



# **Providence Presbyterian Church**

## **Church Policy Manual**

**September 16, 2019**

**(Revised 3/14/2022)**

**Providence Presbyterian Church  
Policy Manual**

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## Record of Revisions

Date of Revision	Revision
August 14, 2017	Revised in entirety
October 9, 2017	Deleted paragraphs 3.1.1.e (Short-term Disability) and 3.1.1.g (Compensatory Time)
November 13, 2017	Revised paragraph 2.2 (Trustees)
August 13, 2018	Revisions to change Christian Education committee to Christian Life committee. Revise policy on rolls and registers being maintained. Other minor editing revisions.
May 12, 2019	Revision to paragraph 2.12.2.b requiring volunteers in the Little Lambs ministry or Enrichment to be adults.
September 16, 2019	Revised paragraph 2.3.1 to remove the cap on the Clerk of Session's period of performance. Revised paragraph 2.12, Nursery Policy, to replace the word "shall" with the word "must." Revised paragraph 2.13, Chaperone Policy, to specify that chaperones must be at least 4 years older than the oldest youth or vulnerable adult participating in the activity. This is a requirement of the PEVA Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy. Revised paragraph 3.2, Sexual Misconduct, to be consistent with the PEVA Sexual Misconduct policy and to identify those persons considered as "trusted leaders." Revised paragraph 3.3, Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy to adopt and be consistent with the PEVA policy. Removed paragraph 4.2.6 deleting administration of the Providence Presbyterian Church Scholarship Program from the responsibilities of the Christian Life Committee.
December 8, 2020	Added a second subparagraph to Paragraph 2.5 to allow "virtual" meetings of the congregation.
March 14, 2022	Deleted paragraph 2.14, Policies for Use of the Church Bus

# **Providence Presbyterian Church Church Policy Manual**

## **1.0 Introduction**

Providence Presbyterian Church is a member church in the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia of the Presbyterian Church (USA). It has been called by God and organized by the Presbytery to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in worship and service to the needy and to promote peace and justice in the world.

This manual provides specific church policies that have been instituted by a vote of the Session. Its purpose is to address only those matters that the Session has deemed necessary to ensure the affairs of the church are conducted in a consistent manner. These policies ensure that church events are conducted with due consideration for the safety and security of the congregation. Changes to this manual require the approval of the Session.

## **2.0 Organization of the Church**

### **2.1. Session Structure.**

1. The Session of Providence Presbyterian Church shall consist of the Pastor(s) and fifteen ruling Elders, distributed into three equal classes, one class of which shall be elected each year by the congregation at its annual meeting.
2. Members of the same family, living in the same household, shall not concurrently serve on the Session as active ruling elders.
3. In order to carry out the Great Ends of the Church (BOO F-1.0304; 2017-2019 edition), the Session shall consist of seven committees: Administration, Christian Life, Church Property, Congregational Care, Fellowship, Mission/Outreach/ Evangelism, and Worship.

### **2.2. Trustees of the Congregation.**

1. The church shall have three Trustees elected by the church membership with one trustee term ending each year. Each trustee may serve contiguous terms.

### **2.3. The Clerk of Session.**

1. The Clerk of Session shall be elected by the Session annually at the February stated Session meeting. If an active ruling elder, he or she shall serve a 1-3 year term consistent with his or her elder class. If not an active ruling elder, he or she shall serve a 3-year term.
2. The Clerk of Session shall be responsible for maintaining the Session minutes, the Church Policy Manual, and the Church Register.

3. The Church Register shall include those records specified in paragraphs G-3.0204 a and b of the Book of Order.

#### **2.4. Session Meetings**

1. Stated Meetings of the Session shall be on the second Monday of the month at 7:00 pm. Except in the months of February, May, August, and November, meetings will normally be held via teleconference. Should the Moderator or any ruling elder believe a physical meeting should be held at the church, the Moderator shall notify the ruling elders of that fact and the meeting shall be conducted at the church. The meetings in the four listed months shall be held at the church.
2. Except when receiving new members, the quorum for Session meetings shall consist of the Moderator and 1/3 of the ruling elders. When receiving new members the quorum shall consist of the Moderator and 2 ruling elders.

