

Manual of Operations and Appendix

The Manual of Operations and Appendix has been approved by Session and made available for review by our members. It is a living document and will be periodically revised and updated. The effective dates of each section of Manual can be found at the top of the page. If you have any questions about the material in the Manual, please contact the Church Office.

MANUAL OF OPERATIONS FOR FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH TUSCALOOSA

PURPOSE

First Presbyterian Church in Tuscaloosa was organized in 1820, one year after Alabama became a state. It was known then as Bethel of Tuscaloosa. It was formed by 16 Presbyterians who left Pendleton, SC, and settled on the banks of the Black Warrior River. The county courthouse was its meeting place. A congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) can be organized only by the authority of a presbytery and shall function under the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). (Book of Order G-1.02). This church is duly organized in accordance with the Book of Order within the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley.

The mission of God in Christ gives shape and substance to the life and work of the Church. In Christ, the Church participates in God's mission for the transformation of creation and humanity by proclaiming to all people the good news of God's love, offering to all people the grace of God at font and table, and calling all people to discipleship in Christ. Human beings have no higher goal in life than to glorify and enjoy God now and forever, living in covenant fellowship with God and participating in God's mission. (BO: F-1.01)

GOVERNANCE

Jesus Christ is the head of the Church. (BO: F-1.0201). Likewise, the Church is the body of Christ (BO: F-1.0301). This church's congregation and session shall be governed in accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), both its Book of Confessions and its Book of Order. Subordinate to that Constitution, this manual and the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order (Newly Revised) shall provide specific guidance.

MEETINGS

Session

Stated Meetings. Stated meetings of the session shall ordinarily be held monthly and in-person absent exigent circumstances. Meetings shall generally be considered open for any member of the FPC congregation to observe without voice or vote. The session may vote to move to a closed session meeting at times where session may feel free to question and debate issues before them without visitors or invited guests present.

Special Meetings. Special meetings of the congregation may be called in accord with the book of order.

Congregation

Annual Meeting. The congregation shall hold its annual meeting in the church building by the end of March unless changed by vote of session. The business at that meeting (in accord with BO: G-1.0503) should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Financial report for the preceding year
- Budget for the current year adopted by the session (for information only)
- Any proposed changes in the terms of call for a pastor in accord with BO: G-2.0804
- Nominating committee report for church officers and their election
- Election of members to serve on the current year's nominating committee
- Review of reports from the pastors, the session, and all church organizations (for information only)

Special Meetings. Special meetings of the congregation may be called in accord with BO: G-1.0502, for any of the following purposes.

Business to be transacted. Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation shall be limited to matters related to the following:

- a. electing ruling elders and deacons;
- b. calling a pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor;
- c. changing existing pastoral relationships, by such means as reviewing the adequacy of and approving changes to the terms of call of the pastor or pastors, or requesting, consenting to, or declining to consent to dissolution;
- d. buying, mortgaging, or selling real property;
- e. requesting the presbytery to grant an exemption as permitted in this Constitution (G-2.0404).
- f. approving a plan for the creation of a joint congregational witness or amending or dissolving the joint congregational witness (G-5.05).

Whenever permitted by civil law, both ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same congregational meeting. BO: G-1.0503

In exigent circumstances, the session may vote to hold a congregational meeting in a different location or conduct a distance congregational meeting. The procedures for a distance congregational meeting are included in [Appendix A.](#)

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Stated Meetings of the Session. The dates and times for stated meetings shall be approved by the session at the June stated meeting. The session may vote to change the approved dates if needed.

Special Meetings (commonly known as called meetings) of the Session. At least 24 hours notice should be given for any special meetings of the session, with the exception of meetings for the sole purpose of receiving members.

For routine matters, an email vote may be taken. For the motion to pass, a unanimous vote of at least a majority of elders in active service is required. If there are no votes, such action must be taken in a meeting.

Congregational Meetings. Notice of a congregational meeting shall be given at regular services of worship on two successive Sundays prior to each meeting in accordance with BO: G-1.0502. The meeting may be convened following the notice given on the second Sunday.

QUORUM FOR MEETINGS

Session Meeting Quorum. The quorum for session meetings shall be the moderator and a majority of elders in active service on the session for all meetings except those for the sole purpose of receiving new members when the quorum is the moderator plus five elders in active service on the session.

Congregational Meeting Quorum. The quorum for congregational meetings shall be the moderator and at least 10% of the active members.

Neither absentee ballots nor voting by proxy shall be permitted in any meetings.

INCORPORATION

The First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa is duly organized as a corporation in the State of Alabama. (Last sentence is a duplicate of sentence under "Business to be transacted on page 2.)

MEMBERSHIP

In accord with BO: G-1.03, the session shall receive and nurture members of the church. The session shall create and annually review rolls for all baptized members, active members, and affiliate members in accord with BO: G-1.04 & G-3.0204, also maintaining the required registers.

All members shall carry out the ministries of proclamation, sharing the sacraments, and living in covenant life with God and each other (BO: G-1.0101).

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Nominating Committee. The nomination and election of ruling elders and deacons shall express the rich diversity of the congregation's membership and shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness (F-1.0403). Ruling elders and deacons shall be nominated by a committee elected by the congregation, drawn from, and representative of its membership.

Congregations may provide by their own rule for a congregational nominating committee. BO: G-2.0401

The Nominating Committee Manual of Operations can be found in Appendix K.1.

Ruling Elders. The congregation shall elect 24 ruling elders distributed into three equal classes, one class of whom shall be elected each year at the annual meeting for a three-year term. In addition, the congregation should elect one youth to serve as an elder for a one-year term. If necessary, the nominating committee shall nominate a successor for a vacancy, to be elected by the congregation for the unexpired portion of the vacated position's term.

Deacons. The congregation shall elect 24 deacons distributed into three equal classes, one class of whom shall be elected each year at the annual meeting for a three-year term. In addition, the congregation should elect one youth to serve as deacon for a one-year term. If necessary, the nominating committee shall nominate a successor for a vacancy, to be elected by the congregation for the unexpired portion of the vacated position's term.

Familial Relations between Church Officers. Persons living in the same household may not serve together on the session or diaconate but may serve on separate boards at the same time. Youth are exempted from this provision and may serve at the same time as another member of their household.

Preparation for Ministry as a Ruling Elder or Deacon. When persons have been elected to the ordered ministry of ruling elder or deacon, the session shall provide 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 shall also confer with them as to their willingness to undertake the ministry appropriate to the order. If the examination is approved, the session shall appoint a day for the service of ordination and installation. BO: G-2.0402

Training. New officer training shall be conducted by ministers and ruling elders with the guidance and support of the Long-Range Planning committee.

Term of Service. Elders and deacons are elected for a term of three years unless elected to fill an unexpired term. Elders or deacons who have completed a three-year term are ineligible for re-election to active service for two years. An elder or deacon elected to fill an unexpired term shall be ineligible for re-election to active service for one year after the expiration of such term. Terms of elders and deacons shall expire when their successors have been ordained and installed.

SESSION

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 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. BO: G-3.0201

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. BO: G-2.0301

Responsibilities

The session shall have responsibility for governing the congregation and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world so that the congregation is and becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of the congregation, the session shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F- 1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed congregations have identified themselves throughout history (F-1.0303), and the six Great Ends of the Church (F- 1.0304). BO: G-3.0201

In light of this charge, the session has the responsibility and power to:

- a. provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard
- b. provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received and
- c. nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ

Worship

Generally, the session shall ensure that services of worship of God are regularly and reverently held in accord with G-3.0201 of The Book of Order.

Sacraments

The Lord's Supper. "The Lord's Supper shall be authorized by the session and administered by a minister of the Word and Sacrament†. It is appropriate that a presbytery authorize and train ruling elders to administer the Lord's Supper in the event of the absence of pastors (G-3.0301b). The session may authorize the celebration of the Lord's Supper at events other than the Service for the Lord's Day, including 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. A council may authorize the celebration of the Lord's Supper in certain contexts beyond the congregational setting, such as hospitals, prisons, schools, military bases, or other ministry settings (G-3.02, G-3.03)" Other settings may include residential environments such as homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities.

The session is given the responsibility to authorize the Lord's Supper at appropriate times. While there is a lower limit to the number of times in a year (once per quarter) the Lord's Supper is to be observed, there is no upper limit other than what is reasonable.

The responsibility of the session is to see that this sacrament is observed and is observed in an appropriate atmosphere and setting. BO: G-3.0409

The Worship Committee should recommend a 12-month schedule of dates for the celebration of communion dates for approval by the session each year.

Baptism. "Baptism shall be authorized by the session and administered by a minister of the Word and Sacrament. 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." BO: W-3.0403

The session must authorize all baptisms.

- a person is to be baptized only once;
- the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) accepts all forms of baptism with water and performed in the name of the triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
- the Sacrament is to be administered in a public service of worship (but other arrangements can be made in exceptional situations as long as the congregation is represented);
- baptism must be administered by a teaching elder or commissioned ruling elder approved by Presbytery;
- the procedure for the sacrament is set and is mandatory;
- at least one of the parents (or the person exercising parental authority) should be a member of a church; BO: W-3.0403
- candidates for Baptism or their parents shall renounce evil and profess their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. BO: W-3.0405

Nurture the Covenant Community

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 Councils of the Church G-3.02 G- 3.0201c–G-3.0204 49 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. BO: G-3.0201

Clerk

The session shall elect a clerk of session to serve a term of one year. A clerk who has served for a total of six consecutive years shall be ineligible for re-election for a period of at least one year. The clerk must be a ruling elder (BO: W-3.0104) but may be an active session member or an elder not currently serving on session. If he/she is not currently serving on the session, he/she shall have a voice in session meetings but may not vote.

The responsibilities of the clerk shall include:

1. Recording the minutes of all meetings of the session and congregation.
2. Oversee the maintenance of membership rolls. There shall be rolls of baptized, active, and affiliate members in accordance with G1.0401, G-1.0402 and G- 1.0403.
3. Receive and report to the session on any correspondence sent to the session.
4. Oversee the requesting of letters of transfer for new members transferring their membership to FPC and the sending of letters of transfer for members transferring their membership to another congregation.
5. When a child is baptized at FPC but the parents are members of a different congregation, the clerk shall oversee the notification to the congregation where the parent(s) are active member(s) so that congregation can record the child on their roll of baptized members.
6. Ensure the timely completion of the Statistical Report for the Office of the General Assembly.

Treasurer

The session shall elect a Treasurer, who shall be a member of the congregation, to serve a term of one year. A treasurer who has served for a total of six consecutive years shall be ineligible for re-election for a period of at least one year.

The responsibilities of the treasurer shall include:

1. Presenting a budget for consideration by the session.
2. Working with staff to ensure that all financial procedures are followed.
3. Make regular financial reports to the session.
4. Arrange for an independent audit annually.

Trustees

Each year the session elects three actively serving elders to serve as Trustees for the Corporation. This should happen in June. The trustees shall serve until their successors are elected.

Budget

The session must approve an operating budget for the year. The budget is usually approved in January. The budget is presented to the congregation for information.

Terms of Call

The session shall review annually each minister's terms of call and shall propose for congregational action (G-2.0804) such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided they meet the presbytery's minimum requirements. The call shall include participation in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly.

Elder Commissioners for Presbytery

The session shall elect elder commissioners to attend each meeting of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley.

Records

The session shall ensure that there are proper and adequate minutes, duly approved, and other records in accord with BO: G-3.0107 & 3.0204, and shall submit any requested records to Presbytery in accord with BO: G-3.0108.

Committees

The session, in accord with BO: G-3.0201, shall establish, discharge, and review the actions of any desired committees and other organizations within the congregation.

Officers are encouraged to identify and recruit members of the congregation with interests and talents similar to the committee's mission to serve as At Large Members (ALM's) of the committee they serve. ALM's have a voice and vote on all matters that come before the committee.

Task Forces

The session or a committee may appoint a task force if helpful to the completion of their mission. If appointed by the session, the task force will report directly to the session for possible action by session. If appointed by a committee, the task force will report directly to the committee for possible action by the committee.

DEACON

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. BO: G-2.0202

Required Policies

Each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that council. All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy, a child and youth protection policy, and an Anti-Racism policy. A council may delegate aspects of its tasks to such entities as it deems appropriate, provided that those entities remain accountable to the council. BO: G-3.0106

Sexual Misconduct Policy. [See Appendix C](#)

Child and Youth Protection Policy. [See Appendix D](#)

Antiracism Policy. [See Appendix E](#)

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How does a “Distance Congregational Meeting” work?

How do we vote?

With this document, you have been presented with the slate of names that the Nominating Committee is proposing for Officers, Nominating Committee and the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee. In 10 days you will be mailed a paper ballot to vote on these positions. In addition, there will be a way to vote electronically by following a link that will be emailed to the congregation. All paper ballots should be postmarked and electronic votes cast by _____ (set date) _____.

How is this voting method valid?

A quorum for Congregational Meetings is 10% of the membership. For us that means as long as we receive _____ ballots, the vote is valid. In order to verify that only active members of the church are voting, all persons casting votes will be asked to provide their names. The Clerk of Session will verify all names, validate the election and the result of the election will be announced by _____ (set date) _____.

What about nominations from the floor?

It is always the right of the congregation to make additional nominations from the floor of the Congregational Meeting. To uphold this principal of our polity, if you would like to make additional nominations, you may do so by emailing the Clerk of Session, Leanne Spencer (spencerlg@aol.com), or you may call the church office to submit your nomination. Any “nomination from the floor” must be submitted by _____ (set date) _____ and the nominee must be eligible and willing to serve if elected.

Why are we electing officers this way?

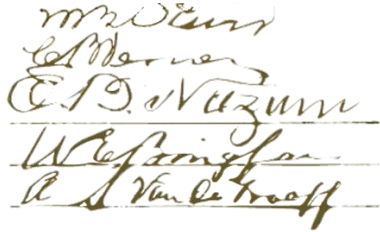
This is now the third (and hopefully last) "Distance Congregational Meeting" we've had at FPC. While we would prefer to meet in person, the Session believes this "Distance" format will allow the greatest number of our members to safely participate in this important process. This unique method of conducting a Congregational Meeting was created with input from the Presbytery and approved by the Session of FPC.

State of Alabama
TUSCALOOSA COUNTY
To Hon. Wm. W. Brandon, Judge of Probate,
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

This is to certify that at a meeting of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church, held on the 12th day of September 1920, at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in said county and state, the undersigned were elected as trustees for said church for one year beginning on the 12th day of September 1920, and ending on the 11th day of September 1921, and until the 11th day of September 1921, and until their successors were elected and qualified.

At said congregational meeting it was determined to incorporate the church under the corporate name of "The First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa," and the undersigned trustees were authorized and directed to file this certificate pursuant to Section 3614 of the Code of Alabama of 1907. The Undersigned respectfully ask your honor to file and record this paper pursuant to law.

Given under our hands this 14th day of September 1920.



Trustees

I, Wm. W. Brandon, Judge of Probate in and for Tuscaloosa County Alabama, hereby certify that the foregoing certificate was filed for record in the office of the Judge of Probate of Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, on the 14th day of September 1920, and has been recorded in 3- Book of Incorporations, page 429, and that the members of said church and their associated and successors are a body incorporated under the laws of the State of Alabama, under the corporate name of First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Given under my hand this the 14 day of September 1920.



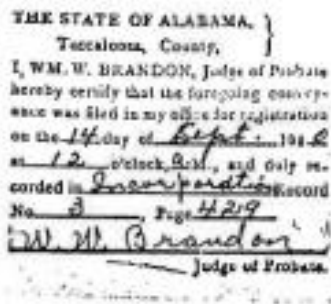
Judge of Probate

E.B. Nuzum
W. E. Bingham
A.S. Van de Graff
Trustees

I Wm. W. Brandon, Judge of Probate in and for Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, hereby certify that the foregoing certificate was filed for record in the office of the Judge of Probate of Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, on the 14 day of Sept. 1920, and has been recorded in 3 Book of Incorporation, page 429 and that the members of said church and their associated and successors are a body incorporated under the laws of the State of Alabama, under the corporate name of Frist Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Given under my hand this the 14 day of Sept. 1920.

Wm. W. Brandon
Judge of Probate



State of Alabama
Tuscaloosa County

To Hon. Wm. W. Brandon, Judge of Probate, Tuscaloosa, Ala.

This is to certify that at a meeting of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church, held on the 12th day of Sept. 1920, at Tuscaloosa Alabama, in said county and state, the undersigned were elected as trustees for said church for the year beginning on the 12th day of Sept. 1920, and ending on the 11th day of Sept. 1921, and until their successors were elected and qualified.

At said congregational meeting it was determined to incorporate the church under the corporate name of "The First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa," and the undersigned trustees were authorized and directed to file this certificate pursuant to Section 3614 of the Code of Alabama of 1907. The Undersigned respectfully ask your honor to file and record this paper pursuant to law.

Given under our hands this the 14th day of Sept. 1920.

W. B. Oliver
C.B. Verner

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH TUSCALOOSA

As members, clergy and staff of First Presbyterian Church, in obedience to Jesus Christ, we are called by Christ to be involved responsibly in the ministry of the church. We confirm that Jesus Christ is the pattern for our lives and ministry and acknowledge:

1. An act of sexual misconduct is a violation of our role in the ministry of the church. In such ministry, all are called upon to exercise integrity, sensitivity and caring in a trust relationship devoted to the best interest of those to and with whom they minister.
2. Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power which breaches Christian ethical principles. It is further a misuse of a trust relationship to gain advantage of another for personal pleasure or power in an abusive, exploitative, or unjust manner. Such conduct cannot be justified by a claim of mutual consent.
3. Sexual misconduct takes advantage of the vulnerability of children and other persons who do not have power to act for their own welfare. It is in opposition to the gospel call to work as God's servant in the struggle to bring wholeness to a broken world. It violates the mandate to protect the vulnerable from harm.

