

**INTRODUCTION TO CHURCH OPERATIONS MANUAL  
PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH V.5**

As of 17 December 2018

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This operations manual helps our church operate in a biblically faithful manner. It covers basic issues related to membership, congregational meetings, responsibilities of church officers, and use of church property. In addition to these routine matters, it also covers issues often overlooked, such as deaconate assistance, biblical counseling, conflict resolution, and confidentiality. These, and other special provisions, are incorporated into our church's "Relational Commitments," so that the full benefit of such provisions may also be extended to people who are not yet members of our church but worshipping with us as part of our community.

At first glance, a visitor might wonder why we have gone into such detail. The primary answer is that we believe it is no longer possible to assume that everyone holds to the same standard of common sense, fairness, and justice, even within the same church. Therefore, what seems appropriate to one member of the church (for example, giving three days' notice of a special congregational meeting or allowing the deacons to spend \$3,000 without congregational approval) might seem outrageous to another member.

The human need for detailed guidance is fulfilled by principles clearly reflected in Scripture. Instead of giving us only the two Great Commandments (love God and love your neighbor), God gave us the Ten Commandments. All of these laws are summed up in the two great commandments, but Jesus knew that until the world is renewed, we will need the guidance of the moral principles set forth throughout Scripture (see Matthew 5:17-7:6). It is from these that we shape specific policies and rules sufficient for our time.

One of the places that we sometimes need this kind of detailed guidance is in the church. Scripture does not tell us exactly how to give notice or establish quorums for congregational meetings, what information should remain confidential and what may be shared with others, how long deacons should serve without re-election, or how to dispose of property if the church dissolves. This operations manual is designed to answer these types of questions, and will hopefully spare us from unnecessary confusion and conflict, help us to act in consistent and respectful ways, and allow us to devote ourselves to the more important matters of God's kingdom.

Proverbs 22:3 warns, "A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it." Realizing that the absence of common norms and values can pose a threat to the unity and well-being of our church, we developed this operations manual as a means of establishing commonly accepted standards for the way we would treat one another and govern ourselves as a body. In particular, this manual is designed to accomplish the following goals:

- Prevent surprises and disappointed expectations of potential members by explaining how the church intends to govern and accomplish its mission.

- Reduce the likelihood of confusion and conflict within the church by establishing clear operational guidelines.
- Prevent the misuse of authority by church leaders by limiting their powers and by establishing procedures that protect members from being disciplined or losing rights without due process.
- Give our elders protection from subpoena by a civil court regarding information received through pastoral counseling, as well as give them guidelines for reporting actual or suspected harm to others by clearly spelling out the principles of confidentiality followed by the church.
- Reduce the church's exposure to legal liability by satisfying recently developed legal requirements and by requiring that potential lawsuits be resolved through biblical mediation or arbitration rather than through litigation.

Bible passages are cited next to particular provisions, and readers are encouraged to look up the references. If questions remain, readers should not hesitate to approach our pastor or one of our elders, who will be happy to talk with you about this manual. The Book of Church Order for the Presbyterian Church in America (referred to as BCO) serves as an operations manual for our denomination and it is often cited in the following pages. A copy of the BCO is available for your review in the church library or online at <http://www.pcaac.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2015BCO-Reprint-with-bookmarks.pdf>

**OPERATIONS MANUAL OF PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PCA**

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1. Name

The name of our church is Providence Presbyterian Church, PCA. Our denomination is the Presbyterian Church of America. In this manual, references to "the church" refer to Providence Presbyterian. References to "the denomination" refer to PCA.

2. Constitution of the Church

This operations manual is subordinate to the Constitution of the denomination, which in turn is subject to and subordinate to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the inerrant Word of God. The Constitution consists of its doctrinal standards set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith, together with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and the Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America (BCO), comprising the Form of Government, the Rules of Discipline, and the Directory for Worship (see BCO Preface III). Should anything within this manual be found to contradict a provision of the Constitution, the Constitution shall control (see BCO 11-4; 25-7).

3. Mission and Limitations of the Church

(a) The mission of Providence Church is to glorify God by building His kingdom through Lord’s Day worship, evangelism, teaching, discipling, and charity.

(b) Limitations of the church are two-fold.

1) We will operate in a manner consistent with law (Romans 13:1)

2) We will conduct all our business and our worship in accordance with the Regulative Principle of Worship.

