

SECTION A

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF
THE SESSION AND
RELATED COMMITTEES**

THE SESSION

Composition:

The local church governing body, the session, oversees the day-to-day work of the church. The session consists of nine ruling elders and the pastor, who serves as moderator. Ruling elders shall be elected for a term of three years.

Meetings: G-3.0203

- There are two kinds of session meetings: stated meetings and called meetings. There will be no fewer than ten stated meetings each year. The schedule for these meetings will be published by the Moderator in December each year. Meetings begin promptly at 7:30 P.M. and end by 9:30 P.M. Session may change the date and time of the meeting by a majority vote. The moderator may call special meetings of the session if he/she deems it necessary or when requested in writing by any two members of the session. Session meetings are not to be regarded as open meetings, and attendance is generally restricted to the members and any guests whom session invites.
- The docket for session meetings is composed by the moderator, in consultation with the clerk. Session members may submit items for the docket.
- A quorum must be present throughout the meeting. A quorum shall consist of one-third of the ruling elders and the moderator.
- All session meetings are to be opened and closed with prayer.
- Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised)*.

Responsibilities: G-3.0201

- Provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard by making provisions for the congregation's regular worship life, approve all special worship services, plan efforts at evangelism and community outreach, and cooperate with ecumenical efforts of other Christian churches.
- Provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received by

authorizing the celebration of the Lord's Supper, at least quarterly, and the administration of Baptism as appropriate, authorize elders to offer the Lord's Supper to shut-ins, and exercise pastoral care to the congregation.

- Nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ by receiving and dismissing members, reviewing active members' roll annually; oversee and direct the congregation's educational ministry; examine, ordain, and install those elected to serve as elders and deacons; encourage the graces of generosity and faithful stewardship; manage the physical property; direct the ministry of the deacons, and all organizations of the congregation; serve as employer for all non-ordained staff; lead the congregation to participate in the mission of the church; warn against error in doctrine and immorality in practice; serve in judicial matters, and assure that there is adequate property and liability insurance.

Finances: G-3.0113

Each session shall prepare and adopt a budget annually to support the church's mission within its area. Session shall elect a treasurer and oversee his/her work. Financial records will be open to inspection by authorized church officers. A report of financial matters will be presented to the congregation annually. There will also be a full financial review annually. (See also: G-3.0205)

Record Keeping: G-3.0204

- The session, through its clerk, maintains minutes of all session and congregational meetings and submits the minutes for the presbytery's annual review.
- Session authorizes the clerk to maintain the following rolls and registers: baptized, active, and affiliate members, register of all baptisms authorized by the session, register of ruling elders and deacons, and any other such registers as session may deem necessary.

Session Committees:

The following program committees shall be standing committees of the session:

Christian Education, Evangelism and Membership, Stewardship, Worship, Mission,

Personnel, and Property Planning Management. Each ruling elder shall serve on a standing committee of the session.

ELDERS AT HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Calling To Be An Elder:

Being an elder is a calling from God. One of the things that we take seriously in the Presbyterian Church is that God cares deeply about what goes on in each congregation. The members of the Nominating Committee may ask someone to serve as an elder, but it is really God who calls people to serve. The members of the Nominating Committee are merely acting as servants who are trying to sense God's calling for a particular church at a particular time.

What is an Elder?

Elders have been the church leaders since the earliest church was formed in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. The following points may help you understand what an elder is:

- Elders are to be active members of the church, elected as persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. (G-2.0301)
- Elders are called to be the spiritual leaders of the church, not the political leaders. They are called to lead the congregation to discover where God is at work in the church and in the world. With God as their guide, and the spiritual disciplines of prayer and scripture reading, elders plan appropriately for the direction of the church's life in accordance with God's will.
- Elders work together on the session. They act as leaders by listening together for what God is calling all the members to do as the church, and then create opportunities to turn what they hear into action.
- Elders are expected to be people of faith, dedication, and good judgment who try to do their best to serve God.

