

Elders on the Session of Peekskill Presbyterian Church

This guide has been prepared for those wishing to suggest names to the Nominating Committee for the office of ruling elder and for those who have been asked by the Nominating Committee to consider service on the Session.

Expectations for elders in the Presbyterian Church (USA) -- from the *Book of Order*:

G-6.0106 Gifts and Requirements of Church Officers

To those called to exercise special functions in the Church--deacons, elders, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament--God gives suitable gifts for their various duties. In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, natural and acquired, those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the Church and in the world. They must have the approval of God's people and the concurring judgment of a governing body of the Church.

G-6.0301 Scriptural Practice

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 governing and ministry.

G-6.0302 Governmental Responsibilities of Elders

Elders are chosen by the people. Together with ministers of the Word and Sacrament, they exercise leadership, government, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a particular church as well as the Church at large, including ecumenical relationships. They shall serve faithfully as members of the session. (G-10.0102) When elected commissioners to higher governing bodies, elders participate and vote with the same authority as ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and they are eligible for any office.

G-6.0303 Gifts and Requirements of Elders

Elders should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel, both within the Church and in the world. (G-6.0106)

G-6.0304 Specific Responsibilities of Elders

It is the duty of elders, individually and jointly, to strengthen and nurture the faith and life of the congregation committed to their charge. Together with the pastor, they should encourage the people in the worship and service of God, equip and renew them for their tasks within the Church and for their mission in the world, visit and comfort and care for the people, with special attention to the poor, the sick, the lonely, and those who are oppressed. They should inform the pastor and session of those persons and structures which may need special attention. They should assist in worship. They should cultivate their ability to teach the Bible and may be authorized to supply places which are without the regular ministry of the Word and Sacrament. In specific

circumstances and with proper instruction, specific elders may be authorized by the presbytery to administer the Lord's Supper in accord with G-11.0103z. Those duties which all Christians are bound to perform by the law of love are especially incumbent upon elders because of their calling to office and are to be fulfilled by them as official responsibilities.

Expectations for elders at Peekskill Presbyterian Church -- from the Moderator of the Session

1. Training

Those elected to this office will be asked to undertake some reading and meeting with other elders-elect.

2. Term of Office

The three-year term will commence in February at the stated session meeting.

3. Session Meetings

The session meets monthly for 1½-2 hours, currently on the 2nd Thursday at 7:00pm. In addition, the session holds an annual retreat with the deacons. There are called meetings as needed.

4. Committee Meetings

Every elder is expected to serve on a committee and to chair a committee for at least one year. In many cases, elders serve as committee chair for more than one year. Most committees meet monthly for approximately 1½ hours.

5. Worship and Other Programs

Elders are expected to take part in Sunday worship faithfully and to support other programs of the church with their presence when appropriate.

6. Serving the Lord's Supper

If able, elders are invited to serve the Lord's Supper regularly in Sunday worship and occasionally to serve the Lord's Supper to those who are unable to attend worship.

7. Personal Piety

Elders are expected to pray daily, to study scripture, and to strive to lead lives worthy of their calling.

8. Financial Stewardship

Elders are expected to contribute regularly to the operating budget of the church.

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