

**Session Manual
First Presbyterian Church
Tallahassee, Florida**



As adopted on March 16, 2025
With revisions as proposed February 19, 2020

SESSION MANUAL

First Presbyterian Church
Tallahassee, Florida

Contents

Session Manual	1
First Presbyterian Church.....	1
Tallahassee, Florida.....	1
SESSION MANUAL.....	i
Introduction.....	1
The Congregation	1
Congregational Meetings	1
The Session.....	3
General Responsibilities	3
Planning and Budgeting.....	4
Coordinated Calendar.....	4
Worship and Special Offerings Calendar.....	4
Session Meetings.....	5
Attendance.....	5
Related Entities	6
First Presbyterian Preschool, Inc.	6
Presbyterian Women.....	6
Vaughan Loan Fund	6
Trustees.....	7
Appointments to Other Boards	7
Standing Committees	8
Endowment Management Committee.....	8
Nominating Committee.....	8
Pastor Nomination Committee/Transition Committee.....	8
Cuba Partnership Working Group	9
Sexual Misconduct Response Team	9
The Staff.....	10
Church Office	11
Session Ministry Teams.....	12
Membership on Ministry Teams	12
Leadership of Ministry Teams	12
Ministry Team Meetings.....	12
Minutes and Reports	13
Participation in Budgeting Process	13
Team Descriptions	13
Budget and Finance Team.....	14
Property Team.....	15

Personnel Team	16
Compassion and Social Justice Team	17
Worship and Music Team	18
Care and Outreach Team.....	19
Spiritual Formation Team.....	20
Appendix.....	21
Policies Adopted by the Session of First Presbyterian Church.....	21
Vaughan Loan Fund	21

Introduction

This manual has been prepared to give an overview of how First Presbyterian Church is organized for mission. The *Book of Order* provides a full description of the responsibilities of the congregation and Session of a particular church. This manual does not replace *the Book of Order*, but attempts to outline how it is applied at First Presbyterian Church of Tallahassee. This is a working document, subject to change as the Session seeks to be faithful to the Word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

The Congregation

The particular church is the basic unit of the Church's mission. The covenant community of First Presbyterian Church includes those on the baptized, active, and affiliate rolls as well as those who take part in the worship and work of First Church but have not been received into membership by the Session (G-1.0402).

All ministry in the Church is a gift of Jesus Christ. Following the pattern of Christ's own ministry, members and officers alike are called "not to be served, but to serve," and to use their gifts "to glorify God and enjoy God forever." Elders are partners in mission with the people of God.

For the purposes of government, the congregation consists only of those who are on the roll of members (formerly termed "active members"). The congregation has limited but essential powers to:

1. elect a nominating committee, elders, and trustees
2. call a pastor or pastors, amend the terms of call, and request or consent to the dissolution of the pastoral call;
3. buy, sell, or mortgage real property (with the consent of presbytery);
4. appoint committees related to the above.

While members are equal partners in mission, the primary responsibility for planning, organizing, and carrying out the mission of a particular church falls to the Session.

Congregational Meetings

The congregation shall hold an annual meeting and may hold special ("called") meetings as necessary. The business to be transacted at special meetings shall be limited to the items specifically listed in the call of the meeting.

All active members of the congregation present at the meeting are entitled to vote. The quorum necessary to conduct business shall be one-tenth of the active membership.

Meetings of the congregation can be called by the Session on its own initiative, by the presbytery, or by the Session when requested in writing by one-fourth of the active members on the roll of the congregation (G-1.0501).

The Book of Order requires “adequate notice” of all congregational meetings (G-1.0502). At First Presbyterian, at a minimum, notice of an annual or special congregational meeting shall be given at the Lord’s Day service on two successive Sundays. The meeting may take place on the Sunday upon which the second notice is given.

Traditionally congregational meetings have been held at the end of the Lord’s Day service and have concluded with the parting charge and benediction ending that service. Congregational meetings can also be held by video conference. If a meeting is held by video conference the notice of the meeting will include information on how members of the congregation can participate. In addition, a link to any video conference will be distributed to all members of the congregation who have an email address, and instructions on joining the conference by phone will be provided to those who do not have an email address.

