

# Presbytery of Missouri River Valley

## Manual of Administrative Operations

*Containing By-laws and Standing Rules*



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## Bylaws of the Presbytery

### **I. Name and Authority**

- A. The name of this Council is the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley.
- B. The Bylaws of the Presbytery are subordinate to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA). In any matter in which these Bylaws conflict with the Constitution, the requirements of the Constitution shall prevail.

### **II. Purpose**

The purpose of the Presbytery is to provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard; to provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received; and to nurture a covenant community of disciples of Christ (G-3.0101) in the region and among the congregations under Presbytery jurisdiction.

### **III. Members and Commissioners**

- A. Permanent Members of the Presbytery are those ministers of the Word and Sacrament enrolled as members through the Presbytery's regular procedures.'
- B. Temporary Members of the Presbytery are:
  1. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are members of other councils or communions, serving congregations under the jurisdiction of this Presbytery, enrolled for the duration of their service;
  2. Ruling elders serving as officers of the Presbytery (Section IV) or as Chairs of Presbytery commissions and committees (Sections VII and VIII).
  3. Ruling elders commissioned to particular service to congregations of this Presbytery, for the duration of their commission.
- C. All members of the Presbytery, permanent and temporary, have all the rights and responsibilities of membership.
- D. Each Session shall commission at least one ruling elder member of its congregation to meetings of the Presbytery. Additional commissioners may be allocated to Sessions by the procedure specified in the Standing Rules.

### **IV. Officers**

- A. The two constitutional offices of the Presbytery are Moderator and Stated Clerk; both of which have those duties defined by the Book of Order:
  1. Moderator. The Moderator shall serve a two-year term of office. The Moderator is not eligible for additional terms of office.
  2. Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk shall be elected by vote of the Presbytery to a 3-year term of office. The Stated Clerk fulfills duties as defined in The Book of Order G-3.0104 and all other duties assigned by action of the Presbytery. The Stated Clerk answers to the Presbytery and Personnel Committee and is subject to removal prior to completion of the term as defined in G-3.0110. The Stated Clerk shall be eligible for multiple terms of office.

The normal sequence of service shall be election by Presbytery as Vice Moderator and Moderator for each for a two-year term. Moderator of Presbytery shall appoint the retiring Moderator of Presbytery to a two-year term as Moderator of Leadership Team. The three positions shall act as the Moderator Team and fulfill duties consistent with the PC(USA) Book of Order and as designated by the Manual of Administrative Operations. In the event one of the Moderator Team positions is vacated prior to the end of a term, it shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to fill the positions of Vice Moderator and Moderator for the duration of the unexpired term. It shall be the duty of the Moderator to appoint Moderator of Leadership Team. The Officers of the Presbytery shall be subject to annual review or check-in with the Leadership Team. (G-3.0108a). Officers shall assume elected duties effective on January 1 following election or immediately upon election if filling a vacancy.

- B. In addition, for purposes of leadership and continuity, the Presbytery has these officers:
1. Vice Moderator. The Vice Moderator presides at meetings of the Presbytery in the absence of or at the request of the Moderator, assumes such duties as the Moderator requests, and holds other responsibilities described in this Manual. The Vice Moderator's term of office shall be two years prior to serving as Presbytery Moderator unless the Vice Moderator fulfills a vacancy.
  2. Treasurer. The Treasurer assists the Stewardship of Resources Committee in supervision of the Presbytery's financial affairs, oversees accounts and financial statements, ensures that appropriate financial systems and controls are in place, ensures that record-keeping and accounts meet the requirements of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and relevant statutory bodies, and ensures compliance with relevant legislation. The Treasurer shall be elected to a 3-year term and is eligible for renewable terms of office.
- C. Only ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders may serve as Moderator, Stated Clerk, or Vice Moderator.
- The offices of Moderator and Vice Moderator, respectively, shall be held by one ruling elder and one minister member of the Presbytery at any given time. In subsequent years, the order shall reverse.
  - The Nominating Committee shall nominate an eligible ruling elder and a minister member of Presbytery for the positions of moderator and vice moderator, to be elected at the last meeting of the calendar year when terms expires and assume the office on January 1. Installation shall occur at the first Stated Meeting of the Presbytery. The term of office shall continue until the installation of the successor. The moderator and/or vice moderator shall be ineligible to succeed her/himself after serving full terms in each position.
  - If the Treasurer is not ordained as a presbyter, then that person will have the privilege of voice at all meetings of the Presbytery and of the Leadership Team but will not be a voting member of either.
- D. Administrative Team
1. Membership