4. Location of Office, hours, and means of contact of church officers

- (a) The church office is located with the church at 400 Eastwood Ave 28301
- (b) Church office hours are by appointment.
- (c) To contact the pastor: (Refer to the back of the worship folder for emails and phone numbers.)
- (d) To contact an elder: (Refer to the back of the worship folder for emails and phone numbers.)
- (e) To contact a deacon: (Refer to the back of the worship folder for emails and phone numbers.)
- (f) Church member's access to the church email and website: (Under construction.)

5. Membership

- (a) The membership shall consist of all communing and non-communing members, all of whom have the privilege of pastoral oversight, instruction, and government by the church (BCO 6). Communing members are those who have made a profession of faith in Christ, have been baptized, and have been admitted by the Session to the Lord's Table (more commonly known as communion or the Lord's Supper). Non-communing members are the children of communing members (see BCO 6-1; 28-5).
- (b) A person may be received into communing membership in three ways: 1) by a letter of transfer (referred in the BCO as a "letter of dismissal") from another church of like faith and practice, 2) by reaffirmation of faith, or 3) by profession of faith. In order to be received into membership, a person who is not transferring from another PCA church must also complete the membership course. All new members (whether transferring from a church of like faith or not) will be asked to meet with the Session in order to give a testimony of their Christian experience. The Session will then recommend the new members to the congregation's Christian confidence and affection. Ordinarily, new members will also be invited to make a public profession of their faith in the presence of the congregation (BCO 57-3, 57-6).
- (c) Those new members who are making a profession of faith for the first time will be asked to assent to the following questions:
  - 1) Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His sovereign mercy?
  - 2) Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him along for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?

3) Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?

4) Do you promise to support to support the Church in in its worship and work of the best of your ability?

5) Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church and promise to study its purity and peace? (BCO 57-5)

- (d) All communing members who are in good standing in the church shall be voting members (see BCO 25-1). ("Good standing" means that a member is not presently under the censure of suspension or deposition.) Any voting member in attendance at a duly called meeting shall be entitled to one vote on matters brought before the congregational meeting (see BCO 6-4; 24-3; 25-1). Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. The pastor shall also be entitled to vote.
- (e) A member who is relocating away from Fayetteville may request to transfer membership to a new church by informing the Session of their intention and the reasons for doing so (see BCO 38-3; 46-1; 46-2). The Session will provide the transferring member with a certificate of dismission. However, if a member requests to transfer because of specific problems or disappointments with the church, the Session shall attempt to resolve those matters so that the member may remain in the church and enjoy greater fruitfulness and personal spiritual growth. If the Session is unable to resolve those matters, it shall offer to assist the member in locating a church of like faith and practice. If it appears to the Session that a member has requested transfer merely to avoid church discipline, that request shall not be acted upon until the disciplinary process has been properly concluded (see Matt. 18:12-20; BCO 38-3).
- (f) Members may also be removed from membership by order of the Session, as an act of pastoral discipline (BCO 27-1), in any of the following situations: 1) when they absent themselves from the services of the church for a period of one year without adequate reason; 2) when they affiliate with another church body which fails to maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity; 3) when they make known to the Session that they have no intention of fulfilling their church vows; or 4) when they are removed by excommunication for persistent impenitence (BCO 38-4). Non-communing members may be removed from membership with their parents or when they reject the covenantal responsibility of submission to home or church and neglect the ongoing exhortation of the Session to profess faith in Christ (see BCO 28). In all such cases, the Session shall continue to communicate with the member and seek to restore him or her in a spirit of gentleness, as Galatians 6:1 tells us.
- (g) Associate members are those who are temporarily in Fayetteville, and continuing to maintain membership at another church out of town. An associate member shall have all rights and privileges of this church, with the exception of voting or holding office. Given the transient nature of our military community, we often have members worshipping with us for a short while and this is an acceptable status should the member's stay in Fayetteville be brief. Associate members are encouraged to transfer

membership to Providence if their stay in Fayetteville is expected to be greater than a year. (BCO 46-4).

## 6. Relational Commitments

(a) What the church expects of its members:

— 1) A public confession of faith, in accordance with the BCO (57-5). (In the event of a member transferring from another like-minded church, the transferring member should give a testimony to the Session.) The confession of faith asks new members to respond affirmatively to the questions found in 5(c) above.

2) Cheerful giving of time and money. Providence Presbyterian Church pays its bills solely on the basis of tithes and offerings of its members and friends, and does its work through the volunteered time of its members and friends. There is no outside source of income. All tithes and offerings received by the church are applied to the budget which is approved annually by the congregation and is available for review at any time upon request. (BCO 21-10)

3) Regular attendance at worship. While an absence in excess of a year will result in removal of membership, it is difficult to imagine the circumstances in which a believer would absent himself or herself for that length of time without explanation. Membership should be sought by those who seek to grow in their relationship with Christ and to regularly participate in His worship, so it is assumed that attendance at worship with believers will be a sign of that relationship. Members should also attend regular bible study and fellowship so as to grow in their faith.