Business at congregational meetings shall be limited to the following:

- electing elders, trustees, and other officers, e.g. members of the Endowment Management Committee;
- calling a pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor;
- changing existing pastoral relationships, by such means as reviewing the adequacy of and approving changes to the terms of call of the pastor or pastors, or requesting, consenting, or declining to consent to the dissolution of the pastoral relationship;
- buying, mortgaging, or selling real property;
- other business stipulated in the *Book of Order* (G-1.0503).

The pastor ordinarily moderates all meetings of the congregation. If it is impractical for the pastor to preside, the pastor may invite another teaching elder who is a member of Florida Presbytery or a person authorized by the presbytery to serve as moderator.

The clerk of Session serves as the secretary for congregational meetings. If the clerk cannot be present, another elder may be designated to serve as the secretary pro tem. In addition, for any congregational meeting held by video conference the Session will designate a member of the congregation who will serve as technical administrator of the meeting and ensure the recording of all votes taken.

Both ecclesiastical business and business related to the corporation of First Presbyterian Church may be conducted at the same congregational meeting.

The Session

Ruling elders are elected by the congregation to lead it in mission and to share in the governing of the larger Church. Ruling elders are ordained for life but serve on the Session for limited terms. Ruling elders currently on the Session are termed “active elders.”

The Session of First Presbyterian Church consists of the pastor, who serves as Moderator of the Session, and 15 active elders serving three-year terms.

Elections for the office of ruling elder are held no later than August each year, with the goal of ordaining and installing a new class of elders in time for the November Session meeting.¹ If a ruling elder is released from active service for any reason, a replacement will be nominated to serve the rest of that elder’s term and will be elected and installed or ordained with the next class of elders.

General Responsibilities

The Session plans and administers the mission of the church, working cooperatively with the Presbytery of Florida, the Synod of South Atlantic, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Because the congregation has chosen not to use the office of deacon, the duties of that office rest with the Session. In abbreviated form, the Session:

1. receives and dismisses members;
2. leads the congregation in the mission of the whole Church;
3. provides for worship;
4. provides for the growth of members and for their equipment for ministry;
5. develops and supervises the church school and educational program;
6. leads the congregation in ministries of reconciliation;
7. challenges members with the privilege of Christian stewardship;
8. establishes the annual budget and distributes the church’s offerings;
9. leads the congregation in continuing renewal and reformation;
10. instructs, examines, ordains, installs, and welcomes elders;
11. delegates and supervises the work of the board of trustees and all other church organizations;
12. administers the church’s program, including the employment of non-ordained staff;
13. manages and determines the proper use of church property and facilities;
14. maintains regular and continuing relationship to the higher governing bodies of the Church;
15. maintains local ecumenical relationships;
16. serves in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline;
17. keeps rolls of the membership of the church;
18. ministers to those who are in need, sick, friendless, and any who may be in distress.

¹ Members of the board of trustees, members of the Endowment Management Committee, and members of the next year’s Nominating Committee are elected at the same time as each new class of elders.

Planning and Budgeting

The Session's planning year begins September 1 and ends August 31 to enable the Session to present a stewardship program to the congregation before each successive year's budget is adopted. Pledges of financial support are received in the fall of each year for the coming fiscal year. The fiscal year begins January 1 and ends December 31.

The short- and long-term goals for mission are reflected in the budget by the following process:

1. In the fall, each Ministry Team evaluates short- and long-term goals for the approaching fiscal year. Short-term goals are those goals which can be accomplished in one year. Long-term goals are those goals which will take longer than one year to accomplish.
2. As part of the process of identifying goals for the coming year, the Personnel Team conducts an evaluation of the church staff and a review of the adequacy of the compensation of all church employees.
3. The Session conducts a stewardship program including mission education and the receiving of pledges of money, time, and talents. Pledges shall be sought from all active participants of First Church, whether members or not. Every effort will be made for financial pledges to be received before the first Sunday in Advent.
4. The Session adopts a budget based on estimated income. The budget is developed and proposed by the Budget and Finance Team in consultation with each Ministry Team as well as members at large.
5. Any significant deviation from the adopted budget of the Ministry Teams must be approved by the Session. Within their total allocation, Teams may adjust line items in amounts up to \$500.00 and report the adjustment to the Budget and Finance Team. Adjustments exceeding \$500.00 must be approved by the Budget and Finance Team and reported to the Session.

