

North Bend Church of the Brethren Handbook of Church Polity 2022

North Bend has been a growing, healthy church, and we praise God for this growth. In 2009 we purchased a building in Butler and that has helped us to increase our numbers, even more. We hold Saturday evening and Sunday morning services in Butler and a Sunday morning service in Danville. God has blessed us with many new members of our church family.

This document is to assist the leaders of our church in fulfilling their duties as chairman of each committee. When we all follow these job descriptions, it will provide a better way of communication between one another. With better communication comes better efficiency, and an efficient church is a church doing the work of the Lord.

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Section One: Church Council and Leadership

I. Church Council

The Church Council is composed of all members of the North Bend Church Congregation and is the highest authority and governing body within the church. The Church Council has four regular meetings a year. We encourage all members to attend the Church Council meetings.

The Church Council will:

1. Vote on the hiring of the Pastor and paid staff.
2. Speak for the congregation on current issues and concerns when necessary.
3. Hear the concerns of any and all members of the congregation.
4. Adopt a budget for the year during the year end meeting and subsequently ensure that it is properly carried out.
5. Hear reports for the purpose of evaluating past accomplishments, studying present conditions, or to plan future programs and projects for the congregation.
6. Rule on policy and organizational matters. The Constitution can be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any church council meeting.
7. Authorize church officers to act on behalf of the congregation when necessary.
8. Vote on any item of new business and old business, ensuring that they are properly carried out by the commissions and officers.
9. Approve the slate presented by the church board.

II. Church Leadership

A. Pastor

The Pastor will serve as a staff member within a vibrant congregation, working with a committed staff and leadership in order to nurture the congregation in the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

The Pastor will:

1. Accept and adhere to the faith and practices of the Church of the Brethren and the local congregation, and his life and conduct shall witness to his Christian faith.
2. Be the spiritual shepherd of the congregation and the executive director of the church program.
3. Be an ex-officio member of the board and the commissions.
4. Preach, teach, administer the sacraments, visit and counsel, and in various other ways aid his congregation in their worshipping and serving God.

B. Director of Youth Ministry

The Director of Youth Ministry will serve as a staff member within a vibrant congregation, working with a committed staff and leadership in order to nurture youth, from 6th grade through 12th grade, and their families in the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

The Director of Youth Ministry will:

1. Recruit, train and coordinate workers for Youth Ministry (YM) classes and events, worship services and Youth Group.
2. Work cooperatively with all staff and volunteers. Provide a warm, friendly and learning environment for youth and families.
3. Use appropriate child development knowledge to best meet the needs of children in curriculum selection, child discipline, classroom grouping, etc.
4. Communicate the needs of the youth program to other staff and church leaders as appropriate. Organize, set up and stocks classrooms with necessary supplies.
5. Visit classes for the purpose of teacher support in order to address any issues or emergencies that arise. Teach classes as needed.
6. Coordinate and provide leadership in developing and implementing a young family outreach ministry focused on children's activities.
7. Assist Pastor in visiting young church families involved in YM as requested; consult with parents regarding an issue with their youth; and refer to certified counselors as appropriate.
8. Attend meetings with Christian Education, teachers and Pastor.
9. Participate in the life and worship of the congregation.

C. Director of Children's Ministry

The Director of Children's Ministry will serve as a staff member within a vibrant congregation, working with a committed staff and leadership in order to nurture children, from birth through 5th grade, and their families in the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

The Director of Children's Ministry will:

1. Recruit, train and coordinate workers for children's ministry classes and events.
2. Work cooperatively with all staff and volunteers. Provide a warm, friendly and learning environment for children and families.
3. Use appropriate child development knowledge to best meet the needs of children in curriculum selection, child discipline, classroom grouping, etc.
4. Visit classes for the purpose of teacher support in order to address any issues or emergencies that arise. Teach classes as needed.
5. Coordinate and provide leadership in developing and implementing a young family outreach ministry focused on children's activities.

6. Assist Pastor in visiting young church families involved in children's ministry as requested; consult with parents regarding an issue with their child; and refer to certified counselors as appropriate.
7. Attend meetings with Christian Education, teachers and Pastor.
8. Participate in the life and worship of the congregation.

D. Moderator

The Moderator will:

1. Be elected annually for a one-year term, to serve from January 1st to December 31st.
2. Preside at all church council meetings. This requires that the Moderator have a working knowledge of the church constitution and parliamentary procedure.
3. Appoint a substitute in the event that they are not able to attend the church council meeting.