#### **2.5. Annual Meeting of the Congregation**

1. The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held in January. The congregation shall be notified of the time and date of the meeting at least two Sundays in advance. The quorum for Congregational meetings shall be the Moderator and 10% of the membership.
2. In times of natural disaster, global pandemic, or other event that do not allow the membership to meet in person, the membership may meet and make decisions “virtually” using whatever technology is available at the time of the disaster.

#### **2.6. Committee and Committee Chairperson Assignments.**

1. The Pastor shall make committee and chairperson assignments.

#### **2.7. Use of the Building**

1. The Administration Committee shall maintain a “Building Use Manual” that provides applicants all policies, procedures, and requirements for use of church facilities. Changes to the “Building Use Manual” must be approved by the Session.
2. To provide for the spiritual growth of the congregation, the Christian life of the congregation, as well as physical space for worship, Church facilities shall be for the exclusive use of the congregation on Sundays. Use of church facilities on Sundays by outside groups is discouraged and any exceptions shall be approved by the Session.
3. The Session shall establish fees for use of the building.

#### **2.8. Weddings**

1. The Worship Committee shall maintain a “Wedding Manual” that provides all policies, procedures, and requirements for use of church facilities for weddings and events associated

with weddings. Changes to the “Wedding Manual” shall be prepared in consultation with the Pastor and approved by the Session.

## **2.9. Providence Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund**

1. The Administration Committee shall oversee a subcommittee to execute policies and procedures for management of the church Endowment Fund. These policies, procedures, and changes thereto shall be approved by the Session.

## **2.10. Policy on Securities (Stocks and Bonds) Donated to the Church**

1. The Session shall approve acceptance and disposition of all illiquid or closely held securities and real property donated to the church. This policy does not apply to the Endowment Fund. The Administration Committee shall execute due diligence to ensure real property is free and clear of all liens, taxes, or other liabilities before accepting. The Clerk of Session and the chair of the Administration Committee shall execute the necessary documents to receive and dispose of securities and real property after acceptance. Securities and real property donated to the church shall be liquidated as soon as practical and the funds placed in the appropriate account. The Administration Committee shall develop procedures and maintain appropriate forms for executing the policy on securities and real property. Changes to these forms do not require Session approval.

## **2.11. Policy on One-time Capital Expenditures**

1. Whenever a one-time capital expenditure exceeds five percent (5%) of the current annual budget, an ad hoc committee shall be established by the Session, charged to consider all options, investigate alternatives, and make a recommendation on a course of action. The committee shall consist of not less than five members and shall elect a chairperson from within those serving on the committee. Committee membership shall be open to all active members of the congregation and shall include at least one active ruling elder. Considering the nature of the expenditure, Session shall also provide the committee its operating parameters, such as time to complete the task, scope of the task, desired outcomes and any other guidance deemed appropriate.

## **2.12. Nursery Policy**

1. The Christian Life Committee shall be responsible for the Little Lambs nursery and the Little Lambs pre-school.
2. Providence Presbyterian Church shall provide a secure, nurturing environment for infants through Kindergarten children where each child will see, hear, and feel the love of Jesus Christ and parents can feel confident their children will receive the highest quality of care and ministry.
  - a. There must be a minimum of two adults in the Little Lambs nursery and the Little Lambs pre-school at all times.

- b. Volunteers who work in the Little Lambs ministry or Enrichment must be 18 years of age or older and have successfully completed a background check.

### **2.13. Chaperone Policy**

1. Adult chaperones must be at least 21 years of age and at least four years older than the oldest youth or vulnerable adult being chaperoned. Drivers must be at least 25 years old. The Session may approve exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis.
2. For 10 or fewer youth, there must be 2 designated adult chaperones. One additional designated chaperone must be added for each additional 5 youth (note: a designated chaperone is a person who has been requested and approved by the Christian Life Committee to serve in this capacity).
3. If the group includes boys and girls for an overnight event, there must be at least one male and one female designated chaperone.
4. A background check is required for all chaperones. The church will pay the fees associated with this background check. Background checks are not required for parents or other adults attending an event at their own expense and participating in a non-chaperoning capacity
5. The church greatly appreciates the sacrifice of time and energy made by chaperones. Therefore, event related expenses for designated chaperones will be paid from Christian Life Committee budgeted funds. Event related expenses are those that have been incurred directly due to the event. For example, fuel for the car is an expense due to the event while automobile service or maintenance is not. Admission to events is included, but lunch enroute is not.
6. Chaperones are expected to take responsibility for youth 24/7, to participate in all activities, and to interact with the youth. They are expected to conduct themselves as Jesus would and to encourage the youth to do the same. Chaperones are an example to the youth in every way: dress, speech, and actions should reflect a positive example.