Coordinated Calendar

The Session ensures that a calendar is maintained in the church office for the coordination of all services of worship, church programs, church-related meetings on or off church property, and all meetings and events taking place on church property.

Worship and Special Offerings Calendar

At the beginning of each planning year, the Session adopts a calendar for:

1. the celebration of the Lord's Supper, including the offering of extended communion, and for worship services in addition to services for the Lord's Day;

2. receiving special offerings.

Session Meetings

The *Book of Order* requires stated meetings to be held at least quarterly (G-3.0203). The practice at First Presbyterian has been to hold a stated meeting for business or continuing education every month, excluding July and December. The session adopts a schedule of stated meetings at the beginning of each planning year.

The Session may be called to meet following Lord's Day worship to receive new members and conduct urgent business. These meetings may be called during the worship service. Called meetings (termed "special meetings" in the *Book of Order*) may be held at other times in accordance with the *Book of Order* (G-3.0203), which allows the Moderator to call a meeting when the Moderator deems it necessary "or when requested in writing by any two members of the session."

In principle, the Session designates at least one meeting per year for continuing education and renewal. This can take the form of a Session retreat at a time other than the regularly scheduled meeting time.

Attendance

It is the duty of elders to attend every Session meeting. Elders are requested to notify the Clerk of Session when they anticipate absence from a stated meeting. The Session has adopted the following attendance policy:

When an elder in active service on the Session fails to attend three successive Stated Meetings, the Moderator or the Clerk shall counsel that elder, reminding him or her of the importance of full and active participation. If for any reason the elder determines that he or she cannot fulfill the duties of the office of elder, that elder shall consider resignation from active service on the Session. If the Session consents to the resignation from active service, the elder shall be released from active service, but shall remain on the register of elders. The Session shall notify the Nominating Committee of the resulting vacancy (Adopted May 28, 2000.)²

² This policy applies to elders who request to be relieved of active service but remain in ordained ministry. If the elder resigns from ordained ministry altogether, the *Book of Order 2019-2021* provides that, upon release of the exercise of ordained ministry, the resigning elder's name shall be deleted from the register of ruling elders (G-2.0406).

Related Entities

First Presbyterian Preschool, Inc.

The First Presbyterian Preschool, Inc., a not-for-profit (501c3) corporation, is housed at First Presbyterian Church. The Preschool is governed by an independent Board of Directors. The Session supports the Preschool program by providing administrative and custodial services, use of office equipment, use of space in the Education Building, and utility services, all at no cost to the Preschool. The Preschool contributes to the operating budget of the Session and to other expenses. Two representatives of the Church, with at least one member of the Session serve on the Preschool Board of Directors. Other members of the Preschool Board are drawn from among the parents of preschool students and the community at large.

Presbyterian Women

At the congregational level, Presbyterian Women is organized into six circles that gather regularly to study and pray together, and a seventh circle dedicated to mission projects. The leaders of Presbyterian Women form a Coordinating Team that meets regularly to conduct business and support the circles. This is the connecting link between the congregation and Presbyterian Women at the Presbytery, Synod, and Church-wide levels.

Presbyterian Women invites the congregation to participate in one of the regular special offerings: the Thank Offering (November), Blanket Offering (February), and Birthday Offering (May). Presbyterian Women collects school supplies at the beginning of the school year, and sponsors one or more senior citizens through the Elder Elf program of Elder Care Services during the Christmas season. In addition, Presbyterian Women organizes three annual events open to all: the Fall Gathering, which introduces the year's Bible study; the Winter Gathering, which usually features an inspirational speaker; and the Spring Mission Workshop. Presbyterian Women and individual circles also participate in the international Fellowship of the Least Coin.

