



FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS

Portland Christian Center

What is the age and history of Portland Christian Center?

Portland Christian Center has an extraordinary and rich history. It was established in 1924 as a result of a spiritual awakening that swept the city of Portland.

It was during this time that a handful of families, who had experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their lives, joined together to form a new congregation. This new church first gathered in the home of Papa and Mama Vetch, owners of a well-known dairy in Northeast Portland.

In a short time, a building was purchased, and the church was named The Portland Gospel Tabernacle. Hundreds of people joined this exciting new church. It was in 1928 that the church leaders felt led to affiliate with the worldwide ministry of the Assemblies of God. The church would become a leader in Sunday attendance and world missions giving.

During the 1930s, the growing congregation found a new home when it purchased a church building on the corner of S.E. 12th & S.E. Taylor. The church continued to experience growth, attracting several families that are still active today.

In the late 1940s, under the leadership of Pastor N.D. Davidson, new property was purchased at S.E. 20th and Madison, and a modern new sanctuary was constructed to accommodate the increasing attendance. In 1947, with the new facilities completed, the church name was changed to Portland's First Assembly of God.

For nearly 30 years, the 20th & Madison location would serve as the home of the church. In the early 1970s, the present site on Dosch Road was purchased. On Sunday, October 15, 1978, under Pastor Jim Swanson, the first services were conducted in the newly constructed facilities.

What is Portland Christian Center's denominational affiliation?

Portland Christian Center is affiliated with the Assemblies of God. The Assemblies of God was founded in 1914 in Hot Springs, Arkansas with 300 people at the founding convention. Today there are 13,017 churches in the U.S. with over 3 million members and adherents. There are more than 69 million Assemblies of God members worldwide, making the Assemblies of God the world's largest Pentecostal denomination. The U.S. Assemblies of God national office is located in Springfield, Missouri.

Is Portland Christian Center denominationally or locally governed?

Portland Christian Center operates under a congregational form of government. That means the membership of the church has ultimate authority over the affairs of the church. The membership selects its Lead Pastor, along with the Board of Deacons, who are ratified by the membership, to govern the affairs of the church on behalf of the membership.

How is Portland Christian Center governed?

The church operates according to its constitution and bylaws, which is available to any member or attendee upon request. By stipulation of that document, a board of eight deacons acts in an advisory capacity to the Lead Pastor, who serves as chairman of the board, in all matters pertaining to the church in its ministry and mission. They provide counsel and mutual assistance in the administration of the business and work of the church. They examine applicants for membership, administrate church discipline, and have ultimate oversight of the finances of the church. In the event the church is temporarily without a pastor, the deacons are empowered to provide for their own chairman from their membership to transact business for the church and to provide for a search for the new pastor. The Board of Deacons meets monthly to pray over the church, receive staff reports, give input on the direction of the church, and vote on key action items, such as the missions report, the finance report, and various other matters requiring board approval.

How does Portland Christian Center select members of the deacon board?

Deacons are chosen from the membership of the church. They are nominated by a nominating committee consisting of the pastor, the retiring board members, and four laypersons selected by the board to represent the various departments and demographics of the church. Deacon candidates may be submitted to the nominating committee by any member of the church. Those nominated to serve as deacons must be ratified by a two-thirds majority vote of the membership present at the annual business meeting for a term of three years each. Deacons cannot serve for more than two consecutive three-year terms. Two deacons are ratified each year.

How are the board officers selected?

The board officers, the Secretary, and the Treasurer, are selected by the existing board members and are ratified by a two-thirds majority vote by the church membership at the annual business meeting.

How are major decisions made at Portland Christian Center?

Major decisions, such as the purchasing, selling, leasing, and mortgaging of real property must be authorized by a vote of at least two-thirds majority of the votes cast in a regular or special business meeting of the church. Other matters, deemed of corporate significance by the pastor and the board of deacons, may be brought to the entire membership from time to time for advice and consent.