### **2.14. Deleted**

### **2.15. Outreach Assistance (Good Samaritan Fund)**

1. The Good Samaritan Fund provides assistance to needy persons within our community. The Administrative Assistant shall be the primary staff person overseeing and managing the fund in concert with guidance from the Mission, Outreach, and Evangelism Committee and the Session.

### **2.16. Fund Raising Involving Sales**

1. It is the Session's conviction that the basic budget of our church should be supported by the voluntary, sacrificial gifts of the congregation. However, we realize that deserving causes and worthwhile programs outside the budget occasionally come to our attention through requests

for fund raising projects. Additionally, church members belong to a variety of organizations that conduct sales activities to support their community service programs and we recognize that many of these sales are the only opportunity that members of the congregation have to purchase items from favored service groups, community programs, and individuals.

2. The Session shall consider approving fundraising events that fall within the following categories:
  - a. Fundraising involving sales conducted by church groups for the purpose of church related or service projects. An example is the Youth Group selling “Super Bowl Subs” to offset the costs of a ski trip.
  - b. Fundraising, not involving sales, conducted by church groups directly supporting church related or service projects. Examples include the monthly Presbyterian Men’s dinners where a nominal fee is charged in order to raise funds for Presbyterian Men’s activities, youth car washes, or other youth service activities where donations may be received.
  - c. Fundraising conducted by non-church groups that use the church’s facilities during the week, where the fundraising is part of an activity conducted by the group and not involving soliciting or ticket sales to the congregation or community at large (the latter is strictly prohibited). An example is the periodic “bunco nights” conducted in the fellowship hall by the Rainbow Circle of the Children’s Hospital of the King’s Daughters (Non-church groups are defined as those not affiliated or sponsored by Providence Presbyterian Church. The Providence Presbyterian Youth Groups, Boy Scout Troop 12, the Men of the Church, and the Women of the Church are examples of affiliated or sponsored groups).
  - d. Fundraising conducted by non-church groups involving sales. An example is sales conducted by the church-sponsored Boy Scout troop.
  - e. Fundraising conducted by members (or children of members) of the church involving sales on an individual-to-individual basis. Examples include Girl Scout Cookie sales or candy sales supporting community youth recreation programs.
3. The following guidelines will apply to all fundraising events at the church:
  - a. Groups and individuals desiring to hold a fundraising project involving sales shall submit their request to the Session (through one of its committees) for its approval at a monthly stated Session meeting.
  - b. Any fundraising efforts involving sales shall be confined to the educational portion of the building. Fundraising efforts, other than capital projects being conducted by the church, shall not be conducted in the sanctuary.
  - c. An organization desiring to conduct fundraising through sales must set up a desk or table in the foyer (outside the fellowship hall) from which to sell. All persons engaged in selling will remain behind this desk/table. Sellers will make no verbal solicitation. Members of the congregation shall not be approached nor pressured to purchase items being sold. Signs advertising the items being sold, including prices, may be posted. An adult, who is both a member of the congregation and a representative of the selling group, will directly supervise these activities.
4. Non-church group’s fundraising events shall not be advertised to the local community nor open to the general public. Programs being performed in the church involving general ticket sales



to the public are prohibited. This does not apply to admission tickets sold by Christian-oriented performing groups when the ticket sales are only to defray the cost of the performance or expenses of the group.

