

**PAW CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Operations Manual - Part I, Congregation

**I. Name**

The Name of the Congregation shall be Paw Creek Presbyterian Church.

**II. Governance**

- A. Paw Creek Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA), organized by the Presbytery of Charlotte, and governed by the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)*. Numbered citations refer to the *Constitution*.
- B. Consistent with the *Constitution* this Operations Manual provides specific guidance for this Congregation. Part I has been adopted by the Congregation to govern the Congregation as an entity of the Church (G-1.01); Part II has been adopted by the North Carolina corporation Paw Creek Presbyterian Church, Inc. to provide by-laws for the corporation (G-4.01); Part III has been adopted by the Session to provide guidance for the Session as it acts as steward for the ministry and affairs of Paw Creek Presbyterian Church in furtherance of Christ's kingdom.
- C. Unless superseded herein or by the *Constitution, Roberts Rules of Order (Newly Revised)* shall be used as parliamentary guidance under Parts I, II, and III of the Operations Manual.

**III. Meetings of the Congregation**

- A. Call - Congregational meetings are called by the Session, or as provided in G-1.0502, and the business shall be limited to the items listed in G-1.0503. There shall be an Annual Meeting in January or February for annual financial and budget reports, consideration of any recommended changes in the pastor's terms of call, election of congregational members to the Nominating Committee, and any other business determined by the session. Additional meetings may be called as needed for specific purposes determined by the session. The business at all meetings shall be limited to those items specified in the call.
- B. Notice - Adequate notice of all Congregational meetings, which shall state the nature of the business to be transacted, shall be given prior to the meetings, including public notice at regular services of worship on at least two consecutive Sundays. The meeting may be convened following the notice given on the second Sunday.
- C. Moderator and Secretary - The moderator and secretary of the meeting shall ordinarily be the Moderator and Clerk of the Session, or as otherwise provided in G-1.0504 and 1.0505.
- D. Members - Membership in the Congregation is determined pursuant to G-1.04. Active Members have voice and vote in all meetings of the Congregation. All other participants are welcome to attend and be heard.
- E. Quorum - The quorum for a congregational meeting shall be the Moderator, the Secretary and ten percent of the active members. The Secretary shall determine that a quorum is present. All active members of the congregation present are entitled to vote. Voting by proxy is not allowed.
- F. Electronic meetings - A congregational meeting may proceed with some or all members participating via electronic connection whenever Session determines that civic restrictions are in place to limit the size of non-worship gatherings. The method of electronic connection shall ensure full simultaneous participation by all members.

**IV. Session**

- A. In accordance with the *Constitution*, the Session is the ruling body of the church. Other than provided herein, organizations and groups within the church are empowered by the Session to perform duties and functions as directed by the Session.
- B. The Session shall consist of twelve (12) ruling elders, divided among three classes for terms of three years. A ruling elder who has served a complete three year term shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of one year.
- C. Ruling Elders are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Congregation after opportunity for additional nominations from the floor. Other than provided in paragraph B above, active members of the Congregation 18 years of age or older are eligible for nomination and election.
- D. A quorum of the Session shall be the Moderator and one-half of the active ruling elders; except for reception of members, when the quorum shall be the Moderator and two active ruling elders.
- E. The Session shall elect annually its officers (Clerk of Session and Assistant Clerk(s), as needed) and officers for the Congregation (General Church Treasurer, Endowment Treasurer and Cemetery Treasurer.)

#### **V. Nominating Committee**

- A. A Nominating Committee shall be formed annually to consider prayerfully the needs of the church and to propose in the fall of each year a slate of nominees to fill expiring terms on the Session, proposing a number of nominees at least equal to the number of vacancies. As directed by the Session, the Nominating Committee may also be called upon to bring nominations for vacancies that occur during the year.
- B. The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members chosen as follows: (1) two currently serving ruling elders elected by the Session, one of whom will be appointed by the Session to serve as chair; and (2) three members of the Congregation who are not currently serving on Session, to be elected by the Congregation from the floor at the annual meeting. No voting member of the Nominating Committee may serve more than three consecutive years.
- C. The pastor shall be a member of the Nominating Committee, serving ex officio and without vote.

