



Presbytery of Lake Michigan

Presbyterian Church [U.S.A.]

Suggestions for hosting a Stated Meeting

Thank you for agreeing to host – or thinking about – hosting a Stated Meeting for the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.

While there are many details that need attention, the goal is to make the process as simple and enjoyable for all involved as possible. This document outlines some of the key planning details that need to be addressed for things to go smoothly and offers some suggestions on how you may wish to approach the tasks. Please note, however, that specific details vary between the hosting sites because each physical church space and team of hosting volunteers are different. Feel free to adjust the plans as needed to fit your circumstances. . . and to contact the presbytery's office manager at office@lakemichiganpresbytery.org or (269) 381-6337 ext. 0 with any questions or concerns.

Space Needs for Stated Meeting

Please identify a space within your church that can seat between 125 and 150 people. There should be a sound system with several different microphones, including one for the Moderator to use, one for the Stated Clerk to use and two or three near aisles for commissioners to use. Ideally, the space has a projection system and screens on which meeting materials can be shown. There needs to be an eight-foot or ten-foot table with two chairs and access to a power outlet available at the front of the meeting space for use by the Stated Clerk and the Recording Clerk.

You will need to identify a space within your church where lunch may be served to the same number of people – either via a multiple buffet lines or with food served on individual tables.

You also are asked to identify a small meeting room or space where orientation for new elder commissioners can be held in the morning and small groups may gather through the day for conversations.

Sometimes, depending on the planned program, there may be a need for additional meeting rooms to support programs planned for that day. Either the Stated Clerk or the presbytery's office manager will communicate these needs as soon as possible in the planning process.

Registration and Information Tables

Final on-site registration generally opens at 8:30 a.m. on the meeting day. To accommodate the process, you are asked to provide three (3) eight-foot or ten-foot tables near the entrance doors that commissioners will use to enter your church.

Meeting participants will sign in at one of the tables and receive their name tags. A second table will be used to confirm lunch registrations, collect payment for meals and distribute lunch tickets. The third table will be used to distribute requested copies of printed packets and other materials.

Often, **groups from within the presbytery or that offer programs of interest to presbytery members will ask to set up an informational table** in the lobby area or some other designated space. **Please identify a space that might accommodate four (4) to six (6) tables.** The presbytery's office manager will communicate the exact needs in this area between three (3) and four (4) weeks before the Stated Meeting.

Technology Needs at the Stated Meeting

A variety of information now is projected on screens during each Stated Meeting, including details about items on the docket, lyrics to songs used during worship and informational slides known as "30-Second Announcements." To do this, **there needs to be a projection system in the meeting space.** *If your church does not have a projection system, the presbytery can arrange to bring appropriate equipment.*

The meeting space does need to have a sound system with several microphones. There should be microphones on lecterns for the moderator and vice moderator to use, at the table used by the Stated Clerk, and at several locations in the meeting space for meeting attendees to deliver comments and ask questions.

It is helpful if there are presentation screens available in the entry and registration areas and/or the lunch space so that the "30-Second Announcements" and other information may be shared.

It also is helpful if you share information about how presbytery meeting attendees may access and use your Wi-Fi system. If a password is needed to access the system, please provide that information to the presbytery's technology manager who will help communicate it to meeting attendees.

Please identify someone within your congregation that can be contacted by the presbytery's technology manager to address specific questions and needs related to the Stated Meeting.

These questions include:

- Whether your church has the equipment to livestream the Stated Meeting.
- Whether your church has the ability to record the audio for the entire Stated Meeting.
- Whether your church has a computer system to project a presentation onto screens in the meeting space. If so, what type of presentation software is used? Can the computer or software be used to play sound over the church's sound system?

Worship

Worship during presbytery meetings is planned by a group of volunteers who work with the Stated Meeting and Moderator. This group helps identify the individual who will deliver

the message, what music and liturgical elements will be used, who will preside over the Communion table, and where the offering may be directed. Someone within the group also drafts the bulletin and/or information for the projected slides; presbytery staff will produce the bulletins and prepare the projection slides.

The hosting church is asked to make sure the Communion table is set up, using grape juice and gluten-free host. (Please contact the presbytery office with questions about the elements.)
The hosting church also is asked to provide a couple of volunteers to serve as ushers, helping to collect the offering and, if needed, ruling elders to serve the Communion elements.

Those planning worship will contact the hosting church about what music and accompaniment may be needed during the Stated Meeting. In general, the worship committee tries to involve musicians from your church *IF* there are individuals available to do this. This may involve having your choir or accompanist perform. The worship committee may also invite musicians from other churches or organizations to support the worship experience. **Someone from the worship group or the presbytery staff will communicate specific needs to support worship during the Stated Meeting being held at your church.**

Refreshments (Morning snacks and lunch)

Generally, the host congregation provides an assortment of light breakfast foods (fruit and muffins), juices and coffee **for people to enjoy during the registration time.** These are usually available from when registration opens at 8:30 a.m. until after the mid-morning break ends about 11 a.m. Remember that many presbytery members must drive a distance to reach the Stated Meeting and welcome the refreshment.

The host congregation also coordinates providing lunch. You may opt to have volunteers prepare the meal, hire a caterer or do a little of both. The meal may be served buffet, plated or family style. The entrées can be hot or cold. Put together a plan that is easy for your volunteers to execute. The only requirement is that there is a vegan option and a gluten-free option available for friends with special dietary concerns.