- As the *Book of Order* states: “Ruling elders, together with teaching elders, 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 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.” (G-2.0301)

Duties and Responsibilities

- Attend monthly session meetings (currently the second Tuesday of the month from 7:30-9:30 PM., excluding July and August).
- Chair a committee for one of the ministry areas, and be a leader in the implementation of a particular ministry area, scheduling and moderating meetings for the committee.
- Attend worship regularly and support the ministries to which Hope Presbyterian Church is called.
- Care for members of the congregation.
- Participate in serving The Lord’s Supper.
- With the other elders, look towards Hope’s future and form a vision for Hope Presbyterian Church.
- Fulfill additional responsibilities such as being a commissioner to presbytery, a member of a presbytery committee, or a member on special councils which may be formed by session for particular projects.

DEACONS AT HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Calling To Be A Deacon:

Hope Presbyterian Church does not have a board of deacons, but does elect and ordain persons to the office of deacon who work under the authority of the session to serve in

the specific role of deacon. The members of the Nominating Committee may ask someone to have his/her name placed in nomination for the office of deacon, but it is really God who calls people to serve. The members of the Nominating Committee are merely acting as servants who are trying to sense God's calling for a particular church at a particular time. Deacons are elected to office by the congregation.

What is a deacon?

- Deacons are to be active members of the church.
- Deacons work together in planning and implementing a ministry of compassion, witness and service.
- According to the *Book of Order*, 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. G-2.0201
- Those who are chosen as deacons should be persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion and sound judgment. G-2.0201

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Attend the January session meeting each year.
- Attend quarterly deacons' meetings.
- Appoint a deacon representative to the Nominating Committee at the first quarterly meeting.
- Keep in touch with those members and friends of Hope Presbyterian Church who need a continued presence of the Hope community in their lives, including those who are sick and unable to attend church, those experiencing a loss, those who are unable to attend church, those whose attendance at church has lapsed, and the college students, especially those attending college away from home.
- Attend worship regularly and provide leadership in worship.
- Support other ministries to which Hope Presbyterian Church is called.
- Pray with members and friends.

CLERK OF SESSION

The clerk of session is an officer of the governing body. The clerk works in cooperation with the pastor/moderator to assure the uniform operation of the session. The clerk of session shall be a ruling elder, but it is not necessary for the ruling elder to be a currently elected member of the session. The session shall elect a clerk, ordinarily in January, for a one-year term.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Records Management

- Accurately record the minutes of the session meetings, including meetings of the congregation, and maintaining the permanent records of the church. The minutes and the church registers (various rolls) should be kept up-to-date and submitted for annual review by the National Capital Presbytery when requested. The clerk will report the results of this review, including any actions taken needed to correct exceptions, to the session.
- Accurately record actions taken which affect membership status and make sure that actions receive the proper follow-up.
- Complete certificates for membership, transfer, baptism, and ordination as elder, deacon, etc.
- Assist the moderator in completing the General Assembly annual statistical report. .

Procedural Matters

The clerk shall assist the moderator in conducting efficient session meetings by:

- Consulting with the moderator for planning the meeting docket, helping to track unfinished business, and annual or quarterly items needing attention. The docket is to be available to session members on the preceding Sunday before the meeting, and voted on by the session at the opening of the meeting.
- Certifying that a quorum is present throughout the meeting.
- Reporting of all relevant correspondence, incoming and outgoing.

Information Supplied to Congregation

The clerk will inform the congregation by:

- Composing a synopsis of actions taken by the session at the meetings and submitting them for publication monthly in the newsletter.
- Compiling an annual report of the clerk, which includes the number of session meetings (both stated and called), the number of congregational meetings, and information on total membership gains and losses, baptisms, a numerical listing of members by ethnic composition, gender, and age, a summary of the communions served, and special services held. This report is to be included in the Annual Report for the January congregational meeting.

FINANCIAL TEAM

The Hope Presbyterian Church Financial Team holds an important position within the church ministry. The team collaborates with and uses as a resource the accounting firm of Anderson, Davis and Associates. The team represents the church within the community with banks, brokerage firms, business vendors, and investors, and has the role of maintaining the business integrity of the church. The church financial system operates on a cash basis accounting system. Income is recorded when actually received, and goods and services purchased are recorded when payment is made.

