



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**5 RIVER STREET
HUDSON FALLS, NY 12839**

(518)636-3200

http://www.fpchudsonfalls.org

REV. MICHAEL S. PLANK, PASTOR

WEDDING POLICY

Our church rejoices in the love of two individuals who desire to share in the commitment of marriage. If we decide together to have your wedding at First Presbyterian Church, our congregation will be glad to partner toward that goal in providing our pastor to give counsel to the couple and worship leadership for the marriage service. We are also open to the use of our sanctuary for wedding services, recognizing that a donation to cover the costs of utilities and other expenses is provided by the couple.

We have created the following policies to provide guidance to couples seeking to use our sanctuary:

- Our pastor will be the officiating clergy person at all weddings within our facilities. It is at his/her discretion to invite others to participate in the marriage service.
- Weddings will be held at least two hours after the conclusion of Sunday and other worship times scheduled for our sanctuary.
- Weddings held during the week must fit within the scheduled use of church facilities.
- At least 1½ hours will be scheduled between weddings that will take place on the same day.
- Weddings are scheduled with the pastor on a first-come, first-serve basis. Others seeking to use the sanctuary must work within given times.
- The following minimum donation schedule for the use of church staff and space is appropriate:

Pastor: \$150	Organist: \$100
Church: \$150	Custodian: \$50

- All donations are to be in the pastor's possession by the time of the wedding rehearsal. We request that payment be made in cash.
- Nothing may be thrown or dropped on church property, inside or outside church buildings. Bubbles may be used *outside*.
- The wedding license is to be in the pastor's possession by the time of the wedding rehearsal.
- This form will be signed and dated to reflect that all parties understand the above policies.

Signature

Signature

Date

Date



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BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT USE POLICY

First Presbyterian Church permits the use of its building and equipment under the following guidelines: the borrowing of church equipment and property is the exclusive privilege of the members of First Presbyterian Church. Borrowers are to sign out items in the log book located in the church office. When items are returned, borrowers are to note their return in the log book.

Items that may be borrowed are limited to the following:

- Tables – lightweight, plastic, six-foot tables
- Chairs – metal folding chairs
- Coffee Pots (must be available for Sunday coffee hour)
- Chafing Dishes

Church owned buildings and rooms may be used by church members and non-profit groups. Rooms must be reserved in advance through the Church Office. Availability will be dependent on church need and use. Rooms are to be cleaned and reset to their original configuration after use.

Alcoholic beverages are **not** allowed on the property or in the buildings. Smoking is **not** allowed in any building.

Any liability arising from use of church equipment lies with the borrower. The borrower is responsible for providing for repair, to the satisfaction of the Board of Trustees, of any damage to equipment or property that occurs while borrowed or during use.

This form will be signed and dated to reflect that all parties understand the above policies.

Signature

Signature

Date

Date



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FUNERAL POLICY

Funerals will be conducted by the pastor at her/his discretion. In the event that that the pastor is unable to officiate a funeral for a member of the church, the pastor or the worship committee will be responsible for finding an alternative officiant.

Reservations for use of the sanctuary or fellowship hall for the purpose of a funeral shall be secured through the church office, provided that there are no scheduling conflicts. The church secretary shall ordinarily be responsible for notifying the Trustees of the date and time of the service so that they may open and close the church.

Music for the funeral service will ordinarily be provided by the church organist, who will be consulted by the pastor if applicable.

If the sanctuary needs to be cleaned prior to the funeral service, the church secretary shall ordinarily be responsible for notifying the custodian.

First Presbyterian Church of Hudson Falls, NY
The Presbytery of Albany
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Revised by COM, February 8, 2010

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT & ABUSE - POLICY AND PROCEDURES

We believe and proclaim that all people are created by God. God values all human life and intends that everyone—men, women and children—have worth and dignity in all relationships. We further believe in justice for all persons. Sexual misconduct is an abuse of power and trust, therefore, unjust. Scripture asserts that religious leadership involves a covenant relationship that presumes the trustworthy exercise of power in behalf of those in our care. A betrayal of this trust is more than just a personal tragedy for the victim. It reflects a tragic breakdown in the character of the abuser that seriously threatens not only those immediately affected but the well-being of the church itself.

For too long, incidents of sexual misconduct have been glossed over, rationalized, or subverted for "the good of the Church." The First Presbyterian Church here proclaims that, the "good of the Church" can never be served by overlooking an abuse of power and trust, that sexual misconduct is wrong. We further declare that charges of misconduct must be dealt with promptly, fairly, and with compassion for both the alleged injured party and the alleged perpetrator.

The purpose of this policy is to make clear the First Presbyterian Church's position on sexual misconduct and abuse and to establish the procedures to be followed in investigating and resolving instances where misconduct is alleged to have occurred. The General Assembly Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct and Albany Presbytery's Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct have encouraged and informed this policy.