E. Church Clerk

The Church Clerk will:

1. Be elected for a term of 3 years.
2. Ensure that the slate is properly prepared and presented.
3. Be the keeper of all church records, lists, membership letters, and other important data.
4. Keep written records (minutes) of all church council and church board meetings. A copy of these minutes should be available at a reasonable time after the meeting. A completed slate is to be posted at least one Sunday prior to the year-end council meeting. The final slate will be posted at least two weeks following that same meeting.
5. Contact the Moderator prior to each church council meeting.
6. Work with the Pastor to ensure that all baptisms and membership certificates are properly prepared.
7. Be someone who can type, and have a computer, and is available to work with the Pastor and any other staff.

F. Church Treasurer

The Church Treasurer will:

1. Be under the direction of the Finance Commission.
2. Be an individual that keeps all financial records of the church.
3. Receive, record, and deposit all offerings collected.
4. Pay all bills after first ensuring that they are in order.
5. Keep books in order and up to date and answer all questions concerning church expenditures and receipts.

6. Reconcile all bank statements to make sure they are correct.
7. Present a written report at the board and council meetings.
8. Attend all council meetings, church board meetings, and Finance Commission meetings without vote.
9. Provide the Auditing Commission with all pertinent data for audits.

G. Assistant Treasurer

The Assistant Treasurer will:

1. Be an individual that will assist the treasurer and be able to step into the position of treasurer if the need arises.
2. Follow all the guidelines listed for the treasurer.

H. Deacons

The Deacons will:

1. Be a group of designated laymen who are responsible for doctrinal decisions and activities of the church.
2. Supervise the physical provisions for baptism, whenever scheduled by the Pastor.
3. Supervise the physical provisions for the celebration of the Love Feast. At least two Love Feast services will be held each year, with one being at Easter and one during October. They will also assist with any other services during the year.
4. At the request of the Pastor, assist in anointing services.
5. Assist in the spiritual development of the church.
6. Consist of a group of no less than seven active deacons.
7. Select a chairman each year, alternating from each site every year.

Section Two: Church Board and Commissions

In order for these individuals to be considered for the slate of officers, they must be members in good standing unless noted otherwise and active members of the congregation and/or the Brethren Brotherhood. Unless otherwise noted, they will be elected for a term of 3 years and can serve 2 consecutive terms with a 1 year lapse before rejoining that commission.

I. Church Board

The church board is composed of the following individuals without vote:

Pastor
Director of Youth Ministries
Director of Children's Ministries
Treasurer
Clerk

And the chairmen from the following commissions with vote, unless otherwise noted:

Music and Worship
Ministerial
Finance
Mission and Witness
Trustees, one from each location
Christian Education
Adult Sunday School Superintendent
Children's Sunday School Superintendent
Women's Fellowship president, one from each location
Youth Fellowship representative
Flower Commission, one from each location, without vote if a non-member
Auditing Commission
Deacons
Website Commission

The church board will meet quarterly, or more often as needed, as determined by the Pastor and the board chairman.

The church board is authorized by the church constitution to act on behalf of the church council, ad interim, except for those actions specifically reserved for the church council in the bylaws. This is generally interpreted to mean that the church board will take care of business matters between church council meetings. It is assumed that all major matters will be deferred to the church council.

Items specifically reserved for the church board include:

1. Presenting a budget for church council consideration.
2. Making all interim appointments as specified by the constitution by-laws.
3. Carry out any directives assigned by the church council.
4. Carry out all other directives of the church constitution.

In the working relationships of the church board and the church council, it is always assumed that superiority lies with the church council. Any action of the church board can be nullified by a majority vote of the church council.

II. Board Chairman

The Board Chairman will:

1. Be selected each November.
2. Notify board members prior to board meetings.
3. Prepare an agenda for the board meetings.

III. Commission Chairman

The chairman of each commission will consist of one person from the Butler site and one from the Danville site. The commission will choose which of the co-chairs should attend the board meeting if only one chairperson is required to attend.

The Commission Chairman will:

1. Call all meetings of their commission and attend every meeting.
2. Lead each meeting of their commission.
3. Ensure that commission responsibilities are completed.
4. Bring commission actions and recommendations to the church board and church council, and to bring church council and church board actions and recommendations to the commission.
5. Maintain a file of written summaries of commissions meetings.
6. Provide a smooth transition to the commission for the following year.

IV. Commissions

The following commissions will:

1. Be composed of three members from each location, unless otherwise noted.
2. Have members that will be elected for a three year term. Members may serve two consecutive terms before requiring a one year lapse before rejoining the commission unless otherwise noted.
3. Meet at least once per quarter, or more often as needed.