Treasurer: Duties and Responsibilities

- Work with the assistant treasurer on a weekly basis to:
 - Receive the weekly cash flow report from the assistant treasurer and make certain that it reconciles with the bank statement.
 - Record weekly contributions in the check register after the cash flow report and the bank statement are reconciled.

- Receive cash flow report from the counter.
- Pay church employees and pay invoices for materials and services, and record these entries into check register.
- Write checks and record transactions in checkbook, describing transactions and documenting invoice numbers if provided. Stamp *paid* on the invoice with check number and date paid.
- Pay independent contractors for services provided to the church, and file appropriate documentation for unincorporated, independent contractors paid \$600 or more. Make certain that paperwork is on file indicating that all independent contractors are licensed, bonded and insured, and have a federal employer identification number (incorporated) or social security number (non-incorporated).
*The Property Planning Management elder is responsible for confirming that contractors have the required documents.
- Meet with the pastor to keep pastor abreast of finances.
- Forward copy of the check register to the accounting firm on a monthly basis to enter into their accounting system to prepare financial reports.
- Establish and pay monthly EFTPS and Maryland taxes online. The accounting firm will provide the amounts of the monthly or quarterly tax payments.

Assistant Treasurer: Duties and Responsibilities

- Create weekly schedule for two-person counting teams.
- Collect, count, and deposit congregational contributions.
- Train new counters on procedures for collecting, counting and depositing congregational contributions.
- Maintain and update written counting procedures, as needed.
- Reconcile and record weekly Cash Flow Report with individual envelopes and loose cash/checks that are received.
- Create, distribute, and maintain yearly individual financial statements of amounts received as designated, pledge and/or in-kind contributions.

- Talk regularly with the treasurer for planning and evaluations.
- Assist the treasurer with the details for Hope Presbyterian Church's Annual Report that is distributed to the congregation.
- Forward the cash flow reports to the accounting firm on a monthly basis.
- Keep Treasurer and Endowment Chairman updated on Building Fund amounts after they have been reconciled.
- Participate on the Endowment and Stewardship Committees.
- Assist in preparing yearly PCUSA statistical report.

Accounting Firm (currently Anderson, Davis & Associates)

- Prepare monthly financial reports for session meetings which take place the second Tuesday of the month. Reports are to include incoming funds, outgoing funds, assets, and liabilities. Highlight for the session various aspects of the report which require attention.
- Prepare end of year financial reports.
- Reconcile bank statements to balance in check book and provide bank reconciliation to the Treasurer.
- Prepare journal entry for endowment and building fund transactions.
- Calculate all payroll checks (net amount and amount required for taxes and forward amounts due to the Treasurer for payment. Forward pay stub to employees.
- Prepare yearly tax documents.

Chair of Endowment Committee: Duties and Responsibilities

- Attend and moderate quarterly meetings of the Endowment Committee.
- Serve as liaison between Hope Presbyterian Church and the investment advisor.
 - Communicate with advisor when transfer of monies from or to the Endowment Fund need authorizing.

- Communicate with advisor when transfer of monies from the church's Bank of America operating account to the Building Fund need authorizing.
- Forward monthly Endowment and Building Fund reports received from the advisor to committee members and accounting firm.
- Prepare Endowment and Building Fund report for the church's Annual Report.
- Prepare quarterly Endowment and Building Fund reports for session.

Schwab Account Manager: Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide the necessary Schwab information to those who desire to donate stock.
- Process the stock received from donors in order for it to be deposited into the designated fund.
- Inform Treasurer of impending stock transfers.
- Forward monthly Schwab reports to the accounting firm.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Worship Committee is a committee of the session responsible for the coordination of the worship ministry of Hope Presbyterian Church. The committee works closely with the pastor and the director of music to ensure that the worship responsibilities set forth in the Directory of Worship in the *Book of Order* (W-1.4004) are achieved.

Membership of the Worship Committee: The Worship Committee is composed of the pastor and the director of music in an *ex officio* capacity, the worship elder/elders, and members of the congregation. Planned meetings will be held 6-8 times during the year after Sunday services and will be announced in advance on the sanctuary set-up schedule and via emails and the church bulletin.

