



# *Church Officer Handbook*

August 2025

Who are we in 2025?

## **The House of Hope Presbyterian Church**

1101 Presbyterians



## **Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area**

60 Congregations

Our Presbytery includes the Twin Cities, extends north to Pine City, south to Austin and Albert Lea, and includes Baldwin, Hudson, and St. Croix Falls in western Wisconsin.



## **Synod of Lakes and Prairies**

16 Presbyteries, 709 Congregations

Our Synod includes Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and part of Nebraska.



## **General Assembly**

16 Synods, 166 Presbyteries  
1.1 Million Presbyterians

# The Session

(Book of Order, G-2.0104, G-2.0301, W-4.4003, G-3.0201)  
(Bylaws, Art V)

**Purpose.** Provide spiritual leadership, conduct short and long-term planning, determine goals and policies, conduct current operations, and provide resources to meet the congregation's needs.

**Qualifications of Elders.** "...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." (G-2.0104) They should be "...persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit." (G-2.0301)

## **Role of Elders.**

Ruling Elders "are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with teaching elders, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships." (G-2.0301)

## **Responsibilities of the Session.** (G-3.0201)

1. **Provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard.** This responsibility shall include providing a place where the congregation may regularly gather for worship, education, and spiritual nurture; providing for regular preaching of the Word by a teaching elder or other person prepared and approved for the work; planning and leading regular efforts to reach into the community and the world with the message of salvation and the invitation to enter into committed discipleship; planning and leading ministries of social healing and reconciliation in the community in accordance with the prophetic witness of Jesus Christ; and initiating and responding to ecumenical efforts that bear witness to the love and grace of God.

2. **Provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received.** This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord's Supper at least quarterly and the administration of Baptism as appropriate, in accordance with the principles of the Directory for Worship; and exercising pastoral care among the congregation; in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the congregation may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.

3. **Nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ. This responsibility shall include receiving and dismissing members; reviewing the roll of active members at least annually** and counseling with those who have neglected the responsibilities of membership; providing programs of nurture, education, and fellowship; training, examining, ordaining, and installing those elected by the congregation as ruling elders and deacons; encouraging the graces of generosity and faithful stewardship of personal and financial resources; managing the physical property of the congregation for the furtherance of its mission; direct, delegate and supervise the ministry of deacons, trustees, and all organizations and task forces in the congregation, providing for support, report, review and control; employing the administrative staff of the congregation; leading the congregation in participating in the mission of the whole church; warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within the congregation and community; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.

**Stated Monthly Session Meetings:**

**Third Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m. Meetings, September through June (excluding December)**

# SESSION COMMITTEES 2025-2026

Clerk of Session: Lynn Stein • Deputy Clerk: Mercedes Sheldon

## ADULT MINISTRY

*To provide spiritual and educational support for the adults of the congregation.*

Chair: Bill Johnston

Staff: Phil Romine

## ARTS

*To provide the congregation with visual and dramatic arts.*

Chair: Elly Verhagen

Staff: Julia Carlson, Aaron David Miller

## CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY MINISTRY

*To provide spiritual and educational support programs for our congregation's children, youth, and their families.*

Chair: Lois Knutson

Staff: Jimmy Hoke, Elsa Kendig

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

*To deepen relationships within the congregation, and with neighbors and the broader community.*

Chair: Elizabeth Sanson

Staff: Phil Romine

## FINANCE

*To prepare the annual operating budget for Session and congregational approval and ensures that expenditures throughout the fiscal year fall within approved budget limits.*

Chair: David Hutchinson

Staff: Scott Jones, Michelle Freyholtz, Mike Gibson

## LITURGY SUPPORT

*To provide for services of worship, the administration of the sacraments, and provide for music programs to support and enhance worship and other activities of the congregation.*

Chair: Diane Smith

Staff: Scott Jones, Aaron David Miller

## **MISSION OUTREACH and PEACE AND JUSTICE**

*To plan and administer the congregation's mission and benevolence programs; and to respond to local, national and international issues in which advocacy is needed.*

