Singing**

- The departure of music from public education and adult avocation
- Wide-spread musical illiteracy
- The embarrassment of group singing within an a-musical culture

- The surrender of pop culture to the lowest common denominator
- The tyranny of “studio” perfection

5. **The Loss of a Poetic Voice & Imagination**

- Cultural predisposition toward math, technology, and science
- Decline of the serious arts and classics in popular media
- Marginalizing of the liberal arts in education

4. **Loss of Corporate Memory**

- Disappearance of Christian “lore” in society
- Triumph of a-theological architecture in the church
- Diminished understanding of symbolism
- Virtual death of the oral tradition

3. **Loss of Biblical Identity**

- Distance (or disengagement) from active participation in the biblical narrative

2. **Loss of Biblical Literacy**

- Common texts and stories no longer memorized
- Epic stories and Bible “heroes” are unknown (though cultural reference is still widespread)
- Biblical characters / situations / images are beyond the knowledge of most “believers”

1. **Embarrassment of the Gospel**

- Confusion and conflict over biblical authority
- Self-consciousness in a pluralistic / egalitarian culture
- The Pilate Syndrome: “What is truth?”

FAST-FORWARD TEN YEARS...

WORSHIP **LEADERSHIP** – Ten years ago, many gifted worship leaders were frustrated with the response of their congregations. Now, more and more pastors and worshipping congregations are frustrated with their worship leaders. I believe there are three non-negotiables for anyone wanting to lead followers of Jesus in worship. We must have:

1. **conviction** that worship of the Triune God is worthy of our best efforts and undivided attention,
2. **compassion** for God's people that compels us to challenge and inspire growth in their personal faith and their participation in the worshipping community, and
3. **commitment** to take a long-view of challenges and opportunities; actively leading people to a deeper experience of discipleship and joy.

As the role of the church changes in the culture, the role of worship must change in the church. Preparation for worship leaders needs to include dimensions of the spirit – consciously remembering for whom we do what we do; the mind – determining and evaluating why we do what we do; and the body – evaluating and improving how we do what we do.

TOP TEN CHALLENGES (2014)

1. Nurturing the Joy of Leading

Authentic Christian worship, like the Word of God on which it is centered, is living, breathing, changing, vibrant, vital, refreshingly unpredictable, and always transformative. The blessing of worship, the life-changing experience of encountering and praising the Father, Son and Spirit, is available to disciples of Jesus every time we gather. This blessing is not dependent on our resources, the beauty of our location, the approval of our culture, or any other temporal circumstance. It is a gift from God.¹

2. Understanding Our Own Preferences

It is necessary to be aware of our own personal affinities—what we as a pastor or worship leader like or dislike in our own experience of worship. The goal should be to play to our own strengths without privileging ourselves over our congregation. On the one hand, far too many ministers [and worship leaders] create worship services that delight their own hearts but do not connect at all to people who are less theologically and culturally trained.... At the same time, we can't lead a worship service well in a style that leaves our own hearts cold. Once we are willing to admit that our preferences and tastes are just that, we are still faced with the fact that we can't lead worship unless we are actually engaged in it ourselves.²

¹Emily Brink and Paul Detterman, *Wise Church: Exploring Faith and Worship with Christians Around the World* (Grand Rapids: Faith Alive, 2013), 22.

²Tim Keller, *Center Church* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2012), 301.

3. Looking Beyond the God “I Want”

Left to myself, the God I want is a god who will give me what I want. He – or more likely *it* – will be a projection of my own desires. At the grosser level, this will lead me to one of the more obvious pagan gods or goddesses, who offer their devotees money, sex, or power (as Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche pointed out). All idols started out life as a god somebody wanted.... Nobody falls down on their face before the god they wanted. Nobody trembles at the word of a home-made god. Nobody goes out with fire in their belly to heal the sick, to clothe the naked, to teach the ignorant, to feed the hungry because of a god they wanted. They are more likely to stay at home with their feet up.³

4. Accepting God’s Invitation

Christian worship is an intentionally decentering practice, calling us out of ourselves into the very life of God. That worship begins with a *call* is already a first displacement that is at the same time an invitation: to find ourselves *in* Christ.... In a society of mutual display and debilitating self-consciousness, it is a special grace to be invited into a Story where we are *hidden* with Christ in God. And being found in him, we are called out of ourselves to love neighbors and enemies, widows and orphans. In the performed story that is Christian worship, we are related to others as neighbors rather than as an “audience.”⁴

5. Embracing the Uniqueness

True worship, then, will be odd and perhaps even weird to the watching world. Its oddness is not lamentable, but perhaps even essential to the church’s faithfulness and witness. For if the gospel is foolishness, it is foolish only to those who do not believe.... For this reason, the church must be unapologetic in her worship. She must not cater to those bound to ridicule her ways as foolish. Christian worship is, in fact, a bold political act. It subverts the world’s values by assigning glory and praise to the One whom the world despises. And as weak as the church at worship might appear to the watching world, the truth is that the powers of this world are no match for the power of God who is present among his people when they gather to sing praise, pray, and hear his Word.⁵

6. Enriching the Experience

“Sing a new Song” is an exciting permission for us. The gospel is not limited to any generation, to any tribe or nation or tongue. In every age, in every place, the Spirit of Christ comes to offer salvation.... Whatever our worship style or tradition, the flow of words in a given service gathers up both old words and new words—the balance varies, but both are always present. We read the Scriptures aloud. We use words from other times and places, perhaps in a traditional liturgy, perhaps in a song or prayer from the last generation, from another continent, or from composer in the next town. The rest of the words in a service are, shall we say, locally grown. How wonderful, as God welcomes our praises and petitions in every language, even the unspoken language of the heart.⁶

³ N. T. Wright, *For All God’s Worth: True Worship and the Calling of the Church* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1997), 22-23

⁴ James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 149-50.

⁵ D. G. Hart and John Muether, *With Reverence and Awe: Returning to the Basics of Reformed Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2002), 34.

⁶ Debra Rienstra and Ron Rienstra, *Worship Words: Discipling Language for Faithful Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 190

7. Re-Telling the Story

At the end of the day, worship has a single role to play in the lives of believers: to retell, re-present, and thus refresh the story of God's love and call... Everything in worship is subordinated to this end and leads to this goal. Similarly, everything we do in worship, our prayers, and our response in faith and devotion has a single goal: to allow us to indwell this story and make it our own. In other words, these [worship] practices are effective when they encourage and sustain the relationships with God, creation, and each other that the Gospel makes possible. Likewise, we, nourished and renewed by the narrative of worship, have a single calling: to tell and live this great story, to remind ourselves and those around us again and again that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.⁷

8. Looking Out the Windows

If God's primary desire was for a church with full seats and overflowing activities, we would focus time, effort, and resources on making our congregation more attractive and appealing than any of the neighboring churches. But scripture reveals that God's singular desire is the redemption of the world, and that Christ has commissioned the Church to continue his work on earth, in the power of the Holy Spirit. To the extent that we realize this, our time, efforts, and resources will be focused on nurturing disciples of Jesus who *expect* to actively participate in God's mission, and who will fully engage in the life of the worshiping community to prepare for that sending.⁸

9. Connecting Worship with Life

The Bible teaches that the people of the world, whether they believe it or not, suffer and die while waiting for us in the church to live like the people of God, demonstrating our worship with our lives (Romans 8:18-25). The heart of the battle over worship is this: our worship practices are separated from our call to justice and, worse, foster the self-indulgent tendencies of our culture rather than nurturing the self-sacrificing life of the Kingdom of God.⁹

10. Becoming a "Lead Worshiper"

"Worship leaders" ...may assume a position of authority in the eyes of the worshiping community and read or play what they have prepared (or what has been prepared for them), with the goal of moving the congregation through their part of the "agenda" of the worship service. "Lead worshipers," on the other hand, ...are called first of all to be worshipers, joining their gifts with everyone else in a common offering of praise. They prepare the worshiping community to encounter the triune God, creating the expectation of interaction, conversation, and response to God, and then stepping back into the community to share in that encounter.... Training lead worshipers requires a substantial investment of time, effort, vision, and passion. It is its own form of discipleship.¹⁰

⁷ William Dyrness, *A Primer on Christian Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 116.

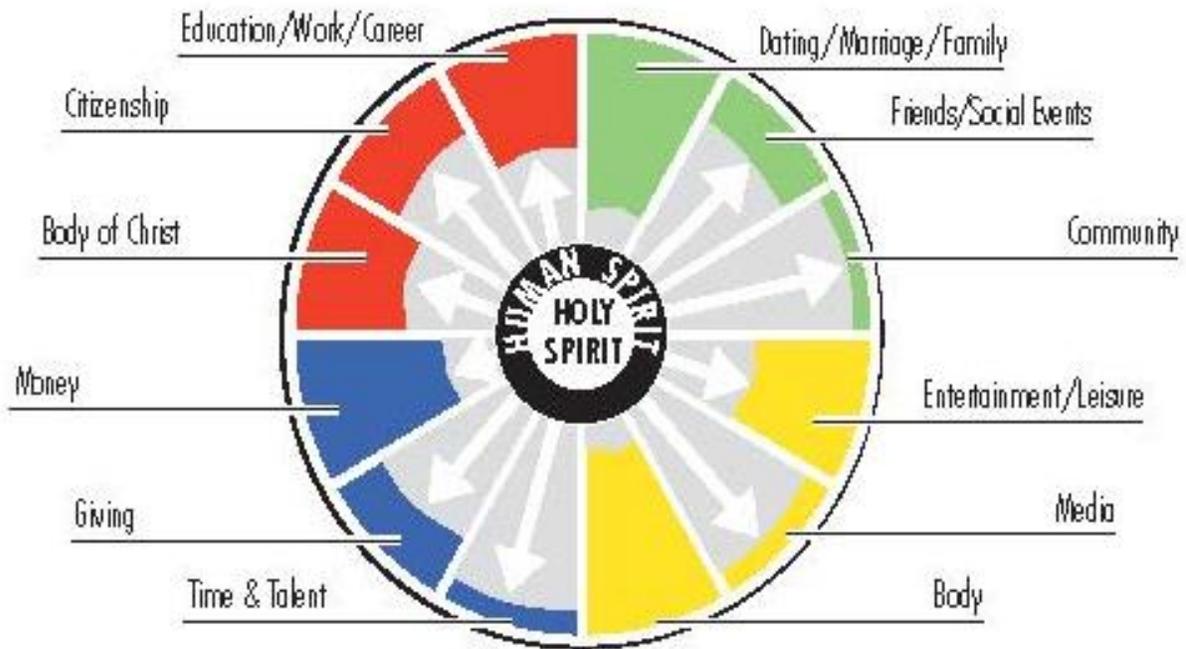
⁸ Brink and Detterman, *Wise Church*, 104.

⁹ Mark Labberton, *The Dangerous Act of Worship* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 22-23.

¹⁰ Brink and Detterman, *Wise Church*, 38.

THE DAILY DECISIONS OF DISCIPLESHIP

Maintaining Our Followership



What does it mean to come after Jesus, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Jesus in each of these arenas of life?

Responsibilities	Relationships
Resources	Recreation

Discipleship

A Disciple is someone who follows Jesus in all areas of his life. A disciple is also someone who engages in making other disciples building them up to do the same.

As a leader in the church you are called by the “Great Commission” to make disciples of all nations. To first make a disciple you must confirm that you yourself is someone who is following Jesus in all areas of your life.

The following two tools are items you can use to help your own walk with Christ and also help others grow in Christ.

- The first one, the “Daily Decisions of Followership” is a self-assessment tool. It is used to help you see what Christ is up to in your life.
- The second one, “The Wheel” is a tool describing the time-tested spiritual disciplines that all Christians should be engaging in their life.

Discipleship is not a program or group event, it is a relationship. You can learn in a program or in larger groups. But true spiritual change only comes from relationships, Life2Life relationships. The first is the relationship someone has with Christ. The second is the relationship the young or new Christian has with more mature Christians.

Discipleship in the church, needs to continue this by people meeting together, sharing life with each other. Each meeting needs to hold each other to living out “The Wheel.”

Here are some links of good discipleship videos on youtube.com

“Do Churches Disciple The Wrong Way?”

<https://youtu.be/IXYn-rJPhNg>

“This is Discipleship”

<https://youtu.be/rk8ERxqCZqQ>

A Life2Life Ministry Declaration

It's All about Relationships

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for a group of people to dissolve certain ministry assumptions and practices, a declaration of causes and principles should be stated describing this dissolution. This Ministry Declaration is a summons to think and act in ministry ways characterized by a life2life imperative.

Contemporary churches are on the hunt for the holy grail of ministry success, seeking freshly marketed programs to turn congregations around. Ministry successes are packaged and franchised, creating marketing lines of books, t-shirts, and specialty Bibles. In the pursuit of turn-key programs, ministry is easily reduced to techniques and curriculums. We have lost the importance of ministering to people life2life.

God intends ministry to be more than a commodity to purchase or a technique to perfect. Life2life ministry is the hidden work of the Holy Spirit, where one life touches another life through a Christ-centered relationship. Whether ministry means advancing the gospel, serving the disenfranchised, building the community of believers, or discipling people for maturity, we must renew our commitment to ministering life2life.

This requires enlarging our understanding of ministry, moving it from the expertise of professionals and formulaic programs, to ordinary people living and discipling as insiders, right where they live, work, or play. While classes, curriculums, and programs are helpful, they must not replace God's vehicle of people ministering to one another life2life.

People who practice life2life ministry hold the following truths to be self-evident.

- **God often starts with the small and unnoticed.** Whether it was a nomadic tribesman (Abraham), a nation of slaves (Israel), or “unschooled, ordinary” people (the Apostles), God begins with the small and unnoticed. Like the mustard seed, Jesus began small (with twelve) but thought big (all nations).
- **God prizes the transformed life.** True life is found when people are transformed into Christlikeness (Galatians 4:17). “Our aim is not first to act differently but to become different in our inner being.” Transformation is more than a series of self-help projects and information mastery; it's a lifelong process of being mastered by another—the living Christ.
- **God invites people to collaborate with Him.** When Jesus saw desperate people crowding for help, he didn't talk of building projects, television shows, or funds to raise. Instead, He challenged the disciples (and us) to pray for laborers, insiders who will assist in Kingdom-work (Matthew 9:36-38). What an amazing thought, God invites us to partner with Him in the work of the Kingdom. ▶



Church Officer Nominations and Development Outline for 2020 – 2021

Selecting and developing church officers is one of the most important responsibilities in the life of the church. Church officers are essential to the spiritual direction, leadership, care, and nurture of the church and so much more. Nearly every aspect of the church requires active, committed, and godly leaders.

Mainline protestant churches have been declining for decades. A 2015 Pew study found that 23% of all Americans identify “none” as their religious affiliation. For young adults, the number is one in three. The emerging “Generation Z” will be the most unchurched in history.

At the same time, First Presbyterian Church is in the middle of what many say is the “most livable city” in America. Downtown is the fastest growing neighborhood in the city. As of April 2018, \$8 billion has been invested in the downtown area around the church in the previous 10 years. But population growth and economic redevelopment don’t necessarily result in church transformation or growth. *Clearly, while the Gospel message will never change, the way we convey the Gospel, care for the city, make disciples, and carry out our mission likely will change.*

Our leaders must be willing to grapple with these realities and be prayerful about discerning what God in this church in our time.

Not only should an officer be a person of godly character as described in the Bible and the Book of Order, what is needed today is a teachable spirit; a desire to grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ; a record of service; a bias for action; and a willingness to adapt to a changing world.

Because of the way officers are called in the Presbyterian Church, the work of the Nominating Committee is vital. Members of the committee must allow themselves to be guided by the Holy Spirit. Their work directly affects the future of the congregation.

Members of the Nominating Committee should begin by praying and organizing for their task. Don’t discuss names of potential candidates at first. Instead, pray for discernment.

Review the biblical qualifications for elders, trustees, and deacons, as well as the duties and qualifications in the Book of Order. Develop the list of the qualities of an ideal elder, trustee, and deacon. Create a picture of what an ideal candidate should look like. Again, avoid discussing specific names at first.

Consider the expectations of church officers with respect to:

Character – does this person’s life reflect a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?

Spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, devotions, bible reading, etc. Is this person growing as disciple?

Needs of the church for leadership, involvement, disciple-making, innovation, etc

Worship and Sunday school attendance. Has this person been involved?

Financial commitment/tithe – the Old Testament standard for giving was 10%. Does this person give sacrificially, so much so that there are things he/she cannot do because of his/her giving?

- The nominating team should ask the bookkeeper whether or not potential nominees give to the church.

Participation in church events – does this person take part in things other than worship?

Teaching, worship leadership – is this person using their gifts to help others grow in faith?

Service – is this person willing to serve others with his/her own hands?

Members of the committee could ask current elders and deacons to generate lists of potential candidates. Ask each staff person to generate list of potential candidates. Each committee member should do so as well. Pray for the people on the lists.

Suggested Timeline:

Fall 2020 – Deacons and Session nominate members of the nominating committee. Nominating committee meets to outline scope of work. Pray

Nov 2020 – Committee meets to consider qualities needed in officers. Pray

Dec 2020 – Committee begins to develop lists of candidates. Pray

Jan 2021 – Committee begins contacting candidates. Pray

Jan 2021 – Committee narrows list of candidates. Pray

Feb 1, 2021 – Final slate of officers complete

Feb 16, 2021 – Session approves final slate of officers at March meeting.

March 28, 2021 – Palm Sunday

April 4, 2020 – Easter

April 11, 2020 – Annual Congregational Meeting (Must be held in April)

April 11 to May 18, 2021 – Window to complete officer training, retreat, examination by session

May 23, 2021 – Officer Ordination and Installation.

Note: *These dates could change.* It would be best to hold the training of new officers over the summer so adequate time could be devoted to training. Then the examination by the session and ordination would occur in September. This would mean extending the term of outgoing officers for three months.

Links and Readings

Rodger Nishioka, "21st Century Reformation":

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-mo4rtZdKk>

Reggie McNeal, "Reggie McNeal – The Future of the Church as Movement

- <https://vimeo.com/328041589>

Peter Smith, "Silent Sanctuaries":

- <https://newsinteractive.post-gazette.com/silentsanctuaries/>

Downloadable and searchable PCUSA *Book of Order*:

- http://oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/book-of-order2017-electronic.pdf

Downloadable and searchable PCUSA *Book of Confessions*:

- https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/boc2014.pdf

New City Catechism - Modern teaching tool about the fundamental of the faith:

- <http://newcitycatechism.com/> (Website and downloadable app)

Church Website: <https://www.fpcp.org/> (Lots of good info here.)

Downtown Ministerium Website:

- <https://downtownpittsburghministerium.org/>

Allegheny County Emergency Services (Comprehensive list of county services)

- <https://files.constantcontact.com/e301f7cb001/a64dd332-a1a1-4188-8ec1-a37c6fbe1e8e.pdf>

Big Burgh Website – Key website (works like an app) for homeless services)

- www.bigburgh.com

Books on Church Transformation:

- *Transforming Church: Bringing Out the Good to Get to Great*, Kevin G. Ford, 2008.
- *For a New Generation: A Practical Guide for Revitalizing Your Church*, by Lee Kricher, 2016.
- *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*, by Tod Bolsinger, 2015.
- *Growing Young: 6 Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church*, Kara Powell, Jake Mulder, and Brad Griffin, 2016.
- *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City*, Tim Keller, 2012. (Comprehensive textbook on city-center ministry).

Books on Growing as Disciples:

- *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, Dr. Robert E. Coleman, 2010.
- *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus's Essential Teaching on Discipleship*, by Dallas Willard, 2014.
- *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God*, Dallas Willard, 1998.
- *Pilgrim's Progress: From this World to that Which is to Come*, John Bunyan, 1678.

Books on Stewardship and Fundraising:

- *Rich Church, Poor Church: Keys to Effective Financial Ministry*, J. Clif Robertson, 2012.
- *A Spirituality of Fundraising*, Henri Nouwen, 2010.

Books on Mission:

- *A Field Guide for the Missional Congregation: Embarking on a Journey of Transformation*, Rick Rouse and Craig Van Gelder, 2008.
- *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor and Yourself*, Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, 2009, 2012.

Books on Justice and Culture

- *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*, Brian Stevenson, 2014.
- *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, Matthew Desmond, 2016.
- *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*, JD Vance, 2016.

Nuts and Bolts

(As of May 1, 2021)

Meetings:

- Trustees meet the second Monday of the month.
- Deacons meet the third Monday of the month.
- Session meets the third Tuesday the month.
- Boards often skip meeting in July, August, and December, if possible.
- If you can't make a meeting, please notify the president of the trustees, moderator of the deacons, or clerk/moderator of the session to be excused.
- If you miss a meeting, it's up to you to find out what you missed by talking to someone in attendance, reading the minutes, etc.
- If possible, please plan to enter the building after hours through the handicapped entrance on Oliver Ave.

Communication:

- Email is the primary means of communication. Please check yours daily.
- Please make sure you are receiving the church Constant Contact email. If not, please contact Cheryl at cswartz@fpcp.org.
- If you have items you want placed in the bulletin, please provide that information to Cheryl NLT Tuesday.
- If you want to make an announcement or do a Moment for Mission in worship, please let Cheryl and/or a pastor know as far in advance as possible.
- Distribution Boxes are located in room 16 by the chapel. Please check your box every Sunday.
- Normal church office hours: 8:30-4:30, Monday - Friday

Important Dates, 2020-2021 (When you, as a church officer, ought to be here.)

- Doors Open Pittsburgh, October 2, 2021
- Light-Up Night, November 19, 2021
- First Night, December 31, 2021.
- Marathon Sunday, May 1, 2022
- Annual Congregational Meeting, TBD (one Sunday in April).

Ongoing:

- Outreached Arms, Tuesdays, 5:30 PM bible study, 6:30 PM meal.
- Intercessory Prayer, Wednesdays, 10:30 AM, pastor's office/zoom.

Please consult the schedule within to determine which church is on duty for the week. Hours are printed below, no appointment is necessary.

