



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How are decisions made that govern and guide the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?

- The PCUSA is governed by elders, both ministers (teaching elders) and ruling elders, who are elected by their respective congregations. They serve on the local church Session and, as elected, with the varying governing bodies/mid-councils (presbytery, synod, and General Assembly) of the church.
- Business that comes to the General Assembly, which meets biennially, ordinarily originates from presbyteries in the form of overtures. Often these overtures are initiated by a session from within a particular presbytery. When an overture is proposed by a presbytery and also receives concurrence from at least one other presbytery, it becomes eligible for consideration by the General Assembly.
- Each overture is rigorously considered by an appropriate General Assembly committee, where it may be amended, and a determination is made regarding a recommendation for General Assembly consideration.
- There is also a provision for commissioner resolutions to be brought for consideration. Other suitable business may be brought, generally through the appropriate committees (e.g., election of the moderator, budget, administrative, operational needs, etc.).
- When items are brought to the floor of the General Assembly a motion is presented, pro and con discussion proceeds, generally leading to a vote on the action. The vote is considered to be the voice and will of the church (PCUSA) for the current time.
- If the action is a constitutional change (Book of Order) it must be ratified by a majority of the presbyteries within a specified time period following the given General Assembly action. It is then considered the official position of the church.

What is the Lake Grove process to address General Assembly decisions?

- As with all PCUSA congregations, LGPC Session waits until a decision is made nationally to address how it affects our congregation.

What happens if the Session does not uphold General Assembly requirements?

- This is rare. The Session addressed this issue with the Stated Clerk of Presbytery of the Cascades. There was not a definitive answer. Generally, the Session and the appropriate representatives from the presbytery enter into a collaborative process to consider and resolve concerns.

Did the Session ever consider voting to leave PCUSA?

- No, because the decision reached did not affect the necessity to address this issue.

What is the voting process for Lake Grove?

- Session voting rules are outlined in The Book of Order (G-3.0105) and direct meetings be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised. The Book of Order is the governing document for the PCUSA. At the time of this vote there are 13 voting members for Lake Grove Presbyterian Church. Four of those are elder-trustees. The current pastors and Clerk of Session have voice but are not voting members. Called and installed pastors have voice and vote.

What happens next?

- LGPC governing documents, policies and procedures, website, and communications will be updated to reflect this policy change.
- Future nominating committees have the ability to nominate church members in same sex marriages for Elder and Deacon. The nominating committee will continue to uphold the standards of qualification for these positions.
- LGPC Pastors have the option to perform same sex marriages in the Church.

Where can I get more information?

- Session will hold Sunday Q/A sessions throughout July following each service (9 -9:30 in the Youth Room, and 10:45 - 11:15 in Room 204)
- All Church Email, July 3
- Website: <https://www.lakegrovepres.org/resources/same-sex-conversation/>

Why this decision at this time?

- The Session's goal was to make this decision by the end of June 2026 before a new Session was seated.
- This decision-making process started in 2023, following a request from the Task Force on Participation and Representation for clarity and transparency regarding these policies.

What do I do next?

- Pray as Christ did for the unity of all believers.
- Continue open, honest conversations with your brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Continue to have conversations about today's issues.
- Continue to use your God-given gifts to show up for the Body of Christ.