

WHO DOES WHAT?

**A Manual of Operations for
Those in Ordered Ministries,
Boards, and Committees in
The Presbyterian Church in Burlington, MA**

Revised June 2020

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Introduction

This manual describes the responsibilities of the various ordered ministries of our congregation, as well as the purpose, membership, and responsibilities of our boards and committees. The information comes from the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [PCUSA] and from the structure of the Presbyterian Church in Burlington [BPC].

The basic form of ministry is the ministry of the whole people of God, from whose midst some are called to ordered ministries, to fulfill particular functions. Members and those in ordered ministries serve together under the mandate of Christ. The Church's ordered ministries described in the New Testament and maintained by the PCUSA (G2.0102) are deacons and presbyters (ministers of the Word and Sacraments, and ruling elders). Although ordination to any of these ordered ministries is lifelong, ruling elders and deacons are elected to specific terms of active service. Along with the pastor, active ruling elders make up the church's governing body, the session, while active deacons make up the board of deacons.

The *Book of Order* emphasizes that "The existence of these ordered ministries in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church" (G2.0102). In keeping with our Reformed tradition, we believe ALL members play a vital role in the life of our congregation and we encourage all members to volunteer for a variety of positions.

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RULING ELDER

Ruling elder is one of the ordered ministries of the PCUSA. This section begins with the description of the ministry found in the *Book of Order*, and then outlines expectations for ruling elders serving on session at the Presbyterian Church in Burlington.

From the Book of Order

- G-2.0301
Ruling Elder
Defined
- 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.
- Elders are chosen by the people. Together with ministers of the Word and Sacrament, they 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. They shall serve faithfully as members of the session. (G-3.0201) When elected commissioners to higher councils, ruling elders participate and vote with the same authority as ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and they are eligible for any office.
- G-2.0104
Gifts and
Qualifications
- In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world.
- W-2.0303:
Ruling Elders
(Worship)
- Ruling elders are called to nurture the common life of the people of God through their gifts of discernment and governance. They should also cultivate an ability to teach the Word when called upon to do so. When appropriately prepared and commissioned by the presbytery, ruling elders may proclaim the Word and administer the Sacraments in a particular congregation (G-2.1001).
- W-3.0414:
Communion
- Ordinarily ruling elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word and Sacraments serve the bread and cup; the session may authorize other church members to do so.

G-3.0201
Responsibilities
of Session

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

a. provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard.

This responsibility shall include providing a place where the congregation may regularly gather for worship, education, and spiritual nurture; providing for regular preaching of the Word by a teaching elder or other person prepared and approved for the work; planning and leading regular efforts to reach into the community and the world with the message of salvation and the invitation to enter into committed discipleship; planning and leading ministries of social healing and reconciliation in the community in accordance with the prophetic witness of Jesus Christ; and initiating and responding to ecumenical efforts that bear witness to the love and grace of God.

b. provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received. This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord's Supper at least quarterly and the administration of Baptism as appropriate, in accordance with the principles of the Directory for Worship; and exercising pastoral care among the congregation in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the congregation may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.

c. nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ. 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 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.

G-4.0302
Mandatory
Reporting

Any member of the PCUSA engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by the PCUSA or its congregations, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse.

ELECTION AND TERMS

Ruling elders are nominated by the church nominating committee and elected by the congregation at its annual meeting in January. Terms are for three years, with eligibility for election to two consecutive terms. If an elder is needed to fill an unexpired term, the nominating committee will present a nominee at a called meeting of the congregation, and election will be for the duration of the unexpired term.

EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ACTIVE RULING ELDERS AT THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN BURLINGTON

A full description of the responsibilities of a Presbyterian session may be found in the *Book of Order*, G-3.0201. At the Presbyterian Church in Burlington, serving on session as an active ruling elder means:

- Attending faithfully all stated and called session meetings, retreats, planning meetings, and other activities that may be scheduled.
- Holding one or more assignments as a member of session:
 - Clerk (elected by session);
 - Chair of a session committee (see following section);
 - Liaison to deacons or trustees;
 - Chairing or serving on other committees, either ad hoc or established.
- Serving as "elder of the month" at least once each calendar year: leading devotions at session meeting, hosting coffee hour the first Sunday of the assigned month, attending (if scheduled) that month's Presbytery meeting, and reporting on the meeting to session.
- Participating in sacraments as called: serving communion during Sunday worship and occasionally (with the pastor) to the home-bound or hospitalized; assisting in the sacrament of baptism.
- Having a concern for the whole life of the congregation and its mission in the world, including special care for the celebrations, concerns, and physical and spiritual nurture of members and friends of BPC.

COMMITTEES OF SESSION

In order to keep ongoing business flowing smoothly, the Presbyterian Church in Burlington has several standing committees. Each of them is normally chaired by an active ruling elder, although exceptions may be made for unusual circumstances. This section begins with a general description of the responsibilities of chairs and members of standing committees, and then presents the specific responsibilities of each committee.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND STRUCTURE

Standing committees are composed of a chair (usually an active ruling elder) and as many other members as needed to conduct the committee's business effectively. Some committees include a member of the board of deacons or other specified body. Each committee must appoint a member to record and distribute minutes of meetings and may appoint a vice-chair. All members serve terms of one full year and may serve additional terms.

Committee members are expected to faithfully attend all scheduled committee meetings, to take on tasks necessary for the committee's operation, and to participate in activities sponsored by the committee.

The committee chair has the following additional responsibilities.

- Annual activities:
 - Determining goals and actions for the year;
 - Requesting an operating budget for the committee and monitoring expenses;
 - Developing the committee's annual report to be included in the annual report to the congregation.
- Monthly activities:
 - Determining the agenda for committee meetings;
 - Conducting meetings in an efficient and effective manner, generally following Roberts Rules of Order;
 - Seeing that minutes are recorded and distributed to committee members and session as required.
- Ongoing activities:
 - Recruiting committee members, using the annual time and talent sheets and informal suggestions;
 - Assigning both general and specific tasks to individual committee members;
 - Providing support and encouragement to committee members and other volunteers in completing tasks.