4) Submission to the oversight of the Session in matters of the church government. Such oversight is exercised not as a result of the superiority of the Session, but as a result of their calling. (21-10)

5) An openness to pastoral counselling, encouragement, and discipline. Members should expect diligent inquiry by the pastor and the Session as to the state of their faith and life.

6) An attitude of prayer towards all things.

(b) What the member should expect of the church, its Pastor and officers:

1) Pastoral care and counselling.

2) Pastoral visits.

3) Prayer and fellowship

4) Confidentiality

5) Availability

6) Financial transparency and integrity. No part of the income or assets of the church shall be distributed to any member or officer without full consideration. The church is prohibited from lending money to guarantee the obligation of a member or officer of the church. No member or officer of the church has any vested right, interest, or privilege in or to the assets, property, functions, or activities of the church. The church may contract in due course, for reasonable consideration, with its members or officers without violating this provision. All records of budget and expenditure of the church are open to review at any time.

#### 7. Ruling Elders and Deacons (officers of the church)

- (a) Ruling elders and deacons must be male voting members (see BCO 7-2; 25-7). In order to be eligible for election by the communing membership of the church, a man shall satisfy the qualifications set forth in Scripture (see 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; BCO 8-1, 2; 24-1). He shall also have been a member in good standing in the church for at least one year, shall have received appropriate training under the direction or with the approval of the Session, and shall have served the church in functions requiring responsible leadership (see BCO 16; 17).
- (b) Ruling elders, both individually as well as jointly with the pastor, are to lead the church in the service of Christ. They are to watch diligently over the people committed to their charge to prevent corruption of doctrine or morals. Evils that they cannot correct by private admonition they should bring to the notice of the Session. They should visit the people, especially the sick, instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourning, and nourish and guard the children of the covenant. They should pray with and for the people. They should have particular concern for the doctrine and conduct of the pastor and help him in his labors (see BCO 7; 8-3, 8, 9).
- (c) Deacons shall demonstrate the compassion of Christ in a manifold ministry of mercy toward the saints and strangers on behalf of the church (see BCO 7-2; 9-1, 2, 3). As delegated and directed by the Session, they shall minister to the temporal needs of members and friends, manage the church finances, and see to the care and maintenance of church property.
- (d) Any communing member may nominate a candidate for the offices of Ruling Elder or Deacon. The Session shall examine nominees and certify those who possess the necessary qualifications for office. An elder or deacon who had been previously certified but who resigned from or was divested of the office must be re-certified.
- (e) Once approved by the session, candidates for office are subject to election by the communing members of the church. Notice of a meeting to elect elders or deacons shall be given verbally, in the church bulletin, or by written letter at least one month in advance such meeting. At least one Lord's Day preceding the date appointed for the election, the Session shall announce to the church the names of those it has certified. Election shall be from those certified. Voting on the election of elders and deacons shall be done by secret ballot, and each vote shall be cast either in favor of

or against the election of each candidate, and those candidates receiving the vote of a majority in favor of their election shall be deemed elected.

- (f) An elder or deacon may be divested of his office by deposition for an offense in doctrine or life (see BCO 30-5). He may also be divested without censure by action of the Session, if a majority of the congregation so requests (see BCO 24-7) or if he cannot or does not for a period of one year perform the duties of his office (see BCO 24-9). An elder or deacon also may resign from his office (see BCO 24-7), or he may be relieved of certain responsibilities when he becomes infirm or by reason of age desires to be released from his duties (see BCO 24-10).
- (g) Church records, session minutes, and church financial records are open to review by church members, with the exception of matters that would violate the church's relational commitment of confidentiality (see Section 13 and 7(b) 6).