#### **VI. Amendments**

Amendments to Part I of this Manual of Operations may be proposed by the Session and adopted at a meeting of the Congregation called for that purpose. The text of proposed Amendments shall be made available for distribution to the Congregation at the services of worship during which public notice of the meeting is given. After discussion, Amendments may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of members present at the meeting.

#### **VII. Implementation**

Any Amendment to this Manual of Operations which has the effect of reducing or raising the number of members on the Session or any other congregationally-elected committee shall become effective with the expiration of the terms of each of the classes serving at the time the Amendment is adopted. Officers currently serving at that time will continue in office through the end of their respective terms.

All other Amendments shall become effective upon adoption, unless otherwise stated in the Amendment.

Adopted by the Congregation June 10, 2018

Paragraph III F added by the Congregation October 18, 2020

**PAW CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Operations Manual - Part II, Bylaws of the Corporation

Paw Creek Presbyterian Church was established in 1809 (the "Church"). The Church was incorporated under the laws of the State of North Carolina on June 25, 1985 (the "Corporation"). The principal office of the Corporation is at 7400 Mount Holly Road, Charlotte, NC 28214, County of Mecklenburg.

**I. Governance of the Corporation**

The Corporation shall be governed in accordance with the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* and the laws of the State of North Carolina. Consistent with the *Constitution* and state law these Bylaws shall provide specific guidance. Roberts Rules of Order (Newly Revised) shall be used for parliamentary guidance.

**II. Trustees and Officers**

Consistent with the laws of this State, both ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same meeting of the congregation.

The active ruling elders on the Session shall serve at the same time as trustees. Since the pastor or the appointed moderator of the congregational meeting is not a member of the Corporation, a member of the Session shall be invited to moderate the meeting when corporate matters appear on the agenda.

The Session as trustees shall elect officers at their stated meeting in January each year and report the officers to the congregation during the annual meeting each year.

**III. Meetings of the Corporation**

There shall be an annual meeting of the Corporation on a Sunday in January or February, at which at least the following business shall be presented: annual financial report and budget reports.

Special meetings may be called by the Session. Such calls shall state clearly the purpose of such special meetings, and business shall be restricted to that which is specified in the call.

**IV. Notice of Meetings**

Adequate notice of all Corporation meetings, which shall state the nature of the business to be transacted, shall be given prior to the meetings, including public notice at regular services of worship on at least two consecutive Sundays. The meeting may be convened following the notice given on the second Sunday.

**V. Minutes of the Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting recorded by the secretary shall be attested by the moderator and the secretary, and recorded in the minutes book of the Session.

**VI. Amendments**

These corporate Bylaws may be amended subject to the Articles of Incorporation, the laws of the State of North Carolina and the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* by a two-thirds vote of the voters present, providing that the proposed changes shall have been distributed at the same time as the call of the meeting at which the changes are voted upon.

Adopted by the Congregation June 10, 2018

**PAW CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Operations Manual - Part III, Session

**I. Role of the Session**

The responsibilities and powers of the Session are those specified in G-3.02, as they may be amended from time to time by the General Assembly. The specific operating guidelines in this document have been adopted by the Session to support the operations of the church, and they may be amended by further action of the Session.

**II. Role of the Moderator**

The Moderator shall be the person specified under the provisions of G.-3.0104. It is the Moderator's responsibility to provide the Session with a unified sense of order and efficiency, in the conduct of individual meetings as well as in the conduct of the specific ministries of the Church. Accordingly, the Moderator is an ex officio member of each committee, and should be informed of committee meetings and activities.