SAINT MARY OF MERCY CATHOLIC PARISH
412-261-0110 202 Stanwix Street

Monday – Friday, 10:00 am – 1:00 PM

Ring doorbell for Parish office door on Stanwix Street

- Emergency food and toiletries
- Local bus tickets for verified job interviews or medical appointments
- Referrals to appropriate social services
- Clothing

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

412-471-3436 320 Sixth Avenue

Monday – Friday, 11:00 am – 2:00 PM

Accessible entrance off Oliver Avenue

- Emergency food and toiletries
- Local bus tickets for verified job interviews or medical appointments
- Referrals to appropriate social services
- Free lunch from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm (only when on walk-in duty)
- Fridays only: Fresh produce available (10:00 am – 1:00 pm)

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

412-232-6404 328 Sixth Avenue

Monday – Friday, 10:00 am – 2:00 PM

Accessible entrance off Oliver Avenue

- Emergency food and toiletries
- Local bus tickets for a verified job interviews or medical appointments
- Referrals to appropriate social services
- Voter registration

SMITHFIELD UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

412-281-1811 620 Smithfield Street

Monday – Friday, 9:30 am - 12 PM & 1 PM - 2:30 PM

Knock on the wooden, street level door on Smithfield Street

- Official food pantry for downtown residents
- Senior boxes for qualifying individuals
- Referrals to appropriate social services

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

412-471-8125 615 Grant Street

Monday – Friday, 9:30-11:00 am & 1:00-3:00 PM

Accessible entrance off Grant Street

- Emergency food and toiletries, including frozen meat
- Local bus tickets for verified job interviews or medical appointments
- Referrals to appropriate social services



Saint Mary of Mercy Roman Catholic Church



First Presbyterian Church



Trinity Episcopal Cathedral



Smithfield United Church of Christ



First Lutheran Church

DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH'S WALK-IN MINISTRY

A Guide to Services Offered by the Churches of Downtown

Reaching out in love to the homeless, the poor, and the discouraged since 1980



DOWNTOWN MINISTERIUM 2020 Walk-In Ministry Schedule

DATES	CHURCH ON DUTY	PHONE #	DATES	CHURCH ON DUTY	PHONE #
December 30-January 5	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811	July 6-12	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110
January 6-12	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125	July 13-19	#2 First Presbyterian Church	412-471-3436
January 13-19	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110	July 20-26	#3 Trinity Cathedral	412-232-6404
January 20-26	#2 First Presbyterian Church	412-471-3436	July 27- August 2	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811
January 27-February 2	#3 Trinity Cathedral	412-232-6404	August 3-August 9	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125
February 3- 9	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811	August 10-16	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110
February 10-16	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125	August 17-23	#2 First Presbyterian Church	412-471-3436
February 17- 23	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110	August 24-30	#3 Trinity Cathedral	412-232-6404
February 24- March 1	#2 First Presbyterian Church	412-471-3436	August 31-September 6	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811
March 2-8	#3 Trinity Cathedral	412-232-6404	September 7-13	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125
March 9-15	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811	September 14-20	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110
March 16-22	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125	September 21-27	#2 First Presbyterian Church	412-471-3436
March 23-29	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110	September 28-October 4	#3 Trinity Cathedral	412-232-6404
March 30-April 5	#2 First Presbyterian Church	412-471-3436	October 5-11	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811
April 6-12	#3 Trinity Cathedral	412-232-6404	October 12-18	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125
April 13-19	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811	October 19-25	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110
April 20-26	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125	October 26-November 1	#2 First Presbyterian Church	412-471-3436
April 27-May 3	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110	November 2-8	#3 Trinity Cathedral	412-232-6404
May 4-10	#2 First Presbyterian Church	412-471-3436	November 9-15	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811
May 11-17	#3 Trinity Cathedral	412-232-6404	November 16-22	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125
May 18-24	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811	November 23-29	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110
May 25-31	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125	November 30-December 6	#2 First Presbyterian Church	412-471-3436
June 1-7	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110	December 7-13	#3 Trinity Cathedral	412-232-6404
June 8-14	#2 First Presbyterian Church	412-471-3436	December 14-20	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811
June 15-21	#3 Trinity Cathedral	412-232-6404	December 21-27	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125
June 22-28	#4 Smithfield UCC	412-281-1811	December 28-January 3	#1 St. Mary of Mercy	412-261-0110
June 29-July 5	#5 First Lutheran Church	412-471-8125			

The FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of PITTSBURGH

BYLAWS OF THE CONGREGATION ECCLESIASTICAL AND CORPORATE

INDEX

<u>Article</u>		<u>Page</u>
	PREAMBLE	1
I	DEFINITION OF TERMS	1
II	NAME, IDENTIFICATION AND SEAL	2
III	MEMBERSHIP	2
IV	CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS	3
V	CHURCH ORGANIZATION	5
VI	CHURCH FUNDS	6
VII	SESSION	7
VIII	TRUSTEES	9
IX	BOARD OF DEACONS	9
X	ELECTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE BOARDS	11
XI	THE MINISTER	13
XII	INDEMNIFICATION	13
XIII	AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS	13
XIV	REVIEW OF BYLAWS	13

Adopted at a Special Meeting
of the Congregation held
Sep 21, 2018

PREAMBLE

The First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh consists of professing Christians, with their children, voluntarily united for divine worship and godly living according to the Holy Scriptures. We declare that the great ends of the church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of the souls of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of God to the world. It is our desire that by our conduct, we shall be a means by which the Holy Spirit will extend God's redemptive love to all people, to the end that all may be saved to enjoy the incredible gift of eternal life with our Lord Jesus Christ. We promise to maintain this church by our faithful attendance at its worship services, to support its mission by our gifts, efforts, and prayers, and to seek, in its fellowship, to glorify Him. We promise to govern our actions that they be in accordance with the Holy Scriptures which we believe is the word of God and the Confessions of our Church heretofore adopted.

ARTICLE I – DEFINITION OF TERMS

Section 1.1 The term Church or Congregation shall mean The First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, either as a congregation ecclesiastically or as a corporation legally, as the case may be.

Section 1.2 The term Session shall mean those persons elected by the congregation to active service as ruling elders, together with all installed pastors and associate pastors.

Section 1.3 The term Trustee shall mean the members in active service who have been elected trustees of The First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation, pursuant to these bylaws, and who serve as the Budget, Finance and Property Committee of the Session.

Section 1.4 The term corporate business shall mean any proposed action to be taken or matter to be considered of a corporate or legal rather than an ecclesiastical nature and/or regulated by or subject to the Acts of Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, including but not limited to buying or selling real estate, borrowing money, amending the Charter or bylaws, or merging, consolidating or dissolving the corporation. Any dispute as to whether a proposed action to be taken or matter to be considered is of a corporate or legal nature shall be resolved by the Session, guided by the opinion of legal counsel of the Church.

Section 1.5 The term Presbytery shall mean Pittsburgh Presbytery or its successor.

ARTICLE II – NAME, IDENTIFICATION AND SEAL

Section 2.1 Name of the Congregation. The Congregation is known as The First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh. It traces its origin to the community of Christian faithful who first requested the supply of a minister from the Presbytery of Donegal on April 14, 1773; conducted a service of worship and communion on the fourth Sabbath of August, 1784, and was incorporated by an Act of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on September 29, 1787.

Section 2.2 Church Location. The principal place for the conduct of the ecclesiastical and corporate affairs of the Church is 320 Sixth Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15222.

Section 2.3 Corporation Name. The Church was incorporated by Act of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enacted the 29th day of September, 1787 (Private Act recorded in Harrisburg in Law Book Volume 111, page 256, An Act to incorporate the Presbyterian Congregation of Pittsburgh and the vicinity thereof, in the County of Westmoreland) under the name "The Trustees of the Presbyterian Congregation of Pittsburgh and the vicinity thereof in the County of Westmoreland"; and by a supplement to said Act, approved

May 15, 1850, the corporate name was changed to “The Trustees of The First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh” and is hereinafter referred to as the “Corporation.”

Section 2.4 Corporate Seal. The seal of the Corporation contains the words “The Trustees of The First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh,” surrounding an open book inscribed “Holy Bible,” above which is the date “September 29, 1787.”

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 3.1 Eligibility. Any person who professes faith in Jesus Christ, promises obedience to His Lordship, completes a series of new member classes or receives personal instruction by the ministerial staff and the Session, has been baptized, gives public testimony of faith in Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, and is formally received by the Session, shall be admitted into membership of the Congregation of The First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh.

Section 3.2 Duties of Members. Church members are obligated to make diligent use of the means of grace, to share faithfully in the worship and service of the Church, to give of their resources as the Lord may prosper them, to render wholehearted service to Christ and His Kingdom throughout the world, and to continue in the peace and fellowship of the people of God. All members shall extend the love of Christ to all persons.

Section 3.3 Types of Members. The Church provides for the following types or classifications of members, their relationship to the church, and the session’s responsibilities to them.

(a.) Active Church Members. Active Church Members shall be those who have been received into membership of the Church and who are active in the Church’s work and worship. Such members shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of the Church, including the right to participate in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, to present their children for baptism, to take part and vote in meetings of the Congregation, and to hold office therein when eligible. Active Church Members are also members of the Corporation.

(b.) Inactive Church Members. Inactive Church Members shall be those who, in the judgment of the Session, do not participate actively in the Church’s work and worship. An Inactive Church Member shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of an Active Church Member except the right to speak in the meetings of the Congregation and to vote and to hold office. The Session is charged with the responsibility of persuading Inactive Church Members to become active. If these efforts are unsuccessful for two years, the Session shall remove the names of Inactive Church Members from the Church roles and so notify them.

(c.) Affiliate Church Members. Affiliate Church Members shall be active members of another church of this denomination, or of another denomination or Christian body, who have temporarily removed from the community where their church is located, have met the above eligibility requirements for membership, and have been received by the Session as Affiliate Church Members. Affiliate Church Members shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of an Active Church Member, except the right to vote or hold office.

ARTICLE IV – CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section 4.1 Types of Meetings

(a.) Annual Meeting – Corporation

(1.) The annual meeting of the Corporation shall be held on the first Monday of the month of April pursuant to the Act of the General Assembly referred to in Section 2.3.

(2.) The meeting may be adjourned until the date of the annual meeting held in accordance with the Section 4.1(b) by the Moderator of the Session and the President or Vice President of the Trustees by means of telephone or electronic communications, or, if prior to the action, each signs a written consent setting forth the action so taken, and the written consent is filed with the Clerk of Session.

(3.) At the Annual Meeting of the Corporation, Trustees shall be elected, reports of the affairs of the Corporation shall be considered, and any other business may be transacted which is within the powers of the members of the Corporation.

(b.) Annual Meeting. The Congregation shall hold an annual meeting and may hold other meetings as necessary. The annual meeting shall be held in April, at a time and date selected by the Session, at the Church location. The annual meeting shall consider such business as electing officers, hearing reports of the ministers, the Session, the Board of Deacons and the financial report of the Trustees and transacting such other business as is appropriate. The Congregation shall review the adequacy of the compensation of the ministers upon the report of the prior review by the Session.

(c.) Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called for any or all of the purposes appropriate to an annual meeting or to conduct such other business as may be proper for congregational or corporate consideration. The business to be transacted shall be limited to the items specifically listed in the call for the special meeting. Special meetings may be called by:

- (1.) The Session whenever it determines such a meeting is necessary; or
- (2.) Presbytery whenever it determines such a meeting is necessary; or
- (3.) the Session when requested in writing by one-fourth of the Active Church Members.

Section 4.2 Notice of Meeting. Public notice of the time, place and purpose of the annual meeting and all special meetings of the Congregation shall be printed in the Church bulletin and announced from the pulpit on two successive Sundays at the worship services prior to the appointed time. The names of persons who will be nominated for office by the nominating committee at a meeting shall be included with the notice of the meeting.

Section 4.3 Presiding Officer. The Moderator of the Session shall preside at all meetings of the Congregation, except when corporate business is being transacted, when the Trustee President or Vice-President shall preside. If the Moderator and the Session agree that the subjects to be discussed at the meeting require it or if the Moderator is ill or otherwise unable to be present, an ordained minister of the Presbytery (preferably an associate minister of this Church) shall be invited by the Moderator or the Session to preside.

Section 4.4 Secretary. The Clerk of Session shall be the secretary of the Congregation and the Corporation. If the Clerk of Session or any assistant shall be unable to attend a meeting, the moderator of the meeting shall appoint an acting secretary.

Section 4.5 Voting. All active church members shall be entitled to vote at meetings of the Congregation and the Corporation. Voting by proxy shall not be allowed. All voting will be conducted by voice vote, unless a hand count or paper ballot is requested by a member.

Section 4.6 Tellers. The Moderator of the meeting shall appoint tellers to count the ballots. Tellers shall be active church members who are neither currently serving on the nominating committee, nor named on the ballots being counted.

Section 4.7 Quorum. A quorum shall consist of the Moderator or acting moderator, Secretary or acting secretary, and twenty-five Active Church Members or one-tenth of the membership of Active Church members, whichever is greater. If corporate business is to be transacted, a quorum must include the Trustee President or Vice-President in lieu of the Moderator or acting moderator.

Section 4.8 Conduct of Meetings. Meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer. A proper quorum having been constituted, all meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except in those cases where the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provides otherwise.

ARTICLE V – CHURCH ORGANIZATION

Section 5.1 Ministries. The Session may, from time to time, establish, modify, redefine or eliminate ministries of the Church.

Section 5.2 Church Structure. For the purpose of carrying on its ministries, the structure of the Church is as follows:

(a.) Church Staff. The church staff is headed by the Minister and may include the following persons:

(1.) One or more Associate ministers, and

(2.) The non-ministerial staff, including professional, secretarial, custodial and other personnel.

(b.) Session. The Session may, from time to time, establish, appoint, redefine or abolish committees, sub-committees (task groups), and commissions to assist in the accomplishment of its work as the need arises; provided, however, that the Trustees, serving as the Budget, Finance and Property Committee shall remain as a standing committee of the Session. The Session has the responsibility for governing the congregation and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world. The Session has the overall authority for managing the property and resources of the congregation, and directing the ministries of the deacons, trustees, and all the organizations of the congregation.

(c.) Trustees. There shall be between six to eight Trustees of the Corporation who are also members in active service. The Trustees shall make up the Budget, Finance and Property Committee of the Session. The Trustees may, from time to time, establish, appoint, redefine, or abolish sub-committees to assist in the accomplishment of their work as the need arises. Trustees serve under the supervision and guidance of the Session.

(d.) Board of Deacons. The Board of Deacons may, from time to time, establish, appoint, redefine or abolish committees to assist in the accomplishment of its work as the need arises.

(e.) Nominating Committee.

Section 5.3 Committees.

(a.) The Session and the Board of Deacons may add Active Church Members to any of their committees and may appoint Active Church Members to special committees which shall be responsible to them.

(b.) The Minister, with the approval of the Session, may appoint committees, groups or individuals to perform special administrative tasks.

Section 5.4 Identity and Nature. The identity and nature of the current ministries of the Church, the Church staff, and the identity and nature of the committees of the Session and Board of Deacons, all as set forth above, are included in these bylaws for purposes of information only, and any of these may be abolished or altered; and any new ministries, staff and committees may be instituted or organized without amending these bylaws.

ARTICLE VI – CHURCH FUNDS

Section 6.1 Trustees. Subject to the prerogative of the Session, the Trustees are charged with the responsibility of conducting the financial affairs of the Church, the maintenance of the Church properties and such additional duties and responsibilities as may be delegated to them by the Session. The Treasurer of the Church shall be elected annually by the Session, upon recommendation of the Trustees, and shall, under the direction of the Trustees, and subject to the prerogative of the Session, be responsible for the receipts and disbursements of the funds of the church.

Section 6.2 Budgets.

(a.) Operating Budget. The Trustees shall prepare an operating budget for the ensuing fiscal year which shall be submitted to the Session for its review and approval. The Session may adopt the operating budget submitted with or without revisions made by it, or it may request the Trustees to revise the operating budget with or without instructions or recommendations.

(b.) Benevolence Budget. The Missions Committee shall prepare a benevolence budget for the ensuing fiscal year which shall be submitted to the Session for its review and approval. The Session may adopt the benevolence budget submitted with or without revisions made by it, or it may request the Missions Committee to revise the benevolence budget with or without instructions or recommendations.

Section 6.3 Annual Report of the Trustees

(a) Contents. The Trustees shall present annually to the Congregation a report verified by the President and Treasurer, or by a majority of the Trustees, showing in appropriate detail the following:

- (1.) the assets and liabilities, including the endowment and trust funds, of the Corporation as of the end of the fiscal year immediately preceding the date of their report;
- (2.) the principal changes in assets and liabilities, including endowment and trust funds, during the preceding fiscal year;
- (3.) the revenue or receipts of the Corporation, both unrestricted and restricted to a particular purpose, for the preceding fiscal year, including separate data with respect to each endowment and trust fund held by or for the Corporation;
- (4.) the expenses or disbursements of the Corporation, both unrestricted and restricted to a particular purpose, for the preceding fiscal year, including separate data with respect to each endowment and trust fund held by or for the Corporation; and

(5.) the number of members of the Congregation by class of membership at the end of the preceding fiscal year, together with a statement of increase or decrease in such number during such year, and a statement of the place where the names and addresses of the current members may be found.

(b.) Presentation. The financial statements required by these bylaws shall be prepared on the basis of generally accepted accounting principles.

(c.) Place of Filing. The annual report of the Trustees shall be filed with the minutes of the meeting of the Corporation.

Section 6.4 Annual Audit. The balance sheet and income statement shall be reviewed or audited annually by independent certified public accountants.

Section 6.5 Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on the first day of January and shall end on the thirty-first day of December in each year.

ARTICLE VII – SESSION

Section 7.1 Composition. The Session shall consist of those persons elected by the congregation to active service as ruling elders, together with all installed pastors and associate pastors. Elders in active service are hereinafter referred to collectively as the “Elders,” or individually as an “Elder.” It is intended by these bylaws that the unicameral system of government within the Church be maintained.

Section 7.2 Election, Number and Classification of Elders.

(a.) Election. The Elders shall be elected by the Active Church Members.

(b.) Number and Classification. The Session shall consist of between eight to twelve Elders, and they shall be classified with respect to the time for which the Elders shall severally hold office by dividing the Elders into three (approximately equal) classes.

Section 7.3 Eligibility. The office of elder shall be open to and be filled by men and women who satisfy the requirements of Section 10.1.

Section 7.4 Duties. The Session shall maintain the spiritual oversight of the Congregation. This shall include, but not be limited to, the following responsibilities:

(a.) The Session shall provide for the service of worship of the Congregation. It shall determine the times and places of preaching the Word and all other religious services.

(b.) The Session shall decide who shall be baptized, instruct the Congregation in the benefits and obligations which baptism involves, and assure that the person being baptized shall be sustained and instructed in the faith by the Congregation.

- (c.) Subject to these bylaws, the Session shall decide who shall be members of the Church, provide resources and instruction to prepare both children and adults for reception into membership, and receive them into the communion of the Church upon satisfactory evidence of their professed faith in Jesus Christ.
- (d.) The Session shall provide for the frequent and orderly administration of the Lord's Supper and instruct the Congregation concerning the proper observance of the Lord's Supper.
- (e.) The Session shall grant certificates transferring members to other churches and shall remove from active and inactive membership those requesting or deserving such action. It shall make diligent effort to persuade Inactive Church Members to become active in this or another church.
- (f.) The Session shall lead the Congregation in participation in the mission of the Church in the world.
- (g.) The Session shall supervise the work of the boards and all the societies or agencies of the Congregation.
- (h.) The Session shall participate with the Minister in the examination, ordination and installation of elders and deacons on their election by the Congregation.
- (i.) The Session shall pray with and for the people, seek the fruit of the preached Word among the flock, and inform the ministers of all members who may need special attention.
- (j.) The Session shall instruct the uninformed, comfort the mourner, nourish and guard the children of the Church.
- (k.) The Session shall provide for the annual review of the adequacy of terms of call of the ministers.
- (l.) The Session shall promote the harmony and unity of the Church.
- (m.) All those duties which private Christians are bound to discharge by the law of love shall be especially incumbent upon the Session by divine vocation and shall be discharged as official duties.
- (n.) The Session shall act with respect to the Operating Budget and Benevolence Budget in accordance with Section 6.2.
- (o.) The Session shall exercise authority over the uses to which the Church properties may be put.
- (p.) The Session shall call annual and special meetings of the Congregation.
- (q.) The Session may delegate specific responsibilities and authority to individuals or to other boards of the church.
- (r.) The Session may add Active Church Members (or Affiliate Church Members) to any of its committees, and may set up special committees of Active Church Members (or Affiliate Church Members) which shall be responsible to the Session.
- (s.) The Session shall appoint representatives to higher governing bodies of the church.

Section 7.5 Meetings. Regular and special meetings of the Session shall be held at such time and place, and with such notice, as shall be determined by the Session; provided, however, the Session shall meet at least quarterly. The Session may request that the Trustee President and a Deacon Representative attend a regular or special meeting of the Session from time to time as necessary for efficient communication and cooperation.

Section 7.6 Quorum. At all meetings of the Session, the presence of at least one-third of the Elders, together with the Minister or acting moderator, shall constitute a quorum.

Section 7.7 Presiding Officer of Meetings. The Minister of the Church shall be the Moderator of the Session. When it appears advisable to invite some other minister to preside, the Minister shall, with the concurrence of the Session, extend an invitation to another minister belonging to the Presbytery. In case of sickness or absence of the Minister, the same expedient may be adopted; or the Session, with the approval of the Minister, may convene and elect one of its members to preside, except in cases involved in judicial process when a minister of Presbytery shall preside.

Section 7.8 Clerk of Session. The Clerk of Session shall be the secretary of all meetings of the Session, the Corporation and the Congregation, shall be responsible for preparing and preserving minutes of all such meetings, and shall furnish extracts therefrom when appropriate. The Clerk, as secretary of the Session, shall handle and maintain a file of all Session correspondence. The Clerk shall perform such additional duties as shall be delegated by the Session or the Minister. The Clerk of Session shall be an Active Church Member, an elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), but not necessarily then in active service; provided, however, that he or she may not vote unless in active service.

ARTICLE VIII – TRUSTEES

Section 8.1 Election, Number and Classification

- (a.) Election. The Trustees shall be elected by the members of the Corporation.
- (b.) Number and Classification. There shall be between six to eight Trustees, and the board shall be classified with respect to the time for which the Trustees shall severally hold office by dividing the Trustees into three (approximately equal) classes.

Section 8.2 Eligibility. A Trustee must then be a member in active service elected by the Congregation and at least 18 years of age.

Section 8.3 Duties

- (a.) The Trustees shall be the Trustees of The First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, a Pennsylvania non-profit corporation and shall elect among themselves a President and a Vice President.
- (b.) The Trustees shall, except as otherwise provided in these bylaws or the acts of the legislature heretofore referred to, exercise all powers granted to a board of directors under the Nonprofit Corporation Law of Pennsylvania, including but not limited to, the power to acquire, own, encumber, lease and dispose of property; to borrow or lend money; to enter into obligations appropriate for the transaction of the affairs of the Church; to invest and reinvest the funds of the Church; to engage auditors to conduct an annual audit or review of the books and accounts of the Church; and to manage and build up the permanent endowment funds of the Church.
- (c.) The Trustees shall report directly to members of the Corporation in corporate matters, and shall be subject to their authority as well as to the authority of the Session as a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- (d.) The Trustees shall also have such further non-corporate duties as may from time to time be assigned to them by the Session.
- (e.) The Trustee President's duties shall include attendance at Session meetings and presentation to Session at such times as requested by Session or as requested by the Trustees and approved by Session.

ARTICLE IX – BOARD OF DEACONS

Section 9.1 Composition. The Scriptures clearly describe deacons as distinct officers in the church. The office is one of sympathy and service after the example of the Lord Jesus. The Board of Deacons shall consist of a minister and between twelve and eighteen deacons.

Section 9.2 Election, Number and Classification of Deacons.

- (a.) Election. Deacons shall be elected by the Members in Active Service.
- (b.) Number and Classification. There shall be between twelve and eighteen Deacons, and they shall be classified with respect to the time for which the Deacons shall severally hold office by dividing the Deacons into three (approximately equal) classes.

Section 9.3 Eligibility. The office of a Deacon shall be open to and be filled by men and women who satisfy the requirements of Section 10.1.

Section 9.4 Purpose and Responsibilities. The purpose of the Board of Deacons is to extend hospitality and minister as compassionate servants to those in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress, and marshal the love and concern of the Congregation, in accordance with the scriptural duties of the office. The responsibilities of the Board of Deacons shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following: maintaining an awareness of the timely attendance of the members of the church family, administering financial aid, assisting those who have unemployment problems, giving counsel to those who are in need of it, comforting the bereaved and providing transportation to those who are not otherwise able to attend services. The Session may from time to time delegate additional or other responsibilities to the Board of Deacons.

