

## Synopsis of Session Responsibilities

The Session is responsible for the mission and government of the particular church and has the following powers/responsibility:

1. To provide opportunities for evangelism to be learned and practiced in and by the church  
**- To lead the congregation by taking the initiative in growing the church and spreading the gospel**
2. To receive members into the church upon profession of faith, upon reaffirmation of faith in Jesus Christ, or upon satisfactory certification of transfer of church membership  
**- To confer with the pastor when baptism or reception into the church is to occur, to determine if the person meets the requirements in the Book of Order for church membership (That is, they make a profession of faith, and are willing to accept nurture in the faith from the congregation)**
3. To lead the congregation in participation in the mission of the whole church in the world **(To choose and encourage congregational participation in the outreach and mission programs of the church locally and in the world)**
4. To provide for worship including preaching of the Word, sharing of the sacraments, and the music program in keeping with the requirements in the Directory for Worship **(To call ministers or elders and otherwise provide for worship leadership. The Session chooses when sacraments will be celebrated and provides all that is necessary for that sharing. The Session also provides for a music program by hiring music professionals and/or providing for choirs, etc.)**
5. To appeal to the Presbytery for an authorized elder to administer the sacraments when there is no ordained minister available **(To fill the pulpit in the absence of a minister)**
6. To provide for the growth of its members and for their equipment for ministry through personal and pastoral care, educational programs including the church school, sharing in fellowship and mutual support, and opportunities for witness and service in the world **(To develop and maintain educational programs for all age levels. To schedule and participate in fellowship events and support witness opportunities in the world.)**
7. To **develop and supervise the church school** and the educational program of the church
8. To lead the congregation in ministries of personal and social healing and reconciliation in the communities in which the church lives and bears its witness **(To work to resolve conflict within the church and in local communities)**
9. To challenge the people of God with the privilege of responsible Christian stewardship of money and time and talents, developing effective ways for encouraging and gathering

the offerings of the people and assuring that all offerings are distributed to the objects toward which they were contributed

10. To establish the annual budget, determine the distribution of the church's benevolences, and order offerings for Christian purposes, providing full information to the congregation of its decisions in such matters

11. To lead the congregation continually to discover what God is doing in the world and to plan for change, renewal, and reformation under the Word of God (**To engage with the pastor and the congregation in discernment of the will of God and to support the programs that are meant to further the church's mission derived from that discernment**)

12. To engage in a process for education and mutual growth of the members of the session (**Participate in ongoing training**)

13. To instruct, examine, ordain, install, and welcome into common ministry elders and deacons on their election by the congregation and to inquire into their faithfulness in fulfilling their responsibilities (**Instruct new elders and deacons and work together for the good of the church**)

14. To delegate and to supervise the work of the board of deacons and the board of trustees and all other organizations and task forces within the congregation

15. To provide for the administration of the program of the church, including employment of nonordained staff, with concern for equal employment opportunity, fair employment practices, personnel policies, and the annual review of the adequacy of compensation for all staff (**Provide for and be concerned with the operation of the Personnel Committee and church staff**)

16. To **provide for the management of the property of the church, including determination of the appropriate use of church buildings and facilities**, and to obtain property and liability insurance coverage to protect the facilities, programs, and officers, including members of the session, staff, board of trustees, and deacons

17. To maintain regular and continuing relationship to the higher governing bodies of the church. **This includes: electing commissioners to presbytery and receiving their reports, nominating to presbytery elders who may be considered for election to synod or General Assembly, observing and carrying out the instructions of the higher governing bodies consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), welcoming representatives of the presbytery on the occasions of their visits, proposing to the presbytery and, through it, to the synod and the General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the whole church, sending annually to the stated clerk of the presbytery statistical and other information according to the requirements of the presbytery.**

18. To establish and maintain those ecumenical relationships necessary for the life and mission of the church in its locality (**Participate in and support ecumenical events, programs, and services.**)

19. To serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline

20. To keep an accurate roll of the membership of the church,

21. To provide for financial accountability through observance of appropriate accounting rules and regular financial audits.