Policy

First Presbyterian Church condemns sexual misconduct. Allegations of sexual misconduct will be fully, and fairly investigated and corrective or disciplinary action taken, as warranted. Further, First Presbyterian Church will report credible allegations of sexual misconduct to law enforcement officials when appropriate and will cooperate fully with law enforcement official's investigation of such allegations. The scope of this policy is not limited to the physical location of First Presbyterian Church and relationships with others at that location. It includes contacts anywhere in connection with carrying out Church responsibilities and relationships with employees, volunteers, and members of any Presbyterian Church (USA) bodies or entities.

Adult Sexual Misconduct – This type of sexual misconduct, includes, but is not limited to:

1. Physical – rape, sexual assault, threat of intimidation and adultery; production or distribution of pornography; unwanted physical contact.
2. Verbal – oral or written sexual innuendoes, risqué jokes, suggestive or insulting questions, comments, or sounds, teasing of a sexual nature, sexual propositions or threats, sexual remarks about clothing, body or love life.
3. Visual – sexually suggestive or gender derogatory objects, pictures, production and distribution of pornography, posters, leering or suggestive gestures.

Child Sexual Abuse – This type of sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

1. Physical – any conduct or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. The upper age limit for status as a child is that recognized by the state in which the act of child sexual abuse is committed.
2. Verbal – sexual innuendoes and risqué jokes; teasing of a sexual nature; sexual propositions or threats; or any conversation of a sexual nature, for any purpose other than instruction approved by a parent.
3. Visual – any involvement with child pornography; display of pornographic or sexual material to a child.

This policy applies equally to all vendors, suppliers or other third parties. No conduct in violation of this policy will be tolerated.

However, it may from time to time be amended, this shall be the policy of First Presbyterian Church.

Child and Youth Protection Policy

“Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.”
-Matthew 19:14

Our congregation embraces these words of scripture attributed to our Lord Jesus Christ and wholly affirms the “Vision for Children and the Church” adopted by the 205th & 219th General Assembly. As such we believe the following theological statements regarding our responsibility to care for the children of our church:

- 1) Children and Youth are gifts of God, created by God and Created good. Therefore, we will set standards for PREVENTION to protect what God has created good.**
- 2) Children and Youth depend upon adults for safety and security. Therefore, we will practice SUPERVISION of those whom we trust to care for those who depend upon us.**
- 3) Children and Youth hope for a world where they can find a safe place. Therefore, we will respond quickly and faithfully to any VIOLATION that may cause harm to a child/youth.**
- 4) Children and Youth need adults to take seriously the baptismal vow of nurture and care. Therefore, we will demand OVERSIGHT from our leaders called to carry out our promises to God.**

The church is a place called by Jesus Christ to trust, welcome, and forgive our friends and our enemies. These same qualities sadly make our church homes a potential “sanctuary” for those who seek to cause harm to God’s precious creation. Therefore, we must continue to live out our practice of extending love and grace to those who are strangers, while also ensuring that we provide measures to ensure the safety of those who cannot protect themselves. We hope the recommendations below will help us take the children of our church up into our arms and provide them a safe place until they are able to protect themselves and others.

“Then Jesus took a little child and put the child among them; and taking the child in his arms, he said to them, ‘Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.’”
-Mark 9: 36-37

DEFINITION

For the purposes of this document child/children refers to young people from birth through 5th grade and youth refers to those in grades 6-12.

Rule of Three – 3 individuals

PREVENTION

Screening. All employees, elders, deacons, and those volunteering to work with children or youth must go through a background check. The procedures for background checks are attached. All background checks must be confidential and secured for five years. All persons must re-submit a background check after five years. Background checks from other employers may not be submitted. The screening policies of employers who provide services within the church complex should be reviewed prior to any regular work being performed in the building.

Review. All cleared checks will immediately be secured. Any records that are not completely clear will be confidentially submitted to the head of staff. A pastor will discuss the issue with the individual. If the individual continues to pursue leadership following a pastoral discussion, the head of staff will decide on further steps to take.

Offenses. Any record which indicates an occurrence of abuse or any form of harm to a minor, any crime against a person or crime of moral turpitude will disqualify a person from participating in leadership with children or youth. The pastoral staff and Child/Youth Protection Taskforce may use discretion in determining what level of contact/leadership an individual with a record of other incidents may have based upon the record of the individual.

New Prospects. New prospects or members shall not provide leadership with children or youth within the first 6 months of regular church attendance. Participation in Bama UKirk may count as church attendance. For volunteers with less than two years of regular church attendance, staff should have the prospective volunteer complete the Volunteer Information Form and contact references using the Volunteer Information form. Any exceptions to this requirement require session approval.

Minimum Age. Persons under the age of 18 shall not provide leadership of other persons under the age of 18 without supervision of at least 2 adults who have completed the screening process.

Permission Forms.

- A youth covenant with regard to behavior and safety should be signed by all youth and parents/guardians who regularly participate in any congregational activity. Each covenant should be renewed on an annual basis and maintained by the Youth Director.
- A parent or guardian must complete a Parental Consent and Release and Hold Harmless Agreement for each child/youth participating in out-of-town activities and should be renewed on an annual basis and maintained by the Youth Director or Associate Pastor for Faith Formation (depending on the participant's area of ministry).
- Children participating in Logos must have a signed Logos Registration Form on file at the church. Each individual providing Logos transportation will have copies of the LOGOS roster and emergency contact information for each child.

Parental Responsibility. Parents are responsible for direct supervision of children in the church building except when children are participating in a church-sponsored activity directed toward children.

Media. Our worship services are recorded and posted online. Permission to use images of children and youth is given during registration for activities. Participants in church events are expected to refrain from posting pictures or video of children or youth without gaining permission from the parent or guardian.

SUPERVISION

Open Door Policy. Any one-on-one consultation shall take place in a room with an open door, in view of an accessible window, or video surveillance.

Adult Supervision. There shall be at least two non-related adults present at any activity involving children or youth. If children/youth are participating in a small group with one adult leader, the “Rule of Three” should be observed at all times and the door should be open at all times. In an emergency situation, an adult supervisor will make unannounced frequent visits when two adults are not available. Adults supervising youth should be at least 21 years old. The youth committee or staff must approve any youth helpers who have not been out of youth for at least four years.

Overnight Activities. At least 3 adult chaperones are required for overnight outings if separate sleeping accommodations are available. If the group is mixed gender at least 1 chaperone must be male and the other female. For over fifteen students another chaperone is required. For larger groups additional adult chaperones may be required with the understanding that a 1-5 ratio is the best practice. If separate sleeping accommodations are not available, 2 chaperones of each gender are required.

Transportation. Anyone who will regularly drive vehicles owned by the church must submit a copy of their driver’s license to the church office. That information will be provided to our insurance company who will notify us if there is a problem. Adults transporting children/youth in their own vehicles must have a valid driver’s license and proof of insurance with them. You may not drive for church events if you have a DUI on your driving record. You must be at least 25 years old to drive the church bus and 21 years old to drive a personal vehicle carrying unrelated youth or children during church events. No youth may drive any other youth unless they are related. Seat belts must be worn at all times and children/youth may not engage in any behaviors that will distract the driver. When the 2-adult rule is not feasible with regard to vehicles in the Tuscaloosa area, the driver should proceed directly to the final destination. No stopping is allowed except in an emergency. Outside the Tuscaloosa area, vehicles with only one adult must travel within sight of the other vehicle(s) at all times and all vehicles should start and stop travel simultaneously.

Event Protocols

- Youth should sign in upon arrival for youth events and visitors must provide the name and emergency contact number for a parent or guardian.
- Parents should sign in children birth to age 5.
- On Sundays, parents should accompany elementary children to their classroom and pick them up when class is over. Elementary children may sign themselves in.
- Children arriving for Logos will be checked in by Logos Volunteers.

Age-Appropriate Expressions of Engagement

Digital communication between adults and children/youth in our church community should reflect the same values we uphold in person: respect, transparency, and protection. These guidelines are designed to help volunteers and staff maintain healthy boundaries, foster trust, and ensure that all interactions support the spiritual and emotional well-being of our young people.

- **Purposeful Contact Only:** Communication should be initiated only when necessary and directly related to church programming, pastoral care, or logistical coordination. Casual or personal outreach is not appropriate.
- **Time Boundaries:** Contact should only occur during appropriate hours, typically between 8:00 am and 8:00pm,
- **Social Media Boundaries:** Adults should not initiate friend requests, follows, or other personal connections with minors on social media platforms.
- **Friendly but Formal Tone:** Communication should be warm and encouraging but remain formal and focused on church-related matters. Avoid overly casual language or personal disclosures.
- **Transparency with Guardians, Accountability, and Documentation:** Whenever possible, include a parent or guardian in digital communication (e.g., group messages, copied emails) to promote openness and accountability. Adults are encouraged to document or report any digital interactions that feel unclear, boundary-testing, or outside standard expectations with a church staff member. This protects both youth and volunteers.

Adults supervising children and youth should ALWAYS:

- Treat each child/youth as a Child of God.
- Respect a child/youth's personal space. Some children/youth prefer high-fives to hugs or prefer not to have others in their personal space at all. An adult should always respect that "no" means "no" regarding a child/youth's personal space unless the safety of the child/youth is at stake.
- Hug a child/youth over the age of 5 from the side unless a frontal hug is initiated by the child/youth.
- Listen attentively and speak respectfully to children/youth.
- Report activity that seems inappropriate to the supervising staff or an elder or deacon on the Children & Families Faith Formation Committee or Youth committee
- Report an activity that constitutes abuse or neglect to DHR. Please see the attached document for details on mandatory reporting.

Adults supervising children/youth should NEVER:

- Be alone with a child/youth; if you need to have a private conversation with a child/youth it should always take place in sight of others.
- Touch a child/youth inappropriately. (Examples of inappropriate touching include but are not limited to: arm tickles, touching a child in anger, disgust or frustration, kissing, wrestling or tickling, piggyback rides, touching private parts, massages or back rubs. While we recognize that children birth to 5 years will need diaper changes and, at times, assistance with toileting, there should always be another adult nearby. Children birth to age 5 may be comforted by frontal hugs or lap sitting, but these behaviors are inappropriate for elementary children unless initiated by the child.)

- Talk, text or message on your phone while supervising children/youth unless it is an emergency situation and you are seeking assistance
- Talk to a child/youth inappropriately. (Examples of inappropriate talk includes but is not limited to compliments or questions relating to physique or body development, sexual jokes, homosexual innuendos, or bathroom humor, swearing or vulgar language, verbal harassment or abuse, individual secrets or special gifts, etc.)
- Consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance which may cause impairment while supervising children/youth.
- Allow youth/children to consume alcohol or other prohibited substances
- Use tobacco in any form including vapor or e-cigarettes in the presence of a child or youth

Training. Each adult supervising children or youth shall be given a copy of this policy by the Youth Director or Associate Pastor for Faith Formation depending on the volunteer area. The policy will be readily available onsite. Video Training for adults supervising children and youth will be provided and adults will be required to complete training prior to supervising children or youth with required renewal every 3 years. Documentation of completed training will be recorded in the church information management system.

VIOLATION

Reporting & Investigation. Any allegation of inappropriate behavior shall be reported immediately to the nearest supervising adult and/or a member of the pastoral or program staff. The person receiving the report shall record the report in writing and initiate an investigation. The person suspected of a violation may be removed immediately from further contact with children or youth until completion of a full investigation. In the case of any suspicion of abuse or neglect, the mandatory reporting procedures below must be followed. Additional reports shall be made to the appropriate authorities in accordance with the laws of the State of Alabama and denominational policy. If a violation is reported about a pastor, a report shall be made to another pastor and to the appropriate Presbytery authority. All reports of inappropriate behavior will be investigated by the pastoral staff and/or the Child/Youth Protection Task Force.

Consequences. The Child/Youth Protection Task Force and the pastoral staff will work together to determine appropriate consequences which could include barring the individual from all church activities.

Mandatory Reporter.

1) Mandatory Reporters:

- a) The State of Alabama law includes **our volunteers and staff** as legally mandated reporters. For example, teachers, officers, day care workers, employees of private institutions of education, are all included.
- b) Regarding teaching and ruling elders, any ordained, licensed, or commissioned pastor, and any person who devotes a substantial portion of his or her time and abilities to the service of his or her church or religious organization, all are Mandatory Reporters of suspected abuse or neglect. Also included is any person called upon to render aid or medical assistance to any child.

2) Procedure for Reporting:

- a) When a child/youth is known or suspected to be a victim of child abuse or neglect, the laws of the State of Alabama require the mandatory reporter to report orally by telephone or direct communication immediately, followed by a written report to a duly constituted authority. (See attachments for details.) The person who has direct knowledge of or suspicion of abuse or neglect must be the one to make the report. A pastor will make themselves available to assist with this process.
- b) The "duly constituted authority" refers to any law enforcement officer, (such as a sheriff or police officer), or the Department of Human Resources office in the county where the abuse is taking place, or in the county of the child's residence. In the case of an immediate emergency, 911 is an appropriate authority to notify.
- c) Regarding teaching elders/ministers of the Word and Sacraments, the law states: when a person communicates with clergy in the scope of the clergy person's professional capacity, and when that communication is made with the understanding that it should not be revealed to another, and the person is merely seeking spiritual advice, the communication is protected by privilege, under Rule 505 of the Alabama Rules of Evidence. However, the communication from a person to clergy is NOT protected (and is thus reportable) when the communication is in furtherance of a crime or a fraud, including abuse or neglect of a child.

OVERSIGHT

Implementation. The oversight of the safety of our children is ultimately the responsibility of the Session, employees, and all members of the church. However, the specific implementation of guidelines shall be handled by the Children & Families Faith Formation Committee (birth to grade 5) and Youth Committee (grades 6 to 12). They shall be responsible for ensuring that all persons are screened prior to volunteering in leadership and appropriately trained on child/youth protection policies.

Confidentiality. All reports and background information shall remain confidential to those who have received the report and the pastoral staff. Reports of proven incidents shall remain in a confidential, locked file along with background checks.

Child/Youth Protection Task Force. The Child/Youth Protection Task Force will be called into service as needed due to the report of a violation, at the request of the pastoral staff, or at the request of session. The Child/Youth Protection Task Force will consist of the chair or his/her designee serving on the Children & Families Faith Formation Committee, Youth Committee *(“and the deacons serving on the Early Childhood Committee” has been omitted), a member of the pastoral staff. At least one person from each committee must be present for the Child/Youth Protection Task Force to take action. This policy shall be reviewed and updated as needed, but at least once every five years by a task force to be appointed by and have representatives from the Children & Families Faith Formation Committee and Youth Committees.

Attachments:

- Volunteer Information Form
- Youth Covenant
- Parental Consent and Release and Hold Harmless Agreement
- Changes to Alabama's Mandatory Reporting Law
- Code of Alabama Title 26. Chapter 14



Alabama Network of Children's Advocacy Centers, Inc.

Changes to Alabama's Mandatory Reporting Law

*Changes/Additions are Underlined

Who are the Mandatory Reporters?

- Medical Facilities: All hospitals, clinics, sanitariums
- Medical Professionals: Doctors, physicians, surgeons, medical examiners, coroners, dentists, osteopaths, optometrists, chiropractors, podiatrists. physical therapists, nurses, pharmacists, and mental health professionals
- Educators: Employees of both public and private K-12 facilities, school teachers and officials, day care workers or employees, employees of public and private institutions of postsecondary and higher education
- Local & State Officials: Peace officers, law enforcement officials, social workers
- Clergy: Any ordained, licensed, or commissioned minister, pastor, priest, rabbi, or practitioner of any bona fide established church or religious organization, or any person who devotes a substantial portion of his or her time and abilities to the service of his or her church or religious organization
- Any person called upon to render aid or medical assistance to any child

What is the Procedure for Reporting?

- When a child is known or suspected to be a victim of child abuse or neglect, the mandatory reporter himself is required to report orally by telephone or direct communication immediately, followed by a written report to a duly constituted authority.
- Previously, the law permitted a person to notify his or her supervisor, and the supervisor would then be responsible for making the report. That process is no longer permitted, and the person who has direct knowledge of or suspicion of abuse or neglect must be the one to make the report.
- The "duly constituted authority" refers to any law enforcement officer, (such as a sheriff or police officer), or the OHR office in the county where the abuse is taking place, or in the county of the child's residence. In the case of an immediate emergency, 911 is an appropriate authority to notify.
- When the initial report is made to a law enforcement official, that law enforcement official must notify DHR, and likewise, when the initial report is made to DHR, the DHR official must notify law enforcement.
- Note on clergy: when a person communicates with clergy in the scope of the clergyman's professional capacity, and when that communication is made with the understanding that it should not be revealed to another, and the person is merely seeking spiritual advice, the communication is protected by privilege, under Rule 505 of the Alabama Rules of Evidence. However, the communication from a person to clergy is not protected (and is thus reportable) when the communication is in furtherance of a crime or a fraud.

What are the Consequences of Punishing an Employee Who Reports?

- Effective immediately, any public or private employer who discharges, suspends, disciplines, or penalizes an employee solely for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect will be guilty of a Class C Misdemeanor.
- The sentence for committing a Class C Misdemeanor is confinement in jail for a period not to exceed 3 months.

Sources:

The Code of Alabama 1975, Section 26-14-3, as amended

The Code of Alabama 1975, Section 13A-5-7(a)(3)

Alabama Rules of Evidence, Article 5, Rule 505, and the Advisory Committee's Notes on the same

Updated 05/13/2013

Code of Alabama
Title 26. Infants and Incompetents.
Chapter 14. Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect.

ALA.CODE§ 26-14-1

§ 26-14-1. Definitions.

For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them by this section:

- (1) ABUSE. Harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare. Harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare can occur through nonaccidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or attempted sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation or attempted sexual exploitation. "Sexual abuse" includes the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or having a child assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of the conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of the conduct; or the rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children as those acts are defined by Alabama law. "Sexual exploitation" includes allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution and allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging in the obscene or pornographic photographing, filming, or depicting of a child for commercial purposes.
- (2) NEGLECT. Negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child, including the failure to provide adequate food, medical treatment, supervision, clothing, or shelter.
- (3) CHILD. A person under the age of 18 years.
- (4) DULY CONSTITUTED AUTHORITY. The chief of police of a municipality or municipality and county; or the sheriff, if the observation of child abuse or neglect is made in an unincorporated territory; or the Department of Human Resources; or any person, organization, corporation, group, or agency authorized and designated by the Department of Human Resources to receive reports of child abuse and neglect; provided, that a "duly constituted authority" shall not include an agency involved in the acts or omissions of the reported child abuse or neglect.