The next pages describe responsibilities of the standing committees of session. Where applicable, the specific job descriptions are available from the committee chair.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

To plan, implement, and evaluate Christian education opportunities for children, youth, and adults in order to increase church members' understanding of scripture, theology, and life as God's faithful people.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The committee's main focus is the Sunday morning Christian education program for all ages, including recruiting and training teachers, collecting registration forms for all children and youth participating in Sunday morning classes, publicizing programs, providing resource materials, and insuring that all requirements of the Safe Child Program (SCP) are met. In addition, the committee organizes several activities and events for adults and youth, possibly including but not limited to:

- Rally Day in September to kick off the new program year
- Confirmation classes for youth (coordinate with the pastor)
- Communion workshop for elementary school children (coordinated with the pastor)
- Mission opportunities for children and youth
- Giving of Bibles to older elementary school children
- Teacher recognition during worship at the end of each program year
- Activities for young children during the worship service in the summer months (Summer Celebration)
- Occasionally coordinate child care for a congregational event (such as the annual meeting)

The committee recruits and supports the following specific positions.

- *Sunday school teachers for children and youth.* Teachers of children generally work in teams to plan and teach lessons, prepare classroom areas, and create a positive environment for learning. The teachers communicate information about the Children's Code of Conduct.
- *Nursery coordinator.* Schedules nursery volunteers for Sunday mornings.
- *Summer Celebration Leaders.* These volunteers provide activities for pre-school and early elementary age children during worship service in the summer months.
- *Safe Child Program Screening Committee.* Coordinates Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks, completes screening of new teachers, and plans Safe Child training as needed.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

To develop budgets for annual operating needs and, as needed, budgets and plans for funding special projects.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The committee's main focus is the annual operating budget. Using budget requests from all committees of session, trustees, deacons, and other groups within the congregation, the finance committee develops an initial budget and presents it to session for adoption. If modifications to the budget are needed, the committee revises income and/or expense figures. The committee may also present the budget to the congregation as requested.

When special projects, maintenance needs, or other major expenses arise, the committee develops budgets and plans for funding these needs and presents this information to the session. The committee may also present information to the congregation as requested.

Present highlights of treasurer's monthly report to session, with copies of summary pages.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

To strengthen connections among current church members, encourage potential members, and maintain accurate membership rolls.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Particular areas of responsibility include:

- Co-leading, with the pastor, at least one New Member's group to provide a foundation for those considering membership or wishing to deepen their understanding of the Presbyterian Church in Burlington and the PCUSA;
- Developing and implementing strategies to involve members in the life of the congregation;
- Recording information provided by visitors and contacting them;
- Publicizing church activities to the local community through newspaper articles, brochures, and other means;
- Monitoring church membership rolls and presenting requests for changes to session for action;
- Recording church attendance using visual counts and using this information to contact members who have been absent;
- Planning and implementing special fellowship events such as fall brunch, church picnic, and Easter breakfast;
- Coordinating weekly coffee hour, including providing detailed instructions to hosts;
- Collaborating with the Webmaster to maintain the church website;
- Recruiting greeters for Sunday mornings.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

To develop and present a slate of candidates for open positions as elder, deacon, trustee, and the next year's nominating committee, proceeding in accordance with the *Book of Order*, G-2.0401. It is also the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to annually present a candidate for Treasurer.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The committee is comprised of at least six members in addition to the pastor, who is a member of this committee, ex officio and without vote. The committee is convened and ordinarily chaired by a member of session. Additional members are specified: one each from the board of deacons and from the board of trustees, and at least three additional members to be elected from among the active members of the congregation. Members of the committee serve for a term of one year. No member of the committee, other than the pastor, may serve on the committee for more than three consecutive years. The term of a committee commences immediately upon election and continues until the next committee is elected.

The committee meets to identify openings on each board, develop a list of candidates based on input from the congregation and committee members, and prioritize those suggested. Care shall be taken to make the nominations as representative as possible of men and women, young and old, and racial ethnic members of the congregation. Individual committee members contact candidates to determine their willingness to serve and report back to the committee. The proposed slate is presented at the annual congregational meeting for election according to the *Book of Order*. When a member of one of the boards is unable to complete her/his elected term, the nominating committee presents a nominee to fill the position at a called congregational meeting.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

To provide annual performance reviews and goal-setting for church staff, review salaries and recommend adjustments, and monitor compliance with personnel policies of the state and federal governments, as well as the PCUSA. The committee also deals with any personnel problems and conducts job searches as necessary for non-pastoral staff.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Personnel Committee consists of a chair, who is a member of session; another active elder, an active deacon, and at least one other person representing the congregation at large. The committee generally meets at least twice yearly, although additional meetings may be called for staff evaluations or other issues which may arise during the year. In addition to the general responsibilities of committee members and chairs, the Personnel Committee is responsible for the following activities.

- Annually:
 - Evaluating staff and facilitating goal-setting;
 - Reviewing compensation for all staff, including the pastor, and recommending adjustments;
 - Submitting information for church budget.
- As needed:
 - Updating job descriptions
 - Revising evaluation processes and instruments;
 - Convening meetings to review concerns from or about staff;
 - Serving as liaison to Presbytery committees or task forces;
 - Initiating and coordinating job searches for non-pastoral staff positions;
 - Conducting Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks on paid staff.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

To make the congregation aware of stewardship opportunities and encourage involvement by church members.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The committee has the following specific responsibilities.

- Distributing the time and talent sheets, and pledge cards;
- Encouraging members to pledge and give to the annual budget;
- Making available information on special offerings in the PCUSA and encouraging members to participate;
- Presenting minutes for mission related to stewardship opportunities.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

To coordinate worship experiences at BPC, both weekly and special services, and recommend changes as appropriate. To support this purpose, the pastor and organist/music director are standing members of the committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The committee coordinates all worship needs, including the following.

Worship assistants: Provide sign-up sheets and recruit lay members as assistants, as well as maintaining records of which members have served as worship assistants and when they served. The pastor provides materials to the worship assistant in advance of the service.

Guest preachers: Working with the pastor, arrange for guest preachers as needed, for instance during the pastor's vacation.

Ushers: Coordinate logistics for church services, including posting hymn numbers, lighting candles, assigning members to collect offering, counting those attending the service and recording the total, and straightening the sanctuary after the service.