**III. Special Meeting Provisions**

- A. Session may act by electronic vote in cases where (1) the Moderator determines the question is likely to be non-controversial; (2) Session members are given opportunity to request that the electronic vote be cancelled and the question referred to a Called Meeting; and (3) the motion and results of the vote are recorded in the minutes of the next Stated Meeting.
- B. Session may meet with some or all members participating by electronic means when necessary due to a public health or similar emergency. The means of meeting must allow for simultaneous discussion among all participating members.

**IV. Organizational Meeting**

The first Stated Meeting of the Session subsequent to the annual ordination and installation of the incoming class of ruling elders shall be the Organizational Meeting of the Session, at which the Session shall:

- A. Elect a Clerk of Session to fulfill the duties designated in G-3.0104; and a General Church Treasurer to fulfill the duties designated in G-3.0205 and to serve as Treasurer of the Corporation. Assistant Clerk(s) or Assistant Treasurer(s) may also be elected, as needed.
- B. Appoint Session members to serve on the Nominating Committee, as provided in Part I of the Operations Manual;
- C. Elect Chairs and/or Co-chairs for the various committees and teams as described below; unless otherwise provided, these positions may but need not be filled by current members of the Session;
- D. Provide for commissioners to the meetings of the Presbytery of Charlotte;
- E. Authorize a calendar for celebration of the Lord's Supper throughout the year; and,
- F. Issue the call for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation, as provided in Part I of the Operations Manual.

**V. Mission Team**

- A. The Mission Team is responsible to
  - Continually evaluate the spiritual health and life of the Church, reporting areas of celebration and concern regularly to the Session;

- Bring to the Session from time to time recommendations for creating, disbanding and reorganizing ministries and programs of the Church, in furtherance of the best use of congregational resources for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom;
  - Attend to the health and functioning of the Session itself, and encourage the Session in its primary role as spiritual leaders of the Church;
  - Coordinate and support the work of the Program Committees of the Church, encouraging cooperative projects that draw upon the strengths of multiple committees to build a shared identity and purpose within the Church, and maintaining a master calendar of events for all groups within the Congregation.
- B. The Mission Team shall consist of a Chair, elected by the Session from among its current membership, along with the chairs or co-chairs of the five Program Committees, representatives of Presbyterian Women and Presbyterian Men, and the pastor.
- C. The Mission-Team shall meet at least quarterly, and shall report to the Session frequently.

## VI. Program Committees

The Program Committees of the Church are responsible for the implementation of the Church's ministry within their respective areas. The Chair or Co-chairs of each committee will determine the membership needs of the committee, and will recruit members from within the Session and Congregation. They will also determine the most appropriate organizational pattern, operating through business meetings and ad hoc assignment of volunteers as needed. The Chair of the Mission Team should be kept informed of committee meetings and activities, and committees should report regularly to the Session.

### A. Christian Education

The Christian Education Committee is responsible for the planning and oversight of the educational ministry of the Church, including Sunday School, Youth Fellowship, weekday classes, Vacation Bible School, and the Church Library. The Committee will recruit teachers/advisors and approve curriculum for all educational activities of the church.

### B. Congregational Care

The Congregational Care Committee provides care to the church family, especially during times of great need, such as hospitalization, extended illness, birth or adoption of a child, death of a family member, personal milestones and family crises. The Committee also oversees the Social Service Fund, and coordinates outreach to visitors, integration of new members into the congregation, childcare during worship, outreach to homebound members and special gifts at Christmas and Easter.

### C. Fellowship

The Fellowship Committee coordinates social activities throughout the year to foster relationships among church members, especially integrating newer members and visitors into the community.

### D. Outreach

The Outreach Committee leads the congregation through mission and outreach to share the Good News of the Gospel to the community and the world, with equal emphasis on both currently active and potentially new ministries of service. In addition to church-sponsored mission projects, the Committee will oversee the Social Services Fund, and will recommend to the Session allocation of Benevolence funds in the annual budget.

