



THE
PONDERING
PUB
OPERATING
PROCEDURES

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1 Purpose

1.1 Mission Statement

The Pondering Pub fosters the growth of Christ-centered communities by providing social settings which encourage friendship and the sharing of works of truth, beauty, and goodness.

1.2 Vision

We want each Pondering to feel welcome and act as a place of structured friendship where men and women can meet and children can be included in good, thought provoking conversation. We also want each Pondering to produce cultural works, or to reflect on cultural works that make up their heritage. Cultural preservation is crucial to the Pondering. All of this must be done with Christ at the core, for if a community or a cultural work ultimately does not aim towards Christ, it will vanish, like vapors in the wind.

1.3 Values

The Pondering Pub is a Christian-based organization designed to create a reprieve away from the ugliness of the world. The Pondering Pub believes that by actively creating beauty, discerning truth, and encouraging goodness, men and women living amongst wolves will create and sustain a hidden community, by which the true intent of Christ can be lived out uninfluenced by those who worship gods other than Christ. Chief amongst these are ideology, hedonism, and nihilism. The Pondering Pub's primary aim is to create a path, founded upon Christ, but by which all may walk upon, to more easily be filled by Him in ways the world does not.

2 Ponderings

A primary function of The Pondering Pub is "Ponderings," gatherings of members called "Ponderers," to discuss works of truth, beauty, and goodness. For a Pondering to be considered valid, it must meet 3 requirements: It must open in a Christian prayer, it must have the 3 leadership roles assigned, and 2 discussion topics must be had with one of them revolving around a cultural work.

2.1 Leadership roles

Pub leadership consists of 3 roles: Host, Pub Rep, and Chief Barkeep. A person may only occupy one of these roles at a time. This is so that there are always 3 people leading a Pondering supporting one another. Any of these roles can be the MC.

2.1.1 Host

The Law. The host arranges the meeting place, maintains order, and decides on opening prayer. The meeting place can be the host's house, a church, a community center, or anywhere the host has

permission to use. The host ultimately takes responsibility for actions occurring at the meeting place. Thus, the host can lay down any rules that is binding for all Ponderings occurring at the meeting place. For example, the host may say, "Everyone must leave at 11 PM" or "Shoes off when you enter." These are called "house rules" and this rule helps the host maintain order and proper rules that visitors may otherwise not know. The host may kick out Ponderers and visitors for rowdy, drunken, or otherwise disruptive behavior. It is up to the host as to whether or not to permit alcohol at a Pondering (Section 5). If permitted, the Host is responsible for what occurs at Ponderings.

Additionally, the host decides on opening prayer. Typically, the host leads in prayer and can use a prayer service such as the one sponsored by the Pondering Pub. However, this is not mandatory. The host can designate someone else to lead opening prayer. The host also can choose to use his/her own prayer.

The host is encouraged to lead opening prayer as it lends moral authority to him/her and encourages others to listen to him/her in other areas. The one who opens a program tends to carry weight. Additionally, since the Pondering Pub is traditional and ecumenical, it is important that one person has the final say on what prayers should be said.

Host is permitted to delegate the duties of hosting and prayer to others, though they are still responsible for what may occur. If a situation arises where the usual host can not be present, but a Pondering still is desired to be held, the Host may delegate the duties of Host to another Pondering Member, with their consent and confirmation of Pub Rep. That Member is temporarily granted all the rights and privileges of Host for that Pondering. Additionally, as mentioned above, the Host may also delegate Prayer Duties to someone else if they won't be present.

2.1.2 Pub Rep

The Pub Rep will be expected to read all of the Operation Procedures. The Pub Rep will be expected to communicate frequently with Chapter Leadership. The Pub Rep will attend Chapter Leadership meetings when requested.

If there are issues with their Pondering, whether immediate or potential, the Pub Rep should contact Chapter Leadership for support. Problems could be a lack of presentations, a hostile attendee, or an influx of non-Christian attendees, etc. Chapter Leadership has the resources and training to deal with these, and can assist that Pondering with issues they are facing.

Pub Rep must meet with Guild Leadership 3 times a year. They should also meet with other leadership positions at least once every 4 months.

2.1.3 Chief Barkeep

The Life. The Chief Barkeep is responsible for ensuring guests feel invited and presentations are occurring. They are essential for the long-term longevity of the Pondering. They must ensure 2 presentations occur at each Pondering. If no one is presenting, then the Chief Barkeep presents twice. It can be as simple as reviewing the Topic of the Week, and sharing a thought he/she had.

It is hard to quantify how to maintain the “Spirit of the Pondering.” So here is my best shot: If a new person walks in, it is the Chief Barkeep who encourages them to say a few words. If a regular attendee had a recent revelation or embarked on a new activity, it is the Chief Barkeep who encourages them to present when they are ready (could be w weeks, could be 5-6 months down the line.) It is the Chief Barkeep who reaches out to attendees who’ve stopped attending and figuring out why.