Communion servers: Recruit elders and deacons to serve communion on the first Sunday each month and at special services; prepare and post diagram outlining movement and serving direction for each person; assist servers as they enter the sanctuary; maintain a list of servers and the dates they served to assure that elders and deacons have regular opportunities to serve.

Music: Working with the organist/music director, arrange any substitute or special musicians, including those needed during summer services.

CLERK OF SESSION

The clerk of session is elected annually by session from among its members and serves as lay leader of the congregation and recording secretary of the session.

Specific duties include the following:

- Preparing minutes of all meetings of session and submitting them for session approval at the next stated meeting;
- Preparing minutes of all congregational meetings and submitting them for approval as required by the *Book of Order*;
- Seeing that permanent copies of the approved minutes are entered in the church's permanent record book (maintained by the church secretary) and that the permanent record book is submitted annually for Presbytery review;
- Seeing that records are maintained of baptisms, weddings, deaths, membership, and ordination, installation, and active service of elders and deacons;
- Maintaining membership lists of church committees;
- Maintaining the list of *elder of the month* assignments;
- Seeing that elder-commissioners to presbytery receive copies of the minutes of the previous presbytery meeting and the docket for the current meeting;
- Handling all correspondence to or from the session and preparing any articles relating to the session for the church newsletter;
- Seeing that the church's annual report is prepared at the end of each year for distribution the Sunday prior to the annual meeting of the congregation;
- Completing the annual statistical report and submitting it to presbytery as required;
- Assisting the pastor during worship services when new members are welcomed into the church and deacons or ruling elders are ordained/installed.
- Communicate to the Treasurer any decisions made by Session with regard to finances and expenditures
- Make sure that church online resources are kept up-to-date, such as access to heads of committees and e-mail mailing lists

SESSION LIAISONS

Session members serve as liaisons to other boards within the church in order to provide a channel for communication.

LIAISON WITH TRUSTEES

With the trustees, the liaison insures that finance and property are managed in a way that is consistent with the mission of the congregation. Although the liaison is not a voting member of the Board of Trustees, he/she should be accorded the opportunity to participate in discussions and may serve as a non-trustee member of trustee committees if appropriate. The liaison has the following responsibilities:

- Attend meetings of the trustees;
- Interpret session policy regarding stewardship of the church's property and finances;
- Advise the trustees regarding items which require session approval and present such recommendations to the session, with a trustee as appropriate;
- Present highlights of trustees meetings at session meetings, providing copies of materials as appropriate;

LIAISON WITH DEACONS

The liaison relays appropriate information from session to the deacons and reports to session appropriate information or requests for actions. He/she attends regular meetings of the deacons and participates in discussions as appropriate. The pastor ordinarily attends and may be designated by session as liaison.

DEACONS

One of the ordered ministries of the PCUSA is that of deacon. This section begins with the description of the ministry of deacons from the *Book of Order*, and then outlines expectations for actively serving deacons at Burlington Presbyterian.

FROM THE BOOK OF ORDER,

- G-2.0201 Deacon Defined 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.
- G-2.0104 Gifts and Qualifications In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world.
- G-4.0302 Mandatory Reporting Any member of the PCUSA engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by the PCUSA or its congregations, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse.
- G-2.0202 Under Authority of the Session Deacons may be individually commissioned or organized as a board of deacons. In either case, their ministry is under the supervision and authority of the session. Deacons may also be given special assignments in the congregation, such as caring for members in need, handling educational tasks, cultivating liberality in giving, collecting and disbursing monies to specific persons or causes, or overseeing the buildings and property of the congregation. Deacons shall assume other duties as may be delegated to them by the session, including assisting with the Lord's Supper. (W-3.0414). A congregation by a majority vote may choose not to utilize the ordered ministry of deacons. If the congregation has neither a board of deacons nor individually commissioned deacons, the function of this ordered ministry shall be the responsibility of the ruling elders and the session.

W-2.0302:
Deacons
(Worship)

Deacons are called to lead the congregation in compassion, witness, and service, representing the ministry of the church in the world and the presence of the world in the church. While deacons have no particular responsibilities for the ordering of worship, the session should ensure that deacons (where present) have regular opportunities to lead in worship, and that their ministries of compassion, witness, and service are reflected in the public services of the church.

W-3.0414:
Communion

Ordinarily ruling elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word and Sacraments serve the bread and cup; the session may authorize other church members to do so.

ELECTION AND TERMS

Deacons are nominated by the church nominating committee and elected by the congregation at its annual meeting in January. Terms are for three years, with eligibility for election to two consecutive terms. If a deacon is needed to fill an unexpired term, the nominating committee will present a nominee at a called meeting of the congregation, and election will be for the duration of the unexpired term.

EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ACTIVE DEACONS AT BURLINGTON PRESBYTERIAN

At the Presbyterian Church in Burlington, serving as an active deacon means:

- Attending faithfully all regular meetings of the board;
- Displaying a special concern for the particular needs, both physical and spiritual, of the members and friends of BPC and those in surrounding communities;
- Preparing and carrying out the prayer chain after activation by pastor and deacon moderator;
- Occasional responsibility for preparing and (along with elders) serving communion;
- Occasional responsibility for preparing and serving coffee hour on the third Sunday of the month.
- Taking part in visits to the hospitalized and homebound;
- Holding one or more assignments as a member of the Board of Deacons:
 - Current deacon committees (see description of duties below):
 - Cards
 - Flowers
 - Transportation
 - People Helping People
 - Crossroads Reporter
 - Volunteering to serve as a representative to a session committee, which involves attending regular meetings and working as an active member to carry out the work of the committee.

Monthly responsibility

- Christian Education
- Worship
- Hospitality

Occasional responsibility

Stewardship

Personnel

Nominating

- Representative to trustees attends monthly trustees meetings and reports back to deacons about relevant topics.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT STRUCTURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The board of deacons has developed the following descriptions of responsibilities and procedures.