Among its special projects, Presbyterian Women identifies high school graduates from within the congregation each year and assigns them to a circle for special attention and outreach as they adjust to college or work. Presbyterian women and men who are no longer able to participate actively in circle activities are assigned to circles as Emeritus Members.

Vaughan Loan Fund

The Vaughan Loan Fund was established to aid students attending Presbyterian seminaries of the former Presbyterian Church, U. S., and the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. It is administered jointly by the Session and the Trustee of the Vaughan Loan Fund, who is appointed for an indefinite term. From time to time the Session and Trustee may approve educational grants from the Fund in keeping with the intent of the trust. The clerk of Session serves as co-trustee. A description of the operation of the Fund is included in the Appendix.

Trustees

Trustees are entities of the corporation of First Presbyterian Church of Tallahassee, Inc. Their duties are specified in the *Book of Order* (G-4.0101) and relate primarily to the sale, encumbrance, and transfer of real property. The Session may also designate the trustees to perform other functions. Trustees may be ruling elders actively serving on the Session.

Six trustees are elected by the congregation in classes of two to serve terms of three years. The power and duties of trustees shall not infringe upon the powers and duties of the Session (G-4.0101), and trustees may not mortgage, sell, or buy real property without the approval of the congregation and presbytery.

Appointments to Other Boards

The Session appoints church members to represent First Presbyterian Church on the Board of UKirk, Tallahassee (the Florida State University campus ministry).

Appointments to the Board of Directors of the First Presbyterian Preschool are made by the Compassion and Social Justice Team and the Spiritual Formation Team and reported to the Session.

Standing Committees

Endowment Management Committee

The Endowment Management Committee (EMC) was established in 1996 to advise the Session on the management of the:

1. Facilities Reserve Fund
2. Outreach Fund
3. Endowment Fund

Since then the EMC has also been given the responsibility of managing a Christian Education Fund, a Columbarium Fund, an Operations Reserve Fund and, when sufficient funds have accumulated, the Michael Corzine Music Education Fund.

The Committee consists of seven members, four of whom are elected by the congregation to six-year terms. The other members of the Committee are the Chair of the Budget and Finance Team, one representative from the Session, and one representative from the Trustees.

The policies guiding the management of these funds are set out in the Endowment and Gifts Plan adopted by the Session in 1996, as amended, which is included in the Appendix.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee consists of five members: one active elder, chosen by Session who will serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee, and four other members from the congregation who are not active elders (G-2.0401). The pastor is an *ex-officio* member without vote.

Annually, in the spring of each year, the Nominating Committee is responsible for creating a slate for a variety of offices, including: five ruling elders who serve a three-year term, three members of the Board of Trustees who serve a three-year term, and two Endowment Committee members who serve a six-year term. The Nominating Committee will also choose four members to serve on the following year's Nominating Committee.

Once a slate is created, a Congregational Meeting is called by the Session. The slate is presented by the Chair of the Nominating Committee for a vote. The vote should take place no later than August, and sooner if possible, to allow the incoming class of elders to go through training in September and October before being ordained and installed.

The Nominating Committee is also responsible for creating a slate for the Pastor Nominating Committee, as needed, and presenting the slate at a Congregational meeting.

Pastor Nomination Committee/Transition Committee

A Pastor Nomination Committee was elected in 2024 to conduct a search for the next installed pastor. Upon the completion of the work of the Pastor Nominating Committee and the dissolution of that committee, it is contemplated that the membership of that group will merge into a Transition Committee to include additional members of the Session and congregation. When the pastoral transition is completed, it is expected that this time-limited committee will be dissolved by the Session.

Cuba Partnership Working Group

In 2016 four members of the congregation traveled to Cuba with an exploratory group to learn about potential church-to-church partnerships with congregations in the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba. After conversations within our congregation a potential partnership was identified with the IPR church in Los Palos, including its satellite location in Nueva Paz, both in the Havana Presbytery. Changes in visa policy and, more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic, have frustrated hopes for a return trip to spend more time with that Cuban congregation. Although we have not been able to organize a return trip, we have provided support through another PC(USA) congregation that is also exploring a partnership with the church in Los Palos. In January 2020 the pastor of that church, Rev. Izett Sama Hernandez, was able to travel to the United States as one of the International Peacemakers in the PC(USA) Peacemaking Program. With the help of all the Ministry Teams and many in the congregation, we were able to host her in Tallahassee for several days. The working group remains hopeful about the possibilities of increased contact and, eventually, a covenant partnership with a Cuban congregation.

