



CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

Constitution and Canons of the Progressive Christian Alliance (PCA)

PREAMBLE

These Constitution and Canons are intended to:

1. Preserve and secure the principles upon which the Progressive Christian Alliance was founded.
2. Preserve the liberties of each affiliated congregation and ministry.
3. Ensure freedom of action and independence from any other religious body or other organization.
4. Provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and of governing The Progressive Christian Alliance.

I. Name

The name of this organization is The Progressive Christian Alliance

II. Purpose

The purposes of The Progressive Christian Alliance are:

1. To worship and serve God.
2. To minister to the needs of those to whom we come into contact to the best of our abilities.
3. To do any and all things related to and in connection with the carrying out of the object and purpose herein above set forth.

III. Statement of Faith

We believe in God, whose love is the source of all life and the desire of our lives whose love was given a human face in Jesus of Nazareth whose love was crucified by the evil that waits to enslave us all and whose love, defeating even death, is our glorious promise of freedom.

Therefore, though we are sometimes fearful and full of doubt, we trust in that love: and in the name of Jesus Christ, we commit ourselves, in the service of others, to seek justice and to live in peace, to care for the earth and to share the commonwealth of God's goodness, to live in the freedom of forgiveness and in the power of the Spirit of love, and in the company of all the faithful past, present, and yet to come, so to be the Church, for the glory of God. Amen.



IV. Core Principles

The Progressive Christian Alliance maintains a focus on Social Justice. We believe that the gospel of Christ calls us to minister to the last, the lost, the least, and the left-out of society.

We respect theological diversity. Faith is not about concrete answers, religious absolutes, creeds, or dogma. Faith is about the search for understanding, the raising of important questions, the open honesty of having doubt, and the realization that no one has it all completely right nor does any human hold all the answers. We seek to follow the advice found in 1st Thessalonians 5:21, which is to “seek truth out in all things and hold firmly onto that which is good.” Religious absolutes of dogma, legalism, and strict doctrine become stumbling blocks and “litmus tests” for who is “in” and who is “out” of the circle of God’s grace. These false tests that Jesus never required get in the way of truly following Jesus and his teachings.

We affirm the dignity of all of God’s children and invite them to participate fully in the life of the church.

V. Government

The government of The Progressive Christian Alliance is vested in its members. We believe in the autonomy of the local church and of our affiliated ministries. The Progressive Christian Alliance shall manage its own affairs and shall not be subject to any other religious body or organization. We recognize the needs for mutual counsel and cooperation, therefore each individual congregation and affiliated ministry is encouraged to enter into cooperative agreements where they feel led.

VI. Nonprofit Status and Liquidation

Updated 2016 Version: In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the Progressive Christian Alliance, all of its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be paid over and transferred at the direction of the Leadership Council to PCA 501c3 congregations, 501c3 affiliated ministries or any 501c3 agencies.

VII. Amendment

This Constitution and Canons may be amended provided the proposed amendment has been presented to all members at least 30 days prior to implementation of proposed amendment allowing all members the opportunity for discussion. No less than three electronic invitations for comment shall be presented during that time. At the end of that period; a majority vote of all those responding shall carry.



CANONS

The Progressive Christian Alliance believes in autonomous churches and an egalitarian approach to its operation. From its outset, the PCA was designed to be an umbrella organization with both: its own autonomous churches, clergy, and chaplains; allied affiliated member churches, laity and clergy. A Leadership Council, elected by the members, runs the PCA with offices having a three-year term.

I. **Progressive Christian Alliance Membership**

A. **Qualification**

1. **Individual Membership**

Individuals who are not clergy but wish to become members of the Progressive Christian Alliance, and are not members of a PCA Church, may do so by submitting a Membership Covenant, expressing their support of the Alliance's mission and core values.

2. **Congregational Membership**

Congregational membership in Progressive Christian Alliance shall consist of autonomous congregations who have expressed agreement with our Core Principles and wish to enter an affiliation with the Progressive Christian Alliance. A signed copy of the Congregational Promise shall be submitted with the appropriate fees for membership in order to be recognized as a PCA congregation, entitling all members to run for offices, to vote for officers and propose and approve changes to our constitution and canons. Member congregations will remain autonomous congregations, but under the PCA umbrella.

Congregations seeking affiliation and membership in the Progressive Christian Alliance will submit the Congregational Covenant with an overview of their ministry. The Leadership Council will approve these applications by a majority vote.

3. **Dual Affiliation for Clergy**

Clergy affiliation with the Progressive Christian Alliance shall consist of ministers who are in express agreement with our Constitution and Canons and request into affiliation with the Progressive Christian Alliance; these ministers will provide a criminal and child abuse records check, current documentation of credentialing from another faith organization, and sign and return the Clergy Covenant. Those who are in a denomination that doesn't allow for dual affiliation should go through the regular PCA ordination process if they are willing to give up their prior affiliation.



4. Non-Parish Ministry Affiliation

Clergy and laity who desire formal affiliation and membership in the Progressive Christian Alliance will submit the appropriate Covenant with an overview of their ministry to the Leadership Council. If, by majority vote, the affiliation is not affirmed, further steps for the candidate will be recommended.

B. Ordaining New Ministers

When an individual expresses a sense of Divine calling to ministry they shall submit a formal declaration of interest to the Leadership Council who will assign a mentor to assist in exploration of their call. When the mentor is satisfied that the candidate is prepared for ministry, the mentor will send the candidate's formal application to the Leadership Council with the mentor's recommendation. Upon submission, the Leadership Council will enter a period of discernment and may, by a majority vote, affirm ordination. If ordination is not affirmed, further steps for the candidate will be recommended. Wherever possible, this ordination shall be observed in the symbolic laying on of hands, in accordance with the long-standing traditions of the church.