- a. The Administrative Team jointly performs assigned functions of a Presbyter as determined by the Administrative Hub and coordinated by the Leadership Team. The Administrative Team will ordinarily be composed of Chairs or representatives of the following Committees/Commissions: Personnel, Stewardship of Resources, Commission on Ministry and the Stated Clerk as a staff member. The Stated Clerk shall serve on the Administrative Team by virtue of election to the position of Stated Clerk. The Committee/Commission members of the Administrative Team members shall be eligible to serve a maximum of two three-year terms. Rotation off the Administrative Team shall be staggered for continuity. Administrative Team members may be co-opted at the discretion of the represented Committee/Commission to complete two three (3) year terms by appointment.

## 2. Duties

- a. Uphold the Presbytery's Covenant: Pray, Act, Accept, and are Good Stewards of our responsibilities by listening to God and one another, being the body of Christ, affirming that God uses us and practicing the Matthew 25 initiative.
- b. Seeking to be faithful, the Administrative Team shall:
  - 1. Help coordinate the administrative and communication needs and opportunities of the presbytery.
  - 2. Help the presbytery keep faithful to its mission.
  - 3. Resource and advise the Leadership Team

## V. Meetings

- A. The Presbytery will hold a minimum of three (3) stated meetings per year. Stated Meetings may be held in-person or electronically with proper notice or at the recommendation of the Leadership Team.
  - 1. Dates, times, locations, or use of electronic format of the meetings are set by the Leadership Team.
  - 2. Upon reasonable notice to members and commissioners, date, time, location, or use of electronic format of a meeting may be changed by the Leadership Team.
  - 3. Business conducted at an electronic meeting shall constitute official business of the Presbytery.
  - 4. The duly elected Moderator of the Presbytery shall preside at Stated and special meetings of the Presbytery. In the absence or request of the Moderator, the Vice Moderator shall preside. If the Moderator or Vice Moderator is not available, the immediate past Moderator shall preside. (G-3.0104)
- B. The Presbytery may be called to a special meeting by the Moderator, in consultation with the Vice Moderator and the Stated Clerk. The Moderator may call a meeting as needed and will call a meeting if requested in writing by two minister members of Presbytery and two ruling elders who are members of different churches. (G-3.0304)
- C. Quorum: The quorum for any meeting of the Presbytery shall be twelve, six ruling elders from at least three different churches and six minister members.
- D. **Parliamentary Authority.** Meetings of the Presbytery Assembly shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, with the following exception: action items that are not expected to generate discussion may be assigned to a

Consent Agenda for consideration in one action by majority vote; and any item may be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration upon the request of a single member.

- E. Cancellation or change to electronic format: a stated or called meeting may be canceled or changed to electronic format.
  - 1. In the case of inclement weather, the Moderator and Stated Clerk shall consult and determine if the meeting should be canceled or changed to electronic format. A reasonable attempt shall be made to inform members and commissioners of the meeting's cancellation. A canceled stated meeting shall be rescheduled for no sooner than ten days' later and notice shall be provided.
  - 2. A called meeting may be canceled if the Moderator and Stated Clerk agree that the business for which it was called is moot, or if those who requested the meeting agree that it should be canceled.
- F. Docket
  - 1. The docket of called meetings shall include only matters included in the call.
  - 2. The proposed docket of stated meetings shall be prepared by a Docket Planning Committee comprised of the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Moderator of Leadership Team, Worship Team chair, Stated Clerk, pastor of the host church, if applicable.
  - 3. The proposed docket of a stated meeting shall be approved by the Leadership Team. Approval of the designated offering for a Stated Meeting shall be approved by the Leadership Team with consultation of the Session of a host church, if applicable.
- G. Expenses
  - 1. A commissioner's reasonable expenses for attendance at meetings of Presbytery should be reimbursed by the Session issuing the commission.
  - 2. If a minister member or ruling elder member needs reimbursement from the Presbytery for expenses to attend a meeting, the member shall request such reimbursement through the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.