Departing snacks are not required but are a welcome treat.

Between 125 and 150 people usually attend a Stated Meeting. Lunch reservations are collected as part of the meeting registration process. An initial count is provided to the host congregation between two and three weeks before the meeting; a final count is provided one week before the meeting.

As the host congregation, you will set the price for lunch. The cost of recent lunches have ranged between \$8 and \$10 per person. Make sure the price covers your expenses.

Registrants are being asked to pay for their lunch **AT THE MEETING** with either cash or a check payable to your church.

Date to be Done	Task
12 weeks before Stated Meeting	Plan menu and estimate costs.
10 weeks before Stated Meeting	Get menu and cost information to PLM office manager.
2 weeks before Stated Meeting	Receive initial reservation numbers and special dietary need info from the PLM office manager.
1 week before Stated Meeting	Receive final reservation numbers and special dietary need info from the PLM office manager.
Day of meeting	Provide 2 or 3 volunteers to help presbytery staff at the check-in table. (The volunteers will help collect lunch payments, distribute meal selection “tickets” and answer questions.) Also have a cash box available to provide change to those who pay cash for their lunch.

Childcare

Childcare may be requested by meeting attendees for any children ages 6 and younger. But the exact number and ages of the children – if any – is not known until the advance registration process ends about two weeks before the Stated Meeting.

So, the first question that needs to be answered is whether your church has a safe, designated space in which to provide the childcare. ***If not, please communicate this to presbytery staff as the planning begins.***

If you opt to provide childcare, you need to follow established safety policies. This includes having at least two adult providers who have passed background checks. The presbytery will complete the background checks, if needed, if you get the appropriate release and information forms from those individuals who will provide the care.

The childcare providers may be volunteer or paid. If the childcare providers are to be paid, the presbytery will cover the costs if the hosting church sets the hourly or event rate AND communicates that to the presbytery at least two weeks before the Stated Meeting. The hosting church also must provide basic information about the childcare providers – including their full name, mailing address and phone number. Presbytery staff will use the provided information to prepare checks to pay the childcare providers so those checks can be given to the childcare providers on the day of the Stated Meeting.

Parking and Directional Signage

This event gives Presbytery members a chance to visit your church and see what makes your congregation unique. But remember that many of the Stated Meeting participants will not have visited your church before. So it’s important to help them find where things are located.

Make sure there is enough places for everyone to park. While a few people may carpool, most will drive their own vehicles. Don't have a big parking lot? Consider asking another nearby church or a business if you might use their parking areas for the day. Need to send drivers to an overflow lot that is a bit remote? Find a volunteer with a van who might be willing to shuttle people to and from their vehicles. Not sure if people will know where to park? Ask the presbytery office manager to bring the big placard signs that indicate where parking is available.

Also plan to hang signs within the church building to indicate where different activities and meeting spaces will be located that day. These signs should point the way to:

- the registration tables,
- the restrooms,
- refreshments,
- the sanctuary or other space where the meeting will occur,
- the fellowship hall or other location where lunch will be served,
- the church office,
- informational displays, and
- a small meeting room where orientation for new elder commissioners can be held in the morning and small groups may gather through the day for conversations.

The signs don't have to be fancy but using a similar design (font, colors, paper) helps visitors more easily identify the information.

Date to be Done	Task
8 weeks before Stated Meeting	Walk through your space to identify which areas are best suited for what activities during the Stated Meeting. Make a list of what you plan to place where.
6 weeks before Stated Meeting	Touch base with the PLM office manager to confirm how many display tables are needed and whether there are any special space or technology needs for this meeting.
2 weeks before Stated Meeting	Prepare any needed directional signs. Let the PLM office manager know if any assistance is needed
Day before/ day of Stated Meeting	Put directional signs in place.

Volunteers

Meeting day activities go most smoothly when you have a strong group of volunteers willing to help with different tasks. Following is a list of how volunteers help the day go smoothly and how many people are needed:

- Parking – Two (2) or three (3) people – plus signage – to guide people towards appropriate parking areas and direct commissioners into the church.
- Registration – Three (3) or four (4) people. Some will guide commissioners through signing the attendance rolls, getting their name tags and collecting any printed materials that may be distributed, and some will help with final details for lunch registrations like

collecting payments and distributing lunch “tickets”. The office manager and bookkeeper will work with this team.

- Ushers – Three (3) or four (4) people to greet commissioners heading into the meeting space and distribute things like worship bulletins. Four (4) to six (6) volunteers also may be needed to help with Communion and collect the offering. These may be the same, or different, individuals.
- Counter – At least (1) volunteer is needed to work with the presbytery’s bookkeeper in counting the offering.
- Technology – At least (1) volunteer is needed to work with the presbytery’s technology manager to make certain that the sound and video systems are used to support the meeting activities.
- Musicians – Members of the presbytery’s worship group will connect directly with someone from your church weeks before the meeting to identify what volunteer musicians may be involved with the meeting activities and how.
- Childcare – At least two adult volunteers or contracted individuals who have submitted to background checks before the Stated Meeting.

Also, it is tradition for the pastor of the hosting congregation to make a short introductory statement (less than 5 minutes) and share some information as the Stated Meeting is opened. (If the congregation does not have a pastor at this moment, the Session Clerk or other designated lay leader should make the statement.) Share interesting facts about the congregation and its history, details about the facility, etc. Also make sure to announce where the restrooms are located, where lunch will be served and where the hospitality room will be located throughout the day.