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Sexual misconduct, defined as including sexual harassment and abuse, whether of a child or adult, is a violation of the principles set forth in Scripture and is never permissible. This policy applies to all clergy and staff, paid and volunteer, officers, church members and those using church property. This policy recognizes that victims of sexual misconduct may include church members and their children, church employees, ministers, and other persons regardless of church membership or association. It is the policy of this church that charges of sexual misconduct be treated with the seriousness they deserve and be dealt with promptly and fairly for the benefit of all parties concerned. In keeping with American law and tradition, the presumption of innocence regarding the accused must be respected.

It is against the policy of the First Presbyterian Church, and illegal under state and federal law, for any clergy and staff, paid and volunteer, officers, church members and those using church property to engage in any form of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment and abuse as defined by this policy.

The First Presbyterian Church is committed to providing a safe place for our faith community to worship, work and gather that is free from this unlawful conduct. The adoption and enforcement of the provisions of this policy are in keeping with this commitment.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

A. What is "sexual harassment?"

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. This policy applies to all members and employees of the First Presbyterian Church, both paid and volunteer, as well as those who use the property. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- 1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or participation;
- 2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a component of the basis for employment or participation decisions affecting the individual;
- 3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's participation in the community or work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive church environment.
- 4) Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to the following, when such acts or behavior come within one of the above definitions:
 - a) either explicitly or implicitly conditioning any term of employment (i.e. continued employment, wages, pay raise, evaluation, advancement, assigned duties, assigned shifts, etc.) or participation on the provision of sexual favors;
 - b) touching or grabbing a sexual part of a person's body;
 - c) touching or grabbing any part of a person's body after that person has indicated, or it is known, that such physical contact is unwelcome;
 - d) continuing to ask a member or employee to socialize on or off church property when that person has indicated that she/he is not interested;
 - e) displaying or transmitting sexually suggestive pictures, objects, cartoons, posters, etc.
 - f) continuing to write sexually suggestive notes or letters if it is known or should be known that the person does not welcome such behavior;
 - g) referring to or calling a person a name with sexual connotations if it is known or should be known that the person does not welcome such behavior;
 - h) telling sexually suggestive jokes or using sexually vulgar or explicit language;
 - i) derogatory or provoking remarks about or relating to an employee's sex or sexual orientation;
 - j) harassing acts or behavior directed against a person on the basis of his/her sex or sexual orientation;
 - k) off-site conduct which falls within the above definition and affects the work environment or community of the church at large.

In addition, retaliation of any kind against a person for having filed or supported a complaint of sexual harassment (i.e. ostracizing the person, pressuring the person to drop or not support the complaint, adversely altering that person's job duties, work environment, or participation etc.) is also against the law and a violation of this policy.

B. What is Sexual Abuse?

Sexual Abuse is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to:

- 1) Any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without mental capacity to consent {D-10.0401b. (1)} or

- 2) Any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of office or position {D-10.0401b. (2)}.
- 3) Examples of sexual abuse include any and all of the following behavior:
 - a) punishing or threatening to punish a person for rejecting sexual attention, requests, and/or demands;
 - b) coercing, or attempting to coerce, a person into a sexual and/or dating relationship;
 - c) the use of spiritual or appointed authority to coerce or the attempt to coerce, persuade, or mislead a person to enter into sexual behavior;
 - d) basing employment, promotion, pay increases, training opportunities or participation in this faith community's events on a person's acceptance or rejection of sexual advances;
 - e) utilizing a position of trust to engage in sexual contact, with or without consent, involving a person who is subject to the implicit trust relationship which the position conveys (e.g., ministers, pastoral counselors, youth leaders, church school teachers, child care workers, etc.);
 - f) any sexual contact by force, threat, or physical intimidation, including but not limited to rape or attempted rape.

C. What is Child Sexual Abuse?

Child Sexual Abuse includes any and all of the following behaviors, whether carried out either on or off site:

- 1) any inappropriate sexual interaction between any individual and a child, whether verbal or physical;
- 2) any sexual contact by force, threat, or physical intimidation, including but not limited to rape or attempted rape;
- 3) any contact or interaction between an individual and a child when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the individual or a third party.