## **VI. Leadership Team**

### **A. Mission**

The Leadership Team helps the Presbytery keep faithful to its mission. The team discerns matters together abiding by the Presbytery's covenant. They are stewards of the Presbytery's vision and its coordinated Administrative Hub.

### **B. Responsibilities**

- 1. Lead the Presbytery in the process of visioning for future; to look toward the future by working with churches and addressing their concerns.
- 2. Appoint and recruit members of ad hoc committees.
- 3. Appoint Investigating Committees (D-10.0201b) and Committees of Counsel (D-6.0302a).
- 4. Assist in planning and approval of the docket for Presbytery meetings.
- 5. Maintain communication with commissions and committees.
- 6. Plan training for commissions and committees as well as its own continuing education
- 7. Serve as the trustees of the corporation.
- 8. Nominate persons for the Presbytery's Nominating Committee

9. Initiate or respond to requests to plan and implement Presbytery-sponsored programming.
10. Evaluate the needs and functions of the Presbytery consistent with the Administrative Hub [Attached].
11. Prepare and recommend to Presbytery a regular system of priority setting and response to new and emerging needs.
12. Serve as the link between the Presbytery and other governing bodies and institutions, including ecumenical and interfaith relationships.
13. Develop and maintain processes for chaplaincy to those serving as Pastors and Educators (G-3.0307) in collaboration with the Commission on Ministry.

C. Membership

1. The Immediate Past Moderator of Presbytery shall serve as Moderator. If this individual is unable to serve, the Moderator shall appoint another person to the position.
2. Moderator of the Presbytery
3. Vice Moderator of the Presbytery
4. Stated Clerk of the Presbytery
5. Administrative Team members if not already serving in one of the categories below.
6. Other representatives, who must be ministers of the Word and Sacrament or ruling elders, designated by the following entities:
  - a. Commission on Ministry
  - b. Mission and Evangelism Committee
  - c. Faith, Education, and Leadership Development Committee
  - d. Social Justice and Peacemaking Committee
  - e. Personnel Committee
  - f. Commission on Preparation for Ministry

**VII. Commissions**

- A. The Presbytery has three permanent commissions, one judicial and two administrative. Members of these commissions shall be nominated by the Presbytery's Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery.
- B. Permanent Judicial Commission
  1. Mission: to serve as described in the *Rules of Discipline* of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
  2. Membership
    - a. The Commission has nine members, all ministers of the Word and Sacrament or ruling elders, in nearly equal numbers as possible. The ruling elder members must be members of a congregation under jurisdiction of this Presbytery.
    - b. They shall serve in three classes of three.
    - c. They serve six-year terms, elected on alternate years.
    - d. Each serves a single term and may not be re-elected, but all are eligible to be called to service for six years after completing their term (D- 5.0206b).
    - e. No two ruling elder members of the Commission may be from the same congregation.

C. Commission on Ministry

1. Mission and Procedures

- a. The mission of the Commission on Ministry (COM) is to ensure the fulfillment of the Presbytery's constitutional responsibilities with respect to its minister members, to assist and support Sessions in obtaining pastoral leadership, to advocate for healthy relationships among sessions, congregations, and pastoral leadership, and other such matters as the Presbytery directs.
- b. The Commission shall adopt a manual of operations, consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and these bylaws, to guide its work.