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ALA.CODE§ 26-14-2

§ 26-14-2. Purpose of chapter.

In order to protect children whose health and welfare may be adversely affected through abuse and neglect, the Legislature hereby provides for the reporting of such cases to the appropriate authorities. It is the intent of the Legislature that, as a result of such efforts, and through the cooperation of state, county, local agencies and divisions of government,

protective services shall be made available in an effort to prevent further abuses and neglect, to safeguard and enforce the general welfare of such children, and to encourage cooperation among the states in dealing with the problems of child abuse.

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ALA.CODE§ 26-14-3

§ 26-14-3. Mandatory reporting.

- (a) All hospitals, clinics, sanitariums, doctors, physicians, surgeons, medical examiners, coroners, dentists, osteopaths, optometrists, chiropractors, podiatrists, physical therapists, nurses, public and private K-12 employees, school teachers and officials, peace officers, law enforcement officials, pharmacists, social workers, day care workers or employees, mental health professionals, employees of public and private institutions of postsecondary and higher education, members of the clergy as defined in Rule 505 of the Alabama Rules of Evidence, or any other person called upon to render aid or medical assistance to any child, when the child is known or suspected to be a victim of child abuse or neglect, shall be required to report orally, either by telephone or direct communication immediately, followed by a written report, to a duly constituted authority.
- (b) When an initial report is made to a law enforcement official, the official subsequently shall inform the Department of Human Resources of the report so that the department can carry out its responsibility to provide protective services when deemed appropriate to the respective child or children.
- (c) When the Department of Human Resources receives initial reports of suspected abuse or neglect involving discipline or corporal punishment committed in a public or private school or suspected abuse or neglect in a state-operated child residential facility, the Department of Human Resources shall transmit a copy of school reports to the law enforcement agency and residential facility reports to the law enforcement agency and the operating state agency which shall conduct the investigation. When the investigation is completed, a written report of the completed investigation shall contain the information required by the state Department of Human Resources which shall be submitted by the law enforcement agency or the state agency to the county department of human resources for entry into the state's central registry.
- (d) Nothing in this chapter shall preclude interagency agreements between departments of human resources, law enforcement, and other state agencies on procedures for investigating reports of suspected child abuse and neglect to provide for departments of human resources to assist law enforcement and other state agencies in these investigations.
- (e) Any provision of this section to the contrary notwithstanding, if any agency or authority investigates any report pursuant to this section and the report does not result in a conviction, the agency or authority shall expunge any record of the information or report and any data developed from the record.

- (f) Subsection (a) to the contrary notwithstanding, a member of the clergy shall not be required to report information gained solely in a confidential communication privileged pursuant to Rule 505 of the Alabama Rules of Evidence which communication shall continue to be privileged as provided by law.
 - (g) Commencing on August 1, 2013, a public or private employer who discharges, suspends, disciplines, or penalizes an employee solely for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect pursuant to this section shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor.
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ALA.CODE§ 26-14-4

§ 26-14-4. Permissive reporting.

In addition to those persons, firms, corporations, and officials required by Section 26-14-3 to report child abuse and neglect, any person may make such a report if such person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected.

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ALA.CODE§ 26-14-5

§ 26-14-5. Contents of reports.

The reports provided for in this chapter shall state, if known, the name of the child, his or her whereabouts, the names and addresses of the parents, guardian, or caretaker, and the character and extent of his or her injuries. The written report shall also contain, if known, any evidence of previous injuries to the child and any other pertinent information which might establish the cause of such injury or injuries, and the identity of the person or persons responsible for the same.

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ALA.CODE§ 26-14-6

§ 26-14-6. Temporary protective custody.

A police officer, a law enforcement official, or a designated employee of the State or County Department of Human Resources may take a child into protective custody, or any person in charge of a hospital or similar institution or any physician treating a child may keep that child in his or her custody, without the consent of the parent or guardian, whether or not additional

medical treatment is required, if the circumstances or conditions of the child are such that continuing in his or her place of residence or in the care and custody of the parent, guardian, custodian, or other person responsible for the child's care presents an imminent danger to that child's life or health. However, such official shall immediately notify the court having jurisdiction over juveniles of such actions in taking the child into protective custody; provided, that such custody shall not exceed 72 hours and that a court of competent jurisdiction and the Department of Human Resources shall be notified immediately in order that child-protective proceedings may be initiated. During such period of temporary custody, the director of the county department of human resources may give or cause to be given effective consent for medical, dental, health, and hospital services for any abused or neglected child.

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ALA.CODE§ 26-14-6.1

§ 26-14-6.1. Duties and responsibilities for investigation of reports.

The duty and responsibility for the investigation of reports of suspected child abuse or neglect shall be as follows:

- (1) Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect involving disciplinary or corporal punishment committed in a public or private school or kindergarten shall be investigated by law enforcement agencies.
 - (2) Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect committed in a state-operated child residential facility shall be investigated by law enforcement agencies.
 - (3) All other reports of suspected child abuse and neglect shall be investigated by the Department of Human Resources.
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ALA.CODE§ 26-14-7

§ 26-14-7. Duties of Department of Human Resources.

- (a) The State or County Department of Human Resources shall make a thorough investigation promptly upon either the oral or written report. The primary purpose of such an investigation shall be the protection of the child.
- (b) The investigation, to the extent that is reasonably possible, shall include:
 - (1) The nature, extent and cause of the child abuse or neglect;
 - (2) The identity of the person responsible therefor;
 - (3) The names and conditions of other children in the home;

- (4) An evaluation of the parents or person responsible for the care of the child;
 - (5) The home environment and the relationship of the child or children to the parents or other persons responsible for their care; and
 - (6) All other data deemed pertinent.
- (c) The investigation may include a visit to the child's home, an interview with the subject child, and may include a physical, psychological, or psychiatric examination of any child or children in that home. If the admission to the home, school, or any other place that the child may be, or permission of the parent or other persons responsible for the child or children, for the physical, psychological, or psychiatric examination, cannot be obtained, then a court of competent jurisdiction, upon cause shown, shall order the parents or persons responsible and in charge of any place where the child may be to allow the interview, examinations, and investigation. If, before the examination is complete, the opinion of the investigators is that immediate removal is necessary to protect a child or children from further abuse or neglect, a court of competent jurisdiction, on petition by the investigators and with good cause being shown, shall issue an order for temporary removal and custody.
- (d) The county department of human resources shall make a complete written report of the investigation, together with its recommendations. Such reports may be made available to the appropriate court, the district attorney, and the appropriate law enforcement agency upon request. The county department of human resources shall make a written report or case summary, together with services offered and accepted to the state's central registry on forms supplied by the registry for that purpose.

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ALA.CODE§ 26-14-7.1

§ 26-14-7.1. Due process rights for persons under investigation by department.

Any person who comes under investigation by the Department of Human Resources for the abuse or neglect of a child or children and who is employed by, serves as a volunteer for, holds a license or certificate for, or is connected with any facility, agency, or home which cares for and controls any children and which is licensed, approved, or certified by the state, operated as a state facility, or any public, private, or religious facility or agency that may be exempt from licensing procedures shall be granted the following due process rights by the Department of Human Resources:

- (1) The department shall notify the alleged perpetrator that an investigation has commenced against him or her after such investigation has officially begun in accordance with written policies established by the Department of Human Resources. The notice shall be in writing and shall state the name of the child or children allegedly abused, the date or dates that the alleged abuse is thought to have occurred, and the substance of the person's actions which are alleged to be abusive. The department

shall establish and maintain written policies outlining the specifics of such notification and other policies deemed necessary and prudent by the department to inform the alleged perpetrator of his rights and the procedures utilized by the department involving child abuse and neglect investigations.

- (2) If the department conducts an investigation relating to child abuse/neglect, the alleged perpetrator shall be notified of the investigator's conclusions.
- (3) If the department's investigators conclude that child abuse/neglect is indicated, an investigative hearing may be held to confirm or reject the investigators' conclusions.
- (4) The alleged perpetrator shall be given ten departmental working days from the receipt of the notification of the investigator's conclusions to request a hearing, and such request must be in writing. If no such request is received in the department's office within ten departmental working days, the alleged perpetrator's opportunity for a hearing shall be considered waived by the department.
- (5) The employer of an alleged perpetrator shall not be notified of the investigator's conclusions prior to a hearing or its waiver unless, in the opinion of the department's investigators, a child is in danger of abuse or neglect; in such case, any person in a position to discover, prevent, or protect the child from his abuse or neglect may be informed of information gathered in the investigation prior to a requested investigative hearing for the alleged perpetrator.
- (6) The alleged perpetrator shall be notified of the date, time, and place of any investigative hearing. Such hearing shall not be open to the public.
- (7) The alleged perpetrator shall have the following rights at any departmental investigative hearing:
 - a. The right to present his case himself or be represented by legal counsel or any other person.
 - b. The right to present written evidence, oral testimony, and witnesses.
 - c. The right to be provided by the department a short and plain written statement of the matters asserted which will be presented at the hearing.
 - d. The right to review and copy at cost any written or recorded statement made by the alleged perpetrator to departmental personnel in the course of the child abuse/neglect investigation. This request must be made prior to the date for the hearing.
 - e. The right to review and copy at cost, before or during the hearing, the written material and other evidence in possession of the department which will be placed into evidence at the hearing.
 - f. The right to inspect any exculpatory evidence which may be in the possession of departmental investigators, and the right to be informed of such evidence if known by departmental investigators before the hearing; provided, that a request for such evidence is made at least five working days prior to the date set for the hearing.
 - g. The right to review and copy at cost all non-confidential department documents pertinent to the case, including written policies and rights.
 - h. The right to cross-examine witnesses testifying at the hearing.

- i. The right to request issuance of subpoenas to witnesses and compel attendance. This request must be received no later than ten calendar days prior to the hearing, unless a shorter time is agreed upon by the hearing officer.
 - j. The right to review and copy at cost all documents in the official hearing file maintained by the hearing officer.
 - k. The right to have a hearing officer appointed who shall be disinterested, fair, and impartial.
- (8) The Department of Human Resources or its investigative hearing officers shall have the power and authority to issue subpoenas to compel attendance by and production of documents from any witness. Subpoenas may be served in the same manner as subpoenas issued out of any circuit court. Where any witness has been summoned by the Department of Human Resources, its commissioner or any of his or her agents, and the witness refuses to appear, testify, or produce records or documents as requested; then any circuit court in this state, or any judge thereof, on application, may issue an attachment for such person and compel him or her to comply with such order and the court or judge shall have power to punish for contempt in cases of disobedience of such order.
- (9) The Department of Human Resources shall establish policies and written guidelines for the conduct and procedures involved in an investigative hearing. At such hearing, the fact that there was a finding by a juvenile court judge or by a criminal court that child abuse or neglect has occurred shall be presumptive evidence that the report should be marked indicated.
- (10) The hearing officer shall notify the alleged perpetrator in writing of the hearing officer's decision.
- (11) Results of investigative hearings:
- a. If the hearing officer concludes that child abuse and/or neglect is "indicated," such findings and evidence shall be filed with the appropriate district attorney and other law enforcement officials which the department may deem necessary.
 - b. The alleged perpetrator's employer or licensing/certifying agency or group may also be notified of the "indicated" findings. Such notification shall be marked "Confidential" and "To Be Used Only For The Purpose Of Discovery Or Preventing Child Abuse." The department shall establish written policies for notification of employers, prospective employers and licensing/certifying agencies or groups.

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ALA.CODE§ 26-14-7.2

§ 26-14-7.2. Child denied medical treatment due to parents' religious beliefs.

- (a) When an investigation of child abuse or neglect by the Department of Human Resources determines that a parent or legal guardian legitimately practicing his or her

religious beliefs has not provided specific medical treatment for a child, the parent or legal guardian shall not be considered a negligent parent or guardian for that reason alone. This exception shall not preclude a court from ordering that medical services be provided to the child when the child's health requires it.

- (b) The department may, in any case, pursue any legal remedies, including the initiation of legal proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction, as may be necessary to provide medical care or treatment for a child when the care or treatment is necessary to prevent or remedy serious harm to the child, or to prevent the withholding of medically indicated treatments from infants with disabilities and with life-threatening conditions. Upon application by the department, the court may issue prelitigation or pretrial discovery orders for persons, medical records, and other documents or materials.

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ALA.CODE§ 26-14-8

§ 26-14-8. Statewide central registry.

- (a) For the purposes of this section, the following words shall have the following meanings, respectively:
 - (1) INDICATED. When credible evidence and professional judgment substantiates that an alleged perpetrator is responsible for child abuse or neglect.
 - (2) NOT INDICATED. When credible evidence and professional judgment does not substantiate that an alleged perpetrator is responsible for child abuse or neglect.
- (b) The Department of Human Resources shall establish a statewide central registry for reports of child abuse and neglect made pursuant to this chapter. The central registry shall contain, but shall not be limited to:
 - (1) All information in the written report;
 - (2) Record of the final disposition of the report, including services offered and services accepted;
 - (3) The names and identifying data, dates, and circumstances of any persons requesting or receiving information from the registry; provided, however, that requests for information and responses where no report exists may be destroyed after three years from the date of the request;
 - (4) The plan for rehabilitative treatment; and
 - (5) Any other information which might be helpful in furthering the purposes of this chapter.
- (c) The Department of Human Resources shall establish and enforce reasonable rules and regulations governing the custody, use, and preservation of the reports and records of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse and neglect reports and records shall be limited to the purposes for which they are furnished and by the provisions of law under which they may be furnished. The reports and records of child abuse and

neglect and related information or testimony shall be confidential, and shall not be used or disclosed for any purposes other than:

- (1) To permit their use to prevent or to discover abuse or neglect of children through the information contained therein, except reports or records in cases determined to be "not indicated" shall not be used or disclosed for purposes of employment or other background checks; or
 - (2) For investigation of child abuse or neglect by the police or other law enforcement agency; or
 - (3) For use by a grand jury upon its determination that access to such reports and records is necessary in the conduct of its official business; or
 - (4) For use by a court where it finds that such information is necessary for the determination of an issue before the court; or
 - (5) For use by any person engaged in bona fide research who is authorized to have access to such information by the Commissioner of the Department of Human Resources; or
 - (6) For use by any person authorized by a court to act as a representative for an abused or neglected child who is the subject of a report; or
 - (7) For use by a physician who has before him a child whom he reasonably suspects may be abused or neglected; or
 - (8) For use by an attorney or guardian ad litem in representing or defending a child or its parents or guardians in a court proceeding related to abuse or neglect of the child; or
 - (9) For use by federal, state, or local governmental entities, social service agencies of another state, or any agent of such entities, having a need for the information in order to carry out their responsibilities under law to protect children from abuse and neglect; or
 - (10) For use by child abuse citizen review or quality assurance or multidisciplinary review panels; or
 - (11) For use by child fatality review panels; or
 - (12) For public disclosure of the findings or information about the case of child abuse or neglect which has resulted in a child fatality or near fatality; the term "near fatality" means an act that, as certified by a physician, places the child in serious or critical condition. Information identifying by name persons other than the victim shall not be disclosed.
- (d) The names of persons or information in the investigative report placed on the state's central registry which may be made available to the alleged perpetrator's employer, prospective employer, or others are those cases that the Department of Human Resources or the investigative hearing officer has determined child abuse or neglect to be indicated.
- (e) In the case of any child abuse or neglect investigation which is determined to be "not indicated," the alleged perpetrator may request after five years from the completion of the investigation that his or her name be expunged from the central registry so long as the Department of Human Resources has received no further reports concerning the

alleged perpetrator during the five years, at which time the department shall expunge the name.

- (f) Nothing in this section shall be construed as restricting the ability of a department to refuse to disclose identifying information concerning the individual initiating a report or complaint alleging suspected instances of child abuse or neglect, except that the department may not refuse such a disclosure in cases in which a court orders such disclosure after the court has reviewed, in camera, the record of the department related to the report or complaint and has determined that it has reason to believe that the person making the report knowingly made a false report.
- (g) Any person receiving reports or records of child abuse or neglect or related information under this section shall maintain the confidentiality of the documents and information and not disclose it except as authorized by law.
- (h) Any violation of the provision of confidentiality shall be a Class A misdemeanor.

Code of Alabama
Title 26. Infants and Incompetents.
Chapter 14. Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect.

ALA.CODE§ 26-14-9

§ 26-14-9. Immunity from liability for actions under chapter.

Any person, firm, corporation, or official, including members of a multidisciplinary child protection team, quality assurance team, child death review team, or other authorized case review team or panel, by whatever designation, participating in the making of a good faith report in an investigation or case review authorized under this chapter or other law or department practice or in the removal of a child pursuant to this chapter, or participating in a judicial proceeding resulting therefrom, shall, in so doing, be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

Code of Alabama
Title 26. Infants and Incompetents.
Chapter 14. Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect.

ALA.CODE§ 26-14-10

§ 26-14-10. Doctrine of privileged communications not grounds for exclusion of evidence as to child's injuries.

The doctrine of privileged communication, with the exception of the attorney-client privilege, shall not be a ground for excluding any evidence regarding a child's injuries or the cause thereof in any judicial proceeding resulting from a report pursuant to this chapter.

Code of Alabama
Title 26. Infants and Incompetents.
Chapter 14. Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect.

ALA.CODE§ 26-14-11

§ 26-14-11. Appointment of attorney to represent child.

In every case involving an abused or neglected child which results in a judicial proceeding, an attorney shall be appointed to represent the child in such proceedings. Such attorney will represent the rights, interests, welfare, and well-being of the child, and serve as guardian ad litem for the child.

Code of Alabama
Title 26. Infants and Incompetents.
Chapter 14. Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect.