Co-Chairs: Jan Parkman and Deb James

Staff: Scott Jones

## **STAFF SUPPORT**

*To manage the church's personnel system.*

Co-Chairs: Patrick Boylan and Leatha Wolter

Staff: Scott Jones

## **STEWARDSHIP**

*To encourage the congregation to contribute time, talent, and financial resources to support the work of the church.*

Chair: Sarah Walbert

Staff: Scott Jones, Michelle Freyholtz, Director of Development

# Board of Deacons

(Book of Order, G-2.0201)  
(Bylaws, Art. VII)

**Purpose.** Ministry of compassion and service.

**Qualifications of Deacons.** Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment. (G-2.0201)

## **Role of Deacons.**

The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. (G-2.0201)

## **Responsibilities of the Board of Deacons.**

1. Support the goals of the congregation as established by the Session.
2. Plan, organize and provide services to meet the needs of the congregation.
3. Plan, organize and support the congregation's outreach into the community.
4. Provide ushers and acolytes to support services of worship.
5. Plan and supervise congregational special events.
6. Provide support for the integration of new members into the House of Hope community.
7. Meet the needs of homebound members through the Caring Visitors program.
8. Provide prayer intercession in support of expressed congregational needs.
9. Support the growth of social groups within the congregation.
10. Provide input into the annual operating budget as developed by the Session.
11. Elect its own officers and committee chairs.
12. Perform other duties as delegated by the Session.

## **Stated Monthly Deacon Meetings:**

**First Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m. Meetings, September through June (excluding December & January)**

# BOARD OF DEACONS 2025-2026

Moderator: Annie Yetter

## Every Deacon:

- Has a Neighborhood Ministry (A Keeping in Touch Ministry)  
Every Deacon takes part in Congregational Care.
- Takes part in volunteering at least one Social Event  
(Rally Sunday, Mardi Gras, Ice Cream Social)  
Every Deacon takes part in the social life of the church.
- Ushers for Sunday morning and special seasonal services

Every Deacon takes part in the worship life of the congregation.

## Other Committee Opportunities:

- Deacon's New Member Committee  
The New Members committee assists with the receiving of new members and serves as sponsors to new members of the church.
- Be a Deacon Representative on a Session Committee

## Other Deacon Opportunities:

- Intercessors' Guild  
Intercessors pray one day each month for members of our church and community.  
Intercessors meet once yearly to coordinate the schedule.
- Funeral Ushering/Reception Service

All Deacons will be asked to help with ushering or kitchen service for funeral and memorial services.

# Board of Trustees

(Book of Order, G-4.01, G-3.02)  
(Bylaws, Art VI)

**Purpose.** Responsible to the Session for financial, legal, risk and facilities planning and management.

**Qualification of Trustees.** Trustees commonly have special knowledge and skills in the areas of finance, investment, law, insurance, architecture and engineering.

## **Powers of Trustees** (G-4.0101)

1. Receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer real or personal property for the church.
2. Accept and execute deeds of title to such property.
3. Hold and defend title to such property.
4. Manage any endowment funds for the furtherance of the purposes of the church.

## **Duties and Responsibilities of Trustees.**

1. Establish long-range goals for the financial stability of this congregation through research and analysis of the changing needs of this congregation.
2. Establish financial guidelines for use of the assets of this congregation for current operating purposes.
3. Collect, invest and disburse all funds of this congregation, observing any restrictions placed thereon by the donors.
4. Designate such banks, trust companies, fund managers or other depositories for the funds and invest ments of this congregation and the manner of withdrawal thereof.
5. Supervise the principal financial involvements of this congregation through committees that will provide control, continuity and communication to the Session.
6. Recommend to the Session the maximum appropriate annual draw from the Endowment Fund.
7. Assist the Session in developing annual operating budget.
8. Regularly monitor budget expenditures and variances.
9. Hold title to all real estate and personal property of this congregation.
10. Authorize such person or persons to execute deeds, mortgages, bonds, checks, contracts and other instru ments pertaining to the business and affairs of this congregation.
11. Supervise the management of the properties, real and personal, of this congregation.
12. Provide for and oversee the repairs and improvements to the property of this congregation.
13. Provide insurance and other risk-management measures for the properties and activities of this congregation.
14. Supervise the activities of the church Treasurer.
15. Provide for an annual audit.
16. Make periodic reports to the Session, including annual financial statements.
17. Prepare information on Trustee Committees for the Annual Report. The Annual Report is prepared by the Budget Committee of Session which will provide the format and process.

