Expressions Commission Handbook

2026

Elizabethtown Church of the Brethren

Contents

Expressions Commission **3**

Expressions Chairperson **4**

Constitution – Mandated Responsibilities 4

General Obligations 4

Expressions Secretary **4**

Job Description 4

Worship Planning Committee **5**

Worship Center Committee **5**

Worship Center Guidelines 5

Drama Group **6**

Concert Committee **6**

Fellowship Committee **7**

Ushers **7**

Head Usher 7

Sound System Chairperson **8**

Substitute Organist Policy **8**

Expressions Commission

I. The Expressions Commission is responsible for the celebration ministry of the congregation. Specifically, the Commission is responsible for providing programs related to worship, music, drama, congregational and denominational celebrations, fellowship events, and the recruitment, training, and supervision of persons who are designated to carry out these functions, including the Fellowship Committee. Please see the Constitution and By-laws of the Elizabethtown Church of the Brethren for further specific details.

II. The Commission shall assume responsibility for providing programs related to:

   a. Worship

      i. The use of worship aids such as the worship center and flowers.

      ii. Conferring with the pastor(s) in decisions regarding pulpit supply in the pastor's absence.

   b. Music, including:

      i. Coordination and supervision of both the vocal and instrumental music programs such as choirs, organists, pianists, directors, and related persons and groups.

      ii. Liaison with directors and other personnel regarding the need for materials, instruments, and other equipment.

      iii. Conferring with music staff persons with regard to division of responsibilities, proposed changes to duties and contracts, and questions related to the music program.

      iv. Supervision of the work of the music program staff.

      v. Consulting and counseling with the Executive Committee regarding possible candidates to fill vacancies in the music program staff, and possible terms of their employment.

   c. Drama, including planning and implementation of plays, speeches, and other dramatic presentations of religious and/or social significance, as well as expressions of other art forms.

   d. Recruitment, training, supervision, and performance of persons related to expressions, such as worship leaders, ushers, streaming operators, and lighting operators.

Expressions Chairperson

Constitution – Mandated Responsibilities

The Chair of the Expressions Commission shall:

- Represent the Commission on the Church Board.
- Represent the Commission on the Executive Committee.
- Call meetings as necessary to conduct the business of the Commission.
- Lead the Commission in implementing current programs while also providing vision for the future.

General Obligations

The Chair of the Expressions Commission shall:

- Prepare carefully for all Commission meetings.
- Remind Commission members of scheduled reports.
- Prepare a complete, manageable agenda and distribute it to all members in advance.
- Start meetings on time and preside fairly and smoothly.
- Delegate duties so that Commission responsibilities are shared equally and handled efficiently.
- Faithfully attend the meetings of and participate in the activities of all groups to which membership is mandated.

Expressions Secretary

Job Description

- Attend all Commission meetings.
- Take minutes reflecting the proceedings of the meeting.
- Digital copies of the minutes should include:
    - Commission name
    - Date of meeting
    - People in attendance
    - Business discussed
    - Secretary's name ("Minutes recorded by _____")
- Minutes should be distributed to the Commission within one week of the meeting.

- Minutes should be sent to the church office for posting after approval.
- Handle any correspondence requested by the Commission.

Worship Planning Committee

Purpose: To enhance our experiences of corporate worship through dreaming, planning, and coordinating the various elements of worship around given themes.

Members: Pastors, Minister of Music, organist/pianist, choir directors, and the chair or representative from the following groups: Worship Center Committee, Praise Team, Liturgical Movement/Streamers, Drama Committee, and Expressions Commission. (New groups that are involved with worship may be included in the future.)

Meetings: Called by the pastors as needed. For example, meetings are held early in the fall to plan for Advent and Christmas and in January to plan for Lent and Easter.

Worship Center Committee

Purpose: To oversee and/or provide decorations and flowers for the communion table and/or chancel area for Sunday morning worship.

Committee: Minimum of four persons; one should be designated chairperson.

Goal: To provide a focus for the worship center that enhances worship rather than distracting from it, and to be mindful of people's feelings as we deal with situations that arise in the fulfillment of this goal.

Responsibilities

- The Worship Center Committee will provide a focus for Easter and Advent. Additional help may be requested from the congregation when needed. During the year, the committee may wish to provide additional worship centers such as harvest, stewardship, or a special sermon topic.
- **Note:** Be sure to reserve set-up and teardown dates on the church calendar when necessary, so you have access to the sanctuary.
- The Worship Center Committee chairperson serves as a member of the Worship Planning Committee.

Worship Center Guidelines

- Arrangements for the worship center should be appropriate for the sanctuary. Usually real or natural materials are preferred rather than artificial flowers; food and dried materials are all acceptable.
- The church has an account with Floral Designs of Mount Joy. They are an excellent resource for flowers and can enter the building for delivery via a Prox Card, if needed.