4. Submit an estimated budget for the next year to the finance committee by September 1st.
5. Be composed of active members of the congregation. Church membership is required unless otherwise noted.

A. Music and Worship Commission

The purpose of the music and worship commission is to provide for the musical and worshipful activities of the church body.

The Music and Worship Commission will:

1. Meet quarterly, or as needed, to plan specials for the worship services and to discuss any worship related activities
2. Contact individuals to provide specials for the worship services.
3. Review any music and/or literature which has been received by the church concerning music and/or worship activities.
4. Assist music director as needed in choosing music for the choir/cantatas.
5. Review the music of any guest groups and specials coming to the church for a worship service.
6. Review the “order of worship” for the worship services periodically with the Pastor and present any recommended changes to the church board and council for approval.
7. Assist with any activity dealing with music and/or worship in the entire church life.

B. Ministerial Commission

The purpose of the Ministerial Commission is to provide a happy working relationship between the Pastor and the congregation. They periodically evaluate the Pastor and Director of Youth Ministry on their daily routines, and when needed, guide the church in securing a new Pastor or Director of Youth Ministry.

The Ministerial Commission will:

1. Meet with the Pastor each quarter (or as needed) for the purpose of evaluation and discussion concerning his leadership of the congregation.
2. Meet with the Director of Youth Ministry each quarter (or as needed) for the purpose of evaluation and discussion concerning his leadership of the youth ministry.
3. Review the salary packages for the Pastor and Director of Youth Ministry once a year, giving careful consideration to Brotherhood guidelines. If adjustments are necessary, these should be submitted to the Finance Commission for inclusion in the church budget.

4. Secure a new Pastor if present Pastor resigns or vacates his position. Upon a Pastor's decision to resign, he must first notify the Ministerial Commission. The commission will then:
 - a. Meet with the District Executive and the church board to identify prospective pastors. It is advisable for the Ministerial Commission to attend a church service conducted by the new prospect.
 - b. If the prospect is approved by the Ministerial Commission, he is then asked to come and give a trial sermon at North Bend. No voting is done in the presence of the prospective minister.
 - c. When a decision is made to call a particular minister, a church council meeting is called, and letters are sent by the Ministerial Commission to all members regarding the business to be transacted. The District executive shall be present to conduct the business meeting. If a pastor other than Brethren faith is called, it must be with the consent of the District Executive and the District Ministerial Board.
5. Secure a new Director of Youth Ministry if the present director resigns or vacates his position. Upon a director's decision to resign, he must first notify the Ministerial Commission.
6. Provide pulpit supply when the Pastor is on vacation, attending annual and district conferences, or other related church activities.
7. Work on preparing the worship service in the absence of the Pastor.
8. Keep a list of all available church laymen and other guest speakers to be used in the absence of the Pastor.
9. Expect the Pastor to assume all responsibility for pulpit supply if he accepts duties in another church, such as a revival or guest speaker occasion. This responsibility includes payment of salary to the pulpit supply.

C. Finance Commission

The purpose of the Finance Commission is to provide communication within the church on the financial state of the congregation.

The Finance Commission will:

1. Meet quarterly with the Treasurer to discuss the financial condition of the church, and to monitor and regulate the church budget.
2. Formulate a church budget, each year, for the October church council meeting. These estimates must be gathered together to form a proposed church budget, to be presented to the church board in October. This will be done by gathering budget estimates from various commissions in the following manner:
 - a. Ministerial Commission - Pastor and Youth Director salary, travel, insurance, and conference expense
 - b. Mission and Witness Commission - All outreach, including brotherhood, missionary and district and local

- c. Music and Worship Commission - Church music and church supplies
 - d. Christian Education Commission - All educational expenses
 - e. Trustees - Improvement expenses, taxes, insurance, utility expense, and any special projects
 - f. Flower Commission - Expenses for flowers and gifts
 - g. Any other budget estimates that are necessary can be gathered from the appropriate sources.
3. Receive budget estimates as necessary to keep up with the increased cost of operation.
 4. Attempt to keep costs in line with the church's financial condition with regard to increased expenditures.
 5. Maintain up to date knowledge of the church's financial state.
 6. Give financial advice concerning any major projects or undertakings.
 7. Help advise the Ministerial Commission in negotiating and updating the Pastor and Director of Youth Ministry's salary and associated expenses.
 8. Help advise the Christian Education Commission in negotiating and updating the Director of Children's Ministry's compensation.
 9. Negotiate and update the Treasurer's compensation.

