

Middlesex Presbytery GUIDELINES FOR HOSTING MEETINGS

This document has been prepared for congregations hosting meetings of Middlesex Presbytery. This outlines the ideal, but Presbytery will do their best to accommodate any congregation that desires to host a meeting.

There is no payment to congregations who host meetings, but we are grateful for the gifts of space and set-up, and the time and expertise of those who assist in facilitating the meeting.

VALUES AND INCLUSIVENESS:

“God’s intention for all human relationships is that they be faithful, responsible, just, loving, health-giving, healing, and sustaining of community and self.” (Membership, Ministry and Human Sexuality,” 1988)

In Middlesex Presbytery, we value, believe and celebrate the diversity found in The United Church of Canada and its congregations, as well as inclusivity and self-respect. We live it out by meeting in spaces where any person can be fully self-expressed, without being made to feel uncomfortable, unwanted, or unsafe on account of age, cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental and physical ability, race/ethnicity, or socio-economic status. It is a place which guards each person’s self-respect and strongly encourages everyone to respect others.

ACCESSIBILITY:

Dinner, workshop, and meeting rooms and washrooms must be accessible to all. Accessibility means that there are options available (elevators, ramps, etc.) such that stairs and other physical structures do not present an obstacle to those who may be challenged with mobility issues. Accessibility also includes consideration for how to accommodate people that may have difficulty hearing or seeing.

TABLES:

For Registration:

At least 8 feet of table space and one chair are needed for registration which is handled by Presbytery. The more space the better.

For Minutes and Handouts:

At least 6 feet table of table space is needed for minutes and handouts.

For Dinner Tickets:

Table, tickets, and cash box are needed along with someone from the congregation to staff it.

All of the above tables are ideally placed just inside or outside the room that people come to first, or in the area where people enter the building. Preferably, the registration table should be close to the meeting space.

PRE-PRESBYTERY MEETINGS:

Sometimes small meetings are held before the Presbytery meeting and smaller rooms, if available, are needed. The Presbytery Secretary will let you know in advance if this is the case.

WORKSHOP: (usually 4:00 pm to 5:15 pm)

Seating and space for about 60.
Several microphones.
Audio/Video if available.
Specifics will be supplied by the workshop leaders.

DINNER: (usually 5:30 pm)

Seating is for approximately 70 as dinner reservations average around 60, and sometimes people, especially those with dietary concerns bring their own meal and join us.

Menu: The menu is entirely up to you, but meat, potatoes/rice, hot vegetable, salad, bread/rolls and dessert are the most popular. If necessary, you may be asked to provide a special dietary option.

Beverages: Coffee, tea and water. Sometimes juice is offered as well and sometimes there is regular and decaffeinated coffee. Please note that coffee and tea are generally available to anyone present, whether they've reserved a meal or not.

Service: Usually dinner is served buffet style with beverages being self-serve, but whatever works best in your situation is fine.

Price: \$15 (which needs to include HST if the meal is catered by someone in the catering business.)

Reservations: When the Secretary of Presbytery sends out the agenda, Presbyters are asked for reservations by noon on the Thursday prior. The Secretary will e-mail the host church with the numbers on Thursday evening or Friday morning. This timeline isn't written in stone, and can certainly be adjusted to earlier if necessary. The policy (as of April, 2011) is that if you reserve dinner, then you pay unless someone can be found to take your place. The Presbytery makes up a reservation list which is given to whoever is collecting the money. Sometimes people ask if there are any extra meals so they can have the meal of someone who had to cancel.

Catering: Can be arranged if your congregation is unable to prepare and serve the meal yourself. The Presbytery Secretary can provide you with the names of caterers if needed.

Tickets: When people pay, give them two tickets, one for dinner and one for dessert. You will need a table, one person (or possibly 2) to collect money, hand out tickets and check names off the reservation list. They should be there by 3:30 pm if there is a 4:00 pm workshop.

Brown Baggers: There are a few people who will bring their own dinner, so please have a bit of extra seating available. There are also some who like to join, but don't eat anything.

PRESBYTERY MEETING: (usually 6:45 or 7:00 pm)

Space is needed for 120 - 150 people.

One table and two preferably armless chairs are needed at the front for Chair and Secretary. A 6 foot length of table is good. One microphone is needed at the table. It should be near a plug for the Secretary's laptop, or have an extension cord available.

One microphone is needed at lectern or pulpit for those making reports.

One or two microphones are needed in the aisles for Presbyters.

Audio/video system is helpful, if available, along with someone to run it. (There is a video projector available from the Resource Centre if needed, but it needs to be booked in advance.)

For the Worship and Opening of the meeting, we'll need a Christ Candle, lighter, Bible, hymn books (unless hymns are projected) and an organist or pianist, depending on what instrument is available in your space.

TIME:

The Registrar may arrive as soon as 3:00 pm and the Chair and Secretary between 3:00 and 3:30 pm, later if there is no workshop. Please have the building open by that time.

Meetings usually finish between 9:00 and 10:00 pm. Someone needs to be there to lock up.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Contact the Secretary of Presbytery.

Revised February 7, 2013 and Approved February 26,
--