MODERATOR

Elected by active Board of Deacons on a yearly basis in February, the moderator:

- Provides the agenda for and facilitates the monthly meetings;
- Assigns deacons to communion preparation, coffee hour, and meeting devotions for each month;
- Informs the session of special concerns or requests from the board of deacons;
- Acts as a stand-in for the pastor to respond to care calls when the pastor is on vacation or away, contacting a minister who is on call as needed;
- With the pastor determines when to activate the prayer chain; the moderator will make the necessary communication to the deacons to start the chain;
- With the pastor disperses funds in the church Emergency Fund, maintaining confidentiality;
- Updates the prayer chain list and determines how to fill in for deacons who may not be available to make calls at a particular time;
- Receives from the church treasurer monthly reports of balances in deacon funds and communicates these to the board of deacons;
- Recommends expenditures from deacon expenses listed in the annual budget and from special offerings (including holiday and Maundy Thursday offerings), or contributions for kitchen supplies, or flowers.

VICE MODERATOR AND DEACON COORDINATOR

Elected by active Board of Deacons on a yearly basis in February, the vice-moderator:

- Coordinates concerns and responsibilities with the moderator;
- Fills in when the moderator is unavailable;

- Assists in finding members of the congregation to supply meals and needs for the physical care of members in need (requests to the deacon coordinator can come from the Moderator, the person in need, the pastor, or other church members).

SECRETARY

Elected by active Board of Deacons on a yearly basis in February, the secretary:

- Takes minutes at the monthly meetings and publishes them to members prior to the next meeting;
- Writes letters to accompany funds that are sent to missions outside the church;
- Handles any other correspondence as required.

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES FOR DEACONS' COMMITTEES:

CARDS. Review prayer concerns in weekly bulletin and send cards as appropriate. Send cards for all special occasions (i.e. graduation, weddings, and births), illness, and deaths in family. Also send Christmas and birthday cards to shut-ins and special friends. Other requests may be made.

FLOWERS. Complete the following scheduled duties.

Post a sign-up list for members of the congregation to provide flowers for the communion table.

As needed: Provide a rose on the communion table for births within the church family.

At Easter and Christmas: Determine the types of flowers to be sold and the price for flowers or dedications without flowers; make announcements to the congregation regarding the dedications and post a notice in the Crossroads; make up the list of names for dedication; collect the money and turn it over to the church treasurer; purchase and pick up the flowers; place them in the sanctuary; remove them after the holiday; and arrange for deliveries to shut-in.

For Advent and Christmas: Coordinate deacons and church members to decorate the sanctuary.

TRANSPORTATION. Give a ride or find rides for parishioners who need transportation to church and church activities.

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE (PHP). Attending the monthly meeting and report back to the deacons the highlights of the meeting. From time to time, make announcements to the congregation on behalf of PHP and take in-kind donations to the PHP deposit points. Coordinate delivering food from the Thanksgiving Harvest of Offering to the PHP food pantry, recruit volunteers for the Wish Tree at the Burlington Mall and coordinate collection of pajamas and sweatshirts.

CROSSROADS REPORTER. Write an article for the monthly *Crossroads* informing the congregation of special events which are sponsored by the deacons, acknowledging volunteers.

OTHER SERVICE AS NEED ARISES:

- Coordinate special receptions or luncheons on behalf of the congregation, for example in the case of a funeral or memorial service.
- Sponsor Christian enrichment and fellowship programs such as speakers on organ donation, hospice, or living wills, host a blood drive, or sponsor a program on mission giving.
- Sponsor annual gift offerings and recommend to Session the recipients of the proceeds. Offerings include Maundy Thursday, Blanket and Tools for Church World Service, and the Holiday Offering (December).

TRUSTEES

This section presents the description of the office of trustee found in the *Book of Order* and then outlines responsibilities at the Presbyterian Church in Burlington that have been determined by our congregation.

From the Book of Order

G-4.0101 Where permitted by civil law, each congregation shall cause a
Incorporation corporation to be formed and maintained. If incorporation is not
and Power permitted, individual trustees shall be elected by the congregation. Any
such individual trustees shall be elected from the congregation's
members in the same manner as those elected to the ordered
ministries of deacon and ruling elder. Terms of service shall be
governed by the provisions of G-2.0404.

The corporation so formed, or the individual trustees, shall have the following powers: to receive, hold, encumber, manage, and transfer property, real or personal, for the congregation, provided that in buying, selling, and mortgaging real property, the trustees shall act only after the approval of the congregation, granted in a duly constituted meeting; to accept and execute deeds of title to such property; to hold and defend title to such property; to manage any permanent special funds for the furtherance of the purposes of the congregation, all subject to the authority of the session and under the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The powers and duties of the trustees shall not infringe upon the powers and duties of the session or the board of deacons.

ELECTION AND TERMS

Trustees are nominated by the church nominating committee and elected by the congregation at its annual meeting in January. Terms are for three years, with eligibility for election to two consecutive terms. If a trustee is needed to fill an unexpired term, the nominating committee will present a nominee at a called meeting of the congregation, and election will be for the duration of the unexpired term.

EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TRUSTEES AT BURLINGTON PRESBYTERIAN

Burlington Presbyterian Church elects trustees of the congregation's corporate entity. These members have specific responsibility for maintaining the church property and related funds. Their responsibilities must be coordinated with the session and the congregation as provided in the *Book of Order and the BPC By-Laws*.

Members of the board of trustees are expected to:

- Attend faithfully the regular board meetings and additional meetings that may be called;
- Participate in events sponsored by the trustees, such as work days.

The board of trustees appoints a chair, vice-chair, and secretary. Each is elected by the board annually and serves for one year. Members may be elected to additional terms.

- The *chair* facilitates board meetings, providing the agenda and devotions; publicizes activities such as work days; assigns tasks to members of the board as needed; serves as president of the corporation; and presides at corporation meetings.
- The *vice-chair* supports the chair, coordinating responsibilities and filling in when the chair is unavailable.
- The *secretary* takes minutes of each meeting and distributes them.
- The property maintenance functions of the trustees may be coordinated by one or more trustee(s) acting as *buildings and grounds chair(s)*.