III. PROCEDURES FOR ALBANY PRESBYTERY AND MEMBER CONGREGATIONS

A. Presbytery Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Presbytery to:

- 1) insist that Presbytery officers, staff, clergy members of Presbytery and elders of congregations which are members of Albany Presbytery set a personal example by not engaging in sexual misconduct in any form;
- 2) explain, through the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry, that sexual misconduct will not be tolerated. Presbytery will regularly conduct training and educational events and activities for both clergy and lay people, organized and supervised by the Committee on Ministry. Such an event is mandatory for minister members of Presbytery at least once every five years.
- 3) take action to address all sexual misconduct by:
 - a) encouraging the reporting of all accusations;
 - b) following up with a person who reported sexual misconduct to insure that the behavior has stopped, and that she/he has not experienced any retaliation or reprisal;
 - c) providing procedures to address sexual misconduct reports or accusations both at the Presbytery and congregational level including, but not limited to, the procedures outlined in this policy.

- d) creating a response team as needed (see III D below) and provide by rule for the appointment of an Investigating Committee as needed (see III F below and D.10.0200, 2b in the Book of Order)
 - e) providing for effective reference checking of ministers received into the Presbytery and strongly encouraging Sessions to carry out their own background checks on employees and volunteers, including but not limited to a sexual misconduct employment questionnaire and release form (see Exhibits A & B attached).
- 4) protect anyone who reports an instance of sexual misconduct from any and all forms of retaliation.

B. Session Responsibilities and Resources

Each session in the Presbytery of Albany is responsible for providing a sexual misconduct-free church environment for its employees and members and policies and procedures to enforce the investigation and prosecution of allegations of sexual harassment and abuse within its faith community. A copy of these policies and procedures should be filed with the Stated Clerk of Albany Presbytery.

It shall be the responsibility of the session to:

- 1) Inform all employees and volunteers, especially those who work with children or youth, of the church's Policy on Sexual Misconduct and provide them with a copy;
- 2) Appoint two to four contact persons in the congregation, including at least one woman and one man, to whom an allegedly injured party may go as an alternative to calling the Pastor. It shall be the contact persons' chief responsibilities to explain the policy to the reporter, and to inform the Pastor and Clerk of Session, *who are strongly encouraged to inform either the Chair of Committee on Ministry or the General Presbyter*. If the Pastor is the accused perpetrator the contact person must also contact the General Presbyter of Albany Presbytery.
- 3) Recognize the importance of and maintain confidentiality regarding both the accuser and accused. It shall be the contact person's responsibility to ascertain what is appropriate confidentiality in discussion with the Pastor or Clerk of Session and to advise the reporter accordingly. It may be appropriate at some point for the Session to inform the congregation of the situation and the parties involved. This should be done in consultation with the either the General Presbyter, Chair of the Committee on Ministry, or the Presbytery's Response Team.

C. Reporting Procedures

Reports of sexual misconduct will occur in a variety of ways. Because an individual church or the Presbytery cannot control to whom the accuser of sexual misconduct will first speak, it is important that all church leaders and employees understand how reports of incidents are to be channeled to the proper person. Reports of sexual misconduct should never be taken lightly or disregarded and allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the accuser, the accused, and of the Church. Reports should be dealt with as matters of highest confidentiality both before and after they have been submitted to appropriate authorities.

All persons covered by this policy have a particular duty to report suspected child sexual abuse and shall report the incident to civil or criminal authorities as required by local or state law. All persons should be educated by their local church and must comply with state and local laws regarding incidents of actual or suspected child sexual abuse.

The importance of properly reporting allegations of sexual misconduct cannot be overemphasized. Attempts to resolve accusations informally, while understandable, can often result in inappropriate responses, which may make matters worse. Accordingly, the following reporting procedures are to be followed.

- 1) A victim of sexual misconduct may be a church member, church employee, anyone on church property, or the minister herself or himself. The injured party is encouraged to contact one of the following if she/he has been or is being subjected to any form of sexual misconduct:
 - a) The Sexual Misconduct Contact Persons of the local church, appointed by the Session. These will be two to four people, including at least one woman and one man to whom the accuser may go instead of directly to the Pastor. It shall be the contact person's chief responsibility to explain the policy and to inform the Pastor and clerk of Session of the accusation.
 - b) The Pastor
 - c) The Clerk of Session
 - d) Should the alleged offender be the Pastor, the General Presbyter should be informed.
 - e) Should the alleged offender be the Pastor, the Clerk of Session is assigned the role of the Pastor wherever this role appears in this policy.
- 2) Allegations received from a third party, but as yet unsubstantiated by the presumed injured party, are to receive a prompt inquiry by the Pastor in consultation with the General Presbyter or Chair of the Committee on Ministry. The accused shall be informed of the allegations.
- 3) A formal accusation by an alleged injured party will initiate a disciplinary case which will be handled as stipulated by the Rules of Discipline D-10.000 and following. This process is briefly identified in Section F.
- 4) Reprisals as a result of reporting allegations are forbidden and, should such occur, could lead to disciplinary process.
- 5) The reporting of false allegations as a vindictive act is also subject to disciplinary process if the person reporting is subject to Presbyterian discipline.