Worship Committee: Duties and Responsibilities

- Consult with the pastor and music director on the order and content of regular as well as special worship services. (G-6.0202), W-3.3000, W-3.2002)
- Provide and train liturgists for each service. (W-2.2000) (See Liturgist Training Folder)
- Oversee the recruitment, duties, scheduling, and training of ushers for each service. (W-2.5002c) (See Usher Training Folder)
- Set-up and clean-up the sanctuary for all services. (See Worship Notebook)
- Provide flowers for regular services. (W-1.3030)
- Provide and maintain decoration materials, including banners, for all special services. (W-1.3030)
- Supply, prepare, and clean-up communion elements. (W-3.3609)
- Place water in the baptismal font for Baptisms, the Baptism of Our Lord Sunday, and other specified services. (W-3.3602)
- Publicize and interpret the worship program to the congregation through announcements, newsletter articles and a report for the annual meeting of the congregation.
- Designate a member of the congregation to be responsible for the sound system, to train others how to use the system, and to establish a schedule for sound system oversight during worship services and other occasions when the sound system is used.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The Stewardship Committee is composed of the treasurer, assistant treasurer, counters, the elder for stewardship, members of the congregation, and the pastor as an ex officio member. The stewardship elder shall serve as the president of the corporation.

Stewardship Committee: Duties and Responsibilities

- Plan and conduct the annual stewardship campaign for the operating budget of the church.
- Develop and carry out a year-round stewardship program in addition to the annual stewardship campaign.
- Prepare annual budget.
- Provide a “Weekly How Goes It,” stating the weekly contributions, the average family giving, and comparing these figures to the budgeted amount.
- Provide monthly statement of average congregational giving.
- Participate in endowment meetings on a quarterly basis to make recommendations on investment policy for funds in the endowment account.
- Collaborate with the assistant treasurer to oversee the work of the weekly counters, ensuring that all funds received by the church, through offerings and other income sources, are deposited. (See Counter Policy).
- Consider and act on requests for fund-raising projects.

EVANGELISM AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Evangelism and Membership Committee is the hospitality ministry of Hope Presbyterian Church.

Evangelism and Membership Committee: Duties and Responsibilities

- Recruit, train and schedule greeters each Sunday to welcome all to worship, to encourage the use of name tags, to orient visitors to the church, invite them to fellowship, and be familiar with the weekly schedule in order to answer questions.
- Plan and publicize “Bring a Friend to Church” Sundays.
- Schedule new member classes in concert with the pastor, prepare and distribute new member packets, and assist pastor with the class session.

- Update the church information brochure.
- Work with the person in charge of the website to make certain it is kept up to date.
- Plan other ways for nurturing the members to gain a sense of community

MISSION COMMITTEE

The Mission Committee leads the congregation in the work of spreading God’s love beyond the walls of the church. It strives to reach out to people in need in the immediate community and around the world. The *Book of Order* states the following as a responsibility of session: “planning and leading ministries of social healing and reconciliation in the community in accordance with the prophetic witness of Jesus Christ.” (G-3.0201, a) The Mission Committee educates and encourages the congregation to participate in the worldwide mission of Christ through their prayers, talent, time, and money. The committee partners with other churches, community groups and the General Assembly Mission Council to extend its reach.

Mission Committee: Duties and Responsibilities

- Encourage the joyful participation of the congregation in Christ’s affirming work of mission and hunger relief.
- Reach out to the congregation using such means as minute for mission, time with children, monthly newsletter articles, bulletin boards, Sunday bulletin inserts, and personal appeals.
- Administer and operate the daily on-site Help By Phone food pantry.
- Appoint a pantry coordinator who ensures that the pantry is staffed daily, that food is obtained from Help By Phone and supplemental sources. The coordinator will:
 - Keep accurate records of expenditures and submit required monthly reports.
 - Guard the privacy of pantry clients.
 - Encourage the congregation to donate bread for the pantry on Communion Sunday and canned soup on Souper Bowl Sunday.