How does the leadership of Portland Christian Center create the operating budget each year, and what is the process for approval of the budget?

The following points describe Portland Christian Center's budgeting process:

- Senior Finance Team approves all budgets, and submits them to the Board Finance Committee.
- The Finance Committee approves the summary budget, then submits it to the Board of Deacons for final approval in January of the new calendar year.
- Budget reports showing actual vs. budget in detail are prepared monthly for department heads.
- Budget reports showing actual vs. budget, in summary, are prepared monthly for the Finance Committee and Board of Deacons, which formally approves these reports.
- The church staff, from the Lead Pastor to all the Departmental Pastors and Directors, operates within the board approved balanced budget.

Does Portland Christian Center audit its finances?

Portland Christian Center has strong internal financial controls, oversight, and reporting. Our goal is to have a formal Financial Review (abbreviated audit) every 2-3 years and a full audit every 5-6 years. An independent certified, public accounting firm, is engaged to perform these functions. Due to the substantial expense for these services, flexibility in scheduling is sometimes required. Results of the review or full audit are presented to Senior leadership, the Finance Committee and the Board of Deacons. The results are also shared at the following annual business meeting.

When is the business meeting held for the Portland Christian Center's membership?

Portland Christian Center holds its annual business meeting during the first quarter of each year. At the meeting, church members are given a written report, the vision of the church is reviewed, progress toward the church's mission and vision is analyzed, a financial analysis for the previous year is presented, new deacons are ratified, and various other business that requires the input and approval of the members is transacted. The meeting follows Robert's Rules of Order.

Who is in charge of the Portland Christian Center's finances?

The Business Office presents financial reports to the Senior Finance Team (Lead Pastor, Executive Pastor, Business Administrator, and any other Senior Leadership Team staff) weekly. The Board Finance Committee reviews the month-end financials prior to the monthly board meeting. The full board then receives the monthly report for review and approval.

What is Portland Christian Center's financial control for spending?

The Senior Leadership Team plus two members of the business office form the Senior Finance Team. They review weekly financial data: income, expenses, and expenditure requests to ensure that income and expenses are staying within the guideline of the board approved church budget. Each month, both the Finance Committee of the Board as well as the Board of Deacons reviews the financial data to ensure that income and expenses are within the guideline of the budget. Any beyond budget needs that arise are submitted to the board for approval.

Expenditure controls:

- Expenditure requests in excess of \$250 (in budget or not) are submitted to Senior Finance Team prior to making a purchase commitment. This ensures good cash flow management.
- Check requests/invoices require approval by the next higher level of authority prior to entry to accounts payable system.
- Weekly accounts payable listing is submitted to and approved by Senior Finance Team prior to issuance of checks.
- All checks require dual signature; those with check signing authority are board approved.

How do we handle offerings?

- When offerings are received, at least two authorized individuals and a security person oversee the process of depositing the cash and checks into an onsite safe in a secured area.
- Administratively, a team of at least three people (two staff and one volunteer) perform the accounting and handling of the offerings in a secured area.
- The bank deposit receipts for cash and checks are always verified to the original count sheets to insure accountability.

Does Portland Christian Center have debt?

In January of 2017, Portland Christian Center celebrated becoming debt-free. In our intentional journey of eliminating corporate debt, the leadership of the church made a commitment to operating debt-free in all matters. With the church's freed up financial capacity, the following adjustments were made:

1. Salaries were significantly below market and increases were given to our staff.
2. Departmental ministry budgets were increased,
3. Funds were allocated to local and global outreach, and
4. By the end of 2017, a reserve account for emergency and seasonal financial swings was established, and maintained to this day.

To whom is the Lead Pastor accountable?

The Lead Pastor is accountable to his ordaining body, the Assemblies of God, and to the Board of Deacons of Portland Christian Center.

How does Portland Christian Center select missionaries for support, and how does it manage the mission's budget?