Section 9.5 Meetings. The Board of Deacons shall hold stated meetings at least quarterly. Special meetings shall be held whenever requested by two of its members, by the Session, or by the Minister. The Board shall meet at least annually with the Session to confer on matters of common interest, with the Moderator of the Session presiding. (Rev. 05/06/98)

Section 9.6 Quorum. One-third of the members of the Board of Deacons shall be necessary to constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Board of Deacons.

Section 9.7 Presiding Officer of Meetings. The Board of Deacons shall elect a moderator from its membership who shall serve as the presiding officer. The Board of Deacons shall also elect from its membership a vice-moderator, a secretary, and a treasurer of the funds of the Board of Deacons.

Section 9.8 Budget. The Board of Deacons shall prepare and adopt a budget for the ensuing fiscal year, which shall be submitted to the Session for its review.

Section 9.9 Annual Report of the Board of Deacons. The Board of Deacons shall present annually to the Session a report showing the following in appropriate detail:

- (a.) cash, at the beginning of the fiscal year and cash and obligations at the end of the fiscal year;
- (b.) the revenue or receipts for the preceding fiscal year;
- (c.) the expenses or disbursements for the preceding fiscal year; and
- (d.) such other additional information as the Board of Deacons may determine to be appropriate or the Session may reasonably request.

Section 9.10 Ministers as Advisory Members. The Minister and associate ministers of the church shall be advisory members of the Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE X – ELECTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE BOARDS

Section 10.1 Qualifications

- (a.) A nominee for either the Session, Trustees, or the Board of Deacons shall have been an Active Church Member for a minimum of one year on the date set for the installation of the nominee.
- (b.) He or she must subscribe to the Constitution and Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and be willing to faithfully assist in the performance of the duties of the Board for which he or she is nominated.
- (c.) A nominee must exhibit fidelity to the Word of God, be of sound faith, live an exemplary life, have compassion, wisdom and exercise discretion and sound judgment.
- (d.) He or she must seek to live a life which conforms to the characteristics of church leaders described by Paul in I Timothy 3:1-7.
- (e.) A married person may not be elected to serve on the Session with his or her spouse.
- (f.) Members may not serve concurrently on more than one board, except as otherwise provided herein.

Section 10.2 Elections

(a.) Classes. Elections shall be held at the annual meeting of the Congregation and the Corporation. Each member of a board (Elder, Trustee or Deacon) of each class shall be elected for a term until the third annual meeting of the Congregation or the Corporation (as the case may be) following the member's taking office and until his or her successor has been elected and qualified or until the earlier death, resignation or removal of the member. The term of office of one class shall expire at the annual meeting of the Congregation and the Corporation (as the case may be) in each year. At each annual meeting of the Congregation and the Corporation (as the case may be) the successors to the Elders, Trustees and Deacons of the class whose terms expire that year shall be elected to hold office.

(b.) Voting. Elders, Trustees and Deacons shall be elected by voice vote unless the Congregation requests otherwise. Election shall be by majority vote of the Active Church Members present and voting at an annual or special meeting called for that purpose, a quorum being present.

(c.) Restrictions – No elder, deacon or trustee shall be elected for a term of more than three years, nor shall an elder, deacon or trustee serve for consecutive terms, in his or her respective office, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. An elder, deacon or trustee, having served in such office for a total of six years, shall be ineligible for re-election for a period of at least one year.

Section 10.3 Incumbent Members of the Boards. No reclassification of any of the Boards or a decrease in its size or the size of any class of any of the Boards shall have the effect of shortening the term of any incumbent Elder, Trustee or Deacon, except when Board changes are the result of these bylaws being revised.

Section 10.4 Vacancies. Vacancies in office shall be filled at a special meeting of the Congregation or the Corporation called for that purpose or at the next annual meeting. Each person so elected shall serve for the balance of the unexpired term and until his or her successor has been elected and qualified or until his or her earlier death, resignation or removal.

Section 10.5 Nominations. Nominations shall be made by the Nominating Committee and may be made from the floor. The person making the nomination from the floor shall have first contacted the nominee, informed the person of the duties and responsibilities of the office and obtained a commitment to serve and permission to be nominated.

(a.) Composition. There shall be a Nominating Committee of seven members as follows:

(1.) Designated. One member of the committee shall be an elder then in active service designated by the Session who shall serve as chairperson of the committee. One member shall be an active deacon designated by the Board of Deacons. One member shall be an active Trustee designated by the Trustees.

(2.) Elected. Two members of the Committee shall be elected at large at the annual meeting of the Congregation. Members so elected may not then be in active service on the Session, the Board of Deacons, or Trustees, but shall be Active Church Members. Their names shall be submitted by the Nominating Committee in a single slate, and as with other offices, nominations may be made from the floor so long as the nominee is qualified, has been informed of the duties and responsibilities and has agreed to be a nominee before the nomination is made.

(3.) Ex-officio. The chairperson of the nominating committee shall serve a second year as a member of the new nominating committee without vote. The Minister shall serve on the nominating committee without vote.

(b.) Term. Designated or elected members of the nominating committee shall serve for a term of one year.

(c.) Quorum. A majority of the voting members of the nominating committee shall be present in person to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

(d.) Responsibilities.

(1.) To seek out qualified members of the Congregation to serve as members of the boards of the church and as members of the nominating committee;

(2.) To present to the Congregation at the annual meeting a single slate of nominees for elders and deacons for terms of three years;

(3.) To present a single slate of nominees for vacancies or unexpired terms of elders or deacons at the annual meeting, or any special meeting, of the Congregation;

(4.) To present to the annual meeting of the Corporation a single slate of nominees for Trustees for a term of three years;

(5.) To present a single slate of nominees for any vacancies or unexpired terms of Trustees at the annual meeting of the Corporation, or any special meeting of the Corporation;

(6.) To present to the Congregation at the annual meeting a single slate of nominees for the nominating committee;

(7.) To give due notice to the Congregation of the slates of nominees to be presented; and

(8.) To contact persons selected for nomination, to inform them of the duties and responsibilities of the office, to obtain their commitment to serve, and to obtain their permission to be nominated.

(e.) Vacancies on the Nominating Committee. Vacancies on the Nominating Committee shall be filled by the Session

ARTICLE XI – THE MINISTER

Section 11.1 The Minister shall exhibit fidelity to the Word of God; feed the flock by reading, expounding, teaching and preaching the Word; administer the sacraments; and provide pastoral care that seeks to serve, uplift and aid the congregation.

Section 11.2 The Minister shall be head of the Church staff, the Moderator of the Session, and an ex-officio member of all church committees, clubs, boards and societies.

ARTICLE XII – INDEMNIFICATION

Section 12.1 To the extent permitted by law, any person serving as an elder or deacon or other representative of the Congregation or serving at the request of the Session as a representative of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise shall be entitled to indemnification and the advancement of expenses in any civil suit or proceeding, threatened pending or completed, alleging personal liability of such person or wrong doing in relation to the activities of the Church.

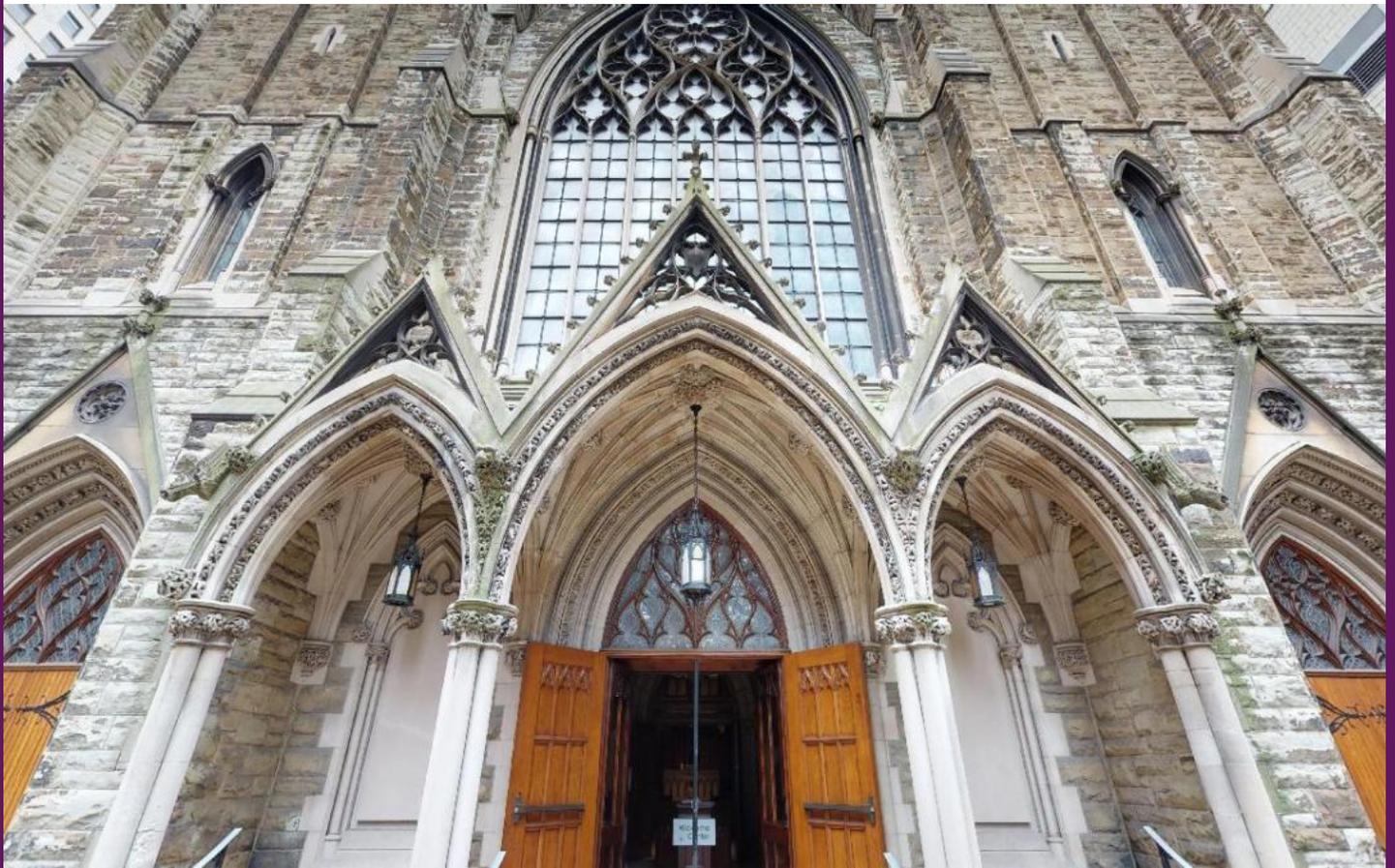
Section 12.2 The foregoing provisions apply not only to those persons presently or hereafter serving in any such capacities but also to those who have heretofore served and to the personal representatives of such persons, past, present and future.

ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Section 13.1 These bylaws may be amended at any annual meeting or any special meeting of the Congregation which shall be called to review the bylaws. The bylaws shall be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voters present, provided there is a full reading of the proposed changes at the meeting. A printed distribution of the proposed changes shall be made in connection with the notice of the meeting. All amendments from the floor shall be presented in writing at this meeting.

ARTICLE XIV – REVIEW OF BYLAWS

Section 14.1 These bylaws shall be reviewed at least every five years by a committee appointed by the Session, which shall present its recommendations, if any, to the Session.



THE ECONOMIC HALO EFFECT OF SACRED PLACES

First Presbyterian
Church

Pittsburgh, PA



AT THE INTERSECTION
OF HERITAGE, FAITH,
& COMMUNITY

Partners for Sacred Places

Methodology

The *Economic Halo Effect of Historic Sacred Places* is a 2016 study by Partners for Sacred Places that quantified the economic impact of congregations stewarding older and historic properties.

The study, conducted by Partners for Sacred Places with Ram Cnaan, Director of the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice, found that the average urban historic sacred place generates over \$1.7 million in economic impact annually.

In addition, this research affirms that:

- Congregations employ, on average, 5 full-time and 6 part-time staff
- Each sacred place is a magnet for visitors, attracting 780 visits each week with only 11% of visits for worship and 89% of visits for other purposes
- 87% of the beneficiaries of the community programs and events housed in sacred places are not members of the religious congregation

History

In 1996, with the support of the Lilly Endowment and other funders, Partners for Sacred Places conducted the first scientific study in which the contributions of congregations housed in historic and older buildings were quantified. Conducted in Partnership with Dr. Ram Cnaan and the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice, this study, *Sacred Places at Risk*, found that an average urban congregation creates over \$140,000 per year in value through the contribution of volunteer time; space at below market rates; and cash and in-kind donations to community-serving programs. The study also found that four of five individuals who visit a given sacred place are beneficiaries of the sacred place's programming rather than members of the congregation.

Sacred Places at Risk established a new methodology for documenting the public value of congregations and led to a new course of study, which was inaugurated by Dr. Cnaan's book, *The Newer Deal: Social Work and Religion in Partnership*, and further validated with the publication of *The Invisible Caring Hand: American Congregations and the Provision of Welfare* and *The Other Philadelphia Story: How Local Congregations Support Quality of Life in Urban America*.

Though groundbreaking, *Sacred Places at Risk* and subsequent works did not attempt to quantify all of the ways that congregations impact their communities. The *Economic Halo Effect of Historic Sacred Places* does.

In 2010, Partners was funded by the William Penn Foundation to test the concept of an expanded methodology. Partners again collaborated with Dr. Cnaan and the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice to craft a comprehensive approach to quantifying the public value of congregations. The pilot, conducted in Philadelphia, sought to take into consideration factors such as area spending and support for local businesses; building maintenance costs; visitor spending; activities that promote community economic development; the impact on individuals' lives; and values inherent to religious properties (green space and recreation space).

Based on an extensive review of available, academically vetted methodologies, the team identified nearly two-dozen quantifiable measures of economic impact relevant to congregations stewarding historic and older sacred places, and assembled a singular methodology to pilot in Philadelphia. The results of this pilot were published in 2013 in the scholarly, peer-reviewed *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*.

Economic Halo Effect of Sacred Places

First Presbyterian Church
Pittsburgh, PA

With funding from the Lilly Endowment and the McCormick Foundation, Partners built upon the pilot by undertaking a larger study. This study differed from the first in that it included a greater number of congregations (ninety), and congregations were selected at random from three large cities (Chicago, Philadelphia, and Ft. Worth). The results were published in November of 2016.

The results of *The Economic Halo Effect of Historic Sacred Places* prompted the creation of The Economic Halo Effect of Sacred Places, a tool that is being used to calculate the economic impact of congregations throughout the United States.

Summary of Findings

The *Economic Halo Effect of Sacred Places* takes into account dozens of factors. These factors are summarized into thematic categories below, with First Presbyterian Church's totals in each category.

Benefit Type	Description	Calculation
1. Direct Spending	Spending on operations and building maintenance is funneled into the local economy	\$873,733
2. Education	Providing preschool and K through 12 schooling saves school districts money and enables parents to work	N/A
3. Open Space	Green space and recreation space improve our environment and lower energy costs	N/A
4. Magnet Effect	Hosting events and operating programs catalyzes visitor spending	\$498,724
5. Individual Impact	Intervening in individuals' lives enables people to work and reduces governmental spending	\$515,609
6. Invisible Safety Net	Operating and hosting community- oriented programs supplements the activity of the local government and social service agencies, adding value to the community	\$448,204
TOTAL		\$2,336,270

Direct Spending

Sacred places drive their local and regional economies through purchasing goods and services and by employing area residents. In fact, studies have demonstrated that upwards of 80% of a given congregation's budget is spent in the region – oftentimes with small, locally owned businesses.

In Partners' three-city study, we found that on average, a historic sacred place spends \$549,073 in its community and employs a total of 11.76 employees. First Presbyterian is relatively consistent with this. In an average year, First Presbyterian spends at least \$873,733 in the region and employs 10 people (including both full-time and part-time employees).

\$873,733 in spending represents First Presbyterian's annual operating budget and non-routine capital spending. Capital spending is not a significant portion of this mix. However, because First Presbyterian is in the midst of a capital campaign to restore its historically and culturally significant building, capital spending will represent a significant portion of the mix in the near future.

Each dollar spent by a sacred place catalyzes additional value within the community (spending to impact ratio). In the case of First Presbyterian, each dollar spent by the congregation catalyzes \$2.67 in value within the region.

Education

Sacred places support their local economies through operating affordable, high quality early childhood education and K through 12 schooling. The former enables at least one parent per participating student to work while the latter provides cost savings to the public school system.

In Partners' three-city study, Education accounted for a very significant portion of the total impact made by historic sacred places: 39.8%. Because First Presbyterian does not operate a school or early childhood education program nor does it share space these types of institutions, Education accounts for 0% of its total.

Please note that First Presbyterian's other programs have educational value, but they are not monetized under Education (because of the way Education is calculated).

Magnet Effect

Urban congregations attract visitors for the purposes of worship, education, programming, and special events – and First Presbyterian is no exception. In addition to regular worshippers, First Presbyterian draws thousands of visitors each year through events (hosted by First Presbyterian and hosted by others) and observation of rites of passage. These visitors – whether a tourist enjoying a tour of the building while in town on business or the families of a couple who are being married at First Presbyterian – spend in the vicinity of the building; on food and drink, gasoline or public transportation (including rideshare), entertainment, and sometimes, lodging.

In total, visitors to First Presbyterian spent at least \$498,724 in the region last year, which accounts for 21% of its total impact of \$2,336,270. This is significantly more than the national average of \$375,944 per congregation.

Invisible Safety Net

Congregations create a 'safety net' for those most at risk within their communities – and this is not always visible to public at large. Congregations do this by operating and hosting community-serving programming and sharing space with others at affordable, below market rates.

Historic sacred places are uniquely able to accommodate a variety of uses and users because they typically include spaces that range in size and purpose – from sanctuaries designed to accommodate large gatherings or performances to education wings designed to accommodate robust Sunday School programs.

In Partners' three-city study, Invisible Safety Net accounted for just 6.6% of the total. In the case of First Presbyterian, it accounted for an impressive 19% (\$448,204) of its total impact of \$2,336,270. Volunteer time, financial and in-kind resources, and space contributed by the congregation are factored into this measure – regardless of whether the program occurs on site or elsewhere in the community (except in the case of the replacement value of space).

Space provided to organizations such as Youth Chamber Connection and the Red Cross adds up over the course of a year. In the past year, it accounted for \$54,650 of First Presbyterian's \$448,204 in Invisible Safety Net.

Individual Impact

Partners recognizes that, outside of the larger programs hosted or run by congregations, clergy, program staff, and professional and lay volunteers often provide one-on-one counseling, make referrals to social service agencies, help find jobs, etc. Much of this outreach is "under the radar" because of the sensitive nature of the assistance given. This research project documented a wide array of outreach with an Individual Impact including counseling to suicidal individuals; counseling to strengthen marriages; assisting people suffering abuse; helping people obtain citizenship; referring people to drug or alcohol counseling (or providing it directly); working with people at-risk of committing crimes/going to prison; teaching youth pro-social values; helping people form new friendships; and enabling people to work by caring for senior family members.

Individual Impact was monetized in the Economic Halo Effect of Sacred Places pilot (published in the Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion in 2013), but not in Partners' more recent three-city study (self-published in November of 2016). However, because it is a tremendously important part of each congregation's narrative, and especially First Presbyterian's narrative, it was monetized as a part of this assessment of First Presbyterian's economic impact.

At \$515,609, Individual Impact accounts for 22% of First Presbyterian's total impact.

For more detail on how this was calculated, please see "If you do not count it, it does not count: A pilot study of valuing urban congregations," which was published in the scholarly, peer-reviewed Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion.

How to Use This Information

We at Partners hope that you will make the most of this data in the coming years by incorporating it into your congregation's materials and incorporating it into your shared narrative. It can be used to:

- Tell your story in a way that appeals to civic leaders and community stakeholders that don't speak the language of faith
- Communicate the value of a given program (for example, a food pantry) or programmatic emphasis (for example, arts programming)
- Bolster annual stewardship campaigns and larger capital fundraising efforts
- To make projections that can strengthen grant applications
- Do sacred places advocacy in the face of threats (for example, tax assessments)
- Suggest ways for to living out your mission in new ways and increasing you Halo impact
- Raise your profile in the community

In the case of a congregation as significant as First Presbyterian, Partners recommends that the congregation consider issuing a press release summarizing the findings and/or utilizing press contacts to garner media coverage. First Presbyterian is a major economic force in the Pittsburgh region, and it merits recognition as such.

About Partners for Sacred Places

Partners for Sacred Places, founded in 1989, is the only national, non-sectarian, nonprofit organization focused on building the capacity of congregations of historic sacred places so that they can better serve their communities as anchor institutions, nurture transformation, and shape vibrant, creative communities.

Partners for Sacred Places brings together a national network of expert professionals who understand the value of a congregation's architectural assets, its worth as a faith community, and the significance of its service to the community at large. With a national presence and offices in Philadelphia, Chicago, and Dallas/Fort Worth, Partners fosters the active community use of historic, sacred places – churches, synagogues, temples, and mosques – and builds the capability of their congregations through training programs and fundraising assistance. Partners has served thousands of congregations and related organizations over the past twenty-five years, and represents the needs and concerns of over 100,000 older, community-serving sacred places across America.

For more information about our work, please visit us on the web at www.sacredplaces.org.

From Shepherds of People to Superintendents of the Program

pres·by·te·ri·an, adj. prez-bi-teer-ee-uh n Pertaining to or based on the principle of ecclesiastical government by elders or presbyteries.

“Still it is plain, from the word of God, as well as from uniform experience that the government of the Church is a matter of great importance; that the form as well as the administration of that government is more vitally connected with the peace, purity, and edification of the Church, than many Christians appear to believe; and, of consequence, that is no small part of fidelity to our Master in heaven...”

—Samuel Miller, *An Essay on the Warrant, Nature and Duties of the Office of Ruling Elder*

What if we have our namesake wrong? What if the role of elders in church government is really to oversee people rather than programs, budgets, and buildings? How has our common practice of elders as titular shepherds only and, in reality, bureaucrats and committee heads, affected the peace, purity, and edification of the Church?

We can at least say, at the outset, that the role of elders in the Presbyterian Church has changed dramatically in the last 150 years. We can also say that the role of elder, in particular, bears little resemblance to what we see in Scripture and our theology. The role of elders in the 1850s, when Church discipline was common practice, seems almost other-worldly, harsh and draconian to elders of the contemporary era. In contrast, were the elders of the 1850s asked about the role played by today’s elders, where the Session functions more like a super-committee superintending the program of the Church, today’s Session would, no doubt, seem very lackadaisical and spiritually wanton. Presbyterians are accustomed to titanic denominational battles which dramatically shift the Church landscape: slavery, the role of women, Scriptural authority, Confessional standards, separation and reunion, ordination, and sexuality among them. In all of these cases, the historian can point to seminal debates and decisions which preceded or prevented such change from occurring. No one doubts that had some of the decisions gone differently, the denomination would look quite different today.

