
Session Meeting

TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2023

Servant Leadership — What ought to be the role of an elder at WPC?

Rebuild the traditional roles of elders and deacons in the life of a PCUSA congregation — will start a conversation in the pulpit and in classes — develop peer pressure.

PCUSA Book of Order W-4.0404 i. (1)

- Will you be a faithful ruling elder, watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service?
- Will you share in government and discipline, serving in councils of the church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

PCUSA Book of Order G-2.0301

As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in discernment of God's Spirit and governance of God's people.

Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit.

Ruling elders are so named not because they “lord it over” the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life.

Ruling elders, together with ministers of the Word and Sacrament, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships.

When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the session. When elected as 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.

Conversation about reorganizing the structures of the church to suit our size and the average ages of the members. Tonight **we begin a process of discernment**. In a month or two, the elders will make some decisions on a number issues of doing our work decently and in an orderly fashion. Some decisions may need approval by the congregation.

This list is not exhaustive — this list is intended to develop a meaningful conversation amongst the elders and staff about appropriate changes to meet the needs of this congregation at this time.

- Elder board size — recommended 12 (3 classes of 4)
- Deacons board size — recommended 9 (3 classes of 3)
- Coordinating council — chairs of teams, clergy, treasurer, clerk of session, and moderator of the deacons, staff members
- Revisit the Vision Statement — reaffirm or update
- Organize church life around the Church Year, the Revised Standard Lectionary, and the plans of the WAM (Worship, Arts, Music) Team
- Recommendations for standing teams

- Administration Team — combines finance, campus management, and personnel
- Mission Team — local, glocal, global
- WAM (Worship, Arts, Music)
- Education and Formation Team — combines adult, youth, children, grandchildren, fellowship — focus on intergenerational ministry
- Deacons — care and cure
- Welcoming and Membership
- New initiatives team — special focus on 1-3 new initiatives that actualize the Vision Statement
- Changes to bylaws — eliminate trustee board and special gifts team; the new Admin Team will assume responsibilities of the trustees and the special gifts team

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Stewardship campaign in October (very old school)— meet in homes, focus on time, talent, and monies; consider a new capital fund: to complete the remodeling of the campus, possible renovation of the interior of the sanctuary; establish a legacy gift program — raise funds for new initiatives, funds for choral scholars, technical scholars.

New Initiatives in 2023

- Establish Coffee House (takes 3-years in a nonprofit to develop permanence) — need a suggestion box, need special gifts for sustainability, furthers the aim of developing partnerships
- Intensify fellowship activities (food, fun, festivity) — build on a strength of the congregation
- Memory Care program — next steps

