

Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)

Manual of Administrative Operations

(Guidelines and Procedures)

In compliance with the PCUSA Book Of Order G-3.0106

September 17, 2025



The Mission of Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church is to be in partnership with God to transform ourselves, our communities, and our world.

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Revisions

Date	Section	Description
July 2023	1. Bright Star	Submitted to Session October 21, 2022 by Mary Ellen Miller, Chair of the Board
July 2023	2. Coffee Hour	Submitted to Session August 2022
July 2023	3. Columbarium	Submitted July 2023
July 2023	4. Deacon	June 29, 2022
July 2023	5. Earth Care	Submitted for this manual
July 2023	6. Finance	Submitted for this manual
July 2023	7. Nominating	Submitted to Session March 2021
July 2023	8. Personnel	Created 06/25/2022 R Cook, Revised P Lockhart 6/26 & again by R Reese 7/25/22 RR
July 2023	9. Presbyterian Women	Submitted for this manual
July 2023	10. Property	
July 2023	11. Pumpkin Patch	Submitted for this manual
July 2023	12. Session	
July 2023	13. South African	
July 2023	14. Special Offerings	Created July 2022
July 2023	15. Tedford Shelter Meal Ministry	Submitted for this manual
July 2023	16. Worship	Submitted to Session July 2022
Mar 2025	18	Added some policies required by the Book Of Order
Mar 2025	Added Bylaws	The Bylaws are reformatted from the original with every effort to maintain original content. Changes to the Bylaws are noted at the end of the Bylaws.
Apr 2025	3.8 Email Discussion and Voting	Added this section
Apr 2025	Various	Updated references to the Book Of Order; where text of the reference is included, the text is quoted and italicized.
Apr 2025	10. Deacons	Added moderator duties which includes some secretary duties; Added tasks for regular meetings.
Apr 2025	21.6 Room occupancy	Added Fellowship Hall occupancy limits when configured different ways
26 Apr 2025	Various	Per consensus at Unretreat: Communion Prep and Serving moved to Worship Memorial Service Reception moved to Presbyterian Women Building Use moved to Property Wedding Policy deleted Safe Church (Haven) Policy moved to Sexual Misconduct Building Close Checklist moved to Building Use Added Sudanese Presbyterian Fellowship of Portland Added Men's Faith Study
2 May 2025	Session Communication Policy	Originally approved 10/9/2019
5 May 2025	Section 9, Worship Committee	Removed Communion Procedures as they are dynamic and are contained in the Worship Procedures document
26 May 2025	Section 9, Added edits supplied by the Worship Committee	Various editorial changes
27 May 2025	Section 10, Deacons	Removed reference to card ministry and Bibles for Prison Initiative
28 May 2025	Section 16, Pumpkin Patch Team	Various editorial changes

28 May 2025	Section 14, PW	Various editorial changes
2 Jun 2025	Section 10, Deacons	Added paragraph for “Greeters”, removed other references to greeters
4 Jun 2025	Section 15, Men’s Faith Study; Section 18, South African Connection Team; Section 19, Sudanese Presbyterian Fellowship of Portland; Section 20, Special Offerings	Various editorial changes
13 Jun 2025	Section 4, Columbarium	Entire section updated
26 Jun 2025	Section 12, Earth Care Team	Editorial addition, one sentence.
11 Jul 2025	Moved entire Section 10, Board of Deacons, to immediately after Section 3, Elders	At request of content experts.
11 Jul 2025	Section 3, Elders, added “The Great Ends of the Church”	At request of content experts.
15 Jul 2025	Section 4, Board of Deacons, replaced with new section submitted by Deacons	Per the Deacons
18 Jul 2025	Inserted “Winter Weather Procedure” into Section 3, Session	The procedure crosses into many areas of the administration of MCPC
1 Aug 2025	Technology Team Section	Added draft section created by Paul Brown.
11 Aug 2025	Technology Team Section	Added more content.
30 Aug 2025	Section 3.9, Session Communication Policy	Simplified.
30 Aug 2025	Section 3, Church-Wide Procedures	Created section and moved into it the Winter Weather Procedure, and Building Open and Close checklists for both Sunday Morning and NOT Sunday Morning. Re-generated the Table Of Contents and Index.
30 Aug 2025	Section 4.9, Communication Policy	Simplified.
30 Aug 2025	Section for Nominating Committee	Moved to before the Columbarium Committee. Note that after the move the above references to section numbers are incorrect.
30 Aug 2025	Property Committee Section	Added items to “Responsibilities and Tasks” and made items more specific.
30 Aug 2025	Section 10.5, Building Use	Added Building Use Policy Form.
30 Aug 2025	Section for Bright Start	Moved to before Coffee Hour Team
17 Sep 2025	Manual approved by Session	The Session voted to approved the Administrative Manual, realizing it’s a living document. Session plans to ask Congregation to vote on some changes to the Bylaws during the 25 Jan 2026, Congregational Meeting.

Throughout this document, “MCPC” refers to Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church, Topsham, ME.

Acknowledgements

The congregation and Session of MCPC are grateful for the multitude of members and friends who have contributed to the content of this administrative manual. Below are some of them. We're sure we have missed some who have significantly contributed, for which we apologize!

Paul Brown.....South African Connection Team
Ruth Cook.....Nominating and Personnel Committees
Joanna Damon.....Presbyterian Women and Memorial Service
Audrey Grassman.....Previous editions and several parts of this Manual
Rev. Diane Hoppe Hugo.....Several and various parts of this Manual
Darryl Johnson.....Property Committee and Pumpkin Patch Team
Page Lockhart.....Coffee Hour Teams
Mary Ellen Miller.....Bright Start Early Childhood Center
Debbie Patterson.....Columbarium
Dick Reese.....Earth Care Team and Personnel Committee
Shirley Reese.....Previous editions of this Manual and Pumpkin Patch Team

Book Of Order Requirements

Where there is content required or recommended by the PC(USA) Constitution, Book Of Order, it is referenced in this Manual. The Book Of Order, 2023-2025, Part G-3.0106, requires that “All councils shall adopt and implement **the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protection policy, and an antiracism policy. Each council’s policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months.**”

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1 Mission Statement

Our Mission is to be in partnership with God to transform ourselves, our communities, and our world. Why? To live and act with Christ's love so that all are uplifted, supported, and connected.

Life at Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church is centered on Christ's call to us as a community and as individuals. All of what we do at MCPC is considered mission – worship, prayer, study and exploring, sharing our building with the community, supporting Bright Start, being “The Pumpkin Church”, relationships with other worshipping communities from Brunswick to South Africa, working with local community support agencies from The Gathering Place to Tedford to Habitat...ALL of it! And our mission statement keeps us in balance.

A life called to grow in our personal relationship with our Lord and in our relationships with each other through Worship, Study, Fellowship & Mutual Care.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD TO TRANSFORM OURSELVES

A life called to be participating in the life of our community, supporting others by bringing our time and our talents and our treasures to prayerfully support our sisters and brothers and siblings in Christ's love through Community Outreach, sharing our Home, and Bright Start Child Care Center.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD TO TRANSFORM OUR COMMUNITIES

A life reminded that God's creation extends far beyond our walls and called to be a part of that creation and in relationship with the greater church through Connectional Ministry, being a **Matthew 25** & an **Earth Care Congregation**, and being in relationship with the Sudanese Fellowship (Portland, ME) and the J.Z.S. Ncevu Church, South Africa.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

2 BYLAWS

2.1 ARTICLE I: NAME AND RELATIONSHIPS

2.1.1 Name

The name of this church shall be the Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church of Topsham, Maine. This church was organized by the Presbytery of Northern New England on October 25, 1987, and was incorporated under the laws of the State of Maine on January 4, 1988.

2.1.2 Connectional Church

This church is a particular congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and is subject to the guidance and direction of the General Assembly, and of the Synod of the Northeast and of the Presbytery of Northern New England. These bylaws and all activities of this church shall always be in full conformity with the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* as properly interpreted by the governing bodies of jurisdiction, and with State laws. These bylaws set forth the ecclesiastical and corporate structure and method of operation of this particular church.

2.1.3 Location

The principal office for the transaction of the business of this church, including its corporate affairs, shall be at 84 Main Street, Topsham, Maine 04086.

2.2 ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES.

2.2.1 A Christian Church in the World***

The objectives of this church are: The proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of ~~mankind~~ **humankind**; the shelter, nurture, and the spiritual fellowship of the Children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the World.

2.2.2 Gifts, Bequests, Funds, Property

To these ends, the church as a corporation may receive, hold, invest and disburse gifts, bequests and other funds; it may own, maintain and/or lease real estate and buildings, and any personal property which is deemed necessary to its objectives and it may enter into, make, and perform and carry out contracts of every kind for any lawful purpose without limit to amount. All property, real and/or personal, now held or hereafter acquired by the church as a corporation, however title be lodged, and interests therein legal or equitable, shall be held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

2.2.3 Nonprofit and nonpartisan

As a corporation, this church has been formed under the Maine corporation law for the religious purposes set forth in Section 1, of this Article, and it shall be nonprofit and nonpartisan. The corporation shall function in compliance with the provisions of the United States Internal Revenue Code, Section 501 (c)(3) setting forth the requirements to qualify as a tax-exempt corporation.

2.2.4 Limitations of Activities and Powers

Neither the congregation nor the corporation shall, except in insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the objectives set forth in Section 1 of this Article.

2.3 ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

2.3.1 Members

The congregation is made up of all members on the active roll of the church. No person shall be denied membership because of sex, race, ethnic origin, worldly condition or any other reason not connected with profession of faith.

2.3.2 Voting Requirements

All such members, and only such members, who are present at a congregation meeting are entitled to vote, subject to the statutory minimum age of 18 years in voting on corporate matters.

2.4 ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

2.4.1 Business Transacted at Meetings

Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation may be of two kinds: ecclesiastical and corporate. Both kinds of business may be conducted at the same congregational meeting.

2.4.2 Opened and Closed with Prayer

All meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer.

2.4.3 Meeting Procedures

All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, except in those cases where the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)* provides otherwise.

2.4.4 Notices of Meetings

Public notice of a meeting of the congregation shall be given on two successive Sundays.

2.4.5 Scheduling of Stated Meetings***

There shall be ~~two~~ **one** stated meetings of the congregation each year. The ~~Fall~~ meeting shall be held during the month of ~~October~~ **January** at a convenient time and place specified by the session for the purpose of electing elders and deacons, and to review the proposed budget for the ensuing calendar year. The Annual Meeting ~~shall be held in January at a convenient time and place specified by the session for the purpose of~~ **will include** receiving annual reports from the session and church organizations, including financial reports, to vote on the changes in the terms of the call (s) of the minister (s) upon prior review by the session, to elect the auditors and the congregational members of the nominating committee, and to transact any and all business that may properly come before it.

2.4.6 Special Meetings

Special meetings of the congregation shall be called by session or on direction of the Presbytery or by session when requested in writing by one-quarter of the active members. Such calls shall state clearly the purpose of the meeting, and no other matter save that specified in the call may be considered. Public notice of the meeting shall be given on two successive Sundays. The meeting may be convened following the notice given on the second Sunday, except there must be ten days' notice of the time, place and purpose of the meeting called to elect a pastor nominating committee.

2.4.7 Quorum

The quorum of a meeting of the congregation shall be not less than one-tenth of the members.

2.4.8 Proxy Voting

Voting by proxy is not authorized.

2.4.9 Moderator

The pastor shall be the moderator of all meetings of the congregation. When the church is without a pastor, the moderator of the session appointed by Presbytery shall preside at all congregational meetings. If it is impractical for the pastor or the moderator of session appointed by Presbytery to preside, she or he shall invite, with the concurrence of the session, another minister of Presbytery to preside. When this is not expedient, and when both the pastor or the moderator of the session and the session concur, a member of session may be invited to preside. At the Annual Meeting, when the terms of the call of the minister(s) are to be voted on by the congregation, the minister(s) shall be excused from the meeting, and the chair of the personnel committee shall serve as moderator for this purpose only, and no discussion other than that which is specifically related to the terms of the call(s) shall be allowed.

2.4.10 No Voting by the Minister

Because no minister may be a member of the congregation, no minister may vote in the meeting of the congregation. When there is a tie vote, the minister presiding shall put the question a second time. If there is a tie vote again, the motion is lost.

2.4.11 Secretary of Meetings

The clerk of session shall be secretary of the meetings of the congregation. If the clerk is unable to serve, the congregation shall elect a secretary for that meeting.

2.4.12 Minutes Attestation and Filing

The minutes of each meeting of the congregation shall be attested by the moderator and the secretary and shall be entered in the minute book of session.

2.4.13 Teleconference or Videoconference Meetings

Effective January 1, 2020 meetings of the congregation, its Session, Board of Deacons, commissions, and committees may meet face-to-face by teleconference or videoconference, or a combination thereof, provided that full opportunity for simultaneous communication is available to all members and that minutes are duly kept and approved.

2.5 ARTICLE V: NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS

2.5.1 Nominating Committee Composition***

There shall be a representative nominating committee composed of ~~seven~~ **four** active members of the church. At the Annual Meeting, four members shall be elected by and from the congregation, or by such organizations within the church as the congregation may designate, none of whom shall be in active service in the session or the board of deacons.

2.5.2 Elders and Deacons on Nominating Committee***

~~Two~~ **One** members of this committee shall be ~~an~~ **one** elders designated by the session, ~~one of whom shall be~~ currently on the session, and serve as moderator. One member of this committee shall be named by and from the board of deacons.

2.5.3 Pastor Membership

The pastor shall be a member of this committee, serving ex officio, and without vote.

2.5.4 Term Limits

The nominating committee shall be chosen annually at the Annual Meeting of the congregation, and no member of the committee shall serve more than three years consecutively. Their term of office shall begin at the close of the Annual Meeting at which they are elected.

2.5.5 Election of Officers

The nominating committee shall present the name of one eligible person for each office to be filled. The committee shall make every effort to ensure that the composition of the session and of the board of deacons with regard to gender, age, race, marital condition or disability corresponds to the composition of the congregation. Full opportunity shall always be given to the congregation for nominations by any active member of the church. A majority of all the voters present and voting at the congregational meeting shall be required to elect.

2.5.6 Elder and Deacon Elections***

Elders and deacons shall be elected at the ~~Fall~~ Stated meeting of the congregation. There shall always be three classes of elders in the session and three classes of deacons on the board of deacons. The classes shall be as nearly equal in number as possible, only one of which shall expire each year. Terms shall ordinarily be for three years, except when it is necessary to elect some elders or deacons for shorter terms in order to equalize the numbers in the classes or to fill vacancies, provided, however, the congregation may, by vote in a congregational meeting, choose to elect one or more persons under twenty-five years of age to the office of elder or deacon, to serve on the session or board of deacons for a term of one, two or three years. All other factors of election, ordination, and service shall apply to such elders and deacons. No elder or deacon shall serve consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. An elder or deacon having served a total of six years shall be ineligible for reelection to the same board for a period of at least one year. Terms of elders and deacons shall expire when their successors have been ordained and installed.

2.5.7 Vote By Voice or Ballot

In the election of elders and deacons, when the number of nominees equals the number of elders and deacons to be elected in each class, the congregation may vote by voice vote or show of hands. When in any class, the number of nominees exceeds the number of elders or deacons to be elected, the congregation shall vote for that class by ballot. When electing a pastor, the vote shall be upon the question whether the congregation, under the will of God, shall call the person nominated to be its pastor, and it shall be by ballot. In every case a majority of all the voters present and voting shall be required to elect.

2.5.8 Preparation of Elders and Deacons

The minutes of session shall record the completion of a period of study and preparation, after which newly elected elders and deacons shall be examined by session as to their personal faith; knowledge of the doctrine, government and discipline contained in the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)* and the duties of office. If the examination is approved, the session shall appoint a day for the service of ordination and installation. Elected elders and deacons shall be installed, and ordained if required, in a regular Sunday morning church service as soon as practicable in the next calendar year after election and not later than the twelfth Sunday after their election.

2.5.9 Ending a Term

An elder or deacon may resign from the session or board of deacons for good cause with the consent of session. Membership on session or the board of deacons terminates automatically upon termination of active membership in the church. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as original elections at a stated or special meeting of the congregation, as session may determine. An elder or deacon thus elected to any vacancy shall hold office for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor.

2.6 ARTICLE VI: SESSION

2.6.1 Members

2.6.1.1 Composition and Vote

The Session shall be composed of the minister (s), and at least six elders in active service. All members of the session, including the minister (s), are entitled to vote.

2.6.1.2 Moderator

The pastor of the church shall be the moderator of the session. In her or his absence, the pastor may, with the concurrence of the session, invite a minister of the Presbytery to preside. If the church is without a pastor, the moderator of session is the minister appointed for that purpose by the Presbytery, or a minister of the Presbytery may be invited by session to preside on a particular occasion. When it is impossible for the pastor or other invited minister to preside, session, with the approval of the pastor or moderator, may convene and elect one of its own members to preside. In all judicial cases the moderator of session shall be a minister of Presbytery.

2.6.2 Clerk of Session

The clerk of session shall be an elder elected by session for an annual term of service determined by session. The clerk shall record the transactions of the church, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, preserve its records carefully, and furnish such of its records for annual review as Presbytery may require.

2.6.3 Powers and Duties

2.6.3.1 Authority and Delegation

The session shall have authority over all affairs and activities of this church both spiritual and corporate except in such matters as may by the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* or these bylaws be specifically accorded to the pastor or moderator, to the congregation or to a higher governing body. Session may delegate particular aspects of its tasks to committees, boards or commissions. The session shall annually appoint the membership of its permanent committees, and may ask members of the congregation to serve on any of its permanent or special committees. The moderator shall designate the chairs for such committees.

2.6.3.2 Complaints

A complaint may be filed with Presbytery by a member of the church against the session, after making written request of the session to reconsider and correct an irregularity or cure a delinquency. The session may file a complaint against Presbytery with the Synod.

2.6.3.3 Real Property Transactions

Matters related to buying, mortgaging or selling real property require approval of the congregation; permission of Presbytery is also required for such actions and for certain types of leasing of real property by the church.

2.6.4 Meetings

2.6.4.1 Stated, Special, Directed***

The session shall hold stated meetings monthly at a time and place designated by it. Special meetings may be called by the moderator when she or he judges it necessary and shall do so when requested in writing by any two members of session. The session shall also meet when directed to do so by Presbytery. Reasonable notice of all special meetings must be given when other than routine business is to be transacted. All meetings shall be opened and closed by prayer. All meetings shall be open to all active ~~and inactive~~ members of the congregation, and to

others who may be invited by any member of session, without restricting the right of session to meet in executive session whenever circumstances indicate the wisdom of doing so.

2.6.4.2 Quorum

A quorum of the session shall be the minister (s) or other presiding officer and one-third of the elders except for the reception and dismissal of members, when quorum may be the moderator and two members of session.

2.6.4.3 Joint Meeting of Session and Deacons

A joint meeting of the session and the board of deacons shall be held at least annually to confer on matters of common interest, with the moderator of session presiding. No binding decision may be reached in such joint meeting, but the session and the board may act separately on matters committed to their respective care.

2.6.5 Property and Finance

2.6.5.1 Responsibility of Session***

Budget making and the securing of revenues is a responsibility of session. The session shall be responsible for the collecting, holding, dispersing and accounting of all church funds. The total budget for all causes shall be prepared by the mission and stewardship committee of session after full consideration of the budget requests of the various committees and the board of deacons.

The treasurer(s) shall be member(s) of that committee ex officio without vote. The tentative budget, as approved by session, shall be presented to the congregation at its ~~Fall~~ Annual stated meeting for information, discussion and comment. The congregation, at the Annual Meeting, shall review the adequacy of the compensation of the minister (s) upon report of the prior review and recommendation by the session, after which the final budget shall be adopted by the session.

2.6.5.2 Responsible for Properties

The session shall have responsibility for the care and management of church properties.

2.6.5.3 Informing the Congregation of Debts

The session shall inform the congregation, in the Annual Report and at the Annual Meeting, of the detailed current status of each outstanding loan, grant or mortgage, and whether it is from a commercial lending institution or from Presbytery, Synod or General Assembly. Such information shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If there are no such outstanding obligations, a statement to that effect shall be made at the Annual Meeting and so recorded in the minutes.

2.7 ARTICLE VII: THE CORPORATION AND TRUSTEES

2.7.1 Members

2.7.1.1 Members of the Corporation

Members on the active roll of the church are members of the corporation, subject to the statutory minimum age of 18 years.

2.7.1.2 Session as Trustees

Elders elected to membership on the session, while thus serving, shall thereby also be elected to be the trustees of the corporation, and are responsible to the congregation according to the laws of the State of Maine, the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)* and these bylaws.

2.7.2 Officers

2.7.2.1 President***

~~The chair of the mission and stewardship committee shall be, ex officio, president of the corporation. The duties of the president shall be all those required of the president of the corporation as found in the Articles of Incorporation, or as authorized or required by session, acting as trustees of the corporation, or as required by state law. The president shall be an elder in active service, and shall be elected by session for such term as it may determine.~~

The President of the Board of the Corporation shall be annually elected by Session.

2.7.2.2 Secretary

The clerk of session shall serve, ex officio, as secretary of the corporation, and shall carry out all of the duties required of the secretary of the corporation as found in the Articles of Incorporation, or as authorized or required by the session acting as trustees of the corporation.

2.7.2.3 Treasurer

The treasurer (s) shall be elected annually by the session, and their work shall be supervised by the session. The treasurer (s) shall report monthly to the session. Minimum standards of financial procedure, as defined in the *Book of Order* G-3.0205, shall be observed. There shall be two auditors elected annually by the congregation at the annual meeting. Such auditors shall not be related to the treasurer (s). All books and records relating to finances shall be audited at least once each year and a report made to the congregation.

2.7.3 Meetings

2.7.3.1 Meeting Content

Meetings of the congregation may be both ecclesiastical and corporate.

2.7.3.2 Session Meetings are Trustee Meetings

All meetings of the session shall be also considered to be meetings of the trustees.

2.7.4 Powers and Duties

2.7.4.1 Property

The corporation shall have the following powers: to receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property, real or personal, for the church; to accept and execute deeds of title to such property; to hold and defend title to such property; to manage any permanent special funds for the furtherance of the purposes of the church, all subject to the authority of the session and under the provisions of the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)*, provided, further, that in buying, selling, and mortgaging real property, the trustees shall act only after the approval of the congregation granted in a duly called and constituted meeting.