If a Pub is fizzling out, it is the Chief Barkeep who brings it back.

2.1.3 MC

The MC is in charge of laying out the agenda of the evening, guiding conversation, and introducing presentations. The MC tends to be the face of that Pondering, so it is important he/she works closely with the Host, Pub Rep, and Chief Barkeep, if they aren’t already dual holding one of those other positions.

The MC should be familiar with the layout of whatever type of Pondering that Pub has decided upon. (Section 2.3.) The MC also should ensure conversation stays generally on topic, and does not become hostile. Debate is good and encouraged. Hostile conversation should be carefully redirected.

2.1.4 Guild Leadership

Geographical regions are divided into Guilds. Each Guild has a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer to manage said area. They are in charge of helping foster new Ponderings, assist old ones, and handle any administration issues that may arise.

Only Guild Leadership may handle funds. Dues may not be handled at the individual Pondering level. This is for tax reasons.

Pub Rep must check in with Guild Leadership 3 times a year. All 3 leadership positions meet with the guild once a year. New Pub Leaders should meet with guild regularly for the first 6 months. Monthly or every two Ponderings, whichever is less frequent.

2.2 Presentations

Presentations make up the crux of Ponderings. They are the springboard of discussion, and the medium by which cultural works can be introduced or preserved. The Pondering Pub has created guidelines to help assist Presentations remain Christ-oriented and assist in their perpetuation.

2.2.1 Locus of Attention

When a presentation is occurring, all Ponderers must give attention to the Presenter. Pondering Leadership should encourage full attention to presenters while they are presenting. Leadership may take aside those who are causing disturbances; such as side conversations, leaving the room to discuss other topics, and distractive comments. These are discouraged. Presenting something before others is scary and hard. The MC should ensure the general locus of attention is focused on the presenter. If the presenter would like to allow questions mid-presentation, jokes, comments, or other such occurrences, they may announce at the beginning of their presentation. However, the general rule is not to allow such occurrences.

2.2.2 Appropriate types of Presentations

Presentations may include any type of cultural work, either created by the Presenter or presented for the purpose of preserving its memory. These may include poems, songs, papers, PowerPoint presentations, paintings, excerpts from books, Youtube videos, etc. If the piece is created by the Presenter, the Presenter may and is encouraged to claim ownership over it. If the piece is created by someone else, the Presenter may not claim ownership over it. However, they may still present it, as long as there is a discussion following it. The piece must either be the center of the discussion or be necessary for the discussion to occur. For example, if a song is shared on Spotify because it emotionally impacted the presenter, the discussion that follows must include at least why the song was significant. This is for legal reasons.

2.2.3 Discouraged types of Presentations

Presentations exclusively focused on politics are discouraged. All works must aim towards truth, beauty, or goodness. If politics is second-handedly involved, that is ok. But the essence of presentations must be cultural.

2.2.4 Length of Presentations

Presentations are suggested to take up no more than 15 minutes, with discussion lasting around another 15 minutes. However, these both must be played by ear, as decided on by the MC. If a conversation is lively and full, and there is little more on the agenda, it would be wise to allow conversation to continue. However, weight must be given to later presenters. If someone is expecting to present that night, time must be appropriately allocated for them to present and discussion to follow, without them feeling like they're taking up everyone's time.

2.3 Structures of Ponderings

There are various types of Ponderings, varying from more casual to more structured. Whatever the form of Pondering is adopted is ok, as long as it has been approved by Chapter leadership and follows Pondering minimum criteria. Some examples of Ponderings are included, as well as the uses and rationale for each.

2.3.1 Casual

Ponderers show up at a designated time, the host leads in prayer, then the MC opens the floor for presentations. The order of presentations does not matter, nor are featured presentations held. It is first come first serve. This is great for areas where cultural works are constantly being examined or created, such as college towns.

2.3.2 Structured

Ponderers show up at a designated time, the host leads in prayer, then the MC opens the floor for presentations, filling the slots in a designated order. Typically, the order is: Presentations of Art, Music, Literature, PowerPoint, Discussion. As each genre is called out, Ponderings raise their hand, indicating they have a presentation of that type. An order of presentations is then assembled and presentations begin. This is good for Ponderings who desire a bit more order than Casual Presentations, but there is still a guarantee of members and presentations.

2.3.3 Featured Presenter

Ponderers show up at a designated time, the host leads in prayer, then the MC lays out the order of events. Typically, the night is filled up by 1 featured presentation. A member might have a magnum opus that they've been working on for months, or have a work they'd like to present that would take up a considerable amount of time, they would simply like to reserve the first spot because this presentation is important to them. These types of Ponderings are good for attracting visitors, as they can be advertised; and for established Ponderings where presentations may not be ensured.