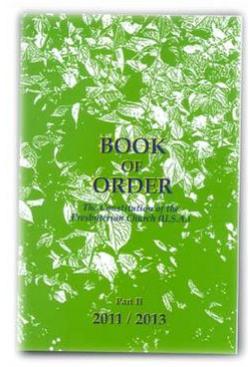
The role of elders is unique in that dramatic change has occurred devoid of these seminal battles. Yet, the shift from the former model to the current one has perhaps had a more dramatic effect than any of the above. From the first Presbyterian General Assembly in 1788 until the merger of the United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America in 1958, the Book or Order described the job of elders with this brief phrase:

Ruling elders are properly the representatives of the people, chosen by them, for the purpose of exercising government and discipline, in conjunction with pastors or ministers.

Despite this continuity of description, the role of elders underwent a dramatic change, and we see the results of that change today.

The job description of elders expands as follows in the 2013 Book of Order:

As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to sharing 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



Capital Campaign Preparation Materials

First Presbyterian Church
Pittsburgh, PA



AT THE INTERSECTION
OF HERITAGE, FAITH,
& COMMUNITY

Partners for Sacred Places

What is a Capital Campaign?

Every sacred place is the center of a unique network for parishioners, neighbors, and friends. For over 25 years, Partners for Sacred Places has helped congregations implement a strategic, coordinated approach to capital fundraising. Partners' methods ensure that true priorities are addressed in building stewardship and that the congregation reaches its full potential in fundraising, that it gets the greatest return on all its expenditures, and that it is energized - not drained - by the fundraising and restoration efforts.

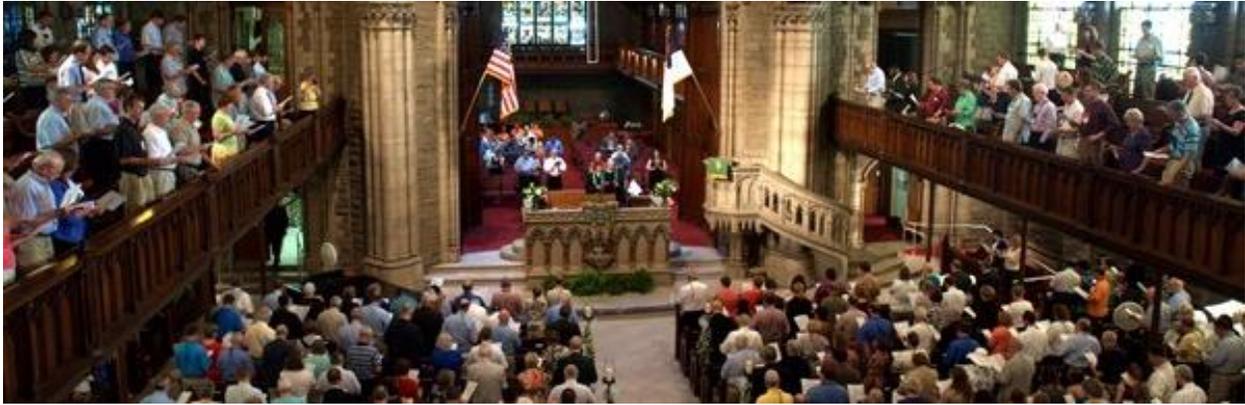
A successful campaign is an amalgamation of a thousand details. From recruiting leadership, creating a project plan, drafting a compelling case statement, coordinating a legion of volunteers, and soliciting donations, the prospect of a capital campaign can seem intimidating. The good news is that 70% of successful campaigns are planning and preparation and less than 30% active solicitation. This preparation guide is meant to assist First Presbyterian Church to successfully complete the most critical "silent" phase and set itself up to attain an overall capital fundraising goal of \$850,000 - \$950,000.

Key Factors of a Successful Campaign

- There is no substitute for leadership.
- Your unique building and history can lead you to unexpected sources of support.
- Congregational consensus and commitment are prerequisites for success.
- "Advance Gifts" determine the success of the campaign.
- A Pyramid of Gifts is the most important tool in the fundraiser's toolbox.
- See your prospects in person; a telephone call is a poor second choice (and mail an even poorer third).
- Never hesitate to tell a potential donor what it will take for the campaign to be successful.
- Don't forget to say "Thanks"!



PARTNERS FOR SACRED PLACES



Leverage *the* Congregation's Gifts

To carry out a successful campaign, First Presbyterian will need to access a wide range of skills. Thankfully, most congregations find that they already have members with the requisite knowledge and experience to complete the necessary tasks during all phases of the campaign!

- Legal expertise: ability to devise language for pledge cards and other documents
- Writing ability: skill to compose brochures, letters of request, press releases, etc.
- Fundraising experience: for gift solicitation, but also organization and record keeping
- Photography and graphic design: ability to design digital and print brochures, invitations, etc.
- Research skills: ability to research individuals, foundations, corporations, government sources, and records
- Communications expertise: ability to place stories and promote content in digital and print platforms

"Silent" *doesn't* mean "Secret"

Potential donors, including and most importantly the members of the congregation, are most likely to support a campaign if they feel they have a voice in shaping it. Obviously, it is not possible to involve every member in every decision, but it is possible to keep the congregation informed and invite their participation at critical junctures along the way. Campaign leaders should use every means available to communicate with the congregation. Letters, newsletters, announcements from the pulpit, posted announcements, and group meetings should all be employed to inform members of major decisions, challenges, and progress.

Likewise, key stakeholders from the wider community should be invited into campaign leadership and activities. These valuable partners keep the campaign relevant and attractive to external donors.

Step 1: Build *a* Strong Infrastructure

Identifying the key stakeholders and drivers

First Presbyterian's capital campaign's success hinges upon the capacity of the leaders that volunteer their time and energy to plan and implement the campaign. Thus, the first step is to recruit individuals to fill the key roles of the Steering Committee.

Getting people to work can be twice as difficult as getting them to give. In order to recruit energized and skilled leaders, First Presbyterian must identify individuals who have a reason to become involved and have the right person make the ask of the potential volunteer.

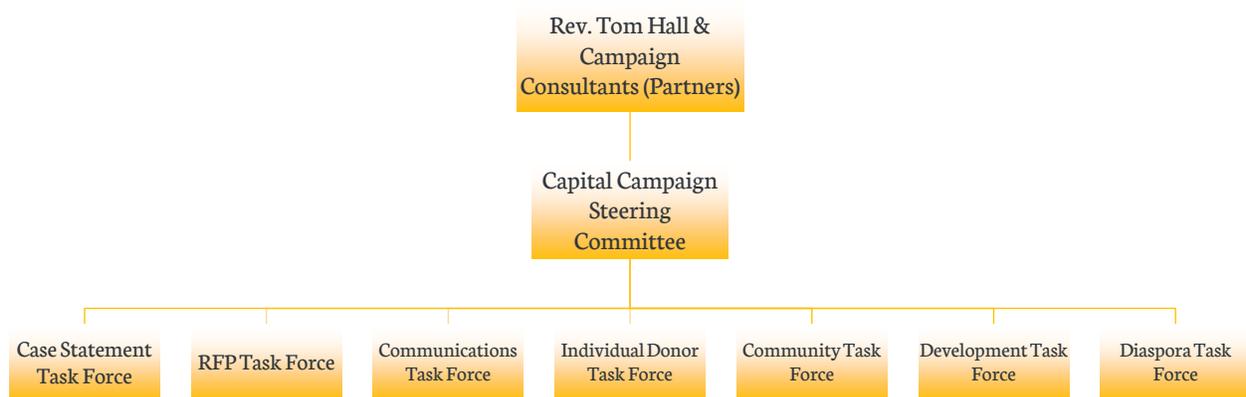
Partners will assist First Presbyterian by facilitating an internal asset-mapping event to identify potential volunteers' strengths and passions. Additionally, Partners will conduct interviews of prospective Steering Committee members, providing a neutral, third-party evaluation of the individual's capacity and gifts to contribute.

It is not necessary to recruit every volunteer for a campaign at once. Typically, the chairpersons of the task forces serve as members of the Steering Committee and are recruited early in the campaign. Volunteers for each task force are recruited later, as needed.

At every level of the organizational chart, it will be important to assure prospective volunteers that the "cause" is good, that the restoration and fundraising plans are sound; and that the campaign is adequately staffed and supported. Many congregations invest in a part- or full-time clerical assistant who can coordinate meeting schedules, donor visits, and follow up with various task force/steering committee task completion.

Capital Campaign Infrastructure

A description of roles, activities, and outcomes



Every campaign needs a “core group” of five to ten members to provide regular oversight. This committee, the Steering Committee, may consist of the same individuals who composed the original group that proposed the capital projects and were involved in the early decision-making about the consultants and the feasibility study. Generally, the Steering Committee will consist of:

- The campaign chairperson
- The pastor
- Three or four leaders of the congregation (who may also be task force chairs)
- At least two external stakeholders who are not members of the congregation

Though only a handful of individuals serve on the Steering Committee, there are plenty of opportunities for other congregation members to donate their time and talents to the campaign! Task forces, as the name suggests, are designed to work towards the completion of a single objective. Once that task has been completed, the associated task force can be dissolved. This allows potential campaign volunteers with limited time and gifts or experience in development, research, writing, editing, and graphic design to take ownership over a defined piece of the campaign without overwhelming them.

The following pages detail the “job descriptions” for each level of campaign leadership, with each group’s roles, responsibilities, and expected results.

Rev. Hall *and* Consultants

Guides and faces of the campaign

Rev. Tom Hall and the Partners for Sacred Places consultants will be involved in the major decisions of the campaign and will lead the gift solicitation component. Though they may be the “face” of the campaign, both Rev. Hall and the Partners consultants rely on the Steering Committee and other volunteers to manage the numerous and varied projects.

While it is tempting to appoint the spiritual leader as the campaign chairperson, they are not the best person to chair the campaign. It is essential for Rev. Tom Hall to provide spiritual leadership, placing the campaign within the context First Presbyterian’s spiritual life and participating in donor visits as appropriate. External sources such as foundations, corporations, and civic groups are, usually, particularly eager to meet with the spiritual leader of an institution.

Steering Committee

Captains of the Campaign Ship

The Capital Campaign Steering Committee acts as a board of directors for the capital campaign and will include congregants, staff, and members from the wider community. Steering Committee members must have a sincere personal desire to help assure the success of the campaign, as well as be willing to make a gift to the campaign that will serve as a model to others. Steering Committee members should expect to meet at least once a month. Other duties include:

- Determining campaign structure, policy, and staffing
- Advising on campaign expenditures
- Soliciting advance gifts and participating in the “ask” process
- Recruiting committee and task force members
- Approving campaign materials; coordinating events, activities, and public relations; overseeing volunteers
- Evaluating results and revising strategy as needed
- Leveraging strategic relationships to recruit new donors to the campaign
- Providing oversight of individual task forces

Task Forces

Sub-teams that are responsible for discreet projects

Case Statement Task Force: Responsible for research into First Presbyterian's and neighborhood history, identification of current conditions/mission of First Presbyterian, writing and revising document.

Request for Proposals (RFP) Task Force: Responsible for developing RFPs for facility upgrades, distributing RFPs to relevant architects, and reviewing proposals and selecting an architect for the project. Works with architect and construction crew throughout the building process.

Communications Task Force: Responsible for creating campaign materials, developing a social media strategy, and creating an e-newsletter that updates members and donors about First Presbyterian.

Individual Donor Task Force: Responsible for reviewing current and potential donors, researching their capacity to give, prioritizing and sorting donors into Pyramid of Gifts, and matching donors to gift solicitor based on his/her relationship to First Presbyterian.

Community Task Force: Responsible for identifying, cultivating, and leveraging relationships in the community; increasing space-sharing partnerships; and welcoming neighbors, commuters, etc.

Diaspora Task Force: Responsible for identifying, cultivating, and leveraging relationships with past members, descendants of past members, and other individuals with historic ties to First Presbyterian.

Development Task Force: Responsible for identifying, cultivating, and leveraging relationships with local, state, and regional foundations; foundation research; meeting with program officers; grant writing; and grant reporting.

Step 2: Strengthen Support for the Project

Community Asset-Mapping and Charrette

Asset-mapping is a powerful tool that Partners provides to help a church identify new stakeholders and develop strategies for connecting the congregation's assets, including its building, to assets in the community - physical, individual, associational, and institutional. Stakeholders and leaders from throughout the community are brought together in a dynamic and exciting process that uncovers ideas for new programs, collaborations, initiatives, and resources.

Partners will work with First Presbyterian to engage in a **Community Asset-Mapping** event that would include faith leaders and congregants, as well as people and organizations from throughout the neighborhood and the city of Pittsburgh. The Asset-Mapping event will identify new partners and collaborators in the wider community, providing important insight for First Presbyterian about how to connect its assets with the gifts and talents of the city around them and lay the groundwork for stronger partnerships now and in the future. This event will also be an opportunity to engage and motivate community leaders to create a vision for shared use of under-utilized spaces, and for the congregation to craft a space-sharing strategy for additional income and increased use of the church building while also expanding their mission and impact.

After the conclusion of the asset-mapping and charrette events, Partners will synthesize the information generated for the congregation. This summary will lay the foundation of fundraising and communications work to support repairs, renovations, and new collaborations and programs.

Asset-Mapping and Connecting in Communities

What is Asset Mapping?

Asset-Mapping is a group exercise with people from all different walks of life and interests. Their common bond is that they each have something to offer – their perspective, enthusiasm, connections, support, curiosity, creativity, etc. Once gathered, participants are invited to identify specific strengths and resources – that is, “assets,” – within the community.

What is an asset? An asset is a person, thing, or quality that holds value. This is something unique about your community, the special strengths and advantages that make your community so valuable. After naming these special characteristics, participants will begin to make connections between all of the assets that have been named and listed.

What does Asset-Mapping accomplish? Asset-mapping helps a group to change perspectives and shift paradigms: from one based on what we *lack*, to energetic new ways of seeing tremendous value and possibility in what we *have*, the connections between them, and the people in our community.

Where does Asset-Mapping come from?

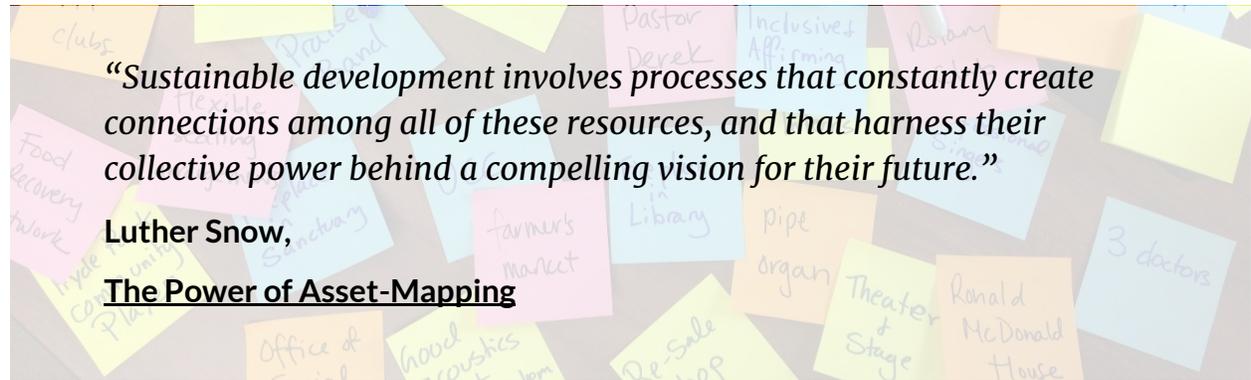
Asset-Mapping is a key practice in **Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)** -- a strategy for sustainable community-driven development. Developed by faculty at Northwestern University, ABCD and its methodologies help communities of all sizes mobilize around the resources and strengths they already have and create greater economic and social opportunity for their members. Asset-Based Community Development is

- **Asset-Based:** starting with what is present, not what is absent
- **Internally-Focused:** utilizing the gifts and talents of local residents
- **Relationship-Driven:** stewarding connections between and among individuals

Changing our Perspective

<u>Deficit-Based</u>	vs.	<u>Asset-Based</u>
<i>Problems</i>		<i>Possibilities</i>
<i>Blame</i>		<i>Shared ownership</i>
<i>What's missing</i>		<i>What's there</i>
<i>Scarcity</i>		<i>Abundance</i>
<i>Risks</i>		<i>Courageous leadership</i>
<i>Needs</i>		<i>Strengths & capacities</i>
<i>Top-Down</i>		<i>Inside-out</i>
<i>Do to</i>		<i>Do with & enable</i>
<i>Charity</i>		<i>Partnership</i>

PARTNERS FOR SACRED PLACES



Partners' Six Types of Assets

<p style="text-align: center;">Associational Assets</p> <p>Voluntary groups, associations, networks, and organizations of individuals who gather to do or enjoy something together that they could not experience on their own.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual capacities of members • Common goals • Local connections & knowledge • Leadership potential • Energy 	<p style="text-align: center;">Narrative Assets</p> <p>Stories that are touchstones for the community/congregations, that contribute to a general reputation and culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background and personal history • What you like to do and contribute • Stories of including those who are marginalized • Stories of when the community was at its best • Stories of economic/social growth
<p style="text-align: center;">Institutional Assets</p> <p>Businesses, firms, public agencies, and nonprofits with budgets and staffs. Individuals participate in institutions because of salaries, sales, taxes, or other legal/financial considerations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood businesses • Local nonprofits • Government agencies 	<p style="text-align: center;">Physical Assets</p> <p>Things that you can see, touch, or feel. These include land and natural resources, buildings and space, equipment, materials and objects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure • Buildings and land • Utilities • Gardens, parks, playgrounds
<p style="text-align: center;">Economic Assets</p> <p>Our spending power, our investing power, and our capacity to provide valuable goods or services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things that are shared, traded, purchased, or exchanged • Can be formal or informal • Where you spend or invest your money 	<p style="text-align: center;">Individual Assets</p> <p>The gifts of the hands, head, and heart. These are the things that an individual knows a lot about, has the ability to make or create, and what motivates them to action. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special knowledge or education • Professional/vocational skills • Hobbies • Personal values

Step 3: Craft *a* Compelling Message

The Case Statement and Communications Strategy

A case statement is a document (from 1 to 3 pages) that outlines an institution's case for support. In a succinct and compelling way, it describes *all* the reasons a congregant, member, or a potential donor in a community - such as an individual, foundation, corporation or governmental entity - might be willing to contribute to your campaign.

A single format for the case statement will not be adequate for all donors that First Presbyterian hopes to reach. In addition to the usual mailing, many congregations have produced videos, created web pages, and utilized social media to reach a variety of potential donors. The Case Statement Task Force should work closely with the Communications Task Force to decide the most efficient and attractive way to design and publish the case statement to appeal to a variety of donors. Variations on the case statement can be tailored to different audiences:

- Congregation members
- Community members
- Preservationists (emphasizing the building's architectural significance)
- Tourists (emphasizing the building's historic importance)
- Individuals interested in "planned giving," such as bequests

Case Statement Preparation

Creating the case statement is one of the most important experiences in a fundraising campaign. It calls for looking at your institution and its building(s) in new ways, discovering hidden historical associations with people and events, and imaginatively answering the question, “Why should I (we) give?”

Historical Research

Important sources to consult include:

- Meeting minutes from governing bodies
- Anniversary history
- Programs from building dedications
- Previous fundraising campaigns materials
- Newspaper articles
- Names on walls, pews, and plaques
- Baptism, wedding, and funeral records
- Old membership lists
- Previous giving records
- Genealogical information

In collecting information about the past, don’t neglect photographs. Photographs uncovered during this “discovery” can prove invaluable when it is time to illustrate the brochure and prepare other information.

Current Research

The second step in the creation of the case statement involves current research to answer the question, “What is important about the institution today?” This is a process in which everyone (congregants, staff, etc.) can participate. We suggest breaking into small groups and using large pads of paper on easels to record the answers given by each group.

Important sources to consult include:

- What does this institution mean to you?
- What is its primary mission? Its secondary mission?
- What are the high points in its history?
- What are the services it provides today?
- What services could it provide in the future to fulfill its mission?
- What is most important about this project? (Be sure to include ancillary buildings)
- What does this institution mean to the larger community?
- What will motivate you, a member, to give?
- What will motivate most members?
- What will motivate the community-at-large?

As (and *if*) you involve congregants, members, and staff in this process, don’t forget the children...they frequently provide the clearest insights and pithiest quotations!

Case Statement Preparation

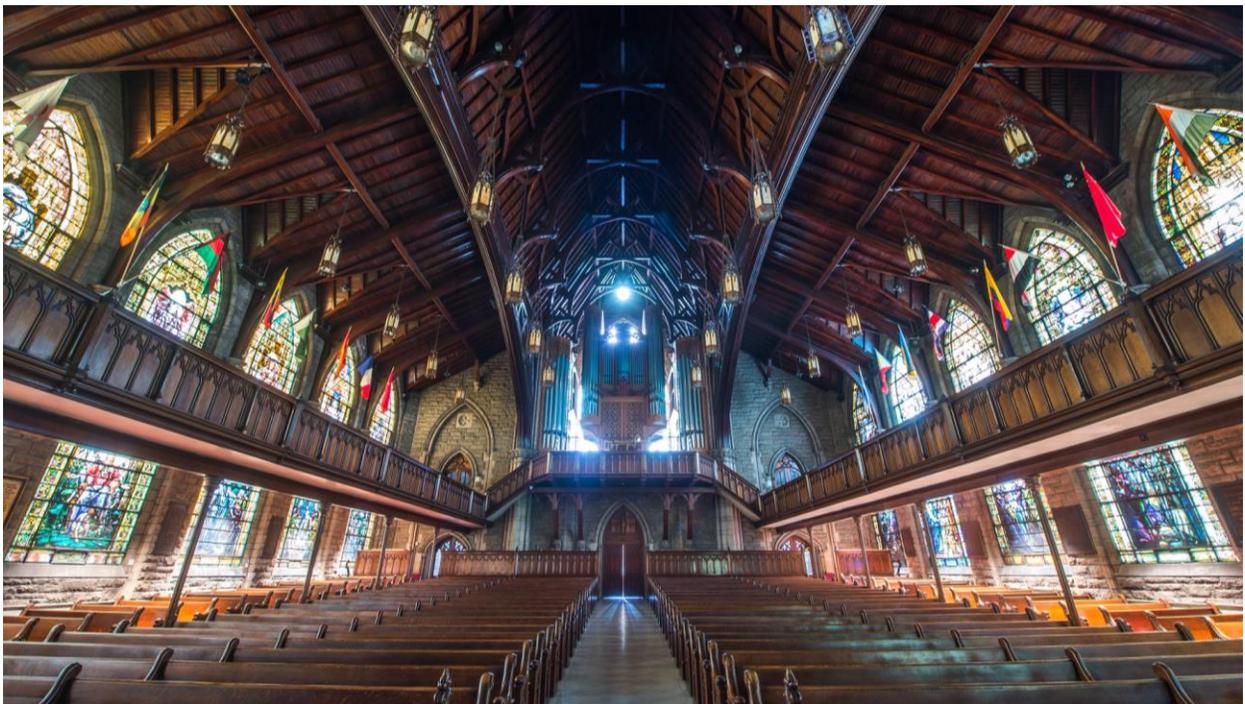
Writing and Revision

The third step is the actual writing of the case statement. It is often written by one individual and reviewed and revised by the Steering Committee and Consultant.

