

II. Life Together in the Community of Faith

2.01 Seeking To Be Faithful Together

Guidelines for Presbyterians During Times of Disagreement

In a spirit of trust and love, we promise we will...

Give them a hearing...listen before we answer

John 7:51 and Proverbs 18:13

Treat each other respectfully so as to build trust, believing that we all desire to be faithful to Jesus the Christ;

- We will keep our conversations and communications open for candid and forthright exchange,
- We will not ask questions or make statements in a way which will intimidate or judge others.

Learn about various positions on the topics of disagreement.

State what we think we heard and ask for clarification before responding, in an effort to be sure we understand each other.

Speak the truth in love

Ephesians 4:15

Share our concerns directly with individuals or groups with whom we have disagreements in the spirit of love and respect in keeping with Jesus' teaching.

Focus on ideas and suggestions instead of questioning people's motives, intelligence or integrity;

- We will not engage in name-calling or labeling of others prior to, during, or following the discussion.

Share our personal experiences about the subject of disagreement so that others may more fully understand our concerns.

Maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace

Ephesians 4:3

Indicate where we agree with those of other viewpoints as well as where we disagree. Seek to stay in community with each other though the discussion may be vigorous and full of tension;

- We will be ready to forgive and be forgiven.

Follow these additional Guidelines when we meet in decision-making bodies:

- Urge persons of various viewpoints or views to speak and promise to listen to these positions seriously;
- Seek conclusions informed by our points of agreement;
- Be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority and respect their rights of conscience;

- Abide by the decision of the majority, and if we disagree with it and wish to change it, work for that change in ways which are consistent with these Guidelines.

Include our disagreements in our prayers, not praying for the triumph of our viewpoints, but seeking God's grace to listen attentively, to speak clearly, and to remain open to the vision God holds for us all.

2.02 Guidelines for Healthy Statements

A PROCESS FOR HONORING GOD'S CALL FOR CHURCH DELIBERATIONS

Begin with prayer and respect for all persons

Positive Regard for Self, others, and the Presbytery

1. Address all statements/questions to the moderator
2. Use "I" statements at all times. ("You," "they," "we," "them," etc. confuses, distracts and detracts.
3. Be specific, identify the words (spoken or printed) and/or behavior wish to address. Identify the issue "for you." Stick to it.
4. Address the merits/demerits of the specific amendment issue at hand.

Negative Behavior that Distracts from the Issue

1. Personal attacks
 - PLEASE – no personal attacks.
 - Do not attribute motives.
 - Do not label opponents.
 - Do not use euphemisms or stereotypes.
2. No "Hot Button" Words
 - They are used primarily to incite others.
3. The floor of presbytery is no place for "self-claimed authority," especially the authority of personal prophecy.

2.03 Ethical Standards

Standards of Ethical Conduct

A. *Standards for Members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

Life Together in the Community of Faith:

**Standards of Ethical Conduct for Members
of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

As a member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in obedience to Jesus Christ, I accept Christ's call to be involved responsibly in the ministry of the church, confirm that Jesus Christ is the pattern for my life and ministry and, relying on God's grace, commit myself to the following standards of ethical conduct.

I

I will conduct my life in a manner that is faithful to the gospel and consistent with my membership in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Therefore I will:

1. Practice the disciplines of study, prayer, reflection, worship, stewardship, and service;
2. Be honest and truthful in my relationships with others;
3. Be faithful, keeping the covenants I make and honoring marriage vows;
4. Treat all persons with equal respect and concern as beloved children of God;
5. Maintain a healthy balance among the responsibilities of my life's work and church membership, my commitments to family and other primary relationships, and my need for spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual renewal;
6. Refrain from abusive, addictive, or exploitive behavior and seek help to overcome such behavior if it occurs;
7. Refrain from gossip and abusive speech; and
8. Maintain an attitude of repentance, humility, and forgiveness responsive to God's reconciling will.