2.7.4.2 Conform to Law and Articles of Incorporation

The corporate powers of the church shall be exercised by the session in its capacity as trustees of the corporation. The session shall process formal documents and perform duties required of it by civil law according to the powers granted to a non-profit religious corporation by the laws of this State, and shall be in conformity with the Articles of Incorporation of this church.

2.7.4.3 Real Property Transactions

The corporation as a church shall not, without written permission of Presbytery transmitted through session, sell, mortgage or otherwise encumber its real property; acquire real property

subject to an encumbrance or condition; lease its real property used for the purpose of worship; or lease any of its other real property for more than five years.

2.7.4.4 Property is Held in Trust

All property held by or for the church, whether legal title is lodged in a corporation or a trustee or trustees, and whether the property is used in programs of the church or of a more inclusive governing body or retained for the production of income, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

2.8 ARTICLE VIII: BOARD OF DEACONS

2.8.1 Members***

The board of deacons ~~shall~~ **should** consist of ~~at least six and no more than twelve~~ members. Deacons shall be nominated and elected, and shall be organized into three equal classes, all as specified in Article V, Section 6 of these by laws.

2.8.2 Organization

2.8.2.1 Officers

The board of deacons shall elect a moderator, a secretary and a treasurer from among its members. The secretary shall keep a record of the board's proceedings. The treasurer shall keep its books. The minister (s) shall be an advisory and non-voting member (s) of the board.

2.8.2.2 Supervised by Session

The board of deacons shall be under the supervision and authority of the session. The records of the board of deacons shall be submitted to the session at least annually and at other times upon request of the session. The session may void or amend any action of the board of deacons, or direct the board to reconsider such action.

2.8.3 Meetings

2.8.3.1 At Least Quarterly; Quorum

The board shall meet regularly, or upon the call of its moderator, or when directed to meet by session, but it must meet at least quarterly. The board shall determine its own quorum.

2.8.3.2 Joint Meeting of Session and Deacons

A joint meeting of the session and the board of deacons shall be held at least annually to confer on matters of common interest, with the moderator of session presiding. No binding decision may be reached in such joint meeting, but the session and the board may act separately on matters committed to their respective care.

2.8.4 Responsibilities

2.8.4.1 Ministry and Other Duties

The office of deacon is one of sympathy, witness and service. The board of deacons shall have the responsibility to minister to those in need, to the sick, to the friendless and to any who may be in distress. The board shall assume such other duties as may be delegated to them from time to time by the session.

2.8.4.2 Deacons On Committees

Deacons may be appointed by session to serve on committees. The session may select and appoint other members of the congregation to assist the deacons in their ministry of compassion.

2.9 ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

2.9.1 Amendment by members

2.9.1.1 Procedures

These bylaws may be amended subject to the Articles of Incorporation, the laws of the State of Maine and the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)* at any regular or special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds vote of the active members, when a quorum is present, provided that a printed distribution of the proposed changes has been made in connection with the notice of the call of the meeting.

2.9.1.2 Must Conform to PC(USA)

These bylaws or the Articles of Incorporation may not be amended contrary to or so as not to respect the provisions of the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)*.

Approved Revisions to the Bylaws

Date	Section	Description
Jan 24, 1993	All	Original Bylaws Adopted by the Congregation
25 Jun 25 1995	Article VIII, Section 1, Board of Deacons, Members	(need before and after wording)
25 Jan 2015	Section 2.6.1.1, Article VI, Section 1, Session, Composition and Vote	BEFORE: and at least nine and no more than twelve elders in active service. AFTER: and at least six elders in active service
Need date	Article IV, Meetings of the Congregation	BEFORE: There shall be two stated meetings of the congregation each year. The Fall meeting shall be held during the month of October at a convenient time and place specified by the session for the purpose of electing elders and deacons, and to review the proposed budget for the ensuing calendar year. AFTER: (Need)
7 Feb 2021	Article IV, Added 2.4.13, Teleconference or Videoconference Meetings	Recommended by the Presbytery: Effective January 1, 2020 meetings of the congregation, its Session, Board of Deacons, commissions, and committees may meet face-to-face by teleconference or videoconference, or a combination thereof, provided that full opportunity for simultaneous communication is available to all members and that minutes are duly kept and approved.

3 Church-Wide Procedures

3.1 Winter Weather Procedure

3.1.1 Advisory Announced by NOAA on Saturday morning

If a *winter weather advisory* is announced by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on the Saturday morning prior to Sunday worship, in-person worship will be cancelled and worship will be conducted over Zoom and Facebook live. This policy will be announced in late fall via the weekly update and from the pulpit.

3.1.2 Announced by NOAA later on Saturday or early Sunday

If a winter weather advisory is issued later on Saturday or very early on Sunday, any church officer who is aware of this should immediately contact the Pastor. In this case members will be notified by email or telephone chain as quickly as possible.

3.1.3 Individual Notification by Shepherds and Deacons

Shepherds and Deacons will determine any church members who will need a phone call to notify them of the cancellation of in-person worship because they do not have access to the internet or for other reasons.

3.2 Building Open Checklist NOT Sunday Morning Worship

- Unlock both front doors.
- Turn on lights for your own use.
- The doors to the sanctuary should remain closed.
- Close the bathroom doors.
- Finally, take a look around to see that everything seems in place.

Note that steps can be done in any order.

3.3 Building Close Checklist NOT Sunday Morning Worship

- If thermostats were changed, reset to their original settings.
- Close and lock all windows in rooms that have been used.
- Turn off all lights in Fellowship Hall, Folger Gallery (hallway in front of sanctuary) and any that were turned on.
- Turn off all lamps in narthex unless Pastor is onsite.
- Ensure all exterior doors are closed and locked (even if Pastor is onsite).

THE HEX KEY IS NEEDED TO LOCK AND UNLOCK THE LONG HORIZONTAL BAR ON THE EXIT DOORS. THE KEY AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR ITS USE ARE HANGING ON A PEG ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE FRONT DOOR TO THE CHURCH.

3.4 Building Open Checklist for Sunday Morning Worship

- Unlock both front doors.

- Turn on the lamps in the Narthex.
- Turn on the mic in the crib room (red switch).
- Turn on the lights in the West Room, halls by kitchen, kitchen, Fellowship Hall and the Foulger Gallery (switch for halls by kitchen behind the door by the community bulletin board).
- If there are any dead flowers, they need to be moved to the kitchen.
- Be prepared to welcome a visiting pastor, musician or other visitor who arrives early.
- The doors to the sanctuary should be closed before worship if that Sunday is designated as a quiet area, otherwise they should be open to welcome people in.
- If weather is getting warm, open sanctuary windows and turn on the fan. The fan should be set all the way over to SLOW – the dial all the way to the right. If the setting is on FAST, there is too much noise.
- Lights on in the sanctuary.
- Check that there are matches for lighting the Christ Candle.
- Put two glasses of fresh water in the pulpit. Use hot water so it will be warm when needed.
- Straighten the hymn books.
- Turn lights on in bathrooms and close the bathroom doors.
- Finally, take a look around to see that everything seems in place.

Note that steps can be done in any order and could vary depending on Pastor's instructions.

3.5 Building Close Checklist for Sunday Morning Worship

(Not needed if other building users will remain in building after worship, in which case it is their responsibility.)

LOWER THERMOSTATS TO 60 DEGREES

West Room
Narthex
Sanctuary
Ladies Room
Fellowship Hall
Loft

CLOSE AND LOCK ALL WINDOWS

Office
Loft
Bathrooms
Rooms
Hallways

TURN OFF ALL LIGHTS

Bathrooms

Rooms
Hallways

LOCK DOORS

All exterior doors
Office
New Wing Hallway (Bright Start Area)
Loft

THE HEX KEY IS NEEDED TO LOCK AND UNLOCK THE LONG HORIZONTAL BAR ON THE EXIT DOORS. THE KEY AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR ITS USE ARE HANGING ON A PEG ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE FRONT DOOR TO THE CHURCH.

4 Session

4.1 Definition and Purpose

Book of Order. G-3.0201 Composition and Responsibilities

"The session is the council for the congregation. It shall be composed of those persons elected by the congregation to active service as ruling elders, together with all installed pastors and associate pastors. All members of the session are entitled to vote. The pastor shall be the moderator of the session, and the session shall not meet without the pastor or designated moderator. If there is no installed pastor, or if the installed pastor is unable to invite another moderator, the presbytery shall make provisions for a moderator. Presbyteries shall provide by rule for moderators when the session is without a moderator for reasons of vacancy or inconvenience.

The session shall have responsibility for governing the congregation and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation is and becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of the congregation, the session shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed congregations have identified themselves throughout history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304).

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

- *provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard.*
- *provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received.*
- *nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ."*

See Book of Order for expanded explanation of the above bullets.

Session shall be guided by and informed by the Mission Statement of MCPC, Section 1.

4.2 The Great Ends of the Church – Book Of Order 2025-2027, F-1.0304

The great ends of the Church are:

the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;
the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God;
the maintenance of divine worship;
the preservation of the truth;
the promotion of social righteousness; and
the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

4.3 Actions required by Session

Particularly, the session shall:

- 1) elect a Clerk of Session to record minutes of all meetings, prepare docket for stated meetings, prepare annual reports for the Congregation, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly as required, maintain the Membership Roll and, maintain necessary correspondence for the Session and the Congregation
- 2) elect a Treasurer of the Congregation for such term as the session shall decide and shall supervise his or her work
- 3) with the Treasurer prepare and adopt a budget and determine the distribution of the congregation's benevolences and any discretionary Grant funds received
- 4) ensure accomplishment of an annual review of financial records
- 5) ensure adequate property and liability insurance is in continuous effect
- 6) authorize offerings for Christian purposes and shall account for the proceeds of such offerings and their disbursement, and provide full information to the congregation concerning its decisions in such matters
- 7) appoint a Generosity Team annually (see Generosity Team Policies and Procedures)
- 8) annually appoint an Elder to the Nominating Committee
- 9) work in conjunction with the Board of Deacons for the nurture and care of the congregation
- 10) authorize Celebration of the Lord's Supper
- 11) participate in joint Officers' Retreat with the Board of Deacons
- 12) examine and receive candidates for membership in MCPC
- 13) support annual recertification of MCPC as a PCUSA Earth Care Congregation

4.4 Membership and Terms of Service

Six elders, chosen by the congregation, constitute the membership of the Session of MCPC. Session meets each month for study and prayer, to receive reports of the ministries of MCPC, and to plan for the worship and life of the congregation. The pastor is the Moderator of Session.

Ruling elders and deacons shall be elected to serve terms of no more than three years on the session and may be eligible for reelection according to congregational rule. However, no ruling elder or deacon shall be eligible to serve more than six consecutive years, and a ruling elder who has served six consecutive years shall be ineligible for election to the same board for at least one year.

4.5 Elder Defined in the Book of Order

Book of Order (The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church USA) G-2.0301

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

4.6 Record Keeping

Session shall maintain the following roll and registers.

4.6.1 Membership Roll

There shall be rolls of baptized, active, and affiliate members. Session will provide written notice to members before deleting names due to member inactivity.

4.6.2 Registers

There shall be registers of baptisms authorized by the session, of ruling elders and deacons, of installed pastors with dates of service, and such other registers as the session may deem necessary.

4.6.3 Minutes

The Clerk of Session shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings. Minutes and all other official records of councils are the property in perpetuity of MCPC.

4.7 Session Committees

Much of the work at MCPC is accomplished by Session Committees. Each Committee is made up of active persons of the Congregation. For reasons of resources and membership, all committees might not be chaired by a sitting elder. The goal of Session is to have some liaison, if not participation, in each committee.

A description for the operation of each committee is presented in other parts of this manual. Each Committee Chair is responsible for submitting an annual report to the Session and that report will be included in written form for the Annual Congregational Meeting.

The Committees of the Session of MCPC include:

1. Columbarium
2. Finance
3. Personnel
4. Property
5. Worship

4.8 Budget Needs

Requested as needed.

4.9 Communication Policy

4.9.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Session Communication Policy is to establish consistency in Session communication to ensure information is distributed both in a timely manner and with appropriate detail.

This policy is applicable for communication to/from Session and a committee, team, or board (C/T/B) of the church (e.g. Board of Deacons, Building Use, Finance, Personnel, Property, Treasurer, Worship, or Bright Start).

4.9.2 Clerk is point of contact

The Clerk of Session will be the point of contact for formal Session communication.

4.9.3 Communications from Session

This section addresses information *from* Session, generally from a Session meeting action, that needs to be officially communicated to another committee, team, or board (C/T/B) at MCPC. This may include information that needs to be passed to the C/T/B, action Session requests of the C/T/B, or requests for information on a topic.

The communication should be sent to the head of the C/T/B to be put on the agenda of their next meeting, whether for general information or for discussion and follow-up if necessary. If there are time constraints, and something needs to be addressed before the recipient C/T/B next meets, that action (and the initial Session communication) shall still be placed on the agenda of the C/T/B's next meeting.

The communication will include the information that needs to be conveyed, and for more complex issues a clear statement of the topic (to insure all are on the same page) and an explanation of why the request or directive is being made. This need not be lengthy. It is not to be a justification of Session action, but rather is to help frame the conversation and reduce the opportunity for misunderstanding. The communication will also specify what kind of response is requested.

This procedure should also be followed when the Session communicates with a body outside of MCPC.

4.9.4 Communications to Session

This section addresses information from a committee, team, or board that needs to be officially communicated *to* Session. This may include periodic reports, general information that needs to be shared with Session, requests of or questions to Session, or responses to Session requests.

All official communication to the Session shall be sent to the Clerk of Session; this is to include regular C/T/B meeting minutes. The Clerk of Session shall distribute the communication to Session with the Docket of the next Stated Session Meeting, as the incoming communication will be on that Docket.

- If it is a question that the Clerk of Session can respond to without Session discussion, then that shall be done, and the Clerk shall report same at next Stated Session Meeting.
- If Session discussion is needed, including if the communication is a response to a Session request, it shall be placed on the Docket for the next Stated Session Meeting.
- If the issue needs to go before the Session prior to next Stated Session Meeting, the Clerk shall inform the Moderator and then share with Session (via email) for discussion and/or action as necessary. The Moderator may also facilitate this process. The issue (topic, discussion and action) shall be on the Docket of the next Stated Session Meeting for acknowledgement, or further discussion and action, as needed.

4.9.5 Regarding minutes from Committee, Team, or Board meetings.

- Minutes of C/T/B meetings shall be submitted to the Clerk of Session for inclusion on the Docket of the Stated Session Meeting that follows said C/T/B meeting – specifically, by the Sunday afternoon prior to the second Wednesday of the month, the second Wednesday being the scheduled monthly Stated Session Meeting.
- If no C/T/B meeting is held in a given month (month being defined as the month between Stated Session Meetings), the C/T/B shall notify the Clerk of Session of same in lieu of submitting minutes.
- Other items a C/T/B would like to communicate to, and/or have addressed by, Session should also be submitted to the Clerk of Session by the Sunday prior to the second Wednesday of the month so they may be placed on the docket of the next Session meeting.

4.9.6 Within Session

This section addresses official communication within the Session. When there is general information or reports to be shared within Session, they should be forwarded to the Clerk for inclusion on the Docket for the next Stated Session Meeting. The Clerk will distribute as a part of that Docket.

In some circumstances, e.g. an Elder is working on a specific project, communication conducted from/to that Elder (v. the Clerk) may be appropriate. (This should be noted in the appropriate Session Minutes.)

4.9.7 Email Discussions and Votes

Email may be used for the purpose of discussion and/or voting on issues that must be addressed before the next Stated Session Meeting.

4.9.7.1 Email discussions

- Discussions may be initiated by the Moderator or Clerk of Session.
- The initiating email shall clearly state the topic and include appropriate background information.
- Responses to the emails in the discussion thread shall use “Reply All”.
- An elder may request a discussion be postponed until the next Stated or Called Session Meeting so the conversation can happen in person; the decision on this matter is the will of the group.
- If the discussion results in the need for a vote, see “Email votes” below.

4.9.7.2 Email votes

- The motion must be made by the Moderator and specify the time frame for discussion of the motion and for voting.
- The motion shall be clearly stated and include appropriate background information.
- Responses to the emails in the discussion thread shall use “Reply All”.
- When voting on a motion, if any negative vote is cast via e-mail, the matter shall be deferred to the next Stated or Called Session Meeting.

The Clerk of Session shall put the motion and results, or a summary of an email discussion, on the docket of the next Stated Session Meeting so it is recorded in the minutes.

5 Board of Deacons

5.1 Definition

Board of Deacons is a group of ordained members elected by the congregation.

5.2 Purpose

"...ministry of deacons as set forth in Scripture is of compassion, witness, and sharing the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or in distress" (Book of Order). Deacons bring the love of Christ to the church and the community.

5.3 Structure

Deacon elections for moderator and secretary take place at the first meeting after Deacons are elected at the annual congregational meeting.

5.3.1 Moderator Of Deacons

Some moderator tasks may be delegated as appropriate

- 1) The Moderator should review all mail directed to the Deacons and initiate action as needed.
- 2) One week ahead of the meeting, request the latest treasurer's report for the Deacon Fund from MCPC treasurer. Raw report to be put into a user-friendly format with possible notes added.
- 3) With the secretary's help, send out meeting reminder with agenda.
- 4) Moderate the meeting using the agenda in order for the secretary to take minutes most efficiently.
- 5) Direct Deacons to review minutes for approval and review Deacon Fund report at the beginning of the meeting.
- 6) During the meeting, designate who will be responsible for various tasks as discussed in the meeting. These may include scheduling new events (contact Building Coordinator to verify availability and entry on Office calendar) and writing up announcements for the upcoming Weekly Update.
- 7) Submit Deacon Check Request Forms to the MCPC treasurer. See Deacon Fund, below, for more information.
- 8) The Moderator, along with the Pastor and Clerk of Session, has access to the Emergency Contact File should the need arise to contact "next of kin" or neighbor for information.
- 9) Submit any new event information to the office for noting on the church calendar and for including in the Weekly Update.
- 10) The Moderator shall be responsible for writing a report for the Annual Report and to be turned in by assigned date.

5.3.2 Secretary of Deacons

- 1) After the meeting, the secretary should prepare minutes as soon as they are able to do so in order to send draft minutes to all the deacons for review. Solicit and incorporate edits for final approval at next meeting.

- 2) Send the latest minutes to the Clerk of Session prior to their next meeting (whether in draft or final form). The Clerk of Session should always receive a copy of the minutes for distribution to the Elders. A final, Deacon approved, copy should be forwarded to the Clerk of Session.

5.3.3 Deacon Fund

- 1) The Deacons' Fund is administered in keeping with guidelines for ministry set forth in Scripture as interpreted by the Book of Order. The fund is administered under the authority of Session. Questions may be submitted to the Session periodically regarding the use of this fund. The Deacons' Fund envelopes state the following: *"On Communion Sunday, the members are asked to make a voluntary contribution to aid the distressed and afflicted of our Church and community."*
- 2) Deacon Fund contributions above \$200 require Session approval.
- 3) A Deacon Fund Request Form must accompany each submission. See Exhibit A.

5.4 Board of Deacons Responsibilities

5.4.1 Congregational Care

- 1) Worship Attendance is recorded by a designated Deacon. Attendance is reviewed at Deacon meetings in order to identify those who have been missed in worship and for follow up.
- 2) Ongoing care for and communication with the congregation is provided through a Shepherd Program that regularly communicates with members and friends of the congregation. Special attention is given to those who are unable to attend worship or have been missed for several weeks. Deacons should regularly provide feedback on their sheep to the pastor and Deacon moderator. See Exhibit B for a detailed description of shepherd responsibilities.
- 3) Ensure members are notified of any decisions to cancel or change worship in adverse weather.
- 4) A Prayer Shawl Program provides knitted shawls to individuals on special occasions such as births and at times of struggle and grief.
- 5) Additional care may include meals or other support after surgeries or other life events.
- 6) Consider financial support, as needed, for congregation members.
- 7) A Deacon coordinates scheduling of Sunday Worship Greeters for worship, including:
 - a) Maintaining a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall
 - b) Encouraging people to sign up – making periodic announcements in the Weekly Update, sending e-mails to previous greeters, speaking with folks, etc.
 - c) Finding greeters in a timely manner for Sundays that are still unscheduled.
 - d) Touching base with greeters to remind them when they are scheduled for the coming Sunday
 - e) Restocking greeter supplies as needed (name tags for visitors, visitor information sheets).

5.4.2 Community Support

A designated deacon reviews requests for assistance in various forms (gas/food card, rent, other items of need). New requestors are required to meet and fill in an information form as shown in Exhibit C. This form also includes what and when assistance as repeat requests. Requests over \$150 need Deacon Board approval. There is a limit of one request each 6 months.

5.4.3 Outreach

- 1) Monthly collection for MCHPP (Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program) which varies according to need (e.g., food, personal care items, and a Diaper Drive.)
- 2) Monthly collection for Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services (MEIRS) which varies according to need (e.g., winter wear, blankets, bulk food items for Food Pantry, etc.).
- 3) Occasional Holiday Collections which have included mittens and gloves for the Warming Trellis and gifts for the Bright Start Giving Tree.
- 4) MCPC supports local non-profit service providers such as MCHPP, Tedford Housing, Habitat for Humanity, The Sudanese Presbyterian Fellowship of Portland, The Gathering Place, Sweetser, etc. with both financial and volunteer support.
- 5) Care for those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or in distress, by supporting non-profits organizations such as Maine Council of Churches and Brunswick Area Interfaith Council in the form of money, volunteering, and serving on their boards.
- 6) Coordinate the PC(USA) Special Offerings (One Great Hour of Sharing, Peace & Global Witness, Pentecost, Christmas Joy) through posters, articles in the Weekly Update, and announcements during worship. Recommend to Session where the local portions of the Peace & Global Witness and Pentecost Offerings should be directed. Review standing orders for publicity with:
PC(USA) Special Offerings
100 Witherspoon Street, Room 325
Louisville, KY 40202.

5.4.4 Communion

The Board of Deacons coordinates all aspects of communion that is served during worship. Procedures are dynamic have previously been documented and kept in the MCPC office.

5.5 Membership

Six members are elected by the congregation at the annual meeting. Members serve a three-year term and may serve two consecutive terms (per Book of Order).

