

Meeting System — Draft

April 2026

MAYFLOWER CHURCH

Meeting System

Streamline System 06 — Mayflower's Meeting Architecture and Cadence

Draft April 2026

Governing Principle

A church runs on a small number of trustworthy meetings.

A meeting that does not run reliably is worse than no meeting at all — it teaches the church that the leaders' word is not their bond. A meeting that runs reliably, even imperfectly, builds the kind of trust that lets the rest of the system work. Mayflower's meeting architecture is built for trust over excitement: the same meetings, on the same days, doing the same work, year after year.

Purpose

This chapter documents Mayflower Church's standing meeting architecture — who meets, when, why, with what agenda, and where decisions get routed when they exceed a meeting's scope. It is Streamline Chapter 17, adapted to Mayflower's actual practice.

It sits in System 06 (Organization Chart and Access) as a chapter alongside the org chart and the Volunteers chapter. The org chart describes Mayflower's structure in space; this chapter describes how that structure operates in time.

How This Chapter Fits

- **It documents existing practice.** Most of what is described below is already happening; this is the written form so a new staff member or officer can see the pattern without needing to be told.
- **It connects to other systems.** The board meetings here feed decisions tracked through System 09 (Decision-Making Framework). The annual calendar that holds them lives in System 04 (Master Calendar Integration). Performance evaluations and goal-setting happen at certain meetings (System 11).
- **Where the bylaws govern, the bylaws take precedence.** Officer terms, quorum, voting, congregational authority — all governed by the Mayflower Constitution and Bylaws (October 2024). This document describes how meetings ordinarily run; the bylaws describe what authority each meeting carries.

The Mayflower Meeting Map

A high-level view — each meeting is detailed in its own section below.

Body	Cadence	Standing Time	Primary Focus
Elders	Monthly	First Tuesday, 6:00 p.m.	Spiritual oversight, member care, doctrine, sermon planning
Deacons	Monthly	Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. (week TBD — see Open Items)	Service ministries, benevolence, hospitality, congregational care
Trustees	Monthly	Fourth Thursday of the month	Property, facilities, contracts, operational finance
Board of Finance	Monthly May/Jun/Jul; as-needed thereafter	To be set by the board	Annual budget development; significant financial decisions; recommendations to congregation
Servants Council	Quarterly	Last Saturday of the last month of each quarter (Mar / Jun / Sep / Dec)	Governance review, ratifying board work, approving operations plans
Team Leaders Meeting	Quarterly	Third Tuesday evening of the second month of each quarter (Feb / May / Aug / Nov)	Leadership development, encouragement, problem-solving across the team-leader cohort
Staff — Sit-down	Once per month	One of four weekly slots	Substantive staff coordination, planning, training, real conversation

Body	Cadence	Standing Time	Primary Focus
Staff — Stand-up	Three of four weeks per month	Same weekly slot as sit-down	Quick weekly coordination — what's happening this week, blockers, asks
Elder-Deacon Roundtable	Cadence TBD	TBD	Cross-board coordination on cases touching both pastoral and service dimensions
Congregational Business Meetings	Quarterly	Last Sunday of the first month of each quarter (Jan / Apr / Jul / Oct)	Membership decisions, budget approval, officer elections, constitutional amendments

Each Meeting in Detail

Elders

- **Cadence:** Monthly.
- **Standing time:** First Tuesday of the month, 6:00 p.m.
- **Attendees:** All elders.
- **Purpose:** Spiritual oversight of the church — sermon planning input, doctrinal questions, member care, discipline cases, pastoral candidacy, oversight of pastoral and discipleship-shaped teams.

Standard agenda:

1. Opening prayer and Scripture.
2. Review of action items from prior meeting.
3. Pastoral cases and member care.
4. Sermon and teaching planning.
5. Discipleship pathway and Equip status.
6. Cross-board items (referrals to Deacons, Trustees, Board of Finance).
7. New business.
8. Quarterly: goals review and team-leader oversight check-in.
9. Closing prayer.

Minutes: Recorded by the Clerk or a designated elder; on file within 7 days; distributed to elders.

Deacons

- **Cadence:** Monthly.
- **Standing time:** The first Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
- **Attendees:** All deacons.
- **Purpose:** Service ministries of the church — benevolence cases, hospitality, congregational care, oversight of service-shaped teams.

Standard agenda:

1. Opening prayer and Scripture.
2. Review of action items.
3. Benevolence cases under consideration.
4. Hospitality and care updates.
5. Cross-board items.
6. New business.
7. Quarterly: goals review.
8. Closing prayer.

Trustees

- **Cadence:** Monthly.
- **Standing time:** Fourth Thursday of the month.
- **Attendees:** All trustees.
- **Purpose:** Stewardship of buildings, property, equipment, contracts, insurance, vendor relationships, and operational finance.