ALA.CODE§ 26-14-12

§ 26-14-12. Establishment of regulations by Department of Human Resources.

The State Department of Human Resources may establish such regulations as may be necessary to implement this chapter and to encourage cooperation with other states in exchanging reports to effect a national registration system.

Code of Alabama
Title 26. Infants and Incompetents.
Chapter 14. Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect.

ALA.CODE§ 26-14-13

§ 26-14-13. Penalty for failure to make required report.

Any person who shall knowingly fail to make the report required by this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a sentence of not more than six months' imprisonment or a fine of not more than \$500.00

Anti-Racism Policy (Diversity)

Revised August 7, 2025

Approved by LRPC September 4, 2025

F-1.0403 states, Unity in Diversity:

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

Racism is the opposite of what God intends for humanity. It is the rejection of the other, which is entirely contrary to the Word of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. Racism is a lie about our fellow human beings, for it says that some are less than others. Because of our biblical understanding of who God is and what God intends for humanity, the PC(USA) and First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa must stand against, speak against and work against racism. (GA policy reference)

PC(USA) requires each Council to adopt an anti-racism policy.

As a congregation within the PC USA we will:

1. Seek to welcome and be open to all people (believers).
 2. Educate ourselves to seek awareness of our own behavior and biases and the impact on our community of faith and the wider community.
 3. Seek resources (curriculum, worship, preaching and music) which are reflective of all ethnic and racial backgrounds.
 4. Offer opportunities to Study Matthew 25 materials and resources to increase our awareness of systemic racism and its impact.
- (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/matt-25-resources/>)

Appendix F Session Calendar

January	Approve budget
	Approve dates for celebration of the Lord's Supper for the calendar year
February	Provide notice for annual meeting of the congregation
March	Annual meeting of the congregation
April	Officer training
May	Examination, ordination & installation of new elders and deacons
	Approve committee assignments
June	First meeting of new session
	Elect clerk, treasurer & trustees
	Approve dates for stated session meetings for the next 12 months
July	
August	Committee chairs provide a list of all committee members to church office for compilation and distribution to all elders and deacons
September	Financial report provided to congregation between Sept 1 & Sept 15
	Review committee mission statements and goals
October	varies
November	varies
December	varies

Monthly Provide summary of session meeting to the congregation.

**Head of the
Church.....JESUS CHRIST**

SESSION

Moderator.....Michael Bailey
Vice Moderator...Lou Ann Sellers
Emily Frandsen
Clerk.....Leanne Spencer
Treasurer.....Angela Hamiter
Trustees.....Forest Wilson '27
Laura Crissey '28
Tommy Danner '29
Stated Meetings: 5:30 PM
5/11/26; 7/27/26; 8/24/26; 9/28/26;
10/26/26; 11/23/26; 1/25/27;
2/22/27; 4/5/27; 5/10/27
Called Meetings: TBD
Congregational Meeting: 2/28/2027

DIACONATE

Moderator.....Marilyn Norris '27
Vice Moderator...VACANT
Staff Liaison...Lou Ann Sellers
Meets: 6 times a year, generally

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Sara Kaylor (e) '27 c
Marilyn Norris (d) '27
Shelley Hancock (d) '27
Laura Crissey (e) '28
Virginia McNeill (d) '28
Krysta Hyche (d) '29
Staff: Lou Ann Sellers

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Mark Byars (e) '28 c
Tim Gilliam (d) '28
Ellen Potts (e) '29
Staff: Michael Bailey

PROPERTY

Kristi Thomson (e) '27
Forest Wilson (e) '27 c
Margaret Stran (d) '27
Steven Deal (e) '28
Bill David Plott (d) '29
Staff: Jackie Joiner

**First Presbyterian Church
of Tuscaloosa, Alabama**

**Committee Leadership
Assignments
2026-2027**

CHILDREN & FAMILY

FAITH FORMATION

Marcella Redden (d) '27
Susan Campbell (e) '28 c
Jana Henry (d) '28
Sydney Sanshu (d) '29
Kit Moss (e) '29
Staff: Emily Frandsen

COLLEGE & ADULTS

FAITH FORMATION

Jacqueline Morgan (e) '27 c
Brink Hutto (d) '28
Renee Agee (e) '29
Lauren Curtner-Smith (d) '29
Staff: Emily Frandsen
Lauren Howard

FELLOWSHIP

Johnnie Blackburn (d) '27
Melanie Edwards (d) '28 c
Tommy Danner (e) '29
Julie Jamison (d) '29
Staff: Lou Ann Sellers

MISSION

Mary Burns (e) '27 c
Harry Powe (d) '27
MargaretAnn Corbett (d) '27
Janice Rosenfeld (d) '28
Thomas Ray (d) '28
Craig Cilimberg (e) '29
Zac Tolleson (d) '29
Lisa Joiner (d) '29
Staff: Lou Ann Sellers

STEWARDSHIP

Cal Holt (e) '28 c
Chris Gattozzi (d) '29
Angela Hamiter (e) '29
Staff: Michael Bailey



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TUSCALOOSA

YOUTH & FAMILY

FAITH FORMATION

Bebo Patton (e) '28 c
Bailey Chambers (d) '28
Brent Hardin (e) '29
Graham Patton (Ye) '27
Carter Brown (Yd) '27
Staff: Nick Rebbe
Emily Frandsen

FINANCE / ENDOWMENT

Jonathan Hood (e) '27 c
Sydney Cook (e) '28
Staff: Jackie Joiner
Michael Bailey

PERSONNEL

Tony Hubbard (e) '27 c
Charlotte Bowers (e) '28
Staff: Michael Bailey

WORSHIP

Elaine Kizzire (e) '27 c
Jim Rosenfeld (e) '29
Staff: Michael Bailey
Marjorie Johnston

**First Presbyterian Church
of Tuscaloosa, Alabama**

**Committee Leadership
Assignments
2026-2027**



CONGREGATIONAL/MISC. COMMITTEES/TEAMS

WELCOME TEAM

Members at Large
Staff: *Michael Bailey*

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Members at Large
Staff: _____

SECURITY & DISASTER ADVISORY BOARD

Kristi Thomson	Al Spencer
Elizabeth Jernigan	James Tucker
Tommy Danner	Trace Neighbors

Staff: *Jackie Joiner*

NOMINATING

Mark Byars '28 c
Jay Evans '27
Beth Smith '27
Virginia Parks '28
Whitney Jamison '28
Elizabeth Jernigan '29
Scott Taylor '29
Staff: *Michael Bailey*

SESSION LIAISON FOR FPP BOARD

Susan Campbell

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Rotating Moderators
Louise Bailey *Secretary*
Becky Compton *Treasurer*
Staff: *Lou Ann Sellers*

WHAT IS DEACON CARE MINISTRY?

Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35

PURPOSE

The DEACON CARE MINISTRY lives out Christ's command to love another by extending care for the members of First Presbyterian Church in offering regular contact and connection to every household, reaching out in love and concern.

BASIC ORGANIZATION

Deacon Care Ministry divides the congregation into regional/neighborhood groups with a deacon team – usually of two – in charge of one Deacon Care Group. The deacon team cares for each household by checking in at least three times over the course of a year. They take note of those who are struggling – informing and working with the pastoral staff to enhance and strengthen the total ministry of our church's care. Compassion is shown also in times of transition – particularly at birth, illness, and death.

DEACON CARE MINISTRY: WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT?

DEACONS

As the backbone of the Deacon Care Ministry, the Deacons carry out the significant ministry of compassion and service in our church and in our community. The Deacons seek to strengthen their response to God's calling to love and service also through the Deacon Care Ministry.

"If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you."

John 13:14-15

Deacon comes from the word “to serve”

Deacons are ordained and called to sharing a ministry of “compassion, witness, and service in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, for the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structure, for anyone in distress.” (The Book of Order G-2.0201)

Expectations of the Deacon within Deacon Care Ministry:

1. The Deacon team should call each household within their deacon care group at least **three times per year** – or on the schedule set by the diaconate. **Pray for each household.**
2. The Deacon will keep a record of those contacts on the “Deacon Care” google spreadsheet. (see spreadsheet “shared” with you by email)
3. Your role is to care by contacting and listening.
 - a. If information shared is sensitive, keep it confidential.
If you are uncertain, then ask the member if it should be held confidentially.
 - b. If the situation shared might be good for an FPC staff member to know or possibly placed on the email prayer concerns, then ask if you may share it.
 - c. In the case a member is angry at the church or pastors or staff, remember your role is to empathize, not sympathize: “I’m sorry you feel that ...”
“What can I/we do as a church to make you feel better?”
 - d. Listen for the pain the other person is feeling – and not the pain it is causing in you.
 - e. Remember: you cannot take care of every problem – your ministry of care is to listen.
4. The Pastors are always available to support you in this ministry!

DEACON CARE COMMITTEE (DCC)

The DCC has oversight of the Deacon Care Ministry and the deacon care groups. Supports and educates the Deacons and the congregation about the Deacon Care Ministry.

MODERATOR OF THE DIACONATE

- Prays for Church Staff, Elders, Deacons, and for the needs in our church and our community.
- Serves as Vice-Chair of the Deacon Care Committee.
- Assumes the role of Deacon for Deacon Care Groups where a Deacon is not able to fulfill his or her role.

VICE MODERATOR OF DEACONS

- Prays for Church Staff, Elders, Deacons, and for the needs in our church and our community.
- Chairs the Deacon Care Committee.
- Assumes the role of Deacon for Deacon Care Groups where a Deacon is not able to fulfill his or her role.

DEACON CARE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

(DEACONS AND CONGREGATIONAL AT-LARGE MEMBERS):

- Pray for Church Staff, Elders, Deacons, those in Deacon Care Groups, and for the needs in our church and our community.
- Review and update the Deacon Care Handbook annually.
- Review and update annually the list of Deacon Care Groups.
- Prepare an annual orientation for new Deacons, including training on the DC Handbook
- Each member of the committee is assigned oversight of a group of Deacons. This oversight involves the following:
 - Pray for assigned group of Deacons.
 - Contact assigned Deacons at least three times a year to check-in and offer support.
 - Communicate with the Deacon Care Committee on progress and needs during meetings.
 - Communicate information on Deacon Care Group members' immediate needs or other information as needed with the Associate Pastor for Congregational Care.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR CONGREGATIONAL CARE

- Prays for Church Staff, Elders, Deacons, and for the needs in our church and our community.
- Assigns new members to Deacon Care Groups and contacts the appropriate Deacon. New member information is available through the Church Secretary
- Assigns members who move from one group to another and contacts both Deacons.
- Coordinates care of members and their families with the deacon – particularly around the time of death, in other extraordinary situations and as the deacon requests.

Check list of Deacon Duties

What Continues:

- _____ Contact all Deacon Care group members
 - Call three times a year over a two-week period
 - Record contacts on the google spreadsheet
 - Send “sorry I missed you” post cards
- _____ September
- _____ January
- _____ April

Our Bread and Butter tasks:

- _____ **Pray** for your deacon care group members, church officers/staff and for the needs in our church and community.
- _____ **Attend Deacon’s meetings** and share appropriate spiritual concerns from your deacon care group.
- _____ Make an effort to **know** each household in your Deacon Care Group
- _____ **Read** daily FPC Email concerns.*
 - If anyone in your DC group is having a life-changing event (birth, death, illness, hospitalization, marriage, etc.), then respond to them.
 - Appropriate actions may include a phone call, letter, driveway visit, gift bag drop-off, or coordinating a meal for the family.
- _____ **Contact** pastors and other deacon care group or church members for help in coordinating a crisis.
- _____ **Update** pastoral staff and diaconate moderator concerning any life-changing events occurring to members of your DC group.
 - You are “eyes and ears” for pastors!!!*
- _____ **Deliver Christmas and Easter plants** or cards to members who are homebound or in care facilities in December and March/April.
- _____ **Provide hospitality** to members and visitors as deacon greeters Sunday morning or through Valet Parking once resumed.
- _____ **Welcome new members** to your deacon care groups by calling or sending a letter.
- _____ **Share** possible members to move to inactive list (once a year) with pastors and diaconate moderator.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY DEACONS

BACK-UP SYSTEM

Who can I call on for help with my responsibilities as a Deacon?

1. Diaconate moderator, vice-moderator, or Associate for Congregational Care.
2. If uncertain how to handle a situation (disgruntled member, extreme medical situation, etc.) do not hesitate to call one of the pastoral staff to work with you in care of the member.
3. The Church Administrative Office acts as a liaison for the Church Staff.

CARE GROUP MEMBERS

How are Deacon Care Groups organized and how are new members assigned?

1. The Deacon Care Groups are organized geographically, in general.
2. The Church Staff notifies the Associate Pastor, who assigns the new member to a deacon care group.
 - a. The Welcome Committee provides the new member with an extensive packet of information about the church and its activities and assigns a Mentor for their first year of membership.
 - b. The Deacon Care Group and Welcome Committee provide dual care for new church members.
3. Church Members who move are assigned to the Deacon Care Group serving the new address area.

NOTE: The Deacons for the old and new Deacon Care Groups are notified when a transfer is made.

OUTREACH IDEAS

Am I, as Deacon, responsible for the expenses of “outreach” for my Deacon Care Group?

1. The deacon’s role is to coordinate meals, not be responsible for the expense.
2. Contact Associate Pastor for Congregational Care if you need support.

How do I respond to a death?

1. Each case demands an individual approach for the expression of Christian compassion.
2. Refer to page 10 for advice on making calls.

How do I respond to birth, hospitalization or illness?

1. Trust your good judgment to determine your best approach.
2. Call the patient and their family to offer support.
3. Mail a card or drop off a remembrance/food after the patient returns home.

How can Deacon Care Groups respond when food and other necessities are needed?

1. Organize a plan for outreach to the individual family in need.
2. General meal outline might include:
 - a. Beverages, Bread (rolls, sandwich bread, etc.)
 - b. Meat/Main dish (sandwich tray, spaghetti, lasagna, bucket of chicken, etc.)
 - c. Vegetable and/or Salad
 - d. Dessert
3. Other needs to consider in the case of a Group members' needs:
 - a. Paper/Plastic Products (plates, utensils, napkins, paper towels, toilet paper)
 - b. Trash Bags, Zip-lock Bags, Coolers, Ice, Drinks
 - c. House sitter during wedding activities/ funeral visitations-funeral/special events

What is the Church Fellowship Luncheon, who is in-charge and what is my job as a Deacon?

1. The luncheon is an annual event to promote fellowship and unity.
2. The Deacon Care Committee members have primary responsibility for planning and organizing.
3. Deacons are to promote attendance to the luncheon, collect reservations, and attend the luncheon to meet, greet and host their DC Group members who attend.

WHAT SHOULD I SAY WHEN MAKING CALLS OR VISITS?

DEACON CARE RESOURCE SHEET

Communication Tips for responding to Group Members in case of illness, death or “catastrophe”

Sample Conversation

- **Re-introduce yourself** and say why you are calling. “Hi. I’m, your Deacon caregiver from First Presbyterian Church.”
- **Express your sorrow** about the event and **ask how they are**. “I just wanted to tell you how sorry I am to hear about and ask how you are doing.”
- **Listen! Listen! Listen!**
 - Turn off the “answer” running in your mind while another is speaking.
 - Mirror back to the person what you have heard. “So, what I heard you saying is...”
- **If you knew the deceased, you could share a memory**. “I always appreciated for her warm smile and handshake each Sunday after the service...”
- **Ask direct questions to carry out your Deacon care responsibilities**. “Do you have enough food at the house? Can I arrange to bring some over to you?” “It’s typical to have someone stay at the house during the funeral. If you don’t have a person, I could arrange someone from the church to do that.”
- **Responding to tears or laughter** “It’s OK to cry (or laugh).” Both can express emotions too deep for words.
- **If you drop off something at the front door of the home**, stay sacredly distanced.

CAUTIONARY TIPS ON CONVERSATION: WHAT SHOULD YOU NOT SAY?

- Unhelpful: “Call me, if there is anything I can do.” (puts the responsibility on them)
Better: “I can do ... (specific task).”
- Unhelpful: “It must have been God’s will for this to happen.” (God does not want bad to happen.)
Better: “I am so sorry for your loss.”
- Unhelpful: “He/She’s in a better place now.” or “God wants her in heaven.” (Person may react in anger.)
Better: “You are in my thoughts and prayers
- Unhelpful: “I know just how you feel. I lost my mother last year....” (and then talk about yourself.)
Better: “I can’t imagine how you feel.”
- If parents lose a baby/child, **do not say:** “I’m sure you will have another one.”
- Don’t judge their reactions – or lack thereof. *They may still be in shock.*

What are the Deacon Greeter Responsibilities?

As Deacon Greeters, you have the first opportunity to make a first impression for all visitors and members entering the church building.

Deacon greeter dates are assigned. If unable to greet on a scheduled date, **the greeter should find your own replacement** within the Diaconate by contacting other deacons by email or otherwise.

Where do I stand? There is one greeter for the early service standing at the garden gate. There are two greeters for the 11:00 o'clock service (or 10:00 o'clock service in the summer) —one standing at the gate, the other below the steps on Greensboro.

Wear a “Greeter” nametag: Find the “Greeter” lanyards on the round table in Warner Hall before you begin your service.

Helpful information to know when greeting:

- SMILE!!!
- GREET EVERYONE—whether you know them or not
- Please do not leave your greeter station, rather introduce visitors to another member to take them where they would like to go (i.e. sanctuary, SS class, etc.)
- Learn the location of classrooms for Sunday School.
- Locate the wall rack in Warner Hall outside of the church office. Find the general Welcome Brochure, Adult Sunday School Brochure and The Pulse (church newsletter).
- Know the times of worship and the worship locations
- Read the weekly church email which lists Sunday School offerings
- Understand how the elevator works and where people will exit on the 2nd floor in relation to the sanctuary.
- Know where restrooms are located and be able to give directions.
- Know how to manage health or security matters i.e. who to contact:
 - On Sunday mornings, if there is a security issue, alert the security officer.
 - For other issues, alert the Sunday sexton in the church office.