Sexual Misconduct Response Team

As required by the Sexual Misconduct policy adopted by the Session in 2013 and amended in 2019, three elders (who may include a teaching elder) are appointed to a team that, among other things, can receive reports of alleged sexual misconduct involving church staff or members. The Sexual Misconduct policy sets out that the Response Team should be gender-diverse. The job of the Response Team is not investigation, but the Response Team ensures that an investigating committee is appointed and serves as a liaison between the investigating committee and the Session. Once appointed to the Response Team, an elder will normally remain on the team for the duration of his or her term on the Session.

The Staff

First Presbyterian Church employs both ordained and non-ordained staff. The pastor is an ordained teaching elder. The pastor is called by the congregation but is a member of the Presbytery of Florida. The pastor is also a member of the Session and holds the office of Moderator with vote. The pastor is employed by the congregation. The rest of the staff is employed by the Session.

The pastor is called by the congregation and installed by the presbytery. The pastor's terms of call are reviewed and approved annually by the congregation, and then submitted to the presbytery for approval. Currently the pastor is a designated pastor in a part-time position while the Pastor Nominating Committee works to call a full-time installed pastor.

Part-time staff includes the Communications and Administrative Coordinator [currently open], Financial Administrator, Housekeeper, and Custodian. At times child care providers are also hired.

The music staff consists of the Organist, the Choirmaster, and up to five Choral Scholars, who are typically graduate students in the FSU School of Music. The Choirmaster hires and supervises the Choral Scholars. Instrumentalists are hired on occasion. It is contemplated that when the current Choirmaster completes his graduate studies in 2025, which will mean leaving Tallahassee, the positions of Organist and Choirmaster will merge into one part-time position.

The pastor is the Head of Staff. The Communications and Administrative Coordinator supervises the custodian in consultation with the Preschool Director [this is currently being done by the pastor while the administrative position is vacant]. Job descriptions are maintained by the Personnel Committee and are kept in the office procedures notebook in the church office.

Vacancies in the non-ordained staff are filled by the Personnel Committee, acting for the Session, in consultation with the pastor. The Session may appoint other search committees as needed.

Church Office

The Communications and Administrative Coordinator is responsible for the operation of the church office, under the supervision of the Pastor. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Updating the church website.
- Updating the church directory.
- Producing the weekly worship bulletin as well as special bulletins, such as for memorial services or additional worship services.
- Distributing a weekly newsletter (electronic and paper versions) and otherwise keeping the congregation informed of current and upcoming events in the life of the church.
- Office operations: e.g., answering the telephone, receiving visitors, making referrals to social service agencies, maintaining supplies, maintaining the church calendar, scheduling use of the sanctuary and education building by church members and other organizations, and other administrative responsibilities.
- Supervising custodial services (in consultation with the Preschool Director) and coordinating services necessary for minor property repairs and upkeep (e.g., if a plumber or locksmith is needed).

Currently a number of these responsibilities are being filled by volunteers.

Session Ministry Teams

Unless otherwise provided by the Session, the mission program of First Presbyterian Church is carried out through Ministry Teams. Each Ministry Team has a particular focus. As necessary, any Ministry Team can propose actions that come within that team's area of focus, including the adoption of official policies by the Session. The Ministry Teams work in cooperation with each other to support worship, service and spiritual growth in the church. A Ministry Team may organize itself into committees as it desires.

As new elders join the Session they are asked to go through a process of discerning where they can best use their gifts and to join a Ministry Team. Elders, like members of the congregation in general, are not limited to participating in a single Ministry Team.

Specific administrative tasks that do not come within the scope of responsibility of a single team, such as periodically reviewing the roll of active members, are occasionally delegated to an ad hoc committee which then reports back to the Session as a whole.