D. Mission and Witness Commission

The purpose of the Mission and Witness Commission is to ensure that the North Bend congregation participates in various outreach programs of the Brotherhood and to participate in mission and witness activities.

The Mission and Witness Commission will:

1. Be responsible for designating the funds for outreach, both local and general.
2. Ensure that the church participates in special projects each year and determines the amount to give to local people in need.
3. Be responsible to plan adult mission trips.
4. Authorize special offerings for local needs of people or special projects.
5. Work with the Pastor to decide how and when these programs will be carried out.
6. Help to provide witness opportunities whenever needed and practical.

E. Trustees

The purpose of the Trustees is to be responsible for all acquiring, conveying, and up-keeping of church property, including the church grounds property, the Danville Cemetery, and any other property and/or facilities the congregation might acquire. The trustees of North Bend Church of the Brethren are the legal trustees of the congregation.

The Trustees will:

1. Be responsible for the care and maintenance of the church buildings and all other property belonging to the church. This may include such things as: maintaining and repairing heating systems, water systems, sewage systems, repairing the roof, siding, windows, or any other related task.
2. Set up and maintain insurance policies for the protection of church property.
3. Be responsible for the cleaning of snow from around the church, and see that the temperature is set properly at all times prior to worship services and any other meetings held at the church.
4. Install or oversee the installation of acquired materials being installed on church property.
5. Danville trustees only: Have charge of the North Bend Cemetery Endowment Fund, holding it in trust and using only the interest for upkeep and maintenance. They shall perform such duties as outlined in the bylaws of the North Bend Cemetery. They will keep or provide for the keeping of all cemetery records and accounts.

Note: The elected Trustees of the North Bend Church of the Brethren are not expected to assume personal responsibility for every task that must be done at the church. These men are full-time employed workers, just like everyone else, and it is assumed that the Trustees will use their authority to hire out any needed tasks. The congregation would do well to assist their task, by volunteering for various work days and other temporary assignments. Each person in the North Bend family is in some way, shape, or form, responsible for the up-keep of our facilities.

F. Christian Education Commission

The purpose of the Christian Education Commission of the North Bend Church of the Brethren is to encourage spiritual education for everyone attending church and Sunday school.

The Christian Education Commission will:

1. Supervise the selection of teachers and assistants for the Sunday School and the nursery.
2. Work with the Adult and Children's Superintendents.
3. Be responsible for all the educational activities and seasonal programs that are connected with Sunday School and the Director of Children's Ministry.
4. Be in charge of ordering Sunday School material or assigning someone to do this.
5. Appoint all Sunday School workers, including teachers, and other needed personnel.
6. Be responsible for Sunday School promotion exercises each year.
7. Oversee the Vacation Bible School, the Easter party, harvest party and special occasions.
8. Ensure that all educational activities center around sound Biblical doctrine.
9. Order birthday presents, for example NBC tote bag or NBC hat, to be given to children attending Sunday School.

10. Supervise nursery scheduling and supplies.
11. Meet with the Director of Children's Ministry each quarter (or as needed) for the purpose of evaluation and discussion concerning their leadership of the children's ministry.
12. Secure a new Director of Children's Ministry if the present director resigns or vacates the position. Upon a director's decision to resign, they must first notify the Christian Education Commission.

G. Adult Sunday School Superintendent

The purpose of the Sunday School Superintendent is to provide supervision for all the adult educational activities of the church. This position currently exists only at the Danville site.

The Adult Sunday School Superintendent will:

1. Arrive 15 minutes before Sunday school to ensure the church is unlocked and classrooms are set up.
2. Provide an interesting, inspirational 10 minute opening, with prayer, Sunday morning for the adult department.
3. Distribute and collect the attendance books and offering from all Sunday School classes and record that information.

H. Children's Sunday School Superintendent

The purpose of the Children's Sunday school Superintendent is to provide a meaningful Christian education program for the children of the North Bend family, with an eventual goal of leading all of the involved children to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. This position currently exists only at the Danville site.

The Children's Superintendent will:

1. Provide a 15 minute opening exercise for the children each Sunday morning from 10:00-10:15am that involves activities such as singing songs, reading a bible story, taking offering, recognizing birthdays, and taking prayer concerns.
2. Be on a committee with two other people. Talk with them to set the schedule. Sometimes people want it to be the same month they teach Sunday school.
3. Plan a special 1-2 times a year for the children to sing during church. Work with the Music and Worship Commission to set this up.
4. Attend all church board meetings, providing a status on any problems, concerns, or special plans.
5. Ensure the children receive a birthday present, for example NBC tote bag or NBC hat. The birthday items get ordered yearly by the Christian Education Commission.