- For large expenditures, a cash advance can be requested from the church treasurer. Please allow adequate time.
- The room located to the left of the chancel area is designated for storage of worship center items.
- The Worship Center Committee may purchase additional supplies and containers as needed and as the budget allows.
- Requests and acknowledgements that appear in the bulletin must be in the church office by the preceding Wednesday – bulletin preparation day.
- Remember to think “BIG” when arranging a worship center. Small items are lost from the rear of the sanctuary.
- Images/slides projected onto the screen or banners hung behind the communion table can be used along with a memorial arrangement with the person’s consent. An inventory of banners is available at the church and can be reserved through the church office or through a Worship Center Committee member.
- Never have two crosses in the chancel area.
- In the Church of the Brethren, the communion table is just that – it is not an altar. There is nothing sacred about the table itself.

Drama Group

Purpose: To provide an opportunity for church members to participate in drama as a means of enhancing and enriching worship as well as for other occasions.

Responsibilities

- Meet regularly to dream and plan effective ways to incorporate drama in worship and other occasions such as Love Feast, Christmas Eve, etc.
- Secure directorship and participants as needed or desired for dramatic presentations.
- Secure participants from the congregation, aiming to give an opportunity to all those with appropriate talents or interest in developing a talent in this area.

Concert Committee

The church holds special concerts thanks to a generous donor who endowed funds to support special musical projects, staff assistance, and equipment. Programs have included classical music, string ensembles, organists, soloists, bells, and college and community concert choirs.

The Concert Committee of six persons, appointed by the Expressions Commission, is responsible for the following tasks:

- Organizes four concerts each year (one concert per quarter).
- Meets as needed.
- Contacts musicians and musical groups 12–16 months in advance.
- Coordinates the schedule and facility arrangements through the church office.
- Completes and submits the *Property Use* and *Check Request* forms to the church office.
- Organizes publicity information for each concert and submits it to the church office for distribution.

Philosophy: People attend musical events for a variety of reasons. The Committee's hope is to advance the musical arts within our local community by bringing people together to be spiritually and emotionally enriched by music, which provides a common denominator and enhances the feeling of a communal experience. Concerts are family-friendly, and everyone is welcome. The musicians and singers are professionals who have excelled in their craft, so they provide a musically delightful program that will inspire everyone who attends. Guests can expect to be not only entertained but also to leave the concert with a renewed sense of awe and wonder at how music touches the heart and soul.

Fellowship Committee

Purpose: To provide opportunities for fellowship for the church family.

Responsibilities

- New member reception following worship services on Sunday mornings.
- Sunday morning coffee after worship services. (Keep supplies on hand: coffee, sugar, etc.)
- Other occasions requested by the Expressions Commission.

Ushers

Purpose: To greet and welcome members and visitors to the Sunday morning worship service.

Head Usher

Responsibilities

1. Serves as liaison between the Expressions Commission and the ushers. Contacts captains concerning issues and directives pertinent to their team on any given Sunday.
2. Checks in informally with the captain each Sunday morning and “pinch hits” if short-handed.
3. Receives requests from pastors concerning the need for ushers at funerals, holiday services, and any other service during the week when there may be a need for ushers.
4. Recruits ushers from the current team to staff special events.
5. Adjusts usher team rotation for the coming year. Confirms each team’s newly appointed captain/assistant captain.
6. (Optional) Oversees the ushers’ breakfast, which is a “kick-off” for the year, usually held on a Sunday in January at 8:00 AM:
    - Decides the menu.
    - Recruits kitchen help.
    - Presides over the meeting after breakfast.
    - Recruits and helps with clean-up.
    - Submits expenses (budget line item).

Usher Captain Checklist (see “usher captain checklist 2025.docx”)

Sound System Chairperson

Purpose: To oversee and provide adequate sound for the Sunday morning worship and other occasions as requested.

Committee: Minimum of five persons; one should be designated chair.

Operator’s schedule: The sound system assignment schedule is set up for a period of one year by the office staff. Each team member is responsible for sound requirements during two successive Sundays. If team members cannot be present on the date they are scheduled, they are to make arrangements with another team member to substitute and notify the office staff of the change. Questions or problems relating to the operation of the system are referred to the team leader.

Substitute Organist and Guest Musician Policies

The substitute organist will receive a flat fee of $150 for playing at a Sunday morning worship service.

The church organist will inform the Music Coordinator of dates they will be absent. The church will pay for the organist's four vacation Sundays. If a substitute organist is required for additional Sundays, the church organist will personally pay the substitute.

Guest musician (not pianist/organist/service accompanist) flat fee: $100/performance.

Job descriptions for the Music Staff are on file in the Church Office.