## **Stated Monthly Trustee Meetings:**

**Second Fridays, 9:00 a.m. Meetings, September through June**

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMITTEES 2025-2026

## OFFICERS

President: Thomas Radio

Vice President: Susan Haigh

Treasurer: Charles Essig

Secretary: Anita Nelson

Director of Administration: Michelle Freyholtz

## INVESTMENT AND AUDIT

*To provide management of special funds and an annual outside audit of church financial activities.*

Chair: Karen Florez

Staff: Scott Jones, Michelle Freyholtz

## HOUSE, PROPERTY, AND INSURANCE

*To supervise the management of real and personal church property.*

Chair: Jeff Knutson

Staff: Scott Jones, Michelle Theisen, Facilities Manager, Michelle Freyholtz

## ENDOWMENT GIFTS

*To encourage bequests, planned gifts, and gifts to the endowment fund of the church.*

Chair: Anita Nelson

Staff: Scott Jones, Michelle Freyholtz

# Tips for Officers and Group Leaders for 2025-2026

## Deadlines

- The Anchor - **10th day of the month preceding publication** unless otherwise noted (no August issue). Material should be emailed to Malinda Johnson: MalindaJ@hohchurch.org or David Goudzwaard-Vaught: DavidGV@hohchurch.org, who will forward your info.
- Sunday bulletin - **10 days preceding publication**. Material should be emailed to DavidGV@hohchurch.org. (Some varying deadlines for special liturgies and holiday schedules.)
- Mailings go through Mark Schwister, (651) 227-6311, allow ample time for mailings: 5 working days for any church mailing.
- The HOH Enews is the weekly newsletter. If you have material you wish to include, please submit it by noon on Monday to Malinda Johnson: MalindaJ@hohchurch.org.
- To subscribe to the HOH Enews, contact MarkS@hohchurch.org.

**When is the next meeting? Please contact your committee chair.** We try to keep to keep the schedule for committee and board meetings and other events updated on the website events calendar as we are able. It is the committee chair's responsibility to send meeting notices to its members, and notify David G.V. with set up needs to be placed on the church calendar. Please note: if meeting notices are last minute, it may not appear on the website calendar in time.

## Committee chairs and leaders:

- Meetings/Room scheduling, set-ups through David Goudzwaard-Vaught, DavidGV@hohchurch.org.
- Except for the big three (Session, Deacons, and Trustees) Committee meeting notices are sent out electronically via email by committee chairs.
- Committee meetings can be scheduled during regular office hours. (See "Office Hours" on the next page.) Scheduling a meeting after business hours may require a door code to enter.
- To request a door code for access to the building when the building/office is closed, please contact David Goudzwaard-Vaught. Check with your committee's primary staff person before scheduling a meeting.
- Each committee has a mailbox. Be sure to check your committee's mailbox in the main office for correspondence or other information that may need your attention.
- For copying and mailroom assistance: Call the church office, 651-227-6311.
- Please turn lights off and leave the room as it was when you came in.
- No propping doors open at any time.

**The building is alarmed from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.** All persons must be out of the building by 10:30 p.m. unless special arrangements have been made with Facilities Manager Michelle Theisen.

## Website: [www.hohchurch.org](http://www.hohchurch.org)

- Postings/changes/corrections/suggestions to the website may be made through Malinda Johnson or Michelle Freyholtz.

