

# **CONNECTIONS**

## **CONNECTING RETIRED WOMEN**

### **POLICIES, PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES**

**Revised 10/08/2025**

This document contains general procedures voted on by the Connections' Executive Board and serves as a guide for officers and activity chairs in the performance of their duties. In no way is it intended to dilute or supersede the organization's Constitution and By-Laws and does not include all policies, practices and procedures mandated therein.

#### **General**

1. Communication and notices as referenced in the document normally refer to electronic information via email communication. Where members lack computer access, a member will be identified to share/provide Connections communications with them.
2. It is the responsibility of the incoming President to see that each new Executive Board member and Activity Chair is notified as to this document on the Connections website and their need to review and be aware of its contents. The President assisted by the Board Secretary will update this document, communicate the changes to the Executive Board, and after the modifications are made distribute it to the membership. Review of By Laws and Policies and Procedures shall occur every 2 years.
3. Proposed changes in the Constitution and By-Laws should be submitted to the President in writing. She will present them to the Executive Board who will, if warranted, appoint a special committee to consider them and make recommendations to the Board.
4. Members of the Executive Board may suggest revisions/amendments to this document. The Board shall act on such suggested revisions/amendments.
5. The Executive Board will decide upon the stipend for speakers. Connections' members who may be speakers are not eligible to receive compensation.
6. Politicians may be invited to speak at a regular membership meeting, but not while they are candidates for office. The subject matter may not be politically oriented.
7. Announcements of outside entertainment, cultural, civic, or educational activities by **speakers** at Connections' membership meetings, functions, etc. and the use of printed material is permitted with approval of the Executive Board.

8. Trips sponsored by Connections must follow specific guidelines: Review and approval by Executive Board in advance; review by treasurer and trip leader to identify a member fee that will cover all costs of the activity; rules, amenities, insurance coverage of the bus line (or other transportation provider) be investigated and that the terms and conditions of these services are clear and in writing; the daily schedule given to each participant ahead of time. In addition, activities' chairs who sponsor bus trips must notify the Church. **Contact Dana Feeney in the First Presbyterian Office.**
9. Photos of Connections Members at Connections activities should not be posted to websites, Facebook pages, Instagram or other social media platforms. It is our aim to protect the privacy of our members.
10. Connections' functions are for members only unless the coordinators of trips, tours, and other special events need additional attendees to help meet financial commitments.
11. Partners/significant others and other special guests may be invited to trips, tours, and/or activities at the discretion of the chair with the approval of the executive committee. However, our goal is to give priority to Connections members.
12. No member of Connections may be expelled, and no membership terminated, except in a manner that is fair and reasonable and is carried out in good faith. If the Board receives a **complaint** from activity leaders, members or other persons of authority at the facilities we use, the Connections Executive Board will review **the matter before any action is taken**. Any member **cited in the complaint** will be notified of the **alleged** offending behavior and **given the opportunity to respond in writing**. The Board will review each report and interview each participant as necessary. **After due consideration by the Board, the member may be expelled, have her activities and privileges limited or be informed** that if the offending behavior occurs again, she may be expelled from the organization.
13. Connections will donate on a quarterly basis a mutually agreed upon amount to the First Presbyterian Church.
14. The First Presbyterian Church or the Northwest Senior Activity Center will be reimbursed for any borrowed items or out of pocket expenses. Replacements are acceptable as reimbursement.
15. Signatories on financial accounts (bank account, etc.) are to be limited to four persons: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Treasurer.
16. Nominations for all officers will be taken by a nominating committee and ballots will be cast to decide the slate of officers in October by a majority of the membership present. Nominees must be members in good standing.
17. For continuity, succession will be: The First Vice President will succeed to President, the Second Vice President will succeed to First Vice President. Nominations will be taken for the Second Vice President, Membership/Board Secretary and Treasurer. Officers will be elected by a majority of membership present at the November meeting. Terms for each individual office will be one year. The sitting President continues to serve on the Executive Board after her tenure.

