

Open Meeting Policy Presbytery of Carlisle

1. The work of the church is strengthened when it is done in a spirit of openness and trust. Church members have a right to know about the work done and the decisions made by representative groups within the church. Therefore, open meetings should be the norm for all such groups.
2. It is the policy of this presbytery and of continuing elected bodies related to it that plenary meetings shall be open to all interested persons. In certain circumstances, meetings of these entities may be closed. These requirements apply:
 - a. Closed meetings may be authorized only by a majority vote of the members present and voting. During the conduct of an open meeting, a motion to go into closed session is a question of privilege and, therefore, following any debate or amendment, requires a majority vote for adoption.
 - b. The reason for closing must be announced before closure and also must be recorded in the minutes. The notice of a special meeting shall state the purpose of the meeting and shall state whether it is intended to be a closed meeting.
 - c. Subjects dealt with in closed session must be limited to matters of property negotiations, personnel, civil and criminal litigation, security, or ecclesiastical discipline.
 - d. The decisions reached in a closed meeting shall be recorded in the minutes and shall be made public with due consideration for confidentiality as soon as appropriate following the end of the closed meeting. Anyone permitted to be present at a closed meeting is honor-bound not to divulge anything that occurred during the closed meeting, other than the decisions as recorded in the minutes.
3. In open meetings, visitors and representatives of both the church and the public are welcome. In closed meetings, only voting members and other persons invited by the group to serve it are to be present.
4. Groups such as committees or task forces that are elected or appointed for a limited period of time to undertake a specific task and do not themselves establish policy shall have open meetings. They may close their meetings when the confidentiality of subject matter requires it or circumstances are impeding the work of the group. Since staff groups have neither authority nor responsibility for establishing policy, their meetings are not subject to these provisions.

Adopted 1/23/1996