II

I will conduct myself within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) so that nothing need be hidden from sisters and brothers in Christ. Therefore I will:

1. Bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ with courage, speaking the truth in love;
2. Honor the sacred trust of relationships within the covenant community and observe appropriate boundaries;
3. Be judicious in the exercise of the power and privileges of positions of responsibility I hold;
4. Avoid conflicts of interest that might compromise my witness and relationships within the community of faith;
5. Refrain from exploiting relationships within the community of faith for personal gain or gratification, including sexual harassment and misconduct as defined by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) policy;
6. Respect the privacy of individuals and not divulge information obtained in confidence without express permission unless an individual is a danger to self or others;
7. Recognize the limits of my own gifts and training, and refer persons and tasks to others as appropriate;
8. Claim only those qualifications actually attained, give appropriate credit to others where due and observe copyrights;
9. Be a faithful steward of and fully account for funds and property entrusted to me; and
10. Accept the discipline of the church.

III

I will participate as a partner with others in the ministry and mission of the Church universal. Therefore I will:

1. Participate in the mission and governance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and work for the unity of the holy catholic church;
2. Show respect and provide encouragement for sisters and brothers in Christ;
3. Recruit church members responsibly, respect existing congregational relationships and refrain from exploiting persons in vulnerable situations; and
4. Cooperate with those working in the world for justice, compassion, and peace, including partners in ministry of other faith traditions.

B. *Standards for Employees and Volunteers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

Life Together in the Community of Faith:

Standards of Ethical Conduct

for Employees and Volunteers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

As an employee or volunteer in an entity, governing body, or congregation associated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), I commit myself to the following standards of ethical conduct.

I

I will conduct my life in a manner that will support the ministry of my workplace. Therefore I will:

1. Be honest and truthful in my relationships with others;
2. Treat all persons with equal respect and concern;
3. Maintain a healthy balance among the responsibilities of my position, my commitments to family and other primary relationships, and my need for spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual renewal;
4. Refrain from abusive, addictive, or exploitive behavior and seek help to overcome such behavior if it occurs; and
5. Refrain from gossip and abusive speech.

II

I will conduct myself at my workplace in a manner that will support its ministry. Therefore I will:

1. Honor relationships within the workplace and observe appropriate boundaries;
2. Be judicious in the exercise of the power and privileges of my position;
3. Avoid conflicts of interest that might compromise the effectiveness of my work;
4. Refrain from exploiting relationships within the workplace for personal gain or gratification, including sexual harassment and misconduct as defined by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) policy;

5. Respect the privacy of individuals and not divulge information obtained in confidence without express permission unless an individual is a danger to self or others;
6. Recognize the limits of my own gifts and training, and refer persons and tasks to others as appropriate;
7. Claim only those qualifications actually attained, give appropriate credit for all sources used in papers, music, and presentations, and observe copyrights;
8. Observe limits set by the appropriate governing body for honoraria;
9. Deal honorably with the record of my predecessor and, upon leaving a position, speak and act in ways that support the work of my successor;
10. Be a faithful steward of and fully account for funds and property entrusted to me;
11. Accept the appropriate guidance of those to whom I am accountable;
12. Participate in continuing education and seek the counsel of mentors and professional advisors;
13. Show respect and provide encouragement for colleagues; and
14. Cooperate with persons of other faith traditions.

C. Standards for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Life Together in the Community of Faith:

Standards of Ethical Conduct

for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

As an ordained officer in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our Confessions, I affirm the vows made at my ordination, confirm that Jesus Christ is the pattern for my life and ministry and, relying on God's grace, commit myself to the following standards of ethical conduct.

I

I will conduct my life in a manner that is faithful to the gospel and consistent with my public ministry. Therefore I will:

Practice the disciplines of study, prayer, reflection, worship, stewardship, and service;
Be honest and truthful in my relationships with others;
Be faithful, keeping the covenants I make and honoring marriage vows;
Treat all persons with equal respect and concern as beloved children of God;
Maintain a healthy balance among the responsibilities of my office of ministry, my commitments to family and other primary relationships, and my need for spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual renewal;

6. Refrain from abusive, addictive, or exploitive behavior and seek help to overcome such behavior if it occurs;
7. Refrain from gossip and abusive speech; and
8. Maintain an attitude of repentance, humility, and forgiveness responsive to God's reconciling will.

