

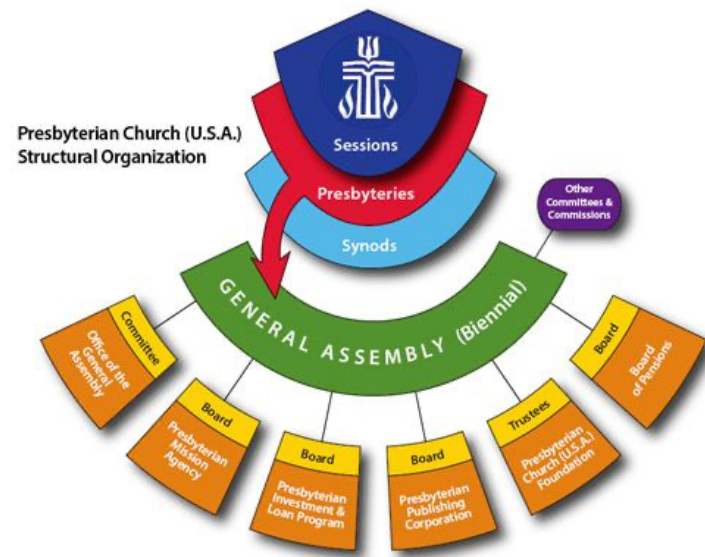
RULING ELDERS: THE MINISTRY OF DISCERNMENT AND GOVERNANCE

G-2.0301 *Ruling Elder Defined, from the PC (USA) Book of Order*

“As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in discernment of God’s Spirit and governance of God’s people. Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. Ruling elders are so named not because they “lord it over” the congregation (Matt. 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 of word and sacrament, 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. When elected as commissioners to higher councils, ruling elders participate and vote with the same authority as ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and they are eligible for any office.”

What is “Session”?

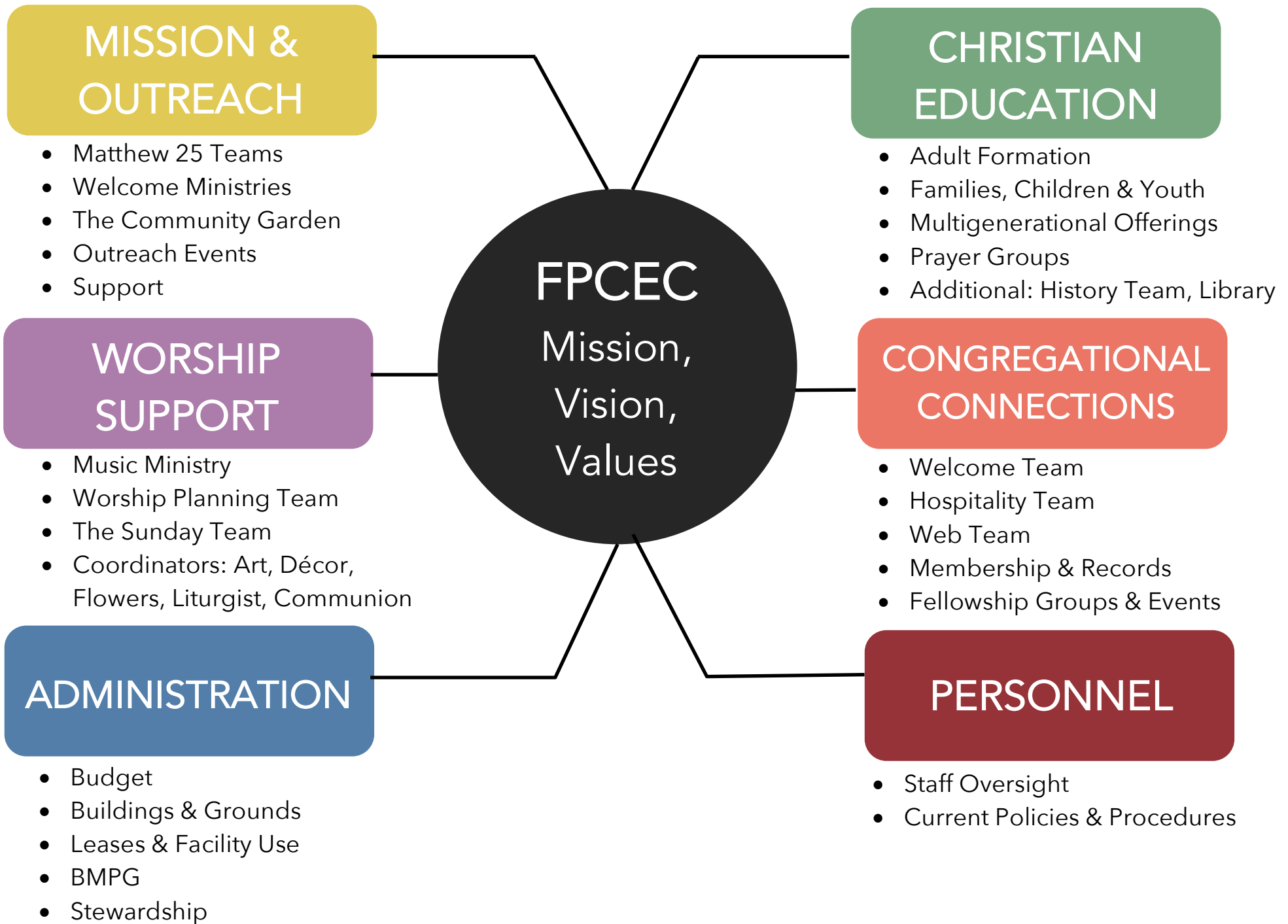
A local church is governed by its session. The session is a group of ruling elders elected by the congregation for three-year terms to lead, oversee, and make decisions in a local congregation. All of the churches in a geographical region gather together in a presbytery. The presbytery meets regularly (quarterly in San Diego with occasional special called meetings) and has responsibility for managing property, ordaining and overseeing ministers, and assisting congregations in their ministry. Several presbyteries in a state or region make up a synod. Synods may meet a few times in a year. Presbyteries send representatives to the General Assembly which meets every two years and is the church’s highest governing body.



