



**First Presbyterian Church**  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

**Archives Policy**

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**Policy Number**

History 5.1

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**Responsible Committee**

History Committee in concert with the Clerk of Session

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**History**

Issued: 2007

Revised: 2011 – approved by History Committee 12/8/2011

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**Policy Statement**

This policy defines:

- the scope of the archives collection,
- the responsibilities of the History Committee,
- the requirements for retention of permanent records of the church,

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**I. Purpose**

There have been recent changes in the governance of PCUSA and FPCSF which pertain to the records of the church. This policy is being revised to be in compliance with these requirements.

The New Form of Government (July 10, 2011) adopted by PCUSA includes the following:

G-3.0107 Records

“Each council shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings. Minutes and all other official records of councils are the property in perpetuity of said councils or their legal successors. When a council ceases to exist, its records shall become the property of the next higher council within whose bounds the lower council was prior to its cessation. The clerk of each council shall make recommendation to that body for the permanent safekeeping of the body’s records with the Presbyterian Historical Society or in a temperature and humidity controlled environment of a seminary of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”

In July, 2011 the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Santa Fe adopted the Book of Order 2009-2011 as its form of government. This Book of Order states:

G-10.0301 Records

“Minutes and all other official records of church sessions, presbyteries, synods, and General Assemblies are the property in perpetuity of said governing bodies or their legal successors.

When congregations, synods, or presbyteries are dissolved, their records are held for them by the next higher governing body within whose bounds they were before dissolution. All minutes and other official records of existing and dissolved sessions minutes and other official records of existing and dissolved presbyteries and synods that are no longer required for frequent reference, are to be deposited for preserving and servicing with the Department of History or in a temperature and humidity controlled environment of a seminary of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is the responsibility of the clerk of each governing body to make recommendation to the governing body for the permanent safekeeping of the governing body's records. All governing bodies are strongly encouraged to microfilm their official records."

## **II. Scope of the Archives Collection**

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The archives of First Presbyterian Church, Santa Fe, New Mexico (FPCSF), serves as the repository for records created by and pertaining to the FPCSF. The archives collection includes Permanent Records, Additional Materials and the FPCSF Arts and Artifacts Database.

## **III. Definitions**

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- A. **Permanent Records** of the church as defined by the governing bodies of PCUSA and FPCSF include:
- Minutes of the session, the congregation, the deacons, the board of trustees, and other official organizations (such as the women's association)
  - Registers (membership, baptism, marriage, etc)
  - Property Records
  - Charters and Articles of Incorporation
- B. **Additional Materials** such as committee minutes, photographs, sound and video recordings and minister's papers that relate to church business are part of the collection. Items included in the archives are limited to those that in some way illustrate or contribute to the understanding of the history of FPCSF. Decisions about items to be collected and stored are to be made by the History Committee in consultation with the Clerk of Session.
- C. **The FPCSF Art and Artifacts Database** records information about the following types of objects:
- Furniture and art such as paintings, sculptures, and other objects which are displayed primarily for decorative purposes;
  - Furniture and art of historical significance;
  - Other objects of historical significance which illustrate the history of FPCSF

The Arts and Artifacts Database does not include records for items made by the Liturgical Arts Committee.

- D. **Furniture of historical significance** means furniture used in worship prior to the most recent building renovations. It also includes more contemporary furniture handcrafted specifically for

church use, such as the carved furniture in the pastor's office and the welcoming table in the lobby. It does not include general use furniture.

## **IV. Implementation**

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### **A. History Committee**

FPCSF has established a History Committee to maintain the Archives Collection and oversee its use. The responsibilities of the History Committee include:

- To work with the Clerk of Session to maintain the permanent records of the church in accordance with the governance requirements of PCUSA and FPCSF.
- To collect materials that illustrate or contribute to the understanding of the history of FPCSF
- To maintain records about art and artifacts of FPCSF
- To be jointly responsible with the Clerk of Session for oversight of the Archives Room.
- To interpret the history of the church for the congregation

The Administration Committee in concert with the Clerk of Session shall nominate a Chairperson for the History Committee and recommend this nomination to Session for appointment.

### **B. Retention of Permanent Records**

The governance of the church charges the Clerk of Session with responsibility for protection of FPCSF archival documents and requires that Permanent Records be submitted to the Presbyterian Historical Society. Permanent Records are to be handled as follows:

- Originals are to be retained by the Clerk of Session until they are submitted to the Presbyterian Historical Society. Each year the History Committee will review the permanent records that have not yet been submitted to determine whether a new submission should be made. If a new submission is appropriate, budget will be requested and the submission scheduled for the following year.
- When a submission is made, originals are to be copied on archival paper. These copies are to be retained in the FPCSF archives.
- Originals are to be sent to the Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS) in Philadelphia to be microfilmed or copied by another method the PHS may adopt in the future.
- Originals are to be retained at the Presbyterian Historical Society after microfilming.
- Copies of the microfilms are to be placed in the FPCSF Archives, the Menaul Historical Library, and the New Mexico State Archives if the budget allows.

Requests to the Presbyterian Historical Society for the return of any of this church's original records, which are stored in Philadelphia, shall be made in writing to the Clerk of Session. The Clerk of Session after consultation with the History Committee may request a return of original documents.

**C. Use of the Archives Room**

An archives room has been set aside to house the archives collection. This room is not available for general committee meetings. It is the responsibility of FPCSF to preserve and secure the contents of its archives. Preservation shall include proper housing, temperature and humidity control, storage and periodic microfilming of the records. The History Committee will make rules for and supervise the use of the archives. The current rules are attached to this policy.

# **ATTACHMENT**

## **Rules for Use of the Archives Room**

### **Access:**

- A History Committee member must be present in the archives when others are using the archives collection.
- An appointment for use of the archives can be made with a member of the history committee. Such appointment is based on the availability of the committee member.
- In emergency cases the church administration or the Clerk of Session can access the archival material. However it is recommended the church administration contact a member of the history committee for assistance.
- The Archives Room is not available for general committee meetings.

### **In the Archives Room:**

- All those researching in the Archives will sign the 'Research Log' maintained in the Archives.
- All volunteers in the Archives will sign the 'Volunteer Work Log.'
- Those using the archival collection should wash their hands frequently.
- Cotton gloves shall be worn when working with photographs.
- Pencils shall be used when working with documents.
- When files are removed from document boxes they are to be re-filed only by the history committee member supervising the research.

### **Copying of Materials:**

- If copies of particular documents are desired, this will be accomplished under the supervision of a member of the History Committee.
- When an access copy is available, it is recommended that copies be made of the access copy rather than the original document.
- There is no charge for copies.

Adopted by the History Committee: December 8, 2011