II

I will conduct my ministry so that nothing need be hidden from a governing body or colleagues in ministry. Therefore I will:

1. Preach, teach, and bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ with courage, speaking the truth in love;
2. Honor the sacred trust of relationships within the covenant community and observe appropriate boundaries;
3. Be judicious in the exercise of the power and privileges of my office and positions of responsibility I hold;
4. Avoid conflicts of interest that might compromise the effectiveness of my ministry;
5. Refrain from exploiting relationships within the community of faith for personal gain or gratification, including sexual harassment and misconduct as defined by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) policy;
6. Respect the privacy of individuals and not divulge information obtained in confidence without express permission, unless an individual is a danger to self or others;
7. Recognize the limits of my own gifts and training, and refer persons and tasks to others as appropriate;
8. Claim only those qualifications actually attained, give appropriate credit for all sources used in sermons, papers, music, and presentations, and observe copyrights;
9. Refrain from incurring indebtedness that might compromise my ministry;
10. Be a faithful steward of and fully account for funds and property entrusted to me;
11. Observe limits set by the appropriate governing body for honoraria, personal business endeavors, and gifts or loans from persons other than family;
12. Accept the discipline of the church and the appropriate guidance of those to whom I am accountable for my ministry;
13. Participate in continuing education and seek the counsel of mentors and professional advisors;
14. Deal honorably with the record of my predecessor and upon leaving a ministry or office speak and act in ways that support the ministry of my successor;
15. Participate in the life of a ministry setting I left or from which I have retired only as directed by presbytery;
16. Provide pastoral services for a congregation I previously served only as directed by the presbytery and provide pastoral services to members of other congregations only with the consent of their pastors; and
17. Consult with the committee on ministry in the presbytery of my residence regarding my involvement in any ministry setting during my retirement.

III

I will participate as a partner with others in the ministry and mission of the Church universal. Therefore I will:

1. Participate in the mission and governance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and work for the unity of the holy catholic church;
2. Show respect and provide encouragement for colleagues in ministry;
3. Recruit church members responsibly, respect existing congregational relationships, and refrain from exploiting persons in vulnerable situations; and
4. Cooperate with those working in the world for justice, compassion, and peace, including partners in ministry of other faith traditions.

** Standards that apply to pastors also apply to commissioned lay pastors when they are performing pastoral functions.

2.04

Sexual Misconduct Policy & Child Protection Policy

The Presbytery of Wyoming has two policies, approved September 2020:

1. Sexual Misconduct Policy, General **(XIII 13.03)**
 2. Sexual Misconduct Policy for Minors and Vulnerable Adults **(XIII 13.04)**
- These policies apply to and govern the conduct of all members of the Presbytery (ordained ministers/teaching elders), all persons on other rolls of Presbytery (commissioned lay pastors/commissioned ruling elders, commissioned church workers, certified Christian educators inquirers and candidates), all employees of the Presbytery (whether ordained to church office or not), all persons who are members of other Presbyteries or members of other denominations serving in pastoral relationships in congregations of the Presbytery, all persons who serve or function on behalf of the Presbytery as volunteers and all non- member employees and contractors/vendors of the Presbytery.
 - These policies seek to ensure that ministry at every level within the Presbytery of Wyoming remains safe, joyous and life-giving for everyone involved.
 - These policies supersede the Policy and Procedure on Sexual Misconduct of The Presbytery of Wyoming adopted September 8, 2001, later revised May 6, 2006, and May 8, 2010.
 - Policies are subject to *the Book of Order* and *The Rules of Discipline* from *the Book of Order* will be followed.
 - These policies are implemented primarily by the Safety Response Coordinator and the Safety Response Team. Additionally, Presbytery Council, the Stated Clerk, the General Presbyter and the Committee on Ministry have roles to play.