D. Response Team Procedures

The Response Team **only responds** and does not deal with any disciplinary actions. Coordination of the process will be done by the Session in consultation with the Committee on Ministry as needed.

- 1) The creation of a Response Team to carry out pastoral but not investigative functions shall be the responsibility of Albany Presbytery, and offered to the allegedly injured party by the General Presbyter as soon as an allegation comes to his or her attention.
- 2) The Committee on Ministry shall appoint a Team of 2-4 members with special concern and sensitivity to sexual misconduct issues. There should be at least one woman and one man on the team. Training will be provided as needed.
- 3) A Response Team may not function as an Investigating Committee and the pool of persons identified in D.2 (above) shall not ordinarily serve on Investigating Committees during the time they are members of this pool.
- 4) If there is more than one Response Team involved in the same misconduct process, the Teams shall not communicate directly with one another unless specifically requested to do so by the General Presbyter.
- 5) Response Teams may be assigned one or more of the following functions:

- 6) To lay out a clear process and to be available for guidance during this process, as well as to suggest appropriate resources
- 7) To listen to and assist injured parties.
- 8) When a Response Team is asked to contact an injured party, it shall do so within five days of its notification to listen, to present procedural options, and to counsel with the person until a course of action is determined upon. The Response Team shall assist as needed in facilitating the use of Presbyterian polity.
- 9) To consult with alleged offenders.
- 10) On the day that a Response Team meets with an injured party, the Pastor, General Presbyter or the Chair of the Committee on Ministry will communicate with the alleged offender to inform her/him of the allegations, and to discuss possible responses and next steps. When so desired, a Response Team will be appointed to consult with the accused. Such a Response Team will provide pastoral support to the alleged offender and/or family members.
- 11) To offer support to families or congregations which have been injured by sexual misconduct and/or allegations of same.
- 12) When a Response Team is asked to provide support to families or congregations who have been injured by sexual misconduct or allegations of same, its role shall be one exclusively of support and it shall refrain from offering any counsel relating to disciplinary procedures.
- 13) To evaluate third-party allegations;
- 14) When a Response Team is asked to evaluate third-party allegations, and it determines there is a need to contact the alleged injured party, it shall follow the procedure in a. above. If a formal inquiry is needed, this is to be done by a Special Disciplinary Committee and not a Response Team.
- 15) To see that the required reporting of any child abuse or other criminal behavior is provided to the appropriate authorities.

E. Procedures for Non-Disciplinary Cases

It is expected that all allegations involving Sexual Abuse will lead to the creation of an Investigating Committee as provided for in the Rules of Discipline. (See F. Below)

In instances where the initial allegations relate to sexual harassment exclusively, the following procedures may be followed unless or until it becomes clear that an Investigating Committee is needed.

- 1) A Response Team will be selected to hear the party or parties bringing the report of sexual harassment. The same Response Team will then meet with the alleged offender and communicate the allegations.
- 2) If the Response Team is able to achieve a resolution of the report which is satisfactory to all parties, it shall report this to the Session and Chair of Committee on Ministry. The Session and/or the Response Team shall follow-up with subsequent reviews after one month and six months.
- 3) If the Response Team is unable to achieve a resolution of the report which is satisfactory to all parties, or if it believes further action is needed to assure no further misconduct will take place, it shall consult with the Session as to whether the Committee on Ministry, General Presbyter, or some other party needs to be involved to accomplish this objective.

- 5) A church session and/or the Committee on Ministry may be requested to admonish a person who has engaged in sexual misconduct and to monitor future behavior. If such behavior is repetitive, the monitoring group in consultation with a professional counselor may require the offender to undergo psychotherapy. The monitoring group may also determine whether a formal disciplinary process should be recommended to the Presbytery.

F. Procedures for Disciplinary Cases

A formal accusation of an alleged Sexual Misconduct offense will initiate a disciplinary case which will be handled as stipulated by the Rule of Discipline, Chapter X. What follows is a simplified outline and should not be used in place of the Book of Order.

- 1) An individual submits a written statement of the alleged offense along with supporting information to the Clerk of Session or Stated Clerk (D-10.0101).
- 2) The Clerk of Session or Stated Clerk reports to the church or Presbytery that an offense has been alleged and of the necessity to appoint an Investigating Committee (D-10.0103). A rule enacted by Albany Presbytery in January 1995 (Minutes of Albany Presbytery, page 42) provides for the appointment of an Investigating Committee between Presbytery meetings.
- 3) The Investigating Committee inquires into the alleged offense and determines if charges should be filed (D-10.0200 and following)
- 4) If charges are filed, the Investigating Committee designates a prosecuting committee. (D-10.0202i)
- 5) If the Investigating Committee has decided to file charges, it informs the accused and asks if the person wishes to plead guilty. It indicates the censure it will recommend. (D-10.0302)
- 6) The charge is submitted in writing to the Clerk of Session who forwards it to the Session of the church (D-10.040)
- 7) The Session conducts a pre-trial conference. (D-10.0405)
- 8) The trial is conducted by the Session (D-11). If the person is found guilty, the possible outcomes are rebuke, temporary exclusion from exercise of ordained office or membership, or removal from ordained office or membership.