## 8. Pastors (Teaching Elders)

- (a) It is the charge of the pastor (teaching elder) to feed and tend the flock as Christ's minister, and with the other elders to lead them in all the service of Christ. It is his task to conduct the public worship of God; to pray for and with Christ's flock as the mouth of the people unto God; to feed the flock by the public reading and preaching of the Word of God, according to which he is to teach, convince, reprove, exhort, comfort, and evangelize, expounding and applying the truth of Scripture with ministerial authority, as a diligent workman approved by God; to administer the sacraments; to bless the people from God; to shepherd the flock and minister the Word according to the particular needs of groups, families, and individuals in the congregation, catechizing by teaching plainly the first principles of the oracles of God to the baptized youth and to adults who are yet babes in Christ, visiting in the homes of people, instructing and counseling individuals, and training them to be faithful servants of Christ; to minister to the poor, the sick, the afflicted, and the dying; and to make known the gospel to the lost (see BCO 7-2; 8-4, 5).
- (b) If the congregation shall choose to elect an associate pastor (see BCO 22-2), his relationship to the church shall be as determined by the congregation (see BCO 22-4). If the Session calls an assistant pastor, his relationship with the church shall be as determined by the Session (see BCO 22-3).
- (c) The pastor and any associate pastor shall be elected by the congregation as is required by the provisions of BCO 20-6.
- (d) A pastor may resign from his position with the permission of his Presbytery, upon due consideration of the needs and counsel of the church. If the church desires to be relieved of its pastor, it may, through a duly called congregational meeting, ask him to resign. If the pastor agrees to do so, the Presbytery shall be requested to dissolve the pastoral relationship as of a mutually agreeable date. If the pastor is not willing to resign, the church may petition the Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship and may send representatives to the meeting to support the request. The Presbytery may grant the request, but only after giving the pastor opportunity to

present his reasons for not concurring, or it may urge the congregation to reconsider its action. The decision of the Presbytery shall be final and binding, except when that decision is appealed to the General Assembly (see BCO 23-1).

## 9. Session

- (a) The session is the governing body of the church and consists of its pastor, associate pastor(s), and ruling elders (BCO 12-1; 22-2; 25-7). The session is charged with maintaining the spiritual government of the church and shall oversee all matters concerning the conduct of public worship and the promoting of spiritual growth and evangelistic witness of the congregation. It shall receive, dismiss, and exercise discipline over the members of the church. It supervises the activities of the Board of deacons and all other organizations of the congregation, and has final authority over the use of the church property (BCO 12-1, 5; 11-1 to 4).
- (b) The pastor shall be the moderator (chairman) of the Session (BCO 10-3; 12-2 to 4). The session may also choose a vice-moderator from among its members. The moderator shall be subject to the control of the Session, and shall in general supervise and control, in good faith, all of the business and affairs of the church. The moderator shall, when present, preside at all meetings of the members and of the Session, and shall conduct such meetings so as to facilitate free and respectful debate and decision-making (BCO 12-2; 10-3; 24-2).
- (c) The session shall have final authority for affairs pertaining to property and other temporal matters as required by civil law for nonprofit corporations (BCO 25-7 to 8). Neither the Session, the nonprofit board of trustees, nor any other officers or delegates shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, pledge or in any manner encumber any church property worth more than \$5000, nor to incur any indebtedness exceeding the sum of \$5000, unless first authorized to do so at a congregational meeting, either through the adoption of the annual budget or by special action of the congregation. The Session may delegate to the Board of deacons, the board of trustees, or to other communing members such of these responsibilities as it deems appropriate (see BCO 9-2, 5). In the event of a genuine emergency, as determined by the Board of Deacons, the Deacons may spend what is required in order to fix the immediate problem. Such action must be reviewed and approved retroactively by the Session at the next called meeting.
- (d) The Session shall meet at least quarterly and shall convene at the call of the moderator, the Presbytery, any two members of the Session, or upon its own adjournment (BCO 12-6; 10-3). Either oral or written notice, including the date, time, and place of a meeting, shall be given at least two days before a meeting. If mailed, notice shall be deemed to be effective the day after the letter is postmarked. Notice may be waived either orally or in writing. An elder's or pastor's attendance at a meeting waives his right to object to lack of notice or defective notice of the meeting, unless at the beginning of the meeting (or promptly upon arrival), he objects to holding the meeting or transacting business at the meeting, and does not vote for or assent to action taken at the meeting.

- (e) When the church has a pastor, a quorum is two ruling elders if there are three or more or one ruling elder if there are fewer than three, together with the pastor. When the church has no pastor, a quorum is three ruling elders if there are five or more in the Session or two ruling elders if there are less than five ruling elders in the Session. In no case may the Session conduct its business with fewer than two present of those who are entitled to vote (BCO 12-1).
  
- (f) The act of a majority present at a Session meeting at which a quorum is present (when the vote is taken) shall be the act of the Session. A pastor or elder shall be deemed to have approved of an action taken if he is present at a meeting of the Session unless: (1) he objects at the beginning of the meeting (or promptly upon arrival) to holding it or transacting business at the meeting; or (2) his dissent or abstention from the action taken is entered in the minutes of the meeting; or (3) he did not approve the action and he delivers written notice of dissent or abstention to the presiding officer of the meeting before its adjournment or immediately after adjournment of the meeting.
  