First Presbyterian Church

Wedding Policy

(Member)



connect / grow / serve

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TUSCALOOSA

900 Greensboro Avenue
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Dear Couple,

We at First Presbyterian Church wish to offer our most sincere congratulations on your upcoming Wedding. We consider it an honor that you have chosen to be married at our church.

We in the Presbyterian church believe marriage is a gift from God. The Book of Common Worship of the Presbyterian Church (USA) states, *“In marriage, husband and wife are called to a new way of life, created, ordered and blessed by God. This way of life must not be entered into carelessly, or from selfish motives, but responsibly and prayerfully.”*

As we assist you in making plans for your Wedding, we want to do so carefully, responsibly and prayerfully. We believe the policies and guidelines contained within this manual, as well as the guidance you will receive in Premarital Counseling, required for all couples, will help you and us all in treating marriage as the sacred gift from God that it truly is.

We look forward to celebrating your big day with you! We hope your wedding will be everything you wish for. Even more so, we pray that your *marriage* will be one in which you experience God’s richest blessings throughout all your days.

Most Sincerely,
M. R. Bailey
Pastor

Wedding Policy for Members

Reserving a Date

The date for your wedding must be confirmed by the church secretary. You will need to fill out an application and return it with a check for all fees in order to reserve a date for your wedding. Reservations can be made up to one year in advance.

Holidays

Weddings are not scheduled on the following weekends: Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

Eligibility

FPC welcomes the use of its facilities for weddings of members who have been active for a minimum of 18 months prior to the wedding date. The child or grandchild of an active member may also schedule a wedding for a member fee.

Fees

Fees include the building fee as well as the fees for the Minister, Organist, Wedding Coordinator, Custodian, and security deposit. *These fees must be paid in full before the facility is booked.*

Minister

One of our ministers will be in charge of the rehearsal and service. The couple will be assigned a Pastor from FPC's staff and must accept that minister's guidance, counsel, and direction. Request for a specific minister is allowed but subject to the minister's availability.

Pre-Marital Counseling

It is required that each couple participate in a program of pre-marital counseling. This ordinarily should consist of several sessions which are arranged by the bride and groom with a minister of this congregation, or another minister approved by the officiating minister.

Wedding Coordinator

The church's wedding coordinator is authorized to oversee the rehearsal, the service and the decorations of your wedding. Contact her as soon as your wedding date is confirmed. She will meet with you and answer any questions you may have.

Church Organist must play all weddings and will approve all music. (See Music Policy)

Facilities

The Sanctuary is available for weddings and can seat up to 500.
The Chapel is available for weddings and can seat up to 125.

The Bride's Dressing Room, the Harbin Parlor, and the basement dining room are available for the Wedding Party. These rooms are available up to 4 hours prior to the wedding. These are spacious rooms, well-lit and equipped with mirrors. Snack food and drinks are restricted to the bride's room and the dining room. You are responsible for removing all personal items and for leaving the areas clean.

Rehearsals

Rehearsals are held on the day before the wedding from 5:00-6:00 p.m. All persons taking part in the service should be present. This includes the minister, the organist, parents, grandparents, stepparents, bridesmaids, flower girls, ring bearers, groomsmen, and ushers. The rehearsal is under the direction of the Wedding Coordinator. The rehearsal is to be no more than an hour in length.

Photography

The church must approve of the photographer. He or she must comply with all rules (See Photographer Policy)

Decorations

The florist must comply with all rules. (See Florist Policy)

Videography

The videographer must comply with all the rules. (See Videographer Policy)

Babysitting

FPC does not provide childcare for weddings. Nursery facilities are not available because of the Child Protection Policies of First Presbyterian Church. Arrangements for childcare must be made away from the church.

Food or drink is not allowed in the Sanctuary.

Smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, or use of illegal drugs is not permitted on Church property.

Refund

Please see Refund Forfeiture Form.

Please return all completed forms by _____

Member Wedding Fees

Premarital Counseling materials fee	\$50
Minister	\$500
Wedding Coordinator	\$400
Church Organist	\$500
Janitorial Fee	\$300, <i>holiday add \$50</i>
Security Deposit *	\$1000
TOTAL:	\$ _____

*****The security deposit will be refunded within 10 days after your wedding provided there is no damage and all the guidelines have been followed including return of the evaluation form "Wedding Evaluation/Security Deposit Refund request form." If the wedding is canceled within 90 days of the reserved date, you will forfeit your refund.***

Member Application Form

Date of Wedding_____ Time_____

Rehearsal Date_____ Time **5:00 P.M.**

Bride's Name_____ Groom's Name: _____

Address _____

Cell Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email:_____ Email:_____

Bride's Parents Names/Address/ Phone # _____

Groom's Parents Names/Address/Phone # _____

Payment received (For Office Use Only)

1. Minister (\$500) _____
2. Premarital counseling materials (\$50)
3. Wedding Coordinator (\$400)_____
4. Organist (\$500) _
5. Custodian (\$300) _
6. Deposit (\$1000) _

TOTAL: \$ _____

Member Wedding Information Checklist

- _____ Date set with church secretary
- _____ Completed Application Form
- _____ Fees paid for: Minister, Organist, Wedding Coordinator, Custodian.
- _____ Initial communication with presiding Minister to schedule Pre-Marital Counseling
- _____ Initial communication with Church Organist, Jason Pedeaux
(469)644-3415 jpdeaux@fpctusc.org to schedule Musical Consultation
- _____ Initial Communication with Church Wedding Coordinator to schedule Wedding Consultation
- _____ Completed Florist Agreement
- _____ Completed Photographer Agreement
- _____ Completed Videographer Agreement
- _____ Completed Refund Forfeiture Form

I agree to comply fully with the wedding policy of First Presbyterian Church.

Signed: Bride _____

Date _____

Groom _____

Date _____

This checklist must be completed and returned to First Presbyterian Church, 900 Greensboro Ave., Tuscaloosa, AL 35401 to the attention of the Church Secretary in order for your date to be reserved on the church calendar.

Wedding Music Policy

The Christian marriage ceremony is a service of worship, in which all honor and glory are directed toward God. All music in worship must, by the very nature of worship itself, direct attention to God and express the faith of the church.

First Presbyterian Church enjoys a musical tradition which it wishes to maintain in all services of worship. Since weddings in the church are regarded as worship services, the wedding selections must be sacred. *The church has authorized the church organist to approve all music before it is used in the service.* Recorded and secular music will NOT be approved.

Requiring the expertise of professional organist, First Presbyterian Church's sanctuary houses a 75-rank Létourneau pipe organ while the chapel houses an electronic organ. The church organist is authorized to play all weddings. Should s/he be unavailable for your wedding date, s/he will find a competent, replacement at no extra cost to the bride.

A consultation with the organist should take place within a few weeks of booking the church for the wedding. During the consultation, the organist will play selections of appropriate music for the processional, the recessional, music for the seating of the grandparents and the mothers.

The use of vocal and instrumental soloists enhances the quality of worship at weddings. All music, vocalists, and instrumentalists must be planned in consultation with the organist. The church organist will be glad to recommend musicians for your use. Fees for vocalists and instrumentalists are set individually and should be discussed with them at the time of booking.

Payment for the services of the church organist is to be made at the time of booking the church.

Florist Policy

Flowers and Decorations

Before the Sanctuary or Chapel may be decorated, arrangements need to be made with the Wedding Coordinator. She must also approve of the florist to be used. Every effort should be made to preserve a worshipful atmosphere. The following procedures should be carefully followed:

- Church furniture (communion table, cross, and candelabras) may not be moved or removed for the service. Church furniture in the Sanctuary and Chapel may be decorated; however no flowers are to extend above the cross.
- The building is open 4 hours before the service in order to allow for decorating. If more time is needed on the day of the wedding, the florist must make arrangements with the church 3 weeks in advance. The florist will be permitted to have no more than 2 hours extra at the cost of \$50.00 an hour.
- The florist may begin setting up on the day prior to the wedding if arrangements are made 3 weeks in advance with the church. The florist must clean up and leave the building by the time the rehearsal begins.
- All flowers and decorations must be taken down immediately after the service and removed from the premises unless arrangements have been made with the church office to leave only the floral arrangements for the Sunday worship service or the Monday flower ministry.
- The church is not responsible for any items left on the premises after the service.
- Decorations are allowed in the following areas:
 - Garden gate to the outside entrance of Warner Hall: A live floral wreath or floral arrangement is permitted.
 - Sanctuary: Live floral wreaths or floral arrangement on the existing nails of the Stillman Blvd. doors and the Sanctuary Garden doors and/or urns with live greenery outside of the two entrance doors in order to define the entrances.
 - Chapel: Urns with live greenery may be placed outside of the main entrance; live wreaths may be placed on the existing nails which are on the doors; or live floral pieces may be hung from the lanterns on either side of the doors.
 - These decorations must be approved by the Wedding Coordinator.
- Only existing candles may be used.
- The church has 3 sets of candelabras with mechanical candles which may be used for the service.
- Potted plants must have a protective saucer underneath.

- No window decorations allowed
- Pew markers are permitted but must be attached with covered wire or ribbon.
- No tacks, nails, tape, or exposed oasis will be used on the pews.
- We do not allow any substance (e.g. rice, bird seed, confetti, rose petals, bubbles, or sparklers) to be used anywhere on FPC property. Flower girls may use SILK flower petals for the service.

Violation of the regulations will automatically remove the florist from the list of approved florists.

Florist Policy Agreement

This agreement, once signed by the florist, will be considered binding for this wedding and any and all weddings this florist is contracted to do at First Presbyterian Church. A new signature from the florist will be required *only* if/when any changes are made to the FPC Florist Policy.

This agreement must be signed by the florist and the bride and returned to the church secretary at First Presbyterian Church, 900 Greensboro Avenue, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401.

For questions, please call the church at 205-752-3531

Name of Florist _____

Address _____

Phone # (____) _____ Fax # (____) _____

Contact Person _____

Name of Bride _____

Date and Time of Wedding _____

I have read the Florist Policy and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Signature of Florist

Date

Signature of Bride

Date

Photography Policy

- The church must approve of the photographer.
- A wedding is a worship service and, as such, **No Flash** photography is permitted during the ceremony. The service begins with the seating of the Mothers and continues through the benediction. One flash photo may be taken as the bride starts down the aisle and one as the couple leaves.
- No movement in Sanctuary once the service has begun
- Flash photographs may be staged and taken before and/or after the service.
- Timed exposures without flash are permitted from the balcony during the service. Camera noise is a distraction to the service.
- The photographer is to consult with the Wedding Coordinator prior to the service so that there is a firm understanding about this policy.
- If photographs are taken prior to the wedding service, the photographer and the entire wedding party must be out of the Sanctuary or Chapel no later than 45 minutes prior to the beginning of the service.
- Photography session after the wedding should not exceed 30 minutes. It is the responsibility of the couple to ensure that this is done so that the guests are not kept waiting and in order to be out of the building no later than 1 hour after the service.
- No photography during the service should be done by family and guests. It is the responsibility of the couple to inform ALL family members of this policy.
- Family and guests may join with a professional photographer whenever the posed pictures are taken.

Photographer Policy Agreement

This agreement, once signed by the photographer, will be considered binding for this wedding and any and all weddings this photographer is contracted to do at FPC. A new signature will be required *only* if/when any changes are made to the FPC Photographer Policy.

This agreement must be signed by the photographer and the bride and returned to the church secretary at First Presbyterian Church, 900 Greensboro Avenue, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401.

For questions, please call the church at 205-752-3531.

Name of Photographer _____

Address _____

Phone # (____) _____ Fax # (____) _____

Contact Person _____

Name of Bride _____

Date and Time of Wedding _____

I have read the Photographer Policy and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Signature of Photographer

Date

Signature of Bride

Date

Failure to abide by this policy may subject the photographer to censure by First Presbyterian Church.

Videography Policy and Agreement

The videographer must be set up behind the organ and must REMAIN IN PLACE throughout the service. No additional lighting or electric cords may be used.

This agreement must be signed by the videographer and the bride and returned to the church secretary at First Presbyterian Church, 900 Greensboro Avenue, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401.

For questions, please call the church at 205-752-3531

Name of Videographer _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ Fax # _____

Contact Person _____

Name of Bride _____

Date and Time of Wedding _____

I have read the Videography Policy and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Signature of Videographer

Date

Signature of Bride

Date

Failure to abide by this policy may subject the videographer to censure by First Presbyterian Church.

Security Deposit Forfeiture

Your wedding is under the direction and supervision of the Minister and the Session of FPC. The Wedding Coordinator is their representative. Any church staff member present may enforce the following regulations regarding the use of the church's facilities.

	Initial: Bride	Groom
1) The consumption of alcohol and the use of drugs anywhere in the church buildings and on the church block is prohibited.	_____	_____
2) Smoking is not allowed in any of the church buildings or grounds.	_____	_____
3) Church furniture is set in place by staff and may not be removed or altered for the service.	_____	_____
4) Refreshments are restricted to the downstairs dining room and bride's dressing room. We ask that you keep this area clean. We are not responsible for any items which are left.	_____	_____
5) Photographers, florists, and videographers must abide by their individual guidelines and policy.	_____	_____
6) If the wedding is canceled 90 days before the reserved date, you will forfeit your refund.	_____	_____
7) The couple must return the "Wedding Evaluation/Security Deposit Refund Request form" before a refund is issued.	_____	_____
8) I agree to comply fully with the wedding policy of First Presbyterian Church. I understand I will be assigned a Pastor from the staff of FPC and I will accept that minister's guidance, counsel, and direction. Requests for specific Ministers is allowed, but subject to that Minister's availability.	_____	_____

Failure to abide by any of the above will result in forfeiture of your refund.

Signature of Bride _____ Signature of Groom _____

Wedding Evaluation/ Security Deposit Refund Request Form

Please assist us by evaluating your wedding experience in our church. It is our goal to be of Christian service. Thank you.

Policies and Guidelines

1. Were the policies and guidelines helpful and easily understood when planning your wedding?

Helpful/Easily Understood

Difficult to Follow

5 4 3 2 1

2. Did the staff and representatives of First Presbyterian Church provide clear guidance and helpful support in a professional manner?

Yes

No

Wedding Coordinator:	5	4	3	2	1
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Yes

No

Organist:	5	4	3	2	1
-----------	---	---	---	---	---

Yes

No

Minister:	5	4	3	2	1
-----------	---	---	---	---	---

Yes

No

Sexton:	5	4	3	2	1
---------	---	---	---	---	---

Yes

No

Other Church Staff:	5	4	3	2	1
---------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Physical Plant

3. Was the church clean and generally presentable for the rehearsal and ceremony?

Clean

Dirty

5 4 3 2 1

4. Was the temperature comfortable upon arriving for the rehearsal and ceremony?

Comfortable

Uncomfortable

5 4 3 2 1

5. Please feel free to provide additional comments here if you so desire.

Request for Security Deposit Refund

We attest that the wedding party and all guests abided by all applicable wedding policies and rules set forth in this manual. We further attest that there is no damage to the Church building, furniture or property. We therefore request our Security Deposit Refund.

Bride or Groom signature (or family of Bride)

Date

Thank you for your input. Please return this form to the church office.

First Presbyterian Church

Wedding Policy

(Non-Member)



connect / grow / serve

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TUSCALOOSA

900 Greensboro Avenue
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Dear Couple,

We at First Presbyterian Church wish to offer our most sincere congratulations on your upcoming Wedding. We consider it an honor that you have chosen to be married at our church.

We in the Presbyterian church believe marriage is a gift from God. The Book of Common Worship of the Presbyterian Church (USA) states, *“In marriage, husband and wife are called to a new way of life, created, ordered and blessed by God. This way of life must not be entered into carelessly, or from selfish motives, but responsibly and prayerfully.”*

As we assist you in making plans for your Wedding, we want to do so carefully, responsibly, and prayerfully. We believe the policies and guidelines contained within this manual, as well as the guidance you will receive in Premarital Counseling, required for all couples, will help you and us all in treating marriage as the sacred gift from God that it truly is.

We look forward to celebrating your big day with you! We hope your wedding will be everything you wish for. Even more so, we pray that your *marriage* will be one in which you experience God’s richest blessings throughout all your days.

Most Sincerely,
M. R. Bailey
Pastor

Wedding Policy for Non-members

Reserving a Date

The date for your wedding must be confirmed by the church secretary. You will need to fill out an application and return it with a check for all fees in order to reserve a date for your wedding. Reservations can be made up to six months in advance.

Holidays

Weddings are not scheduled on the following weekends: Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

Fees

Fees include the building fee as well as the fees for the Minister, Organist, Wedding Coordinator, Custodian, and security deposit. *These fees must be paid in full before the facility is booked.*

Minister

One of our ministers will be in charge of the rehearsal and service. The couple will be assigned a Pastor from FPC's staff and must accept that minister's guidance, counsel, and direction. Request for a specific minister is allowed but subject to the minister's availability.

Pre-Marital Counseling

It is required that each couple participate in a program of pre-marital counseling. This ordinarily should consist of several sessions which are arranged by the bride and groom with a minister of this congregation, or another minister approved by the officiating minister.

Wedding Coordinator

The church's wedding coordinator is authorized to oversee the rehearsal, the service and the decorations of your wedding. Contact her as soon as your wedding date is confirmed. She will meet with you and answer any questions you may have.

Church Organist must play all weddings and will approve all music. (See Music Policy)

Facilities

The Sanctuary is available for weddings and can seat up to 500.

The Chapel is available for weddings and can seat up to 125.

The Bride's Dressing Room, the Harbin Parlor, and the basement dining room are available for the Wedding Party. These rooms are available up to 4 hours prior to the wedding. These are spacious rooms, well-lit and equipped with mirrors. Snack food and drinks are restricted to the bride's room and the dining room. You are responsible for removing all personal items and for leaving the areas clean.

Rehearsals

Rehearsals are held on the day before the wedding from 5:00-6:00 p.m. All persons taking part in the service should be present. This includes the minister, the organist, parents, grandparents, stepparents, bridesmaids, flower girls, ring bearers, groomsmen, and ushers. The rehearsal is under the direction of the Wedding Coordinator. The rehearsal is to be no more than an hour in length.