## **2.17. Committee Procedure Manuals**

1. Each committee chairperson shall maintain a committee “procedures” manual. The purpose of this manual is to capture committee specific information that will be useful to future committee chairpersons in consistently executing the responsibilities of the committee. As a minimum each manual shall contain a description of the processes or procedures that have been established to guide the committee in carrying out its responsibilities, forms that are needed to execute committee responsibilities, manuals that are necessary for certain specific committee responsibilities, and a calendar of recurring actions or responsibilities of the committee. As changes are made, copies shall be provided to the Clerk and the Administrative Assistant. Committee chairs may include any other material in their manual that they deem appropriate.

## **3.0 Personnel Policies**

### **3.1. Personnel Subcommittee**

1. The Administration Committee shall establish a Personnel Subcommittee. The Personnel Subcommittee shall maintain a Personnel Manual containing all policies related to personnel. At a minimum the Personnel Manual shall address the following:
  - a. Position descriptions for paid employees.
  - b. Benefits.
  - c. Office hours and holidays.
  - d. Sick leave.
  - e. Deleted.
  - f. Vacation.
  - g. Deleted.
  - h. Termination of employment.
  - i. Performance evaluations.
2. The Session shall approve all changes to the Personnel Manual.

### **3.2. Sexual Misconduct**

1. The policy of Providence Presbyterian Church is to protect the physical and emotional integrity of all persons who participate in this community of faith. It is incumbent on those in positions of leadership, paid and volunteer, to maintain the highest ethical standards in all their relationships with those under their charge or influence. Sexual misconduct is never permissible or acceptable, and is to be dealt with in a forthright and frank manner.
2. The Session has adopted and implemented the Sexual Misconduct policy of the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia. “Trusted leaders” include the Pastor, Commissioned Ruling Elder, and active

ruling elders. All “trusted leaders” will adhere to and abide by PEVA’s Sexual Misconduct Policy. A copy of PEVA’s policy is available in the church office and online in the Administration documents folder at <http://www.pcusa-peva.org/ofd>. All “trusted leaders” shall review this policy prior to assuming a position as a “trusted leader” and acknowledge this review by completing an acknowledgement form. Additionally, in September of each year, “trusted leaders” shall recertify that they have read, reviewed, and understand PEVA’s policy on Sexual Misconduct.

### **3.3. Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy**

1. The Session has adopted the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia policy on protection of children, youth, and vulnerable adults. All paid employees and volunteers who work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults will adhere to and abide by PEVA’s Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy. A copy of the policy is available in the church office and online in the Administration documents folder at <http://www.pcusa-peva.org/ofd>. Prior to working with children, youth, or vulnerable adults employees and volunteers must acknowledge that they have read the PEVA policy. The acknowledgement must be renewed annually.
2. All church staff; and volunteers who work with children and youth must adhere to the following guidelines regarding their work.
  - a. Church staff and volunteers must not touch, interact with, or otherwise communicate with children/youth/vulnerable adults in any way that is intended to be sexually stimulating. Common expressions of affection (hugs), affirmation (pats on the back), support (prayers), or physical caretaking (changing diapers, toileting, etc.) are appropriate in this community of caring Christians. Care must be taken, however, that expressions of affection and affirmation are not excessive or imposed upon a child/youth/vulnerable adults. Care must also be taken that adults do not act in a sexually stimulating way in front of children/youth/vulnerable adults during any church activity.
  - b. Any worker who observes questionable or inappropriate behavior affecting children/youth/vulnerable adults must report it as soon as possible to the supervisor or person in charge. This supervisor or person in charge must notify the chair of the Christian Life committee and the Pastor.
  - c. Adults are encouraged to be sensitive to the potential for abuse and to appearances of abuse. They must not hesitate to caution others if they observe activities that are, or might appear to be, inappropriate.
  - d. Procedures must be followed before and after events until all children/youth/vulnerable adults are in the custody of parents or guardians.
  - e. Individuals, other than parents, are not permitted to pick up or drop off children/youth/vulnerable adults, unless specifically authorized by a parent.
  - f. Whenever possible, activities are to be conducted in an open area, accessible to public view.
  - g. Two adults (over age 18 and at least 4 years older than the oldest youth being supervised) who have successfully completed a background check must be present during all children/youth/vulnerable adult activities.
  - h. Frequent one-on-one personal contact by an adult with a child or youth away from the church is to be avoided. If such a relationship is contemplated, the adult first should consult with the Pastor.