TREASURER

PURPOSE

To maintain records of all church financial information, deposit and disburse funds, provide financial reports to session and other bodies as requested, report to state and federal agencies, help prepare the annual budget and act as custodian of valuable papers.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The treasurer is elected annually by the session and may serve an unlimited number of terms. The treasurer is responsible for the following duties:

- Counting and depositing all funds received weekly or at appropriate intervals;
- Investing funds, as directed by the finance committee, to provide secure income for the church;
- Disbursing checks and executing online payments for church expenses, including salaries, in a timely manner;
- Maintaining financial records following appropriate guidelines from state and federal governments, and the PCUSA;
- Reporting wages and paying taxes to state and federal agencies:
 - Quarterly wage report to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development;
 - Quarterly filing and payment of state tax withholding to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue;
 - Quarterly filing and payment of Social Security, Medicare and income tax withholding to the IRS;
- Providing earning statements to employees, contractors and government agencies in accordance with state and federal regulations:
 - W-2s to employees, the Social Security Administration and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue;
 - 1099-MISC to contractors, the IRS and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue;
 - Encourage trustees to obtain W-9s and incorporation status from contractors before any payment to them is made;
- Submitting yearly Worker's Compensation audit to the insurance company:
 - Encourage trustees to obtain proof (or lack) of Worker's Compensation insurance from contractors;
- Creating and distributing financial reports monthly to session, trustees, and other bodies as appropriate;
- Creating and distributing special financial reports as requested by session or trustees;

- Preparing the treasurer's report for the annual report;
- Estimating income and expenses, including ministerial compensation that meets Presbytery guidelines, for the annual budget;
- Comparing income and expenses to annual budget;
- Recording pledges, monitoring payments toward pledges, and reporting related information to all giving units;
- Providing financial information for audits as required by state and federal governments, and the PCUSA2424;
- Maintaining the sales tax exempt status with the state;
- Holding insurance policies and other valuable papers;
- Documenting new employees:
 - New hire report to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue;
 - Employment Eligibility Verification (Form I-9) as required by the Department of Homeland Security;
 - Employee's withholding, W-4 (federal) and M-4 (state).

BY-LAWS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN BURLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this congregation is: The Presbyterian Church in Burlington, Massachusetts.

The name of this corporation is: The Presbyterian Church in Burlington, Massachusetts, Inc., of the Town of Burlington in the County of Middlesex in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

ARTICLE II. GOVERNANCE

This congregation and corporation is governed by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The governing council of this church is the session; boards of the church are the board of deacons, and board of trustees. The session is responsible for the mission and government of this church. All ministry and work of the deacons, trustees, treasurer, and any other boards, committees, or organizations of the congregation and corporation is carried out under the authority of the session.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Active members are those who have been received into membership of this congregation by the session in accordance with the *Book of Order* G-1.0303 and G-1.0402. Active members may vote in congregational meetings, and may be elected to offices of ordered ministry (*Book of Order* G-2.0102).

The session may delete names from the roll of the congregation when a member requests, or has moved or otherwise ceased to participate actively in the work and worship of the congregation for a period of two years (*Book of Order* G-3.0204).

ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS

Ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same meeting of the congregation.

Meetings of the congregation shall be conducted according to the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, except in those cases where the *Book of Order* or these By-Laws provide otherwise. All meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer.

There shall be an annual meeting of the congregation at the church, held in January of each year on a date specified by the session.

The purpose of the annual meeting is:

1. To elect ruling elders, deacons, trustees, and members of the next year's nominating committee.
2. To receive the annual report of the session and other organizations of the church along with plans for the coming year.

3. To review and approve pastoral terms of call based upon report of the prior review by the session.
4. To transact any other appropriate business as provided in the *Book of Order*, G-1.05.

Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the session, by the presbytery, or by the session when requested by the trustees, or when requested in writing by one fourth of the active members on the roll of the congregation as provided in the *Book of Order*, G-1.0502. Calls for a special meeting shall state clearly the purpose of the meeting, and no business other than that specified in the call may be considered.

Public notice of annual or special meetings of the congregation shall be made on at least two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. The meeting may be held on the day of the second notice.

The pastor shall ordinarily moderate all meetings of the congregation. Where circumstances make it impractical for the pastor to preside, the presiding officer shall be determined as directed by the *Book of Order*, G-1.0504.

The clerk of session shall be secretary of meetings of the congregation. If the clerk of session is unable to attend, the congregation shall elect a secretary for that meeting in his or her stead. The secretary shall record the actions of the congregation in minutes of the meeting. On behalf of the congregation, the session, at its next meeting, shall review and approve the minutes of the annual meeting or any special meetings of the congregation.

ARTICLE V. VOTING

All active members are entitled to vote at meetings of the congregation. The quorum of a meeting of the congregation is not less than one tenth of the active members on the roll of the congregation. Voting is limited to those active members present at a meeting of the congregation; voting by proxy is not allowed.

ARTICLE VI. SESSION

The session is composed of nine *ruling elders* in active service, divided into three equal classes, one class of whom is elected each year at the annual meeting for a three-year term. No ruling elder shall serve on the session for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years, and after six years' service, no ruling elder is eligible to be elected to a new term until one year has elapsed.

The *clerk of session* is elected for a one-year term by the session from among its members at the first regular session meeting following the annual meeting.

The responsibilities of the session are defined in the *Book of Order* G-3.02.

ARTICLE VII. DEACONS

The board of *deacons* is composed of nine deacons in active service, divided into three equal classes, one class of whom is elected each year at the annual meeting for a three-year term. Provision for length of service is the same as that for ruling elders, above.

The *moderator*, *vice-moderator*, and *secretary* of the deacons are elected for one-year terms

from among its members at the first regular meeting of the deacons following the annual meeting.

The responsibilities of the deacons are defined in the *Book of Order* G-2.02

ARTICLE VIII. TRUSTEES

The board of trustees is composed of six trustees, divided into three equal classes, one class of whom is elected each year at the annual meeting. Provision for length of service is the same as that for ruling elders and deacons.

The *chairperson* and *secretary* of the board of trustees are elected for one-year terms from among its members at the first regular meeting of the trustees following the annual meeting.