Portland Christian Center's prayer is to be the greatest conduit for the great commission the world has ever known. Not because we are so great, but because God is so great and we want to be used by Him to change the world. As a church, we focus on remaining blessable by God and transparent in our missions giving.

Aside from helping to fund missionaries, one of Portland Christian Center's key roles as the steward of Kingdom Builder funds is to help provide financial stability for missionaries. By helping to absorb the financial risk for missionaries through monthly sponsorship, missionaries can focus more on other ministry concerns. Additionally, Portland Christian Center provides a platform for missionaries to disseminate their message and develop support for their ministry, and to show the church family what God is doing and how He is working around the world. The feedback we receive from our missionaries tells us Portland Christian Center is exemplary in our practices and our giving.

The Role of the Missions Advisory Committee(MAC):

The Missions Advisory Committee (MAC) serves as an advisory committee to the Lead Pastor and the Board of Deacons and carries out the administration of Portland Christian Center's Missions Program. All MAC members are active members in good standing of Portland Christian Center as outlined in the Corporate Constitution By-Laws. MAC activities and practices are guided by our Missions Policy Manual. The MAC meets once a month to continually evaluate and promote our missions program, review updates on active missionaries, as well as, pray for, encourage, and prepare recommendations for missionaries and projects according to our seven core values and the guidelines in the policy manual. Minutes are taken at every meeting and submitted to the Board of Deacons every month.

The MAC, as a volunteer committee, makes great effort to maintain close communication with each of our sponsored missionaries and to partner with them to help tell their stories and provide consistent support while on the field. After an initial interview and discussion of missionaries and projects interested in support, the MAC presents recommendations for expenditure of funds to the Board of Deacons. Typically, the church makes monthly faith commitments for up to a 4-year period time (the timeframe an international missionary is on the field before returning to the USA). Once recommendations for faith commitments are approved or adjusted by the Church Board, the MAC informs the missionary or project leader of the church's partnership, and they are added to our missionary roster.

Before supporting new initiatives, donations received through Kingdom Builders are prioritized to fulfill the church's monthly faith commitments to our missionaries and projects. Donations designated to Kingdom Builders and designated to a specific missionary or project help the church to meet our monthly faith commitments and provide stability for the missionary while on the field. Gifts directed to a specific missionary that is more than the monthly commitment established by the church board are sent within the quarter unless there are extenuating circumstances or requests by the missionary or project. Donations made through Portland Christian Center are confidential unless the donor has asked for the missionary or project to be notified.

We invite you to stay up-to-date with our sponsored missionaries and projects through our mission's portal at pcctoday.com/missions. All members of the congregation may submit recommendations for support for missionaries and projects to the Missions Advisory Committee (MAC) at any time by contacting the Missions Department at the church office or by email at global@pcctoday.com.

Does Portland Christian Center pay the expenses for Petros Network?

When Ray and Linda Noah were invited to become the Lead Pastors of Portland Christian Center, they brought with them the outreach ministry of Petros Network. It was something as a church and a board we fully embraced as part of the mission of our great church — church planting and compassion and care. As part of the fundraising efforts, and unlike any other outreach effort of Portland Christian Center, Petros Network pays a fee to Portland Christian Center for work done by employees as well as for business expenses, such as supplies, or equipment use.

The financial investment to form Petros Network as a 501(c)(3) was funded outside of Portland Christian Center by generous donors from across North America. Likewise, Petros Network is governed by an independent board and its own non-profit constitution and bylaws.

While members and attenders of Portland Christian Center may contribute missions giving to Petros Network through the church as they would any other missional partner, like Convoy of Hope or Royal Family Kids, the operating expenses of Petros Network are funded independently of Portland Christian Center.

Petros Network is part of Portland Christian Center's missional story and is acknowledged by the Assemblies of God and given world missions credit for activity concerning Petros Network. This information is reported to the Oregon Ministry Network and the Assemblies of God World Missions department and is demonstrated on annual reports given to the General Assembly.



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