

# **Standing Rules Greenville Community Church**

Adopted June 11, 2023

The following Standing Rules are subject to the Book of Church Order of the Reformed Church in America. If there are any inconsistencies, the latter shall prevail.

## Adoption of Standing Rules and Procedure for Review and Changes

- 1) These Standing Rules must be approved by supermajority vote of consistory. Supermajority is defined as “two-thirds, plus one” of all consistory members, whether they are present at a meeting or not.
- 2) In January of even-numbered years, officers of consistory shall review the Standing Rules and make recommendations for changes, if any, to consistory.
- 3) Changes to Standing Rules shall require two stated consistory meetings. Proposed change(s) shall be introduced at the first meeting, and then voted on at the subsequent meeting to allow for discussion and reflection. Changes shall require supermajority vote of those present at the meeting at which the vote is taken. In the event a change is necessary sooner than this process allows, such change may be approved by a unanimous vote at a single meeting.
- 4) These Standing Rules shall be available to every member of the congregation.

## Meetings of Consistory

- 1) Stated meetings of Consistory shall take place every month, September through June. The September meeting shall take place on the third Sunday at 11:45am, and the other meetings the second Sunday of each month at 11:45am. Rescheduling a meeting may be made by supermajority vote up to one week in advance of the meeting in question.
- 2) Consistory shall make every effort to attend meetings in person. Phone and/or videoconferencing shall be provided, if possible, to allow electronic participation when consistory members cannot be present in person.
- 3) A simple majority of Consistory shall constitute a quorum to do business.

- 4) The Senior Minister shall be President of Consistory and preside at all meetings. If the President is absent, or at the invitation of the President, the Vice President shall preside. If both are absent, consistory shall elect an elder to preside as President pro tem.
- 5) Special meetings of Consistory may be called by the President or by four members of Consistory when deemed by them to be necessary. The congregation shall be notified of special meetings.
- 6) The presiding officer shall direct proceedings, maintain order, and issue motions. When a motion is presented and seconded, discussion of the motion may begin. When members are prepared to vote, the presiding officer shall call for yeas, nays and abstentions. Unless specified elsewhere in the Standing Rules, all votes shall pass by simple majority. The Clerk shall record in the minutes only the outcome of the vote (yea or nay), unless any member calls for recording the specific vote count.
- 7) When not in conflict with the Standing Rules, business shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.
- 8) Church members may attend meetings as observers but may not be given privilege of the floor except by majority vote prior to the meeting. Any non-consistory church member who wishes to attend shall notify the President (or presiding officer, as appropriate) at least three days before the meeting in question.
- 9) Confidential matters shall be handled in executive session, which shall only be held through a motion. Only consistory members shall be present in executive session, which will close by majority vote. Minutes of the executive session may be taken but shall remain confidential except to consistory. Minutes of the consistory meeting itself shall reflect that an executive session was held, and, if appropriate, the general reason why.
- 10) If a specific issue requiring a vote arises between meetings, consistory may vote via email. The Clerk will record the result of the vote as an addendum to the minutes to be approved during the next stated meeting.
- 11) Proxy voting is not permitted. Members must be present either in-person or electronically to vote.

#### Elders and Deacons

- 1) There shall be four elders and four deacons, whenever possible.
- 2) Terms are for three years. After a first term, members may be re-elected for a second term of three years. After a maximum of six years, members are eligible to serve again

after one year of absence from consistory. Consistory members shall be installed at the beginning of each term.

- 3) The roles of elders and deacons shall be in accordance with the Book of Church Order. Though responsibilities may overlap, the following are general guidelines:
  - a. Elders shall oversee overall financial management of the church, approve and welcome new members (including confirmands), exercise discipline when necessary, and provide counsel to the minister in matters of worship and staff supervision. Elders shall also provide a mechanism for an annual review of the minister and make recommendations for minister's compensation and other needs or requests.
  - b. Deacons shall oversee educational and mission initiatives, ensure hospitality, and care for those in financial need through the benevolence fund and special offerings such as the Shoe Project.
  