Membership on Ministry Teams

Each Ministry Team should include, to the extent possible, two active elders and at least four church members. Both active (confirmed) and baptized (not confirmed) members may serve on Ministry Teams. "Friends" of the congregation who are not on the roll may also serve on Ministry Teams. Ministry Teams are encouraged to recruit members. Care should be taken to assure that the membership of Ministry Teams reflects the diversity of church membership (cf. *Book of Order* F-1.0403). The pastor is an *ex-officio* member of all Ministry Teams without vote.

Leadership of Ministry Teams

Each Ministry Team has a chair, who is normally an active elder. The chair also serves as liaison to the Session. If the chair is not an active elder, an active elder serving on the Team shall be designated as the Team's liaison to the Session. It is up to individual teams whether to rotate leadership with each incoming class of elders. Changes in team leadership, whether at the beginning of the year or mid-year, should be reported to the Session and communicated to the church office.

Ministry Team Meetings

The Ministry Teams are expected to meet regularly, preferably monthly, from September through June, and can meet in July and August as needed. Ministry Team meetings are open to all members of the congregation.

Some Ministry Teams meet virtually instead of in person. To the extent possible, teams meeting by video conference should announce their meeting date and time in advance to allow interested members of the congregation to attend any team meeting. Regular team meetings are posted on the church calendar.

Minutes and Reports

Ministry Teams keep written records of decisions made during their meetings and provide copies to the church office to facilitate communication and planning. Because the pastor is an *ex officio* member of all Ministry Teams, the pastor should be copied on minutes and reports as well. This information can be submitted by email. Written or oral reports are made to the Session as needed.

Participation in Budgeting Process

In the fall of each year, each Ministry Team reviews its goals for the coming year and designates a representative to the Budget and Finance Committee, which is charged with proposing an annual budget to the Session.

Team Descriptions

The team descriptions that follow are subject to change in light of evolving practices. The descriptions are a guide to understanding the scope of a team's mission. Teams are encouraged to review these descriptions during the annual planning process and to suggest modifications that may be necessary so that the descriptions are as helpful as possible to new elders and the congregation at large.

Budget and Finance Team

The Budget and Finance Team is charged with fostering responsible stewardship within the congregation and administering church finances. To fulfill this charge, the team will:

- Encourage all people in the congregation to employ their gifts to the glory of God.
- Educate the congregation regarding opportunities for service to First Presbyterian Church, the community, and the larger Church.
- Plan and carry out a program to receive pledges of financial and other support.
- Prepare an annual program budget for approval by the Session by November of each year.
- Administer the annual program budget.
- Educate members regarding opportunities for planned giving through wills, bequests, deeds of trust, etc. and encourage members to support First Presbyterian Church through these means, or designate the Trustees to carry out this duty.
- Recommend to the Session a member to serve as Treasurer (G-3.0205). The *Book of Order* requires the Session to elect a Treasurer for a specific term. Once elected by the Session, the Treasurer shall:
 1. monitor the receipt and expenditure of funds;
 2. sign checks in keeping with the program budget and the policies of the Support and Stewardship Ministry Team;
 3. submit monthly reports to the Session or delegate that responsibility to the Financial Administrator.
- If necessary, recommend to the Session one or more Assistant Treasurers to carry out the work of the Treasurer when that individual is not available.
- Work with the Treasurer and Financial Administrator to carry out a program for the receipt, counting, recording, disbursement, and short-term investment of regular and special offerings.
- Work with the Treasurer and Financial Administrator to keep accurate records and submit accurate reports.
- Appoint an Audit Committee to perform an annual financial review.

Committees

The Budget and Finance Team may create a separate Stewardship Committee for the purpose of planning and carrying out an annual stewardship campaign during the months leading up to the adoption of an annual budget.

The Budget and Finance team shall appoint an Audit Committee each year to perform the annual financial audit required by the *Book of Order* (G-3.0113). Members of the Audit Committee may not be related to the Treasurer.