5.6 Tasks for Regular Meetings

Together, the board of Deacons shall consider the following in its regular meetings, not necessarily in this order:

- 1) Review attendance record to see if anyone has been missing for a number of Sundays; also take note of visitors or those who are repeat visitors in order to determine appropriate follow up.

- 2) Receive monthly Shepherd updates with quarterly review of all MCPC congregation participants (sheep) listed and add or subtract as needed. Noted are those who are sick, having upcoming hospital procedures, taking special vacations and experiencing other important, noteworthy events.
- 3) Consider if anyone needs meals for recovery at home. A group of cooks is then notified by the Deacons or by other organizations such as PW to organize cooking and deliveries.
- 4) Consider possible recipients of prayer shawls for occasions such as sickness, bereavement, and births.
- 5) Review congregational, community, or individual needs met since the last meeting.
- 6) Review donation requests and determine how Deacon Funds may be disbursed.
- 7) Consider other upcoming special services which may result in flowers or plants left over to be taken to anyone that is homebound and designate to whom and who will deliver.
- 8) Review congregation for home communion and determine who will do this (at least one Deacon and the pastor).
- 9) Verify supplies are sufficient for:
 - a) Blueberry bread and church information for visitors (as well as bags, etc.).
 - b) Gas or food cards for community needs.
 - c) Greeter materials for Sunday mornings.
- 10) Assign for the coming months:
 - a) Who will record Worship Attendance.
 - b) Item(s) to be collected for MCHPP
 - c) Item(s) to be collected for MEIRS
 - d) Devotions for the next Deacon meeting
 - e) Secretary for the next meeting if no one is so designated.
- 11) Other items that may come up periodically that will need scheduling and planning, e.g. Potlucks, ice cream socials.

5.7 Budget Needs

The work of the deacons is funded by contributions to the Deacon's Fund. There is no annual budget. Periodic articles and/or sharing during worship should be done to promote contributions to the Deacon Fund. Expenditures are approved by a majority vote based on needs and available funds. Directives may come down from Session.

5.8 EXHIBIT A - Deacon Fund Request Form

Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church – Deacon Fund Check Request

Date: _____ Requested Check Amount: \$ _____

Request Information:

Check Payable To: _____

Account # to be Credited (if applicable): _____

Check on Behalf of (if applicable): _____

Check Mailing Address : _____

Check Designation:

____ Community Support ____ Congregational Care ____ Outreach

Signature of Requesting Individual (or see below) : _____

If no further approval required, Approval Signature: _____

Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church – Deacon Fund Check Request

Date: _____ Requested Check Amount: \$ _____

Request Information:

Check Payable To: _____

Account # to be Credited (if applicable): _____

Check on Behalf of (if applicable): _____

Check Mailing Address : _____

Check Designation:

____ Community Support ____ Congregational Care ____ Outreach

Signature of Requesting Individual (or see below) : _____

If no further approval required, Approval Signature: _____

5.9 EXHIBIT B - Shepherd Program Description

MCPC SHEPHERD MINISTRY

PURPOSE: is to maintain contact with and be sure that every MCPC sheep is cared for. (First established in March 2020 in response to the pandemic shutdown and our inability to be in regular contact.)

FORMAT: Everyone who regularly participates in MCPC is assigned to a Shepherd (generally Elders & Deacons). All Officers are also assigned a shepherd so that they may be well cared for (serving officers may not ask for help, so may especially need someone for regular check-in). *Every Shepherd is someone else's sheep!*

The primary goal of the sheep assignment is to be in touch with your sheep on a regular basis. Suggested reasons for contact are included below.

SPECIFICS:

- Verify access and/or participation in worship and other events – make sure you are aware of how your sheep are connected to the church.
- For those Sheep who cannot join us for worship, you can relate a story or news from Sunday's worship service.
- Ways to reach out:
 - Phone calls – for human contact
 - Emails – less intrusive and an easier format for some; you can also send a special prayer, seasonal reflection (Advent, Lent, etc.) or even something funny.
 - Cards – on special occasions (Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter, something special in the life of a Sheep)
- When new people (i.e. visitors) are added they should be contacted more frequently.:

CLOSING THE LOOP: The Pastor relies on Shepherd feedback on how those in the congregation are doing, and who might need special attention or a call from the Pastor. Regular feedback should be sent directly to the Pastor, even if it is just “everyone is doing well!”

Prior to each meeting of the Board of Deacons the Deacon Moderator will reach out to the Shepherds to verify that they are in touch with their sheep and remind them that feedback needs to be forwarded to the Pastor.

If there is a Sheep who is not responsive to attempts at contact, speak with the Pastor and Moderator to discern the best course of action. (It may be appropriate to let the individual know that we are not trying to pester them but really do care how they are doing and perhaps ask them to clarify for us what they would like their relationship with MCPC to be as well as their preferred form of contact.)

5.10 EXHIBIT C - Personal Assistance Request Form

Personal Assistance Request Form MID-COAST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH	
<i>In order to understand your needs more clearly, we ask the following questions:</i>	
Date: _____	Client's Age: _____
Name: _____	Other Adults in Household: _____
Telephone/Cell: _____	Marital Status: _____
Address: _____	Name(s) & Age(s) of Children: _____
_____	_____
Referred by: _____	_____

Request: _____

Employed: YES NO If YES, Employer: _____

First call to MCPC? _____ How long in Area: _____

Prior Address: _____

Other Income/Resources: _____

Notes/Referrals (including resources recommended): _____

Outcome (including any future help restriction(s)): _____

Signature of Recipient: _____

6 Nominating Committee

6.1 Membership

The Nominating Committee (NC) is comprised of:

- 1) An Elder on Session and selected by Session – Chairs the committee
- 2) Serving Deacon (selected by the Board of Deacons)
- 3) Member-at-large (elected by the congregation)
- 4) Member-at-large (elected by the congregation)
- 5) Pastor, ex officio member

6.2 Purpose

Tasked with discerning and presenting nominees to office for vote at the coming year's Annual Meeting, and any other needs for nomination in the current year.

6.3 Nominations for The Annual Meeting of the Congregation

The slate to be nominated for the Annual Meeting includes:

- 1) Two nominees for Elder – three-year terms, max two consecutive
- 2) Three nominees for Deacon – three-year terms, max two consecutive
- 3) Two nominees for the Nominating Committee Members-at-Large – one-year term, max three consecutive

As a Nominating Committee, we will seek to discern who God is calling to serve at MCPC as Elder or Deacon or on next year's Nominating Committee. In our time together, we must decide on and invite persons to be nominated for each of these roles. And in turn, those we speak to will seek to discern if they feel called to serve.

Discernment is the process of making decisions with God's help.
Discernment is a way of making decisions that reminds us we are not alone.

6.4 Supporting Documents

- 1) NC-Support Material.pdf supporting material on the roles of Elder and Deacon
- 2) MCPC member roster with ordination status (updated annually)
- 3) Nomination Committee History.doc
- 4) 2020 NommComm Initial Meeting-Minutes1.4.2021.doc
- 5) 2020 NommComm Meeting-Minutes1.12.2021.doc
- 6) Letter to Nominees.doc

6.5 Chair Responsibilities

- 1) Contact the members of the committee, letting them know you are the chair, who is on the committee, and finding out the best way to reach each of them – this will make things smoother when it is time to meet as a committee.
- 2) Convene NC meetings as needed. (Suggest beginning the process for annual nominations in late Fall.)
- 3) Provide background information/education on NC process to the committee.

- 4) Guide committee through process of prayerfully identifying possible nominees, contacting them, and asking to place their name in nomination. (It is important that you ask nominees only after discussion and agreement of the Nominating Committee. Nominees should receive a copy of the Administrative Manual. Committee conversation on selection of nominees is confidential. Only names of who you decide to contact need be included in minutes.)
 - 5) A few special rules: the majority of voting members on the NC must not be currently serving on Session; a member of the NC may not be nominated by that NC to serve as Elder.
 - 6) You report to the Congregation, but do apprise Session of how things are going.
 - 7) Provide slate of nominees for the Annual Report, including the following information:
 - a. Office, name, term (1st or 2nd), length of term (three years unless filling an unexpired term).
 - 8) Confer with the Clerk of Session on:
 - a. when the examination of the newly elected officers will occur (typically the session meeting immediately following the Congregational Meeting for the annual elections)
 - b. when ordination/installation will occur (typically on the following Sunday)
 - 9) Send confirmation emails to those who have accepted the nomination, let them know the events which they will need to attend:
 - a. Election (Congregational Annual Meeting)
 - b. Examination by the Session. (The examination is typically a sharing of faith stories, though one year we asked the new officers to share which of the ordination/installation questions was the most difficult for them and why, providing the questions beforehand.)
 - c. Note: let the newly elected Elders know they are asked to stay for the entire Session meeting.
 - d. Ordination/Installation (during Worship)
 - 10) Serve as the Elder presenting the newly elected officers for ordination/installation (work with the Pastor)
-

7 Columbarium Committee

7.1 Purpose

The Columbarium Committee administers the use of the columbarium. Responsibility for maintenance of the columbarium and the surrounding grounds is shared jointly by the Columbarium Committee and the Property Committee.

7.2 Organization

The Committee is comprised of three members of the congregation arranged in consecutive annual (calendar year) classes, each for a three-year term. Candidates will be selected annually by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Congregation during the Annual Meeting. The Committee will organize itself with respect to chairmanship and duties of individual members. The Committee takes from and reports to the Session which is the supervising body.

7.3 Duties

The Columbarium Committee has the following responsibilities.

7.3.1 Materials

The Committee will have available at all times the following materials:

- 1) An attractive up-to-date brochure
- 2) Application forms
- 3) Certificates of Approved Reservation
- 4) Record of Purchase forms
- 5) Copies of the Matthews Order Form

7.3.2 Application processing

The Committee will receive and process applications for the use of niches:

- 1) Determine eligibility of applicants
- 2) Indicate to applicants which niches are available
- 3) Respond to applications including delivery of properly executed deeds of use to approved applicants.

7.3.3 Records maintenance

The Committee will maintain records of the niches in use, reserved and available.

7.4 Financial

7.4.1 Fees

Fees for the use of the columbarium will be determined by the Session with the advice of the Columbarium Committee.

7.4.2 Payments

Payments will be made to the church Treasurer.

7.4.3 Account of Columbarium Funds

The church Treasurer will maintain an account of columbarium funds including receipts and disbursements which will be monitored by a member of the Columbarium Committee. The columbarium account will be subject to the annual audit of church accounts.

7.5 Miscellaneous

7.5.1 Scheduling of inurnment

Scheduling of an inurnment will normally be arranged by the Pastor. A member of the Columbarium Committee will ensure that the wishes of the family are met with respect to placing ashes in the designated canister and inserting the canister in the niche using appropriate tools.

7.5.2 Nameplates

Nameplates are ordered by the committee and normally require a lead time of six weeks. Return of blank plates will normally be done periodically by the committee when several have been accumulated to consolidate shipping costs. Returning plates results in a credit to the church. Amount of credit varies over time.

7.6 Columbarium Policies and Procedures (Form)



Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 211 (84 Main Street), Topsham, ME 04086
Office: 207-729-3193 Website: mcpconline.org

Policies and Procedures for the Columbarium at MCPC

ELIGIBILITY: Ashes of any past or present member of MCPC, their spouse, parents, children, or others who, in the opinion of the Pastor and the Columbarium Committee, have a sufficient connection to a member, shall be eligible for inurnment in the Columbarium. Application (attached) should be made to the Columbarium Committee. Upon granting an application and payment of fees and charges a Certificate of Use shall be issued.

OWNERSHIP: All Columbarium niches remain the property of MCPC (there are two niches per opening in the Columbarium). Reservations of a niche and payment of the established fee entitles the purchaser to the privilege of use and not the rights of ownership. Niche assignments are made in consultation with the applicant, Pastor, and the Columbarium Committee. Niche assignments may be changed at the discretion of the Pastor or the Columbarium Committee.

ADMINISTRATION: Oversight of the columbarium is the function of the Columbarium Committee which serves under the authority of Session. Maintenance of the Columbarium and surrounding area rests with the Property Committee, guided by recommendations and requests from the Columbarium Committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES & DISCLAIMERS: MCPC will endeavor to protect the ashes and their receptacles both before and after they are inurned in the Columbarium but shall have no liability for the failure to do so.

COLUMBARIUM REMOVAL: MCPC reserves the right to move all or part of the Columbarium to a different site as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Session.

rites & SERVICES: All rites and services in connection with the inurnment of ashes in the Columbarium shall be those prescribed by the Pastor of MCPC.

PLAQUES & INSCRIPTIONS: Each niche shall be marked by a bronze plaque with the name of the decedent and dates of birth and death. Inscriptions shall be uniform in style, size, and structure. The Columbarium Committee will obtain and install the plaque.

RESERVATION OF NICHES: Niches shall be secured upon payment of the fee in effect at the time of reservation. In the event a subscriber desires to cancel such reservations, they may do so in writing, addressed to the Columbarium committee. A refund to the subscriber or their estate will be determined by the Committee.

FEES & CHARGES: The fee for a niche is \$500 and niche plate cost is \$300 for one (8x4 plate) and \$400 for two (8x8 plate). Opening and closing of niches, mounting of engraved plaques, and other related services shall be furnished and rendered only by persons or concerns approved by the Columbarium Committee. The services of a funeral director and the cost of cremation are the sole responsibility of the family or estate of the decedent.

CONTACTS: The name of a relative or friend must be provided for future contact if needed.

Upon application for a niche, this policies and procedures document must be signed by the applicant and initialed by a member of the Columbarium Committee with one copy given to the applicant and one to be filed in the office.

Signature of applicant _____ CC Initials _____

Columbarium App with Policies (page 1 of 2) - approved by Session 4-9-2025

7.7 Application for Columbarium Niches (Form)



Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 211 (84 Main Street), Topsham, ME 04086
Office: 207-729-3193 Website: mcpconline.org

Application for Niches in the Church Columbarium

Date submitted _____

Date approved _____

Clerk of Session initials _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Number of Niches requested _____
(one per person/each opening holds two niche slots)

Additional contact information (please provide the name of someone we can contact in the future, if needed).

Name: _____ Relationship to applicant: _____

Phone number _____

Email address _____

I/we have read and understand the Policies and Procedures attached to this application, as well as the cost and limitations.

Applicant Signature: _____

Columbarium Committee member Signature: _____

Additional documents to be completed:

Policies and Procedures with initials for file Initials _____

Certificate of Approved Reservation Attachment #2 Initials _____

Church Record of Payment and Inurnment Attachment #3 Initials _____

Columbarium App with Policies (page 2 of 2) - date approved by Session 04-14-2021

7.8 Certificate of Approved Reservation for the Columbarium (Form)



Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 211 (84 Main Street), Topsham, ME 04086
Office: 207-729-3193 Website: mcpconline.org

Certificate of Approved Reservation Columbarium

Number _____

The Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church, a member congregation of the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) and of the Presbytery of Northern New England, organized and existing under the laws of the State of Maine, and owning and maintaining a columbarium on its property at 84 Main Street, Topsham, Maine, in consideration of the sum of _____

grants the sole and perpetual use of Niche(s) _____ (there are two niches per opening) to _____

as shown on the diagrams of the Columbarium on file in the office of the Church, subject to the provisions, conditions, and limitations, and with the privileges specified in the Policies and Procedures heretofore and hereafter adopted by the Session of the Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church.

It is mutually agreed that the rights hereby granted are and shall for all purposes be deemed to be personal property only.

In witness thereof, the Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church has caused these presents to be subscribed by its duly authorized officers this _____ day of _____, 20__.

By _____ and By _____
(Pastor) (Elder-Clerk of Session)

State of Maine
County of Sagadahoc
Town of Topsham

On the ____ day of _____, 20__ before me personally came _____ and _____ to me known, who being severally sworn, did depose and say they reside at _____ and _____ respectively, and that they are the _____ and _____ respectively of the Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church, described in and which executed the above instrument of Reservation under the authority of the Session of said Church.

Notary Public

Columbarium Certificate of Approved Reservation – approved by Session 4-9-2025

7.9 Church Record of Payments for Columbarium and Inurnment (Form)



See current fee schedule **Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church**

P.O. Box 211 (84 Main Street), Topsham, ME 04086

Office: 207-729-3193 Website: mcpconline.org

Church Records for Niche# _____ and Inurnment

Name/address of purchaser:

Contact info for person other than purchaser:

Record of Payment:

Amount Due for 1 or 2	Amount Received	Date Received	Initials
Niche cost \$500/\$1,000			
Plate cost \$300/400			

Record of Plate orders:

Name and Niche #	Date Ordered	Date Received	Date Installed	Initials

Record of Inurnment:

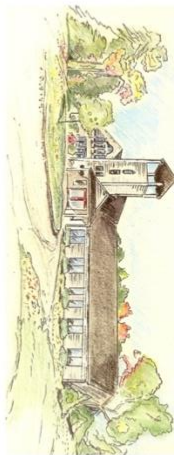
Name of Deceased	Niche #	DOB	DOD	Inurnment Date	Initials

Columbarium Record of Payments - Date Approved by Session 04-9-2025

7.10 Columbarium Tri-Fold Page 1

**The History of the
Columbarium**

The burial of the mortal remains of the Christian dead has always been regarded as an act of religious import. While little is known with regard to the burial of the dead in early Christian centuries, we know the tradition of burial in or near the church developed so the dead might rest near the gathering place of their families and friends. Only in recent times have burial grounds been used that are far removed from community centers of life. Our Columbarium is a place of rest on sacred grounds. In the serenity of its intimate area, family and friends may gather for remembrance, meditation, and prayer amidst the community of faith. Wherever we have come from, MCPC has become our home and we are glad to have our loved ones nearby as they are as dear to us as our own family.



**MID-COAST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church in Maine

~
April 9, 2025

**MID-COAST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

*The
Columbarium*



**NICHE BURIAL
ON
CHURCH GROUNDS**

Policies and Procedures for the Columbarium at Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church

THE COLUMBARIUM AT MID-COAST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IS A VAULT WITH RECESSED METAL COMPARTMENTS FOR THE PLACEMENT OF EARTHLY REMAINS AFTER CREMATION. EACH METAL NICHE IS ENCLOSED WITH A PROTECTIVE FRONT OF BRONZE TO WHICH IS ATTACHED A METAL IDENTIFICATION PLATE WITH THE DECEASED'S NAME AND THE DATES OF BIRTH AND DEATH.

EACH PURCHASER RECEIVES A CERTIFICATE OF USE WHICH INDICATES A CHOICE OF NICHE. THIS CERTIFICATE ENTITLES A PERSON TO A BRONZE NAMEPLATE AND ASSURANCE OF PERPETUAL CARE.



ELIGIBILITY: Ashes of any past or present member of MCPC, their spouse, parents, children, or others who, in the opinion of the Pastor and the Columbarium Committee, have a sufficient connection to a member, shall be eligible for inurnment in the Columbarium. Application should be made to the Columbarium Committee. Upon granting an application and payment of fees and charges a Certificate of Use shall be issued.

OWNERSHIP: All Columbarium niches remain the property of MCPC. Reservations of a niche and payment of the established fee entitles the purchaser to the privilege of use and not the rights of ownership. Niche assignments are made in consultation with the applicant, Pastor, and the Columbarium Committee. Niche assignments may be changed at the discretion of the Pastor or the Columbarium Committee.

ADMINISTRATION: Oversight of the columbarium is the function of the Columbarium Committee which serves under the authority of Session. Maintenance of the Columbarium and surrounding area rests with the Property Committee, guided by recommendations and requests from the Columbarium Committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES & DISCLAIMERS: MCPC will endeavor to protect the ashes and their receptacles both before and after they are inurned in the Columbarium but shall have no liability for the failure to do so.

COLUMBARIUM REMOVAL: MCPC reserves the right to move all or part of the Columbarium to a different site as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Session.

MITES & SERVICES: All rites and services in connection with the inurnment of ashes in the Columbarium shall be those prescribed by the Pastor of MCPC.

PLAQUES & INSCRIPTIONS: Each niche shall be marked by a bronze plaque with the name of the decedent and dates of birth and death. Inscriptions shall be uniform in style, size, and structure. The Columbarium Committee will obtain and install the plaque.

RESERVATION OF NICHES: Niches shall be secured upon payment of the fee in effect at the time of reservation. In the event a subscriber desires to cancel such reservations, they may do so in writing, addressed to the Columbarium committee. A refund to the subscriber or their estate will be determined by the Committee.

FEES & CHARGES See current fee schedule for the cost of a single of double niche. The cost of engraving the niche's nameplate is included in the fee. Opening and closing of niches, mounting of engraved plaques, and other related services shall be furnished and rendered only by persons or concerns approved by the Columbarium Committee. The services of a funeral director and the cost of cremation are the sole responsibility of the family or estate of the decedent. See current fee schedule.



Inquiries about reserving a niche may be directed either to the Pastor or a member of the Columbarium Committee.

7.12 Columbarium Niche Plate Costs over the years

2000	8x4	\$ 80.00
	8x8	\$160.00 (or, was that [2] 8x4?)
2001	8x4	\$ 80.00
	8x8	\$109.00??
2002	8x8	\$116.00
2003/2004	8x4	\$ 92.00 (actual cost \$101.20)
	8x8	\$120.00??
		someone charged \$92+\$92?
2006	8x8	\$128.00 (actual charge added 16% surcharge 20.48 and shipping \$6 for total \$154.00)
2008	8x8	\$171.00
		6.5x2.13? \$131.00?
		(church paid \$134 for remake of one)
2009		\$308 for ??
2011	8x8	\$145 + \$10 charge= \$154.00
2012	8x4	\$163.00
	8x8	\$213.00
2014	8x4	\$163.00
	8x8	\$213.00
		(billed \$233.89)
2025	8x4	\$300.00
	8x8	\$500.00

8 Finance Committee

8.1 Definition

The Finance Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Session. The Committee maintains the financials of MCPC, makes financial recommendations and ensures the financial policies of MCPC are followed.

The following is transcribed from the Book of Order G-3.0205, The Session, Finances:

“The session shall prepare and adopt a budget and determine the distribution of the congregation’s benevolences. It shall authorize offerings for Christian purposes and shall account for the proceeds of such offerings and their disbursements. It shall provide full information to the congregation concerning its decisions in such matters.”