Important points to emphasize in your case statement include:

- The mission of your institution and why it is important
- The historical significance, including those prominent individuals associated with it over time
- Your service to the community – past, present, and future
- The range of people served by your institution
- Total needs, including facilities enhancement, operating support, new programs, and endowment
- Objective of the campaign
- The plan for meeting the objectives, including a budget
- Competence to implement the plan, including leadership, staff, financial health, and other institutional strengths

Examples of case statements by other Partners clients are included at the end of this packet for reference and inspiration.



Step 4: Develop a Solicitation Strategy

Donor Identification and Solicitor Training

The success of all gift solicitations – from the highest \$ amount to the lowest – depend on asking the *right solicitors* asking the *right person* at the *right time* for the *right amount*.

- The *right solicitors* will be two or three influential individuals whom the prospective donor does not wish to disappoint.
- The *right person* includes members of the congregation, but also community stakeholders, neighbors, and other individuals or groups that have a vested interest in First Presbyterian's success.
- Campaign leaders will want to be sensitive to fluctuations in business and personal fortunes of donors so that they are asking at the *right time* – clergy and lay leaders responsible for pastoral care (e.g., deacons) will be invaluable to solicitation strategy development.
- The *right amount* is the largest gift the prospective donor could make if properly motivated – an amount that research suggests is both sacrificial and possible.

Experienced fundraisers know that it is almost impossible to reach an ambitious goal without securing gifts from the top “tier” of donors in advance of announcing the campaign to the public. The Partners consultants and Rev. Hall will meet with donors who have the highest capacity to give before the public launch so that First Presbyterian begins its public phase with 30% - 40% of the goal already raised!

The Individual Donor Task Force will develop a solicitation strategy that pairs volunteer solicitors with prospective donors and the Partners consultants will lead multiple solicitation workshops to build volunteers' capacity and confidence in making the ask!

Donor Identification *and* Rating

A Strategy for Successful Asks

By its very name, “campaign” suggests a methodical approach to achieving carefully defined objectives. To carry that analogy further, it is impossible to advance on all fronts at once. For this reason, campaigns typically proceed from the “inside out” beginning with solicitation of those with the greatest reason to give and proceeding outward to constituencies that require a longer cultivation process.



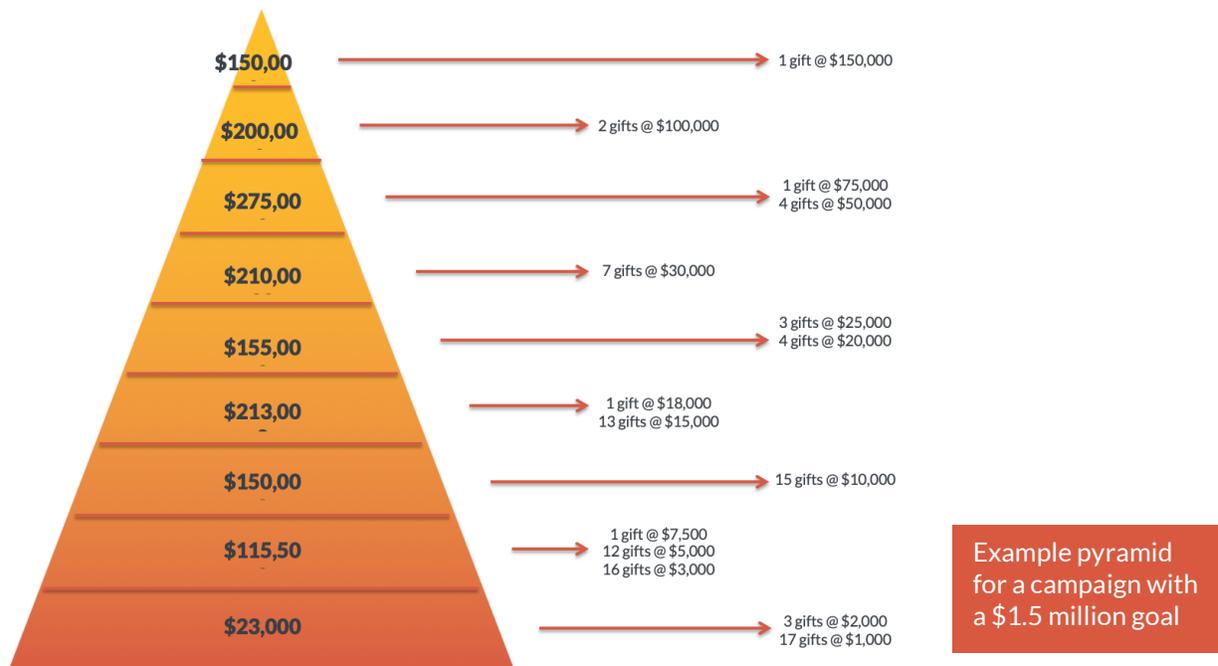
In addition to moving from the inside out, successful campaigns proceed from larger gifts to smaller gifts with every ring in the circle. Early gifts “set the pace” and set an appropriately high standard for others to follow. For this reason, the Steering Committee will secure at least 30% of the top gifts before formally announcing the campaign.

It is never too early to begin collecting the names of potential donors! Prospects are assigned to a gift category or division based on research and rating. To identify prospective donors, campaign volunteers should focus on current and former members, neighboring institutions, and space-use / ministry

partners. Several weeks before active solicitations are scheduled to begin, a small, select group of campaign volunteers will gather to “rate” or “evaluate” the prospects that will be solicited. Asking figures are used to determine the levels on the Pyramid of Gifts, representing what a prospect could do if properly motivated.

Pyramid of Gifts

The Foundation of First Presbyterian's Fundraising Strategy



The Pyramid of Gifts has been given many names in campaigns over the years, such as Table of Gifts, Standards Chart, Chart of Investments, etc. No matter what it is called, the Pyramid of Gifts is the most important planning and solicitation document of the entire campaign because it illustrates in precise terms the size and number of gifts that will be needed to reach the campaigns goal.

For many years, the Pyramid of Gifts was constructed according to a rough “rule of thirds,” which dictated that the lead gift in a campaign must equal 10% of the total to be raised, with approximately one third of the total coming from the top 10 gifts. This assumes a fairly large prospect pool, with prospective donors at every level of the pyramid.

Partners has adapted the Pyramid of Gifts to include the specific situation of each congregation. Using a congregation’s giving history, Partners lends particular weight to the giving potential of prospects at the higher levels of the pyramid. This is particularly helpful for congregations with a small prospect pool or with few donors in the middle ranges.

Not every congregation has prospects capable of gifts in the six-figure range. All congregations, however, have members of relative wealth and the Pyramid of Gifts remains an unbeatable tool for persuading wealthier individuals to assume a larger role.

Step 5: Go Public!

Preparing and Implementing the Public Phase

Remember, successful campaigning is 70% preparation and less than 30% solicitation! If First Presbyterian has completed all the preparatory steps in the Silent Phase, the “public appeal” (what most people think of as “the campaign”) should move smoothly and rapidly.

- Plans for the public phase are finalized
- Advance gifts have been secured
- Volunteer solicitors have been trained
- Every member of the congregation has been rated and “assigned” to a solicitor
- Materials have been designed and printed/posted

Many congregations celebrate the launch of the Public Phase with a kickoff event to build enthusiasm and inspire solicitors and prospective donors to action. Just like a pep rally before the big game, kickoff events build hype in the congregation and community!

After the kickoff event, solicitors begin scheduling meetings with their prospects and regularly report back to the Steering Committee. Campaign leadership keep the congregation’s energy focused on the campaign by:

- Praying for the success of the campaign
- Regularly publishing results
- Publishing (and thanking!) those who have supported the campaign
- Distributing souvenirs to those who have given

Your Consulting Team

Meet the people who will be walking with you



GIANFRANCO GRANDE
Lead Consultant

Gianfranco Grande brings over 25 years of experience in management of nonprofit organizations and capital campaign strategies to his role as Executive Vice President of Partners for Sacred Places. Gianfranco serves as the Lead Consultant for First Presbyterian's capital campaign and will be involved with every component of the project.

REV. BRIDGET FIDLER
Capital Campaign Consultant

Ordained in the UCC, Rev. Bridget Fidler Bridget brings a deep understanding of church cultures and seeks to help churches see themselves and their role in the community from a fresh perspective. Rev. Bridget serves as a consultant to the First Presbyterian campaign and will be involved with every component of the project.



JOSHUA CASTAÑO
Community Engagement Consultant

Joshua Castaño has expertise in delivery of capacity-building training programs and other programmatic initiatives as well as community-based fundraising. Joshua will work with First Presbyterian campaign leadership on all community engagement components of the campaign, including asset-mapping and the development of a community advisory

SARAH JONES
Associate Consultant

Sarah holds a Master of Divinity as well as a Master of Social Service Administration and brings experience designing and implementing service programs in faith-based and secular organizations. Sarah will serve as coordinator for the First Presbyterian campaign, assisting with all project components.





First Church Reaching Out



rendering of proposed elevator access; current stair access to Second Floor FCCS, left- right- rendering of proposed elevator access.



Lift Yourself by Uplifting Others



The Capital Campaign of First Church of Christ, Congregational

81 High Street, Suffield, CT 06078

Our Mission Statement

*As disciples of Jesus and stewards of God's Creation, we joyfully worship,
faithfully serve and generously give so that lives may be transformed*

Making the Case

The Congregation of First Church of Christ has committed to embark on a major capital campaign to raise \$920,000 which will allow us to live into our church's Mission Statement. As a church that exists "In the Community, For the Community," our renovation goals will enable us to provide Christian hospitality through our open doors by making our facility more accessible, welcoming and safe for all who enter.

"LIFTING UP OUR COMMUNITY" CAPITAL CAMPAIGN GOALS

FUNDING FOR ACCESSIBILITY & REPAIRS.....\$350,000

THE CENTERPIECE OF OUR RENOVATION IS THE INSTALLATION OF A MULTI-LEVEL ELEVATOR TO PROVIDE EASY ACCESS TO ALL LEVELS OF OUR CHURCH FOR PUBLIC USE. RENOVATIONS ALSO INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN EXTERIOR ADA-COMPLIANT RAMP AND HANDICAPPED-ACCESSIBLE RESTROOMS, ROOF REPAIRS AND EXTERIOR PAINTING

FUNDING FOR MISSION PROJECTS.....\$90,000

IT IS A LONG-STANDING TENET AT FIRST CHURCH THAT TEN PERCENT OF FUNDS RAISED DURING A CAPITAL CAMPAIGN ARE DESIGNATED TO OUR MISSIONS & OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Our History

For nearly 350 years First Church of Christ, Congregational has stood at the center and heart of Suffield. A stone tablet on the Suffield Green marks the site where the first meeting house stood – a structure serving as church, gathering place for government business and local school house. When the meeting house was built, the area that is now Suffield was still part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. By 1674, the required 20 families and minister were in residence and the Town of Suffield was officially recognized by the Colony.



The Parish House, built in 1956, is the building adjacent to the Sanctuary. It contains the Chapel, Fellowship Hall, parlor, classrooms, offices and music rehearsal spaces of the church. This addition has five separate levels with multiple stairways which pose barriers to access and are neither welcoming nor Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. **The members of First Church support this capital campaign because we know our mission is about welcoming and serving our community. Our ability to be a relevant and engaged family of faith is tied to the well-being of all the residents of the wider Suffield community.**

First Church has forged productive relationships with local churches, non-profit organizations and local government in service to the Suffield community. Partnering with local funeral homes and Masonicare, our Blue Christmas service comforts those for whom the holidays are emotionally challenging. We host a monthly midweek service open to all shut-ins and elderly town residents, providing the opportunity to worship, share reflections and receive communion, followed by a light luncheon and fellowship. In partnership with Second Baptist Church, we host a summer Vacation Bible School for youth as well as an annual Blessing of the Animals on the Town Green. During the Lenten season, our "Quiet Day" event is an invitation to the community to come into the church to engage in hands-on inspirational activities that promote personal reflection, meditation and service. First Church works closely with Suffield Community Aid to stock its food pantry, maintain a heating fuel fund and encourage general donations. We support the Crossroads Food Pantry at West Suffield Congregational Church through donations of food and funds. The Carter Fund of First Church offers financial assistance to those suffering with cancer.

Countless Suffield residents have been touched by the hospitality of First Church over the years. For many, attending even one First Church event or activity has been a positive life-changing experience. Our Capital Campaign aspires to broaden and deepen our capacity to serve the residents of Suffield and to extend our mission to transform lives.



Building Use By the Numbers

- 33 preschool families in classrooms and Fellowship Hall
- 75 attending weekly AA meetings in classrooms and Fellowship Hall
- 35 attending weekly meetings of Families and Narcotics Anonymous in classrooms
- 100 attending Cub Scout Blue and Gold ceremony in Fellowship Hall
- 18 students receiving weekly tutoring in classrooms
- 144 sandwiches made weekly in Fellowship Hall for delivery to Enfield's Loaves and Fishes
- 4 annual Music On High community concerts performed in the Sanctuary
- 86 students and 6 teachers participating in AP Testing in Fellowship Hall
- 11,000 meals made in one day for Rise Against Hunger in Fellowship Hall
- 200 hot meals prepared in Fellowship Hall for Cathedral in the Night in Northampton
- 800 food items collected in the Sanctuary for Crossroads Food Pantry
- 280 families attending Breakfast with Santa in Fellowship Hall

First Church & the Community

First Church of Christ is an Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ. We have intentionally and collectively affirmed and declared our conviction that every person is a beloved child of God, worthy of our welcome and respect. We celebrate the full and unique identity of each person regardless of ancestry, origin, age, economic status, physical and mental ability, gender expression, and sexual identity and orientation. Our vision as members of First Church is that the church should fully "Be the Church" in all its best expressions. To live that mission fully, we must ensure access to our church building for all who wish to enter. First Church has a steady history of intentional outreach to serve and lift up our community, providing Christian hospitality through our open doors, engagement with and advocacy for the people of Suffield, and sanctuary and welcome to all.

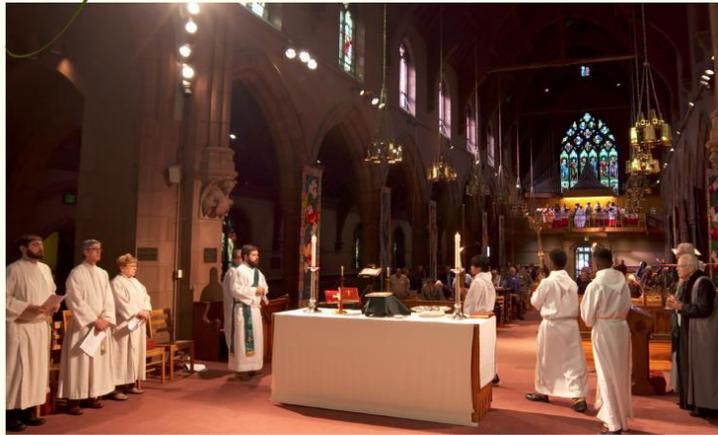


CELEBRATING A PLACE *of* FAITHFUL SERVICE TO HARTFORD

THE CAMPAIGN *for* TRINITY CHURCH

OUR GOAL

- The unique and historic buildings of Trinity Church serve many people – most of whom are not church members.
- These buildings require preventative care and code compliance upgrades so that they can continue to be safe and sturdy for the long term.
- We're asking members of the church and the community to donate generously to enable the needed tasks to be done right. Our goal is to raise \$750,000.



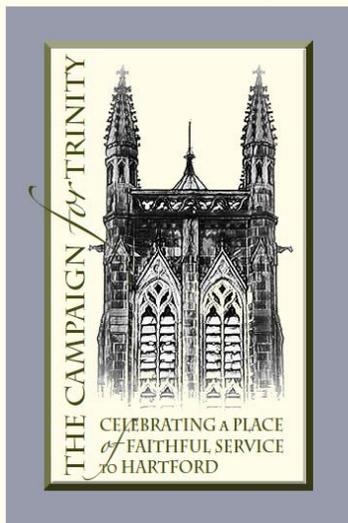
THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE use or visit the buildings of Trinity Church each year. They are young and old, rich and poor, and racially, ethnically and religiously diverse.

On a typical weekday, the halls of our buildings are bursting with activity and filled with the voices of students, staff, parents and volunteers of Trinity Academy, a tuition-free elementary school; and the Choir School of Hartford, an after-school program that nurtures life skills through the art and discipline of music. Hundreds of people gather on a weekly basis to gain support from the many scheduled weekly 12-step and similar programs, while others looking for inspiration and cultural exploration attend concerts and special events. On Sundays, people from the neighborhood and from across the region gather for worship in the Episcopal tradition for inspiration and fellowship.

The buildings of Trinity Church represent a vital resource for the neighborhood and the city. Beautiful and architecturally irreplaceable, they provide common ground for a wide range of people to come together through a host of activities that nurture body, mind and spirit.

These buildings are an important part of Hartford's "social infrastructure". They also provide financial value to the neighborhood and the city. Partners for Sacred Spaces, a national organization devoted to enhancing the life and ministry of historic urban sacred buildings, recently concluded a study that estimated the financial value to the city of Trinity Church and its allied programs to be \$3,075,212 million per year.

THE CAMPAIGN *for* TRINITY



THE CAMPAIGN *for* TRINITY

OUR NEEDS AT A GLANCE



ENTIRE COMPLEX

NEEDS: Masonry repointing
Roof gutters and flashing
Fire & safety upgrades

MEMORIAL GARDEN

BUILT: Last renovated 2000
USES: Summer services
Open to the public on summer weekdays
when volunteers are present for welcome & supervision
NEEDS: Steps and fountain repair

MAIN CHURCH

BUILT: 1898 – Tower 1912
USES: Church services, weddings & funerals
The Choir School of Hartford rehearsals & events
Trinity Academy musicals
Graduations, convocations, and other community events
Concerts by local and touring groups
NEEDS: Repair plaster
Upgrade safety rail for choir loft
Accessibility ramp for chapel

GOODWIN HALL/KITCHEN/LIBRARY

BUILT: 1892
USES: Social gatherings and meetings
Trinity Academy meals and meetings
Receptions and special events
NEEDS: New stove for kitchen

PARISH HOUSE

BUILT: 1881
USES: Church offices
Apartment
NEEDS: Porch repairs

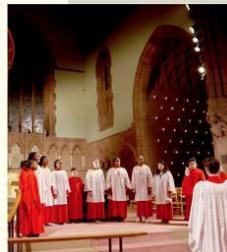
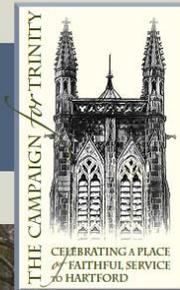
EDUCATION WING

BUILT: 1962
USES: Church school classes
Trinity Academy classes and offices
Piano lessons for Choir School
Community service meetings
NEEDS: Replace poorly insulated windows

PARKING LOT

BUILT: Last paved in 1995
USES: Parking for church, school, choir school & all events
NEEDS: Repaving

ONE PLACE, MANY USES



THE CAMPUS OF TRINITY CHURCH is made up of several interconnected and historically significant buildings and surrounding courtyards in the heart of Hartford's Asylum Hill neighborhood – fronting both Farmington Avenue and Sigourney Street. These buildings serve many people and organizations.

SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL USES:

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
A diverse, Christian worshipping community in the Anglican/Episcopal tradition with a longstanding history of openness and service to the Hartford community.

TRINITY ACADEMY
An independent, tuition-free elementary school serving 1st through 4th grade students and their families in the Hartford area. The school features extended school days and a focus on educational excellence in a supportive environment.



THE CHOIR SCHOOL OF HARTFORD
A youth choir and music education program for elementary through high school students that uses the Royal School of Church Music curriculum to teach vocal performance and music theory. Students receive training, instrumental lessons and a stipend.



COMMUNITY SERVICE
Meetings of 12-step recovery programs, including Alcoholics Anonymous, Al Anon and Narcotics Anonymous. Meal preparation for community outreach programs, such as Church by the Pond in Bushnell Park and Loaves and Fishes.

PERFORMING ARTS
Concerts by local and visiting orchestras, choirs, chamber ensembles and solo recitals, Choir festivals and Hartt School events.

OUR GOAL

A STUDY of the Trinity Church campus, recently completed by Northeast Collaborative Architects, identified the following needs:

- ♦ Preventative care actions: roof and gutter repairs and masonry repointing, to prevent future damage, particularly water damage, to the buildings
- ♦ Safety upgrades, including updated fire and security alarms and railings, to ensure that the many people who use the buildings are safe and secure
- ♦ Replacement of damaged plaster and damaged wooden porch
- ♦ Energy upgrades, such as replacing single-pane windows in the education wing

The campaign goal of \$750,000 will address these items. If additional funds are raised, the scope of work will be expanded to include further functional and aesthetic improvements the architects have also recommended.

This goal is well beyond the scope of what can be funded out of the church annual operating budget. The Campaign for Trinity provides an opportunity to fund the renewal of the Trinity Church buildings so that they can continue to be safe, welcoming and beautiful. Your gift to the Campaign is an investment in the future and a celebration of a place of faithful service to Hartford.



A TRADITION *of* SERVICE

THE PARISH OF TRINITY CHURCH

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH made a bold decision in 1870 when it decided to reorganize itself as a Free Church. This meant the church would not be funded through rented pews, standard for churches at the time, but instead by an annual fundraising canvass of members. This decision reflected a belief that the church is not a club that exists to provide certain religious services for its subscribing members, but rather a community financially supported by its members that exists to minister to the wider community.

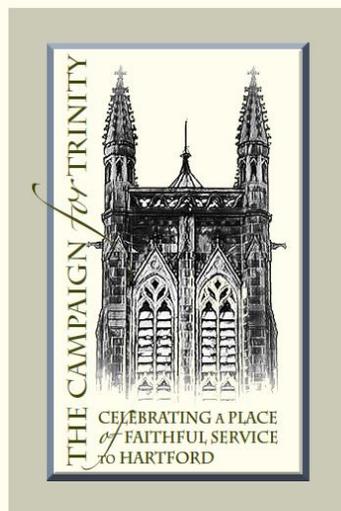
This commitment was reaffirmed when the current church sanctuary was designed and built in the 1890s without pews that could be owned or rented. Also, and not yet standard at the time, the church complex included extensive halls, offices and community meeting spaces. This was, and remains a visible expression of the church's intention to be

a place of learning and service as well as worship.

This commitment continues to unite diverse individuals from varied backgrounds into a community, united in faith and mission. Trinity has been a center for many programs that directly affect the neighborhood: tutoring at nearby West Middle school; assisting in the settlement of refugees from Bosnia, Cuba, Germany, Liberia, Myanmar, and Syria; offering the after-school program Light and Peace; supporting the Loaves and Fishes soup kitchen; and hosting the Salvation Army Senior Center are a few examples that showcase Trinity's commitment to its community.

