



October 12 through October 18, 2025



Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God (Romans 13:1)

Dear Friends in Christ,

This week, I want to talk about Presbyterian Polity, or how we govern ourselves. At Ohio Church, we have two elected bodies – the Session (comprised of Ruling Elders) and Deacons.

Here are some definitions, from our Constitution, The Book of Order:

Deacon: “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. Persons of spiritual character, honest reputation, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgement should be chosen for ministry.”

Ruling Elder: “Ruling elders are so named not because they “lord it over” the congregation (Matthew 20:25), but because they 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 [Ministers], 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. When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the Session.”

Deacons and Elders are elected by the congregation, but they do not have “constituencies.” Our leaders do not represent certain age groups, genders, or geographic areas – in their deliberations, they vote their conscience. On the other hand, as servant leaders, they should keep their ears open to the opinions and feelings of the congregation. Further, they should be present and available to those they serve – this means participating in the work and worship of the church.

What about Authority and Responsibility? Our Book of Order is quite clear about who has, and who does not have authority, and who is responsible for what.

What the Congregation has authority over: “Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation shall be limited to matters related to the following:

- a. electing ruling elders, deacons, and trustees;
- b. calling a pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor;

- c. changing existing pastoral relationships, by such means as reviewing the adequacy of and approving changes to the terms of call of the pastor or pastors, or requesting, consenting to, or declining to consent to dissolution;
- d. buying, mortgaging, or selling real property;
- e. requesting the presbytery to grant an exemption as permitted in this Constitution
- f. approving a plan for the creation of a joint congregational witness, or amending or dissolving the joint congregational witness

What about the Pastor? Again, from the Book of Order: “The Pastor has certain responsibilities which are not subject to the authority of the Session. [Regarding] worship, the pastor is responsible for:

- a. the selection of Scripture lessons to be read
- b. the preparation and preaching of the sermon or exposition of the Word,
- c. the prayers offered on behalf of the people and those prepared for the use of the people in Worship,
- d. the music to be sung (in coordination with the choir director)
- e. the use of drama, dance, and other art forms”

Essentially, the Pastor has no authority (or no responsibility) for things outside of worship. The congregation has limited authority too. So if you add them up, you come to the conclusion that the Session is responsible for everything else.

So why am I taking the time to go through all this? I hope you are still reading!

As your Pastor, certainly I have opinions, experience, and input, but decisions are made by the Session, and by the congregation as noted above. And unless the Session specifically decides to give me authority for something, I don't have it.

Likewise, we are not congregational, nor are we Baptist or Episcopal (Catholic) – we are Presbyterian. The Presbyterian form of government is representative and consultative. Leaders are elected out of the body, and the membership agrees to submit to the authority of the leaders.

As we move forward through this Transitional time, let us be clear regarding who has what authority, and who does NOT. And as Paul reminds us, we are all under the authority of Christ, who is the Head of the Church.

If we all strive to follow the words of the Apostle, the Body of Christ called Ohio Church will be much healthier.

In Christ,

Pastor





Worship

- Sunday School for children 3yr.-6th grade is during worship after the children's chat
- Adult Sunday School is at 9am
- 70 were in church on Sunday, October 5

Congregational Care

- Story Time continues on Wednesdays at 9:30 or 10:30am
- SOUP SALE is on October 12 following worship. Price for a quart is \$8.
- Deborah Circle will meet Monday, October 13 at 6:30. Bring an apple to make a Carmel Apple
- Deacon's Fellowship on October 19 to Meet and Greet Pastor Jim. A variety of soups and dessert will be served
- Saturday, October 25—Ladies mark your calendars for the Women's Retreat at Raccoon State Park. See details on last page

Mission

Operations

- FALL CLEAN UP DAY scheduled for Saturday, October 18 at 9am. We need your help to get our church looking her best when we host the Beaver-Butler Presbytery meeting on Nov. 18. There are projects for everyone! We'll be painting inside and out, weather permitting. The flower beds need attention. The nursery toys need sterilized. The pews need polished. The list goes on and on! Many hands make short work! There were whispers about donuts, too! Hope to see you there!

It's Choir time again! During this time of transition, the choir will sing twice a month for Sunday services. We will have short rehearsals after church on Sundays, beginning September 14. Join us for fun and fellowship!

We are looking for volunteers to do special music/readings on the weeks that the choir is not singing. It can be playing an instrument, singing a song, or reading a poem. Anything you would like to do to enhance our worship service. There is a Signup sheet hanging outside the choir room.



Anniversaries	Birthdays	Birthdays
Ken & Lorraine Jones 10/05	Joe Gavita 10/03	Dana Gavita 10/14
Nancy & Kevin Hribar 10/11	Greg Holsinger 10/08	Lillian Otto 10/19
Jeff & Jennifer Davis 10/16	Eleanor Pike 10/08	Peggy Franzese 10/20
Scott & Sharon Neville 10/16	Shanna Rastetter 10/12	Peggy Atwell 10/24
Susan & Larry Palochak 10/23	Janis Lewis 10/13	Trent Nan 10/29



Joys and Concerns September 28, 2025

- Diane Gennaro had a spinal ablation on Tuesday.
- Jen Davis–Her sister Chris had her surgery to remove the pacemaker on Tuesday, Now ready to start breast cancer radiation
- Bev Abate–Prayers for her neighbor Sue who didn’t have procedure last week for her headaches. She is very lost and depressed, not knowing what to do next.
- Missy Sardo–Prayers for her mom, Caroline, who is going through a rough time
- Dawn Psik–Her sister, Susan started her third round of chemo on Monday
- Prays for Tim Blanchard, Mary Blanchard’s son, laurie Anderson’s brother. Tim underwent surgery for bladder cancer on Tuesday. The entire family needs prays.
- Christina Palmer–Dannielle is out of surgery, talking and answering questions. They were not able to get the full tumor. Good news is it is non-cancerous. She will start radiation in 5-6 weeks.
- Pastor Jim–tear in meniscus in both knees. Saw Doctor on Tuesday



WOMEN'S RETREAT

Women's Retreat 2025

Date: October 25, 2025

Time: 9 am to 4 pm

Place: Raccoon State Park Rec Hall

Guest Speaker: Rev. Page Creach

She will do a talk based on the Beatitudes

In the afternoon we will be working on Mission Project

Breakfast and Lunch Provided including hot beverages and water

Please bring a notebook and Bible

Cost \$10.00 to cover the cost of Breakfast and Lunch

Checks Payable to Ohio UP Church Women's Association

Name(s): _____

Phone No./Email _____

Registrations Due by October 19th

Please contact Patti Strominger with any questions.

Call/Text: 724-494-2160 or email: pattistr@gmail.com