E. Worship

The Worship Committee is responsible for the worship life of the church, coordinating with the pastor and music staff on plans for the celebration of the seasons of the church year, and ensuring that the sanctuary is supplied and prepared for weekly worship. Additional duties include recruiting, scheduling and training session greeters, usher teams and prayer teams, and acting as liaison with the Session in relation to budgeting and other matters for the music program, audio-visual services and worship projection ministry.

**VII. Resource Team**

A. The Resource Team is responsible to

- Continually evaluate the material needs of the Church, along with its need for and use of operational resources, and to report areas of celebration and concern regularly to the Session;
- Facilitate healthy and open communication about the resources and needs of the church among committees, Session and Congregation;
- Coordinate and support the work of the Resource Committees of the Church, encouraging cooperative projects that draw upon the strengths of multiple committees to foster the most efficient and faithful use of the resources with which the church has been blessed;

B. The Resource Team shall consist of a Chair, elected by the Session from among its current membership, along with the chairs or co-chairs of the four Resource Committees and two standing Resource Subcommittees, the General Church Treasurer, and the pastor.

C. The Resource Team shall meet at least quarterly, and shall report to the Session frequently.

**VIII. Resource Committees**

The Resource Committees of the Church are stewards of the gifts which God gives to the Church to make possible its work in the world. The Chair or Co-chairs of each committee will determine the membership needs of the committee, and will recruit members from within the Session and Congregation. They will provide for regular meetings of each committee and, where appropriate, for the delegation of tasks to various members of the congregation, and should report regularly to the Session.

A. Administration

The Administration Committee is responsible for oversight of the church office, including equipment and procedures, and for hiring, evaluating, and recommending appropriate compensation for non-ordained church staff. The Committee, at Session's delegation, may also handle responsibility for annual evaluation of ordained staff related to the church pursuant to G-2.0504, nevertheless such staff members remain ultimately responsible to the Congregation and the Presbytery. The Committee will also review regularly the policies in sections VII and VIII of this Manual (Harassment and Child/Youth Protection) and recommend to the Session any needed amendments or updates.

B. Finance

The Finance Committee is responsible for oversight of the Financial life of the Congregation, including an annual budget process that considers the church's anticipated resources and the programming needs of the church committees; regular communication with the Session and Congregation to encourage generous stewardship of the church's resources; proper accounting of all church income and expenditures in all general and restricted funds; regular reporting to the Session on a monthly basis, or more often as needed or requested, and on an annual basis to the Congregation; maintenance of banking accounts

and church investments, including endowment funds; provision for an annual independent financial review of records and processes; long-range planning to anticipate financial needs; and provision for adequate property, casualty and liability insurance. The Committee shall supervise the work of the General Church Treasurer and any support staff; and shall recruit and supervise volunteers for weekly counting and deposit of gifts and other income.

C. **Property**

The Property Committee is responsible for the maintenance and management of church buildings and grounds, and for the perpetual care of the Paw Creek Presbyterian Church Cemetery - including all equipment, supplies, and security arrangements; set-up and take-down of facilities for scheduled events; coordination with church groups and outside building users; supervision of custodial and groundskeeping contractors; and regular communication with the Session of anticipated major maintenance needs. The Committee is also responsible for maintaining church-owned vehicles and supervising their use.

**IX. Best Practices**

The Session shall maintain a compilation of Best Practices for each committee, subcommittee and team, updated at least annually by the various chairs and co-chairs, to include listings and details of activities for the year so as to serve as a guide for future group and session members.