2. Membership

- a. The Commission has eighteen members: nine ministers of the Word and Sacrament and nine ruling elders.
- b. The membership is divided into three classes of six.
- c. The term of service is three years; a member may be reelected once. Members may fill a partial term of two years or less, and then may be elected to serve two consecutive terms. Total consecutive service is not to exceed eight years.

3. Officers

- a. The Commission shall have a Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk.
- b. The Commission elects these officers annually.

4. Meetings

- a. The Commission shall meet at a time and place of its choosing.
- b. A quorum of the Commission shall be a majority of its members.

5. The Presbytery delegates to the Commission the following powers: each such action is to be reported to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting.

- a. to examine and to receive ministers of the Word and Sacrament into membership. Examination shall include but not be limited to theology, call to ministry, background check, and statement of faith. (G-3.0306)
- b. to approve the establishment and dissolution of pastoral relationships when all parties agree, and to approve the terms of such relationships.
- c. to approve the transfer of presbytery membership of ministers of the Word and Sacrament when requested by other presbyteries.
- d. to grant permission to ministers of the Word and Sacrament to labor within and outside the bounds of this Presbytery.
- e. appoint administrative commissions to install or, in consultation with the Commission on Preparation for Ministry, to ordain and install. Process for ordination and installation shall be a part of the Commission's procedural manual. (G-3.0307)
- f. to propose administrative commissions for the purpose of church closures to Presbytery for approval.
- g. to appoint moderators of session in the absence of an installed pastor as needed (G-3.0201)

- h. to approve commissions to ruling elders called to specific service, once they are certified by the Commission on Preparation for Ministry
- i. to appoint administrative commissions to ordain and install Ministers of Word and Sacraments
- j. to validate the ministry of Ministers of Word and Sacrament not in active service to a church. Validated ministries shall include but not be limited to chaplains, staff of ecumenical organizations, interfaith organizations, faith-based community organizations and other ministries following review of the service involved. (G-3.0306, G-2.0503a)

#### D. Commission on Preparation for Ministry

##### 1. Mission and Procedures

- a. The mission of the Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) is to develop and promote a process to encourage qualified and capable individuals to consider ordained ministry; to enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament; to assist individuals and supporting congregations as they proceed to Inquiry, Candidacy, and Ordination; to recommend for Presbytery's election minister and ruling elder readers of examinations for candidates for ordination;
- b. to provide for the training, testing and preparation of ruling elders called to be commissioned to specific ministries. (G-3.0306)
- c. to approve training programs completed by Commissioned Pastors prior to arrival in the Presbytery.
- d. The Commission shall adopt a manual of operations, consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and these bylaws, to guide its work.

##### 2. Membership

- a. The Commission has six members: three ministers of the Word and Sacrament and three ruling elders. No two ruling elders may be from the same congregation.
- b. The membership is divided into three classes of two.
- c. The term of service is three years; a member may be reelected once. Members may fill a partial term of two years or less, and then may be elected to serve two consecutive terms. Total consecutive service is not to exceed eight years.

##### 3. Officers

- a. The Commission shall have a Moderator and Clerk.
- b. The Commission elects these officers annually.

##### 4. Meetings

- a. The Commission shall meet at a time, place, or electronically of its choosing.
- b. A quorum of the Commission shall be a majority of its members.

##### 5. The Presbytery delegates to the Commission the following powers: each such action is to be reported to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting.

- a. to receive inquirers and candidates from other presbyteries and, upon the presbyteries' request, to dismiss them to other presbyteries.
- b. to certify candidates for Minister of Word and Sacrament are ready to serve.



- c. to certify ruling elders as ready to be commissioned to service as a Commissioned Pastor or commissioned to particular service as defined by Presbytery.
- d. in collaboration with COM to evaluate and approve Commissioned Pastor's previously commissioned by another Presbytery prior to commissioning in PMRV.