Photography

The church must approve of the photographer. He or she must comply with all rules (See Photographer Policy)

Decorations

The florist must comply with all rules. (See Florist Policy)

Videography

The videographer must comply with all the rules. (See Videographer Policy)

Babysitting

FPC does not provide childcare for weddings. Nursery facilities are not available because of the Child Protection Policies of First Presbyterian Church. Arrangements for childcare must be made away from the church.

Food or drink is not allowed in the Sanctuary.

Smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, or use of illegal drugs is not permitted on Church property.

Refund

Please see Refund Forfeiture Form.

Please return all completed forms by _____

Non-Member Wedding Fees

Sanctuary for rehearsal and wedding	\$650
Chapel for rehearsal and wedding	\$550
Premarital Counseling materials fee	\$50
Minister	\$500
Wedding Coordinator	\$400
Church Organist	\$500
Janitorial Fee	\$300, holiday add \$50
Audio Technician (Sanctuary)	\$250
Security Deposit *	\$1500
TOTAL:	\$_____

*****The security deposit will be refunded within 10 days after your wedding provided there is no damage and all the guidelines have been followed including return of the evaluation form "Wedding Evaluation/Security Deposit Refund request form." If the wedding is canceled within 90 days of the reserved date, you will forfeit your refund.***

Non-Member Application Form

Date of Wedding _____ Time _____

Rehearsal Date _____ Time **5:00 P.M.**

Bride's Name _____ Groom's Name: _____

Address _____

Cell Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email: _____ Email: _____

Bride's Parents Names/Address/ Phone # _____

Groom's Parents Names/Address/Phone # _____

Payment received (For Office Use Only)

1. Sanctuary for rehearsal & wedding (\$650) ____
2. Chapel for rehearsal & wedding (\$550) ____
3. Minister (\$500) ____
4. Premarital counseling materials (\$50) ____
5. Wedding Coordinator (\$400) ____
6. Organist (\$500) ____
7. Custodian (\$300) ____
8. Audio (\$250) ____
9. Deposit (\$1500) ____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Non-Member Wedding Information Checklist

- _____ Date set with church secretary
- _____ Completed Application Form
- _____ Fees paid for: Minister, Organist, Wedding Coordinator, Custodian.
- _____ Initial communication with presiding Minister to schedule Pre-Marital Counseling
- _____ Initial communication with Church Organist, Jason Pedeaux
(469)644-3415 jpdeaux@fpctusc.org to schedule Musical Consultation
- _____ Initial Communication with Church Wedding Coordinator to schedule Wedding Consultation
- _____ Completed Florist Agreement
- _____ Completed Photographer Agreement
- _____ Completed Videographer Agreement
- _____ Completed Refund Forfeiture Form

I agree to comply fully with the wedding policy of First Presbyterian Church.

Signed: Bride _____

Date _____

Groom _____

Date _____

This checklist must be completed and returned to First Presbyterian Church, 900 Greensboro Ave., Tuscaloosa, AL 35401 to the attention of the Church Secretary in order for your date to be reserved on the church calendar.

Wedding Music Policy

The Christian marriage ceremony is a service of worship, in which all honor and glory are directed toward God. All music in worship must, by the very nature of worship itself, direct attention to God and express the faith of the church.

First Presbyterian Church enjoys a musical tradition which it wishes to maintain in all services of worship. Since weddings in the church are regarded as worship services, the wedding selections must be sacred. *The church has authorized the church organist to approve all music before it is used in the service.* Recorded and secular music will NOT be approved.

Requiring the expertise of professional organist, First Presbyterian Church's sanctuary houses a 75-rank Létourneau pipe organ while the chapel houses an electronic organ. The church organist is authorized to play all weddings. Should s/he be unavailable for your wedding date, s/he will find a competent replacement at no extra cost to the bride.

A consultation with the organist should take place within a few weeks of booking the church for the wedding. During the consultation, the organist will play selections of appropriate music for the processional, the recessional, music for the seating of the grandparents and the mothers.

The use of vocal and instrumental soloists enhances the quality of worship at weddings. All music, vocalists, and instrumentalists must be planned in consultation with the organist. The church organist will be glad to recommend musicians for your use. Fees for vocalists and instrumentalists are set individually and should be discussed with them at the time of booking.

Payment for the services of the church organist is to be made at the time of booking the church.

Florist Policy

Flowers and Decorations

Before the Sanctuary or Chapel may be decorated, arrangements need to be made with the Wedding Coordinator. She must also approve of the florist to be used. Every effort should be made to preserve a worshipful atmosphere. The following procedures should be carefully followed:

- Church furniture (communion table, cross, and candelabras) may not be moved or removed for the service. Church furniture in the Sanctuary and Chapel may be decorated; however no flowers are to extend above the cross.
- The building is open 4 hours before the service in order to allow for decorating. If more time is needed on the day of the wedding, the florist must make arrangements with the church 3 weeks in advance. The florist will be permitted to have no more than 2 hours extra at the cost of \$50.00 an hour.
- The florist may begin setting up on the day prior to the wedding if arrangements are made 3 weeks in advance with the church. The florist must clean up and leave the building by the time the rehearsal begins.
- All flowers and decorations must be taken down immediately after the service and removed from the premises unless arrangements have been made with the church office to leave only the floral arrangements for the Sunday worship service or the Monday flower ministry.
- The church is not responsible for any items left on the premises after the service.
- Decorations are allowed in the following areas:
 - Garden gate to the outside entrance of Warner Hall: A live floral wreath or floral arrangement is permitted.
 - Sanctuary: Live floral wreaths or floral arrangement on the existing nails of the Stillman Blvd. doors and the Sanctuary Garden doors and/or urns with live greenery outside of the two entrance doors in order to define the entrances.
 - Chapel: Urns with live greenery may be placed outside of the main entrance; live wreaths may be placed on the existing nails which are on the doors; or live floral pieces may be hung from the lanterns on either side of the doors.
 - These decorations must be approved by the Wedding Coordinator.
- Only existing candles may be used.
- The church has 3 sets of candelabras with mechanical candles which may be used for the service.
- Potted plants must have a protective saucer underneath.

- No window decorations allowed
- Pew markers are permitted but must be attached with covered wire or ribbon.
- No tacks, nails, tape, or exposed oasis will be used on the pews.
- We do not allow any substance (e.g. rice, bird seed, confetti, rose petals, bubbles, or sparklers) to be used anywhere on FPC property. Flower girls may use SILK flower petals for the service.

Violation of the regulations will automatically remove the florist from the list of approved florists.

Florist Policy Agreement

This agreement, once signed by the florist, will be considered binding for this wedding and any and all weddings this florist is contracted to do at First Presbyterian Church. A new signature from the florist will be required *only* if/when any changes are made to the FPC Florist Policy.

This agreement must be signed by the florist and the bride and returned to the church secretary at First Presbyterian Church, 900 Greensboro Avenue, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401.

For questions, please call the church at 205-752-3531

Name of Florist _____

Address _____

Phone # (____) _____ Fax # (____) _____

Contact Person _____

Name of Bride _____

Date and Time of Wedding _____

I have read the Florist Policy and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Signature of Florist

Date

Signature of Bride

Date

Photography Policy

- The church must approve of the photographer.
- A wedding is a worship service and, as such, **No Flash** photography is permitted during the ceremony. The service begins with the seating of the Mothers and continues through the benediction. One flash photo may be taken as the bride starts down the aisle and one as the couple leaves.
- No movement in Sanctuary once the service has begun
- Flash photographs may be staged and taken before and/or after the service.
- Timed exposures without flash are permitted from the balcony during the service. Camera noise is a distraction to the service.
- The photographer is to consult with the Wedding Coordinator prior to the service so that there is a firm understanding about this policy.
- If photographs are taken prior to the wedding service, the photographer and the entire wedding party must be out of the Sanctuary or Chapel no later than 45 minutes prior to the beginning of the service.
- Photography session after the wedding should not exceed 30 minutes. It is the responsibility of the couple to ensure that this is done so that the guests are not kept waiting and in order to be out of the building no later than 1 hour after the service.
- No photography during the service should be done by family and guests. It is the responsibility of the couple to inform ALL family members of this policy.
- Family and guests may join with a professional photographer whenever the posed pictures are taken.

Photographer Policy Agreement

This agreement, once signed by the photographer, will be considered binding for this wedding and any and all weddings this photographer is contracted to do at FPC. A new signature will be required *only* if/when any changes are made to the FPC Photographer Policy.

This agreement must be signed by the photographer and the bride and returned to the church secretary at First Presbyterian Church, 900 Greensboro Avenue, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401.

For questions, please call the church at 205-752-3531.

Name of Photographer _____

Address _____

Phone # (____) _____ Fax # (____) _____

Contact Person _____

Name of Bride _____

Date and Time of Wedding _____

I have read the Photographer Policy and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Signature of Photographer

Date

Signature of Bride

Date

Failure to abide by this policy may subject the photographer to censure by First Presbyterian Church.

Videography Policy and Agreement

The videographer must be set up behind the organ and must REMAIN IN PLACE throughout the service. No additional lighting or electric cords may be used.

This agreement must be signed by the videographer and the bride and returned to the church secretary at First Presbyterian Church, 900 Greensboro Avenue, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401 or faxed to 205-752-3885.

For questions, please call the church at 205-752-3531

Name of Videographer _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ Fax # _____

Contact Person _____

Name of Bride _____

Date and Time of Wedding _____

I have read the Videography Policy and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Signature of Videographer

Date

Signature of Bride

Date

Failure to abide by this policy may subject the videographer to censure by First Presbyterian Church.

Security Deposit Forfeiture

Your wedding is under the direction and supervision of the Minister and the Session of FPC. The Wedding Coordinator is their representative. Any church staff member present may enforce the following regulations regarding the use of the church's facilities.

	Initial: Bride	Groom
1) The consumption of alcohol and the use of drugs anywhere in the church buildings and on the church block is prohibited.	_____	_____
2) Smoking is not allowed in any of the church buildings or grounds.	_____	_____
3) Church furniture is set in place by staff and may not be removed or altered for the service.	_____	_____
4) Refreshments are restricted to the downstairs dining room and bride's dressing room. We ask that you keep this area clean. We are not responsible for any items which are left.	_____	_____
5) Photographers, florists, and videographers must abide by their individual guidelines and policy.	_____	_____
6) If the wedding is canceled 90 days before the reserved date, you will forfeit your refund.	_____	_____
7) The couple must return the "Wedding Evaluation/Security Deposit Refund Request form" before a refund is issued.	_____	_____
8) I agree to comply fully with the wedding policy of First Presbyterian Church. I understand I will be assigned a Pastor from the staff of FPC and I will accept that minister's guidance, counsel, and direction. Requests for specific Ministers is allowed, but subject to that Minister's availability.	_____	_____

Failure to abide by any of the above will result in forfeiture of your refund.

Signature of Bride _____ Signature of Groom _____

Wedding Evaluation/ Security Deposit Refund Request Form

Please assist us by evaluating your wedding experience in our church. It is our goal to be of Christian service. Thank you

Policies and Guidelines

1. Were the policies and guidelines helpful and easily understood when planning your wedding?

Helpful/Easily Understood

Difficult to Follow

5 4 3 2 1

2. Did the staff and representatives of First Presbyterian Church provide clear guidance and helpful support in a professional manner?

Yes

No

Wedding Coordinator:	5	4	3	2	1
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Yes

No

Organist:	5	4	3	2	1
-----------	---	---	---	---	---

Yes

No

Minister:	5	4	3	2	1
-----------	---	---	---	---	---

Yes

No

Sexton:	5	4	3	2	1
---------	---	---	---	---	---

Yes

No

Other Church Staff:	5	4	3	2	1
---------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Physical Plant

3. Was the church clean and generally presentable for the rehearsal and ceremony?

Clean

Dirty

5 4 3 2 1

4. Was the temperature comfortable upon arriving for the rehearsal and ceremony?

Comfortable

Uncomfortable

5 4 3 2 1

5. Please feel free to provide additional comments here if you so desire.

Request for Security Deposit Refund

We attest that the wedding party and all guests abided by all applicable wedding policies and rules set forth in this manual. We further attest that there is no damage to the Church building, furniture or property. We therefore request our Security Deposit Refund.

Bride or Groom signature (or family of Bride)

Date

Thank you for your input. Please return this form to the church office.

FUNERAL OUTLINE

Pastoral Staff:

- Contacts family after death
 - Meet to plan funeral:
 - Committal plans, details of service (scripture/hymn suggestions), time of day, impact, visitation, reception
 - ideal timing if possible:
 - 10/11 a.m. or 1/2 p.m.
 - Informs family that one floral arrangement will be allowed in the service; other florals delivered will be placed around the church as appropriate depending on reception plans, etc.
 - Provide info sheet with catering recommendation and floral recommendation if needed
- Emails staff
 - date, time, general logistics, how many people expected
 - hands plans off to Church Admin/creates assignments for other staff, Director of Music & Organist
- Meets with family to discuss:
 - Explains offerings of church regarding pre or post service visitation/reception
 - small offering (10-50)- water, lemonade, cheese straw, nuts, or cookie (provided by church)
 - medium offering (50-125)- asking church members to provide sweets/savory bite sized food, drinks provided by church, set up in Warner Hall
 - large or extra-large offering (125+)- family to consider use of a caterer to supplement bite sized desert/savory bite provided by congregation; drinks provided by church.
 - Family should consider arranging for floral arrangement for table if planning on a FLC event.
 - Any full meal family wishes to feed family before or after a service would need to be catered by the family.
 - How does family wish to dispose of floral arrangements - plants vs flowers.
 - emails details to Church Admin
- Gets bulletin to Church Secretary (service program)

Church Administrator:

- After time of funeral designated - Checks with:
 - Funeral Home
 - Funeral Host list, funeral usher, funeral hospitality, and sound system
 - Preschool & Upper Crust
- Day of Service:
 - Unlocks Doors - side doors, Chapel doors
 - Bar in front door to be removed for casket
 - Flowers - directs placement of delivered flowers
 - Makes sure bulletins get delivered to service
 - Candles - Mike
 - Sherry (Make sure she is contacted to work, if needed)
 - Reserves Rows
 - Kleenex in family room areas
- Traffic Pattern
 - Arranges for cones
 - "Proceed to back" stated from pulpit for reception
 - Makes sure there is proper signage for directions/restrooms
- If Church is providing beverages, ensures Coffee, lemonade and water are available and prepped
- Keeps snacks (mixed nuts/cheese straws) in stock at church
- Coordinates set-up
- Paper/plastic products in stock
- Sound & video coordinated
- Watch for family

Funeral Hostess:

(revised June 2023)

Duties:

- The Church Administrator contacts the hostess volunteers when there is a death. Depending on the size of the service, three or more team members are needed for a service.
- Work as a team with church staff, funeral home personnel, food volunteers, and caterers, to make the service as stress free as possible for the family.
- Arrive when families arrive at the church at least 30 minutes prior to funeral or memorial service.
- Greet family members and make sure that they have everything they need prior to service.
- Ask the family members if they wish to take all tabletop floral arrangements after the service or if they wish to leave any arrangements for the church flower distribution.
- Remove acknowledgment cards and card holders from floral arrangements. Write a brief description on the cards and place the cards in the family zip bag provided by the funeral home.
- Direct mourners to location of the service, bathrooms and give other general directions. Preschool doors should be locked during weekday services and mourners should not be allowed in the preschool area.
- Once the service begins, hostesses may enter the service. For Friday or Saturday services, hostesses may choose to remain in Warner Hall area to direct late arrivals and/or be an additional set of eyes for security.
- During visitations, hostesses gently direct family members to the far end of the visitation area to avoid congestion.

Setup and cleanup:

- The church sextons are responsible for setting up the stands for registers, tables, other display items requested by the family and beverages before the service.
- Place pitchers of water wherever the family is waiting before the service. Hostesses help monitor the pitchers for refilling.
- Sextons are responsible for cleanup after the service.
- Hostesses may choose to do light cleanup such as picking up empty cups, plates and napkins.

Visitation/Reception Food:

- Hostesses are not responsible for requesting, procuring, plating, or serving food. If food is part of the reception, the Food and Beverage Group will be responsible for set up, managing the food, and cleanup.

Ushers:

- Contacted by Church Admin via email
- Duties:
 - Greet and welcome guests
 - Hand out bulletins
 - Seats guests
- Placement of Ushers - to make church more welcoming
- Chapel Service
- Sanctuary Service
 - Sanctuary: X
 - Rose Garden/Warner Hall X
 - Stillman door X

Hospitality:

- Hospitality Compassion Group
 - 6-8 individuals needed to be Rotating Hospitality Chair (HC)
 - HC organizes appropriate reception based on size working with Church Admin
 - Chairperson contacts group by email or Sign-Up Genius for food and help
- Coordinates with church admin regarding set up
- Ensures flower arrangement coming for table
- Theology of funerals pamphlet from Worship Committee
- Food Table should be set up in shape of cross - 4 8' tables (If in FLC) with separate drink table 2 6' tables. For extra-large group set up 3-4 large rounds and bistro tables (new) with lots of white chairs set up in groups. Extra table should be
- Set up Group
 - Receiving food, plating food, planning array of buffet
 - Set up Drink station (water, lemonade, coffee on request)
- Managing the reception - make sure food is refilled as needed
- Managing the Drink Station - keeping liquids refilled and pouring for guests
 - Make sure family gets a drink in receiving line as needed
 - If enough help, could consider passing a water/lemonade to guests in long line
- Break down and Clean Up
 - Box up food for take away
 - Take trays, other receptacles to FLC Kitchen for washing
 - Have volunteers for wash, dry, return order to whatever used.
 - Make sure tablecloths are placed where they will be taken to cleaners.

Pastoral Staff

- Possible Wednesday Night Offering:
 - Plan your funeral
 - Create funeral file for members to keep in Pastor's office
 - Collective funeral file for members at time of death



Is Cremation Consistent with Christian Belief?