- 4) Consistory members shall be elected according to the following process, which shall be begin in 2024 (the current process shall remain in place in 2023):
  - a. In March, the congregation is invited to confidentially submit names of potential candidates to the minister and elders.
  - b. By April 1, the elders and minister prepare a final list of candidates for new terms. In doing so, they shall take into consideration candidates presented by the congregation, as well as identify leadership needs of the church. The final list need not include candidates submitted by the congregation.
  - c. By May 1, the senior minister contacts the final candidates and prepares a list of those who agree to serve. The elders shall confirm the final list, and the candidates' names shall be printed in the church bulletin on three consecutive Sundays before a congregational vote as indicated in (d).
  - d. No later than the first Sunday of June, a congregational meeting shall be held to elect deacons and elders. The candidates shall be presented as a slate by the Vice President, and a simple voice vote taken. If the President deems it necessary, the vote may be taken by confidential ballot, which shall be counted by the Vice President and one other elder. Only church members may vote. The meeting shall begin and end with prayer.
  - e. Elected consistory members shall be ordained and/or installed the second Sunday of June, if possible. They shall be invited to attend the June consistory meeting as visitors, and if installed, their terms shall begin after the June meeting is adjourned.
  
- 5) Family members shall not serve on consistory at the same time, and church staff members shall not be eligible for service on consistory.

- 6) If a vacancy occurs with less than twelve months remaining in a term, consistory shall identify and elect a member of great consistory to complete the term. If necessary, the vacancy may remain unfilled until the next election period.
- 7) If a vacancy occurs with more than twelve months remaining in a term, consistory will identify a candidate and present the candidate to the congregation for election.
- 8) Vacancies shall be filled within 60 days of the vacancy becoming known to consistory, if possible.

## Officers

- 1) **Officers of consistory**, all of whom shall be members of consistory, shall be: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Clerk. (If the Treasurer, by necessity, is not an installed consistory member, the Treasurer shall be an ex-officio consistory member without a vote.) All but the President (Senior Minister) shall be elected by consistory to serve one-year, renewable terms. The President shall nominate candidates for each office, and any consistory member may nominate an alternate candidate.
- 2) **President:** The Senior Minister shall be President of consistory and chief operating officer of the church, and have the following responsibilities, in addition to others mentioned elsewhere in these Standing Rules:
  - a. Create the agenda for meetings.
  - b. Appoint committee chairs and monitor work of committees.
  - c. Shall send, or cause to be sent by the Clerk, all notices required to be given to consistory members.
  - d. Work with the Treasurer and Vice President to create annual stewardship program and a draft budget for the upcoming year.
  - e. Approve and oversee the employment of staff members, and work with staff and committees to oversee independent contractors in their purview.
  - f. Sign all acts of consistory that are required to be in writing.
  - g. Manage the development and implementation of strategic planning.
  - h. Serve as ex-officio board member of the Playschool and Nursery School.
- 3) **Vice President:** The Vice President shall be an elder who shall serve for no more than two consecutive terms. If there is no installed minister, the Vice President shall fulfill the administrative duties assigned to the Senior Minister. The Vice President shall serve on the Finance and Administration Committee and on the Playschool/Nursery School board.

- 4) **Clerk:** The Clerk shall attend all meetings of the consistory and congregation, and shall maintain and distribute the minutes of each. If the Clerk cannot be in attendance, the President shall appoint another consistory member to substitute. The Clerk shall also distribute materials for meetings (including committee reports, agenda, etc.) and manage the safekeeping and distribution of church member records including baptisms, memberships, marriages and deaths.
  
- 5) **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall be the chief financial officer of the church. Every effort shall be made to appoint an installed consistory member as Treasurer; however, if necessary, consistory may elect a church member who is not an installed consistory member to serve in an ex-officio capacity, with no vote. The Treasurer shall have the following responsibilities, in addition to others mentioned elsewhere in these Standing Rules:
  - a. Attend all consistory meetings. (If serving in an ex-officio capacity, the Treasurer shall not participate in executive sessions unless absolutely necessary.)
  - b. Oversee the collection and reception of all income and revenues of the church, and their deposit in appropriate funds and accounts;
  - c. Oversee the payment of all church staff, vendors and contractors;
  - d. Pay all taxes and assessments payable by the church;
  - e. Make other such expenditures as may be authorized by consistory;
  - f. Serve on the Finance and Administration Committee, and with them review from time to time the performance of financial institutions;
  - g. Present to consistory at stated meetings (1) current accounts of revenues and expenditures; (2) year-to-date budget; and (3) performance of Reserve Fund and the overall balance of the treasury.