## Membership

1. The Connections roster shall be used for Connections business only. Connections emails/invitations are meant for Connections members only. Members shall **NOT** forward Connections emails to non-members.
2. Applicants must be sponsored by a member who has been a member for at least one year. These prospective members' applications will be processed in chronological order. If an applicant does not know a current member, the organization may appoint a sponsor. A member may sponsor no more than one applicant per year except for the Executive Board and members of the Membership Committee.
3. Applicants must complete an application form (the current version resides on our website) and forward it to their sponsor. The check for the application fee is equal to annual dues made out to "**FPC: Connections**" should accompany the application.
4. It's the sponsor's responsibility to review the applicant's application form for completeness, sign it, and forward it to the Membership Secretary. The Membership Secretary shall acknowledge to the sponsor when the application has been received. Dues will be sent to the Treasurer when the applicant is notified. She will be introduced at the general meeting. If the application is not complete, it is the sponsor's responsibility to help the applicant meet the application requirements.
5. The Membership Committee, consisting of the Membership Secretary, the Connections Executive Board and member volunteers, has delegated full responsibility for the membership function to the Membership Secretary, who may consult with the Executive Board if she has any questions.
6. When the Membership Secretary is satisfied the applicant and sponsor have completed the application requirements, she shall provide the applicant with information regarding access to the Connections website, including the "Constitution and By-laws", "Policies, Practices, and Procedures", and Activities Calendars. She shall receive the location and password for Membership Roster after she is introduced into the organization.
7. It is the sponsor's responsibility to accompany the applicant to the required first monthly meeting she attends and introduce her to the Membership Secretary, and the leaders of the activities groups she has expressed an interest in, and as many other members as possible, so she feels welcome in the organization. The Sponsor and the Membership Secretary will schedule the meeting at which the applicant will be introduced. Members will receive a membership packet and name tag.
8. The Membership Secretary shall maintain a list of applicants who are pending membership.
9. After an applicant has been formally introduced at the general membership meeting, the sponsor should continue to encourage her participation in the organization and its various activities and introduce her to as many other members as possible.
10. General membership meetings are exclusively for Connections members. Walk-ins shall not be accommodated.

11. An applicant who is admitted to the organization after September 1 and has paid the application fee/yearly dues amount will be considered as dues paid for the following year.
12. As per the Constitution, members whose dues for the current year are not paid on or before December 1 shall be removed from the membership list. To ensure that participation in activities is denied, activity leaders will be sent a list of their names.
13. A member who wishes to resign may do so by giving notice to the Membership Secretary or to an officer or fellow member who should advise the Membership Secretary.

## **Connections Executive Board Mission Statement:**

The Executive Board's mission is to carry out the purpose of the organization

The **Connections Executive Board** shall:

- Manage Connections activities and finances.
- Act as a resolution board for complaints and/or situations that are counter to Connections Constitution and Policies/Procedures.
- Place agenda items before the board as requested by board and/or Connections members
- Develop consensus when providing resolution on items on the board agenda. When a consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be taken. A measure will pass when 7 out of 10 board members vote yes.
- Suggest modifications/additions to our Constitution and Policies/Procedures if omissions are identified or changes are indicated.
- Maintain confidentiality in Executive Board discussions and communications.
- Members of the Connections Executive Board are expected to be collegial in all discussions, respecting dissenting opinions while still participating in the sometimes-difficult discussions. When developing decisions/compromises, our highest priority is the inclusion of all members in Connections activities as much as is feasible, also to make decisions consistent with our Constitution and Policies/Procedures.

## **Officers and Their Duties**

The **President** shall:

- preside at all meetings at which she is present.
- prepare a program for the monthly meetings with the assistance of the board and membership.
- request volunteers to act as facilitators for the various activities.
- appoint facilitators.

- convene committees as may be required and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee.
- prepare brief reports to be submitted to the membership in conjunction with the Membership and Board Secretary.
- finds and contracts an Auditor to perform a yearly audit.
- appoint, in consultation with the Treasurer, assistant(s) to the Treasurer to assist her in her duties.
- schedule Executive Board meetings at her discretion.
- furnish an annual report to members of the Executive Board and the membership, to be entered in the minutes by the Membership/Board Secretary.
- check Connections' mailbox for correspondence.
- serve as a voting member on the Executive Board.
- attend Connections Sunday at Church to speak about Connections' activities.
- Chair an ad hoc committee to review the Constitution and By Laws and the Policies and procedures every 2 years.

## **The President's Duties by Month**

### **December**

- convene Executive Board meeting with incoming officers prior to December general meeting.
- approve First Presbyterian Church fee and Church staff Christmas gratuities.
- establish budget for following year and conduct other business as needed.
- present gratuity checks to staff.
- participates in “Passing of the Gavel Ceremony” at December membership meeting when leadership changes.

### **April**

- acts as Master of Ceremonies at Connections' Fellowship Luncheon held at the Church.

### **June**

- establish a Nominating Committee to identify candidates for offices for next year.
- announce results of nominating committee for vote at October membership meeting and through email notification.

### **September**

- present the Pastor with a check for the quarterly donation at the September membership meeting

### **October**

- hold vote for nominated slate of officers.
- request all Chairs to send summary activity report to President by October 31.
- set date and place for President's “Thank you Luncheon” for all Activity Chairs.
- review budget excess and decide whether to spend it or roll it over to the next year.

**November**

- hold vote for officers.
- send invitations for President's Thank You Luncheon.
- hold President's luncheon for all chairs to honor their work during the year.
- present President's Annual Report to the membership and Pastor based on Chairs' Activity Reports.
- appoint a member to act as MC for "Passing of the Gavel" ceremony in December

**The First Vice President shall:**

- perform all the duties of the President in the absence of the President.
- assist President as requested.
- presents programs and associated cost to Executive Board for approval.
- prepare a program for the monthly meetings.
- be responsible for providing speakers and have a speaker's budget approved by the Executive Board for her term of office.
- arrange for compensation for said speakers.
- be responsible for timely and efficient communication with the membership.
- serve as a voting member on the Executive Board.