The responsibilities of the trustees are:

1. To administer the property and finances of the congregation and corporation, including care of buildings and grounds, preparation of budgets, provision for adequate insurance coverage, and responsible investment.
2. To provide representatives to the finance committee of session, which prepares an annual budget of appropriations needed for all purposes for the succeeding year: a goal budget prior to the annual stewardship campaign, and a final budget based on the results of the campaign.
3. To provide for the annual auditing of all books and records of church finances.
4. To hold stated meetings at least quarterly, and keep accurate minutes of trustees meetings.
5. Any other responsibilities related to the property and finances of the church that the session may designate.

ARTICLE IX. TREASURER

The *treasurer* of the congregation and corporation is elected annually by the session at the first meeting following the annual meeting. The nominating committee shall make recommendation to the session of a qualified candidate from the active membership of the church. The board of trustees supervises the work of the treasurer.

The responsibilities of the treasurer are:

1. To charge each item of expenditure against the proper appropriation, and notify the trustees and session if expenditures are liable to exceed appropriations in the approved budget.
2. To keep records of all receipts and expenditures, and regularly to advise the trustees of the general and particular conditions of the finances.
3. To be custodian of all valuable papers such as deeds, insurance policies, and all papers ordered placed on file by the trustees and to deliver all to his/her successor.
4. Any other responsibilities related to the finances of the church that the session or trustees may designate.

ARTICLE X. NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS

Nominations for ruling elders, deacons, trustees, and the next year's nominating committee shall be made by a representative nominating committee of the active members of the church.

The nominating committee is comprised of at least six members in addition to the pastor, who is a member of this committee, ex officio and without vote. One member of the nominating committee is from the members of session; this member convenes the nominating committee, and ordinarily chairs the committee. One member is from the board of deacons, and one from the board of trustees. At least three additional members shall be elected from among the active members of the congregation. Members of the nominating committee serve for a term of one year. No member of the nominating committee, other than the pastor, may serve on the committee for more than three consecutive years. The term of a nominating committee commences immediately upon election and continues until the next nominating committee is elected.

Care shall be taken to make the nominations as representative as possible of men and women, young and old, and racial ethnic members of the congregation.

Elections shall take place in accordance with the *Book of Order*, G-2.0401. Additional nominations of qualified persons for any elected office may be made from the floor by any active member in attendance with the consent of the nominee. A majority of all the active members present and voting is required to elect; voting by proxy is not allowed. If the number of nominations is equal to the number of open offices the vote may be by voice or by hand. If the number of nominations is more than the number of open offices the vote must be by ballot.

Vacancies in elective offices shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner provided for above, with elections to take place at annual or specially called meetings of the congregation.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS

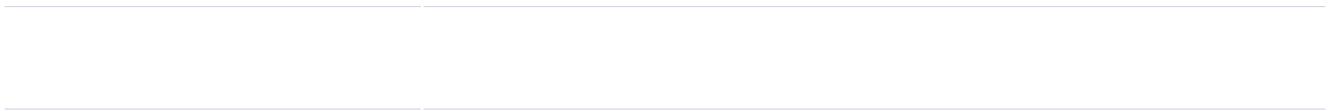
These by-laws may be amended only by approval of two-thirds of those eligible voters present at a duly called meeting of the congregation, and only in accord with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

CHANGE LOG

Adopted 23 January 1988	Original version
Amended 12 February 1989	Unspecified amendment(s)
Amended 21 January 2012	Updated to reflect changes in the Form of Government
Amended 16 January 2016	Amended Article IV to change date of annual meeting to a date in January specified by session
Amended 27 January 2019	Amended Articles IV and X to delete reference to the preschool board

Amended 14 June 2020

Amended Article IV to allow for electronic congregational meetings



The Presbyterian Church in Burlington

Safe Child Program

— *People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them and blessed them.* *-Mark 10: 13-16 (NRSV)*

Children are a gift from God, made in God’s image. Church leaders of children’s and youth programs are responsible for providing examples of God’s loving care to God’s children. Leaders’ Christian behavior, when caring for children and youth, should reflect the values and expectations of the church community. All leaders must follow the rules and guidelines of the church at all events, thereby providing appropriate supervision of children and youth.

Purpose of the Safe Child Program

The Safe Child Program’s goal is to ensure that The Presbyterian Church in Burlington provides a safe place for all children and youth to be nurtured in Christian faith.

The Safe Child Program also provides guidance on how to respond to an allegation of child abuse, being sensitive to the needs of the child and the accused in a manner befitting a Christian community.

Responsibilities

- The ultimate responsibility for the Safe Child Program resides with the Session. Session will annually review and approve all adults who will work with children and youth. The official list of approved adults is kept as part of the Session minutes.

- The Christian Education Committee will review the functioning and effectiveness of the Safe Child Program annually, including the CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) policy, and will recommend changes to Session.
- Teachers and others from the congregation have the right and obligation to request changes or clarifications in specific aspects of the Safe Child Program. Requests should be made to the CE Committee.
- The CE Committee will inform the congregation about the Safe Child Program in the annual report.
- The C.E. Committee will collect registration forms for every child at the beginning of each school year and on new attendees as deemed appropriate. The form will ask parents to give The Presbyterian Church in Burlington permission to teach their children in the ways of Christian living. The information obtained will include but not be limited to: allergies, date of birth, school grade level, health concerns, behavioral issues, and other information the parents would like the teachers to know. Parents will be informed of our Safe Child Policy and asked how they would like to receive a copy of it. The collected registration forms will be kept in the office.
- The C.E. Committee will conduct Safe Child Program training performed by properly qualified people and assure that feedback on its contents is welcome from the participants. The C.E. Committee will maintain a list of all participants having completed training along with signed and dated forms from the participants attesting that they have read, understood, and will abide by the Safe Child Program.
- It is recommended that the pastor give an annual sermon on the importance of children and our responsibility to protect them from harm.

Screening

Screening must be completed for paid staff and volunteers working with children and youth.

Screening Committee

A Screening Committee will carefully select adults to work with children and youth and maintain all records in a confidential manner. The committee is a subcommittee of the CE Committee which monitors the ongoing screening process and writes the church's CORI policy. Members of the Screening Committee will be approved by Session annually and their names will be recorded in the Session minutes. The Screening Committee will include a representative from C.E., the Cori Administrator,

and a third member. Once the Screening Committee has screened a candidate, the candidate's name will be forwarded to the Session for approval.