#### Finances and Personnel Matters

- 1) **Stewardship Campaign:** The President, in consultation with the Treasurer and Vice President, shall launch an annual stewardship campaign no later than November 15 for the following year. The campaign shall incorporate financial information such as current and historical budgets, levels of giving, fundraising goals, etc. All stewardship activities shall proceed with a spirit of gratitude.
  
- 2) **Annual Budget:** The Treasurer, in consultation with the President, Vice President and committee chairs, shall prepare a draft annual budget by December 1 for the following year. The draft budget shall be presented to consistory at the December meeting for discussion and input. Consistory will then vote to approve the final budget at the January meeting for that calendar year. After approval, the final budget shall be presented to the congregation at a congregational meeting no later than March 1 so the congregation may ask questions.

- 3) **Appropriate Expenditures:** A committee shall not spend more than what has been budgeted for its use, nor incur any unbudgeted debt, unless authorized by consistory.
- 4) **Extraordinary Expenditures:** Pertaining to expenses outside the purview of committees, no unbudgeted expenditures shall be authorized or made without approval of the Treasurer and President. An extraordinary expenditure in excess of \$2,500 requires a majority vote by consistory.
- 5) **Disbursements from Reserve Fund:** Disbursements from the Reserve Fund shall be made in accordance with the fund's established purpose, with a mind toward the fund's long-term growth and stability. The Treasurer shall recommend disbursements to the Finance and Administration Committee, who shall vote on the disbursement. The fund manager shall execute the disbursement.
- 6) **Vendor Proposals:** Special projects outside the scope of regular contractors shall require at least two proposals from separate vendors. Proposals shall be detailed and itemized (if appropriate) and submitted on vendor letterhead or a document (paper or electronic) signed by the vendor.
- 7) **Vendor Review:** The performance of regularly retained vendors shall be reviewed annually by the President, Treasurer and the vendor's supervising committee. If that group decides to change vendors, the change shall be reported to consistory.
- 8) **Reimbursements:** All reimbursement requests shall be accompanied by a receipt or invoice.
- 9) **Annual Reports:** The President and Treasurer shall endeavor to provide to the congregation an annual report for the previous fiscal year.
- 10) **Benevolence Fund:** The minister, and deacons in consultation with the minister, may provide financial assistance to those in need with contributions from the Benevolence Fund. Contributions of \$300 or more must be approved by the President. Whenever possible, cash payments should be avoided and contributions should be made directly to a vendor (eg, landlord or utility) or given in the form of items needed (eg, clothing, toiletries, etc.).

## Committees

There shall be five ministry committees, as listed below. Each committee shall have a chairperson, who is a member of consistory, who shall be appointed annually by the President and participate in the annual budgeting process. Church members and adherents may serve on any committee except where noted. Committees shall meet at the discretion of the chair, and shall be entrusted to do the work under their purview. Minutes of committee proceedings shall

be shared with consistory, and shall be given to the Clerk for distribution no less than three days before the next stated consistory meeting.

- 1) **Education Committee:** Responsible for overseeing education, faith development and discipleship programs for all age groups, including Sunday school, the Christmas pageant, confirmation and adult programming. The committee shall support and work with the minister and Faith Formation Coordinator as needed.
- 2) **Facilities Committee:** Responsible for overseeing the maintenance of church buildings and grounds, including the manse. The committee shall have the discretion to take care of standard maintenance without consistory approval, but in the case of large and/or unusual projects affecting major changes to aesthetics, layout and function, the committee shall propose recommendations for consistory vote. The committee shall support and work with the Church Administrator and Buildings and Grounds Overseer, as needed.
- 3) **Fellowship Committee:** Responsible for planning and organizing church social events and hospitality initiatives (“in-reach”) including usher guidelines and training, coffee hours, receptions, and other planned events.
- 4) **Mission Committee:** Responsible for planning and organizing service activities (“outreach”) to the community, including identifying partner organizations and enlisting and encouraging volunteers.
- 5) **Finance and Administration Committee:** Responsible for assisting Treasurer with preparation of the annual budget; making recommendations on the management of restricted funds and reserve fund; promoting planned giving; creating and maintaining guidelines (including fees) for space users; and monitoring office supplies and operation (including IT and communications). The committee shall also recommend for consistory approval “safe church” guidelines, including a policy regarding sexual harassment and discrimination. Committee membership shall be restricted to the President, Treasurer, Vice President, and no more than one other church member. One of the committee members shall be a manager of the reserve fund, who shall be approved by the committee.