Standard agenda:

1. Opening prayer.
2. Property and facilities updates.
3. Vendor and contract status.
4. Operational finance items.
5. Cross-board items.
6. New business.
7. Quarterly: goals review.
8. Closing prayer.

Board of Finance

- **Cadence:** Monthly in May, June, and July; as-needed thereafter for financial decisions.
- **Composition:** Senior Pastor, Financial Secretary, plus the chairs of Elders, Deacons, and Trustees.

- **Purpose:** Annual budget development; financial decisions exceeding operational thresholds; recommendations to the congregation for approval at the appropriate business meeting.
- **Annual cycle anchor:** Heavy budget development runs through May, June, and July; the budget proposal arrives at the Servants Council in its August meeting and ultimately to the congregation per bylaws (October 25, 2026 is the upcoming target congregational approval date).
- **As-needed meetings** are convened by the Senior Pastor or the Treasurer when a financial decision exceeds operational authority.

Servants Council

- **Cadence:** Quarterly.
- **Standing time:** Last Saturday of the second month of each quarter at 10:00 a.m.— February, May, August, and November.
- **Attendees:** Per bylaws.
- **Purpose:** Governance-level review and approval — ratifying board work, approving operations plans, providing the standing assembly through which the church's leaders coordinate at the quarter level.

Standard agenda:

1. Opening worship and prayer.
2. Reports from Elders, Deacons, Trustees, and the Board of Finance.
3. Pastor's report.
4. Operations plans or systems documentation up for approval.
5. New business.
6. Closing prayer.

Team Leaders Meeting

- **Cadence:** Quarterly.
- **Standing time:** Third Tuesday evening of the second month of each quarter — February, May, August, and November.
- **Attendees:** All ministry team leaders, with relevant oversight board members welcomed.
- **Purpose:** Leadership development, encouragement, and problem-solving across the team-leader cohort. Distinct from the Servants Council in that it focuses on the leaders themselves — their growth, their challenges, their connection to one another — rather than on governance.

Standard agenda:

1. Opening prayer and welcome.
2. Brief teaching or development input (from Senior Pastor or guest).
3. Wins and stories from the quarter.
4. Open problem-solving — leaders bring challenges to the room.
5. Cross-team coordination items.
6. Prayer for one another and for the church.

Staff Meetings — Sit-Down (Monthly)

- **Cadence:** Once per month, in one of the four weekly meeting slots.
- **Format:** Sit-down — 60 to 90 minutes.
- **Purpose:** Substantive coordination across the staff team. Big-picture planning, discussion of cross-functional initiatives, training input, real conversation rather than transactional update.

Standard agenda:

1. Opening devotion and prayer.
2. Reports/updates from each staff member (longer than stand-up form).
3. Topic for substantive discussion — one major topic per meeting.
4. Cross-team blockers and decisions.
5. Calendar and upcoming events review.
6. Training or development input.
7. Closing prayer.

Staff Meetings — Stand-Up (Weekly, 3 of 4 weeks)

- **Cadence:** Three of four weeks per month — in the same weekly slot as the sit-down.
- **Format:** Stand-up — 15 to 25 minutes. Literally standing helps keep it short.
- **Purpose:** Quick weekly coordination. What is happening this week. Blockers. Quick asks.

Standard agenda:

1. Brief opening prayer.
2. Each staff member: what is happening this week, what is blocking me, what I need.

3. Anything urgent for the church or the calendar.
4. End on time.

Elder-Deacon Roundtable

- **Cadence:** Meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. This format is used when one or both boards are at their minimum capacity.
- **Attendees:** Elders and Deacons.
- **Purpose:** Cross-board coordination on cases that touch both pastoral and service dimensions — for example, a member in pastoral crisis who is also receiving benevolence support, a discipline case that affects deacon work, or a new ministry team that needs both pastoral oversight and service-side operational support.

Congregational Business Meetings

- **Cadence:** Quarterly.
- **Standing time:** Last Sunday of the first month of each quarter — January, April, July, and October.
- **Authority:** Per bylaws — membership decisions, budget approval, officer elections, constitutional amendments, dissolution decisions.

Standard Meeting Disciplines

Across all meetings, regardless of body, Mayflower aims at the same disciplines:

- **Start on time. End on time.** A meeting that runs over teaches the team that meetings are not respected.
- **Open and close in prayer.** This is not a flourish; it is a theological act of submission. Mayflower's meetings are gatherings of Christ's people doing Christ's work; we acknowledge Him at the front and at the back.
- **Take minutes.** Every meeting that makes decisions records them. Decisions, who is responsible, when they will report back. Not a transcript — a record.
- **Track action items.** Decisions without action items wither. Each meeting closes by reviewing what each person owns and when they will report back.
- **Phones off.** Meetings deserve attention. Pastoral emergencies excepted.
- **Confidentiality where appropriate.** Pastoral cases, benevolence cases, personnel matters, discipline cases — what is said in those meetings stays in those meetings.