## VIII. Committees

### A. General provisions of Committees

#### 1. Membership

- a. Except for the Nominating Committee itself, members of committees are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery.
- b. All minister members of Presbytery (permanent and temporary) and members of congregations under jurisdiction of this Presbytery are eligible to serve as members of committees.
- c. Members of committees serve three-year terms; members may be re-elected to a second term. When members are elected to fill unexpired terms of two years or less, they may be elected to up to two full terms in their own right, so long as no one serves on the same committee for more than eight consecutive years.
- d. Committee members shall assume elected duties effective on January 1 following election or immediately upon election if filling a vacancy. Rationale: Clarify the date of assuming responsibilities.

#### 2. Meetings

- a. Committees shall meet at times and places of their own choosing.
- b. The quorum of a committee meeting is a majority of its members.

#### 3. Officers

- a. Each committee shall annually elect a chair, a vice chair, and a clerk.
- b. If the chair is a ruling elder, that person has voice and vote at a Stated Meeting of the Presbytery; if the chair is a church member not ordained as a ruling elder, that chair has voice but not vote at meetings of the Presbytery. Ordinarily individuals may only serve as Chair/Moderator of one PMRV Committee/Commission simultaneously.

- 4. Procedures: Each committee shall adopt a manual of operations, consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and these bylaws, to guide its work.

### B. Faith Education and Leadership Development (FELD)

#### 1. Mission

The mission of the Faith Education and Leadership Development Committee is to provide resources and training in the areas of Christian Education and Church Officer Training; assist congregations in their development of Christian Education programs including Educator support and teacher-training opportunities; maintain a relationship with the ministry of Camp Calvin Crest through those serving on the Calvin Crest Camp and Conference Center Board of Directors; carry out the Presbytery's responsibilities identified in *The Book of*

*Order* to provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to its member churches in the areas of faith and leadership development; maintain the Presbytery's media equipment and resources, and to encourage and foster the mission of its working groups.

## 2. Membership

The Committee has nine members: three ministers of the Word and Sacrament, three ruling elders, and three other persons who may be presbyters or other church members.

## 3. Youth Ministry

### a. Mission

- The mission of Youth Ministry is to assist congregations in their development of meaningful youth ministry programs; develop and provide resources for ministries with youth on the Presbytery level for the congregations; develop Presbytery-wide youth events, which at times may be in cooperation with other Presbyteries in the region; promote and, when necessary, administer opportunities for church wide events – such as Triennium, Camp Calvin Crest, Synod School, High School, college and seminary events, etc. as well as provide a full report to the Presbytery; and promote opportunities for networking among youth ministry workers, including developing the Presbyterian Youth Workers Association (PYWA) within the Presbytery.

### b. Membership

- The Working Group has three adult members elected by the Presbytery for three-year terms. These adult members may be presbyters or other church members, with no two church members from the same congregation, and will serve three-year terms. These adult members may co-opt any number of youth members for one-year terms; youth members are to be members of congregations within the jurisdiction of the Presbytery and between the ages of fourteen and eighteen at the time of appoint; they may be reappointed up to two times to serve not more than three consecutive years. No two youth members are to be from the same congregation.

## C. Mission and Evangelism

### 1. Mission

- The mission of the Mission and Evangelism Committee is to serve as a catalyst for connecting individuals and congregations with opportunities for mission education, mission interpretation, and active participation in mission programs offered by local congregations, Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly; assist the congregations of the Presbytery in their own interpretive tasks of mission programs of higher councils of the denomination; provide oversight responsibility for the mission involvement of the Presbytery; develop and administer a system of administration for the granting of regular and special mission funds and other mission-designated funds entrusted to the Committee by Presbytery; encourage, promote, and carry out

opportunities that will further the efforts of congregations in the areas of evangelism; identify and communicate the resources and opportunities that might further evangelism in congregations and the Presbytery; assist in creating opportunities for fellowship within the Presbytery; and implement the Presbytery's actions regarding organizing new churches, receiving and uniting churches in consultation with their members, and locating new churches and churches desiring to move.

