

Onewa Christian Community
Presbyterian Church Aotearoa New Zealand

A CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Consolidated Guiding Principles

1 PREAMBLE

- 1.1 The following Consolidated Guiding Principles are formed with the strategic intent of the Mission and Vision of **Onewa Christian Community**. The Vision being “**We aspire to be an active and innovative Christian community that provides leadership and builds partnerships in our fast-changing world.**” The Vision and Mission intentions with Values are in appendix 1.
- 1.2 In all respects of the congregation's life and governance, the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand applies. The Consolidated Guiding Principles is authoritative only to the extent that it is consistent with the Book of Order provisionsⁱ and its Supplementary Provisionsⁱⁱ. In the event of any inconsistency, the Book of Order or Supplementary Provisions prevails.
- 1.3 **Onewa Christian Community** ordering certain local aspects of its parish life and governance according to Regulation 7.4 (3) of the Book of Order, remains a Charge of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

2 MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 Members of **Onewa Christian Community** and Associate Members of **Onewa Christian Community** have membership of Chapter 4 of the BOO.
- 2.2 Members can make nominations to or be nominated for and elected to the Church Council and vote in a minister's calling.
- 2.3 A Member of **Onewa Christian Community** may exercise the rights of, and for statistical purposes will be recorded as, a communicant member of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 2.4 The Church Council may receive Associate Members: Any person who wishes to be linked with the vision and the life of **Onewa Christian Community** and who applies to do so as an Associate Member of the **Onewa Christian Community**.
- 2.5 Associate Members can participate in the congregation meetings and vote separately in the election of elders or calling of a Minister. They are eligible to make nominations to or be nominated for election to the Church Council, but Members must make up at least 60% and Associate Members no more than 40% of the Church Councilⁱⁱⁱ
- 2.6 Rolls: The Church Council maintains the Roll of Members and the Roll of Associate Members of **Onewa Christian Community**, updating these rolls annually. For practical purposes, the Church Council may maintain a single pastoral Roll recording the names of Members, Associate Members, and any other persons under the pastoral care. Denominational affiliation may be noted if desired by members concerned.
- 2.7 All Members and Associate Members recognise and accept the Church Council's authority and the other courts of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

3 MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

- 3.1 **Annual Meeting:** An Annual Meeting of the congregation is held to review the congregation's full life and elect the Church Council. The Church Council presents reports on all aspects of the congregation's life and work, and the meeting deals with any matters referred to it by the council, committees, members, or by Presbytery or General Assembly. The meeting may make recommendations to the Church Council.
- 3.2 **Other meetings:** By giving reasonable notice (not less than 10 working days), the Church Council may call additional meetings of the congregation ["Congregational Meeting"], and the Church Council may refer to such meetings any matters that are within the responsibility of the Church Council. These meetings will be for the purpose advertised. Such meetings may be called on the Church Council's initiative or at the Presbytery or General Assembly's written request or by at least five members of the congregation.
- 3.3 **Chair:** Normally the Minister/Moderator takes the chair at Annual Meetings and Congregational Meetings.
- 3.4 **Voting:** Members and Associate Members are eligible to vote on all matters in Congregational Meetings. Members and Associate Members vote separately in the election of elders and the calling of a Minister (see 2.3 and 2.6)

4 CHURCH COUNCIL AND COUNCILLORS

- 4.1 **The Church Council,** with the Minister(s) and any lay workers appointed by the Church Council, has responsibility for all aspects of the congregation's life.
- 4.2 **Description:** Members of the Church Council are known as Church Councillors.
- 4.3 **Qualities:** Members of the congregation elected as Church Councillors possess gifts and qualities which make them suitable for their work; are faithful in their attendance at public worship and known in the congregation for their Christian faith and love, their reliability and competence, their discernment and good judgement.
- 4.4 **Accountability:** Councillors undertake to uphold the "Code of Ethics" (appendix 2) to respect the doctrine and practice of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and to accept the authority of the Church Council, the Presbytery and the General Assembly.
- 4.5 **Membership:** The number of members on the Church Council may be revised from time to time as the Annual Meeting may decide. Typically, there are 8-10 members of the Church Council who are elected for a three-year term. The Minister(s) is a member of the Church Council and has a casting vote. Other ministry staff members and the treasurer, if not an elected member, are ex officio members of the council.
- 4.6 **Nominations:** Members of **Onewa Christian Community** (see 2.2) and Associate Members may be nominated for election to the Church Council, provided Associate Members do not constitute more than 40% of Church Council^{iv}.
- 4.7 **Election:** The election of the Church Council takes place at the Annual Meeting (see 2.3, 2.6, 3.1 and 3.4) using procedures formulated by the council.
- 4.8 **Length of service:** Church Council members retire at the end of their three-year term but may make themselves available for re-election for a second three-year term. After two consecutive terms (or six years) on the Church Council, there is a stand-down year before any person can be nominated and elected for further service^v.
- 4.9 **Commissioning:** Those Members elected to serve on the Church Council would be commissioned as Elders. Associate Members are not ordained but are commissioned as Church Council members. Members who become Elders at the time of election to the Church Council and choose not to stand for the council again or are not re-elected continue to be recognised as Elders within the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. Their service of eldership may continue to be exercised through appropriate pastoral and liturgical roles. As elders, they will come under the Church Council's authority and the other courts of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 4.10 **Meetings:** The Church Council meets typically at least every two months, and having given reasonable notice, at other times as required.
- 4.11 **Quorum:** A quorum for the Church Council meetings is one quarter plus one elected member, of which three Church Councillors must be elders.