Some may wonder if cremation is consistent with Christian belief in the resurrection of the dead. Unlike the ancient Egyptians, we do not believe that our eternal hope is in any way contingent upon the preservation of one's earthly remains. St. Paul, who describes resurrection with the metaphor of a seed's germination, assures us that while the body is "sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body."

(1 Corinthians 15:44)



First Presbyterian Church
900 Greensboro Ave.
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
(205) 752-3531
www.fpctusc.org

THE COLUMBARIUM in the Rose Garden



**First
Presbyterian
Church**
Tuscaloosa, AL

Purpose

The Columbarium in the Rose Garden of First Presbyterian Church is a place of inurnment, for memorializing and interment for the remains of eligible persons who chose cremation. The garden and grounds provide a quiet and dignified place of peace and beauty for loved ones to meditate and pray on this hallowed ground, sacred to the memory of those who have joined the Church Triumphant.

Eligibility

The columbarium shall be used for the inurnment of the cremated remains of

- (a) current and former members of the Church,
- (b) current or former ordained ministers of the Church, and
- (c) eligible family members to a current/former member or current/former ordained minister.

Inurnments in a Niche

The niches are designed as a single niche. The placement of the cremated remains of more than one deceased person in a single niche is prohibited. Two single niches can be purchased and plaqued accordingly to indicate a couple.

Container, Plaques, & Cremation Cost

Niche cost includes the container, bronze plaque and all engraving. The plaque is inscribed with the deceased's name, date of birth and date of death. The cremation costs are not covered by any fee paid to the Church. The family will work directly with a funeral home for the cremation. No urn is used.

Pricing

Single Niche: \$2,500 per niche

*pricing includes container, plaque, & plaque engraving

Reserve a Niche

Visit fpctusc.org/resources/columbarium to reserve a niche or fill out a printed form in the church office.



How Can I Learn More?

Contact Jackie Joiner, Church Administrator, at jjoiner@fpctusc.org or (205) 752-3531 for more information about FPC Columbarium reservation and policies.

You can also find the Columbarium Manual of Operations for FPC on our website at fpctusc.org/resources/columbarium

First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa The Columbarium Manual of Operations

The Columbarium of First Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa, Alabama (the Church) has been established to provide an area on the grounds of the Church for the inurnment of the remains of deceased members of the Church and their families. These RULES are designed to assure that the procedures to be followed in inurnments are reverent and orderly and to specify the privileges and conditions in connection with the use of the Columbarium.

1. **Supervision of the Columbarium.** The Church shall at all times have full control of the Columbarium. Such controls shall be exercised through the Building and Grounds Committee, the "Committee," and shall be managed by those individuals designated by the Building and Grounds Committee, Finance Committee, Senior Pastor, and Church Administrator. The Committee may adopt such rules or its own governance as it sees fit, subject to review and approval by the Session.
2. **The Columbarium.** The Columbarium shall consist of niches that are uniform in size to be used for the inurnment of the ashes of the remains of "Eligible Persons" as hereafter defined. Each niche shall bear a specific number.
3. **Eligibility.** The Columbarium shall be used only for the inurnment of the cremated remains of (a) current and former members of the congregation of the Church; (b) spouses of such members, (c) children or stepchildren of such members and their spouses, (d) grandchildren of such members and their spouses, (e) parents or stepparents of such members; and (f) current or former ordained ministers of the Church, their spouses, children, and stepchildren, all of which classes of persons shall be deemed members of the Church for purposes hereto (the "Eligible Persons"). The Session shall have the authority to make exceptions to the definition of "Eligible Persons."
4. **Reservation of Niches; Title and Rights Retained by the Church.** Specific niches for the inurnment of cremated remains may be reserved by Eligible Persons for future use upon the payment of fees approved by the Committee in effect at the time of making of the reservation, together with the execution of all required documents. The reservation of a niche shall be evidenced by a certificate issued by the Church to the Eligible Person making the reservation substantially in the form attached hereto. Legal title to all niches and appurtenant real and personal property shall at all times remain in the Church. The reservation of a niche and the payment of a reservation fee confers only the right to use the niche in accordance with the rules in effect from time to time, and no title or right of ownership to the niche or any appurtenant real or personal property becomes vested thereby in the Eligible Person making the reservation. The payment of the reservation fee is separate from, and not in satisfaction of, the fees required under Paragraph 6 hereof. Reservations may not be transferred or assigned to any other person or persons except with prior written permission of the Committee. Reservations may be canceled by written notification addressed to and received by the Committee by the Eligible Person in whose name and reservation was made or that person's personal representative. Should a reservation be canceled, the Church will, upon written request, refund 50% of the reservation fee paid without interest. If a niche which has been reserved is unused within a reasonable period of time after the later of the death of the person reserving the niche or the death of the spouse of such person, the Committee may declare the reservation cancelled, and the reservation fee paid will be

refunded, without interest, upon the written request to the person legally entitled to the same subject to any appropriate offset by the Church. If a person in whose name a reservation is made ceases to be an Eligible Person, the Committee may likewise declare the reservation canceled upon written notice to such person, and the reservation fee paid will be refunded, without interest, upon the written request of such person.

5. **Fee for Right to Use Niche where no Reservation has been made.** On those occasions when the family of a deceased Eligible Person desires to have the cremated remains of the deceased inurned in the Columbarium but no niche has been previously reserved, the right to utilize a niche may be obtained upon the payment of the same fee as for a reservation then in effect and the execution of all required documents. The payment of this fee is apart from, and not in satisfaction of, the fees required under Paragraph 6 hereof.
6. **Urns.** The Urn or other container containing the cremated remains of the Eligible Person to be inurned in the columbarium shall be obtained from the Church.
7. **Plaques.** Plaques that may be affixed to the niches shall be of the uniform size, type and composition prescribed by the Church and shall be obtained from the Church. Each plaque may be inscribed only with the deceased Eligible Person's name, date of birth and date of death. Plaques on niches receiving the cremated remains of two (2) Eligible Persons may be inscribed with such information for both persons. No other inscription(s) will be permitted. The Church will provide for the inscriptions upon such plaques.
8. **Cremation Costs.** The costs of cremation are not covered by any fee or fees paid to the Church pursuant to these Rules and the Church will not offer any cremation services. The representative of the deceased Eligible Persons shall be responsible for cremation in accordance with the laws of the State of Alabama and for all costs in connection therewith.
9. **Multiple Inurnments in a Niche.** The niches are designed -as single niches. The placement of the cremated remains of more than one (1) deceased person in a niche is prohibited.
10. **Memorial Services.** A memorial service for the inurnment of cremated remains will be planned by the ministers of the Church in consultation with the deceased's family. Only a minister of the Church or someone designated by such a minister may conduct the services held in connection with the inurnment of remains in the niches of the Columbarium. No inurnment shall be permitted without such a service.
11. **Right of the Church to Remove Created Remains.** Each Eligible Person upon his or her reservation of a niche, or the family of an Eligible Person upon their purchase of the right to use a niche, as the case may be, shall upon request acknowledge in writing, and the Church reserves without such acknowledgment, the right to remove the cremated remains of a deceased inurned therein and to cause the re-inurnment of such remains in any other appropriate location, as determined by the Church in its sole and absolute discretion, whether on the present grounds of the Church or elsewhere, upon the occasion of the relocation or discontinuance of the Columbarium for any reason.
12. **Removal of cremated remains by entities other than the Church.** Upon the request of a person showing evidence of due authority and payment of all appropriate fees, a niche may be opened, and the cremated remains of a deceased Eligible Person inurned therein may be removed by such person authorized by law to do so, and upon compliance by such person

with all requirements of state, municipal or other applicable laws. Any such opening of a niche shall be done by the Church at such times as may be convenient to it and the cost thereof shall be paid by the person requesting such action. The Church may require as a condition to complying with such a request that the person making such a request release and indemnify the Church against all liability and expenses (including attorney's fees) incurred in connection with such opening and removal. If, after the removal of the cremated remains of the deceased, the cremated remains of another deceased are not still present in the niche (only in the case of a double niche), all rights to use the niche shall revert to the Church. The Church shall refund no fees of any type to any person or estate upon such removal of inurned remains.

13. **Record of Inurnments.** The Church shall maintain a record of each inurnment in the Columbarium. The name of the deceased in each inurnment, the deceased's dates of birth and death and the name of the deceased's next of kin shall be included in such record. The Church shall also maintain a list of all Eligible Persons reserving niches together with the names of the next of kin of such Eligible Persons.
14. **Accounts.** The Church shall maintain all fees, donations, bequests, or other funds received by the Church in connection with the Columbarium in a segregated account. All disbursements from that account shall be approved by the Session of the Church, or, if such authority is delegated by the Session, by the Committee. Appropriate periodic and annual audits and/or reviews of the aforesaid account shall be conducted in accordance with the Church's regular accounting practices.
15. **Conditions.** The columbarium will be opened to visitors at all times that the Church is open to the public, or such other times as specifically approved by the Church. Funeral or memorial services may be held in the sanctuary or chapel of the Church or in the Sanctuary Courtyard. No remains may be inurned in the Columbarium niches without a committal service as provided in Paragraph 11 hereof. No flowers, real or artificial, or any other items will be placed in the Sanctuary Courtyard or on or near the Columbarium.
16. **Liability.** The Church's sole liability to any Eligible Person and his or her heirs, representatives, successors and assigns in connection with the ownership, use and maintenance of the Columbarium shall be limited to the fee paid (without interest) for the right to use a niche. No consequential, incidental, or other type of damages, costs or other expenses shall be payable by the Church or by any person or entity acting for or on behalf of the Church. Disputes with respect to the Certificate of Ownership, the Manual of Operations, the "Columbarium," or the maintenance, operation or termination of the "Columbarium" shall be subject to arbitration pursuant to the rules of the American Arbitration Association.
17. **Amendment or Waiver of Rules.** The Session of the Church may, at any time and from time to time, upon request or its own motion, modify, amend, repeal, suspend or waive any or all of the rules and requirements stated herein. A waiver of any rule or requirement stated herein shall not be construed, unless specifically so stated by the Session, or constitute a waiver of that rule or requirement with respect to any situation or occurrence arising thereafter.

Committee Structure and Committee Responsibilities**Nominating Committee****Last Amended 1/26/2026****Approved by Session March 23, 2026****A. Purpose**

It shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to nominate persons to the congregation for active service as Elders on the Session, Deacons on the Board of Deacons, and members-at-large to serve on the Nominating Committee for the following year. Nominations shall be made in accordance with constitutional provisions of the Book of Order of the PC(USA), G-2.04, and the provisions of this manual.

B. Membership

In accordance with the provisions of the Book of Order, G-2.0401 the members of the Nominating Committee shall be elected as follows:

1. One member shall be designated by and from the Session.
2. One member shall be designated by and from the Board of Deacons.
3. Two members shall be chosen from the congregation at-large, each year, by the congregation at a Congregational Meeting, to serve a three-year term.
4. The Pastor shall be a member of this committee, serve ex-officio without vote.
5. The Session, Board of Deacons, and congregation shall take care to see that the membership of the Nominating Committee includes both men and women and gives fair representation to persons of all age groups and of racial-ethnic members of the congregation.

C. Leadership

The Moderator of the Nominating Committee shall be designated by and from the Session, being one of the members appointed by the Session.

D. Responsibilities

1. The Nominating Committee shall take the time to study carefully the descriptions of the officers elected to the Church as they are found in the Old and New Testaments and the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
2. The Nominating Committee shall seek from members of the congregation their suggestions for persons to be nominated as Elders and Deacons by publishing in the church bulletin for three consecutive weeks the requirements of the office and requesting that names be suggested for such officers.
3. The Nominating Committee shall present a single nominee for each place to be elected on the Session and Board of Deacons.
4. The Nominating Committee shall present two nominees to serve on the succeeding Nominating Committee from the congregation at-large, none of whom may be in active service on the Session. It shall take care to observe the provisions of the Book of Order, G-2.0401
5. The Nominating Committee shall consult with and secure the approval of all First

Presbyterian Church Committee Structure and Committee Responsibilities Administration
Division persons whom it intends to nominate prior to publicizing its report to the congregation.

6. The report of the Nominating Committee, including the names of the nominees to all offices or positions, shall be publicized to the congregation at least two weeks before the meeting at which it is to be presented.
7. The Nominating Committee shall present its nominations at a Congregational Meeting, ordinarily held no later than February of each year.

E. Meetings

1. The Nominating Committee shall establish its own meeting schedule.
2. The Nominating Committee shall plan its work so that there is sufficient time to:
 - a. Engage in careful study of the requirements of each office and the characteristics needed in persons who fill these offices.
 - b. Discuss the needs of the congregation for leadership on the Session and Board of Deacons.
 - c. Request and receive suggestions from the congregation regarding nominees.
 - d. Engage in careful consideration of members of the congregation and the gifts, qualities, and experience each might bring to the church.
 - e. Engage in prayer for guidance of God's Spirit in making decisions regarding nominees.
 - f. Visit each nominee to interpret the Nominating Committee's view of the requirements and responsibilities of an Elder or Deacon and the reasons why they feel led by God to nominate that person.

F. Eligibility for Nomination

Members of the Nominating Committee shall not be eligible to be nominated by the committee for active service on the Session Board of Deacons, and Trustees.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A. Nominating Committee.

The nomination and election of ruling elders and deacons shall express the rich diversity of the congregation's membership and shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness (F-1.0403). Ruling elders and deacons shall be nominated by a committee elected by the congregation, drawn from, and representative of its membership. Congregations may provide by their own rule for a congregational nominating committee. BO: G-2.0401

B. Ruling Elders.

The congregation shall elect 24 ruling elders distributed into three equal classes, one class of whom shall be elected each year at the annual meeting for a three-year term. In addition, the congregation should elect one youth to serve as an elder for a one-year term. If necessary, the nominating committee shall nominate a successor for a vacancy, to be elected by the congregation for the unexpired portion of the vacated position's term.

C. Deacons.

The congregation shall elect 24 deacons distributed into three equal classes, one class of whom shall be elected each year at the annual meeting for a three-year term. In addition, the congregation should elect one youth to serve as deacon for a one- year term. If necessary, the nominating committee shall nominate a successor for a vacancy, to be elected by the congregation for the unexpired portion of the vacated position's term.

D. Familial Relations between Church Officers.

Persons living in the same household may not serve together on the session or diaconate but may serve on separate boards at the same time. Youth are exempted from this provision and may serve at the same time as another member of their household.

E. Preparation for Ministry as a Ruling Elder or Deacon.

When persons have been elected to the ordered ministry of ruling elder or deacon, the session shall provide 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 shall also confer with them as to their willingness to undertake the ministry appropriate to the order. If the examination is approved, the session shall appoint a day for the service of ordination and installation. BO: G-2.0402

F. Training.

New officer training shall be conducted by ministers and ruling elders with the guidance and support of the Long-Range Planning committee.

G. Term of Service.

Elders and deacons are elected for a term of three years unless elected to fill an unexpired term. Elders or deacons who have completed a three-year term are ineligible for re-election to active service for two years. An elder or deacon elected to fill an unexpired term shall be ineligible for re-election to active service for one year after the expiration of such term. Terms of elders and deacons shall expire when their successors have been ordained and installed.

Finance / Endowment Committee

Committee Responsibilities

Last Amended 1/26/2026

Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder
Elder
Deacon or At Large Members
Staff Representative
Long Range Planning Representative
Stewardship Committee Representative

Mission

In faithfulness to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, to oversee the financial activities of the church and administer these activities as good stewards of the congregation's gifts for the work of the church and glory of God; to encourage lasting gifts to the church endowment and to be good stewards of the funds entrusted to the endowment.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host the monthly Finance/Endowment Committee meetings, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Finance/Endowment Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Finance/Endowment Committee report at Session meetings.

Prepare the church budget and recommend to Session for approval.

Conduct required audits of church finances and present to Session.

Present a financial report for the Church Congregational meeting.

Present a yearly annual endowment summary report for the congregation of the endowment funds. To encourage and solicit gifts to the church's endowment.

To serve as a clearinghouse for all gifts distributed from the endowment funds and trusts, ensuring that requests are made by correct committee or entity, determine which endowment will fund the request, and provide the funds through the church administrator to the entity.

Provide oversight of the investments of the endowment portfolio which includes selection of the investment firm that manages the portfolio. Meet with the endowment portfolio manager at least 2 times per year to discuss and make modifications of investment strategies for each Trust or Fund.

Work with committee ministries on spending and budgeting as needed.

Award scholarships annually.

Be responsible to the church for carrying out plans to fulfill goals adopted by the committee.

Monitor and oversee Preschool finances.

Properties Committee
Committee Responsibilities
Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder
Elder
Deacon
At Large Members
Staff Representative:

Mission

Guide the congregation in faithful stewardship of the gift of this beautiful facility. A valuable resource for the members and community, in that buildings and grounds require continual effort in the areas of management, repair, and maintenance.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host monthly Properties Committee meeting, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Properties Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Properties Committee report at Session meetings.

Conduct regular visual inspections of the interior and exterior of the physical property of the church. Identify issues, prepare plans to address, and complete projects.

Approve vendors and bids. Make recommendations to Session for major capital expenditures.

Understand where the endowment funds are set for repair, maintenance, and operations.

Assess and approve preschool physical property changes or improvements.

Listen and respond to suggestions and concerns from the congregation.

Develop and maintain plans for the care and maintenance of all facilities including monitoring service contracts and a listing of scheduled maintenance needs.

Develop policies for use of church facilities and church vehicles.

Encourage "ownership" and pride in the building and grounds with workdays, tours, and historical information

Stewardship Committee
Committee Responsibilities
Last Amended 1/26/2026
Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder
Elder
Deacon
At Large Members
Staff Representative

Mission

To support the mission of the church and its programs by identifying talents and gifts of those within our congregation and by helping to create an atmosphere in which members of the church feel motivated to bring those talents and gifts to God's service.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host the monthly Stewardship Committee meetings, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Stewardship Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Stewardship Committee report at Session meetings.

Appoint a representative to serve on the Finance/Endowment Committee and attend monthly Finance/Endowment Committee meetings.

