

Progressive Religious Coalition of Augusta

Bylaws

(approved 06/12/2019)

Preamble

Vision

The Progressive Religious Coalition (PRC) acts as a catalyst to frame social justice issues in a moral/spiritual context and to realize progressive values in our communities.

Mission

The PRC will act selectively to encourage measures that promote flourishing of individuals and the communities in which they live and will act to challenge injustice whether it arises from government actions, economic and business practices, in the education system, or in religious institutions.

Article One: Name

1.1 The name of the fellowship is the Progressive Religious Coalition of Augusta (PRC).

Article Two: Membership

2.1 PRC welcomes new members. Candidates may be admitted for membership at any general meeting of the PRC, at which a quorum of the active members must be present, by a 2/3rds affirmative vote. Procedures for admission of new members are included in the PRC Policies and Procedures document.

2.2 There are two classes of membership in the PRC:

- a. Active members: Active members are those members who have attended at least one meeting in the past 12-months.
- b. Associate members: Associate Members are those members who have either moved out of the area but wish to remain affiliated with the PRC; and/or those members who are unable to attend regularly for any reason. Except for those automatically made associate members, a quorum of the PRC members must vote to make a member an associate member. These members are exempt from attending meetings and will have no voting authority at any PRC meetings. Associate members are not counted for the purpose of a quorum.

2.3 Members not attending any PRC meetings for the previous 12 months shall automatically have their membership moved to associate member status and would then need apply to the Membership Secretary for reinstatement as an active member.

Article Three: Officers

3.1 The officers of the PRC are President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Membership Secretary, and Treasurer.

3.2 These five officers are elected for two-year terms by a simple majority of the members present at the annual meeting, at which a quorum must be present. These five officers constitute the Steering Committee.

3.3 Except for the Treasurer, officers may be re-elected to the same office for no more than one successive two-year term.

3.4 Three officers constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Steering Committee.

3.5 Steering Committee meetings are open to all members unless the President calls for an officers-only session.

3.6 The Steering Committee is entrusted to carry on the business of the PRC on behalf of the membership, including appointing a nominating committee for elections, arranging meeting agenda, initiating programs, and making contracts for services.

3.7 The President is responsible for calling meetings and serving as moderator, organizes the work of the Steering Committee, may appoint working groups and standing committees and name their conveners, approves with the treasurer any reception or disbursements of funds, and performs other duties appropriate to a presiding officer.

3.8 Only the President and her/his designees may speak to the press on behalf of the PRC.

3.9 The Vice President fills in for the President when the President is unable to be at meetings, programs, or services. The Vice President is tasked with overseeing the programs and services of the PRC.

3.10 The Recording Secretary keeps minutes, handles correspondence, and can assist the Director of Social Media with all social media services if necessary.

3.11 The Treasurer makes disbursements, collects donations and deposits funds, acknowledges gifts/donations, posts the financial balance at regular PRC meetings, and makes a full financial report at the annual meeting. The Treasurer may serve a maximum of 4 consecutive terms.

3.12 The Membership Secretary coordinates invitations and inquiries for membership and keeps contact information current for all PRC members.

3.13 Officers or members may be removed with or without cause by a 2/3 vote at a general meeting held with two weeks' notice with the agenda item of replacing an officer or removing a member stated explicitly in the meeting notice.

3.14 If a member leaves office before completing the two-year term, the Steering Committee may suggest a member to serve in that office, to be approved at a regular PRC meeting, until a new election is held at the next annual meeting.

Article Four: Meetings

4.1 The President calls the annual meeting, usually held in March, giving at least two weeks notice to all members.

4.2 Notice should include nominations for any offices to be filled and advertisement that the PRC may accept nominations from the floor with permission from the nominee(s).

4.3 The notice shall include an agenda and a description of business to be conducted.

4.4 The Treasurer shall provide a full financial statement.

4.5 Fifty percent of active members, including at least two officers, shall constitute a quorum for the annual meeting or for any official business to be conducted at a general meeting.

4.6 The President may call meetings of the Steering Committee as needed, and these meetings may coincide with the general PRC members meetings.

4.7 The President shall also call a general meeting when requested by at least three PRC members or two members of the Steering Committee.

4.8 Meetings of the PRC members are for members only unless the President chooses, or a simple majority of the members vote, to hold all or part of a meeting open to the public.

Article Five: Finances

5.1 There are no dues or fees for membership in the PRC.

5.2 There are no paid staff members or officers.

5.3 The Steering Committee may ask for donations, request offerings, and receive contributions on behalf of the PRC (such as an offering at the annual MLK service).

5.4 The Treasurer shall secure and maintain a tax identification number from the Georgia Secretary of State.

5.5 The Treasurer may apply for and maintain a checking/savings account with an FDIC financial institution, using the Steering Committee officers as agents to secure the account as needed by bank policy and/or by law and as check signers on the account.