- Adults shall not share their personal relationship problems with a child/youth.
3. All activities should begin and end at the church or at an agreed-upon place.
  4. A criminal record search shall be conducted on child/youth/vulnerable adult volunteers. Results of background checks shall be filed in a secure location and maintained by the Pastor.
  5. The Christian Life Committee shall prepare and maintain forms appropriate for these purposes. Changes to these forms do not require Session approval.

#### **4.0 Responsibilities of the Church Committees**

##### **4.1 Administration Committee**

The Administration Committee shall plan and implement, with Session approval, programs designed to challenge every member of the church family in the stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. It shall also be responsible for matters pertaining to personnel and building use requests. Specific responsibilities include:

1. Stewardship/Finance
  - a. Coordinate the planning, preparation, and execution of an ongoing program of year-round stewardship education to encourage greater congregational giving of time, talent, and treasure.
  - b. Provide a continuous program of stewardship education for adults, youth and children, teaching the commitment of life and possessions and encouraging proportionate giving on a regular, systematic basis.
  - c. Ensure that all “new” members are given a financial program of the church and challenged to respond with a pledge. Ensure that new members are given the opportunity to make a commitment of their time, talent, and treasure.
  - d. Recommend to the Session a treasurer and financial secretary and supervise their work. Ensure the church’s insurance policy provides adequate bonding.
  - e. Audit the records of the treasurer of each church group that holds funds for group activities.
  - f. Encourage and supervise the establishment of memorials.
  - g. Submit an annual budget recommendation to the Session no later than the December stated meeting. Oversee the process through which committees submit their annual budget requests.
2. Evaluate and act on Endowment Sub-Committee disbursement requests and recommendations submitted to the Administration Committee and make the proper submission to the Session.
3. Maintain the articles establishing the endowment fund, the endowment sub-committee, and the church investment policy statement.

##### **4.2 Christian Life**

The Christian Life committee shall plan and implement, with Session approval, programs that are designed to provide an inclusive nurturing environment whereby all participants are enabled to

discover the joy and riches of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The standard of excellence applicable to all curriculum, programs, and events shall be that of Scripture and Reformed Theology. Specific responsibilities include:

1. Provide for the study of the Christian faith for all groups of the congregation through diverse discipleship opportunities. In collaboration with the Session, recruit, train, and supervise leaders and teachers. Review, select, and oversee the use of approved curriculum.
2. Provide a church library with resources to enhance spiritual growth for all ages of the church family.
3. Acquire and maintain educational aids and equipment to enhance discipleship opportunities.
4. Provide a ministry to youth that leads them to accept Christ as Lord and Savior, to develop a personal relationship with Him, and to learn to care and support each other in their Christian walk of faith.
5. Provide a devotional program.
6. Establish guidelines for participation in youth activities. This will include, at a minimum:
  - a. Provision of event specific participate forms that establish parental permission to participate and include all planning information related to the trip including the itinerary, type of transportation, names of drivers, contact information, and arrangements for pick-up following the event.
  - b. Information regarding deposits and refunds for youth activities away from the church.

#### **4.3. Church Property**

The Church Property committee shall plan and implement, with Session approval, programs and procedures designed to provide the most effective use of the church property in the total mission of the church. Specific responsibilities include:

1. Maintain the grounds, building, equipment and furnishings of the church.
2. Manage a maintenance schedule for the building and specified equipment.
3. Assist in the disposal of obsolete and/or non-repairable equipment.
4. Work with paid staff, volunteers, and contractors for the upkeep and maintenance of the church property and equipment.
5. Assist in decisions regarding the use of non-designated personal gifts.
6. Ensure the church is ready for use during Sunday school, worship, and church-sanctioned events.

7. Ensure cleanliness of the kitchen.
8. Assist in the management of building and equipment keys including the distribution to authorized persons.