- (g) The Session may meet by means of a conference telephone call or similar communications equipment, provided all persons entitled to participate in the meeting received proper notice of the telephone meeting, and provided all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time. A member participating in a conference telephone meeting is deemed present in person at the meeting. The moderator of the meeting may establish reasonable rules as to conducting business at any meeting by phone.
  
- (h) The Session may appoint a vice-moderator (vice-chairman), who may perform, in good faith, the moderator's duties if the moderator is absent or is unable or refuses to act, and if any emergency should arise requiring immediate action (BCO 12-2). In addition, associate or assistant pastors may substitute for the pastor as moderator of the Session at the discretion of the pastor and Session (BCO 12-4). A vice-moderator or substitute moderator shall have all of the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the moderator. When the church is without a pastor, the moderator of the Session may be either a minister appointed for that purpose by the Presbytery, with consent of the Session, or one invited by the Session to preside on a particular occasion, or one of its own members elected to preside. In judicial cases, the moderator shall be a minister of the Presbytery to which the church belongs (BCO 12-3).
  
- (i) The clerk of the Session shall be the secretary of the church and shall in good faith: (1) create and maintain one or more books for the minutes of the proceedings of the Session; (2) provide that all notices are served in accordance with these Operations manual or as required by law; (3) be custodian of the church records and corporate records; (4) subscribe the minutes of all meetings of the Session; (5) when requested or required, authenticate any records of the church; (6) keep a current register of the post office address of each member; and (7) in general perform all duties incident to the office of secretary and any other duties that the moderator or the Session may assign to the secretary. The Session shall elect its clerk (secretary) annually from among its members (see BCO 10-4).

- (j) The session may establish such committees as it deems necessary for the work of the church (See section 12 for more detail).

## 10. Board of Deacons

- (a) The board of deacons shall oversee the ministry of the deacons. Deacons shall demonstrate the compassion of Christ in a manifold ministry of mercy toward the saints and strangers on behalf of the church (see BCO 7-2; 9-1, 2, 3). This ministry consists of several ministries of service:
- Minister to the temporal needs of the members and friends of the congregation.
  - Manage the church's finances to include the collection, accountability, and security of tithes and offerings.
  - Care and security of church grounds, buildings, and property. While the care and security of church property is the responsibility of the entire church congregation, both members and non-members, the Deacons are responsible for organizing and overseeing such efforts as they see necessary to accomplish proper care and security. - (BCO 9-4 and Acts 6:2-3).
- (b) The Board of deacons shall elect a chairman and a secretary from their number and a treasurer to whom shall be entrusted the funds for the current expenses of the church. It shall meet separately at least once a quarter and whenever requested by the Session. The Board of deacons shall determine the number necessary for a quorum (see BCO 9-4).
- (c) The church treasurer shall be elected by the Board of deacons and approved in that appointment by the Session. He shall: (1) have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the church; (2) receive and give receipts for moneys due and payable to the church from any source, and deposit all moneys in the church's name in banks, trust companies, or other depositories that the Session shall select; (3) submit the books and records to a Certified Public Accountant or other accountant as directed by the Session; and (4) in general perform all of the duties incident to the office of treasurer and any other duties that the moderator or Session may assign to the treasurer. If required by the Session, the treasurer shall give a bond for the faithful performance of the treasurer's duties and as insurance against the misappropriation of funds. If a bond is required, it shall be in a sum and with the surety or sureties that the Session shall determine.
- (d) A separate deacons' fund shall be maintained by the deacons, subject to oversight by the Session, for the good of the members of the church and others for whom the Deacons have responsibility. Funds for this are collected separately from church offerings by means of a deacon's fund collection box. The deacons will collect funds from this box every Sunday night and secure the funds in the deacon office until they can be accounted for. The disposition of the funds shall only be made known to members in a general sense; all private information shall be limited to the Deacons and the Session. (See paragraph on confidentiality 6(b) 4).