“Sessions may provide by rule for standard financial practices of the congregation, but shall in no case fail to observe the following procedures:

- a. All offerings shall be counted and recorded by at least two duly appointed persons, or by one fidelity bonded person;*
- b. Financial books and records adequate to reflect all financial transactions shall be kept and open to inspection by authorized church officers at reasonable times;*
- c. Periodic, and no less than annual, reports of all financial activities shall be made to the session or entity vested with financial oversight.”*

And the following, transcribed from the Book of Order G-3.0113 General Principles of Councils, finances:

“A full financial review of all books and records shall be conducted every year by a public accountant or committee of members versed in accounting procedures. Reviewers should not be related to the treasurer(s). Terminology in this section is meant to provide general guidance and is not intended to require or not require specific audit procedures or practices as understood within the professional accounting community.”

8.2 Purpose

The Finance Committee will work to assure, to the best of its ability, a sound financial program for MCPC.

8.3 Membership

The Finance Committee will have a minimum of three members. Members shall represent a cross section of the MCPC’s membership. The Treasurer is a member of this committee. Members must be able and willing to keep confidences.

8.4 Meetings

The Finance Committee will meet monthly unless mutually agreed upon by a majority of the Committee. Specially called meetings may also take place. Meeting notices may be by email. Meetings can be in person or virtual.

8.5 Responsibilities

The Financial Committee will:

- 1) Be the central contact and the main source of information regarding all church finances and oversee the congregation's financial status.
- 2) Oversee the preparation of accurate financial reports for the session.
- 3) Conduct internal controls and monthly reconciling of the bank statements to church financial system figures in preparation for the annual financial review.
- 4) Select a team to accomplish the Financial Review checklist.
- 5) Prepare and present an annual budget to the Session and to the congregation.
- 6) Educate the congregation in financial stewardship; take into consideration the congregation's giving habits and trends.
- 7) In coordination with the Treasurer, recommend financial actions to the Session.
- 8) Oversee member pledges and records of giving. Quarterly and year-end statements of giving should be provided for individual members.
- 9) Assure that more than one person has knowledge of the financial status of MCPC, passwords, and keys to records. Those assigned this duty are the Treasurer and the Finance Committee Chairman.
- 10) Oversee the counting of offerings and other deposits.
- 11) Perform special studies and make recommendations as requested by Session.
- 12) Perform an annual review of workers comp and building/liability insurance policies.

8.6 Counting of Offering and Deposit

For Offering received on Sunday morning:

- 1) At the conclusion of the service, a member of the finance committee will get the "deposit" envelope along with the "cash counting sheet" a date should be written on the envelope and the cash sheet.
- 2) The finance committee volunteer will take the offerings out of the container at the back of the Sanctuary.
- 3) While standing in the back of the Sanctuary, they will determine if there is loose cash included in the offering:
 - a. Yes, there is loose cash: The finance committee member will find another congregant to count the cash. They will fill out the attached form. Sign the bottom and place it in the "deposit" envelope.
 - b. No there is no cash: The finance committee member will place the items from the offering into the "deposit" envelope.
- 4) 4. The deposit envelope is then put into the Lockbox. It is noted on the log book with an @ if there is a cash sheet included in the deposit.

8.7 Offering Cash Counting Sheet

MID-COAST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ***OFFERING CASH COUNTING SHEET***

Today's Date: _____

Loose Cash Dollar Total: \$ _____

Cash in Envelopes:

Envelope # or Name

Cash amount

_____ \$ _____

_____ \$ _____

_____ \$ _____

_____ \$ _____

_____ \$ _____

Total Cash in Envelopes: \$ _____

Signed: _____

8.8 For Offering received on other days

- 1) Any donation (pledges, rent checks, special offerings etc.) which were not placed in the Sunday morning offering will be placed directly into the lock box.
- 2) When they are put in the lockbox a note will be made in the Logbook as to who put them in the lock box and a reference to who the deposit was from (no dollar amount).
- 3) If the item contains cash, the person depositing them in the lockbox should note it on the log book in the "Item deposited" column – an @symbol is enough to let the treasurer know that there is cash in the lock box.

8.9 Recording the Offering/Donations and making the Deposit

- 1) At least two times in one month two people (at least one being a member) get together to do the deposit. They are hence forth called "counters"
- 2) The counters pull any items from the lockbox and any items in the offering box. (completing the cash sheet if applicable)
- 3) The items are then checked versus the logbook to make sure that everything on the log book is out of the lock box.
- 4) Each item is then listed on a sheet of paper to be used to record the donation:
 - a. If the item is an offering record: The check #, The pledgers name, the dollar amount of the check and then the breakdown of where to apply the donation (Operating budget, Deacon Fund, Special offerings)
 - b. If the item is anything other than a check given as a donation (recycle money, rent checks, refund checks, etc.). Record: Check #, Name on check, the dollar amount, and where the item should be applied.
 - c. If the item is loose cash collected on Sunday morning. Record: Loose Plate, dollar amount. Verify the amount on cash on the counting sheet matches the dollar amount.
- 5) The deposit will either be driven to the bank and put in the overnight box or it will be placed in the lockbox and a finance committee member will deposit it on a weekday.
- 6) After the cash and checks have been deposited, attach the deposit ticket to the sheet of paper with the list and place in the top right-hand drawer of the Treasurer's desk.
- 7) The Treasurer then takes that list and puts it in the locked filing cabinet.

8.10 Annual Financial Review

In the first quarter of each calendar year a review of church financial records will be performed. A committee of members versed in accounting procedures may accomplish this task, or the records may be sent to an outside, independent auditor. Reviewers should not be related to the Treasurer (s).

8.11 Church Treasurer

The Book of Order G-3.0205, The Session, finances, states:

"The session shall elect a treasurer for such a term as the session shall decide and shall supervise his or her work or delegate that supervision to a board of deacons or trustees."

- 1) The Treasurer should receive and retain copies of the session minutes to ensure all action items relating to financial matters are met.
- 2) Responsibilities:

- a. Participate in the annual budgeting process.
- b. Serve on the Financial Committee
- c. Anticipate financial problems.
- d. Report the financial status of MCPC to the session quarterly or during meetings called for the specific purpose of financial oversight. This reporting should include the operating and nonoperating Income and expenses and the appropriate balance sheet.
- e. Manage, safeguard, and maintain the congregation's financial resources. Any endowment funds must be invested; certificates of deposits, shares of stocks, and bonds must be safeguarded.
- f. It is the Treasurer's responsibility to be certain that only authorized persons have access to funds.
- g. If the Operating checking account exceeds anticipated spending, the Treasurer has the responsibility to see that those funds are properly invested to secure maximum financial return.
- h. Prepare an annual statement of the financial condition of MCPC for the membership.
- i. Review accuracy of payroll and currency of pension and benefit payments.

The Treasurer should maintain a folder with all essential information regarding church finances (It would be prudent to keep this information off site in a safety deposit box)

- 1) Federal ID numbers
- 2) State ID numbers – Tax Exempt, State Withholding, Local Withholding numbers
- 3) Bank account number(s)
- 4) Investment firm [may be a PC (USA) foundation], contact and phone number - Include any account numbers
- 5) Loan information: how financed, account #, rate, term, secured by, payment information, etc.
- 6) List of church financial software being used including secure passwords and support phone numbers.
- 7) List of phone numbers/websites used in the Treasurer's work, such as bank, investment firm, and local and state tax office(s).
- 8) Any other pertinent information for your congregation.

8.12 Financial Review By Committee

8.12.1 Important Disclaimer

This checklist is provided to assist MCPC in fulfilling the requirement of Book of Order. The Book of Order does not require a professional accountant or attorney conduct the annual review of the financial records of a congregation. Completion of this checklist should satisfy the requirement of the Book of Order. The Financial Review Committee is not rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. If accounting or legal advice is necessary or required, the services of a competent professional advisor should be acquired.

8.12.2 Introduction

This document is intended as a guide to assist the Financial Review Committee in its compliance with the minimum standards of financial procedures specified in the Book of Order. G-3.0113 and G-3.0205 specifically outline financial responsibilities and procedures and sets minimum standards. The text presents broad guidelines for a review committee. Some churches hire professional accountants to conduct a formal audit.

MCPC is required to carry out the following: A full financial review of all books and records relating to finances once each year by a public accountant or a committee of members versed in accounting procedures. Such auditors should not be under the guidance of the Treasurer.

8.12.3 Nature of the Review

The purpose of the review is to insure good financial procedures and to help the congregation have confidence and trust in the stewardship of their contributions. A financial review is a good way for some members of the committee to become familiar with every aspect of MCPC's financial procedures. The committee should evaluate MCPC's financial operations, reports, policies, and procedures. The checklist is a way of identifying areas that are strong and those that need attention. An explanation of the items in the checklist appears at the end.

8.13 Financial Review Checklist

FINANCIAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

For the Fiscal Year Ended Date December 31, _____

Reconciliation of Bank & Investment Accounts

- ✓ Are bank accounts reconciled to finance software figures done monthly?
- ✓ Verification of beginning and ending year balances

INCOME

- ✓ Offering counted by two unrelated persons (or one bonded individual)
- ✓ Funds deposited in timely fashion
- ✓ Verify Sample(s) Deposit amount against Deposit Register and Sunday count verification.
 - *Obtain a list of dates of Sunday and other services during the year at which collection were taken. Choose a representative sample of dates and obtain the documentation prepared by the counters. Verify the total amount recorded on the count sheet for each day selected. Note the amounts designated as pledge income, Special Donation and/or loose offering income. Trace these amounts in the deposit register and note any discrepancy.*
- ✓ Transactions checked against postings to Quickbooks (or Donarius)
- ✓ On-line donations are properly booked to the proper income line and properly credited to the donor.
- ✓ Other income processes verified

DISBURSEMENTS

- ✓ Invoices properly approved
- ✓ Check number and dates or EFT (Electronic Fund Transfer) noted on invoice or debit card purchases properly approved
- ✓ Accounts to charge noted on invoice
- ✓ Any invoices to vendors over 30 days in arrears
- ✓ Interest & service charges recorded
- ✓ Designated gifts paid out on a timely basis if applicable

REPORTS

- ✓ Is the complete financial picture provided by reports
- ✓ Approved budget included in reports
- ✓ Policies for restricted funds reviewed and adhered to.
- ✓ Regular reports provided on pledge giving to finance committee.
- ✓ Reports provided in timely fashion
- ✓ Reports distributed to the appropriate people and committees.
- ✓ Both a balance sheet and a statement of income and expense for operating and nonoperating accounts.
- ✓ Verify that net income (operating plus non-operating) for the period equals the change in balance sheet total for the same period
- ✓ Restricted funds versus non-restricted funds are clearly identified on the balance sheet

GENERAL LEDGER

- ✓ Restricted funds separated appropriately
- ✓ Fund balance from prior year correct
- ✓ Correct fund balance carried into next year

ADMINISTRATIVE

- ✓ Church Employer Identification Number available
- ✓ File for EIN and tax filings safeguarded (941's and 1099s)

PAYROLL

- ✓ Salaries paid according to approved annual meeting minutes.
- ✓ Session/committee approval noted and written documentation in file
- ✓ Proper 1099 filing of approvals for persons paid for over \$600 paid on contract/honorarium
- ✓ Notification of pastor salary promptly reported annually to the Presbyterian Board of Pensions.
- ✓ Notification of payroll statistics promptly to the workers comp audit process

H. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Financial Review Committee has examined the accounts listed in the final financial report presented to the congregation at the annual meeting(attached), reviewed the procedures of counting and accounting under the current *Book of Order*, reconciled receipts and disbursements with bank deposits and bank balances, and has found the balances displayed correctly, presented fairly, with proper procedures, and records properly kept, except as noted below:

Signed: _____ Date _____

Financial Review Committee Chair or Auditor

_____ *member*

_____ *member*

_____ *member*

_____ *member*

**COPIES OF THIS REPORT SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE
CLERK OF SESSION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR.**

8.14 Cash Disbursements Policy and Procedures

MCPC will normally pay vendors and individuals by check, debit card, or electronic funds transfer (EFT), for goods and services purchased. Below are policies to carry out this policy:

- 1) Disbursements will be made after receiving a Request for Check Form. The form must be signed by a person authorized to make the request and have an original invoice or other supporting documentation attached.
- 2) MCPC shall obtain taxpayer ID numbers from unincorporated vendors. Payments of \$600 or more to unincorporated vendors in any year will be reported on a Form 1099.
- 3) The Treasurer and at least one other member of the Finance Committee, are authorized to sign checks. Current bank signature cards are on file at the bank.
- 4) The Finance Committee will assure that more than one person has knowledge of the financial status of MCPC, passwords, and keys to records. Others with this information should be the Treasurer and the Finance Committee Chair.
- 5) A bank debit card will be maintained by the Treasurer primarily for on-line purchases. This card will be kept in a secure location in MCPC's office.
- 6) Receipts for credit purchases will be turned in with information regarding the purchase. A "Request for Check" form will be filled out with the notation "Debit Card Purchase" on the form.
- 7) Food vouchers or grocery store gift certificates will be purchased and issued to an individual (usually with Deacon Fund monies). Cash will not normally be given.
- 8) Bank accounts shall be reconciled monthly by someone who is not authorized to write or sign checks.
- 9) Blank checks should be stored in a safe or locked storage.

8.15 Request For Check

Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church - Request for check
(or Expense information for use of Debit Card or Auto-pay Expense Information)
Date: _____ Amount of Expense: \$ _____

Payable to: _____

Purpose: _____

(note: this is the comment written in the computer and will not appear on the check)

Which account should be charged?:

<u>Worship Expense</u>	<u>Dumpster Exp</u>	<u>Software & Hardware</u>
<u>Contract Services</u>	<u>Hospitality</u>	<u>IT Supplies</u>
<u>Maintenance & Repair</u>	<u>Office Supplies</u>	<u>Other</u>
<u>Legal Fees</u>	<u>Publicity Exp</u>	_____
<u>Insurance (Prop /WC)</u>	<u>Website and Domain</u>	
<u>Utilities</u>	<u>Internet & Telephone</u>	

Signature: _____
(person requesting or approving the check or expense)

Final approval Signature: _____
(by person responsible for budgeted funds)

Payroll Entry Form

Date: _____ Total Payroll from Page 1 \$ _____
(1 day before check date)

Payroll Billing (page 1)	\$ _____
Pastor Wages & FICA	\$ _____
Pastor Housing Reimb	\$ _____

Custodian Wages (Hours _____) \$ _____

Bookkeeper Wages (Hours _____) \$ _____

MCPC portion of taxes \$ _____

Total \$ _____

9 Personnel Committee

9.1 Purpose

To follow PC(USA)'s "theological model" of church employment, relationships and policies. Please see the Reference section, below. As MCPC is a church, not a business, our model in employment emphasizes that policy is grounded in the beliefs of the Christian community and the PC(USA). Relationships and policies arise from Jesus's practices of inclusion, appreciation of each and every person's unique talents and varied gifts and call to accountability before God and one another to God's mission of justice for the world. Theological commitments are primary - even as they seek to comply with the requirements of civil law. Please see the Reference section, below.

9.2 Responsibilities

The Personnel Committee is a committee of Session tasked with supporting the Pastor and other paid staff at MCPC.

9.3 Tasks

The Personnel Committee makes recommendations to the Session about hiring practices, compliance with congregational policies and applicable employment and tax laws, job descriptions and annual goals and evaluations, as follows:

- 1) Support and advocate for the pastor; be a sounding board for the pastor and provide feedback.
- 2) Make sure the pastor is not overloaded with goals and tasks.
- 3) Research and propose personnel and compensation policies to Session.
- 4) Oversee staff compliance with Presbyterian polity and applicable law.
- 5) Help Session to set goals and priorities for staff, and assist Session in periodic evaluations.
- 6) Educate the congregation, as needed, regarding each employee's particular needs, e.g. the pastor's need for study leave, sabbaticals, protected time, etc.
- 7) Acknowledge the various gifts of our staff in appropriate ways e.g. pastor appreciation day in October (Pastor Appreciation month).
- 8) Make recommendations to Session regarding the Pastor's Terms of Call, and compensation for other staff positions.
- 9) Keep minutes of our meetings and email the approved minutes to the Clerk so minutes can be posted in final form in a timely manner (i.e. within 10-14 days of the meeting).
- 10) Review job descriptions annually with Session; job descriptions should include essential functions, core competencies, and specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-specific, inclusive and equitable goals as per PC(USA) recommendations. Please see the Reference section, below.
- 11) Annually review and suggest changes in compensation for paid staff as the budget for the coming year is developed.
- 12) The Chair of Personnel will moderate the Annual Congregational Meeting when the pastor's compensation package is reviewed, discussed, and voted upon.

9.4 Membership and procedures

- 1) The committee should have three to five members, and the chair shall be a member of MCPC.
- 2) Ideally one committee member should also be a member of Session (or at least recently served on Session).
- 3) If possible, include someone knowledgeable about employment law (HR professional or attorney).
- 4) Members should be neutral and objective - and should guard against making decisions based on relationships rather than objective criteria. Please see the Reference section, below.
- 5) Each member should serve a term of three years, renewable once.
- 6) Periodic training is advised, such as on-line boundary training or other training recommended by PC(USA) &/or PNNE.
- 7) The committee should meet at least every other month.
- 8) To help orient a new member rotating on the committee, s/he should read these guidelines, the Personnel Committee minutes of the last quarter and ideally reference 1 below.

9.5 Budget Needs

The Personnel Committee requests that Session, in consultation with the Chair determine and plan for an amount to be used for “staff appreciation” at holiday time at the end of the year.

9.6 Annual timeline reminders

- 1) Recognition of Pastor’s first day in MCPC’s pulpit.
- 2) Pastor Appreciation month – October.
- 3) Late November/early December: holiday gift brainstorming for staff, with Session, and implement the plan in a timely fashion.

9.7 Reference

Employment Guidance for PC(USA) Sessions and Session Personnel Committees. Newly revised 2021 and recommended by PNNE. Access on line at:

https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/employment_guidance_for_sessions_and_session_personnel_committees_2021.pdf

10 Property Committee

10.1 Purpose

The MCPC Property Committee is charged with responsibility for the care, maintenance, operation, repairs, and improvements of the building (interior and exterior) and grounds (driveway and parking lots; lawns, Columbarium, and playground; wooded areas, brook, and fenced retention pond). This includes 4.1 acres of property; 12,000+ sqft building, exterior and interior; all utilities, exterior and interior; all life safety systems operations and mandatory inspections and testing; and building security.

10.2 Membership

The Property Committee depends on many who volunteer their skills and time to maintain and improve the appearance of the building and grounds.

10.3 Responsibilities and Tasks

- a) The Fire Sprinkler System requires inspections and tests to be accomplished by code, with repairs and upgrades being performed as required. Schedule the annual test of the Fire Alarm system.
- b) Raking and pruning at the annual Spring and Fall cleanup events; summer mowing, trimming, pruning, and cutting brush to keep our grounds in peak condition; and in winter shoveling entries/exits, sanding, and spreading ice melt.
- c) A continuing challenge is to ensure our 30-year-old boiler is working properly; conducting boiler shut down in the spring and boiler start-up in the fall.
- d) Ensure minor repairs are accomplished, e.g., repair wobbly or broken sanctuary chairs, replacing the light on MCPC's sign by the street, stopping woodchip erosion from the Bright Start playground.
- e) negotiating snow plowing and sanding contract for the winter season
- f) and reducing the attic clutter.
- g) Plan and manage restroom updates.
- h) Pavement sealing is a project for spring or summer.
- i) Monthly, check emergency lights.
- j) Drain building fire sprinkler system.
- k) Review budget expenditures
- l) Monitor the building's exterior cladding, which has been discovered to have begun to decay.

10.4 Budget Needs

The Property Committee must annually review, and estimate the next year's expenses for:

- a) Contract Services
- b) Routine Maintenance and Repair
- c) Large Maintenance and Repair
- d) Property/Liability Insurance
- e) Utilities
- f) Dumpster

10.5 Building Use

10.5.1 Fees and Recommended Donations

Fees and donations are collected in order to cover the reasonable expenses including heat, electricity, water, cleaning, maintenance and general "wear and tear". Please see the Fee Schedule for a list of such fees and recommended donations.

10.5.2 Insurance

The church may require that groups using the facilities furnish a certificate of insurance. All groups, its members, associates, and/or vendors using church facilities agree to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the church for any liabilities, damage, claims or cost arising out of or related to its use or occupancy of the premises.

10.5.3 Smoking

The MCPC building has been designated a "NO SMOKING" facility. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building.

10.5.4 Alcohol and Animals

- 1) Alcoholic beverages may not be served or consumed anywhere within the building or on the church property.
- 2) No animals other than service animals are permitted in the building or loose on the grounds unless specifically approved by the office.

10.5.5 Set-up decorating and clean-up

- 1) Posters, signs, newspaper clippings and other display items must be posted on either a bulletin board or supported by an easel. Nothing is to be attached to windows, walls or doors (easels are kept in the storage area inside the Men's room near the kitchen).
- 2) Food and non-alcoholic beverages are allowed in the Fellowship Hall. Please do not take these items elsewhere. Exceptions are made for special occasions such as public receptions and must be approved by the Building Use Coordinator. Water may be carried into the sanctuary.
- 3) For recurring events, materials may be stored in either attic within designated spaces. Contact the Building Use Coordinator if new or additional storage space is needed.
- 4) If the kitchen is used, it shall be returned to the same or better manner than in which it was found. No spills, food, dishes, trash shall be left over. The floor should be mopped. Flowers and other decorations may only be left at the prior approval of the MCPC Building Use Coordinator.
- 5) After use, vacuum the Fellowship Hall and if the kitchen is used, mop the kitchen floor at the end of the event.
- 6) Return all items used to their proper location or storage including, but not limited to: tables, chairs, plants, etc. See (9) below for restrictions related to moving sanctuary furniture, music equipment and the pulpit.
- 7) When leaving, turn off lights and turn the heat down to 62 degrees.
- 8) Recognize that the church is unable to provide 24-hour snow/ice removal service. It is the group's responsibility to salt and sand appropriately at all entries.
- 9) Use of church musical instruments located in the sanctuary is prohibited unless previously negotiated, and the church musical instruments will not be moved.

- 10) Sanctuary furniture and the pulpit must not be moved without prior approval. All furniture will be returned to their original location and configuration.

10.5.6 Room Capacity

- 1) The Fellowship Hall is limited to 108 occupants.
 - a. Standing only = 300 occupants
 - b. Concentrated chairs = 200 occupants
 - c. Unconcentrated (tables and chairs) = 108 occupants
- 2) The Sanctuary is limited to 333 occupants.
- 3) The Loft is limited to 19 occupants.
- 4) The West Room is limited to 29 occupants.
- 5) The Nursery is limited to 11 occupants.
- 6) The classrooms (one self-contained and three sections of the big L shaped room) are limited to $11 + 14 + 12 + 7 = 44$ occupants.