Property Team

The Property Team is charged with managing and maintaining the property and facilities of First Presbyterian Church. The sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church is both a historical landmark and the center of worship and mission for the congregation. It is the intent of the Session that church property, including the Education and Westminster Buildings, be used to the glory of God and in service to the larger community. This Ministry Team will:

- Develop and administer policies for the proper use of property and equipment, including the use of any audiovisual equipment, by members and non-members.
- Maintain a schedule of maintenance and repair for all church facilities, including the sanctuary and organ.
- Assess the short- and long-term maintenance needs of church facilities and recommend to the Session a plan to meet those needs.
- Maintain the buildings and grounds with regard to accident prevention and the safety of both persons and property.
- Administer the Columbarium in accordance with policies adopted by the Session.
- Encourage and organize church members to help with maintenance and repairs.
- Assure that all church property and equipment is adequately insured.
- Periodically review the security systems in use on church property and recommend enhancements to those systems as necessary.
- Provide for the purchase and maintenance of office equipment, custodial supplies, and other supplies.
- Maintain inventories of church equipment and supplies.
- Work with First Presbyterian Preschool to assure that Preschool facilities meet the health, safety, and educational requirements of the Preschool's program.

Columbarium Committee

The Columbarium Committee was created in 2017 to oversee the construction and installation of a columbarium, a dedicated setting for the reverent disposition of cremated remains of the dead. The committal of ashes in a columbarium is the theological and liturgical equivalent of the committal of a body to the earth, “in sure and certain hope of the resurrection.” The columbarium in the courtyard of First Presbyterian Church has niches that will accommodate the remains of one or two individuals, covered by uniform granite plates. The columbarium also has designated space for inscribing the names and years of birth and death of members of the First Church community whose ashes are not interred in the columbarium. Fees for niches and memorial inscriptions, as well as gifts designated for the Columbarium, are kept separate from other operating, endowment, and facility funds.

In 2020 this committee was merged with the Property Team, which administers the columbarium in accordance with the Revised Columbarium Policy adopted by the Session (a copy of which is attached in the Appendix).

Personnel Team

The Personnel Team is charged with supporting and overseeing the work of the paid staff of First Presbyterian Church. The Ministry Team will:

- Recommend to the Session a staffing pattern appropriate to the mission of First Presbyterian Church.
- Work with the Session pastor to evaluate, oversee, and support the staff.
- Meet regularly with the staff, both ordained and non-ordained, to encourage them in their ministries, to assess their needs, and to aid their professional growth and development.
- On behalf of the Session, annually examine the pay and benefits provided to staff to assure that employees are paid fairly and in keeping with the church's commitment to social justice.
- Recommend to the Session remuneration for non-ordained staff.
- Recommend to the congregation changes in the pastor's terms of call.
- Maintain appropriate job descriptions.
- Recommend appropriate employment policies or updates to existing policies to the Session for approval.

Compassion and Social Justice Team

The Compassion and Social Justice Team plans and coordinates the local mission of First Presbyterian Church to promote social justice and care for God's creation and conducts programs of mission education. The Team has a special focus on hunger, on homelessness, and on environmental stewardship. In addition, the Team:

- Identifies and assesses local mission opportunities, especially for people who are poor, homeless, physically or mentally challenged, victims of prejudice, incarcerated, or otherwise marginalized (e.g. Elder Care Services, ECHO, Grace Mission, Kearney Center).
- Participates and encourages involvement in local, state, national and international service efforts (e.g. Habitat for Humanity, Sustainable Tallahassee, Grass Project in Haiti).
- Presents educational programs and speakers, in coordination with the Spiritual Formation Team, to educate the congregation about mission opportunities.
- Works with advocacy networks to promote social justice (e.g. Florida Impact, Bread for the World, Tallahassee Citizens Against the Death Penalty, Prison Ministries).
- Promotes ecumenical cooperation.
- Supports peacemaking efforts.
- Reviews requests from organizations to use church facilities for their own programs.
- Recommends through the budget process social justice causes the Session might support.