- (e) Collection of tithes and offerings (T&O). The deacons are responsible for the collection, accounting, and security of the offerings, whether it be in cash, check, or by electronic transfer.
  - Following the collection of T&O the offering plates will be taken to the deacon's office and locked inside the cabinet.
  - After the service, the deacons will count the funds and prepare them for deposit.
  - If no deacons are present, the funds will be secured in the office until the deacons are available to account for them.
  - The deacons will notify the owner of any check returned for insufficient funds
  - A designated deacon will deposit the T&O and return the deposit slip to the treasurer within the week.
- (f) The book fund box will be checked every Sunday night and any funds deposited will be secured in the deacons' office.
- (g) The deacons are responsible for all expenditures of church funds. Unbudgeted expenditures in excess of \$50 must be approved by the deacons
- (h) The deacons are responsible for church credit and loans. They will ensure that the Church does not carry credit card debt, and that installment debt (such as the mortgage) is paid as due.
- (i) The deacons will provide a report for each Session meeting. At least quarterly the deacons will ensure that either a deacon or an elder has provided the members with a report of the Church's financial status.

## 11. Board of Trustees

The church has established a nonprofit organization in order to manage the acquisition and disposition of church property and mortgage. This nonprofit, known as Providence Presbyterian of Fayetteville, Inc., is organized as a (501)(c)3 under the IRS code and North Carolina law. It is governed by a board of trustees who shall be elected by the congregation at a duly called congregational meeting (BCO 25-7). The Board of Directors is subordinate to the Session and governed by Bylaws which are available for review. The trustees, while important members of the church government, are not ordained officers of the church.

## 12. Congregational Meetings

- (a) An annual meeting of the church shall be held each year at a date, time, and place to be determined by the Session (see BCO 25-2). At the annual meeting, the voting members shall elect ruling elders and deacons, adopt an annual budget, and transact any other business that may come before the meeting.
- (b) Special meetings of the church shall be called at a date and location to be determined by the Session whenever the Session deems it to be in the best interests

of the church or when requested in writing to do so by more than the number of members required in BCO 25-2.

- (c) The date, time, and location of all congregational meetings must be announced orally or in the church bulletin at least two weeks prior to the time set for the meeting, or by letter mailed at least eight days prior to the meeting (see BCO 25-2). If the voting members adjourn any congregational meeting to a different date, time, or place, notice of a new date, time, and place need not be given if the new date, time, and place is announced before adjournment. A member entitled to a notice may waive notice of the meeting (or any notice required by the laws of the State of North Carolina or these operations manual), by a writing signed by the member. The member must send the notice of waiver to the church (either before or after the date and time stated in the notice) for inclusion in the minutes or filing with the church records.
- (d) The purpose of a congregational meeting shall be announced in advance if it involves: the election or removal of officers; the calling or removal of the pastor; the acquisition or disposition of property worth more than \$5000; the dissolution of the church; or a question regarding the church's denominational affiliation. When a meeting is called for the transaction of specific matters of business, no business shall be conducted except that which is stated in the notice (see BCO 25-2).
- (e) A member's attendance at a meeting: waives the member's right to object to lack of notice or defective notice of the meeting, unless the member at the beginning of the meeting objects to holding the meeting or transacting business at the meeting; and, waives the member's right to object to consideration of a particular matter at the meeting that is not within the purpose or purposes described in the meeting notice, unless the member objects to considering the matter when it is presented.
- (f) One-fourth (1/4) of the voting members shall constitute a quorum at congregational meetings (see BCO 25-3). Unless provided otherwise in this operations manual, a majority vote of those in attendance, a quorum being present, is sufficient to decide any matter.
- (g) The pastor shall be the moderator of congregational meetings by virtue of his office. If it should be impracticable or inexpedient for him to preside, or if there is no pastor, the Session shall appoint one of their number to call the meeting to order and to preside until the congregation shall elect their presiding officer, who may be a minister of the Presbyterian Church in America, or any male member of that particular church (see BCO 25-4).
- (h) A clerk shall be elected by the congregation to serve at that meeting or for a definite period, whose duty shall be to keep correct minutes of the proceedings and of all business transacted and to preserve these minutes in a permanent form, after they have been attested by the moderator and the clerk of the meeting. He shall send a copy of these minutes to the Session of the church (see BCO 25-5).