2.3.4 Miscellaneous notes

Many Ponderings mix and match Pondering types. For example, they might decide to meet twice a month, on the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month, with the first Pondering being a Structured Pondering and the second Pondering being a Featured Presenter Pondering. However, this is not necessary and some Ponderings may choose to meet weekly

It is important to remember the Topic of the Week will be posted every other week, and provides a guaranteed presentation. Some Ponderings have chosen to present the Topic of the Week first, and to set a timer for a given amount, for example 20 minutes.

2.3.5 Mission Ponderings

When a Pondering is being held in a location not formally listed at the incorporating address, this is known as a Mission Pondering. This can occur for several reasons: The normal meeting place is unavailable, someone else wishes to host one, or a new Pondering is just starting up. Mission Ponderings can only occur under two conditions:

1. Chapter Leadership grants permission.
2. The Host and Pub Rep agree to move their Pondering's activities to that secondary location.

All rules governing normal Ponderings apply to Mission Ponderings.

3 Membership

3.1 Objectives

The Pondering Pub will provide membership options to its participants to help facilitate the Pondering Pub's workings while protecting its interests. Members will sign Media Consent and Release Waivers, Indemnification Waivers, and Content Creation Waivers. Members will also pay dues as set by the Board of Directors. Members will belong to a particular Pondering, constituting that Pondering's body.

3.2 Privileges

Members are granted individual privileges as well as any privileges that come with belonging to a particular Pub.

- Members signing up for the first time are gifted a Custom Pondering Pub Sticker as well as a Membership card.

These will be delivered to the member by their Pub Rep within 2 months of their joining.

- Members will gain access to member-only events. (Ponderfest, which is a member-only event.)
- Members will be granted permission for acquiring Merits, outlined in Section 9.
- Members may vote on decisions affecting their Pub.
- Members get priority for reserving weeks for being Featured Presenter.

4 Social Media

The Pondering Pub encourages appropriate photos to be taken during Ponderings, to share our experience with others. Members will sign Media Consent and Release waivers protecting the Pondering Pub from lawsuit as necessary. All photos taken must be taken with tact and consideration for the subject of the photo. No embarrassing, crude, or disrespectful photos may be taken. If a subject wishes for a posted photo to be taken down within 1 month of its posting, it must be taken down. The photo will be taken down within 7 business days of the poster of the photo being notified in writing.

4.1 Social Media Director

The Pondering Pub Board of Directors will approve a Social Media Director. He/She will be in charge of approving and uploading social media posts on behalf of the Pondering Pub. If anyone would like to post something to Social Media, it must be processed by the Social Media Director for approval.

The Social Media Director can create assistant positions to assist in creating and approving social media posts. Any positions created by the Social Media Director will have the same authority as him/her and must be approved by the Board. The Social Media Director will have overriding authority of all decisions made by his/her assistants.

4.2 Process of Submission

It is encouraged for Ponderings to submit material for social media. It is a great way to showcase the highlights of each Pondering Pub, while contributing towards the mission of the Pondering by sharing its vision. Any posts, materials, or ideas may be submitted to your Pub Rep, who in turn will submit it to their nearest social media assistant.

4.3 Facebook

Facebook posts typically are used to advertise upcoming Featured Presenters and share created cultural works. Posts must be approved by Chapter Leadership, or a designated agent of The Pondering Pub. When advertising upcoming Featured presentations, it should go: "Location name and time, Presenter and Presentation title, brief description."

4.4 Twitter

Twitter typically is used to showcase the topic of the week. Topic of the week includes a picture, a sentence of context, and 3-4 discussion questions. Any relevant links are to be included as well.

4.5 Instagram

Instagram posts should showcase the culture of the Pondering. Quality photos of conversations, featured presenters, and presentations should be shared to communicate the experience of what attending a Pondering is like.

5 Alcohol

5.1 Official Stance

Wine is made to gladden the hearts of men; but do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. These two Bible verses encapsulate the Pondering Pub's mentality on alcohol. Ponderings are not required or encouraged to have alcohol. If a host permits alcohol at their location, it should be controlled and used only to help set members at ease. Parties, heavy drinking, and drunkenness are forbidden at Ponderings, and it is the duty of the Host and Pub Rep to prevent gatherings from turning to debauchery.

5.2 Legality

The Host and Pub Rep must ensure that all state and federal alcohol laws are being followed in their homes. Alcohol may not be sold nor may money be officially gathered to be used to purchase alcohol. If alcohol is to be permitted, it is encouraged that guests bring their own beverages and consume them. Alcohol should not be served to minors.

5.3 Difficulties

If you've experienced a Pondering where you believe the alcohol consumption got out of hand, or you believe the alcohol culture at your Pondering has become toxic, please contact your Chapter Leadership Team.