

3A. Church Council Policy
Plymouth Congregational Church

Article I. Spending Authorizations

Members of Church Council shall be authorized to spend up to \$1000 of their associated budgeted line items without prior Church Council approval. Expenditures by Trustees of over \$5000 (with senior minister or moderator approval for expenditures over \$2000) or other expenditures over \$1000 require prior Church Council approval.

Article II. Church Committee Supervision Support Responsibilities

While supervision of Associate Ministers and staff members is primarily the responsibility of the Senior Minister, effective operation of the church requires support from members of lay leadership who also have significant contact with them.

The following church committees are expected to support the Senior Minister's supervision role of specified staff members:

- A. Personnel:
 - Senior Minister
 - Associate Minister
- B. Deacons:
 - Choir Director
 - Organist
- C. Trustees:
 - Groundskeeper
 - Custodian
- D. Adult Education Committee:
 - Parish Assistant
- E. Church Council Officers:
 - Administrative Assistant
- F. Youth Education Committee:
 - Paid Youth Assistants
 - Youth Education Director

To support the supervision of the Senior Minister, these committees will:

- Provide input to the Senior minister for use in yearly evaluations
- Support evolution of job descriptions – especially during transitions
- Work with the Senior Minister to develop an initial salary proposal for associated staff member(s), and submit to personnel for approval

- Include salaries in yearly budget proposal (include cost-of-living increases from personnel)
- Alert treasurer to any change in salary status (time off, etc.)

Additionally, the Personnel Committee will:

- Develop pay standards through comparison with other churches
- Propose uniform yearly cost-of-living increases for all employees
- Review and approve all salary proposals

Article III. Church Council Representative Responsibilities to Council

Regular attendance by Council members is very important to support consistent representation of each committee to the Council and to facilitate the smooth conduct of Council business.

If representatives cannot attend they should name a substitute as soon as possible, help them prepare for the meeting, and notify the Moderator so they can plan as appropriate. Keep in mind the Constitution does not allow a single individual to represent two committees. It is the responsibility of the substitute to review the agenda of the previous meeting and prepare for ‘old business’, discuss new agenda items with the Council representative for insight, and to vote on issues considering both the special viewpoint of their committee and the good of Plymouth Church.

With such a large Council it is very important Council Members help each other prepare for meetings. As a general rule, motions should be made visible before meetings and members respond with their comments before the Council meeting so the committee making the motion can be well prepared. Comments on agenda items before the meeting help the Moderator prepare for the discussion and plan the agenda.

Article IV. Plymouth Mission and Vision Statements

Plymouth Church Mission Statement (Why we exist)

It is our mission to worship God and help make God’s realm visible in the lives of people, individually and collectively, especially as it is set forth in the life, teachings, death and living presence of Jesus Christ. We do this by:

- Creating an open and affirming faith community with opportunities for caring and fellowship that deepen relationships and promote a spirit of unity

- Encouraging the spiritual growth of our members and engaging their ministry by nurturing their relationship with God, calling forth their gifts, and equipping them for Christian service
- Actively inviting others into our faith community, providing a safe welcome for a diverse people
- Joining others within broader communities to promote the integrity of creation and a more just, inclusive and peaceful world

Plymouth Church Mission Statement (Pictorial Version)

It is our mission to worship God and help make God's realm visible in the lives of people, individually and collectively, especially as it is set forth in the life, teachings, death and living presence of Jesus Christ. We do this by:

Inviting: (Evangelism)

Actively inviting others into our faith community, providing a safe welcome for a diverse people

Transforming:

Creating an open and affirming faith community with opportunities for caring and fellowship that deepen relationships and promote a spirit of unity
Encouraging the spiritual growth of our members and engaging their ministry by nurturing their relationship with God, calling forth their gifts, and equipping them for Christian service

Sending: (Mission)

Joining others within broader communities to promote the integrity of creation and a more just, inclusive and peaceful world

Plymouth Church Values

We value:

- Holding God as the center of our lives
- Jesus as a model of human wholeness and human responsibility
- The encompassing love and presence of the Holy Spirit
- An inclusive environment that encourages diversity
- The legacy of our founders and the traditions of our UCC heritage
- Education of children and others of all ages
- Stewardship of time, talent and resources
- Compassion

- Peace based on justice
- Autonomy balanced with covenant
- Individual journeys of thought, faith development and biblical interpretation
- Risk-taking leadership of social issues
- Creeds as testaments of faith rather than tests of faith

Article V. Grievance

The Plymouth Council recommends the procedure below be followed by members of Plymouth when they have a grievance with a decision made by a Council Committee or the Council:

1. Member(s) should take their concern directly to the committee. It is our hope that the concern will be resolved there. But, if the member(s) is still unhappy...
2. Member(s) could take their concern to the Moderator to have a motion concerning the issue put on the Council agenda. Member(s) would launch the discussion with their motion (published in advance in the agenda as is typical) and then engage with the Council in a discussion of the issue. At some point the Council would take an action. But, if the member(s) is still unhappy...
3. Member(s) could take their concern to the Moderator to have the item added to the agenda for the Annual Meeting.

Article VI. Declaration of Support of Plymouth UCC Clergy regarding the Blessing of Unions

- We declare support of clergy of Plymouth Congregational, UCC, who preside at services recognizing and blessing the union of persons who are committed to live in covenanted, committed, mutually respectful and loving relationship. This may include persons of the same sex.
- We support the clergy in conducting counseling deemed appropriate in preparation for a requested service of blessing, and in making pastoral decisions based on understanding of serious intention and adequate preparation.