### 13. Congregational Committees

- (a) A congregational committee may be formed to execute policy and decisions of the Session. Congregational committees shall be comprised of elders, deacons, communing church members and/or regular visitors under the care of the session. Congregational committees may be standing or temporary committees. Men and women alike are encouraged to serve on committees.
- (b) Committees will not be formed or begin work without prior approval by the Session. Temporary committees for projects may obtain quotes or complete minor scope review to prior to authorization to provide supporting documentation for project initiation and voting.
- (c) All committees will have regular meetings and be able to give updates if required by the Session. The date, time, and location of all congregational committee meetings may be set by the committee members. If the committee adjourns any committee meeting to a different date, time, or place notice of a new date, time, and place all members of the committee must be notified.
- (d) The purpose of a congregational committee shall be announced in advance if it involves:
  - the calling of the pastor;
  - the acquisition or disposition of property worth more than \$5000.
- (e) When a committee is formed for the completion of specific matters of business, no business shall be conducted except that which is stated by the committee.
- (f) A committee member who is under church discipline will be required to step down from the committee during sanctions. A member may be reinstated after pending a review with the Session.
- (g) A standing committee is formed to address routine needs of the church. These committees shall consist of one Elder/Deacon and at least two members of the congregation. A record of standing committee members shall be maintained by the session.
- (h) The church standing committees are:
  - (1) Music Committee: Responsible for the selection of hymns and psalms, as well as oversight of the accompanist and any special music.
  - (2) Grounds Committee: Responsible for maintenance and improvement of our grounds as well as oversight of the work of church members work on the grounds.
  - (3) Missions Committee: Responsible for review of the church's commitment to local, national, and foreign missions on an annual basis, and for bringing recommendations for change to the Session on an annual basis. Responsible for

maintaining contact with mission organizations and for ensuring that the congregations know their prayer needs and any other special needs.

(4) Nursery Committee: Responsible for care and improvement of our nursery facilities. Also responsible for maintaining a roster of qualified individuals to work in the nursery and the development of rules and procedures for safely caring for infants in the nursery.

(5) Visitors and Greetings Committee: Responsible for ensuring that every visitor to Providence is greeted and made welcome. Also responsible for keeping track of visitors and following up with a visit or a phone call, and with keeping the pastor informed.

(i) A temporary committee is formed to complete a specific project. Projects may be presented by the Session, the Board of deacons, communing members, or regular visitors in good standing. Projects under \$5000 may be approved by the Session. For projects exceeding \$5000, a committee may be given permission to form by the Session to present project initiatives for congregational vote.

#### 14. Church Budget and Financial Management

- (a) The deacons will prepare the draft budget for the church annually. The Session must concur with the budget but it is the members of the congregation who approve it.
- (b) The church financial year is the calendar year. The Session will provide budgeting guidance to the deacons by 15 October. The deacons will present the proposed budget to the Session at the November meeting. Once the budget is approved by the Session, the Session will present the budget to the congregation for approval prior to the end of the year.
- (c) The budget and the financial position of the church in the execution of that budget are available for review by members at any time.
- (d) The church treasurer is a member of the board of deacons (see chapter 10). The treasurer shall report on the financial state of the church to the session at every session meeting. Quarterly, the session shall receive a report on budget execution from the treasurer.
- (e) Church credit cards will be held by the Pastor and the Treasurer. Credit card receipts will be turned in to the Treasurer within 2 weeks. The Treasurer shall pay off the credit card in full each month. Should funds not be available to do that, the Session will be notified and no further charges shall be made until the balance due is paid.
- (f) Unless action is otherwise taken by the congregation (such as in the case of a mortgage) the church will not carry forward debt from one month to the next.
- (g) The church shall strive to maintain a ready cash reserve equal to 90 days of operating expenses.

- (h) Separate restricted funds may be established by the church from time to time, but they must be approved by the session.

#### 15. Church Records

- (a) The Session shall keep the following records: (1) minutes of its meetings, including a record of the administration of the sacraments and changes in the membership of the congregation; (2) minutes of the meetings of the congregation; (3) rolls of the members in the congregation (communing, non-communing, and voting), with the dates of their reception (see BCO 12-8); (4) resolutions adopted by the Session; (5) appropriate accounting records; and (6) its operations manual and all amendments to them currently in effect (see BCO 12-7).
- (b) A member shall be entitled to inspect and copy, at a reasonable time and location specified by the Session, any of the church records described above, to include that of the nonprofit organization, provided the Session finds that the member has a proper purpose and is acting in good faith. The Session may limit access to any records that contain confidential information about a particular person or persons.

#### 16. Church Security

- (a) The deacons will maintain a roster of men of the church who will stand security watch during services, ensuring that access to the church, and the parking lot are watched at all times.
- (b) The deacons will maintain an alarm system for the church property, and oversee key control.
- (c) The church respects the right to bear arms, and members may carry concealed weapons, provided that all legal permits are in order.

#### 17. Marriage and Building Use

- (a) Marriage may only be performed in accordance with BCO 59 and WCF 24, for couples, at least one of whom is a member of the church, and who have completed the full course of pre-marriage counseling. There will be no rental or use of the church facility for non-member weddings, receptions, or other marriage or civil union related events.
- (b) Other uses of the building for activities other than regularly scheduled worship, Bible studies, prayer meetings, fellowship meals, congregational meetings and classes shall be at the sole determination of the session.
- (c) Under no circumstances will the church property be rented out, or offered on a "for hire" basis. The church may, with session approval, permit nonmembers to utilize the church, provided such use is consistent with the law, and the church's purpose.