## 2. Membership

- The Committee has six members: two ministers of the Word and Sacrament, two ruling elders, and two other members who may be presbyters or other church members.

## 3. Immigrant Ministry

### a. Mission

The mission of Immigrant Ministry is to assist the Presbytery in supporting immigrant groups as they seek to adjust to life and ministry in a new culture; support the Immigrant Ministries as it seeks to adjust to life and ministry in a new culture; facilitate and support leadership development; assist in the development of budget, funding, and facilities management; and interpret to congregations of the Presbytery the mission of the immigrant ministry.

### b. Membership

The Immigrant Ministry Group is comprised of presbyters and other church members, who represent different congregations within the Presbytery and who possess specific gifts and abilities to support and further the immigrant ministry.

## 4. Nicaragua International Partnership

### a. Mission

- The Nicaragua International Partnership of the Presbytery of Missouri River Valley is part of an international partnership between the Interdenominational Council of Evangelical Pastors of La Concepcion, Nicaragua, and Presbytery of Missouri River Valley, USA. We are united with our partners through love and faith in Christ, in response to God's call to build God's kingdom, working actively, modeling the ministry of Jesus Christ to extend his love, justice, joy, hope, empowerment, and message within our communities. Consistent with our jointly developed partnership Mission Statement and the PCUSA relationship-based mission model, we strive to act with a commitment to world mission, a love for humankind, and a trust in each other which continually deepens objectives.

1. Communicate frequently, sharing with each other the needs and joys of our communities.
2. Promote exchanges between the partnership communities.
3. Work together in partnership on programs and projects, while being good stewards of God's gifts.

D. Nominating Committee

1. Mission

- The mission of the Nominating Committee is to encourage participation in the ministry, mission, and work of the Presbytery by qualified persons from throughout its congregations; secure from congregational leadership names of individuals who have particular gifts and abilities that would further the vision of the Presbytery; and nominate persons to fill vacancies when there is a resignation or death.

2. Membership

- The Committee has nine members: three ministers of the Word and Sacrament, three male church members, and three female church members, with no two church members from the same congregation, divided into three equal classes. These people are nominated by the Leadership Team and elected by the Presbytery.

3. Procedures and Expectations (G-3.0111)

- The Nominating Committee shall annually present a slate of candidates for election at the final Presbytery meeting of the year which shall include officer candidates and candidates for service on vacancies on Presbytery Commissions and Committees. The Nominating Committee may fill vacant positions as candidates are presented for nomination and election at a regular Presbytery meeting. Terms of office shall commence for elected positions effective on January 1. If installation is required, installation shall be held at the first Presbytery Stated Meeting of the calendar year.
- Expectations of Officers, Commissions and Committees be in compliance with Committee/Commission expectations or in compliance with the Book of Order.

E. Personnel Committee

1. Mission

- The mission of the Personnel Committee is to provide confidential counsel, guidance, care, and advocacy support for the Presbytery Staff as defined in the Presbytery Personnel Policies and Procedures. The Personnel Committee serves as the Presbytery's Head of Staff to employ, provide annual performance reviews of Presbytery Staff, provide a platform for all staff searches, hear, and attempt to resolve all staff concerns and problems and terminate staff members if necessary.

2. Membership

- The Committee has four members who have been nominated and duly elected by the Presbytery.

3. Personnel policies, staff search and review procedures shall be posted on the Presbytery website. (G-3.0111)

F. Representation

1. Mission

- The mission of the Committee on Representation is to advise the Presbytery regarding the implementation of principles of unity and diversity; advocate for diversity in leadership; and consult with the Presbytery on the employment of personnel (G-3.0103).

2. Membership

- a. Moderator of the Presbytery
- b. Vice Moderator of the Presbytery
- c. Stated Clerk of the Presbytery
- d. Chair of Nominating Committee. Representatives from underrepresented groups shall be consulted to seek candidates for Presbytery service on Committees and Commissions.