10.5.7 Security

- 1) Groups renting the facilities will be given access only to the rooms rented and the restrooms. All other areas will be secured and will remain off-limits.
- 2) Keys may be authorized by the Building Use Coordinator or Pastor and shall be dispensed by the church office, which shall keep track of all keys.
- 3) There will be an Event Chair Person for the activity as noted on the REQUEST FOR USE OF THE CHURCH OR GROUNDS form. It is the event chair's responsibility to do the following:
 - a. Ensure children are properly supervised by adults.
 - b. Not allow children to roam about the building (including the restrooms).
 - c. Be present at the activity during the entire time.
 - d. Supervise the clean-up of the building and return of equipment to its original place.
 - e. Ensure that any damage done to the facility or equipment will be repaired or replaced or paid for by the renters (lessees).
 - f. Be responsible for opening and closing (locking) the church if the group is first in/last out. A key should be picked up and dropped off at the church office.

10.5.8 Fee Schedule (updated Jan 22, 2020)

All fees are for the use of utilities of the building (electricity, heat, etc.) and general cleaning of the building. Note that fees do not cover the use/time of Pastor or Organist.

10.5.8.1 Non-Members

AREA	FEE
Fellowship Hall	\$75
Sanctuary	\$150
Kitchen	\$75
Classrooms	\$20
Loft	\$50
West Room	\$50

10.5.8.2 Members

MCPC Members and nonprofit organizations are not normally charged a fee to use the facilities. However, members or organizations may voluntarily give a donation.

Suggested for Donations

Fellowship Hall	\$25
Sanctuary	\$50
Kitchen	\$50
Classrooms	\$10
Loft	\$10
West Room	\$10

The Building Use Coordinator may negotiate fees if necessary. Returning users for special events may be given a 10% discount.

10.5.9 Emergency Procedures

- 1) In the event of an emergency, contact the appropriate emergency service (police, fire, ambulance).
 - a. All of these can be reached through 911.
- 2) Evacuate the building, if necessary.
- 3) Contact an emergency church representative: See poster in the kitchen and back hallway door indicating those to be contacted.

10.5.10 Request for Use of Church or Grounds (Form – next page)



Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church
84 Main Street
P.O. Box 211
Topsham, ME 04086
729-3193

Request for Use of Church or Grounds (Please fill out and return to the church office)

Applicant Information

Name of Event/Activity: _____

Date of Event: _____

Contact Person: _____
First Last email

Address: _____
Street Address City State Zip Code

Recurring Event? ☐ YES ☐ NO If Yes, Start date: _____ End Date: _____

Specific Rooms or Areas Requested: _____

Sponsoring Group: _____

Estimated Attendance: _____ Will Admission Be Charged? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you have Liability Insurance? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Insurance Carrier: _____ Policy Number: _____

If previous building user, is liability form on file in church office? ☐ YES ☐ NO

- I/We understand and agree that neither Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church, nor its Session, Deacons, representatives, employees or agents may be held liable in any way for an occurrence in connection with the Activity which may result in injury, harm, or other damages to the undersigned or members of our organization and guests, invited or not
- I/We further release Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church, its Session, Deacons, employees, agents or representatives from any claim by the Undersigned member of the organization, their estates, heirs or assigns arising out of or from participation in any form or fashion in the Activity.
- I/We also authorize Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church, its Session, Deacons, employees or agents to render or obtain such emergency medical care or treatment as may be necessary should any injury, harm or accident occur while participating in the Activity.
- We agree that the rental fee is _____. Other agreements in exchange for rental fee are _____

I/We further state that I/we have read the **Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church Building Use Policy**, have initialed acceptance in the required spaces.

Representative of Organization: _____ Date: _____

Building Use Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

10.5.11 Building Use Policy (Form next 2 pages)

BUILDING USE POLICY

Version 8/13/2011
Approved

This policy applies to all special occasions. Special occasions are defined as any activity not specifically designed for a church function such as: anniversaries, birthdays, family functions, reunions, funerals, receptions, retirement ceremonies, home school events, community events, scouting events, etc.

If the request is for a recurring event, a fee payment schedule will be set by Session that is mutually acceptable to both parties. A contract may be requested by either party.

RESPONSIBILITY OF INDIVIDUAL / GROUP USING FACILITIES:

1. Contact the church office and inform the church secretary of the event, place, and time. The secretary will confirm if space is available and the applicable fee. A REQUEST FOR USE OF CHURCH OR GROUNDS form will then be sent to the event contact person. Priority will be given to church related events or previously scheduled events. The Church Session has the authority to override a previously scheduled outside event if there is a need for the church to use the building or a room for another event.
2. Sign the use form if the terms are acceptable and return the form to the church secretary. Note that these terms include leaving the building as it was found, with NO SMOKING OR USE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES in the building or on the church property. NO ANIMALS are permitted in the church building or loose on the grounds except when a trained guide dog is required to assist an individual.
3. Upon notification of approval from the church secretary, contact the Building Use Coordinator and confirm the approved date, time, church items you will be using, personal items being brought into the building for the activity, who will be setting up, cleaning up, and when doors need to be locked or unlocked, etc.
4. Fees are due two weeks prior to the occasion and are to be paid to the church, check made payable to Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church. Failure to pay two weeks in advance will remove the event from the church's calendar.
5. Because the Loft is not child proof, it is for adult use only.
6. Set up and clean up properly for your activity:
 - a. Posters, signs, newspaper clippings and other display items must be posted on either a bulletin board or supported by an easel. Nothing is to be attached to windows, walls or doors (easels are kept in the storage area inside the Men's room near the kitchen).
 - b. Food and non-alcoholic beverages are allowed in the Fellowship Hall. Please do not take these items elsewhere. Exceptions are made for special occasions such as public receptions and must be approved by the Building Use Coordinator. Water may be carried into the sanctuary.
 - c. For recurring events, materials may be stored in either attic within designated spaces. Contact the Building Use Coordinator if new or additional storage space is needed.

(CONTINUED NEXT PAGE, 2 OF 2)

- d. If the kitchen is used, it shall be returned to the same or better manner than in which it was found. No spills, food, dishes, trash or mess shall be left over. The floor should be mopped. Flowers and other decorations may only be left at the prior approval of the Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church's Building Use Coordinator.
 - e. After use, vacuum the Fellowship Hall and if the kitchen is used, mop the kitchen floor at the end of the event.
 - f. Remove all trash from the activity to the parking lot dumpster. Please ensure all areas used are checked for trash, clothing, and other articles, and they are removed from the premises. After 30 days, unclaimed articles will be donated to a charity.
 - g. Return all items used to their proper location or storage including, but not limited to: tables, chairs, plants, etc. See (8) below for restrictions related to moving sanctuary furniture, music equipment and the pulpit.
 - h. When leaving, turn off lights and turn the heat down to 62 degrees. If a key was obtained from the church secretary prior to the event, it should be deposited in the lock box in the vestibule.
- 7. Recognize that the church is unable to provide 24 hour snow/ice removal service. It is the group's responsibility to salt and sand appropriately at all entries.
 - 8. Use of church musical instruments located in the sanctuary is prohibited unless previously negotiated. Sanctuary furniture and the pulpit must not be moved without prior approval. If approved, church personnel will do all the moving.

Initial here to acknowledge that the RESPONSIBILITY OF INDIVIDUAL / GROUP USING FACILITIES section has been read and agreed to

BUILDING SECURITY & SUPERVISION

Groups renting the facilities will be given access only to the rooms rented and the restrooms. All other areas will be secured and will remain off-limits. There will be an Event Chair Person for the activity as noted on the REQUEST FOR USE OF CHURCH OR GROUNDS form. The Event Chair Person will:

- 1. Ensure children are properly supervised by adults.
- 2. Not allow children to roam about the building (including the restrooms).
- 3. Be present at the activity during the entire time.
- 4. Supervise the clean up of the building and return of equipment to its original place.
- 5. Ensure that any damage done to the facility or equipment will be repaired or replaced or paid for by the renters (lessees).
- 6. Be responsible for opening and closing (locking) the church if the group is first in/last out. A key should be picked up and dropped off at the church office.

Initial here to acknowledge that the BUILDING SECURITY & SUPERVISION section has been read and agreed to.

10.6 Agreement of Civil Discourse

Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church is open to all people and offers its meeting spaces to a wide variety of groups and events. As part of our mission, we offer our spaces for many purposes, including public discourse on a wide range of topics. The views and opinions expressed by those who use our building for presentations or meetings do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the congregation of Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church. And, as a denomination that proclaims “mutual forbearance” to be a foundational principal of our denomination we require:

- That all who use our building act respectfully toward others, including those of differing opinions, and to attempt to understand others’ points of view.
- To refrain from personal attacks, while maintaining the right to vigorously disagree.
- To refrain from making statements which characterize opponents of a particular position or opinion as evil.
- To refuse to make untrue statements in defense of any position.
- To value honesty, truth and civility while striving to find workable solutions.

I have read the above statements and agree to abide by these requirements for civil discourse while using any space in the buildings of Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____

11 Worship Committee

11.1 Definition

The Worship is a Committee of Session, responsible for worship and associated activities at MCPC.

11.2 Purpose

We gather in worship to glorify God, who is present and active among us.

The purpose of the Worship Committee is to provide and oversee opportunities for individual and congregational worship, devotions, and spiritual development.

Worship is a collective activity of the people of God and an expression of our common life and ministry. The church's ministry springs from its worship, where God builds up the body of Christ through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The church's ministry flows back into worship as we bring to God the celebrations and concerns of the community of faith.

Quotes from the Directory for Worship, W-1 & 5

11.3 Structure and Membership

A team of those interested in being part of Worship preparation, direction, and oversight.

- 1) The pastor will serve on the Worship Committee.
- 2) The Committee will have a Chair.
- 3) Committee members assume specific tasks and leadership roles as needed.
- 4) Committee members need not be official Members of MCPC.
- 5) Others in the congregation, though not specifically on the Worship Committee, may also be involved in worship tasks, or assume leadership for specific tasks, as the opportunity or need arises.

11.4 Responsibilities

The Worship Committee meets regularly, reviewing the order of worship and individual worship services to consider what is going well, what we would like to adjust, and what needs attention. In addition to this ongoing oversight of worship, responsibilities of the Worship Committee include:

- 1) Worship Bulletin
The Pastor (or preacher/worship leader) will create or update the order of worship or details for the Bulletin Supplement to be printed and emailed for Sunday and communicate music to that week's accompanist.
- 2) Accompanists
- 3) Liturgists
- 4) Schedule and prepare worship participants as needed, including:
 - a. Participants for special services
 - b. Pulpit Supply, and Worship Leader if the Pulpit Supply is only preaching (Unless done so previously, Pulpit Supply should be approved by Session.)
- 5) Special Services
- 6) Worship associated activities (e.g., Lenten Conversations)

- 7) Seasonal changes of Paraments and Appointments (banners, décor, etc.)
- 8) Piano maintenance
- 9) Worship supplies and materials
- 10) Report to MCPC Session on a regular basis, identify highlights and/or new things worship is doing, and request Session approval as needed
- 11) Maintain and update Worship Procedures Documents.

11.5 Task Information and Procedures

Procedures and detailed instructions for the work of the Worship Committee are in the Worship Procedures. They are updated as needed and can be found both on the Angel OneDrive in Worship>Worship Procedures and in the Worship Procedures binder in the Office.

Documents in the Worship Committee Procedures include:

Worship Procedure Documents

- 1) Accessibility to Worship
- 2) Bulletin / Order of Worship
- 3) Candles
 - a. Christ Candle
 - b. Advent Candles / Advent Wreath
 - c. Lenten Intercession Candles
 - d. 19" Sanctuary Candles
- 4) Candles–Liturgy for Advent
- 5) Candles–Liturgy for Lent
- 6) Coffee Hour (informational-not under purview of WT)
- 7) The Crosses
- 8) Flowers
 - a. Palm Sunday Palms
 - b. Easter Flowers
 - c. All Saints Sunday Memorial Roses
 - d. Christmas Poinsettias
 - e. Flowers for the Sanctuary on other Sundays
- 9) Funerals (informational-not under purview of WT)
- 10) Liturgical Year
 - a. Liturgical Colors
- 11) Liturgists
 - a. Outline and explanation for Liturgists
- 12) Music
- 13) Offerings & Prayers
- 14) Paraments and Appointments
- 15) Planning and Task Timetable
- 16) Sanctuary Open—Close Procedure
- 17) Special Services
- 18) Worship Leaders
- 19) Worship Related Opportunities

11.6 Record or Minute Keeping

The Worship Committee keeps the following documentation, prepared and maintained by the Chair of the Worship Committee in consultation with the Pastor.

- 1) **Agendas** for each meeting. An agenda is sent to the Worship Committee members the week prior to a meeting.
- 2) **Minutes** for each meeting. Meeting minutes should be completed in a timely manner. Minutes for each meeting are reviewed with the pastor and then sent to the Worship Committee. The finalized minutes are sent to the Clerk of Session. (If at all possible, minutes are to be submitted to the Clerk for the first Session meeting following a Worship Committee meeting.)
- 3) **Action Items list**
Action Items are noted within Worship Committee Meeting Minutes; items not currently being worked on but still outstanding are listed at the end of the minutes to maintain awareness.
- 4) **Annual Worship Service Summary**
An ongoing summary of the year's worship services is kept. This summary document includes material from meeting minutes both for completed services and events and for those still in the planning stages. Information about upcoming services or events is revised as needed throughout their planning; final information in the summary includes details of the service/event and any information that the Worship Committee wants to keep in mind for such services/events in the future.
- 5) **Annual Report**
In January, prepare the Worship Committee Annual Report for the prior year for inclusion in the MCPC Annual Report.

11.7 Budget Needs

Budgetary needs of the Worship Committee include providing for the following expenses:

- 1) Piano tuning and supplies
- 2) Batteries for the microphones
- 3) Candles
- 4) Paraments and Appointments for the liturgical seasons
- 5) Various materials for worship, such as cards for the Advent prayer tree
- 6) Music

Per Session, honorarium for pulpit supply may come from Memorial Funds; funds for pulpit supply needed during the pastor's sabbatical can be drawn from the **Nurturing Spiritual Gifts Fund**. (The NSG Fund originated as a gift from Matile Hugo for pastoral use but couldn't be so designated, so the fund was broadened to nurturing spiritual gifts.)

It should be noted that there are times when worship purchases are not submitted for reimbursement, the purchaser considering it a contribution (e.g., washcloths for Maundy Thursday foot washing in 2022). The Worship Committee keeps track of these expenses to have a more complete picture of the full expense of worship ministry.

There are also two flow-through funds for worship related activities.

- 1) The ***Flower Fund*** receives and disburses money as needed for flowers used in the sanctuary. The fund is maintained by the treasurer.
- 2) The ***Worship Connections Fund*** receives and disburses money for study materials and books for worship-related congregational studies and events.

Requests for larger expenses, e.g., new hymnals, would be submitted to Session for special funding.

12 Bright Start Early Childhood Center Board of Directors

12.1 Purpose

The Bright Start Early Childhood Center Board of Directors is a volunteer board consisting of church members, community members, and parents of Bright Start students. The board serves as a liaison between MCPC and the Early Childhood Center. The board recognizes that Bright Start is a mission of MCPC as well as a service to the Topsham/Brunswick community. The board's purpose is to oversee the operation of Bright Start and its Director.

12.2 Structure

There is no set number of required members on the board. The usual number is between seven and ten. The board meets monthly, usually from 1 to 3 PM during nap time for the children. A monthly agenda is followed. The board reviews the monthly director's report and the current monthly financial statement. Any new business the Director has is also addressed.

The chair of the board, chosen from the group, leads the monthly meetings and sends out the agenda to all members a few days before the scheduled monthly meeting, after touching base with the Director and receiving new business items from the Director. During the monthly meetings, the Director of Bright Start goes over the director's report and the financial statement with all board members.

12.3 Responsibilities

The main responsibility of the board is to meet monthly to oversee the operation and finances of the Bright Start program. If needed, the board has the responsibility of hiring a new director. The director has the responsibility of hiring new staff when needed.

Board members also volunteer to read to the classes, cover nap time when extra help is needed, and help with special planned events. These volunteer jobs are volunteer only and not required of board members.

At the end of the summer semester, board members, along with staff, help to thoroughly clean the classrooms to prepare for the fall classes. This is a full day of cleaning, and once again not required of board members, however, most board members volunteer their time for the day.

12.4 Membership

- 1) Pastor of MCPC
- 2) The Director of Bright Start Early Childhood Center
- 3) Church Members
- 4) Community Members
- 5) Parents of Bright Start students

New board members are invited to join the board when a member leaves the board, the board feels that the number of members should increase, or a board member recommends someone they feel would add to the board's membership.

12.5 Tasks of the board

The specific tasks of the board are to support the director, support the center, and oversee the preschool's operations.

The board helps to keep MCPC members informed of Bright Start news and to encourage church members to support the preschool by donating snacks, cleaning products, and paper products. Board members will also on occasion oversee tasks needed such as repairs in the classrooms and the playground.

12.6 Record or minute keeping

The secretary of the board is chosen by the group and is responsible for taking minutes at the monthly meetings. Copies of the minutes are emailed to committee members by the secretary as soon as possible after each monthly meeting.

The secretary is also responsible for keeping copies of the minutes in a binder for future reference.

12.7 Budget needs

The board of directors does not operate on a budget. The board does oversee the budget of the preschool through monthly financial reports.

13 Coffee Hour Teams

13.1 Definition and Purpose

The goal of the coffee hour teams is to provide a social opportunity for visitors and for members after worship. Visitors can be identified and engaged, and members can greet each other and strengthen the bonds of friendship and connection to the congregation. Coffee hour is the literal and practical expression of God's message that we love and support one another and welcome the stranger in our midst.

13.2 Structure

The group consists of a coordinator and five "teams". (There are generally two people on each team.)

13.3 Responsibilities

On a quarterly basis the coordinator develops a proposed three-month schedule, which is sent to the team members for review. If a team or a member of a team is not available on a given date, adjustments are made to the schedule, facilitated by the coordinator. Once a final schedule is agreed to, a copy is sent to the Office Angel so that it can be posted in Fellowship Hall.

The coordinator is responsible for ordering coffee when necessary.

The teams generally provide milk or cream for coffee/tea, as well as fruit, vegetables, crackers and cheese, and cookies or coffee cake.

The emphasis is on simplicity, to provide a snack and a reason to linger. From time to time, birthdays or "feasts" of the church calendar are celebrated at coffee hour as well; for example, we sometimes have hot cross buns or a King Cake on the appropriate festivals.

13.4 Budget Needs

Budget needs are for the purchase of coffee. MCPC purchases fair trade coffee through a local company (as of 2024, Wicked Joe), which is a little more expensive, but a step towards improving the economic situation for third world growers. Each week's Coffee Hour Team covers the cost of the snacks provided.

Though the Coffee Hour Team does not fall under the purview of the Worship Team, a copy of this document is kept on file with the Worship Team Procedures.

14 Earth Care Team

14.1 Purpose

To ensure that MCPC continues to be an Earth Care Congregation.

The Earth Care Congregation program is part of the Presbyterian Hunger Program. The PCUSA believes that hunger, poverty, and environmental destruction are linked-areas of concern. Further, in 1990 the General Assembly of the PCUSA adopted Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice, which calls our denomination to engage in the tasks of restoring God's creation. The "Call to Restore the Creation" recognizes and accepts restoring God's creation as a central concern of the church, to be incorporated into its life and mission at every level. This is a long-term effort - for cherishing God's creation enhances the ability of the church to achieve its other goals.

To become an Earth Care Congregation, Session studied and in mid 2016 signed the Earth Care (EC) Pledge to integrate environmental practices into all facets of congregational life including the four categories of worship, education, facilities and outreach. In April 2017 we received our First Year Certification from PCUSA and since then we have been annually recertified.

14.2 Responsibilities

The EC Team is an ad hoc committee, responsible to Session, tasked with trying to educate and inspire ourselves so that we can, as an Earth Care Congregation share information, enthusiasm, and potential actions with the congregation in an attempt to help honor and preserve God's creations.

14.3 Tasks

- 1) Continuously study and learn about taking care of God's creation in order to prioritize topics to present to the congregation.
- 2) Follow biblical teachings[1] - not political or partisan goals- when informing the congregation. Truth telling about climate change can be challenging, but necessary.
Psalm 24:1 The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.
John 18:37-38 Pilate asked him, "So you are king? Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."
- 3) Follow the principles emphasized in PCUSA's Climate Care Challenge[2]
- 4) Work in concert with various groups at MCPC in the four areas of PCUSA emphasis:
 - a. Worship: encourage the worship committee's use of relevant hymns, scriptures, sermon topics
 - b. Education: work with and encourage Bright Start to intentionally include EC teachings (composter, snack garden, outside classes) which are strongly encouraged by PCUSA; support the Men's Group by periodically addressing climate issues; present EC issues in Minutes for Ministry and/or bulletin board topics; provide items of interest in the Thursday on-line updates periodically

- c. Facilities: work with the Chair of Properties and Properties Committee, PW, and Session to ensure EC-friendly products are used and EC-friendly practices are followed.
 - d. Outreach: when appropriate encourage car-pooling, use of tap water instead of bottled water for church held events, become aware of and, ideally, be involved in ecumenical and/or regional EC events.
- 5) Respond to PCUSA's on line Jan-Feb invitation to renew MCPC's Earth Care annual certification.
 - 6) Meet at least every six months with the Pastor to review and assess EC goals and progress at MCPC

14.4 Membership

The MCPC Earth Care Team is not a formal committee or group which meets regularly. It is an ad hoc team.

14.5 Budget Needs

The EC team has no budget line.

[1] Climate Church, Climate World: How people of faith must work for change by Jim Antel. 2018. P.5

[2] PCUSA's Climate Care Challenge. See www.pcusa.org/climatecarechallenge

15 Generosity Team

15.1 Introduction and Purpose

In the PNNE Zoom Webinar entitled *Re-tooling Finance & Personnel* (3/31/22), Rev Rose Nibs from the PCUSA's Presbyterian Foundation recommended churches adopt a new paradigm: do not have a Stewardship Committee or Campaign, but instead have a "Generosity Team" and "Generosity Campaign" as these are more appealing terms. She also emphasized having mini "testimonies" about the "Joy of participating" in various MCPC activities (PW, Men's group, Gathering Place, Pumpkin Patch, Bright Start etc.) during the campaign and perhaps even intermittently throughout the year. This will encourage people to "fund the vision of MCPC." Grace, gratitude and generosity are driven by our shared values.