4.12 **Voting:** All elected Church Councillors may exercise a vote at Church Council meetings. The Minister/Moderator has a deliberative and a casting vote. Ex officio members (see 4.5) of the Church Council do not have a vote.

4.13 **Functions:**

- 4.13.1 The members of the Church Council share the responsibility collectively.
- 4.13.2 Oversight of the congregation's wellbeing.
- 4.13.3 Guardianship and development of the congregation's ethos.
- 4.13.4 Leading the mission and strategies of the congregation.
- 4.13.5 Oversight of the worship of the congregation.
- 4.13.6 Engaging with theological, church, and social issues.
- 4.13.7 Stewardship of the congregation's property and finance.
- 4.13.8 Relationships with the wider Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and other bodies.
- 4.13.9 It is ensuring compliance with the New Zealand Charities' regulations.
- 4.13.10 Ensuring compliance with relevant New Zealand legislation including, but not limited to, employment, health and safety and privacy legislation.
- 4.13.11 They are ensuring compliance with the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand Book of Order.

4.14 **Administration**

- 4.14.1 Overseeing effective pastoral care of all persons for whom the congregation is responsible.
- 4.14.2 Keeping rolls (see 2.7) and receiving at least annually a report on their revision.
- 4.14.3 Seeing that all minutes and records required by the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand are kept, secured and produced when required.
- 4.14.4 Arranging for Elders to attend Presbytery and General Assembly.
- 4.14.5 Arranging the procedure for the nomination and election of members to the Church Council.
- 4.14.6 Reporting to the congregation at least annually.
- 4.14.7 Ensuring the safe keeping of all archival material.

4.15 **Officers**

The officers of the Church Council^{vi} are:

- 4.15.1 Moderator. Usually, the Minister will chair Church Council and Congregational meetings.
- 4.15.2 The Church Council Secretary: Takes the minutes of Church Council meetings and Congregational Meetings, record statistics, and maintains records of the Church Council.
- 4.15.3 The Treasurer. The council appoints a treasurer, who would become an ex officio member of the council.
- 4.15.4 The Presbytery Elder and an Elder to attend General Assembly. The Church Council typically chooses these elders from the members of the Church Council.

5 **COMMITTEES AND TEAMS**

- 5.1 The Church Council may appoint committees, teams, or task groups, including a team that may exercise executive functions.
- 5.2 The Church Council works typically through the teams, committees or task groups appointed by the Church Council. The Church Council and the congregation at a Congregational Meeting may, from time to time, determine the most appropriate and effective form of working through teams and committees.
- 5.3 The Church Council draws up the terms of reference for the teams and may, from time to time, review and amend such terms of reference.

6 PASTORAL CARE

- 6.1 All members of Church Council and all other active Elders are responsible, under the oversight of Church Council, for the congregation's pastoral care.
- 6.2 The Church Council determines from time to time how Elders will exercise pastoral care.
- 6.3 Pastoral oversight and care include the nomination by the Minister of candidates for baptism and the annual revision of rolls as under 2.7.

7 AMENDMENTS

Clauses 1 to 8 of the Consolidated Guiding Principles may be amended by a simple majority of members voting at a properly constituted Congregational Meeting or Annual Meeting and subsequently approved by Presbytery. The Church Council may amend the appendices at any time.

8 OVERSIGHT

The Northern Presbytery resolves questions involving the interpretation or application of these Consolidated Guiding Principles, where resolution cannot be reached within the congregation. An appeal may be made to the General Assembly.