G. Social Justice and Peacemaking Committee

1. Mission

- The mission of Social Justice and Peacemaking is to assist the Presbytery in its education and advocacy of issues related to social justice and peacemaking emerging from higher councils of the denomination to:
  - a. assist the Presbytery in the development of programs and activities related to issues regarding social justice and peacemaking;
  - b. work with other committees and relevant groups in the proper administration of special funds related to social justice, hunger, peacemaking, etc.
  - c. be responsible for education, action, and advocacy on social ministry/public policy issues on which the General Assembly, Synod or this Presbytery has officially spoken; and on political/legislative matters of concern to the Church.

2. Membership

- The Committee shall have up to six individuals (presbyters and other church members) who represent different congregations within the Presbytery and who possess specific gifts and abilities to support and further the ministry described above.

H. The Presbytery's Disaster Assistance Committee

1. Mission

- The mission of the Presbytery's Disaster Assistance Committee is:
  - a. To assist congregations within the presbytery in becoming more prepared for natural or man-made disasters.
  - b. To have equipment and personnel who will provide first response to a disaster within the presbytery.
  - c. To maintain information about each church facility to aid PDA and other disaster responders in setting up centers critical to disaster relief.
  - d. To facilitate the presbytery and congregations in their participation in Presbyterian Disaster Assistance mission opportunities.

2. Membership

- The committee is comprised of those individuals who are called to work in disaster relief in any capacity.

I. Stewardship of Resources Committee

1. Mission

- The mission of the Stewardship of Resources Committee is to be responsible for stewardship, handle any funds development for the Presbytery, and oversight of the

regular receipt of funds and gifts to the Presbytery; provide for the financial oversight, management, accounting, and annual financial review (G-3.0113) for all Presbytery funds-

- a. Make recommendations to the Presbytery concerning requests of congregations to buy, sell, or encumber church property, following review and consultation with appropriate parties; and assure the Fiscal Accountability Policies of the Presbytery are carried out.
- b. Following the approved investment policy, consult with a professional investment person identified by the Presbytery yearly concerning the investment policy of the Presbytery, then make the appropriate recommendation to the Leadership Team concerning any changes to the investments.

2. Membership

- The Committee has six members.

J. Worship and Spirituality

1. Mission

- The mission of Worship and Spirituality is to cooperate with Presbytery leadership and Staff to develop appropriate and engaging worship services for the Presbytery; oversee the receipt and counting of offerings at Presbytery worship services for which it is responsible and ensures that the offerings are delivered to those responsible for the appropriate deposit of funds on behalf of the Presbytery; engage in partnerships with other entities and congregations to address ongoing needs related to spiritual growth and worship; provide and promote events that will develop and further the spiritual growth of individuals and congregations; assist in the communication of appropriate denominational resources related to spirituality and worship; and encourage theological discussion within the Presbytery, including speakers and/or discussion at Presbytery meetings and at other events and times.

2. Membership

- The Working Group has six members: two ministers of the Word and Sacrament, two ruling elders, and two other presbyters or other church members.

**IX. Amendment**

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of presbyters present and voting at a meeting of the Presbytery, if notice has been given of proposed amendments. This notice shall be either publication of the proposed amendment at the previous meeting of Presbytery or distribution of the proposed amendment to all members and sessions of the Presbytery not less than two weeks before the meeting.

## Standing Rules of the Presbytery

### I. Rules Governing Meetings

#### A. Docket

1. The docket of a stated meeting of the Presbytery shall be drafted by a design team consisting of the Moderator, Vice Moderator and Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, Worship Team chair, and the pastor and/or other representative(s) of the host.
2. The draft docket is presented to the Leadership Team for approval not less than two weeks before the meeting.
3. The docket shall include worship, which should ordinarily include the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and should give priority to learning, building of relationships, and acting, rather than reporting past activities.