The following positions in the church will be subject to the screening policies and procedures:

1. Minister
2. Student minister
3. Choir Director (if responsible for leading a children's or youth choir)
4. Church schoolteachers and assistants
5. Youth group leaders
6. Nursery volunteers
7. Children's or youth music leaders
8. Drivers of children or youth
9. Others as deemed appropriate

Screening includes the following components:

1. Review of an application form to work with children (completed forms will be kept in the church office)
2. A personal interview
3. Reference checks
4. A criminal records check (CORI)
5. In addition, paid staff working with children will undergo a background check including national criminal records check and sex offender registry. This screening will be the responsibility of the Personnel Committee.
6. Determination that the candidate has been an active participant in our congregation for
at minimum six months

Exceptions to this screening policy may be made at the discretion of Session or CE to cover short-term involvement in children's activities. In these cases, new volunteers will be paired with a fully screened/approved adult.

CORI Policy

Refusal to undergo a CORI check (or, if required, a background check) will automatically disqualify a person from working with children or youth, but NOT from participating in any other church activity.

The Church's CORI Administrator will process CORIs and background checks. Only the CORI administrator will see the CORI results. In the event of results showing criminal history, the applicant will be told immediately. If the applicant is a paid

employee, the CORI Administrator will inform the Personnel Chair. The applicant will be given a copy of the church's CORI policy, a copy of the report(s) of criminal history and the source of same. They will be given the opportunity to dispute the accuracy of the reports. Results of CORI or background checks that are considered by the applicant to be in error will be promptly resubmitted.

The CORI Administrator will keep a list of the CORI applicants with the date the results were received, but will shred any papers which include Social Security Numbers or other sensitive personal information.

CORIs and background checks will be repeated **at least every three years**.

Automatic Disqualification of an Applicant (Safe Child Policy)

The following are the kinds of documented criminal **convictions** that would automatically disqualify a person from working with children or youth in the church:

- Any crime in which a child was a victim
- Any crime in which violence was threatened or perpetrated against another human
- Any crime in which there was public exposure
- Any crime involving sexual misconduct
- Any crime involving physical abuse or neglect
- Any crime in which a firearm or other potentially lethal weapon was involved

DUIs/DWIs and transporting children

A conviction for driving under the influence or while intoxicated with alcohol or drugs disqualifies a church volunteer from transporting children. If the person has applied to work with children and there are no other criminal convictions, they may work with children but may not transport them.

Requalification as a driver requires a clean CORI for the five preceding years and evidence of graduation from an alcohol or substance abuse treatment program.

Training

Adults who work with children or youth will be required to participate in Safe Child Program training. The Screening Committee, Response Team, CE Committee and Session will also be trained. All such leaders should undergo training at least **every three years**. Other interested people may take the training as they desire. All who attend training will sign a form stating they have read the Safe Child Program, understand it, and will abide by it.

Training should coincide with officer training or the start of the church school year.

Training should include but is not limited to:

1. An overview of the Safe Child Program with its goals and procedures
2. Guidance for common situations involving child contact
3. How to recognize a case of child abuse or neglect, within or outside the church
4. Responsibilities of mandated reporters
5. How to respond to an alleged case of child abuse or neglect
6. Support that all who work with children or youth may enlist or expect
7. Dealing with visiting adults in classes
8. Standards of behavior between adults and children and youth

Classroom teachers will review the **Children's Code of Conduct** (Appendix B) with their classes annually.

Safe Child Guidance for Working with Children

Personal Conduct

It is expected that adults and youth aides will conduct themselves in a loving Christian manner.

Teachers, chaperones, and youth aides shall not drink alcohol, smoke or use recreational drugs when in charge of children or youth.

Two Leader Rule

Two adults or one adult and a youth aide will be present for all group activities, both in person and virtually, involving children or youth. At least one adult must be screened and trained.

The CE committee has the responsibility of annually finding teachers and assistants for each class, as well as substitute teachers in sufficient number to maintain the "two leader rule." The CE committee will provide teachers with contact information for the current list of teachers, assistants and substitute teachers, and the names of anyone willing to leave the sanctuary to be a second leader in a class at the last minute. Teachers will coordinate coverage with each other and the assistants to maintain the two leader rule. Any activity or class lacking two leaders should be cancelled.

Discipline

Class order will be kept by discipline that is fair and sensitive to the group or child. No child will be disciplined in a physically or verbally abusive manner. If the situation warrants, a disruptive child's parents may be contacted for help.

Bathroom Use

If at all possible children should conduct bathroom activities by themselves. If bathroom activities require assistance, two leaders can accompany a single child or group of children. If two accompanying leaders are not possible, one will be acceptable if that leader informs the other leader prior to the trip. Diapering should be performed in the presence of two leaders.

Food

No food will be given to any child without the prior permission of that child's parents due to unknown food allergies the child may have.

Pickup

At the conclusion of a class or event each child in grade two or younger is to be released only to that child's own parent or to a previously designated alternate adult.

Permission Slips

Parents, prior to any overnight or off-site activity in which the parents are not present, will fill out permission slips. The form will include who is in charge of the group, the purpose of the activity, where they are going, the length of the activity and the expected return time. Emergency contact information will be included along with information such as allergies, medications, etc. Permission slips will be kept on file.

In the event of retreats or other off-site activities in which children would be under the care of non-screened people, at least one screened person should be present in all activities.

Photo Waiver

Photos/videos of children/youth shall not be posted on social media or websites without written consent of youth and parent/guardian. Children shall not be identified by name on social media or websites.

Transportation

Anyone transporting children or youths must meet the following criteria:

1. Possesses a valid driver's license
2. Meets requirements of the state law for driving others

3. Has adequate car insurance (adequate means the state mandated minimum)
4. Those with a history of DUI/DWI must have re-qualified per screening criteria (page 4)

Response Plan

Introduction

We believe it is the church's responsibility to ensure the children of the church are cared for in a safe manner. Everyone associated with the church and particularly those who work with children or youth should do all they can to prevent abuse or neglect, but the church needs to be prepared to respond if a case should occur. Reporting and response procedures are critical components of our Safe Child Program.