G. Procedures for Administrative Leave

Administrative leave for an accused employee of the First Presbyterian Church or minister member of Albany Presbytery may commence:

- 1) as soon as an allegation is made
- 2) when charges have been filed
- 3) at the request of the Pastor, Session or COM**
- 4) at the request of the Session of the accused

During the first three months of administrative leave, full compensation will continue to be paid by the church. While it is desirable that the investigation be completed and the situation resolved within a three-month period, continued administrative leave, up to one year, is negotiable.

**In the event that all three are in agreement, the administrative leave may begin immediately and simply be reported to the congregation and the Committee on Ministry. In cases where there is not agreement among the three parties, the Personnel Committee is charged with making a recommendation to the Session and the Session shall decide after having heard from the Pastor and the Personnel Committee.

H. Follow-Up With Congregation

The Presbytery acknowledges that special care may be needed for congregations following the departure of an alleged sexual offender. Church members and staff will likely face issues of betrayal, hurt, anger, loss, confusion, etc. The Committee on Ministry is urged to arrange for interim pastoral leadership and/or other professionals who are skilled in caring for congregations that have experienced such injuries.

Please complete, sign and return Exhibits A & B (attached) to:

Clerk of Session
First Presbyterian Church of Hudson Falls
9 River St.
Hudson Falls, NY 12839

Approved by COM and Amended January 8, 2010

NOTHING FOLLOWS IN THE BLANK SPACE BELOW - EXHIBITS A & B ARE ATTACHED

EXHIBIT A – Page I

First Presbyterian Church EMPLOYMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____

Last First Middle

Full Address: _____

Business Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Have you ever been known by any other name: Yes ___ No ___ If yes: _____

EMPLOYMENT RECORD (List current and previous employers for the last five years.)

Employed by: _____

Full Address: _____

Your Supervisor or Clerk of Session: _____ Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Employed from (Month/Year): _____ To: _____

Why did you leave? _____

Employed by: _____

Full Address: _____

Your Supervisor or Clerk of Session: _____ Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Employed from (Month/Year): _____ To: _____

Why did you leave? _____

Please complete the following certification:

I certify that:

- (a) no civil, criminal, ecclesiastical complaint has ever been sustained or is pending against me for sexual misconduct;
- (b) I have never resigned or been terminated from a position because of any sexual misconduct on my part; or
- (c) I have never been required to receive professional treatment for reasons related to sexual misconduct on my part.

Signed _____ Date _____

NOTE: If you are unable to make the above certification, you may instead attach to this questionnaire a description of any complaint, termination, or course of treatment in which you have been involved, giving names and addresses of employers or physicians, the outcome of the situation and any explanatory comments you care to add.

EXHIBIT A – Page 2

First Presbyterian Church EMPLOYMENT QUESTIONNAIRE RELEASE

The information I have provided on this questionnaire is accurate to the best of my knowledge and may be verified by the employing entity. I hereby authorize First Presbyterian Church to make any and all contacts necessary to verify my prior employment history and to inquire concerning any prior arrest or criminal records or any judicial proceedings involving me as a defendant. By means of this release I also authorize any previous employer and any law enforcement agencies or judicial authorities to release any and all requested information to First Presbyterian Church.

I have read this release and understand fully that the information obtained may be used to deny me employment or any other type of position from the employing entity. I also agree that I will hold harmless the employing entity, as well as any prior employer, law enforcement authority, or judicial authority from any and all claims, liabilities, and cause of action for the release or the use of any information.

Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

EXHIBIT B

First Presbyterian Church ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

I hereby acknowledge that I received on _____ (date), a copy of the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures for First Presbyterian Church of Hudson Falls, and that I have read the policy, understand its meaning and agree to conduct myself in accordance with the policy.

Signature _____ Date _____

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HUDSON FALLS, NY COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

Budget/Finance/Stewardship:

- Oversee annual Stewardship Campaign & Consecration Sunday events and the finances of the church. Work closely with Treasurer & Financial Secretary, Church Secretary, Pastor and Personnel Committee chair.
 - Reviewing and ordering stewardship materials, scheduling minutes for missions, writing Good News articles, creating luncheon reservation cards, calling out to members of the congregation for attending Consecration worship service, working with secretary & pastor regarding numerous stewardship mailings/sermons, setting up congregation luncheon & dinner for officers of the church, providing results of estimate of giving cards at luncheon, working closely with treasurer & financial secretary to review finances especially for yearly budget and Consecration Sunday totaling & with Personnel Committee chair regarding any salaries changes.)