**Budget, finance, contributions, stewardship administration:** Michelle Freyholtz, Director of Administration, (651) 223-7556, [MichelleF@hohchurch.org](mailto:MichelleF@hohchurch.org).

**Accounts payable, approved check requests:** Finance Manager, Mike Gibson (651) 223-7555, [MikeG@hohchurch.org](mailto:MikeG@hohchurch.org)

- The deadline for submitting approved check requests and invoices is Monday morning by 9 a.m. each week.
- Please allow 5 working days for processing checks.
- Two signatures are required on checks over \$500, so extra time may be needed to contact a second authorized signer.

**For building emergencies after hours:**

Call Michelle Theisen, Facility Manager (651-747-7280); or Michelle Freyholtz, Director of Administration, (763) 434-3504 (cell) or (612) 644-3504 (home).

**CURRENT BUILDING/OFFICE HOURS**

Monday:	9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday:	9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday:	9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Thursday:	9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Friday:	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Saturday:	CLOSED
Sunday:	No Office Attendant

## Committee Portal for Minutes

In an effort to provide an opportunity for all officers and current committee members to read and be informed about what other boards and committees are discussing, our website contains a "Committee Portal" which will be a location for all Session, Deacon, and Trustee boards and committees to upload their minutes.

You will be able to read any minutes from any Session, Trustee, or Deacon committee that uploads them to this portal. Uploading is very easy by clicking the button that says "upload document"; then choosing the committee and the year in a drop-down menu; then browsing your computer for the PDF, WORD or EXCEL document, just as simply as you would if you were attaching a document to an email.

This portal will only be as rich and informative as you make it to be. The more committees that upload their minutes, and the more you read those that are provided, the more information about what's going on at HOH you'll receive!

This is a password protected portal, and only officers and current committee members will receive the password. We are trusting that you will not share this password with those that are not currently serving on a board or committee.

The Committee Portal can be found at our website [hohchurch.org](http://hohchurch.org) under the "About Us" tab, then choose "Governing Bodies." Scroll down the page until you see "Committee Portal" and click where it says "click here".

Please contact David Goudzwaard-Vaught, [DavidGV@hohchurch.org](mailto:DavidGV@hohchurch.org), for the password.

Also, please remember that the Governing Bodies page contains a plethora of other useful information for officers to access.

Lastly, it would be best to assign a person from your committee to upload the minutes monthly for your committee once they are completed. Also, please note that there will be a one month delay with Session, Trustee, and Deacon Board minutes as they need to be approved by the bodies before being released.

And, as always, if there are specific minutes that you are seeking that are not in the committee portal (specifically minutes prior to 2022), please contact [DavidGV@hohchurch.org](mailto:DavidGV@hohchurch.org)

Here is a direct link to the sign in page:

<https://www.hohchurch.org/committee-portal/>

## Realm Cheat Sheet

Realm is a great tool to use – especially when looking to trade communion serving dates.

### **Sending a Message**

Once you're logged into Realm, you can send a message to all of Session by following these steps:

1. Look at the left side icons and click on 'Groups'.  
You should now see the committees/groups you are associated with.
2. To find other Elders, click on 'Session.'  
You should now see the newsfeed for our group.
3. Use the pencil icon to send/post an item to the whole Session. The 'post' box will let you compose a message, attach files, and even use bold text and make bulleted lists.

If you want to communicate just with a committee, you can click 'change group' on the right-hand side of the message box. OR you can click on 'Groups' again and select the correct group, then repeat step #3.

When you are in 'Groups,' you can access the contact information for anyone in your group, EVEN IF they are not visible in the 'Directory' part of Realm. To do this:

1. Go into the group that you share with the other person. {steps 1-2 above}
2. Look toward the top of the Group page, above the icons, to find where it says 'Participants.'
3. Click on 'Participants' and you should see a full list of those in the group.
4. Click on any one name to see that person's contact information.