The Presbyterian Church in Burlington's Response Plan is based upon the following underlying principles:

- All allegations are to be taken seriously and must be made in writing.
- Situations must be handled quickly with due respect for people's privacy and confidentiality.
- Respect must be shown for alleged victims and alleged abusers. Pastoral care should be made available to all.
- The alleged victim should not be held responsible.
- Full cooperation must be given to civil and insurance authorities if appropriate.

Reporting Responsibilities

Any adult who interacts with children or youth is obligated to report any alleged incident of abuse or neglect. According to Massachusetts law, "clergy members, including ordained or licensed leaders of any church or religious body, persons performing official duties on behalf of a church or religious body, or persons employed by a religious body to supervise, educate, coach, train or counsel a child on a regular basis..." are defined as mandated reporters.

In summary, all adults who are acting in the name of the church, or who are responsible for the governance of the church, are mandated reporters.

Reportable Incident

The determination of what constitutes a reportable incident will be made based upon information provided in training. Once someone believes that an incident of abuse or neglect has occurred, he/she should report it to the Response Team or the DCF. The appropriate form (**Appendix A**) must be completed and submitted to any member of the Response Team by the accuser or a representative of the alleged victim.

Any individual, at any time, may report an incident directly to DCF or to the Response Team.

Guidelines for the Response Team

If a fully completed written report (**Appendix A**) is received by the Response Team, its default action should be to forward it to DCF and the insurance company unless the Response Team determines it is not a reportable incident. If DCF subsequently screens out the report or fails to follow up on the allegation in a timely manner, then the Response Team must follow up and make recommendations for actions.

The Response Team shall be appointed by Session and shall be comprised of three members from the following: Session, Deacons, Trustees and the general congregation. There shall be at least one male and one female on the Response Team. In addition, one person will be designated as an alternate. In the event the accused is a member of the Response Team, the alternate will replace the accused. In the event a conflict of interest or other non-routine situation occurs involving a team member, the alternate will take the place of that member.

Members of the Response Team will serve for one year, and on transition, at least one experienced member will continue on the committee for the following year. An exception is if the Response Team has an ongoing allegation in progress.

Duties of the Response Team

The Response Team's formal proceedings will include but not be limited to the following:

1. Meet within 24 hours after receiving a written Report of Unusual Occurrence (**Appendix A**). This meeting may be held by telephone conference.
2. If applicable, inform civil authorities and the insurance company. The Response Team must first inform the insurance company if a report is being referred to DCF and then inform the accused that the report is being filed with authorities.

3. Inform the minister that the Response Team has received a report and identify the individuals and circumstances involved.
4. Treat both the accused and the alleged victim with dignity and support.
5. The accused person should be automatically relieved of duties temporarily or removed from class participation until a resolution is found.
6. Inform all parties that pastoral counseling is available.
7. Make sure that the accused and accuser are advised regarding steps for instituting formal PC(USA) disciplinary processes.
8. The Response Team determines a timeline for action(s) and monitors implementation of actions.
9. If DCF decides to screen out the incident or the Response Team deems the incident is not reportable, then the Response Team will recommend action to the Session.
10. Document all activities and deliberations.

Response Team Consultations

The Response Team may confer with a pre-approved outside consultants, the DCF, or the insurance company lawyers for advice on actions. Confidentiality must be maintained when conferring with outside consultants. The insurance contact is our agent **Sharon Cross (800-554-2642), scross@churchmutual.com, or the claims department of Church Mutual (844-322-4662).**

Possible actions of Response Team are listed, but are not limited to these

The Response Team may have several options to recommend as action:

- Inform the insurance company.
- Inform DCF.
- Inform the police.
- Broker a mutually acceptable resolution for incidents clearly not reportable to DCF.
- Refer a minister to Presbytery for disciplinary action via the Stated Clerk of Presbytery.
- Refer a church member to the Session Moderator for disciplinary action.
- Recommend counseling or pastoral care to all parties involved.
- Temporarily remove a person from a role involving child contact. Permanent removal may be recommended to Session.
- Temporarily remove a child or youth from a class or other activity. Permanent removal may be recommended to Session.

Response team record keeping

The Response Team will keep all records confidential, including detailed records of its actions and minutes of its deliberations and its conversations with the accuser, accused and other parties involved. No discussion of its activities shall be shared with anyone outside of the Response Team except the minister, nor shall anyone be provided with any of its records absent an order of the Court or appropriate civil or ecclesiastical authorities. Closed files shall be marked "Confidential" and be under the supervision of the Session.

Designated Church Spokesperson

The Minister shall be designated to speak to the press, community, or congregation if any allegations are made public. The Minister would make use of a prepared statement. It would stress that the church has a formal Safe Child Program with policies and procedures to cover allegations of child abuse and neglect, and that the program is in place and the church is following the procedures. If the Minister is unable to be the spokesperson, then the responsibility falls to the Clerk of Session.

Church Governing Body

In the church, judicial responses to alleged abuse are relegated to the Session (in the case of church members) and the Presbytery (in the case of ministers), according to the Rules of Discipline in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Part II (The Book of Order). The Response Team should consult with the Session Moderator in the case of church members, and with the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery in the case of ministers.

The Response Team can also pursue actions through documented procedures in the Book of Order, through the Clerk of Session or through the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.

Response will vary according to the status of the accused. Church members and ministers are subject to inquiry and discipline under the Book of Order. The minister serving congregations is subject to oversight by the Presbytery.

3. Please give other information which you think might be helpful in establishing the cause of the alleged incident and/or the person responsible for it. Please provide the name(s) of the alleged perpetrator(s).

4. What action has been taken thus far by those involved?

Signature of Reporter _____ Date _____

Signature of Receiver _____ Date _____

5. Finding of the Response Team:

6. Action(s) recommended:

7. Follow up monitoring to ensure actions completed

Children's Code of Conduct

I am a child of God who loves and cares for me. I will treat others the way I would like to be treated.

I will listen quietly to what others have to say.

I will tell someone who cares about me if I am threatened or afraid.

I will share.

I will use church and other peoples' property carefully.

I will clean up my own mess.

I will keep my arms and legs to myself.

I will respect others' feelings and apologize if I hurt them.



Presbyterian Church in Burlington, MA