Over the years, the specific programs sponsored and hosted by Trinity Church have changed as needs and opportunities change. What remains constant is the commitment of Trinity Church to use its buildings and resources for service to all of God's people. ■

HERE NO ONE IS TO BE HIGHER IN RIGHT OR PRIVILEGE THAN ANOTHER,
THIS COMMON AND EQUAL RIGHT BEING BASED ON THE COMMON AND EQUAL
NEED EACH OF US HAS OF DIVINE HELP. - Colonel Jacob Greene
AT THE LAYING OF THE TRINITY CHURCH CORNERSTONE, 1894



THE CAMPAIGN *for* TRINITY

STEERING COMMITTEE:

The Rt. Rev. Andrew Smith, *Capital Campaign Co-Chair*
Mark MacGougan, *Capital Campaign Co-Chair*

The Rev. William J. Eakins, *Trinity Church Rector Emeritus*
Martha Freimuth, *Trinity Church Warden*
Andrea Gardner, *Trinity Academy Board, The Hartford Insurance Co.*
Kristen Gordon, *Watkinson School*
Gianfranco Grande, *Partners for Sacred Places*
The Rev. Dr. Donald L. Hamer, *Trinity Church Rector*
Ken Johnson, *NINA – Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance*
Linda MacGougan, *Parishioner*
Cathy Rowe, *Parishioner*
Jennifer Scanzano, *Trinity Academy Head of School*
Ernestine Weaver, *The Choir School of Hartford Board*

For More Information: trinityhartford.org

Your Giving Will Make a Huge Difference, Now and For Future Generations



TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH 120 SIGOURNEY STREET HARTFORD CONNECTICUT 06105 TRINITYHARTFORD.ORG

Rev. 1.25.19

High-capacity donors, who will be making advance gifts, should be contacted early on in the planning and preparation process so that they can plan a major gift in their budgets. As these are often members of the congregation, they will also need ample time to make both their campaign pledge and their annual stewardship pledge.

It is important to see all donors personally; a personal visit is more likely to result in a contribution. A request similar to the one below can be used to schedule donor visits with the potential donors that First Presbyterian will give significant gifts.

Dear [NAME],

Greetings from [First Presbyterian]!

Over the past few months, we began an exciting campaign to rehabilitate our facility and serve our community for many years to come.

We would love the opportunity to meet with you sometime in the near future to go over the details of this important campaign and to ask for your support. We will reach out in the next couple of days with a phone call to try to schedule a meeting time that is convenient for you.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to meet with us, and, again, we are confident that you'll want to be part of this vital effort to serve and transform our congregation and the wider Pittsburgh community.

We look forward to connecting soon.

Silent Phase		
Year	Month	Tasks/Milestones
2019	November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor ID with Rev. Hall (November 13, 2019) • Partners sends campaign material (job descriptions, infrastructure, etc.)
	December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee Interviews
2020	January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Hall* • First Steering Committee Meeting • Partners delivers Pyramid of Gifts
	February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee meeting • Task Forces finalized • Space Assessment
	March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Asset-Mapping • Steering Committee meeting • Partners delivers Space Assessment report • Case Statement drafted
	April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee meeting • Partners delivers Internal Asset-Mapping report • Community Asset-Mapping
	May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee meeting • Strategic Planning session • Case statement Finalized • Solicitation strategy finalized • Partners delivers Community Asset-Mapping Report
	June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee meeting • Media strategy & material design finalized • Volunteer Solicitor Training (1) • Partners delivers list of grants • Planned Giving workshop • Top donor visits
	July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee meeting • Volunteer Solicitor Training (2) • Top Donor visits • Annual Stewardship/Planned Giving workshop • Planning for Public Launch
	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee meeting • Public Launch plans finalized

Public Phase		
Year	Month	Tasks/Milestones
2020	September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Launch • Attendance at solicitation events as needed/requested
	October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners check-in
	November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners check-in • Evaluation and Planning for subsequent phases

Contract Deliverables:

- One (1) Town Hall meeting to “kick-off” the capital campaign and increase congregational buy-in*
 - **though not included as a contract “deliverable,” the Town Hall is an important milestone and will be particularly helpful for First Presbyterian Church - Partners will organize and facilitate at no additional cost to the congregation.*
- One (1) full day of internal asset-mapping (March 2020)
- One (1) full day of community asset-mapping (April 2020)
- One (1) strategic planning session for First Presbyterian leadership (May 2020)
- An organizational chart laying out the reporting relationships between Church, steering committee and task forces, existing Church committees, campaign volunteers, and other stakeholders, and other stakeholders and outlining the responsibilities of each group (November 2019)
- A list of 15 potential grant resources for the capital campaign and/or ongoing ministries at Organization (June 2020)
- A strategy and timeline for rating and soliciting donors (January - July 2020)
- Training for campaign Steering Committee, volunteers, and staff (December 2019 - August 2020)
- Accompanying campaign leadership on solicitations for up to 15 top donors (June - July 2020)
- One (1) annual stewardship & planned giving workshop (July 2020)

a 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.

This does not include the 32 functions of the Session also enumerated by the Book of Order.

The basic shift which happened is that Elders went from what I will call the personal model of leadership, where they saw their first responsibility to be spiritual leaders of individuals, to the institutional model, where they saw their first responsibility to be building of a strong institution.

This is not a zero sum game, meaning that one does not happen at the exclusion of the other. Instead, it is a matter of emphasis. What does Session see as their first job? To build disciples or build the institution? To shepherd people or superintend the program?

Some of the differences between the two models are:

<u>PERSONAL MODEL</u>	<u>INSTITUTIONAL MODEL</u>
People builder	Program builder
Shepherd	Superintendent
Spiritual leader	Committee Chair
	Time spent organizing
Time spent discipling	Responsible for things
Responsible for people	
Narrow job description	Copious job description
Enabler	Doer
Comfortable with authority	Uncomfortable with authority
Session meeting is worship	Session meeting is business
Works to create freedom	Tends to bureaucratize
Simple church	Complex organization

The institutional model is enabled and marked by two ministry structures which are a given in most contemporary Presbyterian congregations: the committee system and the Church program.

The organization of the Session along the lines of the committee system appears to be an advent of the late 19th and early 20th century, more than likely to create a role for elders, who in the waning of the practice of Church discipline, needed another role to remain viable. William Henry Roberts, who at his resignation in 1920 as Stated Clerk of the denomination, was called the by *The New York Times* “the most famous Presbyterian in the world,” suggested in his 1897 elder manual:

The oversight of the general interests of the congregation by the Session, can be most efficiently conducted by the appointment of permanent committees upon the more important matters of Sessional business ... These committees may be five in number — viz. on the Sabbath School, Systematic Beneficence, Church Music, Missionary and Young People’s Societies, and Conference with Deacons and Trustees.

A study of Session minutes reveals that few Sessions were organized along these lines. Indeed, Session minutes from the late 1800s and early 1900s look very similar in form and content although the practice of discipline has largely been removed. However, by the 1920s organizing the Session along the lines of permanent committees given tasks to run the institutional affairs and ministries of the Church was commonplace.

Capital Campaign Town Hall: *First Presbyterian Church*



AT THE INTERSECTION
OF HERITAGE, FAITH,
& COMMUNITY

Partners for Sacred Places

Who is Partners for Sacred Places?



National Reach and Impact

In the past 30 years, Partners has grown into:

A national organization with staff in Philadelphia, Chicago, and Dallas

A thought-leader for research and public policy related to historic houses of worship

A trainer to more than 1,000 community-serving congregations and parishes and more than 4,000 faith and lay leaders

A bridge-builder and space broker between congregations and their communities

A partner to more than 100,000 sacred places across the country

Giving USA 2018

How much did Americans give in 2018?

\$427.71 billion

Americans gave \$427.71 billion to charity in 2018 in a complex year for charitable giving.

Giving to foundations decreased the most, after experiencing strong double-digit growth in the year prior.

Giving to international affairs showed the largest growth in 2018 of any sector.

Where did the generosity come from?

Contributions by source (by percentage of the total)

Giving by Foundations
\$75.86 billion
(4.7% up when inflation adjusted)

↑ 7.3% over 2017

18%

Giving by Bequest
\$39.71 billion
(2.3% down when inflation adjusted)

0.0% same as 2017

9%

Giving by Corporations
\$20.05 billion
(2.9% up when inflation adjusted)

↑ 5.4% from 2017

5%

Giving by Individuals
\$292.09 billion
(3.4% down when inflation adjusted)

↓ 1.1% from 2017

68%

Giving by individuals declined in 2018, comprising less than 70 percent of overall giving for the first time in at least 50 years.

* All figures on this infographic are reported in current dollars unless otherwise noted.

Where are all the charitable dollars going?

Contributions by source (by percentage of the total)

	% of total giving in 2018	\$	% change from 2017	inflation adjusted
Religion	29%	\$124.52 billion	↓ -1.5%	-3.9%
Education	14%	\$58.72 billion	↓ -1.3%	-3.7%
Human Services	12%	\$51.54 billion	= -0.3%	-2.7%
Foundations	12%	\$50.29 billion	↓ -6.9%	-9.1%
Health	10%	\$40.78 billion	= 0.1%	-2.3%
Public-Society Benefit	7%	\$31.21 billion	↓ -3.7%	-6.0%
International Affairs	5%	\$22.88 billion	↑ 9.6%	7.0%
Arts, Culture, and Humanities	5%	\$19.49 billion	= 0.3%	-2.1%
Environment/Animals	3%	\$12.70 billion	↑ 3.6%	1.2%
Individuals	2%	\$9.06 billion	-	-

■ indicates growth in current dollars with a decline after adjusted for inflation

Visit www.GivingUSA.org to learn more and to order your copy of *Giving USA 2019: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2018*.

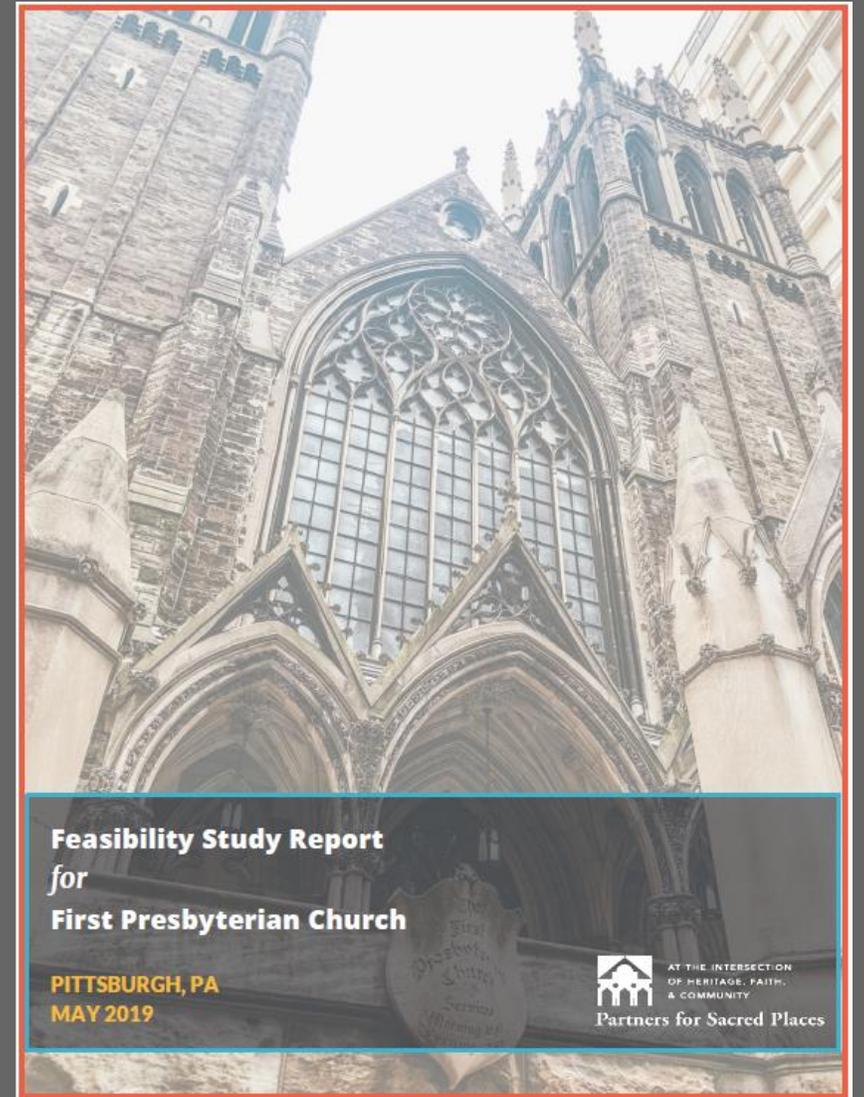


Giving USA Foundation™, The Giving Institute, and the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy are pleased to continue their partnership in providing the most comprehensive, longest-running, and most rigorously researched resource on U.S. charitable giving, *Giving USA: The Annual Report on Philanthropy*. It is a privilege to report on the generosity of Americans and related historical trends on U.S. charitable giving.

What is a feasibility study?

An opportunity for the congregation to gauge receptiveness of congregants and the community to its campaign; to identify and recruit volunteers; campaign leadership and major donors; and to identify realistic fundraising goals.

- Conducted private, confidential interviews with congregation and community members
- Analyzed interview results to determine feasibility of a capital campaign, opportunities for community engagement, and advise Luther Memorial Church of next steps
- Specific areas of inquiry included:
 - Philanthropic appeal
 - Leadership capacity
 - Perception
 - Gift potential
 - Opportunities for community engagement



Findings



Project Priorities

- Clarify building's maintenance and restoration priorities, including financial resources needed to address
- Strengthen member relationship and governance to meet capital and fundraising needs
- Collaboratively develop objectives and goals for congregational and community engagement and growth
- Develop and implement financial stability plan

Findings



Leadership

- Heavily involved in downtown Pittsburgh business and civic associations
- Seen as a “doer;” generates bold ideas to meet the urgent needs of the congregation
- Recent influx of newer members to leadership positions has increased governance capacity
- Differing priorities for the church’s future have driven intense internal discussion

Findings



Communication

- Lay leaders are knowledgeable of maintenance needs and the church's financial situation; other members have little understanding
- Participation in Downtown Pittsburgh events have helped advertise the church as a “neighbor” as well as an institution
- Community members see First Presbyterian as a “church that cares” because of its dedication to the feeding and homeless ministry

Findings



Gift & Funding Potential

- Some interviewees were supportive of a capital campaign, some were hesitant due to murky understanding of the building's needs and the church's current finances
- First Presbyterian is well connected in Pittsburgh and well-known in the business community
- Partners identified several potential grant opportunities to assist with preservation and maintenance of the building
- Partners recommends moving forward with the first phase of a capital campaign to repair the roof with an initial goal of \$850,000 - \$950,000

Recommendations



- Build congregational unity and develop leadership
 - Host an a congregational asset-mapping event to identify and affirm the gifts that all members bring to the table
- Develop a collaborative strategic vision for the congregation in three areas:
 - Financial Stewardship
 - Congregational Growth
 - Community Engagement
- Immediately strengthen culture of financial stewardship by:
 - Decreasing reliance on endowment principle
 - Prioritize a year-round stewardship program
 - Implement a robust approach to planned giving
 - Inspire confidence among members in the church's financial management
- Raise the congregation's profile in Pittsburgh
 - Hold a community asset-mapping event to build awareness and connection with other civic institutions and potential partners
- Build a collaborative and transparent campaign infrastructure

FPCP Congregational Priorities

Financial Sustainability

- Some members see the need for an immediate capital campaign
- Some members are apprehensive about such an undertaking in the church's current financial situation
- Concerns cited include the decreased pledge rate, skeletal annual stewardship initiatives, the large operating expenses, and the reliance on endowment principle to close budget gaps
- Confusion about the management of recent, large bequests, the state of the endowment, etc.
- First Presbyterian Church is currently operating with a large deficit; the congregation will need to work to both cut expenses and increase giving

FPCP Congregational Priorities

Congregational Growth

- Membership growth is a high priority for all congregation members, but recruitment strategies differ
- Changing demographics of downtown Pittsburgh have resulted in the loss of core membership pool
- Opportunities for community partnerships, specifically through space-sharing
- Volunteer opportunities present attractive opportunities for engagement among younger Pittsburgh residents

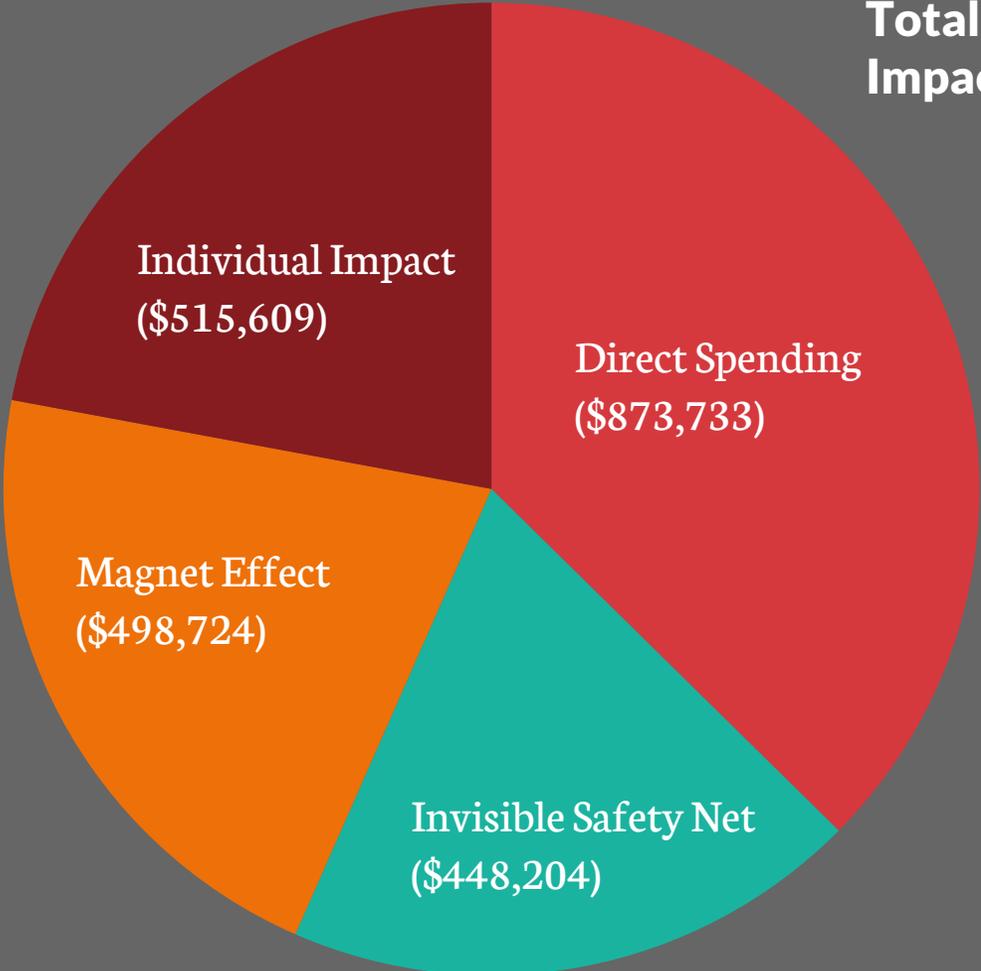
FPCP Congregational Priorities

Community Engagement

- Differing definitions and emphasis on “mission” and “community service”
 - One view prioritizes the ongoing and long-standing financial support of missionaries affiliate with PCUSA organizations
 - The other view prioritizes service and outreach to the local, marginalized populations of downtown Pittsburgh
- Differing views of youth outreach and engagement
 - Ongoing relationship with Camp Ligonier
 - Local outreach to high-school students, college students, and other young people through The Cellar
- Entire congregation shares the value of mission service and youth formation/development

First Presbyterian's Economic Halo Effect

**Halo
Valuation
(2019)**



**Total Annual Economic
Impact: \$2,336,270**

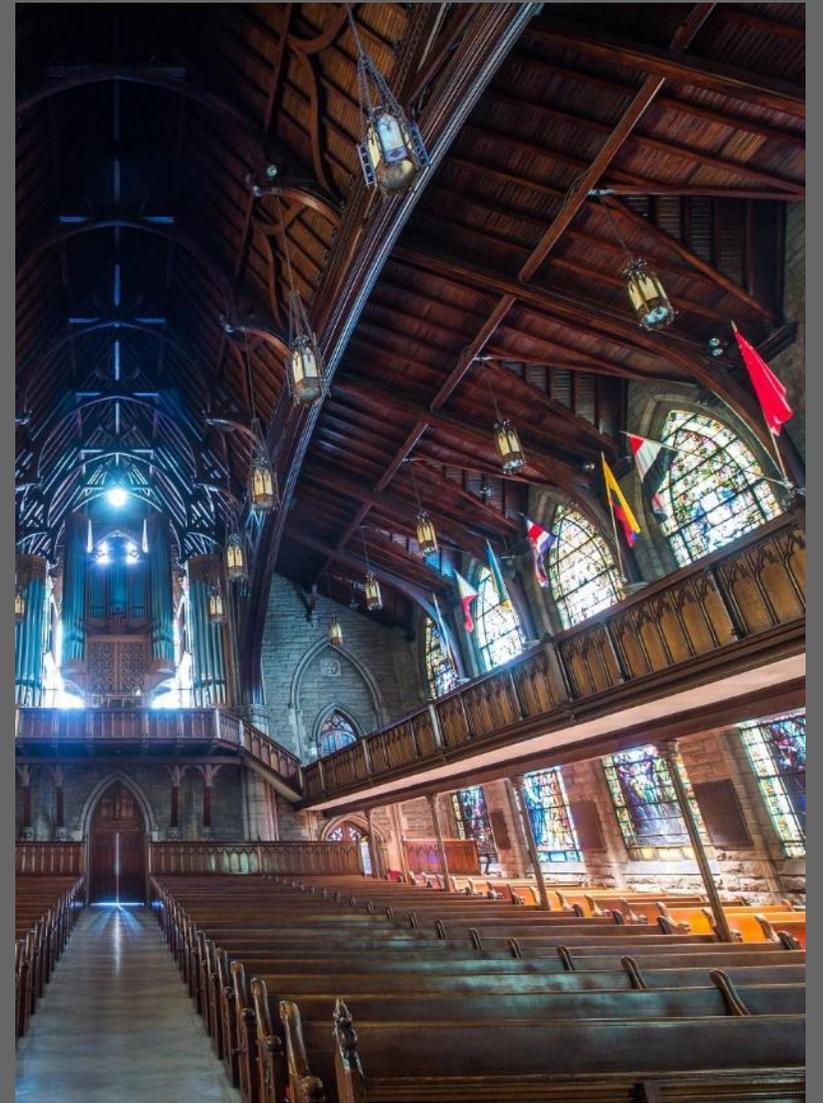
Halo Valuation (2019)

Benefit Types

- **Direct Spending:** Sacred places drive local and regional economies through purchasing goods and services and by employing area residents and patronizing locally owned businesses. Each dollar spent by a sacred place catalyzes additional value within the community.
- **Magnet Effect:** Urban congregations attract visitors for the purposes of worship, education, programming, and special events. Visitors spend in the vicinity of the building; on food and drink, gasoline or public transportation, entertainment and sometimes lodging.
- **Invisible Safety Net:** Congregations create a “safety net” for those most at risk in their communities. Congregations operate and host community programming and share space with others at below-market rates.
- **Individual Impact:** Congregations provide one-to-one counseling, make referrals to social service agencies, assist with job placement, etc. While mostly “under the radar,” this type of service provides much needed counseling to people considering suicide, battling substance abuse, preventing criminal activity, and otherwise contributing to an individual’s or family’s health and well-being.