Standard Agenda Templates

These templates are starting points; specific bodies will adapt them. They are reproduced here so a new chair or recorder can run a meeting on day one without inventing a format.

Board Meeting Template (Elders, Deacons, Trustees, Board of Finance)

1. Opening prayer and Scripture (~5 minutes).
2. Review of action items from the previous meeting (~5 minutes).
3. Standing reports / updates from members carrying current work (~15 minutes).
4. Substantive discussion of one or two main items (~30-45 minutes).
5. Cross-board referrals and items to escalate (~5 minutes).
6. Quarterly only: goals review and check-in on team leader oversight (~10 minutes).
7. New business and prayer requests (~10 minutes).
8. Closing prayer.

Sit-Down Staff Meeting Template (60-90 minutes)

1. Opening devotion and prayer (~10 minutes).
2. Each staff member's update — longer form than a stand-up (~20 minutes).
3. Topic of the month — substantive discussion (~30 minutes).
4. Cross-team coordination and decisions (~10 minutes).
5. Calendar review (~5 minutes).
6. Training or development input (~10 minutes, when included).
7. Closing prayer.

Stand-Up Staff Meeting Template (15–25 minutes)

1. Brief opening prayer (~2 minutes).
2. Each staff member, in turn: this week's headline, blockers, asks (~10–15 minutes).
3. Calendar or pastoral urgency items (~3–5 minutes).
4. End on time.

Minutes and Action Tracking

Every meeting that makes decisions produces minutes:

- **Format:** Short. Decisions, who is responsible, when. Not a transcript.
- **Filing:** Church Office within 7 days.
- **Distribution:** To the body that met, plus the Senior Pastor. Minutes are combined for monthly communication to the church body by being made available outside the church office.
- **Action item carryover:** Each subsequent meeting opens with a review of action items from the previous meeting.

Escalation Paths

When a meeting encounters a decision that exceeds its authority:

- **From staff to the Senior Pastor or relevant board** — for cross-board coordination, doctrinal questions, financial decisions exceeding operational thresholds.
- **From a board to the Servants Council** — for governance matters that affect more than one ministry area or that require operations plan approval.
- **From the Servants Council to the congregation** — for matters governed by the bylaws (membership, budget approval, officer elections, constitutional amendments).

The full *Decision-Making Framework* (System 09) documents which decisions go where in detail.

Annual Calendar Integration

These meetings should be on the church's master calendar (System 04 — Master Calendar Integration) at the start of each calendar year:

- Twelve elder meetings — first Tuesday of each month, 6:00 p.m.
- Twelve deacon meetings — Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. (week TBD).
- Twelve trustee meetings — fourth Thursday of each month.
- Three Board of Finance meetings — May, June, July; plus as-needed for financial decisions.
- Four Servants Council meetings — last Saturday of March, June, September, December.
- Four Team Leaders meetings — third Tuesday evening of February, May, August, and November.
- Approximately twelve sit-down staff meetings and thirty-six stand-up staff meetings.
- Four congregational business meetings — last Sunday of January, April, July, and October.
- The August Leadership Summit — annual anchor for goal-setting and refresh (System 11 — Annual Goals).

The Quarterly Cadence Cascade

Mayflower's quarterly governance cycle now follows a clean three-step cadence through each quarter:

1. **Month 1 — Congregational Business Meeting** on the last Sunday of the month (January / April / July / October).
2. **Month 2 — Team Leaders Meeting** on the third Tuesday evening (February / May / August / November).
3. **Month 3 — Servants Council Meeting** on the last Saturday of the month (March / June / September / December).

Within that frame, the boards do their monthly work (Elders 1st Tuesday, Deacons 1st Tuesday, Trustees 4th Thursday, Board of Finance May/Jun/Jul plus as-needed) and feed agenda items up the cycle.

Sources

- *Streamline: How to Create Healthy Church Systems* — Michael Lukaszewski (Chapter 17: Implement a Team Meeting System).
- *Mayflower Church Constitution and Bylaws* (March 2026) — for officer terms, quorum, and the authority that each meeting carries.

- *Decision-Making Framework — April 2026* (BookStack, System 09) — for which decisions go where.
 - *Mayflower Annual Goals* (BookStack, System 11) — for the goal-setting rhythm anchored at the August Leadership Summit.
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