15.2 Membership

- a) Two Session approved co-chairs to lead the Generosity Team for the fall campaign.
- b) Co-chairs will serve for one year unless they opt to continue on longer with Session approval.
- c) Session should name and approve the co-chairs at the July or August Session meeting, since it will be easier to recruit volunteers if they have time to plan their fall campaign and a Timeline for the campaign is very important.
- d) The Pastor is an important ad hoc member of the committee.

15.3 Responsibilities

- a) The co-chairs and Pastor meet in September to develop the theme, general outline and Timeline for the fall campaign which should begin in early/mid-October. Dedication Sunday, early December, should be determined by Session well in advance.
- b) Any special *Minutes for Ministry* or *Time of Sharing* should be developed by the co-chairs with input and/or approval of the Worship Committee and the Pastor.
- c) The Pastor will give at least one sermon, given before Advent, devoted to the importance of generosity; several PCUSA discussions of this topic emphasize the importance of the Pastor's role in any Generosity Campaign.
- d) The congregational letter should be drafted by the co-chairs and ideally mailed before Thanksgiving thus allowing time for budget preparation.

15.4 Special needs and/or Tasks

- a) The co-chairs will need an up to date address list and labels for recipients of the Generosity Campaign congregational letter. This should be made available to the team by November 1.
- b) Session should monitor the committee's Timeline at each of the fall Session meetings.

15.5 Record keeping

Generosity Teams completing their one-year term will provide a file with useful articles, related background material, and any tips which might be useful to future Generosity co-chairs.

15.6 Budget needs

- a) Roll of first-class stamps to mail the congregational letter.
 - b) Copy costs for reproducing the letter with MCPC color letterhead.
-

16 Presbyterian Women

16.1 Name

The name of the group is the Presbyterian Women.

16.2 Purpose

The purpose as given by the national church is, “Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit we commit ourselves: to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study, to support the mission of the church worldwide, to work for justice and peace, and to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God’s kingdom.”

16.3 Background, Structure, Officers

The group at MCPC was formed under the guidelines and rules of the Presbyterian Women PC(USA) sometime around 1994. The structure of the group has changed over the years from one that followed the national church's rules to one that works on an informal basis. This is primarily due to dwindling numbers and interest. The last annual meeting of PW MCPC was held circa 2015. The moderator, vice moderator, treasurer, and an at-large member form the coordinating team along with the Pastor. Other women are welcome to join the team or attend meetings.

16.4 Membership

All women who attend MCPC are considered to be members of Presbyterian Women and are invited to participate in any and all activities sponsored by PW.

16.5 Responsibilities and Tasks

Some of the responsibilities and tasks of the group have changed over the years and some have stayed the same. The PW coordinating team has always set the program of activities for the year and has managed all monies taken in through those events.

The Christmas Fair is the major event sponsored by PW and is the greatest source of money taken in. The team meets to determine how to distribute that money. We have always pledged some of the money to efforts of the national church through the PW of the Presbytery of Northern New England (PNNE). Over the years other money has gone to such things as MCPC, Bright Start, Warm Thy Neighbor and many other local charities and organizations. Other activities include, We Survived Winter Brunch, the Fall Fashion Fling, a Christmas Tea or Party, an MCPC Retreat, and an annual Worship Service. We also take part in a Presbytery wide retreat sponsored by PNNE PW and are responsible for hosting the retreat every three years. Other tasks include Memorial Service Receptions, and as needed outreach help such as Health Kits.

16.6 Minutes

Since going to an informal structure, minutes have not been taken on any regular basis. The moderator sends out emails with a meeting agenda, time and place, often in the kitchen during coffee hour, and business is conducted but except for a treasurer's report there are no formal

reports and no official minutes are taken except when required for legal purposes such as bank transactions.

16.7 Budget Needs

PW rarely has many issues that impact MCPC's budget. There are occasions when some expensive equipment might be needed, such as a new freezer, and we would look to MCPC to share in the cost, but as a rule PW operates within its own resources.

16.8 Memorial Service Reception Procedures

These procedures are dynamic based on availability of volunteers and resources. For most up to date procedures, please contact the PW moderator.

16.8.1 Set-up

- 1) Depending on the memorial service start time, tables and chairs need to be set up the day before. When there is an afternoon service, tables and chairs can be set up the morning of the service. The layout may change depending on the number of people expected. A table or two may need to be set up for pictures and mementos. Sometimes it is necessary to set up for a slide or video show. The current layout in use calls for three of the “kitchen” tables be set up in a row near the serving window and set up so people can sit at them. We also set up two tables at the other end of Fellowship Hall near the windows for people to sit. The fourth “kitchen” table is used for serving cold drinks and is set up as shown on the diagram. Two tables are set up along the outside wall for the buffet and one long table for serving tea and coffee.
- 2) The blue tablecloths are used on the serving tables. White cloths may be needed for tables where people can sit.
- 3) Plates and Napkins – A designated person needs to pick up the paper plates and napkins in a suitable color. We use the middle size plates and small napkins.
- 4) Silver and Flowers – The silver tea sets need to be brought down from the attic and polished when needed. The round set is used for coffee and decaf coffee and one of the square sets is used for tea. Tea and coffee are made in the kitchen and transferred to the silver. Both sugar and creamers are used and a glass sugar bowl for artificial sugar.
- 5) Designate someone to make tea and lemonade.
- 6) Flowers are sometimes provided by the family but not often for Fellowship Hall. Someone should be designated to take charge of flowers for the hall.

16.8.2 Food Items – Finger food only!

Sometimes, when a large crowd is expected, if the family offers to provide something they might bring platters of sandwiches or other finger food.

When food is provided by PW we serve a buffet generally consisting of the following items:

- Cheese platters
- Veggie platters
- Savory bites filo cups of brie or mini quiches or over non-sweet food
- Fruit or fruit kebabs
- Cookies
- Brownies Bars

- Banana Bread
- Dips or cream cheese when called for.

When sandwiches are to be served two or three people need to be designated to provide the ingredients and the sandwiches are made in the kitchen the day of the service. These are currently being served but they are only suggestions.

17 Men's Faith Study

17.1 Schedule and Purpose

The men of MCPC (and friends) meet monthly on the third Saturday, 9-10:30am for a Zoom “virtual breakfast” and study. We continue sharing joys and concerns followed by participating in lively, Christian-oriented studies.

17.2 Participation

Various men usually participate in one or more of our monthly meetings each year, and thanks to Zoom men in other states have been joining us. All have enjoyed each other's company and insights. We continue to wrestle with putting our understanding of faith into practical practice in our lives and the life of the congregation.

17.3 Resulting In

The time together provides the opportunity to find ways of supporting the various needs of the congregation and to support each other as we attempt to walk the Christian life. Participants usually help with conducting the Men's Sunday Worship Service each year, serving hot drinks and sandwiches at the PW Christmas Fair, and providing volunteer help in various set-up and take-down occasions.

17.4 Budget Needs

There are no budget needs.

17.5 Reporting

A write-up of activities is expected for the Annual Report.

18 Pumpkin Patch Team

18.1 Definition and Purpose

Each October, the Pumpkin Patch benefits the Indigenous population in the Farmington area of New Mexico. The growing and harvesting of the pumpkins employs over 700 Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, and Pueblo people, providing a sustainable income for families in an area where the unemployment rate is over 40%. MCPC partners with the *Pumpkin Patch Fundraiser* organization, the backbone of which consists of churches and other non-profits, totaling approximately 1,200 locations based on faith and trust. MCPC keeps a portion of the profit and 70–75% is returned to the Pumpkin Patch organization and the Indigenous farmers in a partnership that was begun over 40 years ago.

18.2 Structure

A chairperson/contact point person, a co-chair, and a treasurer are required by the Pumpkin Patch Fundraiser organization. The Pumpkin Patch organization has researched our site and determines the number of pumpkins in our delivery (typically 50-60% of the truck load.)

18.3 Membership

This is an ad hoc team. During the month of October, we rely on volunteers to unload and sell pumpkins. The more help the more successful the sales will be, and we encourage volunteers from not only the congregation but from those who use the building (Una Voce, Bright Start parents and staff, MidCoast Youth Theater, Girl Scouts.)

18.4 Responsibilities

- 1) The chair is the contact person between our site and the Pumpkin Patch organization. During the year there are numerous communications (usually via email) regarding proposed delivery date, request to ship, and inventory forms to fill out and return. Notification comes when the truck is loaded and leaving the farm, with phone number of the driver and verification of delivery time, etc.
- 2) As October nears, the lawn needs to be prepared for the pumpkin delivery. Pallets that have been stored next to the Bright Start fence need to be spread out to accommodate the pumpkins. The co-chair organizes this task and recruits volunteers for placement.
- 3) Notification is sent to all users of the MCPC building requesting help in the unloading.
- 4) Request for assistance of the Mt. Ararat High School cross-country team is made through Chris Hoffman, Principal. The teens have been extraordinarily helpful in the unloading!
- 5) Notification in the MCPC weekly UPDATE begins a month in advance to let people know when the pumpkins are coming, and a sign-up board is posted in the narthex for volunteers to sign up for selling pumpkins.
- 6) The chair carefully monitors this sign-up board and makes sure that there are two volunteers for each shift.
- 7) Instructions for each volunteer shift are provided, detailing set up each day and including the use of the iPad for credit card sales.

18.5 Record Keeping

- 1) The chair schedules volunteers for the selling of the pumpkins. Two persons are needed for each shift and the patch needs to be open for approximately 6 hours daily from the day after delivery through October 31 (Halloween day).
- 2) The chair orients new volunteers and assures that a new volunteer is paired with an experienced person.
- 3) The chair schedules the end of the day counting of the cash and checks. The chair reports these numbers daily online at the Pumpkin patch USA Fundraiser website.
- 4) The Treasurer keeps track of the credit card sales numbers from the iPad, and reports them weekly to the chair who then adds them to the online report.

18.6 Budget Needs

Since the 2020 pandemic, we have engaged the Southern Maine Movers at a cost of \$300 for assistance in the unloading of the truck.

19 South African Connection Team

19.1 Background

MCPC continues to be connected to Presbyterians in South Africa. Beginning in 2002 we began our outreach journey when we developed a connection with two Xhosa and one Colored (mixed race) congregation in rural Adelaide, Eastern Cape Province. Then in 2015 MCPC transitioned to an ongoing relationship with J.Z.S Memorial Church in Queenstown (Queenstown now renamed Komani), Eastern Cape Province.

19.2 Pen Pal Program

Our pen pal program between individuals at MCPC and Members of J.Z.S. Ncevu Memorial continues to drive our South African connection, the ongoing e-mail exchanges promoting a deeper friendship, understanding and support between our two congregations.

Holiday cards at Christmas and at Easter are sent from our congregation to supplement the Pen Pal “program”.

Through our correspondence we have shared stories of ourselves and of our MCPC church. We have likewise been brought into the life of this large, Xhosa congregation. Both joys and concerns are facing them. Political upheaval continues to be a challenge but there are many celebrations along the way. You are encouraged to visit their Facebook page *JZS NCEVU Memorial Congregation* to see worshipful singing and dancing and to get to know our South Africa connection better.

19.3 Special Projects

Financial support has been provided for special projects and for special needs. The most recent has been aiding in the repair of the church building following severe storm damage. A special collection from the congregation was the source of funds.

19.4 Ways to make the Connection Stronger

Your MCPC Connection Team is grateful for this relationship with our brothers and sisters in Christ in another part of God's world. The Team will be meeting to determine how best to move forward to continue or to revitalize the program to make the connection stronger and more effective. All are encouraged to join in by volunteering to be a pen pal and/or joining the Connection Team.

19.5 Budget Needs

There are no budget needs.

19.6 Reporting

A write-up of activities is expected for the MCPC Annual Report. A display of activities on a Fellowship Hall bulletin board is encouraged.

20 Sudanese Presbyterian Fellowship of Portland

20.1 Support

Support of the Fellowship is advisory and friendship in nature. In the early years of the Fellowship, a more active relationship took place in the form of a joint steering committee that acted as a Session and of involvement in monthly worship services.

20.2 Background

A special bond has existed between MCPC and the Sudanese Presbyterian Fellowship of Portland since two very tall gentleman visited our church in 2005 and stated that they were Presbyterian refugees from Sudan. Since that special Sunday, the Presbytery of Northern New England with MCPC as the main sponsoring congregation has nurtured and supported a group of Presbyterian Sudanese. The form of support has varied over the years, ranging from fellowship to providing preachers and helping to convert a rented office into a worship space. Financial aid over the years has come from MCPC, other PNNE churches and from PC(USA) grants.

20.3 Fellowship Recovering from effects of COVID

2024 saw a resurgence of the Fellowship as it emerged from the effects of COVID on Fellowship members. Sunday afternoon worship services have resumed, hosted by the Williston-Immanuel Church in downtown Portland. The Synod of the Northeast made rental at Williston-Immanuel possible through a two-year grant (2022-23, \$7,000 and in 2023-24 \$5,000). MCPC Deacons have been providing \$500 in yearly support of the Fellowship's Deacon activity in Portland and in South Sedan.

20.4 2024 Nuer Youth Conference

A 2024 highlight in the life of the Fellowship was hosting a very successful Nuer Youth Conference for Peace and Development. The Nuer tribe is one of the largest in South Sudan, and over 100 delegates attended the conference, coming from numerous USA states as far away as Alaska, and from Canadian provinces. Such conferences are an annual event in the Nuer community that rotates among cities. Workshops and worship services took place daily, beginning Friday at the Williston-Immanuel United Church in Portland and culminating in a Sunday afternoon and evening worship service and meal at MCPC. What a joy it was to see our sanctuary filled with joyous singing and preaching!

20.5 Support of Sudanese Community

Other activities include the Fellowship supporting the wider Portland Sudanese Community through their Deacon funds. Fellowship generosity was particularly evident in

their financial support and prayerful presence with the death of Fellowship members and support churches in South Sudan.

20.6 Budget Needs

There are no budget needs. Contributions to the Fellowship have traditionally come from the Deacons' Fund.

20.7 Reporting

A write-up of activities is expected for the Annual Report. A display of activities on a Fellowship Hall bulletin board is encouraged.

21 Special Offerings

21.1 Definition & Purpose

MCPC receives PC(USA)'s four church-wide Special Offerings, each focusing on a specific area of ministry within and beyond MCPC. The following Special Offerings information is from PC(USA).

NOTE: Dates in the following box are for the 2022 calendar.

One Great Hour of Sharing OFFERING DISTRIBUTION: 36% Presbyterian Hunger Program 32% Presbyterian Disaster Assistance 32% Self-Development of People presbyterianmission.org/oghs	RECEIVED: During the season of Lent, especially on Palm Sunday, April 10, and Easter, April 17 CONGREGATION REMITTANCE: 100% sent to Presbyterian Mission Agency
Pentecost Offering OFFERING DISTRIBUTION: 40% Congregational ministries with children at risk 60% Presbyterian Mission Agency > 50% ministries with youth and young adults > 10% child advocacy/children at risk presbyterianmission.org/pentecost	RECEIVED: During the season of Pentecost, especially on the Day of Pentecost, June 5, or any other youth-focused Sunday CONGREGATION REMITTANCE: 40% kept by congregation 60% sent to Presbyterian Mission Agency
Peace & Global Witness Offering OFFERING DISTRIBUTION: 25% Congregational peace and witness efforts 25% Presbytery and synod peace and witness efforts 50% Presbyterian Mission Agency > peacemaking, reconciliation and global witness presbyterianmission.org/peace-global	RECEIVED: World Communion Sunday, October 2 CONGREGATION REMITTANCE: 25% kept by congregation 25% sent to mid council 50% sent to Presbyterian Mission Agency
Christmas Joy Offering OFFERING DISTRIBUTION: 50% Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions 50% Leadership development and education at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color presbyterianmission.org/christmasjoy	RECEIVED: During the season of Advent, especially on the Sunday before Christmas, December 18 CONGREGATION REMITTANCE: 100% sent to Presbyterian Mission Agency

MCPC receives these offerings on the following days and seasons:

- 1) One Great Hour of Sharing—received on Palm Sunday
- 2) Pentecost—received on Pentecost Sunday
- 3) Peace & Global Witness P&GW—received on World Communion Sunday

- 4) Joy Offering—received at the end of Advent and into Christmastide.

21.2 Responsibilities and Tasks

Special Offerings at MCPC are overseen by the Deacons. PC(USA) provides offering related materials for each of the Special Offerings. Offerings received at MCPC are sent to PC(USA) and, for Pentecost & P&GW, local organizations. For each Special Offering, the following is done.

- 1) Receive and review PC(USA) materials; select material to include in publicity; verify or modify the standing order with the PC(USA) contact. The standing order contact is:
Customer Service
800-533-4371
customer_service@presbypub.com
- 2) Remind Session of upcoming Special Offerings a month or two prior to the offering.
- 3) For the local portion of Pentecost and Peace & Global Witness (P&GW):
 - a. Determine recipient of portion designated to be used locally per offering guidelines.
 - b. Obtain session approval for local recipient.
 - c. Include information about local recipient in publicity for the offerings.
- 4) Get the word out (OGHS begins with Lent, others 3-4 weeks before the offering is received):
 - a. Publicize the special offering on the bulletin board and in the update.
 - b. Hang poster in the Narthex and put info on the calendar bulletin board.
 - c. For OGHS put out fish banks and service location maps.
 - d. For Pentecost and P&GW publicize local recipients.
- 5) On the Sunday the offering is received, include a note about it in the bulletin's Time of Offering.
- 6) Offerings can be placed in the sanctuary offering box or sent to MCPC's office.
- 7) Get final details from the Treasurer on the offering received and report to Session.
- 8) Pentecost and P&GW: write letter to the local recipient and coordinate getting the check with the treasurer; post any thank you note received for a few weeks, then put it in the Thank You Binder.

21.3 PC(USA) General Contact

special.offerings@pcusa.org; 800-728-7228, ext. 5047; www.pcusa.org/specialofferings

21.4 Record Keeping

Maintain document with amount of special offering received and, for Pentecost and P&GW, the local organization and amount they received. Keep a copy of the letter sent to local recipients on file. In January, prepare the Special Offerings piece for the Annual Report of the previous year.

Supporting Documents on the MCPC Angel computer: SUMMARY AND DISPOSITION of Special Offering Giving.docx

A quarterly “thank you” letter is sent by the PC(USA) showing what has been contributed by MCPC for the four special offerings, for any contributions through the Presbyterian Giving Catalog and for any other special offering (e.g.: specific hurricane relief). A section of the report also shows the number of individuals and amounts of special offerings sent directly to the PC(USA) and thus bypassing any MCPC record keeping.

21.5 Budget Needs

There is no cost for special offering resources from PC(USA). MCPC’s Treasurer manages the financial aspects of offering receipts. Allow a few weeks for offerings to be received before remitting.

21.6 Remitting Funds

Presbyterian Church (USA) PO Box 643700 Pittsburgh PA 15264-3700

21.7 We are a Matthew 25 Congregation

“As a Matthew 25 Congregation: The Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) offer the whole Church a way to embody Matthew 25 through the Spirit-inspired stories and gifts which place us in partnership with those who have least. For the church to be the Church it must be enacted in relationship to those in need — an understanding that can readily be drawn from Matthew 25. Through gifts to the Special Offerings, we support ministries of compassion, justice, hunger, Christian formation, education, peacemaking and global witness.” From PC(USA) Special Offering

22 Technology Team

22.1 Computers

Computers to be maintained include the Office Angel, Finance and Zoom, and the pastor's personal laptop, if needed. Functions and capability that need to be maintained include:

- 1) Virus and spam protection
- 2) Software updates and new software and hardware purchases
- 3) Back-ups (local external drive and using Microsoft 365 or Carbonite)

22.2 WiFi

Wi-Fi is a wireless networking technology that uses radio waves to provide wireless high-speed Internet access. A common misconception is that the term Wi-Fi is short for "wireless fidelity," however Wi-Fi is a trademarked phrase that refers to IEEE 802.11x standards.

WiFi in the MCPC building assures that internet is available. Spaces include the MCPC Office, Bright Start Office, West Room and Loft. It's less often needed in Fellowship Hall and for the Pumpkin Patch. The Team will need to interface with Comcast if any problems or upgrades arise.

WiFi now connects all computers except the Finance computer. Cable connects that computer and the copier.

22.3 Web Administration

22.3.1 Design and maintenance

This is currently at the discretion of the MCPC web minder, after review with staff and members who are vested in the content. Maintenance includes ensuring annual fees are paid for Word Press, the web content management system, and Go Daddy, the domain registrar.

22.3.2 Periodic Postings

Every effort should be made to keep the website fresh, current, and relevant.

22.4 Angel Desktop Computer Administration

22.4.1 File Sharing/Microsoft 365

22.4.2 Back-up

Carbonite products offer automatic data backup and recovery, along with data management and migration solutions. Carbonite was not billed in 2024 and should be reviewed for need. Using Microsoft 365 backup is now sufficient.

22.4.3 Remote Internet Access

Access to the Angel computer is available by logging into the Comcast church account from any web browser.

22.4.4 Zoom Laptop Computer Administration

The Zoom Computer is used to facilitate the broadcast of worship services via Zoom and YouTube. There are cameras and a microphone associated with the Zoom operation. The

Zoom computer may also be used for broadcast meetings such as for Session and Deacons. Recording is only done for worship services.

22.4.5 Finance Desktop Computer Administration

The Church Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer are the only users of this computer.

22.5 Budgeting and Expense Management

22.5.1 Intro

The Tech Team should be responsible for Information Technology Expense subaccount of MCPC annual budget. Expenses not in the approved budget and over a threshold amount of \$500 would require Session approval. Team approval would be sufficient below that threshold amount.

22.5.2 XFINITY (Comcast)

This expense includes monthly billing for internet and phone including Bright Start. Bright Start does contribute to offset being included in the MCPC bill. XFINITY equipment is located in the electrical room next to the outside door facing Main Street and in the supply closet across from the church office.

22.5.3 MalwareBytes

Annual billing for anti-virus and malware protection. Malwarebytes is a cybersecurity company creating antivirus and malware removal software for Windows, macOS, and Android devices. Its software aims to eliminate persistent malware, with free on-demand scanning and a Premium version offering real-time protection and exploit prevention for up to five devices.