Capital Campaign

- **Silent Phase**
 - Strategic Visioning
 - Asset-Mapping
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - Space Sharing
- **Fundraising**
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- **Communication**
 - Case Statement
 - Material Design & Strategy
- **Public Phase**



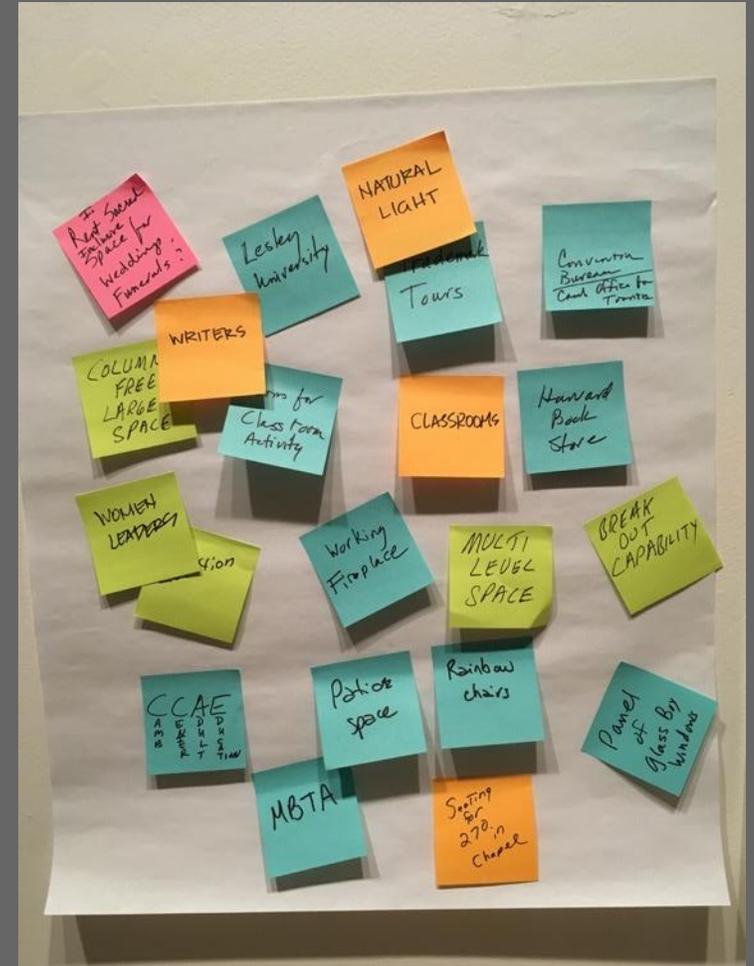
Capital Campaign

- Silent Phase
 - Strategic Visioning
 - Asset-Mapping
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - Space Sharing
- Fundraising
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- Communication
 - Case Statement
 - Material Design & Strategy
- Public Phase



Capital Campaign

- Silent Phase
 - Strategic Visioning
 - **Asset-Mapping**
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - Space Sharing
- Fundraising
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- Communication
 - Case Statement
 - Material Design & Strategy
- Public Phase



Capital Campaign

- Silent Phase
 - Strategic Visioning
 - Asset-Mapping
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - Space Sharing
- Fundraising
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- Communication
 - Case Statement
 - Material Design & Strategy
- Public Phase



Capital Campaign

- Silent Phase
 - Strategic Visioning
 - Asset-Mapping
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - [Space Sharing](#)
- Fundraising
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- Communication
 - Case Statement
 - Material Design & Strategy
- Public Phase



Capital Campaign

- Silent Phase
 - Strategic Visioning
 - Asset-Mapping
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - Space Sharing
- Fundraising
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- Communication
 - Case Statement
 - Material Design & Strategy
- Public Phase

B. Standard Pyramid of Gifts Based on the Traditional "Rule of Thirds" for Campaigns with a \$1,000,000 Goal



1 gift @	\$100,000	\$ 100,00
1 gift @	\$75,000	\$ 75,000
2 gifts @	\$50,000	\$ 100,000
4 gifts @	\$25,000	\$ 100,000
10 gifts @	\$10,000	\$ 100,000
20 gifts @	\$5,000	\$ 100,000
30 gifts @	\$3,000	\$ 90,000
40 gifts @	\$1,500	\$ 60,000
125 gifts @	\$1,000-\$1,400	\$ 150,000
300 gifts @	\$100-\$ 999	\$ 185,000
TOTAL 534 gifts		\$1,000,000

Capital Campaign

- Silent Phase
 - Strategic Visioning
 - Asset-Mapping
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - Space Sharing
- Fundraising
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- Communication
 - Case Statement
 - Material Design & Strategy
- Public Phase



Capital Campaign

- Silent Phase
 - Strategic Visioning
 - Asset-Mapping
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - Space Sharing
- Fundraising
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- Communication
 - Case Statement
 - Material Design & Strategy
- Public Phase



Capital Campaign

- Silent Phase
 - Strategic Visioning
 - Asset-Mapping
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - Space Sharing
- Fundraising
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- Communication
 - Case Statement
 - Material Design & Strategy
- Public Phase

CELEBRATING A PLACE *of* FAITHFUL SERVICE TO HARTFORD

THE CAMPAIGN *for* TRINITY CHURCH

OUR GOAL

- The unique and historic buildings of Trinity Church serve many people – most of whom are not church members.
- These buildings require preventative care and code compliance upgrades so that they can continue to be safe and sturdy for the long term.
- We're asking members of the church and the community to donate generously to enable the needed tasks to be done right. Our goal is to raise \$750,000.



THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE use or visit the buildings of Trinity Church each year. They are young and old, rich and poor, and racially, ethnically and religiously diverse.

On a typical weekday, the halls of our buildings are bursting with activity and filled with the voices of students, staff, parents and volunteers of Trinity Academy, a tuition-free elementary school; and the Choir School of Hartford, an after-school program that nurtures life skills through the art and discipline of music. Hundreds of people gather on a weekly basis to gain support from the many scheduled weekly 12-step and similar programs, while others looking for inspiration and cultural exploration attend concerts and special events. On Sundays, people from the neighborhood and from across the region gather for worship in the Episcopal tradition for inspiration and fellowship.

The buildings of Trinity Church represent a vital resource for the neighborhood and the city. Beautiful and architecturally irreplaceable, they provide common ground for a wide range of people to come together through a host of activities that nurture body, mind and spirit.

These buildings are an important part of Hartford's "social infrastructure". They also provide financial value to the neighborhood and the city. Partners for Sacred Spaces, a national organization devoted to enhancing the life and ministry of historic urban sacred buildings, recently concluded a study that estimated the financial value to the city of Trinity Church and its allied programs to be \$3,075,212 million per year.

THE CAMPAIGN *for* TRINITY

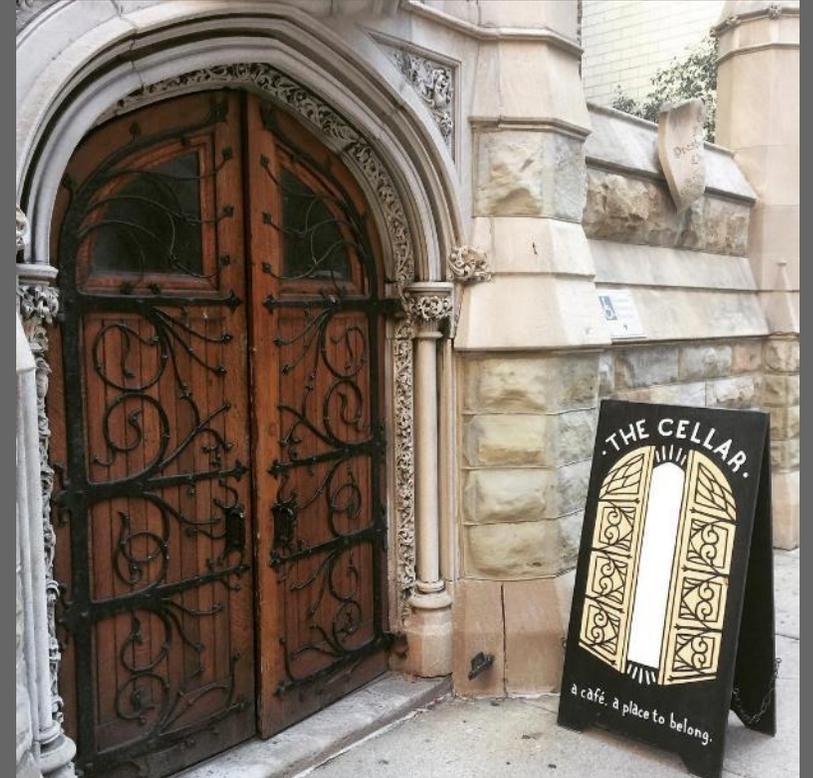
Capital Campaign

- Silent Phase
 - Strategic Visioning
 - Asset-Mapping
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - Space Sharing
- Fundraising
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- Communication
 - Case Statement
 - **Material Design & Strategy**
- Public Phase



Capital Campaign

- Silent Phase
 - Strategic Visioning
 - Asset-Mapping
 - Financial Stewardship training
 - Space Sharing
- Fundraising
 - Donor Identification & Pyramid of Gifts
 - Leadership & Volunteer Training
 - Researching & Soliciting Donors
- Communication
 - Case Statement
 - Material Design & Strategy
- Public Phase



Questions?

Gianfranco Grande, Executive Vice President
ggrande@sacredplaces.org

Rev. Bridget Fidler, Consultant
bfidler@sacredplaces.org



21st

Century Shepherds

By Rev. Eric Laverentz, D. Min.

© 2009

Rev. 06-2016



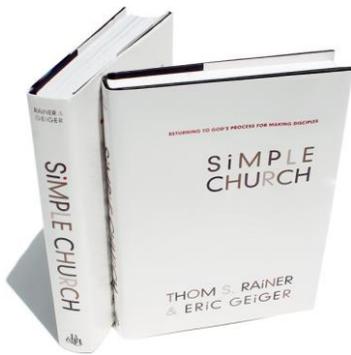
Elder Leadership Institute / elderleadership.org / 1-800-667-7250 x401

In 1931 Cleland Boyd McAfee in the next incarnation of the Manual for Presbyterian Elders observed:

Most sessions operate through committees of two, three, or more, expecting monthly reports of their work, each committee securing from the session authorization for anything out of the ordinary which needs to be done.¹

As Session minutes from the late 1700s to the early 1900s appear very similar, minutes from the 1920s until now also appear quite similar. In fact it is a running joke that Presbyterianism is synonymous with the committee system.

The Church program is the other institutional feature which marks contemporary practice and also represents a departure from earlier practice. By "program" I mean that which Cleland Boyd McAfee defines as, "the four-part way in which the Church serves its members, the community, the denomination, and the world on the behalf of Jesus Christ."²



The book *Simple Church* asserts that in a program-driven Church the development of the programs themselves, rather than the development of people, becomes the overriding goal. They write, "Church leaders who are programmers focus on one program at a time. Their goal, though never stated, is to make each program the best."³

What is plain from a study of Session histories is that increasing programs overwhelmed the time and capacity of the Session, leading them away from their Shepherding role and into one of the superintendent of the program. Rather than being the Church, they were attempting to **do** Church, confusing activity and business with growth into Christ-likeness. A well-intentioned program became the end rather than the means.

The story of Mary and Martha illustrates the hazards of doing for Jesus rather than being with Jesus:

Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said,

"Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me."

But the Lord answered her,

"Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her. (Luke 10:38-41)

What is the "one thing" which is "necessary" for the Church of Jesus Christ? Jesus seemed to say it was disciple-making.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. (Matthew 28:19-20)

In the best case, the role of elder has transitioned to create the institution for that disciple-making to happen. However, it used to be that the elders themselves were responsible for disciple-making.

¹ Cleland Boyd McAfee, *The Ruling Elder* (Philadelphia, PA: The Presbyterian Board of Education, 1931) p. 83.

² McAfee, p. 69.

³ Thom Rainer and Eric Geiger, *Simple Church* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2006) p.26.

A Brief History of Elders

Although elders in the Presbyterian Church seem to be synonymous with committees, that function appears nowhere in the Scriptural or pre-20th century witness upon the role of elders.

Peter's first letter contains the longest New Testament description of elders:

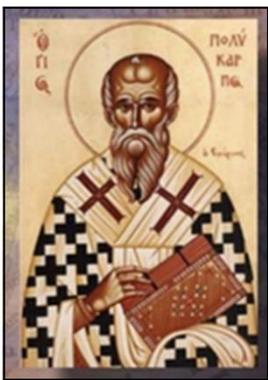
"So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory." 1 Peter 5:1-4

Elders are not simply a New Testament phenomenon, but we also see that they were appointed even in the wilderness of Sinai as God's people wandered through the desert. In response to Moses feeling overwhelmed by his responsibility as the leader of the people, God instructed him to appoint elders so he would not have to bear alone the burden of Shepherd.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. And I will come down and talk with you there. And I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you may not bear it yourself alone." Numbers 11:16-17

And God gave these elders some of the Spirit which He had given to Moses:

So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord And he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tent. Then the L came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it. Numbers 11:24-25



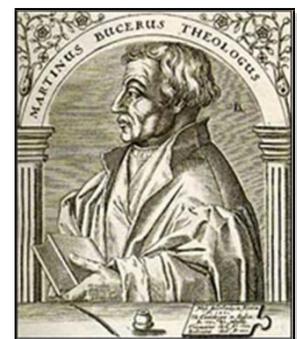
The Church father Polycarp (70-155 AD) also sketched out a role for elders which emphasized their shepherding of the people.

Let the elders be tender and merciful, compassionate toward all, reducing those that are in error, visiting those that are weak, not negligent of the widow and the orphan and him that is poor; but ever providing what is honest in the sight of God and man; abstaining from all worth, respect of persons and unrighteous judgment; being far from covetousness, not hastily believing a report against man, not rigid in judgment, knowing that we are all faulty and subject to condemnation.

Martin Bucer (1491-1551) spoke about a church practice he called the "discipline of life and manners" which he saw as central to the life of the

Church, and in which he saw the elders playing an important role as they led the people in it:

The discipline of life and manners consists in this...by the authority and magisterium of our Lord Jesus Christ, each person should strengthen and advance his neighbors, wherever this is possible, and urge them to progress in the life of God, as his disciples, in his faith and knowledge. And if any fall into error of doctrine or some vice of life and manners, whoever can should with utmost zeal recall such persons from all false doctrine and depraved activity...¹



Now, although we may shy away from such language today, Bucer's clear emphasis is upon a proactive strengthening of the community grounded in love and grace. The discipline is clearly not only for those who struggle and fall, irreducible to simply hauling in wayward members before the Session. In Bucer's conception of shepherding, the pastor and elders set a community tone which carries through to everyone in the community.

The American Presbyterian Samuel Miller (1769-1850) picks up this strain from Bucer and in his 1831 manual for elders clearly argues, based upon the Biblical and historical record, that it is the role of elders to form a team with the pastor to shepherd and disciple the people of the congregation. After explaining that role of elders, he speaks of the necessity of this arrangement because of the pastor's limited resources. He even goes so far as to say that it is "absurd" to think that one pastor, even working diligently, could possibly be an adequate shepherd for a congregation. Keep in mind, as well, that during the age of Samuel Miller, most congregations were about one hundred or fewer in size. Like Moses, the responsibility is simply too great if any kind of discipleship is expected.

He (the pastor) cannot be everywhere, and know everything. He cannot perform what is expected from him, and at the same time so watch over his whole flock as to fulfill every duty which the Church demands. He must "give himself to reading;" he must prepare for the services of the pulpit; he must discharge his various public labours; he must employ much time in private, in instructing and counseling those who apply to him for instruction and advice; and he must act his part in the concerns of the whole Church with which he is connected...We might as well expect and demand any impossibility...²

Miller goes on to explain, in some detail, just what it looks like for the elder to shepherd the people as a spiritual leader. I will quote from it at length, highlighting a few of the more noteworthy passages:

It is their duty to have an eye of inspection and care over all the members of the congregation; and for this purpose to cultivate a universal and intimate acquaintance, as far as may be, with every family in the flock of which they are made "overseers."

They are bound to watch over the children and youth, and especially baptized children, with paternal vigilance, recognizing and affectionately addressing them on all proper occasions; giving them, and their parents, in reference to them, seasonable counsel, and putting in the Lord's claim to their hearts and lives, as children of the Church.

It is their duty to attend to the case of those who are serious, and disposed to inquire concerning their eternal interests; to converse with them, and, from time to time, to give information concerning them to the Pastor.

It is their duty to take notice of, and admonish, in private those who appear to be growing careless, or falling into habits in any respect criminal, suspicious or unpromising.

It is their duty to visit and pray with the sick, as far as their circumstances admit, and to request the attendance of the Pastor on the sick, and the dying, when it may be seasonable or desired.

It is incumbent on them to assist the Pastor for maintaining meetings for social prayer, to take part in conducting devotional exercises in those meetings; to preside in them when the Pastor is absent; and, if they are endowed with suitable gifts, under his direction, occasionally to drop a word of instruction and exhortation to the people in those social meetings. If the officers of the Church neglect these meetings, (the importance of which cannot be estimated), there is every reason to apprehend that they will not be duly honoured or attended by the body of the people.

It is the duty of Ruling Elders, also, to visit the members of the Church and their families, with the Pastor, if he requests it; without him, if he does not; to converse with them; to instruct the ignorant; to confirm the wavering; to encourage the timid, and to excite and animate all classes to a faithful and exemplary discharge of duty. ³

But what did this look like in practice? A common way that elders exercised this responsibility was through discipline. Abundant evidence also exists of the proactive shepherding advocated by Bucer.

At the First Presbyterian Church of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, the Session worked tirelessly for months with a certain Mr. W.S. Childress who claimed that if he only had a job that he would be able to better control his drinking. The Elders labored to find a decent job.

At the First Presbyterian Church of New York, the Session found an African-American domestic servant, Mrs. Mary Waters, not guilty of stealing salad tongs—this was despite the testimony of three white witnesses claiming that she did.

At the First Presbyterian Church of Dayton, Ohio, the congregation was divided into parishes with each elder conducting at least one visit per week—including prayer, unless ‘peculiar’ circumstances prohibited it. The elders at Dayton, following Matthew 18:15, commended a man to go first to his brother with his grievance rather than them and seek reconciliation. He followed their counsel and was reconciled to the man who had slandered him publicly.

There are many records of disciplinary cases. This widespread practice was less than perfect. It was also a very common work of most Sessions until the Civil War. The practice of disciplinary action continued in many congregations until the early 20th century. At Murfreesboro, the Session called before them a man whose daughters were caught dancing. Another man was examined vigorously by the elders for visiting a house of ill-repute. In New York the excommunication of Mr. Michael DeGray took place “agreeably.” Mrs. Ann Brown confessed to slander and was suspended from the communion of the Church until she demonstrated repentance. At First Presbyterian Church in Dayton, Ohio, a man had to answer for farming hogs on the Sabbath. In June of 1856 that Session found G. Arnold guilty of adultery. On April 5 1897, four other members were suspended for the same offense. ⁴

Discipline was even a part of the Session leadership in liberal congregations. Second Presbyterian Church in Kansas City was founded as an anti-slavery, New School congregation. Even they have a history of discipline. In one of many cases, the Session became aware, apparently, at least in part through the local media, of an unmarried doctor who had a sexual relationship with one of his female employees. In its minutes is a letter sent to the doctor explaining the practice of discipline, the Session’s motivations, and their hope for resolution and redemption. (see next page)

Kansas City, Mo. March 3, 1899

Dr. H.S. Lowry,

Dear Brother:

In view of the unhappy publicity what has been given your relations with your former employee and assistant you will not be surprised that as church officers we feel called upon to take notice of the results of your trial.

Recognizing that Church discipline has three purposes: to subserve the acquittal of persons unjustly accused, the expulsion of members persistent in sin, and the rescue and support of those who confess and forsake their wrong-doing. We are happy to know that your written acknowledgement, placed before us, with expressions of sorrow and penitence, per it us to recognize you as belonging to the third class.

The offence to which you plead guilt is among the most grave it is possible for a man to commit, being nothing less than the seduction of one whose youth and helplessness should have appealed to your compassion, whose honor should have been defended by her employer, and whose virtue, sacredly guarded by one professing to be her lover. Her youth, her innocence, and her implicit trust in yourself ought to have appealed to your honor as a gentleman and your conscience as a Christian. We believe that, carried away by your passion at the time, you nevertheless intended to make ever reparation in your power, when you realized the enormity of your offence. But illicit relations long continued blunt the moral sensibilities and beget recriminations and aversions unfavorable to betrothal vows. That however cannot free any man from the binding character of their obligations. It is not the civil service which constitutes marriage in the eye of heaven. In the forum of Christian morals we believe you to be as truly the husband of your former assistant as you ever can be, and that it is your duty to consummate that relationship by all proper and legal forms if it be permitted you to do so. Knowing as you do that this young person has held herself as absolutely faithful to you as if you were duly married any other marriage entered into by you would seem to us, and to the general public, as adulterous and bigamous. An adequate repentance it seems to us can only be fully evidenced by giving to the young woman you have wronged the right to bear your name and to look to you for the protection which a husband alone can afford a wife.

Exercising therefore the authority entrusted to us by our Book Of Discipline (Chap. VII Sec.47) and wishing to use it for the edification and instruction, we must pronounce you suspended from the communion and fellowship of the Church until such time as your evident penitence Christian life may warrant a full restoration of Church privileges Trusting in the sincerity of your

(indecipherable) professions, we pledge personally our sympathies and our prayers trusting that you may profess to be fully restored to that place of public confidence and Christian esteem which you once enjoyed. We offer our prayers to the great Head of the Church that we may be helped (indecipherable) name pure and free from reproach, we remain yours most.

Sincerely,

The Clerk of Session

The practice of Shepherding, as I have mentioned, waned as the 19th century drew to a close. What an examination of Session records reveals is that Sessions, for the most part, simply received and dismissed members, a very basic form of congregational care and discipline. This pattern continued until Sessions became responsible for the execution of the Church program and were reorganized into permanent committees.

At Second Presbyterian the Session minutes of May 3, 1926, record that five committees, consisting entirely of ruling elders were appointed: Public Worship, Missions, Evangelism, Social and Publicity and House.^{5 6}

The minutes of July 25 provide a description of each of these committees, with the exception of the House Committee, which was simply akin to a Buildings and Grounds or Facilities Committee:

Committee on Public Worship Duties: The music of the Church, pulpit supplies, special cooperation in prayer meeting.

Committee on Missions, Stewardship, and Finance: Promotion of missionary education in the Church benevolences; special offerings; every-member- canvass; the benevolent contributions of Church organizations.

Committee on Evangelism: The winning of souls to Christ on the profession of faith, both inside and outside the Church; the winning of Church people living in our community to Church membership; the holding of members faithful to their privileges to Christ and His Church.

Social and Publicity Committee Duties: Promoting the social life of the Church, reception of new members, oversight of the social activities of the Church organizations, such as entertainments and banquets and proper publicity.

The Session, of course, continued to receive and dismiss members but after this point the minutes demonstrate the exponential growth of the Session's oversight of the institutional affairs and program of the Church.

¹ Martin Bucer, *De Regno Christi* found in *Melancthon and Bucer* ed. tr. Wilhelm Pauck (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1969) p. 240.

² Miller, p.179

³ Miller, p.203-204.

⁴ These are just a handful of hundreds of examples I have seen in Session minutes from the 1800's and even early 1900s. I do not want to belabor the point.