Outreach and Mission:

- Oversee PC(U.S.A.) special offerings, Salvation Army bell ringing, CROP Walk, Souper Bowl Sunday, Food Pantry donations, blood drives, Pennies for Hunger, National Day of Prayer, and any other offerings as the need arises. Work to help alleviate hunger in the community. Work closely with the Office Manager for ordering materials, scheduling minutes for mission, putting envelopes in pews, writing Good News articles, posting mission and local event information, facilitating monthly committee meetings, recording committee expenses for Session updates as well as the annual report, and reviewing incoming requests for mission support.

Welcoming/Spreading the Good News:

- Maintain visitor registry book on the parquet table in the north Narthex.
- Distribute gift bags for visitors which hold tri fold info sheet about HF Presbyterian, pieces of Scripture candy, hard candy in cellophane with encouraging biblical verses, HF Presbyterian imprinted pens, fridge magnets, bookmarks, (sometimes) ``We Are Presbyterians`` booklets
- Greeters at Narthex doors before services aid those with infirmities and welcome visitors. Greeters at Sanctuary doors after services introduce interim pastor to congregation, and invite/escort visitors to coffee hour, introducing them to others.
- Thank-you-for-visiting notes for those who signed the register and were not recognized as visitors on a particular day.
- Copies of Shepherd's Guide on tables in Narthex
- Operation Christmas Child: Shoebox-size packages to needy children here and abroad (contact is Mr. Carrigan)

Advertising/Announcing:

- Bulletin Boards in Narthex (north and south) announcing/celebrating current holidays, special events and people. Announcements for Bring-a-Friend-to Church Sundays.
- Banners (double-sided) announcing Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter, and fundraising events.
- Online/In print Community Calendars and Ads:

Fundraising/Increasing Community Visibility:

- Sandy Hill Days in September (food ordering/purchasing/preparation, primarily, by Dale Dickinson at present). Strawberry Shortcake Booth on church side of Juckett Park . The committee has a canvas pavilion, which is sometimes used for other church events too.)

Monitoring Membership Rolls (biennially/triennially):

- Phoning/calling on members to reinforce their participation in worship and events.
- Removing the names of those not interested in membership at this time (with the understanding that they only need to give the office a call if they wish to return to active membership).
- Submitting names of individuals in a report to Session for consideration and approval.

Worship:

- Co-ordinate with Pastor and choir director for Sunday service
- Arrange for supply when needed
- Order supplies with Secretary (pew pads, candles, communion cups)
- Be aware that correct banners, colors and paraments are up
- Arrange to set up flowers for special services...(Easter, Christmas, others)
- Assist with Special Services set up Hanging of the Greens, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Thanksgiving.
- Assist 1st time elders with communion set up and sanctuary set up if needed
- Provide ushers
- Change sign in front of church (outside)
- Arrange for luminary placement on Christmas Eve...order with Secretary if needed
- Set up dates for the celebration of the Lord's Supper for the following 12 months (in January)

Personnel

- To deal with all matters that directly affect members of the church staff.
- To be an impartial ear to hear the concerns, problems, and conflicts that might exist between members of the staff and the congregation.
- To develop and implement Personnel Policies for the staff.

- To provide a yearly, but separate, salary and performance review for members of the staff.
- To be the forum for the discussion of disagreements and problems:
 - between members of the staff that cannot be worked out through normal channels,
 - between members of the staff and members of the congregation that cannot be worked out through normal channels, and to make recommendations to the Session about any actions that need to be taken.
- To provide for a performance review for members of the staff that should be completed no later than the closing of the church office for summer.
- To provide for a salary review for members of the staff that is completed no later than the Wednesday before the October Session meeting so that changes in salary can be brought, with the rest of the budget, to the October Session meeting. (This also depends on when Presbytery sends out their guidelines for raises)

Fellowship

- Responsible for Coffee Hour: recruit people and let Secretary know so they can receive a reminder letter, update instructions, see that supplies are purchased such as coffee (Fair Trade), sugar, juice, etc. See that money is collected each coffee hour and manage money to use for purchases.
- Any articles regarding coffee hour, dinners, etc must be in by the 15th of the month.
- Planning events, such as Pot Luck Suppers, Harvest Dinner when we have one, Special receptions such as anniversaries, pastor's birthday, other special events as needed, as:
 - Presbytery meetings when held at our church
 - Caroling (making arrangements)
 - Hanging of the Greens (provide soups)
 - Making sure sign up sheets are available for events when needed
 - Seeing that supplies are available for each event
 - Getting set up, decorating and clean up teams together for special events
 - Cleaning up kitchen and dining area of Fellowship Hall (making sure tables are wiped clean before using for food, cleaning out the refrigerator periodically, cleaning out cupboards)
 - Making sure dishcloths, towels and table cloths are clean
 - Purchasing cleaning supplies such as dish detergent
 - Advising secretary when napkins, paper towels, juice cups and garbage bags need to be ordered.