C. Membership responsibilities

- 1.** Members in good standing have the right to a voice and vote in all PCA policy matters and shall have the rights and privileges to full participation in the life and work of the Alliance.
- 2.** It is the duty of Alliance members to uphold the Articles of Faith and Constitution and Canons of the Progressive Christian Alliance.
- 3.** All Alliance members pledge to maintain and protect the principles of respect for diversity and radical hospitality as stated in our Core Principles.

D. Termination:

- 1.** Congregational membership in the Progressive Christian Alliance shall be terminated at will when a member requests a termination of membership to the leadership council. All assets of the member congregation or ministry remain their own, regardless of membership status.



2. Membership in Progressive Christian Alliance shall be terminated when a member is removed by a majority vote of the Leadership Council due to reasons and circumstances provided in the Disciplinary Policy. The Leadership Council will counsel the member for reconciliation prior to an action of termination of membership.

II. Disciplinary Procedures

- A. Should any unhappy difference arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17.
- B. Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the Leadership Council shall endeavor to resolve the conflict; and if this effort fails shall be empowered to act in the best interest of the Progressive Christian Alliance.
- C. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the Alliance may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the Progressive Christian Alliance.
- D. Any whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by majority vote of the Leadership Council, upon evidence of their repentance and reformation.

III. Leadership Council Officers

A. Leadership Council (LC) Members and Responsibilities

1. The Leadership Council Members shall consist of a Chair, Co-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Member at Large elected by the Progressive Christian Alliance membership.

They are responsible to:

- a. Make a serious commitment to participate actively in council work, fulfilling tasks assigned in a timely manner.
- b. Regularly attend council meetings and important related meetings via electronic means.
- c. Can miss no more than three consecutive meetings. At the point of missing three meetings, it is the responsibility of the Council Member to step aside or to submit a plan of action to the



Leadership Council to maintain their position or the position will be considered vacant.

- d. Will set annual goals. The chair will direct the Leadership Council to assess specific annual goals and report to membership prior to the PCA Convocation or annually if a Convocation is not held for that year.
- e. Will oversee the direction, creation and administration of the PCA's online presence.
- f. Will oversee the direction, creation and administration of processes and materials for membership, affiliation, and ordination.
- g. Is committed to upholding the Constitution and Canons of the Progressive Christian Alliance.

B. Leadership Council Positions and Descriptions of Responsibilities

1. Leadership Council Chair Responsibilities

- 1) Sets agendas for the Leadership Council meetings with input from the membership at large and fellow LC members.
- 2) Chairs meetings of the Council.
- 3) Encourages Council's role in strategic planning.
- 4) Responsible for the oversight of the financial aspects of the Progressive Christian Alliance along with the Co-Chair.
- 5) Serves ex officio as a member of committees and attends their meetings when invited.
- 6) Helps guide and mediate Council actions with respect to organizational priorities and governance concerns.
- 7) Ensures regular communication of progress with the membership at large.
- 8) Performs other responsibilities assigned by the Council.
- 9) Serves a three (3) year term and may not self-succeed into same position. Cannot concurrently chair another committee within the Progressive Christian Alliance. In the absence of the Secretary it is the Chair's responsibility to find an ad-hoc secretary from among the members of the Leadership Council.

2. Leadership Council Co-Chair Responsibilities

- 1) Performs the Chair's responsibilities when the Chair cannot be available (see Chair Job Description)
- 2) Reports to and works closely with the Chair and other LC members



- 3) Performs other responsibilities assigned by the Council.
- 4) Responsible for the oversight of the financial aspects of the Progressive Christian Alliance along with the Chair.
- 5) Oversees endorsement for specialized ministry.
- 6) Serves a three (3) year term and may not self-succeed into the same position.

3. Leadership Council Secretary Responsibilities

- 1) Maintains records of the council and ensures effective management of the organization's records.
- 2) Creates and manages minutes of council meetings.
- 3) Ensures minutes are distributed to members of the Progressive Christian Alliance and the Leadership Council within five (5) business days of the Leadership Council Meeting or Convocation Meeting.
- 4) Is able to research and obtain legal documents (articles, by-laws, IRS letters, etc.) to note applicability during meetings.
- 5) Serves a three (3) year term and may not self-succeed into same position. Cannot concurrently chair another committee. In the event the Secretary is unable to fulfill their duties for a period of time, they will notify the Chair as soon as possible so a replacement can be identified.

4. Leadership Council Treasurer Responsibilities

- 1) Manages finances of the organization.
- 2) Administrate fiscal matters of the organization
- 3) Provide annual budget to the council for members' approval.
- 4) Ensures development and council review of financial policies and procedures.
- 5) Provides monthly financial statements to council members and, upon approval by council members, to PCA membership.
- 6) Maintain records of donations by membership both individual and congregational and provides end of year tax statements to all who have donated.
- 7) Prepare and file all IRS tax forms related to 501(c)3 status, including form 990 and/or other documents required by the IRS.
- 8) Is able to use software to track all income, expenses, etc.
- 9) Serves a three (3) year term and may not self-succeed into same position. Cannot concurrently chair another committee.



5. Leadership Council Member-At-Large

- 1) Acts as a liaison between the council and the membership of PCA as a whole.
- 2) Stays in regular connection and communication with the membership of PCA.
- 3) Fills in for other leadership council roles in the case of vacancies.
- 4) Serves a three year term and may not self-succeed into same position. Cannot concurrently chair another committee.

IV. Licensing

Churches may independently discern, license and call a pastor or deacon for their congregation. If the clergy person desires to be ordained through the PCA they must apply. (See ordination procedures.)