Session Committees at First Presbyterian Church, USA

The following pages reflect our current committee structure, with detailed tasks and teams overseen by each committee on the following page. Our six committees are: Administration, Worship Support, Mission & Outreach, Christian Education, Congregational Connections, and Personnel.

Session Committees



Mission and Outreach

Staff Liaison: DSF, DOO

- **Matthew 25** | Revitalization, Racism, Poverty including Refugee/Immigrant Support Team & Street Team
- **Welcome Ministries** | Protein Packs, Welcome Church
- **Community Garden** | Partner with St. Alban's Episcopal
- **Outreach Events** | Mission Craft Fair, SD MOM, Circle Players
- **Support** | Missionaries, Nurses Fund, Las Colinas Jail Ministry, Presbyterian Offerings

Worship Support

Staff Liaison: Pastor, CD, DWA, AA, DOO

- **Music Ministry** | Choir, Bell Choirs, Worship Team
- **Worship Planning Team** | Weekly Monday Noon Zoom for collaborative staff and volunteer worship planning
- **Sunday Team:** Ushers, Audio-Visual, ADA/HVAC, sanctuary/instrument/equipment maintenance
- **Coordinators** | Art, Décor, Sunday Flowers, Communion Servers, Liturgists

Administration

Staff Liaison: DOO, Treasurer

- **Budget** | Oversee, Propose
- **Buildings & Grounds** | Maintenance, repairs
- **Leases & Facility Use** | Coordinate, calendar
- **BMPG** | Big Mission Planning Group (partner with Mission)
- **Stewardship** | Stewardship Brunch, annual initiative, ongoing education

Christian Education

Staff Liaison: DSF

- **Adult Formation Team** | Classes, Digging Deeper, Meditations w/Mari, Retreats
- **Families, Children & Youth** | Sunday School Team, Kidz Klub Team, Youth Group Team, Childcare Team, Events Team (VBS & UNCOMMON)
- **Prayer** | Prayer Team, Circle Prayer, Centering Prayer
- **Additional** | Library Team, History Team, Matthew 25 Revitalization efforts

Congregational Connections

Staff Liaison: DOO

- **Welcome Team** | Welcome Table, Greeters, Visitor follow-up
- **Hospitality Team** | Kitchen, Food, Coffee Fellowship
- **Web Team** | Website, Promotions, Branding
- **Membership & Records** | Membership Class, audit
- **Fellowship Groups & Events:** TBN, Christian Cruisers, Bridge Club, Girlfriends, Dining Groups, Concerts

Personnel

Staff Liaison: Pastor

- **Staff:** Hire, Fire, Reviews, Exit, Support, Leave Oversight
- **Current Policy:** Employment law, Sexual Harassment, Anti-Racism Training, Child Safety, Live Scan, etc.

STAFF LIAISONS: Director of Spiritual Formation (DSF), Director of Outreach & Operations (DOO), Director of Worship Arts (DWA), Choir Director (CD), Administrative Assistant (AA)