Christian Education:

- Christian Education Committee is in charge of the education of the youth and sometimes with the assistance of the Pastor, adult education in the life of Christ, the Church, and God. The Christian Education Committee is comprised of a moderator, and elder, and members at large that are willing to assist in the

development of the youth of the church. The moderator can be the elder or a member at large.

- The Christian Education Committee meets, at a minimum, quarterly. Depending on the time of year more meetings may be necessary. The Christian Education Committee is also in charge of the nursery and coverage during worship service and special services held at the pastor's discretion. This Committee is also in charge of recruiting volunteers not only for the nursery but as teachers to instruct and guide the youth on their journey with Christ.

The Christian Education Committee is/has been in charge of the following:

- Selection of the Curriculum for each year
- The Christmas Pageant (with assistance of music director)
- Youth Sunday (a presentation of the Lord's Day)
- 'Grace of God' dinner and basket raffle (new this year and used as a fundraiser for the supplies needed each year)
- Participation in other seasonal events (Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost)
- Teacher Appreciation
- Issuing of Bibles to youth
- Development and response to the need for mission within the church
 - 'Souper' Bowl Sunday
 - New Orleans or other mission
 - Midnight Run

Nominating

- Seeks out prospective candidates for the office of trustee or ruling elder within the church.
- Yearly we replace a specific number of current officers with newly elected people to fill said positions.
- The first step is meeting with the nominating committee members to formulate a strong list of candidates.
- The candidates named on the prospective list are called by the committee members and asked if they would consider the position the committee chose for them.
- The committee members answer questions and discuss concerns the candidate might have regarding the position.
- If the candidate agrees to serve, a list of all candidates is submitted at the annual congregational meeting for approval.
- If approved by the congregation, they are then installed as either a deacon or an elder to serve the church.
- The nominating committee also conducts basically the same process to establish the pulpit nominating committee (PNC) when the church is looking for a new pastor.
- The committee also has to meet and discuss a candidate for approval if a present officer is unable to serve their full term as deacon or elder.

Memorial

- Review applications and determine winners of the LaRue, Presbyterian, and Women's Association scholarships. Monitor the Dempsey Loan for students

DUTIES FOR ELDER OF THE MONTH

SET-UP

(SET-UP CAN BE DONE ANYTIME BETWEEN FRIDAY AFTERNOON AND 9:00AM SUNDAY)

- BRING BOX OF BULLETINS** AND CHILDREN'S BASKET FROM THE CHURCH HOUSE TO CHURCH. YOU WILL FIND THE BOX ON THE CHAIR IN FRONT OF THE CHURCH OFFICE.
- PUT ONE PACKET OF BULLETINS** ON EACH SIDE OF THE NARTHEX
- PUT PACKET MARKED "CHOIR"** ON THE 1ST CHAIR IN THE CHOIR LOFT
- DIVIDE PACKET MARKED "5 EXTRA"** AND PUT 2 ON THE TABLE, 1 ON THE PULPIT, 1 TO JOYCE AND 1 TO DIANE
- PLACE THE CHILDREN'S OFFERING BASKET ON THE FRONT LEFT CORNER OF THE ORGAN**
- CHANGE THE HYMN BOARD** – THE BOX OF NUMBERS IS NEXT TO THE ORGAN (ON THE FLOOR, LEFT SIDE). YOU MAY USE A CHAIR TO STAND ON OR THERE IS A WHITE STEP STOOL BEHIND THE CHOIR.

ON SUNDAY

BEFORE THE SERVICE...

- LIGHT THE CANDLES 10 MINUTES BEFORE THE SERVICE BEGINS**
- SWITCH ON THE SOUND SYSTEM** (SWITCH IS IN BLACK BOX IN BACK HALL)
- FILL THE SILVER BOWL IN THE BAPTISMAL FONT** WITH WATER FROM THE FAUCET IN THE BACK HALL

DURING THE SERVICE...

- EXTINGUISH CANDLES DURING LAST VERSE OF LAST HYMN;** LIGHT WICK ON CANDLE LIGHTER FROM CHRIST CANDLE, THEN EXTINGUISH CHRIST CANDLE. WAIT IN FRONT WITH LIT CANDLE LIGHTER AND WALK DOWN OPPOSITE AISLE AS PASTOR TO GREET PEOPLE AS THEY EXIT.