**X. Staffing Guidelines**

- A. **Hiring:** When a position becomes vacant and/or a new position is created by the Session, the Session shall authorize a search and designate an appropriate church committee to coordinate the hiring process with the Administration Committee. After consultation between the designated committees and any relevant volunteers or staff, those committees shall present a written position description to the Session. Upon approval by the Session of the position description and a salary range, the designated committees will proceed to seek and interview candidates, dividing the tasks as they see fit. The final decision to recommend a candidate to the Session for employment will be the joint decision of the designated committees. An offer of employment shall state a time for initial review and evaluation. Once a new employee is hired, the position description will be maintained in the church files for the duration of the employee's tenure, and may be updated upon agreement of the employee and the Session.
- B. **Supervision –** Employees work under the direct supervision of the pastor, with input from relevant committees and the Administration Committee. After consulting with the pastor and supervisory committees, the Administration Committee will conduct an annual performance review with each employee, with reports to the Session as needed.
- C. **Employee Policies –** The Administration Committee will recommend to the Session guidelines for sick leave, vacation leave and holiday schedules; a termination policy; statements about the church's compliance with federal and state regulatory requirements; and other policies as needed; and upon adoption or amendment by the Session will communicate all policies clearly and regularly to all staff.
- D. **Employment of Church Members –** Active members of the Congregation are not eligible for employment on the permanent staff of the Church. Qualified relatives of active members may be eligible for employment after determination by the Session that such employment will not create any actual or perceived conflict of interest, and will not disrupt the Congregation in any way.

## **X. Harassment Policy**

This policy applies to all church leaders, employees and volunteers and covers situations involving employees, members of the congregation, visitors to the church, volunteers and the general public.

Paw Creek Presbyterian Church will not allow any form of sexual harassment or any such conduct that has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance, church involvement or worship experience or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

The following types of conduct have been found to contribute to a sexually hostile environment:

- Unwelcome flirtation, suggestive compliments, requests for sexual favors.
- Use of degrading gender-related terms or jokes about sex or gender-specific traits or stereotypes.
- Leering, prolonged staring, sexually suggestive whistling and making sexually graphic comments or gestures; referring to another person in a sexual manner.
- Display of sexually explicit or gender-derogatory cartoons, pictures, magazines, calendars or objects on church property.
- Unwelcome touching, including fondling, kissing, putting an arm around a person, rubbing a back or shoulders, leaning, embracing, stroking someone's hair, picking lint, adjusting hair ornaments, snapping men's suspenders, examining jewelry and intentionally brushing up against a person.

Such conduct, when experienced or observed, should be reported to The Pastor, any member of the Administrative Committee or the Clerk of Session immediately. The Administrative Committee will conduct an investigation and will be required to report the findings to the Session, regardless of the alleged victim's desire that the matter not be reported. The privacy of the person under investigation and the victim shall be respected at all times.

Any intentional sexual harassment is considered to be a major violation of church policy and will be dealt with accordingly by corrective counseling and/or suspension or termination depending upon the severity of the violation. Criminal violations will be reported to local law enforcement.

It is the intent of Paw Creek Presbyterian Church to provide an environment free from verbal, physical and visual (signs, posters or documents) forms of sexual harassment. All church leaders, employees, members and volunteers are asked to be sensitive to the individual rights of others.

## **XI. Child and Youth Protection Policy**

Paw Creek Presbyterian Church embraces a theological, moral and legal responsibility to provide a safe environment for children and youth, and support for those who work with them - both staff members and volunteers. To that end, the Session has adopted the following policy:

### **A. Definitions**

- Church Program - for the purposes of this policy, an activity sponsored and/or operated by Paw Creek Presbyterian Church, on or off of church property, at which children or youth are present and are unaccompanied by a parent or legal guardian. This term may include, but is not limited to: Sunday School, nursery care, Youth Group, Vacation Bible School, Youth Mission Week, and any other enrichment or tutoring activity.
- Child - a person under the age of 18 years who participates in any Church Program, including Youth between the ages of 11 and 18 years



- Staff - any paid employee of the Church, regardless of specific responsibilities related to children.
- Volunteer - an adult over the age of 18 years who is present at a Church Program as a leader, helper, chaperone, or in other capacity, inclusive of church members and non-members; for Youth programming, a Volunteer is an adult over the age of 21 years for the purposes of Youth Fellowship, or an adult over the age of 18 years for the purposes of Sunday School classes .