Worship and Music Team

The Worship and Music Team, in partnership with the pastor and Organist-Choirmaster, nurtures the congregation in both public and private worship, and is specifically charged with “the maintenance of divine worship” (G-1.0304). The Worship and Music Team:

- Proposes to the Session the occasions, days, times, and places for worship and for the celebration of the Sacraments.
- Organizes the ministry of ushers, greeters, readers, flower arrangers, musicians, and other worship leaders.
- Organizes elders to serve communion in Lord’s Day worship and, working with the Care and Outreach Team, to extend communion to those who cannot attend public worship.
- Makes video recordings of services for posting on the church website and You Tube channel.
- In cooperation with the Spiritual Formation Team, conducts programs of worship education, with special emphasis on preparing and welcoming children as full participants in corporate worship.
- Proposes and reviews policies for the use of the sanctuary for weddings, civic gatherings, ecumenical and interfaith worship, and other purposes.
- Oversees the use of special appointments such as flowers, candles, banners, paraments, and other objects of art in the sanctuary and other worship settings.

The Organist and Choirmaster (or Organist-Choirmaster, if that position is held by a single individual) are *ex officio* members without vote.

The pastor has the following constitutional responsibilities for services of worship which are not delegated to the Worship and Music Team or Session (W-2.0304):

Ministers of the Word and Sacrament (also called teaching elders) are called to proclaim the Word, preside at the Sacraments, and equip the people for ministry in Jesus’ name. Specifically, ministers of the Word and Sacrament are responsible for: the selection of Scriptures to be read, the preparation of the sermon, the prayers to be offered, the selection of music to be sung, printed worship aids or media presentations for a given service, and the use of drama, dance, and other art forms in a particular service of worship.

Care and Outreach Team

The Care and Outreach Team welcomes visitors, integrates new members into the life of the congregation, and coordinates our care for each other during times of celebration or challenge. Some of the team's activities are:

- Hosting informal lunches, dinners, and “drop in” socials providing time for intergenerational fellowship.
- Reaching out to the homebound with cards and regular visits, and by coordinating with the Worship and Music Team to offer extended communion.
- Offering comfort and care for church members through meals, transportation, and other support.
- Organizing receptions following memorial services.
- Maintaining a prayer chain and a list of prayer requests on the church website.
- Collecting and following up on the “Friendship Register” to ensure visitors are contacted, welcomed, and invited to attend events in addition to worship.

Spiritual Formation Team

The Spiritual Formation Team plans, implements, and evaluates educational programs and formational events for all ages in our congregation. The team:

- Develops, conducts, and supervises programs of education for all ages, including but not limited to Sunday morning Church School for children, youth, and adults; Mid-Week Adult Enrichment programs several times each year, often centered around a theme; youth group for middle and high school students; worship education for children; confirmation preparation; and seasonal events.
- In addition to serving directly in many of these programs, recruits a wide cross-section of the congregation to serve as teachers, group leaders, and advisors; submits the names of those individuals to the Session for approval; and recognizes those individuals yearly.
- Evaluates and submits to the Session for approval curriculum resources to be used in educational programs.
- Maintains a relationship with UKirk Tallahassee, the FSU campus ministry, and encourages college students (both in and out of town) to stay connected to the church through correspondence, holiday gatherings, and participation in the annual Montreat College Conference.
- Organizes informal and educational gatherings for young adults and encourages young adult participation in conferences and study groups.
- Organizes educational events, classes, and conferences for adults.
- Develops and facilitates church family retreats, camps, and conferences.
- Maintains and nurtures a relationship with Dogwood Acres Camp and Retreat Center.
- Fosters an understanding of Christian service by organizing and facilitating mission and service opportunities for all ages.
- Appoints a member of the team to serve on the board of directors of First Presbyterian Preschool.

Appendix

Policies Adopted by the Session of First Presbyterian Church

Columbarium Policy (as revised and adopted August 16, 2020)

Endowment and Gifts Plan (adopted April 28, 1996; amended December 9, 2012)

Christian Education Fund Guidelines (June 1997)

Sexual Misconduct Policy (adopted April 15, 2013; amended December 15, 2019)

Wedding Policy (revised and adopted by the Session July 12, 2015)

Vaughan Loan Fund