18. Nursery

- (a) Providence provides a nursery, manned by volunteers from within the women of the church, as well as a cry room for nursing mothers. The nursery is open for all Sunday activities.
- (b) The church's nursery committee maintains the roster for volunteers. Men and boys are not permitted to work in the nursery.
- (c) Children who are ill should not be left in the nursery. If a child appears ill, or has been crying for more than 10 minutes, the nursery worker will seek the child's parents to care for the child.

19. Christian Education

- (a) The church offers Bible studies for its members through mid week studies at the church or neighborhood studies at members' homes.
- (b) Separate men and women's studies are offered on a weekly basis at times and locations that are regularly announced.

20. Church Calendar – **to be completed**

21. Ownership and Distribution of Property

- (a) The church shall hold, own, and enjoy its own personal and real property, without any right of reversion to another entity, except as provided in this manual (see BCO 25-9 to 11). Should the church decide to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church in America as provided in BCO 25-11, the church shall retain ownership of its property. Such withdrawal shall not be considered to be "dissolution."
- (b) "Dissolution" means the complete disbanding of the church so that it no longer functions as a congregation or as a corporate entity. Upon the dissolution of the church, its property shall be applied and distributed as follows: (1) all liabilities and obligations of the church shall be paid and discharged or adequate provision shall be made for them; (2) assets held by the church upon condition requiring return, transfer, or conveyance, which condition occurs by reason of the dissolution, shall be returned, transferred, or conveyed in accordance with such requirements; (3) assets received and not held upon a condition requiring return, transfer, or conveyance by reason of the dissolution, shall be transferred or conveyed to one or more domestic or foreign corporations, societies, or organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the responding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), and are engaged in activities substantially similar to those of the corporation; this distribution shall be done pursuant to a plan adopted by the Session, provided that no assets are distributed to any organization governed by a member of the Session.

- (c) If the church is dissolved by the Presbytery at the request of the congregation and no disposition has been made of its property by those who hold the title to the property within six months after such dissolution, then those who held the title to the property at the time of such dissolution shall transfer to the Presbytery all property of the church; and the receipt and acceptance by the Presbytery, or its proper representatives, shall be a full and complete discharge of all liabilities of such persons holding the property of the church. The Presbytery receiving such property shall apply the property or the proceeds thereof at its discretion, and the requirements of Bylaw 14 b. are satisfied (see BCO 25-12).
- (d) Any assets not otherwise disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, for such purposes and to such organizations as said court shall determine, provided such organizations are part of the Presbyterian Church in America.

## 22. Indemnification of Officers

- a) The Session may choose to indemnify and advance church-related expenses of any elder, deacon, employee, or agent of the church, to include the Board of Trustess of Providence Presbyterian of Fayetteville, inc.
- b) The church shall indemnify any elder or deacon or former elder or deacon of the church, or trustee against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by him (or her in the case of trustee) in connection with the defense of any action, suit or proceeding, civil or criminal, in which he or she is made a party by reason of being or having been such an elder, deacon, or trustee, except in relation to matters as to which he shall be adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of his duty.

## 23. Rules of Order

All meetings of the church, the Session, and its various boards and committees shall be conducted pursuant to the latest edition of *Roberts Rules of Order*.

## 24. Management of Change (MOC)

- a) The church management of change policy is based on the principle that all changes should be evaluated, approved, and necessary to maintain the church or reach out to the community. Any person attending the church may propose a change, but all changes must comply with the guidelines in the church manual, BCO, and scripture.
- b) MOC- Subtle Projects are project that cost under \$2500 and may be approved by the Session. MOC-Projects are projects that exceed \$2500 and must be approved by the Session and a congregational vote. All projects must be completed by a committee.
- c) Projects may be funded from the budget, a special donation, or by a fundraiser. Funding means must be approved by the Session, and if raised in the name of the church, must also be consistent with the BCO.

- d) Management of change initiation forms must be completed and submitted to an Elder for review by the Session. If scouting of a project is approved, a temporary committee may be formed and subsequent documentation must be completed for formal review with the Session and/or congregation.

## 25. Amendment of Operations manual

This operations manual may be amended or repealed only by the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the session present at a duly-called meeting of the session called for such purposes.

Management of Change Documents: (still in progress)



GP 2.0 - COD  
Initiation Form.doc