

## An Elder's Guide to FPCR

**As an elder, there are a number of resources you need:**

1. **Church Officer's Manual.** All of the policies, procedures, job descriptions, by-laws and forms were reviewed and updated in 2014. You will find these in the notebook. Please review the notebook.
  - a. We don't expect you to carry the notebook everywhere, so we have posted the manual on the church website. <http://www.fpcrockaway.org/how-we-work.html> If you don't have the link just go to fpcrockaway.org, click on the tab "Who We Are" and scroll down to "How We Work". The manual link is at the bottom of the page. This can be a handy resource to access on your phone during a committee meeting.
2. **Constitution:** We are guided by the Constitution of the PC(USA).
  - a. The Book of Confessions (Part I of the Constitution) includes our creeds and confessions and guides our theological identity. You may download the book for free at: <https://www.pcusa.org/resource/book-confessions/>
  - b. The Book of Order (Part II) offers additional information about who we are as Presbyterians, how we are to be structured and ordered. It offers specific instructions in our form of government, a directory for worship and rules of discipline. You can download the Book of Order (BoO) in a free PDF at: <http://store.pcusa.org/OGA13010>.
3. **Calendar:** As Presbyterians (PCUSA) we are connected to a denomination of congregations and a wonderful resource of information through our denominational offices in Louisville, KY. The PCUSA calendar is an excellent planning tool for committees and ministries of the church. We order copies each year for those who wish to have one. When the Presbytery notifies us of the next calendar we will ask who would like one.
4. **Mail Box:** As an officer, you have your own personal mail box in the office. Just behind the door of the church office you will find them. This will be an important communication tool for you. You will receive all kinds of correspondence that you will want to check regularly.

### Requirements:

1. **Meetings:** the Session meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. except for July and August. Attendance is expected. If you are unable to attend a meeting you must contact the Clerk of Session or the Moderator (either of the

pastors). Decisions made by the Session require a quorum, therefore monitoring attendance is an important part of preparing for a meeting.

2. **Called Meetings:** From time to time something will come up between meetings that requires action. Often these are committee concerns (*for example, the cost of a major building repair may be more than first anticipated, if the cost is beyond the Property Committee budget or more than \$5,000 it must have Session's approval.*) A meeting of the Session may be called by two elders according to BoO G-3.0203. A request for a called meeting must be in writing, but an email is acceptable. These meetings require a quorum and attendance is expected. If you are unable to attend please contact the Moderator/s or the Clerk.
3. **E-votes:** In rare circumstances it may be necessary for the Session to vote on an issue between meetings. Only issues that have been previously discussed in the Session are eligible for an e-vote.
4. **Committees:** The role of the Session is to govern and guide the 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. (BoO G-3.0201) While the Session functions as the head of the church body, the committees are the hands and feet. Each elder will be expected to serve on one committee. Those who are willing may serve on more than one. Each committee is ordinarily expected to be moderated by an elder. *Elders need to be prepared to moderate a committee. Committee assignments are the responsibility of the pastor in consultation with the elder.*
  - a. **Nominating Committee:** Election of elders and deacons is carried out by a committee according to BoO G-2.0401. Two elders are expected to serve for a total of two years. One will serve as moderator, the other will be the rising moderator and will moderate the second year of his or her term. Additional members will be elected by the congregation.
5. **Additional Meetings:**
  - a. **Committee Work Day:** We have an annual Committee Work Day that plays a vital role in visioning and carrying out the ministries of the congregation. Because this is a meeting of the Session, if we have a quorum we can vote if necessary, elders and deacons are expected to attend. As with any other meeting, a request for an excused absence should be communicated to the Moderator/s or Clerk.
  - b. **Conflict Management Training:** In 2012 the congregation concluded the New Beginnings Assessment and created a report to the congregation with recommendations from the small groups that participated in the assessment. The report was adopted by the congregation and the Session

was entrusted with living out the vision. The report includes specific direction for the Session in that elders will be expected to attend Healthy Congregations/Conflict Management Training and officer training. Dates for these will be presented to the Session. In some circumstances Officer Training may be included during Session meetings. Those unable to attend will be expected to attend training at the next available offering.

- 6. Expectations:** In addition to the expectations named in the “duties and responsibilities” section of the Church Officers Handbook, officers are expected to support the work of the New Beginnings process as determined by the congregation and reviewed through Committee Work Day.