22.5.4 TechSoup

Annual fee for enabling non-profit discounts. TechSoup is a global network that equips nonprofits, charities, and libraries with technology solutions, training, and resources to improve their operations and impact. It acts as a bridge between the technology sector and the social sector, facilitating access to discounted software, hardware, and other digital tools. TechSoup also provides educational content, community support, and expert guidance to help organizations navigate the digital landscape.

22.5.5 Microsoft 365

Microsoft 365 is a subscription service that provides access to Microsoft's productivity and creativity apps, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook, along with cloud services like OneDrive and advanced security features.

22.5.6 Zoom

Annual membership for video conferencing.

22.5.7 Audio/Video

Hybrid church audio and video potential expenses. (Check if info is included in computer inventory.)

22.5.8 Office Copier

22.6 Password Administration

User access protection should be managed on at least:

- 1) Office Angel computer;
- 2) Zoom computer;
- 3) Finance computer;
- 4) Outlook mail;
- 5) Microsoft 365;
- 6) Website;
- 7) WiFi;
- 8) Zoom account.

22.7 Future planning and implementation

The amount of effort will vary widely between years depending on need. For example, a busy year would be when there is a required upgrade to computer operating systems or moving to a hybrid (broadcast and in person) church service.

We will need to replace older computers as needed with donated or new computers.

Under consideration:

- 1) PayPal setup and operation (in conjunction with Treasurer)
 - 2) Projection needs for worship and for other occasions
-

23 Tedford Shelter Team

23.1 Definition and Purpose

As Christians, we express our faith by showing a caring concern for the marginalized in our society. Tedford Housing, as one of its several programs serving the needs of people in need in the community, provides emergency shelter and a safe place for people to rebuild their hope. Shelter guests facing the crisis of homelessness work one-on-one with case managers to find and secure housing. MCPC volunteers with the organization's Meal-A-Month program by providing a nutritious meal for 16 people (increasing to 24 when new facility opens in September 2025) on the fourth Monday of each month. These meals nourish our neighbors in need and support the entire ministry of Tedford Housing in our community.

23.2 Structure

This is essentially an "ad hoc" ministry. It has been the recent practice for the point-person to prepare the main dish for the monthly meal. However, this has not always been the model. Formerly, members of the congregation signed up to provide the entire meal. Sometimes a small group got together and prepared a meal in the MCPC kitchen. Regardless, a chairperson is needed to plan a meal and organize the cooking or arrange for the contributions of the other elements of that meal. And volunteers are needed to assist, contribute elements of the meal, and sometimes deliver the meal.

23.3 Responsibilities

The point-person maintains communication with the host of the shelter. A periodic email reminds of the dates assigned and generally a phone call from the shelter on the night before also is a reminder. Under the current structure, the point-person plans the meal and provides the main entrée. Most meals include a main course, vegetable and/or salad, bread/starch, fresh fruit, desert and condiments (salad dressing, butter, etc.). A sign-up sheet is posted in the Fellowship Hall at least 2 weeks prior to the 4th Monday assigned meal. Members of the congregation sign up for various elements of the meal and either bring them to worship the day before or deliver them to the MCPC kitchen by 3 PM in time for delivery to the shelter for the evening meal. Delivery to the shelter on Cumberland Street is made between 3 and 4 PM and it is the responsibility of the chair to deliver or arrange for another to do so.

23.4 Membership

All members and friends of the congregation are invited to participate as members of the ministry of caring.

23.5 Record Keeping

The chair keeps a record of the meals served each month in order to vary the menu and provide a variety of delicious and nutritious meals. A report is prepared for the MCPC Annual Meeting summarizing the year's offerings of meals.

23.6 Budget Needs

None. This is a ministry of volunteer time and food contributions.

24 Sexual Misconduct Policy

24.1 Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church (hereinafter referred to as MCPC) that all church members, church officers, non-member employees, and volunteers are to maintain the integrity of the ministerial, employment, and professional relationship at all times. Persons who engage in sexual misconduct are in violation of the principles set forth in Scripture, and also of the ministerial, pastoral, employment, and professional relationship. It is never permissible or acceptable for a church member, officer, employee, or volunteer to engage in sexual misconduct.

24.2 Distribution

Copies of this policy and its procedures shall be made available to all those who are members of and/or participate in activities of the church. This policy and its procedures are to be made available to persons who accuse others of misconduct, including those who are or claim to be victims of sexual misconduct, as well as their families.

24.3 Standards of Conduct

... As [God] who called you is holy,
be holy yourselves in all your
conduct;
... Tend the flock of God that is in your charge,
...
not under compulsion but willingly,
...
not for sordid gain but eagerly. ...
not lord it over those in your
charge, but be examples to the
flock.
... You know that we who teach will be judged with greater
strictness.
1 Pet. 1:15; 5:2–3; Jas. 3:1,
NRSV

The ethical conduct of all who minister in the name of Jesus Christ is of vital importance to the church because through these representatives an understanding of God and the gospel's good news is conveyed.

"Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world." (Book of Order, G-2.0104a).

The basic principles of conduct guiding this policy are as follows:

1. Sexual misconduct is a violation of the role of pastors, employees, volunteers, counselors, supervisors, teachers, and advisors of any kind who are called upon to exercise integrity, sensitivity, and caring in a trust relationship. It breaks the covenant to act in the best interests of parishioners, clients, co-workers, and students.
2. Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power that breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relation to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure in an abusive, exploitative, and unjust manner. If the parishioner, student,

client, or employee initiates or invites sexual content in the relationship, it is the pastor's, counselor's, officer's, or supervisor's responsibility to maintain the appropriate role and prohibit a sexual relationship.

3. Sexual misconduct takes advantage of the vulnerability of persons who are less powerful to act for their own welfare, including children. It is antithetical to the gospel call to work as God's servant in the struggle to bring wholeness to a broken world. It violates the mandate to protect the vulnerable from harm.

24.4 Definitions

Sexual Misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include:

Child sexual abuse; including, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. In the Presbyterian Church (USA), the sexual abuse definition of a child is anyone under age eighteen.

Sexual abuse as defined in the *Book of Order*: "Sexual abuse is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone without the capacity to consent, or any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position." (*Book of Order*, D-7.0901).

Sexual harassment; defined for this policy is as follows: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution;
- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual;
- c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or
- d. an individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual jokes, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children.

Rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.

Sexual conduct (such as offensive, obsessive or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome touching or fondling) that is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.

Sexual Malfeasance; as defined by the broken trust resulting from sexual activities within a professional ministerial relationship that results in misuse of office or position arising from the professional ministerial relationship.

Misuse of technology; use of technology that results in sexually harassing or abusing another person, including texting or emailing suggestive messages and images to persons with whom one has a ministerial relationship. It is never appropriate to view pornography on church property. When this includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse. There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or church entity or within the context of ministry.

24.5 Church Response to Allegations of Sexual Misconduct

24.5.1 Principles

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, officers, and employees of the church should seek healing and assure the protection of all persons. Where possible, the privacy of persons should be respected and confidentiality of communications should be maintained.

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, officers, and employees of the church should seek to uphold the dignity of all persons involved, including persons who are alleging harm, persons who are accused of sexual misconduct, and the families and communities of each.

MCPC has jurisdiction over its members, officers, and employees and the Presbytery has jurisdiction over the pastors such that if a member, officer, or employee is alleged to have committed an offense against Scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution, the church or Presbytery has the duty to inquire into the allegations and, if the allegations are proven, to correct the behavior of the member, officer, or employee and ensure the safety of others in the community. Allegations of sexual misconduct are always considered allegations of offense against Scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution that trigger the disciplinary processes of the PC(USA) set forth in the *Book of Order*. In the case of an active non-member who is employed or volunteers with the church, the individual will be covered by the procedures of the written personnel policies of the church.

If the person accused of sexual misconduct is no longer a member, officer, or employee of the church or Presbytery, but the conduct occurred while the person was acting on behalf of the church, the church does not have jurisdiction to correct the behavior, but it does have a duty to hear the allegations of offense and to take measures to prevent future occurrences of harm. The church or Presbytery may appoint an administrative committee or commission to hear the allegations of sexual misconduct. The governing body may also take measures to prevent future occurrences of harm through education and policy.

24.5.2 Reporting Requirements

24.5.2.1 Reporting Sexual Misconduct

A person needing to report that a member, officer, employee, or volunteer of MCPC has committed sexual misconduct is encouraged to seek guidance from a pastor, the clerk of session or the stated clerk of the Presbytery regarding filing a report.

Congregation: If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a member, elder, deacon, volunteer, or employee of a congregation, the report of allegations should be made to a pastor or the clerk of session. If the accused is a member or officer of the church, the church will respond by using the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If the

accused is a nonmember employee or volunteer, the church will respond by using procedures set forth by the session of the congregation.

Presbytery: If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a pastor or other minister member of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the report of allegations should be made to the stated clerk of the presbytery. If the report of allegations is placed in writing, the presbytery will respond by using the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*.

24.5.2.2 Receiving Reports of Sexual Misconduct

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct will occur in a variety of ways. Because a governing body or entity cannot control to whom the victim of sexual misconduct will speak first, it is important that officers, employees, and persons highly visible to church members and visitors understand how reports of incidents are channeled to the proper person. The allegations may come from persons who have or who do not have a formal relationship with MCPC and may be made to a variety of officers or leaders within MCPC. It is the duty of these officers to see that any allegation of sexual misconduct is reported appropriately keeping in mind the mandatory reporting requirements for allegations of child abuse.

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct should never be taken lightly or disregarded and allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the victim, the accused, and the church. Reports of allegations should be dealt with as matters of highest confidentiality, both before and after they have been submitted to appropriate authorities as outlined below. The first person to learn of an incident of sexual misconduct should not undertake an inquiry alone or question either the victim or the accused unless the incident is divulged in the process of pastoral care, counseling, or a therapy session. If the victim is hesitant to talk to “higher authorities,” the person who has received the initial report has a special pastoral responsibility to build trust and willingness to speak with the accuser, lest the church be unable to respond because no one is able to give firsthand information.

The person receiving the initial report of allegations of sexual misconduct shall analyze the relationship of the person accused of sexual misconduct with MCPC and shall make sure that the allegations of offense are filed with the council having jurisdiction over the person accused. This may be done by the person alleging harm or by any member of the PC(USA). If the accused is a church member or employee, the report should be filed with the clerk of session. If the accused is a pastor, the report should be filed with the stated clerk of the Presbytery.

If the report is made orally, the person receiving the report of allegations should request that the person making the report of allegations place it in writing. A report of allegations of sexual misconduct in writing from a member of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed an offense must be acted on according to the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If a clerk or stated clerk receives a report of allegations in writing from a nonmember of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed sexual misconduct, the report also should be acted on according to the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If the person who makes the report is unwilling or unable to place it in writing, any member of the PC(USA) may make the written statement that will automatically trigger the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*.

24.5.2.3 Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

The Book of Order (G-4.0302) requires that

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

The ecclesiastical authority is the **clerk of session** - if the accused is a church member, elder, deacon or employee; or the **stated clerk** of the Presbytery if the accused is a pastor or other minister member of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
The civil authority is the **State of Maine** - if a child or any person is in immediate danger,

Call the police: 911.

All persons covered by this policy have an additional duty to report knowledge of child sexual abuse to the employing entity, supervisor, or governing body representative. All persons should be informed of and must comply with state and local laws regarding incidents of actual or suspected child sexual abuse. These reports should be made within a reasonable time of receiving the information.

These provisions of the *Book of Order* attempt to balance conflicting moral duties for officers of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

For ministers of the Word and Sacrament, the provision strives to balance the duty to protect children from future harm with the duty of a minister to hold in confidence any information revealed to them during the exercise of pastoral care in any ministry setting. See Book of Order G-4.0301 *Trust and Confidentiality*.

For elders, deacons, and certified Christian educators, the provisions strive to balance the duty of an officer of the church to protect children from harm and any secular duty the officer may have to hold in confidence any information revealed as a result of a secular relationship such as attorney/client, counselor/client, or physician/patient. The secular duties will be a function of secular law and may vary from state to state.

24.5.3 Responding

The appropriate response will vary according to the relationship of MCPC with the person who is accused of sexual misconduct. Church members and officers are subject to inquiry and discipline (censure and correction) under the *Book of Order*. Non-church member employees and volunteers are subject to oversight and correction.

24.5.3.1 Accused Covered by Book of Order

When an allegation of offense of sexual misconduct has been received by the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery, the clerk of the council will report to the council that an offense has been alleged and that the council will proceed according to the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. The council should appoint an investigating committee to inquire into the allegations. The investigating committee must promptly begin its inquiry into the allegations. Delay may cause further harm to the victim and/or the accused. Councils must cooperate with civil authorities in an investigation of child sexual abuse or other criminal sexual misconduct. Church disciplinary proceedings cannot interfere with a criminal investigation by civil authorities and may have to be suspended until these are completed. The session has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving members, ruling elders, and deacons of the church, each congregation having jurisdiction only over its own members. A presbytery has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving teaching elders. A presbytery may dissolve a pastoral relationship when the “*Word imperatively demands it*” (G-2.0904). However, a presbytery may only place a minister on administrative leave when allegations of child abuse have been received and the presbytery has followed the *Book of Order* procedures to conduct its risk evaluation to determine whether or not a minister member accused of child abuse should be placed on administrative leave (D-7.0902). It is recommended that the permanent judicial commission (PJC) members who will conduct this risk evaluation based upon the allegations and a hearing should also consider secular legal advice.

When a church officer renounces jurisdiction, the clerk or stated clerk shall report the renunciation at the next meeting of the council and shall record the renunciation in the minutes of the council. The status of any pending charges may be shared with the council at that time.

24.5.3.2 Accused Not Covered by Book of Order

When the church receives an accusation of offense of sexual misconduct against a nonmember employee or volunteer, the procedural response will be guided by the written personnel policies. If the situation is not adequately covered by written policies, the Session may appoint either a committee or an administrative commission for the review of the allegation.

The committee or commission that will respond to the allegation of offense of sexual misconduct will do the following:

- a. Determine whether or not the allegation gives rise to a reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct by the accused.
- b. If so, gather additional information necessary to decide about correcting the behavior.
- c. Determine any remedies, including limiting ministry, suspension, or termination necessary and advisable under the circumstances. If the accused is a member of another denomination, that denomination will be notified of the allegations and the response.
- d. Inform the victim and the accused of the remedy.
- e. In all cases, the personnel committee shall prepare a written report, which shall be included in the accused’s permanent personnel file. The accused shall be allowed to attach any written statements to said documents, also for permanent inclusion in the permanent file.

All procedures shall follow the guidelines set forth by the Session.

24.5.3.3 Record Keeping

The Session should keep detailed records of its actions and minutes of its deliberations and its conversations with the accuser, the accused, and other parties involved, correspondence, and copies of the reports received from committees or commissions. Such records will be kept confidential as far as possible. In Case # 208-6, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) interpreted the Rules of Discipline to say that a council or entity may share the contents of inquiry reports with other councils or entities of the PC(USA) when necessary. The clerk of the governing body or director of the entity will maintain the records while the inquiry is in process.

24.6 Prevention and Risk Management

24.6.1 Implementation

It is a violation of the MCPC's work rules to engage in sexual misconduct and MCPC encourages the reporting of sexual misconduct.

24.6.2 Liability and Insurance

MCPC should regularly inform their liability insurance carriers of the activities and programs they operate or sponsor and of the duties and responsibilities of officers, employees, and volunteers. The standard insurance policy should usually be enhanced by endorsements to cover specific exposures such as camps, day-care operations, shelters, or other outreach programs. It is also recommended that MCPC obtain an endorsement to its general liability insurance policy specifically covering sexual abuse and molestation. Such coverage may provide for legal defense expenses and judgments in civil suits brought against the governing body or entity, its officers, directors, or employees.

24.6.3 Employment Practices

24.6.3.1 Record Keeping

Accurate record keeping is an essential part of hiring and supervision practices of MCPC. A personnel file shall be maintained on every employee, including ministers. The file should contain the application for employment, any employment questionnaires, background checks, references responses, and all other documents related to an employee's employment, except records which may be required, by law, to be kept in separate files.

24.6.3.2 Prescreening Applicants

MCPC will establish thorough and consistent hiring practices. If an applicant is unknown to the employer, the employer should confirm the applicant's identity by requiring photographic identification such as a driver's license. A background check shall be performed, including a national criminal background check, on all applicants that may have interaction with children and youth.

Part of pre-employment screening should include specific questions related to discovering previous complaints of sexual misconduct.

24.6.3.3 References

The church is responsible for contacting references for prospective employees, or volunteers (the Presbytery will assist with reference checking of prospective pastors). A written record of conversations or correspondence with references should be kept in the employee's personnel file. (See below for a sample reference form).

If false or misleading information is given by the applicant, or relevant information is withheld, the applicant should be eliminated from consideration.

Applicants should be informed of negative comments regarding sexual misconduct and shall be given an opportunity to submit additional references or to give other evidence to correct or respond to harmful information obtained from a reference.

24.7 Educating and Training - Awareness

Since the issue of sexual misconduct has become an ever more present reality, there is an emerging need to educate and train a wide variety of persons. Persons needing this specific education include: ministers; volunteers; officers; nonprofessional and professional staff; members of the congregation; and employees.

Education for these persons and groups will be different on a group-by-group basis. A primary requirement for all persons should be common knowledge regarding professional and ministerial boundaries and the MCPC Sexual Misconduct policy.

Much of a congregation's education currently happens in response to an actual case of sexual misconduct. However, it is recommended that the congregation be as proactive in this area as possible offering education in a variety of settings. There are already numerous resource materials available that could be adapted to a congregation's setting.

24.8 Definitions

Accused is the term used to represent the person against whom a claim of sexual misconduct is made

Accuser is a term used to represent the person claiming knowledge of sexual misconduct by a person covered by this policy. The accuser may or may not have been the victim of the alleged sexual misconduct. A person such as a family member, friend, or colleague may be the accuser.

Church when spelled with the initial capitalized refers to the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Church when spelled with the initial in lowercase refers to local churches. The word *congregation* is used loosely for members and participants.

Employee is the comprehensive term used to cover individuals who are hired or called to work for the Church for salary or wages.

Entity is the term used to refer to any program or office managed by a board, committee, council, or other body whose membership is elected by a governing body.

Council is a representative body composed of elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament: sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. Councils were called governing bodies prior to July of 2011. A council may establish entities such as day-care centers, conference centers, camps, or homes for the aged. A council may have both church members and nonmembers as employees.

Inquiry is the term used in the Rules of Discipline to determine whether charges should be filed based upon allegations of an offense received by a governing body. See *Book of Order*, D-10.0000.

Mandated Reporter is described by some states' laws as a person who is required to report any and all suspected incidents of child abuse, including child sexual abuse that come to their attention. State laws vary from defining "all persons having knowledge" as mandated reporters to specifying very limited lists of professions whose members are required to report. The State of Maine requires Mandated Reporter Training for:

C. Any person affiliated with a church or religious institution who serves in an administrative capacity or has otherwise assumed a position of trust or responsibility to the members of that church or religious institution, while acting in that capacity, regardless of whether the person receives compensation. [PL 2003, c. 210, §4 (NEW).]

Persons Covered by this policy includes church members, church officers, ministers, and nonmembers who are employees or volunteers of the General Assembly of the PC(USA). All other governing bodies or entities of the General Assembly are urged to create a sexual misconduct policy using the guidelines set out in this policy.

Response is the action taken by the governing body or entity when a report of sexual misconduct is received. It may include (1) inquiry into facts and circumstances, (2) possible disciplinary action (administrative or judicial or both), (3) pastoral care for victims and their families and others, and (4) pastoral care and rehabilitation for the accused and care for their families.

Secular Authorities are the governmental bodies, whether city, county, state, or federal, who are given the responsibility to investigate, criminally prosecute, and/or bring civil charges against individuals accused of sexual crimes or offenses against adults and children.

Secular Law is the body of municipal, state, and federal laws and is often referred to collectively as civil and criminal law. Prohibited behavior addressed by this policy may result in criminal and/or civil charges filed under secular law.

Victim is a person claiming to have been harmed and/or abused by a person covered under this policy.

Volunteer is the term used for those who provide services for the General Assembly of the PC(USA). Volunteers include persons elected or appointed to serve on boards, committees, and other groups. For purposes of this policy, volunteers are treated the same as employees.

24.9 Employment Questionnaire and Release Form

Name: _____

Last

First

Middle

Street Address: _____

City

State

Zip

Business Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Have you ever been known by any other name? __Yes__ No__

If yes, please provide other name(s): _____

Employment Record (List current and previous employers for the last five years)

Employed by: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Supervisor's Title _____

Employed from (month/year) to _____ (month/year) _____

Why did you leave? _____

Employed by: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Supervisor's Title _____

Employed from (month/year) to _____ (month/year) _____

Why did you leave? _____

Employed by: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Supervisor's Title _____

Employed from (month/year) to _____(month/year)_____

Why did you leave? _____

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 for reasons related to sexual misconduct.

Signature _____

Date _____

Note: If you are unable to make the above certification you may instead give in the space provided a description of the complaint, termination, or the outcome of the situation and any explanatory comments you care to add.

Release

The information contained in this questionnaire is accurate to the best of my knowledge and may be verified by the employing entity. I hereby authorize (*Name of Employing Entity*) to make any and all contacts necessary to verify my prior employment history, and to inquire concerning any 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 relevant information to the (Name of Employing Entity)_____.

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 or judicial authority from any and all claims, liabilities, and cause of action for the legitimate release or use of any information.

Signature_____

Witness_____

Witness_____

24.10 Reference Check Record Form

This form may be used to keep a record of all face-to-face or telephone reference checks. Additions that have to do with sexual misconduct or child abuse may be needed to justify to a court of law that they have done reasonable and prudent screening before hiring a person.

Confidential Employment Reference

1. Name of applicant: _____

2. Reference or church contacted (if a church, identify both the church and person contacted):

3. Date and time of contact: _____

4. Person contacting the reference or church: _____

5. Method of contact (phone, letter, personal conversation): _____

6. Summary of conversation (summarize the reference's remarks concerning the applicant's fitness and suitability for the position, any convictions for or actions pending related to sexual misconduct, sexual harassment or child abuse):

Name _____ Title _____

Signature _____ Date _____

24.11 Sexual Misconduct Policy - Acknowledgement of Receipt (Form)

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

Signature _____

A similar acknowledgement should be signed at the time amendments to the policy are made and distributed.