#### **4.4. Congregational Care**

The Congregational Care committee shall plan and implement, with Session approval, programs and activities that provide for the “Pastoral care” of the congregation and involve every willing member of the church family in an active role in the mission of the church. Some of its specific responsibilities include:

1. Establish and maintain a program of Care Teams and Care Team leaders to provide a pastoral connection and conduit for bringing prayers and concerns to the Pastor and to assimilate new members into the life of the church
2. Show care and concern to the congregation in times of special need through:
3. Organize the church pictorial directory every 2 to 3 years.
4. Serve as liaison to Presbyterian Women, Presbyterian Men, Gad-Abouts, and other groups formed out of special interest or need in the church family.
5. Conduct an annual review of the Church Roll and report recommended changes to the Session. Review the roll of inactive members and encourage them to renew active participation in the life of the church.
6. Remove the flowers from the sanctuary following the worship service and oversee distribution to members who are shut-in, hospitalized, or in a similar situation. When new babies are born to members of the congregation, oversee delivery of the rosebud to the parents.

#### **4.5. Fellowship**

The Fellowship Committee shall plan and implement, with Session approval, programs and activities that meet the social and fellowship needs of the congregation. Specific responsibilities include:

1. Organize social and recreational activities for the purpose of congregational fellowship.
2. Periodically plan and coordinate congregational church dinners.
3. Assist committees with suppers or refreshments before or after special programs.
4. Provide refreshments for fellowship time following Sunday morning worship.
5. Organize and supervise set-up and clean up before and after fellowship activities.

6. Be responsible for the purchase and storage of supplies.
7. Monitor the use and cleanliness of the kitchen refrigerator and freezer.

#### **4.6. Mission, Outreach, and Evangelism**

The Mission, Outreach, and Evangelism Committee shall plan and implement, with Session approval, programs designed to enable the congregation and individuals to be Christ's servants in the world, proclaim the Gospel and exercise justice, compassion, and concern, and to provide opportunities for every member of the congregation to respond effectively to the command of Christ to "go and make disciples." Specific responsibilities include:

1. Motivate members of the congregation to assume individual and corporate responsibility for witness to Christ through the International Mission of the church.
2. Serve as liaison between our congregation and missionaries we support.
3. Promote approved benevolent causes of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Publicize and plan programs around/regarding the One Great Hour of Sharing, Joy Fund, Peacemaking, Pentecost offerings, and others as may be approved by the Presbyterian Church (USA). Publicize and update Session-approved church programs.
4. Offer opportunities for the congregation to minister to the needs of the world through community action and social concern, cooperating not only through the outreach of our denomination, but with other organizations, both local and national, in meeting the needs of persons, groups and ministries.
5. Mobilize the members of the congregation to seek out, show a real interest in, and witness to individuals who have not made a commitment to Christ or do not have a church home in this community.
6. Enlist, train and keep a list of persons who will assist in the committee's work of visitation and evangelism.
7. Establish means to increase congregational awareness of the need for evangelism.
8. Enlist, train, and supervise persons to be greeters at all regular and special services so that all who attend worship may receive a warm welcome and cordial greeting at the opening and conclusion of worship.
9. Publicize and maintain the food closet in partnership with The Catholic Church of St. Mark's ministering to the hungry in our community.

#### **4.7. Worship**

The Worship Committee shall plan and implement, with Session approval, opportunities designed to satisfy the worship needs of every segment of the congregation. Specific responsibilities include:

1. Assist the Pastor and the Session in interpreting to the members of the congregation the meaning and nature of worship, developing a sense of reverence in worship, and encouraging attendance at all worship services.
2. Work with the minister in planning and carrying out the regular and special services of worship to bring glory to God.
3. Make provisions for the celebration of the sacraments including the training of Elders to serve communion and assist in baptisms, custodial care of the communion service and baptismal font, and the preparation and clean-up of communion elements.
4. Coordinate the assignment of Elders to assist the minister in serving communion to the sick and shut-ins of the congregation when requested.
5. Encourage parents to present their children in baptism.
6. Work closely with the Director of Music and Organist, supporting and assisting them in their service. Assist the Pastor, as requested, in the annual evaluation of the Director of Music.
7. Assist the minister in providing the proper setting for the conduct of public worship. Provide for appropriate flowers and decoration, bulletins, and worship supplies.
8. Enlist, train, and supervise persons to be ushers at all regular and special services.
9. Arrange for pulpit supply and other special speakers.