- To minister monthly to the men at Prince George's House with prayer, fellowship and dinner.
- To create and carry out opportunities for service such as thanksgiving baskets for needy families, adopting a Christmas family, collecting disaster relief supplies, providing school supplies for local children, sponsoring needy children abroad through an international organization, and contributing to international hunger programs such as the Moringa Tree Project.
- To appeal to the congregation for special denominational offerings such as One Great Hour of Sharing and the Christmas Joy Offering.
- To develop and plan for the mission needs in the budget.

PROPERTY PLANNING MANAGEMENT (PPM)

The Property Planning Management elder collaborates with the trustees to oversee the use of the building and the care of the building and grounds.

Property Planning Management (PPM): Duties and Responsibilities

- Register all outside groups that request use of the Hope Presbyterian facilities and seek session approval for their requests.

Each year in early December, the PPM elder must determine those outside groups who are requesting use of Hope facilities for the next calendar year. An application that details each request for the coming year is prepared by the outside group and presented to the session (See Building Use Request Form #). The PPM elder facilitates the preparation and obtains session approval for the requested facilities usage. Included in the preparation of these requests is a recognition and acceptance by each group of the Church Facility Use Guidelines and Fee Schedule that the session has approved for use of our building. The goal is to have each request resolved by mid-January of the coming year. There will typically be a complement of outside groups that will use Hope facilities throughout the year. In addition to the groups mentioned above, there are other

events such as weddings and funerals for which there are separate policies.

- Serve as the liaison between the session and the trustees, presenting matters that the trustees propose for session approval.

The PPM elder is not a trustee, but must work closely with the trustees on building maintenance and improvement issues, and attend trustee meetings. He/she must have a complete understanding of the action items that have been placed on the trustees' to-do-list. If there are trustee actions that have a significant financial cost, the session must approve that expense.

TRUSTEES

The trustees of Hope Presbyterian Church oversee and coordinate the care of the buildings and grounds.

Trustees: Duties and Responsibilities

- Check the trustee mailbox in church office and suggestion box in the Hope foyer for work items for the trustees.
- Make specific assignments to trustees for building and grounds maintenance responsibilities.
- Hold quarterly meetings in February, April, July, and October.
- Interface with the elder responsible for Property Planning Management. He/she will serve as a liaison between the trustees and the session.
- Serve as trustee of the month. A list of trustees of the month is to be posted on the front of the broom closet on the back porch.
- Purchase renewable supplies needed throughout the facility. Make certain that every trustee has a Hope Presbyterian MD tax-exempt form.
- Work with church budget allocations covering capital expenditures.
- Elect a trustee to serve on the Nominating Committee at the February

- Hold at least two all-church work days (spring and fall) to handle maintenance items. In each of these seasons, the needed work items can be accomplished over the course of a week instead of just a single day.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Christian Education Committee coordinates and unifies the Christian formation program of the church. The committee provides Christ-centered learning experiences, which explore the Christian faith according to the reformed tradition, and how our faith relates to daily living. The Christian Education program strives to teach the Word of God, strengthen the faith and encourage members to grow in their calling to be disciples.

Christian Education: Duties and Responsibilities

- Oversee the Sunday School program, which includes recruiting and training teachers, commissioning them for their work and recognizing their service.
- Recommend curriculum to be used in the Sunday School, evaluate the curriculum with the teachers, and request that the church secretary order the new curriculum.
- Support and supervise the Youth Council to ensure that there is a balance in faith formation, mission and fellowship.
- Coordinate Vacation Bible School every summer by appointing and supporting leadership, recommending curriculum, requesting the church secretary to order the curriculum.
- Support, plan and recruit leadership for confirmation classes for those in seventh grade and above who wish to become full members of the church.
- Schedule and coordinate special aspects of the worship services related to Christian Education such as Rally Day, confirmation, and recognition of high school and college graduates.
- Serve as a resource for the adult Christian Education opportunities such as the weekly Adult Forum, the Christian Women's Fellowship, the weekly Collington

Bible study, and seasonal studies during Advent and Lent.

- Communicate opportunities that are available in the Christian Education program via newsletters, announcements, and e-mail.
- Communicate opportunities to grow in the faith through community experiences, mission, and programs made available through the PCUSA.
- Manage the Christian Education budget.