**The Second Vice-President shall:**

- solicit from activities chairs the dates of all meetings they anticipate conducting and any information they want included on the monthly activities calendar.
- Work with activity leaders to find a public space for their activity's meetings.
- **Works with activity leaders to provide a Certificate of Insurance (COI) to the venues where our activities meet.**
- coordinate the calendar with the church office and the Northwest Senior Activity Center and other relevant venues to ensure rooms schedule for activities/event meetings are available.
- prepare and update the monthly activities calendar and see that it is posted on the website and distributed to the membership each month.
- work with the President to keep a major events calendar up-to-date and available to event chairs (including trips and tour leaders) to prevent schedule conflicts.
- serve as a voting member on the Executive Board.

**The Treasurer shall:**

- record all Connections' financial transactions
- oversee the monies held by financial institutions.

- present a monthly financial summary to the Executive Board.
- make the financial records available for an annual audit.
- assure signatures on financial accounts are current.
- collect dues and other monies from all activities and maintain records.
- send out notice requesting dues payment through Constant Contact.
- report receipts, expenditures, and the balance of the monies in custody at each membership meeting.
- work with activity chairs in establishing format and data to be collected and reported for their trips/activities requiring additional funds.
- serve as a voting member on the Executive Board.

**The Membership Secretary shall:**

- communicate with persons seeking information on joining Connections.
- oversees the membership process.
- maintain the data for the membership roster (email addresses, phone numbers, town of residence).
- provide a report to the Executive Board on the status of membership.
- serve as a voting member on the Executive Board

**The Recording Secretary shall**

- take and distribute meeting minutes.
- assist in correspondence to the membership about meetings and special events.
- assist committee facilitators in communicating with the membership.
- serve as a voting member of the Executive Board.

**The Church Liaison/Sponsor Representative shall:**

- maintain communications between the group and sponsor.
- alert the President and the membership about events requiring schedule changes due to conflicts with First Presbyterian Church's activities.
- provide information about Connections' activities to the Pastor and/or designee on a yearly basis.

**The Connections Cares Secretary, after speaking with a family member or close relative, shall perform these duties depending on the event**

Member illness or hospitalization

- notify members via email - keeping things simple, sharing whatever details the member is comfortable with letting others know.

- extend best wishes for recovery on behalf of Connections.

#### Member death

- notify members via email - keeping things simple, sharing whatever details the family member is comfortable with letting others know.
- find the name of a contact person who can provide funeral/wake/memorial service details.
- notify the Treasurer to send a memorial gift if appropriate and supply the Treasurer with the address to which it should be sent.
- notify President or her designee to attend the wake and/or memorial service of the Member's spouse, partner, or close relative.

#### Activity Group Protocol:

##### **Activity Groups: How to Start a Connections Activity Group**

All recognized Connections Activities must be approved by the Executive Board. This will allow for a smooth startup, an invitation to be sent to all members, ensure space, and provide any items the group activity may require.

If you are interested in leading/holding an activity group:

- Contact the Connections President with a description the group
  - Include any supplies or special setup needed, the day and time you would like to meet and the space requirements.

The Board will consider:

- other activity groups meeting concurrently on day/time requested.
- space requirements and programmatic needs of the activity. Every effort will be made to find public space for the activity.

#### Board Procedure:

- the Second Vice President will seek out the required space and enter the activity on the Connections Calendar.
- the President will send an invitation to Connections' members informing them of the new activity. They will be asked to contact the Activity Leader to be included in the group.
- the Activity Chair will send the list of members to the Membership Secretary who will enter members into Constant Contact with that activity label.
- future communications with the group will be done through Constant Contact or the activity leader's personal email; she will be provided with an excel spreadsheet with the names, emails and phone numbers of the group members.

**The Activity Chairs shall:**

- deposit all funds exceeding \$100.00 with the Treasurer for the future use of the activities affected.
- keep accurate records of funds received and transmitted to the Treasurer for deposit.
- invite and encourage persons on any waiting list to participate in the activity when space allows.
- submit an annual report to the President by the end of October. It should include an overview of the activity and responsibilities of the activity chair.
- confirm participants in their activity are paid members and communicate to the Executive Board the list of unpaid persons(s) for their action.
- allow all members of the activity group to participate in group activities
- verify activity participants are group members.
- add new members at their request, giving priority to current members regarding space in a scheduled activity.
- report to the President an accident report if a member is injured while participating in Connections activity. The accident report should include, member/s name, date and time of accident, injury and action taken (e.g. emergency vehicle called, where the member was taken).

**Connections Members shall:**

- indicate which groups in which they will participate
- communicate with the Activity Leader indicating when they will participate
- if they are interested in an event an activity group is sponsoring, they must first join the group and notify the Activity Leader that they wish to join the group. They will be allowed to participate in the activity if space allows (Current members of the group will have priority.)
- **behave in a manner consistent with Connections mission of inclusion and respect for others, promote a climate of friendship and support. Any member in violation of these tenets will be notified of the offending behavior and appropriate action taken as articulated in the General section above at point 12.**