- 5.6 The Treasurer is responsible for depositing any funds received by the PRC accepted by the Steering Committee.
- 5.7 The Steering Committee authorizes the Treasurer to disperse funds up to \$250.
- 5.8 Checks for amounts greater than \$250 should be signed by both the Treasurer and another officer.
- 5.9 The Treasurer should be prepared to state the balance on the account at any regular PRC meeting and give a full financial report at the annual meeting.
- 5.10 The books are open to be examined by any officer at any time.
- 5.11 A review of the accounts should be conducted at year end, by at least two persons not including the Treasurer.

Article Six: Bylaw revisions and repeal

- 6.1 These By-laws can be amended or repealed or new By-laws adopted at any meeting of the PRC by a majority vote of all of the active members, provided that at such a meeting a quorum is present and that written copies of the proposed changes were provided to each member at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the changes proposed are to be acted upon.
- 6.2 The Recording Secretary should keep a copy of the original Bylaws and a master copy that shows the amendments and the date of their acceptance in addition to maintaining the current constituted bylaws.
- 6.3 The Bylaws and the Policies and Procedures shall be reviewed at least every two years in January for any changes that may need to be presented to the members at the General Meeting.

Article Seven: Indemnification

- 7.1 The PRC may, to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by law, indemnify any person made, or threatened to be made, a party to any action or proceeding by reason of the fact that she or he was an officer or member of the PRC, against judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement and reasonable expenses, including attorneys' fees.

Attestation of Secretary

I, the undersigned Secretary of the PRC hereby attest that these Bylaws were adopted by a majority vote of the Active members at a meeting held for that purpose on June 12, 2019.

Rev. Mother Ellen Francis, Secretary

Progressive Religious Coalition of Augusta

Policies and Procedures

1. Procedures for admission of new members

1.1 The PRC welcomes new members. Eligible candidates for membership shall be:

- 1) Clergy and lay leaders of religious bodies;
- 2) Or others practicing disciplines in spiritual or other truth-bearing fellowships that seek peace and unity with, within and among religions.

1.2 All PRC members may receive requests for members and shall convey such requests to the Membership Secretary.

1.3 The applicant shall complete a form that included contact data; how s/he meets either r provision 1) or 2) of the eligibility requirements; a statement as to why s/he will be able to contribute to the purposes of the PRC; how s/he expects membership in the PRC to contribute to his/her spiritual growth; and a place to sign indicating that s/he agrees with the covenant.

1.4 The Membership Secretary shall meet in person with the candidate prior to a general meeting, distribute copies of the written application to the members present, and make a recommendation to the members regarding extending to the candidate an invitation to membership. The procedure for a vote for admission to membership is outlined in the By-laws.

2. Individual Conscience, PRC Unity, and Responsible Dissent

2.1 Members are expected to be able to articulate their own progressive positions on issues of religion and society, to be ambassadors in the larger community advocating progressive points of view, and to become able interpreters of the mission and vision statements of the PRC.

2.2 The PRC is a fellowship that coheres through sharing values.

2.3 A core value is to embrace diversity and inclusion in the PRC and in society with a mission to foster robust debate and discussion of controversial issues in religion and society.

2.4 The PRC has no expectation that all members will be in agreement on every nuance of every issue; the group has no interest in binding the conscience of any member.

2.5 The PRC values diversity of viewpoints among members and often serves as a resource and support to members who disagree with prevalent social opinions.

2.6 The PRC seeks to champion progressive causes in society and to engage in responsible dissent where human rights are violated, and religious diversity repressed.

2.7 The PRC values those skills involved in forming and molding group opinions, achieving consensus where possible, and forging bold courses of action when facing opposition. For group purposes, members do not engage in filibusters.

3. Debate during PRC meetings

3.1 The President or designated presiding officer may rule to end debate on an issue during a meeting, recognizing a majority opinion and offering others space to express their dissent later in writing which the Recording Secretary may summarize and place in the meeting minutes as a dissenting opinion or minority report.

4. Changes to these Policies and Procedures

4.1 The Policies and Procedures of the PRC may be changed with two weeks prior notice, at a meeting of the PRC at which a quorum of the active members is present, by majority of those members voting.

5. Social Media and websites

5.1 The Director of Social Media is solely responsible for managing content and frequency of updates for social media and monitoring commentary on social media sites such as the official PRC Facebook page and website. The President may appoint sufficient individuals to assist the Director of Social Media with posting and managing the PRC social media accounts.

5.2 Social media site content represents current and upcoming events, news, and commentary related to the activities of PRC and is reflective of the PRC vision and mission statement.

5.3 All postings on the official PRC social media accounts shall conform to the same guidelines set forth in section 2 of these Policies and Procedures.

5.4 There shall be only one official PRC Facebook Page and/or Group. There shall be only one official PRC website (<http://www.prc-augusta.org>). There shall only be one official PRC Twitter, Snapchat, and/or Instagram account. The Director of Social Media shall be an administrator on all official PRC social media accounts and websites regardless of who created them.

5.5 The Director of Social Media is nominated by the President of the PRC and approved by a simple majority of the members. The Director of Social Media shall serve in this capacity until their resignation or until removed by the members of the PRC by a simple majority vote.