## B. Rules applicable to all Church Programs

### 1. Background Screening

All Staff and Volunteers must grant permission to the Church to perform a Background Screening to seek information about any history of criminal or other inappropriate behavior. Prior to transporting Children in a motor vehicle, a Drivers License screening is also required. These screenings will be performed through a procedure approved by the Session and administered through the Church office. Results of screenings will remain confidential, as detailed in the current Session procedures, but may be used to deny participation in Church Programs.

### 2. References

Those in charge of various Church Programs may ask for and contact references from new Volunteers, especially those who are new to the Church family.

### 3. Two Adult/Open Door Rule

At least two adults should be present with Children at all times, and must remain within sight of each other except in emergency situations. If two adults are not available, then doors to all rooms in which Children are present are to be open at all times.

### 4. Gender Balance/Overnight activities

A balance of male and female adults is recommended for all activities, and is required for overnight Youth activities. Overnight activities for all Children require a minimum of two adults over the age of 21 years, at least one of which is over the age of 25 years.

### 5. General conduct

In working with Children, Staff and Volunteers are expected to:

- Connect with Children and express the love of Christ to them;
- Help to build a welcoming environment where Children feel seen and wanted;
- Serve using good and common-sense safety practices;
- Retrain from unsafe acts that might endanger self or others;
- Report any unsafe situations or acts immediately to the person in charge of the Program;
- Be aware of location of first aid and other safety equipment.

## C. Rules applicable to specific situations

### 1. Bathroom breaks

An adult should not enter the bathroom with a Child over four years of age. For younger Children who need assistance, an adult may enter the bathroom after notifying an additional adult and leaving the door to the bathroom open.

2. Discipline

When needed, discipline should be accomplished primarily through redirection or, if necessary, a time out or notification of a parent or guardian. Physical discipline is never allowed.

3. Allegations of Abuse

Any suspicion or evidence of abuse (injury, negligent treatment, or sexual/emotional maltreatment) should be reported immediately to the Session through the Pastor or Clerk of Session. All allegations will be treated with upmost seriousness and urgency, which will include notification of parent or guardian, and notification of and cooperation with legal authorities. This includes suspicion or evidence of abuse that has taken place outside of the Church Program.

D. Implementation

1. Staff and Volunteers

Newly recruited Staff and Volunteers must read and sign a copy of this policy prior to beginning their work with Children. A copy of this policy will be placed on permanent display in all rooms where programs for children and youth will take place. Every second year the church will compile a roster of all Staff and Volunteers who continue to be active in working with children and youth, and those people will be asked to sign the roster to indicate that they have reread this policy. The Session, upon recommendation of those in charge of Church Programs and/or the Pastor, may decline to allow a Volunteer's participation for any reason.

2. Training of Staff and Volunteers

The Session will provide resources to train staff and volunteers on the use of this policy.

3. Church Programs

Staff, program leaders and applicable session committees shall review this policy regularly and ensure that procedures are in place to properly enact its provisions and support all volunteers in compliance.

4. Outside Users

An entity or individual using church property to operate an activity that is not a Church Program and at which children or youth are present without a parent or guardian, regardless of payment or non-payment of rent, is required to review this policy and satisfy the Session that steps will be taken to substantially comply with its terms while on church property.

Adopted by the Session May 6, 2018

Amended by the Session to add "IX. Child and Youth Protection Policy" November 18, 2018

Paragraph III A added by Session action March 18, 2020

Paragraph III B added by Session action April 27, 2020

Paragraph VII added by Session action March 17, 2022

Paragraph XI, sections B.1 and D.1 amended by Session action September 12, 2022

Paragraphs IV amended; Paragraph VIII amended and sections B.1 and C.1 deleted by Session action  
February 21, 2023