I. Women's Fellowship

The Women's Fellowship organization that is an active, vital organization made up of all interested ladies of the North Bend family. There is one organization for each church location. Their activities and efforts parallel those of the church, and they provide very valuable assistance in the total context of the church program. The Women's Fellowship is referred to here in the context of the church board, only because the women's fellowship president from each site is a voting member of the church board, and should attend all meetings, giving representation to the women's fellowship. A complete list of the purpose, yearly goals, activities, and procedures is printed each year by the fellowship, and is made available to all.

J. Youth Fellowship

The Youth Fellowship provides activities for all the youth in the church, in an attempt to provide them with opportunities for Christian decisions. The Youth Fellowship is mentioned here only in the context that the representative is an member of the church board, and should attend all church board meetings, giving representation to the church youth.

K. Flower Commission

The purpose of the Flower Commission is to provide gifts from the church at appropriate times. Those who serve on this commission may be members or non-members.

The following list of guidelines has been adopted for the Flower Commission:

1. Illness: Confinement in hospital, home or outpatient surgery shall receive flowers, plant, fruit, or gift card at a local restaurant.
2. Births: A bible is purchased for each newborn child.
3. Deaths: In the event of the death of any church member, or anyone who attends or contributes in any way to the support of our church, shall be remembered as the discretion of the Flower Commission.
4. Other: Any situation not covered by these guidelines shall receive flowers and/or gifts at the discretion of the Flower Commission, according to tradition and precedent.

L. Auditing Commission

The purpose of the Auditing Commission is to provide an annual audit of the treasurer's records.

The Auditing Commission will:

1. Receive the books, records, and any other important data from the treasurer for review by the auditors. To simplify the auditing process, it is recommended this be done every 3 to 4 months.
2. Complete a thorough examination to ensure accuracy of all accounts.
3. Compare all bills, payments, and receipts of church business.
4. Co-sign the treasurer's report after all arrangements are complete.

M. Website Commission

The purpose of the Website Commission is to reach new people and keep all connected and involved by maintaining and updating the church website and social media platforms. The commission is composed of 4 individuals, 2 from each site. Two committee members, who are also church members, shall have administrative accounts to the website. Non-church members shall not have administrative accounts.

The Website Commission will:

1. Meet at least quarterly with additional meetings as needed.
2. Publish information to the church website and social media platforms including but not limited to:
 - a. General information about the church location and service times.
 - b. General information about the church missions, bible studies, organizations, and history.
 - c. A calendar of church events.
 - d. Articles about church events and activities.
 - e. Publishing of sermons including audio and live streaming.
 - f. A contact form allowing visitors to ask general questions, make prayer requests, and contact the Pastor.
3. Respond to inquiries made via the church website and social media or forward requests to the appropriate people.
4. Be responsible for maintaining a broadband internet connection at both sites.
5. Be responsible for administering the website and social media accounts.
6. Be responsible for renewing the domain registration and website hosting of northbenchurch.org and northbendchurch.com.
7. Moderate the posts on all church social media platforms.
8. Maintain the online giving platform.

Section Three: Other Commissions

I. Sunday School Teachers

The purpose of the Sunday School Teachers is to teach the Bible. Each teacher should be a member in good standing.

The Sunday School Teachers will:

1. Study the specific lesson each week, preparing an interesting presentation.
2. Arrive 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the Sunday school hour, to greet the students, and make any final preparations necessary.
3. Maintain regular, faithful, and consistent attendance habits, as well as an exemplary Christian life.
4. Attend all announced teacher's meetings.
5. Find a replacement teacher in situations where you cannot be there.
6. Complete required background checks.
7. Report any needed materials, up-keep, or improvements to the Christian Education Committee.

II. Ushers/Deacons

The purpose of the ushers and deacons is to assist the Pastor by ensuring that the morning worship service runs smoothly.

The Ushers/Deacons will:

1. Greet people as they enter the sanctuary.
2. Distribute the bulletins, and any other hand-outs that the Pastor makes available.
3. Assist people in finding a seat when the sanctuary is full.
4. Collect the offering and give it to the Treasurer .
5. Count the number of people in attendance at all services. The attendance figure and offering figure should be posted on the attendance board.
6. Assist the Pastor in any manner that he so requests.