Appoint a liaison to the Communications Team Conduct an annual stewardship campaign aimed at securing the necessary financial resources to meet the church's budget, including assessment of available resources and techniques for the accomplishment of this goal.

Assess annually the stewardship teaching and communication that takes place through other committees and programs to ensure that stewardship is presented by our church as a call to service for all Christ's followers.

In concert with the Finance/ Endowment Committee, prepare and present an annual report to the congregation at the annual Congregational Meeting. If no Congregational Meeting is held in the first quarter of the year, then the report must be presented to the congregation no later than April 15. A second report to be distributed at the beginning of September immediately prior to the launch of the annual pledge campaign.

Perform a congregational giving analysis and share the results of this analysis with the congregation.

Produce a communication plan to support the annual activities of the committee.

Personnel Committee
Committee Responsibilities
Last Amended 1/26/2026
Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder

Elder

Deacon and /At Large Members

Staff Representative

Mission

The mission of the Personnel Committee is to support and encourage staff members, develop personnel policies, assist with hiring new staff, and assist with employee separation events.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host the monthly Personnel Committee meetings, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Personnel Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Personnel Committee report at Session meetings. Review staff individual goals, performance and compensation.

Review staff compensation vs. Presbytery and comparable local churches.

Evaluate staffing vs. current needs/available funds, considering input from church leaders and appropriate committees.

Evaluate staffing investment needed for growth with input from church leaders and appropriate committees.

Address budget requests and Christmas bonuses for staff.

Provide emotional support for staff and resolve personnel problems and issues.

Assist with organizing annual staff planning retreats.

Plan and organize staff appreciation luncheon.

Perform an annual review of both pastoral and staff compensation plans and determine what, if any, adjustments need to be made in the coming year to ensure FPC is paying its pastoral staff and employees a fair and competitive salary as well as benefits. In connection with the annual budget process, any proposed compensation changes will be submitted to the Finance committee to consider including adjustments in the coming year's budget. In accordance with the Book of Order, the Committee will report their findings and recommendations concerning compensation for the pastoral staff to the Session on an annual basis.

As needed, prepare a report of changes in Terms of Call for Clergy to be presented at a Congregational Meeting.

Long Range Planning Committee

Committee Responsibilities

Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder
Elder
Deacon
At Large Members
Staff Representative

Mission

To envision what Christ intends the church to do and be, involve officers and members in this process, foster a process of planning and guide the implementation of the plans to realize the high calling of Christ.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host monthly Long Range Planning Committee meeting, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Long Range Planning Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Long Range Planning Committee report at Session meetings.

Oversee Committee recommendations to Session for persons to serve the following positions:

- a. Treasurer
- b. Preschool representative
- c. Clerk of Session
- d. Trustees
- e. Nominating Committee Chair
- f. Committee assignments for incoming Elders and Deacons

Assist with newly elected Elders and Deacons training.

Assist and monitor church properties, both contiguous and non-contiguous parcels.

Monitor and update First Presbyterian Church Manual of Operation and Appendix to see that it stays current.

Develop and update the Future Maintenance/Replacement Cost Estimation of the church physical property document.

Meet with First Presbyterian Church committee chairs and evaluate current committees:

- a. Committee needs and productivity.
- b. Committee structure.
- c. Advise Session if any restructuring seems appropriate.

Appoint a representative to serve on the Finance/Endowment Committee and attend monthly Finance/Endowment Committee meetings.

Worship Committee
Committee Responsibilities
Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder
Elder
Deacon
At Large Members
Staff Representative

Mission

To glorify God through worship; to help lead people to worship in spirit and in truth by focusing our attention and affection on the Lord during worship; and to educate and train future generations to use the gift of music and other worship arts to praise and glorify God. To that end, to provide the mechanics for a smooth flow in all aspects of worship.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host monthly Worship Committee meeting, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Worship Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Worship Committee report at Session meetings.

Support, encourage, and enhance the music ministry according to the Worship Committee Mission.

Support the acolyte and cross bearer program.

Promote and assist in planning special services during Advent, Lent, Holy Week, and other occasions.

Decorate the church for Advent, Easter, and Christmas.

Maintain all musical instruments.

Support and encourage participation in the annual Music and Worship Conference in Montreat, North Carolina.

Provide to Session a recommendation of Communion dates for the coming year.

Arrange for Communion services with the preparation of the sacraments, polish and store the silver, maintain Communion supplies, and cleans the Sanctuary after each Communion Sunday.

Support the Sanctuary Guild, flower committee, and memorial service committee.

Appoint a flower coordinator to work with the church's floral designers to schedule and prepare flower arrangements for the front of the sanctuary.

Create music opportunities for the community.

Support recitals and concerts offered through the Music Ministry to include the annual Binford Organ Recital Series recital, Carols by Candlelight, the All-Saints' Service, and other special offerings throughout the year.

Maintain wedding and memorial service policies. The policies are to be reviewed annually.

Coordinate usher training and scheduling ushers for all events requiring the service.

Coordinate and schedule Lay Readers for worship services.

Prepare an annual communication plan to support the activities of the committee.

Review and approve a Worship and Music Budget to be administered by the Director of Music. The Director of Music will communicate any requests that are out of the ordinary for the Committee's approval, to be presented to Session.

Maintain a five- year plan.

Fellowship Committee
Committee Responsibilities

Committee Membership

Elder
Elder
Deacon
At Large Members
Staff Representative

Mission

Support, strengthen, and nurture God's families throughout the congregation, the community, and the world. Since the family of God includes the whole world, we will enhance study, mission, and fellowship to reflect this belief. This will be facilitated through church-wide meetings, fellowship events, and special programs to promote friendship in order to further strengthen the Body of Christ. The vision is that First Presbyterian Church will be a friendly, growing and serving witness to Christ where every member feels valued through involvement in the life of the church.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host monthly Fellowship Committee meeting, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Fellowship Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Fellowship Committee report at Session meetings.

Plan, promote, and implement Wednesday night meal programs.

Plan, promote and host the annual fall Church picnic.

Plan, promote, and implement a marriage enrichment program.

Plan, promote, and conduct annual retreats and activities for families.

Plan, promote, and implement name tag Sunday.

Produce the pictorial church directory on its planned three-year schedule.

Organize small group meals called Dinners for Eight.

Plan, promote, and conduct M&M (Mature Member) events.

Arrange for the organization, recruitment, and training of Stephens Ministry participants.

Plan, promote and host events that provide opportunity for personal interaction and fellowship including Lemonade on the Lawn, Ice Cream Socials, church-wide brunches, Dinners for Eight, Crockpot Cookoff.

Assist other committees with Global Mission Festival, receptions for organ recitals and music performances, Tent or Treat, and Easter Egg Hunt.

Children and Family Faith Formation Committee

Committee Responsibilities

Last Amended 1/26/2026

Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder

Elder

Deacon

Deacon

At Large Members

Staff Representative

Mission

To encourage the teaching of the Bible and growth in Christian faith for children and their families. The committee shall work to seek to enable faith formation for children from birth to 11 years old and also for the families of these children.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host the monthly Children and Family Faith Formation Committee meetings, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Children and Family Faith Formation Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Children and Family Faith Formation Committee report at Session meetings.

Recruit Sunday school teachers for elementary and preschool classes. Recruit director and assistant director of Vacation Bible School (VBS), as well as implement summer VBS programming.

Review curricula for Sunday school classes for preschool and elementary aged, and Vacation Bible School curriculum.

Oversee childcare services for church programming. Coordinate personnel decisions (hourly rates, policies, etc.) with Personnel Committee.

Review changes in the weekday Preschool policy and serve as liaison to Session on behalf of the Preschool board.

Present Bibles to infants upon birth (via the Baby Basket), first grade LOGOS, and 3rd graders.

Assess Sunday school attendance by grade and class as relates to the calendar year. Use this information to restructure classes as needed.

Formulate a workable budget for implementing Children and Family Faith Formation programming.

Recognize teachers and other volunteers for their service and dedication to the Children and Family Faith Formation program of this church.

Provide oversight, support, instruction, and materials for our Godly Play leaders.

Offer Lord's Supper preparation class annually.

Create a communication plan to support the activities of the committee.

Pack baby baskets with FPC bib, baby Bible, baptism book, and nursery information to be delivered by pastors upon the news of a new baby in our congregation.

Organize volunteers for Read Across America Week at First Presbyterian Preschool.

Organize Child of the Covenant event with breakfast and recognition for those born in the previous year.

Organize Young Families (birth to 5 y/o) fellowship events at least once a year.

Organize Tent or Treat. Organize a Trick or Treat celebration annually.

Organize Easter Egg Hunt & Church-wide lunch annually.

Assist with Christmas pageant.

Youth and Family Faith Formation Committee

Committee Responsibilities

Last Amended 1/26/2026

Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder

Elder

Deacon

At Large Members

Staff Representative

Mission

To glorify Christ through the growth of our relationships with God and one another, in fellowship with our congregation, and through the service of our community.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Oversee the planning of high quality and engaging youth programming for spiritual and communal growth. These include, but are not limited to: Sunday Youth Nights, Small Groups, Sunday School, Bible Studies, Fellowship Outings, Retreats, and Montreat.

Plan and implement immersive and authentic service and mission opportunities, both locally and abroad.

Provide authentic and meaningful leadership opportunities for youth, including the Youth Leadership Team and the selection of Youth Elder and Youth Deacon.

Plan and implement the bi-annual Confirmation program.

Recruit volunteers for all youth programs.

Assist in the planning and implementation of annual Youth Sunday.

Provide pastoral care for youth and families as needed.

Assisting in the planning and implementation of larger youth gatherings throughout the year, such as Progressive Christmas Dinner, Superbowl Party, End of the Year Party and the bi-annual Youth Auction.

Review and plan annual budget and long-term plans.

Host the monthly Youth and Family Faith Formation Committee meetings, record minutes, and forward minutes for inclusion in Session packets.

Make the Youth and Family Faith Formation report at all Session meetings.

College and Adults Faith Formation Committee

Committee Responsibilities

Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder
Elder
Deacon
Deacon
At Large Members
Staff Representative

Mission

Fulfill the call of Christian ministry to college-age students through all adult ages for teaching the Bible and growth in Christian faith, and to empower adult Christians to assume roles of service and leadership in the church and community.

Fulfill the calling to minister to college-age students through programs such as UKirk and fulfill the responsibility for Christian Education of all adults by helping church staff in identifying leaders to teach, encouraging growth in faith and service for all adult members, and collaborate in communicating these opportunities.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host the monthly College and Adult Faith Formation Committee meetings, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for College and Adult Faith Formation Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make College and Adult Faith Formation Committee report at Session meetings.

Provide Advent and Holy Week or Lenten Devotionals to encourage personal reflection during these special Christian seasons.

Assist in recruiting Adult Sunday school teachers

Review curricula for all Adult, college age and older, Sunday school classes, and recommend same to session for approval.

Survey adults during even-numbered years to determine if additional Sunday school classes need to be formed.

Formulate a workable budget for implementing Christian Education programming for college age through adults of all ages.

Recognize teachers and other volunteers for their service and dedication to the Christian Education program of this church.

Provide Advent and Holy Week or Lenten Devotionals to encourage personal reflection during these special Christian seasons.

Create a communication plan to support the activities of the committee.

Appoint one committee member to be liaison to the Communication team.

Support of college retreats, trips, and conferences: fall retreat, Montreat College Conference, mission trips for college age, etc.

Involvement of students in the life of First Presbyterian Church: College Sunday and other various worship leadership opportunities, youth and LOGOs interns, involvement in FPC mission and outreach programs.

Recruit FPC groups to provide college student meals

Provide a place for UKirk to host programming.

Provide Tuesday night UKirk meetings, intramural sports opportunities, involvement in UA Homecoming, and more.

Support UKirk Alumni Association.

Freshmen transfer students outreach and recruitment: contacting incoming Presbyterian students throughout the summer and encouraging involvement in campus ministry through BAMA move-in days, etc.

Involvement in greater church campus ministry organizations: Synod of the Living Waters Campus Ministries (SOLWCM), Alabama Presbyterian Campus Ministries (APCM), PC(USA) Collegiate Ministries, etc. as well as the University of Alabama Campus Ministry Association.

Nurture, support and education for college-age through all ages of adults.

Mission Committee
Committee Responsibilities
Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder
Elder
Deacon
Deacon
Deacon
Deacon
Deacon
Deacon
At Large Members
Staff Representative

Mission

Serving God by managing and fostering guidance, advocacy, and education for local and global missions of First Presbyterian Church, always sharing the love of Christ through our presence and witness. Our vision is that First Presbyterian Church will be known by the way its members serve God's people, the Mission Committee will be the lens through which members see themselves serving Christ.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host the monthly Mission Committee meetings, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Mission Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Mission Committee report at Session meetings.

Plan and produce the annual Global Missions Festival.

Create, nurture, and maintain on-going mission partnerships.

Plan, support, and manage both local and global mission projects for all age groups, including both church members and those beyond our membership.,

Entertain requests from and disperse funds to local organizations.

Oversee the administration of the Simril Bryant Fund for the Poor of Tuscaloosa County.

Maintain board membership on the Compassion Coalition of Tuscaloosa County.

Engage in advocacy efforts.

Congregational Care Committee
Committee Responsibilities
Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Elder
Elder
Diaconate moderator
Diaconate vice moderator
Deacon
Deacon
At Large Members
Staff Representative

Mission

To coordinate the many ways care is offered to members and guests of our church.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host the Congregational Care Committee meetings, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Congregational Care Committee meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Congregational Care Committee report at Session meetings.

Coordinate care and provide training for groups offering care including

- The Deacon Care Ministry where deacons offer care, food and visits during members' experiencing life events such as birth, illness and death.
- The Flower ladies who deliver flowers weekly to homebound/in care facilities and other
- Card Ministry (Presbyterian Women currently do this)
- Knitting Ministry – Knit baby blankets for baptism
- Consider new care ministry possibilities such as a Digital connection/ministry, Sunday morning prayer with a deacon , etc.

Council and Teams

Deacon Council

Council Responsibilities

Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Council Membership

Diaconate moderator
Diaconate Vice moderator
At Large Members
Staff Representative

Mission Provide oversight of the Deacon Care Ministry, which is the intentional care of every member. The committee will support and educate the Deacons and the congregation about the Deacon Care Ministry.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Plan, organize and oversee the duties of the Diaconate and host Diaconate meetings as needed.
Review and revise the Deacon Care Handbook before distribution at the beginning of each year.
Establish contact regularly assigned group of Deacons to check-in and encourage the ministry of their Deacon Care Group.
Promote Deacon Training in the responsibilities of the Deacons towards their Deacon care groups, the use of communication tools to be used in the communication process, and the use of intrapersonal communication to make them successful in their jobs.
Provide information to the congregation about the Deacon Care Ministry.
Develop information about the DCC to be placed on the First Presbyterian Church website.
Plan and facilitate an annual spring Deacon Care Luncheon.
Ensure that new members are assigned to a Deacon Care group on a monthly basis.

Welcome Team
Team Responsibilities
Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Council Membership

All to be At Large Members
Staff Representative

Mission To create a warm and welcoming atmosphere in which to greet visitors and inform them about First Presbyterian Church's opportunities for fellowship, study, and service; to guide them to membership in the church; and to help assimilate new members into the life of the church.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host the Welcome Team meetings as needed, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Welcome Team meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Welcome Team report at Session meetings.

Contacting and welcoming visitors who attend worship services.

Providing visitors and new members with information about church activities and opportunities.

Planning and implementing visitor receptions and new member luncheons.

Making the officers and congregation aware of potential new members.

Assimilating new members into the life of the church.

Maintaining a program to help identify and welcome visitors and greet them in a warm, welcoming manner.

Hosting the Inquirers' Sunday School Class.

Communications Team
Team Responsibilities
Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Council Membership

All to be At Large Members

Staff Representative:

Mission This team will develop communications goal and strategies to build fellowship and awareness and to communicate positive messages about First Presbyterian Church to members, potential new members, and the community.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Host the Communications Team meetings as needed, record minutes and forward minutes to church office for inclusion in Session packet.

Prepare agenda and minutes for Communications Team meetings and forward minutes to the church office for inclusion in the monthly Session packets.

Make Communications Team report at Session meetings.

Maintain website and social media.

Publish monthly newsletter.

Coordinate Sunday broadcast outreach and other media productions.

Produce promotional materials and arrange for buying advertising space.

Develop strategic branding and messaging.

Establish consistent standards of quality across all materials.

Evaluate and adopt new technologies.

Maintain liaison with all standing committees of the church and assist with the development and execution of their individual communication plans

Presbyterian Women
Committee Responsibilities
Last Amended 01/26/26
Approved by Session - March 23, 2026

Committee Membership

Team Members: Moderator (Rotating Monthly), Secretary, Treasurer, Liaison with Circle Bible leaders, Circle Representatives.

Staff Liaison:

Mission

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study, support the mission of the church worldwide, work for justice and peace, and build an inclusive caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

Annual and Recurrent Responsibilities

Hold monthly PW Coordinating Team meetings.

Prepare agenda, financial statement, and minutes for team members.

Prepare annual budget for Circle members.

Discuss and promote budget in our Circle meetings.

Receive financial pledges from Circle members.

Distribute collected funds to local, Presbytery, and Synod causes.

Prepare annual handbook.

Update FPC calendar with dates of Circle meetings.

Update FPC website with all Circle information.

Update FPC membership about PW events through the church bulletin, newsletter, and social media platforms.

Order and distribute Bible study resources to Circle members.

Conduct monthly Bible study lessons in all Circle meetings.

Plan, promote, and implement annual Angel Tree Christmas Mission Project.

Plan and implement holiday Greeting Card Ministry for FPC home-bound members.

Plan, promote, and implement monthly Pantry donations for a mission partner.

Plan, promote, and implement annual Honorary Life Membership presentation.

Plan, promote, and implement annual gathering with our sisters from First Methodist and Christ Episcopal.

Provide funds for a ministerial robe for an FPC seminary student.

Provide Christmas gifts for FPC staff.

Plan, promote, and implement collection of the national Thank Offering in the Fall and the Birthday Offering in the Spring.

Encourage participation in FPC functions by all Circle member