⁵ The house committee also consisted of Dr. McKelvey and F. M. Lee, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

⁶ The Missions Committee was evidently retitled in a few months to become "Missions, Stewardship and Finance."

Shepherds in the 21st Century

When I was researching for this project at the Presbyterian Archives in Philadelphia, I had a brief conversation with the chief archivist there, a trained historian, who also serves as an elder in her Presbyterian congregation. “When you finish, I would like to see what you come up with. Everyone knows this is broken. But no one is sure what to do.” I remember having a conversation with one of our own elders who was expressing her frustration at the way Session functioned. “This isn’t what I signed up for, Eric,” she said, “I thought an elder was supposed to be a shepherd.”

What if the Presbyterians have the most basic position of authority, the namesake, and wrong? With the declining population of mainline Presbyterians in this country, indeed there is almost the same number now as there were at the turn of the century, and nearly every indicator points to decline, it would seem that something at the basic level is very wrong.

Gregory Willis in his study of Church Discipline concludes that by the late 1800s and early 1900s that congregations were shifting the emphasis of their ministries from the personal to the institutional and jettisoning discipline in the process.

The search for the efficient church transformed traditional notions of purity....Churches across the nation were abandoning old models of congregational life. They instituted more efficient systems of church finance and transformed themselves into centers of social life and recreational activity. Efficiency became the watchword of a new generation. ⁱ

What would a 21st century governing system which emphasized effective discipleship rather than efficiency look like? What would it look like for congregations to reclaim the historic role of elder? How would such a position be structured?

Samuel Miller, for one, was positively enthusiastic about the possibilities for Christ’s Church with Elders performing their God-given, Scripturally commanded roles:

Were the foregoing views of the nature and duties of the Elder’s office generally adopted, duly appreciated, and faithfully carried out into practice, what a mighty change would be effected in our Zion!...Were every congregation, besides a wise, pious and faithful pastor, furnished with eight or ten Elders to co-operate with him in all his parochial labors, on the plan which has been sketched...can any one doubt that knowledge, order, piety and a growth in grace as well as in numbers, would be as common in our Churches, as the reverse is now the prevailing state of things, in consequence of the want of fidelity on the part of those who are nominally the overseers and guides of the flock?

Let us consider again the Book of Order description for elders which guided the Presbyterian Church for more than a century and a half:

Ruling elders are properly the representatives of the people, chosen by them, for the purpose of exercising government and discipline, in conjunction with pastors or ministers.

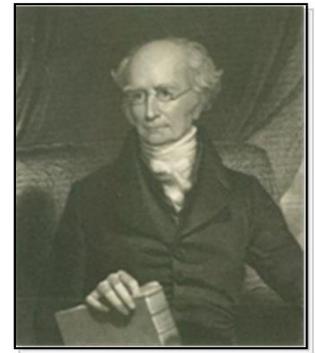
There are four parts to this statement. One of which relates to the grounding, one to method, and two to purpose.

1. Representatives of the people

Elders should be close to the people of the congregation, in relationship with them, having a sense of their spiritual needs, struggles and triumphs. As Samuel Miller wrote:

It is their duty to have an eye of inspection and care over all the members of the congregation and for this purpose to cultivate a universal and intimate acquaintance, as far as may be, with every family in the flock of which they are made "overseers."

This ability to represent them only happens through intentional relationships. The Elders should know the people better than the program.



2. In conjunction with pastors and ministers

Elders should function together as a team with the pastors. Again, Samuel Miller was adamant about this function. The pastor cannot properly do his or her job as a teacher if the elder is not doing theirs as a shepherd. Miller called the very idea "absurd" that a pastor could pastor a congregation without elders functioning as shepherds. The pastors and elders are of equal rank and authority, however, with different jobs. As each properly lives out their call, it allows the other to do the same.

3. Exercising government

Samuel Miller, among many others, points out that the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church lays the responsibility for "the spiritual government of the congregation" at the feet of the Session. The definition of government has changed dramatically in the last century and a half. During the age of Miller, government was an internal thing, or as historian Michel Foucault puts it, "the way in which conduct...might be directed." A great many 19th century preachers spoke of the government of the Holy Spirit. So, government, in this context, speaks to helping individuals act as Christ-followers, rather than our contemporary of a person or council which administer laws or rules.

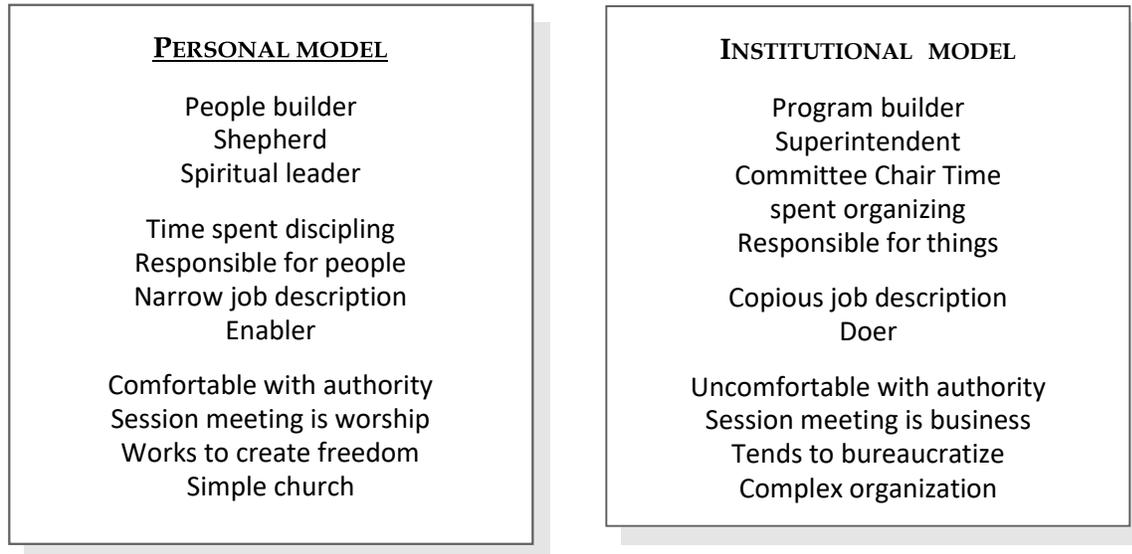
4. Exercising discipline

Reactive discipline as it was practiced by Sessions where members were brought in before the elders to repent of sins is not likely to build the body of Christ. Although it has been conclusively demonstrated that most Session had a more holistic view of discipline, for 21st century elders, the emphasis must land clearly upon proactive discipline, known better as discipleship. Miller summarized the role of elders in pursuing discipline in proactive, rather than reactive posture:

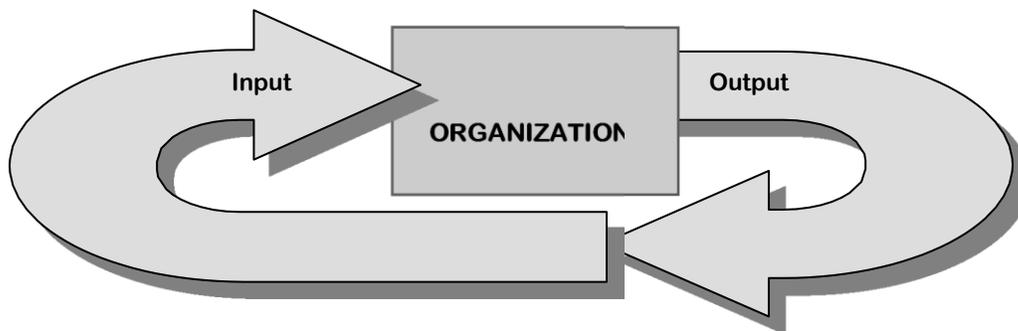
It is the duty of Ruling Elders, also, to visit the members of the Church and their families, with the pastor, if he requests it; without him if he does not; to converse with them; to instruct the ignorant; to confirm the wavering; to caution the unwary; to reclaim the wandering; to encourage the timid, and to excite and animate all classes to a faithful and exemplary discharge of duty. ii

Again, reading closely, it is the relationship which is the vehicle for this kind of proactive, positive discipline.

Let us consider again the two lists of qualities of the personal model and the institutional model:



Two illustrations demonstrate the basic difference between the personal model and the institutional model. In any organization there is a **feedback loop**. You have input into the organization, the organization processes the input and creates an output. It is commonly represented like this:



Imagine two bodies of water which, although physically impossible, function as a loop. One is a small stream flowing into a pond and then out again the other side:



Simple physics tells you that a narrow stream flowing into a large pond will only produce a trickle on the other side, if anything at all.

The other is a large stream, narrowing down into a narrow channel. Simple physics dictates that the resulting energy will create a torrent and powerful output. The formula for this is: $V = Q/A$

$$\text{Velocity} = \frac{\text{flow rate}}{\text{area}}$$

The first stream represents the institutional model which tends to be heavily driven by the Church program and not particularly concerned with individuals. Session exercises control at the entry to the pond (membership requirements) and at the exit (mission) and people are free to float around the pond as they choose for years, decades, a lifetime. There is no momentum toward spiritual growth. Consequently, mission and evangelism, overflow of a life changed by the Holy Spirit, are a mere trickle.

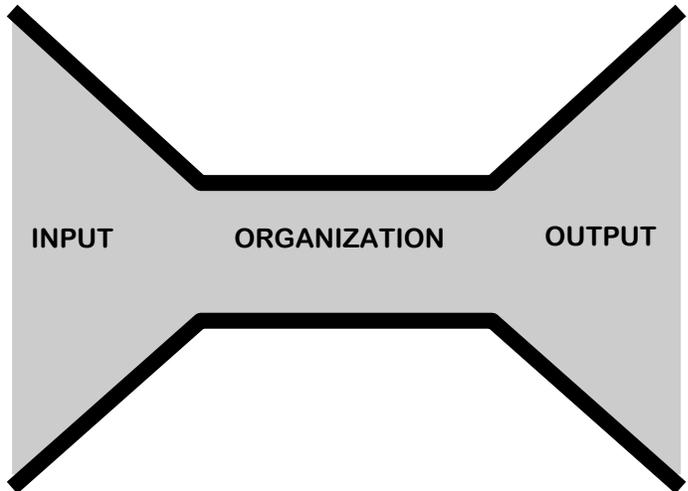
This severely limits the congregation's impact upon the community which narrows the entry point into the congregation. Think of a congregation which promotes itself saying, "There are so many ways to get involved here."

The second stream represents the personal model which is not program driven, where every program is regarded as an admission that discipleship has fallen short, and people are funneled into discipleship opportunities; new member classes, discipleship or small groups, and leadership training. It is more far more concerned with people than program. The Session exercises control at only one point, the middle—narrowing the range of options considered program or discipleship. As lives are changed through the discipleship process, mission and evangelism (output) happens naturally through changed hearts and this creates a wider input as the community is changed around the congregation.

The responsibility for the program does not fall on the shoulders of the Session. The responsibility for shepherding people does. Whatever program occurs does not happen directly under the auspices of the elders but it is the overflow of the spiritual growth of the people.

Remembering our history by readopting the job description for elders which guided Presbyterians for more than 150 years allows this transformation to happen.

Ruling elders are properly the representatives of the people, chosen by them, for the purpose of exercising government and discipline, in conjunction with pastors or ministers.



i Gregory A. Willis, *Democratic Religion: Freedom, Authority, and Church Discipline in the Baptist South 1785-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) p.131.

ii Miller, p.204.

Shepherd Elder responsibilities with a serious assist from John 13 and Samuel Miller

Basic responsibilities:

- Make contact at least once a month to discuss how they are doing. Not what they are doing. Be sure you get prayer requests and ask for follow up on how they are doing.
- Gather the group under your charge together once or twice a year for fellowship.
- Get to know their families and their situation learning children's and spouse's names.
- Look for opportunities to serve or counsel them in their Church leader responsibilities and provide assistance. Look for opportunities to care for them and their family in their day to day life. Celebrate and grieve with them as the opportunities allow. Remember birthdays and anniversaries.
- Pray daily for each person by name.
- Communicate important information to them about their church and the Vision.

The Biblical model for Elder is one of servant leadership. 1 Peter 5, the major Biblical text on Elders, we see this emphasis upon humility and servanthood: "...shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory...clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you."

A strong Biblical model for servant leadership is Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet in John

13. John's version of the Last Supper includes the ritual purification of the disciples before they set about the task of becoming the Church without Jesus' physical presence in the world. He, in essence, cleanses them so they may become a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit.

Unconditionally love people under care.

- A. "Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them love to the full extent of his love." (John 13:1)
- B. Jesus loved all the disciples, even Judas. You will have people who are more receptive than others to this role. By loving the unlovable, we do two things: 1) We experience the power of the Holy Spirit who empowers us to love the difficult. 2) We give others the grace to show their faults.
- C. Get to know families: Samuel Miller, "Cultivate a universal and intimate acquaintance, as far as may be, with every family in the flock of which they are made "overseers." Nothing demonstrates love to people more than taking an interest in those whom they love—especially children.

Pay attention to people's needs, pains and attempt to meet them.

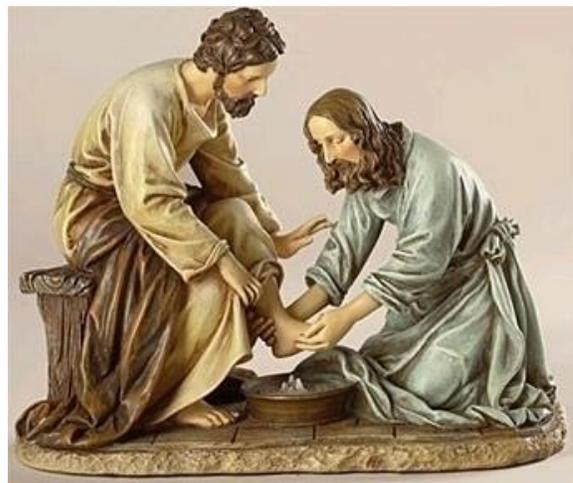
- A. "Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around them." (John 13:5) Foot hygiene in a dusty, sandal-wearing culture was an incredible need.
- B. Ask yourself what is the need of my people? What is their dirty feet? How can I meet that need? A staff member at the church has on her desk the phrase, "Ease the pain. Be the solution or the answer?" James 5:14 speaks to this as well.
- C. Ask yourself consistently, "What is Jesus doing in this person's life?" If we take Romans 8:28 and Jeremiah 29:11 seriously, we know that Jesus is working in their life. We do not bring Jesus to them. Jesus, via the Holy Spirit, is already working in them. The surest way to impact someone's life is to get on board with what Jesus is already doing. Prayer is also critical in this process. I find that as I pray for people the Holy Spirit gives me incredible insights into what is going on in their life.

Be vulnerable, humble and transparent.

- A. "(Jesus) rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist." (John 13:4) Jesus "took on the form of a slave." In this context where the currency of authority is few and far between, we have to earn the right to be heard. Jesus did not have to earn authority but He demonstrated a good model for us.
- B. This transparency demands that we lead a life of personal integrity. There is no room to hide behind 'doing.' See First Timothy 3 and Titus 1 for examples.
- C. Be unafraid to share own struggles but make sure there is some distance.

Realize that servanthood is a necessity.

- A. "Peter said to him, 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no share of me.'" Jesus did not take no for an answer. He knew His mission and He would not even let the protests of the disciples stop him from it.
- B. This role is an old role, but new to many here and it may be uncomfortable to some, but this is at the heart of Christian community and I believe we can set a wonderful tone and standard for what the church can be if we are insistent upon servant leadership.
- C. We are different in that Jesus did not need to serve. We do. We are made by God to serve Him and love each other. Peter needed to be served. Leadership in the Church is difficult and challenging—especially in a place where lives are being changed. Can we minimize burnout and actually build up ourselves and each other while they are engaged in leadership?
- D. I believe that once we begin down this path, we will not even be able to tolerate the old system. Peter, after being told by Jesus he must have his feet washed exclaimed, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my feet!"



Draft Operating Agreement Between DEACONS and Session

1. The Deacons will normally meet no fewer than six times a year to coordinate ministry efforts and support prayer for each other in their common mission for Jesus Christ.
2. The Deacons will be divided into four teams: 1) Worship and Music, 2) Outreach, 3) Hospitality, and 4) Children and Youth.
3. Deacons, moderated by an Associate Pastor designated by Session, will partner together to:
 - A. Oversee the details and execute the vision of worship, including supporting the chancel guild, providing for the communion elements, and supporting the worship and music staff.
 - B. Foster mission partnerships grounded in prayer, service and finances both locally and internationally to build the Kingdom of God beyond the boundaries and borders of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church.
 - C. Work to create a warm welcome that speaks to the love of Jesus Christ and the unity of the Holy Spirit for every visitor and member that comes through the door of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church.
 - D. Partner with the families and ministry staff to create disciples of children and youth in a safe, welcoming environment that helps them make decisions for Jesus Christ that will impact the rest of their lives as well as their eternity.
4. The Deacons will meet jointly with the Elders and Trustees at least three times a year to foster fellowship, communication, and to evaluate the mission and ministry of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church.
5. The Deacons will propose a budget for ministry for the next fiscal year to the Trustees no later than four months before that year begins.
6. The Deacons shall provide a written report to the Session and the Trustees following every meeting, detailing their activity as well progress, both anecdotal and statistical, toward the mission and ministry of CPC.
7. The Deacons will share the story of the work of the Holy Spirit in our community both within and without the walls of Cornerstone Church.
8. Manuals of Operation documenting additional internal processes, procedures, and operating requirements will be developed by the Deacons as appropriate.

Draft Operating Agreement between TRUSTEES and Session

1. Trustees shall meet a minimum of once per calendar month at a time and place to be designated by a majority vote of Trustees.
2. Trustees shall be responsible for all “business” activities of CPC. This includes, but may not be limited to:
 - A. Personnel decisions as well as supervisory oversight for all CPC employees excluding ordained staff, working with paid staff to provide scheduling, duty assignments, employee guidance, obtaining and supervising employee benefits, preparing and maintaining an employee handbook, and generally fulfilling Sessions’ vision for the operation of Cornerstone Church.
 - B. Keeping records of all expenses, filing any required reports, and tracking all financial activities of CPC. Carefully and prayerfully providing stewardship of CPC funds in accordance with PCOS Session guidance.
 - C. Supervision, in conjunction with a future business/operations manager, and assistance with all maintenance, repairs, and construction required of the CPC building, facilities, and grounds, to include capital improvement or construction projects.
3. To accomplish this, the Trustees will be divided into three, three person teams, with each team having members from each class currently serving. The first team will be the personnel team, the second the financial team, and the third will be the facilities team. Each team will meet separately from other Trustees as needed, and can draw upon other members of the congregation and work with members of the paid staff to accomplish the above tasks.
4. Additional internal processes, procedures and operating requirements will be developed by the Trustees.
5. Annually, no later than October 30, the Trustees will present to Session in writing a draft proposed budget. Trustees will schedule listening/learning sessions on at least three different occasions over the next 30 days to present reasoning behind the proposed budget to those members of Session and the congregation who wish to attend. Then, during the December Session meeting, the Trustees will formally present a proposed budget for the upcoming year, along with the financial report to date, and the results of the stewardship campaign. Session will then vote up or down on the budget proposal, and vote to accept or not the financial report. This information will then be updated by the Trustees with year-end data, and made available to present to the annual corporate meeting.

Elder “Business Plan” by Rich Osberg

How to live into the ELI Retreat

My thought, sparked by Doug’s suggestion that we tackle discussion of the bullet points of the *Institutional vs. Personal Model* set forth in the materials from Rhea and Eric over the course of our upcoming meetings, was placing the materials provided by Rhea and Eric into the context of a business plan, to give a structure and hierarchy for discussion and implementation.

Vision/Mission: As Elders, move from an *Institutional Model* to a *Personal Model*

Objectives:

Be/Have:

Not:

People Builders

Program Builders

Shepherds

Superintendents

Spiritual Leaders

Committee Chairs

Spending Time Discipling

Spending Time Organizing

Responsible for People

Responsible for Things

Narrow Job Description

Copious Job Description

Enabler

Doer

Comfortable With Authority

Uncomfortable With Authority

Session Meetings be Worship

Session Meetings be Business

Working to Create Freedom

Tending to Bureaucratize

A Simple Church

A Complex Organization

Strategies:

- Foster community, accountability and authority through relationships
- Create government by the Holy Spirit rather than government by polity
- Prioritize creating disciples rather than institution building
- Create a team approach to ministry
- Create a missional mindset among the members
- Force leaders into a life of transparency, integrity, scholarship and discipleship- because there is no room to hide behind ‘doing’

Plans:

- Live out the change personally
- Let scripture lead, and history inform
- Focus on the idea and empower others to think through the details
- Let the ‘change process’ model what we want to become
- Create and empower Deacons and/or Trustees to manage mission and Business responsibilities
- Create clear lines of responsibility
- Pray for patience

Processing the ELI Retreat Session Meeting, June 21, 2016

What was the session's reaction to the retreat, led by Eric Laverentz and Rhea Patton, June 17-18, 2016?

- Thumbs up
- Surprised
 - o Shepherds vs institutional model
- Invigorating
- Freeing to do what you're called to do
 - o Seems doable
 - o Shifts focus to one good thing
- Lead by example out of our relationship to God
- Excited
- Refreshing
- Revolutionary
- Want to keep it going
- Encourages us to reimagine structure
- Trusting those to do what God called them to do
- No words. Want to do more
- True cultural change

Where do we want to be when we grow up?

- Session as small group
- Session as a koinonia community
 - o Intimate
 - o Trusting
 - o Empowered
 - o Allowing Holy Spirit to speak into our lives.
 - o Silence; taking time out; reflection
- Change flowing out into the congregation.

So how do we begin to imagine moving forward? We asked ourselves:

- How do we communicate this?
- How do we live into this?
- How do we create a functional structure?
- How do we effect true cultural change?
- But weren't we called with the old skill set in mind?
- Don't all the old things still need to get done?
- Won't we be building the road as we go? Yes
- Won't we be writing the manual as we proceed? Yes

Proposed next steps.

- We propose to work through the bullet points in Eric's model of the session:
 - o Take one bullet point each meeting and discuss. For example, how do we move from being:
 - "Program Builders" to "People Builders."
 - Superintendent to shepherd
 - Committee chair to spiritual leader
 - Time spent organizing to time spent discipling
 - Responsible for things to responsible for people
 - Copious job description to narrow job description
 - Doer to enabler
 - Uncomfortable with authority to comfortable with authority
 - Session meeting is business to session meeting is worship
 - Tends to bureaucratize to works to create freedom
 - Complex organization to simple church
 - o Allow different members of the session to facilitate each discussion

- We'll analyze these bullet points using Eric's "Seven Steps to Creating Change"
 1. Live out the change personally
 2. Let scripture lead and history inform
 3. Focus on the idea; empower others to think through the details
 4. Let the change process be a model of what you want to become
 5. Create and empower deacons and/or trustees to manage mission and business responsibilities. We acknowledge it is "Easier to be Martha," and "Our hearts run to do the easy thing rather than the hard work of discipling people."
 6. Create clear lines of responsibility
 - Elder: Someone you'd go to with a hard problem in life.
 - Trustee: Someone you'd go to if you were opening a small business
 - Deacons: Someone you'd go to to organize a block party.
 7. Pray for patience. Allow people to move "at the speed of trust."