AFTER THE SERVICE...

BRING SUPPLIES BACK TO THE OFFICE: MAKE SURE THE BASKET FOR THE BULLETINS, THE BASKET WITH THE SUNDAY SCHOOL OFFERING, EXTRA BULLETINS, SERMONS AND THE YELLOW ATTENDANCE SLIPS ARE BROUGHT BACK TO THE CHURCH HOUSE AND PUT ON THE CHAIR WHERE YOU FOUND THEM OR ON RENE'S DESK IF THE OFFICE IS OPEN.

Membership at First Presbyterian Church

We welcome *all people* to worship with us! Many of those who worship with us also want to become members of our church. When you become a member, we enter into a covenant together.

The idea of a “covenant” is as old as Scripture itself. In the Bible, God made covenants with the people – individuals and with the community as a whole – and promised to be their God, provide for their needs, love them, guide them, and hold them accountable. The people, in turn, made covenants with God to be God’s faithful people, to follow in God’s ways, to love and serve God with their whole being. People also made covenants with each other – to demonstrate specific ways in which they would live together as people of faith.

When you join First Presbyterian Church, the covenant we enter reflects biblical ways to live together, reflects the things we believe about living lives of faith as Presbyterians within the larger community of the Church, and reflects the implications of the membership questions that we ask people to affirm when they join the church.

You covenant with us that . . .

1. I will attend worship regularly.
2. I will reflect regularly on how I spend my time and money as a part of my understanding of my own mission and purpose in life.
3. I will do something helpful to others within the church.
4. I will do something helpful to others within the community in which I live.
5. I will do something helpful to others in the world.

We covenant with you that . . .

1. We will provide meaningful worship experiences and quality educational events for people of all ages.
2. We will be there to support you in your life’s events.
3. We will support you and pray for you in your life’s work and witness outside of the church’s walls.
4. We will responsibly develop our continuing mission to the neighborhood, city, nation, and world.

The Process of Becoming a Member at First Presbyterian Church

Membership means more than a check mark next to your name. It is a holy, joyful, and serious commitment. Membership affords you the privileges of deeper involvement in our ministry, participation in decision-making, and the use of our space and facilities. However, the majority of our events, including worship, are open to *all people* regardless of whether or not they are members. Becoming a member means that you desire to participate more deeply and fully in our mission and ministry than simply attending events. To become a member, we ask you to go through the following process.

NOTE: This is a PROCESS, and it is designed to help you discern whether or not membership in our church is something you want to pursue. We trust those who come to us to be honest with themselves and with us about whether they want to continue the process all the way through. You are welcome to stop the process at any time and still continue your involvement and worship with the church. However, to become a *member* of the church, you will need to complete the following...

- 1) When you express interest in being a member, you will be given a sponsor. This person will be someone who has been an active member of the congregation. Your sponsor will be expected to spend casual time with you over coffee, a meal, etc. at least twice. You will also spend 2 hours volunteering with your sponsor in some part of the life of the church. Among other things, options include helping with the rummage sale, attending craft night, working with the prayer shawl group, making sandwiches for the Code Blue shelter, or bell ringing or caroling around Christmas. This will give you a hands-on feel for what the church does, and is also a great opportunity to spend time getting to know people in the congregation as you work with them to make the world a better place.
- 2) You'll have the opportunity to learn more about the church and what it's like to be a member, in addition to building a relationship with someone in the church.
- 3) You will be expected to participate in a 6-week class (a new course starts several times each year and meets weekly after church on Sundays) which is a discussion-driven course about traditional Presbyterian beliefs on all kinds of theological and social issues.
- 4) You and your sponsor will be asked to meet with Session (the governing body of the church). This is not a test! Rather, it's a chance for you to get to ask any further questions you have about the church, its history, its beliefs, or its decision-making processes. It will also give you yet another chance to meet people in the congregation.

- 5) To join the church, you must be baptized (if you've never been baptized, this will happen on the day you join). A person joins the Church by one of three ways:
- a. Profession of Faith - for those who have never been a church member anywhere before.
 - b. Reaffirmation of Faith - for those who have been a church member before, but are not an active member of a congregation at this time.
 - c. Letter of Transfer - for those who presently are active members of another congregation.

On the day you join, you stand before the congregation during worship on a Sunday morning:

The Bible talks about the importance of professing one's faith in Christ before others. New members are called before the congregation during a regular worship service, and are asked to affirm the following statements:

- a. Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world? (*"I do"*)
- b. Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Lord and Savior, trusting in his grace and love? (*"I do"*)
- c. Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love? (*"I will, with God's help"*)

After you've completed the process, we welcome you joyfully into official membership in the worship, mission, and ministry of our church!