9 APPENDICES

Appendices 1 to 4 record information pertaining to aspects of the organisation and administration of **Onewa Christian Community**.

APPENDIX 1 – Vision and Mission intent

Vision, **“We aspire to be an active and innovative Christian community that provides leadership and builds partnerships in our fast-changing world.”**

We will:

- **be innovative in our approach to life and worship**
- **demonstrate our willingness to share life experiences and spiritual awareness, promoting the teaching and practice of Jesus**
- **seek out opportunities to promote inclusiveness, interfaith awareness and collaboration, especially through partnerships with local community organisations**
- **be visible in the community as we live our values**

Values

- **Community** - We focus on people, personal connection and treating everyone with respect in practical ways ('manaakitanga').
- **Diversity and inclusion** - We want to reflect and support the community around us through diversity and inclusion.
- **Open mind / open heart** - We make space for personal and spiritual growth. We promote real and meaningful connection with others.
- **A living faith** - Active faith begins at the point where certainty ends. A living faith involves faith in oneself, faith in others, faith in the future and faith in God.

APPENDIX 2 – Onewa Christian Community Code of Ethics

With God's help,

1. I will keep spiritually and emotionally healthy by following a regular spiritual growth discipline and good personal recreation and self-care.
2. I will act with integrity, deal openly and honestly with those under pastoral care, maintain a safe environment, and uphold their best interests, rights, and well-being, rather than my own.
3. I will respect the privacy of individuals and the confidentiality of information. The only exception is where there is clear and imminent danger to the person or others or a legal obligation to disclose the information, at which time they will be informed of those limits.

4. I will affirm the dignity and worth of each person. I will ensure pastoral care is available for them without discrimination because of their age, gender, race, sexual orientation, religious belief, economic status or physical or mental abilities.
5. I will acknowledge that people come from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and therefore act with awareness, sensitivity and responsibility.
6. I will recognise that it is my responsibility to maintain personal and professional boundaries in pastoral relationships.
7. I will not abuse my position's relative power by taking advantage of people for personal, financial or institutional or spiritual gain.
8. I will not subject anyone to sexual exploitation, harassment or abuse, and recognise that any sexual intimacy in the pastoral situation is unacceptable.
9. I will recognise that there are limits to my competence and refer people to others better qualified when necessary or desirable. I will not attempt clinical counselling without appropriate training.
10. Ordained Ministers: I will use regular professional supervision, where appropriate, or similar processes ensure accountability, good time management, fair theological reflection and a high standard of pastoral care.
Volunteers: I will attend, whenever possible, training provided or recommended by the church to ensure accountability, appropriate theological reflection and a high standard of pastoral care.

APPENDIX 3 - Executive Team

The Minister, Church Council Secretary, Treasurer and Resource and Risk Committee Convenor form an executive who may make decisions implementing the Church Council's policies in response to any matters of urgency that arise in between meetings of the Church Council. The Church Council would ratify these decisions at their next meeting.

APPENDIX 4 - Employees

The non-ministry employees of **Onewa Christian Community** are accountable to the Church Council. Management and supervision of employees is the responsibility of the Minister (s), but day to day oversight may be delegated.

APPENDIX 5 - Honorary Associate Ministers

- The congregation may appoint Honorary Associate Ministers. These are Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the PCANZ, or partner churches, who are Members or Associate Members of **Onewa Christian Community** who have been invited by Church Council and whose appointment as an Honorary Associate has been affirmed by the congregation. This title recognises the role of Ministers who serve in ways other than parish ministry and the particular contribution to the congregation.
- Their ways of serving are open and flexible, being at the Minister's request and the Honorary Associate's agreement.
- No remuneration is typically received.
- Honorary Associate Ministers are eligible for election to the Church Council in the same way as any **Onewa Christian Community** member.

ⁱ The Book of Order [2018 Book of Order](#) does not seek to replicate legislation and other legal requirements of Aotearoa New Zealand. The Book of Order aims to set out the Presbyterian rules and how we operate as a church. It should be consistent with the law of Aotearoa New Zealand.

ⁱⁱ Other publications, [Church Management Support](#) guide that contains guidance on health and safety. Other guides, such as the Child Protection Policy and Code of Ethics, are available here on the PCANZ Website.

ⁱⁱⁱ Book of Order 7.1.1 (1)

^{iv} *ibid* 7.1.1 (1)

^v At the end of the first three years of the New Entity's operation, one-third of the Church Council will stand down. After that, a regular rotation, as stated, continues.

^{vi} Officers of the Church [Charities Officer Resource](#) kit contains guidance for charities officers