24.12 Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct (Form)

Reported by:

Name_____

Title_____

Address_____

City, State, and Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

Date of Report:_____

Person suspected of misconduct:

Name:_____

Title:_____

City, State, and Zip Code:_____

Telephone:_____

Other person(s) involved (witness or victims):

Name_____ Title _____

Age_____ Sex_____

Address_____

City, State, and Zip Code_____

Telephone _____

Report of Suspected Sexual Misconduct (cont.)

Describe incident(s) of suspected sexual misconduct, including date(s), time(s), and location(s):

Identify eyewitnesses to the incident, including names, addresses, and telephone numbers, where available: _____

24.13 Employment Questions to ask of potential employees

Persons seeking ministerial calls or employment in nonordained positions should be asked questions such as:

- a. Has a civil, criminal, or ecclesiastical complaint ever been sustained against you involving sexual misconduct by you?
- b. Have you ever resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons relating to allegations of sexual misconduct by you?
- c. If so, indicate the date, nature and place of these allegations, and the name, address, and telephone number of your employer at that time.
- d. Have you been required to receive professional treatment, physical or psychological, for reasons related to sexual misconduct to you?
- e. If so, please give a short description of the treatment including the date, nature of treatment, place, and name, address, and telephone number of the treating physician or other professional.

24.14 Meeting the Needs of All Involved

In cases of sexual misconduct there are needs that have to be met for the good of all persons, groups, and entities. To ensure that the governing body is ready to meet the variety of needs present, an independent response coordination team may be named. This team will not investigate the allegation or in any way function as an investigating committee for disciplining members or officers, but should confine itself to coordinating a process that will meet the specific needs of victims and their families (if any), the accused and family (if any), the congregation, the Session, and staff.

24.14.1 The Needs of the Victim

The Session and response coordination team should assure that adequate treatment and care are available for alleged victims of sexual misconduct and their families. Sometimes, the victim or family is so angry and alienated from the church, that offers of help may be perceived as insincere or as attempts of a cover-up. If the victim or family at first refuses, the church should continue to offer help. Above all the church should not act in a self-protective manner by ignoring the victim and their families.

The extent of the damage to the victims of sexual misconduct will vary from person to person, and is influenced by such factors as the degree or severity of abuse, the age and emotional condition of the victim, human dynamics, and the importance of one's religious faith. The Session, and response coordination team is to assume in all cases that the victim has been wounded by the experience.

Feelings of guilt, shame, anger, mistrust, lowered self-esteem, unworthiness, and feelings of alienation from God, self, the religious community, and family are frequent injuries suffered by victims. It is important for the response coordination team to be sensitive to the victim's pain and need for healing, and to act by making appropriate pastoral care available.

The following are some of the needs of the victim:

- 1) To be heard and taken seriously. From the time that the victim is first able to indicate that sexual misconduct has occurred, that person should receive immediate attention and serious consideration from all church representatives.
- 2) To receive pastoral and therapeutic support. The victim may require spiritual and professional assistance as a result of sexual misconduct. The response coordination team should offer to help arrange for such support from a pastor and therapist, if the victim desires. Discussions with such people would be confidential, privileged conversations.
- 3) To be informed about church process and progress with regard to the accusation. One member of the response coordination team should be the church contact person for the victim. Frequently, this contact person will give the victim information as to what is happening in the church as a result of the accusation.
- 4) To receive legal advice. The response coordination team should suggest that the victim might benefit from independent legal advice. (Legitimate claims might be more effectively pursued and flimsy or false claims discouraged.) If requested, the response coordination team should suggest ways in which independent legal advice can be obtained.
- 5) To be assured of an advocate of one's own choosing. A victim may need continuing moral support from one individual who is present while the church process deals with the accusation. This advocate may be a relative, friend, or someone suggested by the response coordination team. This advocate could speak for the victim, if necessary.
- 6) To be assured that justice will be pursued. The victim needs to be told by the response coordination team, and shown by the processes of the church, that justice is being pursued through fact-finding, truth-telling, confrontation and agreement that may include removal or temporary exclusion of the accused from office or adjudication of the complaint.
- 7) To receive healing and reconciliation. In addition to specific forms of restitution mentioned above, the victim needs to receive a sense of healing and reconciliation with all concerned—the self, the family, the church and, ideally, the accused. The response coordination team can help bring this about using the church's processes and resources.
- 8) While the above are needs of the victim, one recognizes that all of these needs may also not be met through a reasonable handling of a specific case, but may only occur over a lengthier period of time. All of these needs, however, should be taken seriously and compassionately, and the rights of the victim respected.

24.14.2 The Needs of the Accused

The governing body or entity shall offer treatment and care for the accused as well as alleged victims and families. If the accused is a minister, this is the primary responsibility of the Commission On Ministry.

Feelings of guilt, shame, anger, mistrust, lowered self-esteem, depression, unworthiness, and feelings of alienation from God, self, the religious community, and family are often experienced by the accused. In addition, there may be fear of job loss, incarceration, and indignation if an allegation is false.

When a person is found not guilty of charges of sexual misconduct, it is important for the Session or Presbytery to see that the decision is disseminated as widely as possible within their power, unless doing so would further injure the person accused.

24.14.2.1 Personal Care

Whether the allegations about the accused are eventually found to be true or not, the accused deserves to be treated with Christian kindness and respect.

The response coordination team may suggest that the accused seek spiritual support or professional counseling. People in staff positions, such as presbytery executives or stated clerks, should not engage in personal counseling of the accused because of their potential involvement in disciplinary process.

24.14.2.2 Economic Security and Care for Family of Accused

When an allegation of sexual misconduct has been made against a minister, the economic security of the accused is directly threatened, along with reputation, career, and family relationships. Again, the committee on ministry can be of assistance.

The response coordination team may alert the committee on ministry to the possible spiritual, emotional, and financial needs of the family of the accused and recommend expert resources.

24.14.3 The Needs of a Congregation in a Context of Sexual Misconduct

The Session, Presbytery and response coordination team should be aware of the problems a congregation or employing entity may experience following allegations of sexual misconduct by a minister, employee, or volunteer. The allegations may polarize the congregation or organization, damage morale, create serious internal problems, and even limit the trust a congregation may place in succeeding pastors. Efforts should be taken to recognize and identify the problems and heal any damage that may be done to the congregation.

When there is sexual misconduct on the part of a minister, non-ordained staff, or volunteer in a particular congregation, a number of needs unique to that congregation will emerge since sexual misconduct impacts congregations in different ways. Therefore, these needs will not necessarily emerge in the same sequence in each situation. Depending on the parties involved in the sexual misconduct, some of the needs may not emerge. In any event, those managing the church's response to the sexual misconduct will want to know that the following needs may emerge.

24.14.3.1 Pastoral Care

Members and staff of the congregation will need pastoral care. If it is the pastor who is involved in the sexual misconduct, care will need to be provided by another member of the ordained staff (if the church is a multiple-staff church) or by a trained interim pastor. If the pastor leaves as a result of sexual misconduct, in extreme cases a trained interim pastor or consultant in sexual misconduct may need to work with the congregation for an extended period of time.

If it is not a pastor who is involved in the sexual misconduct, then the pastor will provide the needed care for the congregation. The pastor, if not previously trained in this specialty area, will

need to consult with denominational specialists who will advise him or her how to proceed and any anticipated problems.

24.14.3.2 Information about the Case

Members of the congregation will need opportunities both to receive and give information. If a case of sexual misconduct becomes a matter of public knowledge within a congregation and if a pastor has been found guilty of sexual misconduct, the interim pastor or consultant may hold appropriate meetings with individuals, small groups, or with the whole congregation. Such meetings should provide information about sexual misconduct in general, Presbyterian polity and our judicial process, and how others who may have been victimized may be heard and ministered to. If the offender is not the pastor, then the pastor may perform these functions. At such meetings, one may expect members to vent their feelings. An opportunity for this to happen should be provided. If this venting does not take place, then it may create serious problems for the future of the congregation, for future pastors, and for the Session.

24.14.3.3 Resource Persons

In light of the above needs, the following are several resource persons whose services would be valuable to a congregation in the context of sexual misconduct:

- a trained interim pastor;
- a committee on ministry representative knowledgeable in polity and the effects of sexual misconduct in the church;
- a consultant or therapist with knowledge and experience in dealing with sexual misconduct;
- an attorney who can discuss legal aspects of a case;
- an insurance agent who can advise the congregation about their exposure to liability or coverage.

24.15 Safe Church Policy

24.15.1 Objective

To provide a safe and secure environment within the MCPC that protects our children and incapacitated adults from harm and abuse. In seeking to accomplish this objective we will also protect our congregation by reducing legal risk and liability exposure in case of potential accusation.

24.15.2 Definitions

Adult Leader/Teacher/Worker: over 18 years of age

Youth Leader/Teacher/Worker: 9th-12th grade high school student

Youth Helpers: 6th-8th grade junior high school student

Children/youth: under 18 years of age

Incapacitated adult: an adult 18 years of age or older who due to physical, emotional, or mental ability is unable to manage personal, home or financial affairs in his/her own best interest or is unable to act or unable to delegate responsibility to a responsible caretaker or care giver.

Child abuse: defined by state law, but generally includes (1) non-accidental physical injury, (2) sexual contact or exploitation, (3) neglect, and (4) intentional or negligent infliction of emotional distress.

Child sexual abuse: defined by state law, but generally any sexual contact with or exploitation between an adult or caregiver and a child or adolescent even if the victim gives consent.

24.15.3 Safety/Emergency Procedures

24.15.3.1 Fire and Accident Emergency Procedures

Serious accidents should be reported to the Church School Teacher, Head Usher, or Pastor immediately so that a doctor or nurse can assist or a call to 911 be placed if warranted. Even minor accidents (including bumped heads) should be reported to the child's parents. Write a note on the sign-in sheet as a reminder.

The following emergency lists, phone numbers and procedures shall be posted in each classroom, the parlor, the fellowship hall, and the church office:

1. Ambulance 911
2. Police 911
3. Fire evacuation procedure and map for each room.
4. Location of fire alarms and extinguishers
5. Location of first aid kit and equipment
6. Location of telephones

24.15.3.2 Rooms and Equipment

Only age appropriate toys, equipment and supplies shall be in each classroom. All staff should watch for and promptly report any safety or health hazards needing repair or cleaning to the Building and Grounds Committee or one of the pastors.

24.15.3.3 Preschool Age Children (Birth - Pre-K)

1. Enrollment and attendance guidelines: Preschool children with any short-term infectious illness or any symptom of illness (fever, chronic cough, diarrhea, skin eruption or bloody sore, or mouth sore) should be kept at home until recovered. Preschool children with any long-term or chronic infectious illness may be ministered to in a special care setting by a person who has received training from a health professional in the special care needed by the child. No child may attend an early childhood setting in the event of weeping or bloody skin or mouth sores that cannot be successfully covered or controlled with medication. Biting of an unusual frequency or severity that would be accompanied by actual transfer of blood from the biter will result in removal from the school.
2. Sign-In Book: Each time a child attends pre-school or nursery the parent(s)/guardian(s)/ and /or responsible adult(s) is/are required to register that child by using the Sign-In Book available in the classroom.
3. Preschool Staff: Leaders/Teachers/Workers and/or Helpers should not be in preschool classes whenever they have any infectious illness (whether spread by respiratory, intestinal, direct contact, or blood-borne routes), any symptom of such illness, any open sore (including "cold sores"), or sign of skin infection, including hangnails or cuts which

are inflamed and might be a source of staph infection (which could be a serious problem in nurseries). Staff should pay extra attention to their own personal hygiene and habits, particularly when handling snacks, and avoid exposing children to sneezes or kisses*. (*Smiles, verbal affirmation, hugs, and pats on the back are wonderful ways to express the love of Christ).

4. Handwashing Guidelines: Handwashing is the first line of defense against the spread of infections. Strict handwashing must be practiced by children and staff including, but not limited to the following times: upon arrival, before eating or handling food, after going to the bathroom or assisting in toileting or diapering, after contact with body fluid, or after cleaning areas contaminated with body fluids. Hands should be washed with running water and liquid soap.
5. Sanitization Guidelines: Commonly used surfaces and toys should be sanitized with a standard bleach solution (1/4 teaspoon bleach to 1 quart water).
6. Blood precautions: You must use disposable gloves when contact with blood is anticipated, particularly if you have cuts or scrapes on your hands, or when cleaning surfaces that have been contaminated with blood. Disinfect contaminated surfaces with a strong bleach solution of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water. Throw gloves away and wash hands with soap and water.
7. Safety: Think safety, especially in recreational or play settings. Games should be age appropriate and played in safe areas, free of hazards. No child should be allowed to jump from any height greater than his/her own height. Preschool staff especially must handle children gently and carefully, properly supporting babies' heads and necks, never lifting or swinging any child by the arms (some children's shoulders separate easily) or throwing children in the air.

24.15.3.4 Elementary Age Children (K - 5)

1. Enrollment and attendance guidelines: Complete roll books for attendance
2. Staff: Leader/Teacher/Worker and/or Helpers should not be in classes whenever they have any infectious illness (whether spread by respiratory, intestinal, direct contact, or blood-borne routes), any symptom of such illness, any open sore (including "cold sores"), or sign of skin infection, including hangnails or cuts which are inflamed and might be a source of staph infection (which could be a serious problem in nurseries). Staff should pay extra attention to their own personal hygiene and habits, particularly when handling snacks, and avoid exposing children to sneezes or kisses*. (*Smiles, verbal affirmation, hugs, and pats on the back are wonderful ways to express the love of Christ).
3. First Aid: see Blood Precautions section above
4. Safety: Think safety, especially in recreational or play settings. Games and equipment should be
5. Age appropriate and played/used in safe areas, free of hazards. No child should be allowed to
6. Jump from any height greater than his/her own height.

7. Handwashing Guidelines: Handwashing is the first line of defense against the spread of infections. Strict handwashing must be practiced by children and staff including, but not limited to the following times: upon arrival, before eating or handling food, after going to the bathroom or assisting in toileting, after contact with body fluid, or after cleaning areas contaminated with body fluids. Hands should be washed with running water and liquid soap.

24.15.3.5 Junior/Senior High Youth (grades 6-12)

1. Enrollment and attendance guidelines: Complete roll books for attendance
2. Staff: Leader/Teacher/Worker and/or Helpers should not be in classes whenever they have any infectious illness (whether spread by respiratory, intestinal, direct contact, or blood-borne routes), any symptom of such illness, any open sore (including “cold sores”), or sign of skin infection, including hangnails or cuts which are inflamed and might be a source of staph infection (which could be a serious problem in nurseries). Staff should pay extra attention to their own personal hygiene and habits, particularly when handling snacks, and avoid exposing children to sneezes or kisses*. (*Smiles, verbal affirmation, hugs, and pats on the back are wonderful ways to express the love of Christ).
3. First Aid: see Blood Precautions section above
4. Safety: Think safety, especially in recreational or game settings. Games and equipment should be played/used in safe areas, free of hazards.
5. Handwashing Guidelines: Handwashing is the first line of defense against the spread of infections. Strict handwashing must be practiced by children and staff including, but not limited to the following times: upon arrival, before eating or handling food, after going to the bathroom or assisting in toileting, after contact with body fluid, or after cleaning areas contaminated with body fluids. Hands should be washed with running water and liquid soap.

24.15.4 Recruiting and Selecting Church Workers

1. All church workers (volunteers and paid employees) shall be screened using a form and/or interview.
2. References from previous church membership and personal references may be checked by the Safe Haven Administrator and/or Pastors.
3. Information obtained from the form and/or, interview, and/or reference check shall be documented and held in strict confidence.
4. Our policy shall be introduced in the membership orientation classes by including materials in a membership packet.
5. Volunteers are only permitted to work with youth or children after a signed application is obtained from volunteers to follow church policies with respect to working with youth or children and approved.

6. Volunteers with criminal abuse violations shall not volunteer for positions that involve youth or children.
7. Adult survivors of child abuse shall meet with a pastor before working with children or youth.
8. A signed Agreement Form must be submitted annually by each volunteer indicating that they will follow church policies with respect to working with youth or children.

24.15.5 Supervising Church Workers

1. A team-teaching approach (two adult rule) should be used during all activities involving children or youth. Sunday morning church school will be an exception to this rule because of the presence of the Church School Superintendent whose duties shall include periodic checking of the church facility.
2. Parental permission shall be obtained for any adult to be alone with a child or youth for any reason. Parental permission shall also be obtained for the involvement of children or youth in church sponsored programs and activities.
3. Suspicious behavior and symptoms of abuse should be discussed immediately. Some conduct may only deserve an initial comment to the person(s) involved. Other behavior may require formal reporting. See reporting policy, below. Types of abuse that should raise suspicion include verbal comments, pornographic materials, obscene phone calls, exhibitionism, fondling, and rape. Physical signs of abuse include lacerations and bruises, nightmares, irritation, pain, or injury to genital area, difficulty with urination, discomfort when sitting, torn or bloody underclothing, venereal disease. Behavioral signs of abuse may include anxiety when approaching church or nursery, nervous or hostile behavior toward adults, sexual self-consciousness, “acting out” of sexual behavior, withdrawal from church activities and friends. Verbal signs may include statements like, “I don’t like [a particular church worker]”, “[A church worker] does things to me when we are alone”, or “I don’t like to be alone with [a church worker]”.
4. All classroom doors shall have an unobstructed window or the door must be left open.
5. Adequate adult supervision must be available at all programs that involve children or youth. Supervision must be maintained until all children or youth are in custody of their parents or guardians.
6. Special attention must be given to overnight activities that involve youth. All adult chaperones and supervisors must be cleared in advance. Both male and female chaperones must be present for mixed groups. Chaperones must include two non-related people. Separate sleeping quarters for men/boys and women/girls must be provided.
7. A church nursery identification procedure shall be used to ensure that children are released only to a properly identified and preauthorized adult.

24.15.6 Reporting Policy (Safe Haven Administrator?)

Members have a legal obligation to the state, an obligation to the church, and a moral obligation to report any incidents of abuse.

1. It is the policy of the Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church to follow the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Presbytery of Northern New England and the statutes regarding child abuse and neglect reporting for the state of Maine.
2. The following line of reporting shall be followed in every case of expected abuse:
3. Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor, and the Safe Haven Administrator
4. State agencies (Division of Child and Youth Services)
 - a. Depending on the circumstances and following the state's reporting guidelines.
5. Violations of the policies of this church or reason to suspect abuse are the basis for making a report.

This policy shall be administered/maintained by the Safe Haven Administrator and reviewed/updated by the Personnel Committee and submitted to the Session for approval on a yearly basis.

This policy was reviewed and approved by the Session on: _____

24.15.7 References

Presbytery of Northern New England Sexual Misconduct Policy 6/2/2001 (attached) (available in each classroom and Church Office)

Reducing the Risk Resource Kit (available in the Church Office/Library)

Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church, Richard R. Hammar, Steven W. Klipowicz & James F. Cobble, Jr., Church Law & Tax Report, 1993

Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse Training Manual, Steven W. Klipowicz, Church Law & Tax Report, 1993

Reducing the Risk, (videotape), Church Law & Tax Report, 1993

What Church Leaders Should Know about Child Sexual Abuse, (cassette tape), Church Law & Tax Report, 1993

24.15.8 Church Leader/Teacher/Worker/Helper Agreement Form (next page)

Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church

(Please note: Information obtained will be held in strict confidence and is available only to the Safe Haven Administrator and the Pastors)

Name: _____ Driver's License # _____

Address: _____

Phone: Home (____) _____ Work: (____) _____

____ Single ____ Married - Spouse's Name: _____

____ Children - Names and Ages: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Do you have any medical training or are you CPR-certified? ____ Explain: _____

Are you a member of Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church? ____ How long have you attended? ____

Church(es) attended in the past 5 years:

Name of Church	Address	Dates Attended	Member?

If you have served in any ministry in the past, please list here:

Name of Church	Description of Ministry - Dates	Pastor	Phone

Area of ministry in which you are interested:

____ Sunday School; What age or grade? _____ ____ Youth Group

____ Childcare: ____ Sunday am: ____ Special Events: ____

____ Vacation Church School

As the church grows larger, it becomes more difficult to know all of our volunteers. If this is the first time you have served in Children's or Youth Ministries at Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church, please list Local Personal References or someone from Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church who would give you a reference (must be over 18 years old and not related to you).

Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

The questions listed below are part of our interview process in order to help provide a safe and secure environment for our children and youth. All information is held strictly confidential by the staff. Answering “yes” to any questions may not necessarily preclude your involvement in the Children’s or Youth Ministries. Thank you for understanding.

Do you use illegal drugs? _____

Have you ever been convicted of a crime, the conviction of which has not been annulled, other than minor traffic violation? _____

Are there any circumstances involving your life-style or your background that would call into question your ability to work with children or youth? _____

If you answered “yes” to any of the above questions, please explain: _____

_____ I have read and agree to follow the **Safe Haven** policy.

_____ I understand that personal information will be held in strict confidence.

_____ If any of the above information changes, I agree to inform the Safe Haven Administrator of the Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church.

_____ I understand that I may be required to undergo a background investigation and a criminal history records check and I hereby authorize the same.

_____ I certify that I have never been convicted of a crime, the conviction of which has not been annulled, other than those explained above.

_____ I certify that the above information is accurate.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please return this form to:
Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church

25 Dismantling Racism Policy

MCPC endorses and intends to follow the policy established by the Presbytery and contained in its Operating Manual (dated Sep 14, 2024). All employees, members, and volunteers are especially referenced to the training requirements in the Presbytery Operating Manual, below.

The Dismantling Racism training shall be required at least once every five years for:

- All Teaching Elders who are serving as pastors to a congregation or are engaged in a Validated Ministry, within one year after their arrival. A certificate of completion from the training should be submitted to the Commission on Ministry (COM) within 6 months of the training. This requirement will be included in the terms of call. Failure to fulfill this requirement within the specified time will result in unpaid administrative leave until it is completed.
 - Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs) and all Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders elected to serve on the Commission on Ministry (COM), the Leadership Commission (LC), the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM), Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC), Committee on Representation (COR), and Moderator and Vice Moderator, within one year of being commissioned or elected.
 - All Candidates for Ministry, prior to certification. In the event that the timing or location of a training is not feasible, the candidate may work with CPM to determine an alternate means to meet this requirement.
 - All Presbytery staff, within one year of hire/election.
-

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