#### B. Parliamentary procedure

1. The parliamentary authority is that specified by the Book of Order or, if none specified, the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.
2. The Moderator of the Presbytery rules on questions of procedure.
3. The Stated Clerk serves as the Presbytery's parliamentarian.
4. Unless the Presbytery provides otherwise, speeches addressing a question in debate shall be limited to three minutes.

#### C. Redress of Imbalance (G-3.0301)

1. Annually, as soon as possible after Sessions have submitted their membership reports, the Stated Clerk shall ascertain the parity of minister and ruling elder members and commissioners. The Clerk shall consider all ministers of the Word and Sacrament in active service, as well as those who are retired and serving congregations and who are retired and continue to attend meetings of the Presbytery; and one ruling elder commissioner per session as well as those ruling elders entitled to voice and vote at meetings (Bylaws, III.B.).
2. If the number of ruling elders equals or exceeds the number of ministers of the Word and Sacrament, there is no imbalance, and no action is needed.
3. If the number of ministers of the Word and Sacrament exceeds the number of ruling elders, then the Stated Clerk shall propose a means to redress the imbalance by asking Sessions to elect additional commissioners. The Clerk shall give priority to those congregations with more than 350 members; those congregations with more than one minister of the Word and Sacrament installed to permanent service; those congregations who regularly participate in the mission of the Presbytery; and those congregations whose membership may help create diverse representation within the life of the Presbytery. The Clerk may consult with the Committee on Representation for guidance, as needed.

### II. Rules Governing Subordinate Entities of the Presbytery

#### A. Representation

1. As the Nominating Committee is seeking members to nominate for election, they should consult with the Committee on Representation for guidance.

2. Before presenting candidates for election to the Presbytery, the Nominating Committee shall inform the Committee on Representation, who shall ascertain if the Nominating Committee was diligent in its attempt to seek diversity in candidates.

**B. Electronic Decision-making**

1. Recognizing there are times when the various entities of the Presbytery need to make decisions between scheduled or stated meetings as well as to act swiftly in other occasions, the Leadership Team, Committees, Commissions, and other Presbytery groups (in lieu of calling a special meeting) may choose to use electronic forms of communication.
2. Chairpersons shall make a good faith effort to contact all members through e-mail, telephone, text, fax, and/or other electronic means.
3. When at least a majority of the members respond in the affirmative (or the negative) then that decision will be considered the action of the body.
4. Such action shall be reported to the next meeting of the body and recorded in its minutes.

**C. Intentional and Implied Resignation**

1. There are times when those elected are unable to continue in their service to the Presbytery. These individuals should communicate their resignation to the Stated Clerk.
2. If during a calendar year an individual is *absent without notice* from three meetings, this may be interpreted by the Chair as an implied resignation, recorded in the minutes, and reported to the Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk then notifies the Presbytery of the vacancy and refers the matter to the Nominating Committee.

**III. Rules Governing Records**

**A. Records of Sessions**

1. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery shall coordinate the general administrative review of records of sessions (G-3.0108a).
2. The Commission on Ministry or the Presbytery itself may require special administrative review (G-3.0108b).
3. Only the Presbytery by majority vote at a meeting, the Presbytery's Permanent Judicial Commission, or an administrative commission specifically charged with that purpose and power may direct a Session to take particular action (G-3.0108c).

**B. Presbytery's temporary records**

1. The Presbytery keeps files of papers related to minister of the Word and Sacrament members, inquirers, candidates, and sessions at its office. These files may be retained in perpetuity. Those under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery have the right to view their files; such right is surrendered when transferring to another jurisdiction or renouncing jurisdiction.
2. When an investigating committee of the Presbytery determines not to file charges and its decision is not overturned (D-10.0303), it shall surrender its records to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, who shall retain them for three years, after which they shall be destroyed.

**C. Presbytery's permanent records (G-3.0107)**



1. The Presbytery shall hold a minimum of 25 years of permanent records on-site in a fire-safe manner. Other Presbytery minutes and permanent records shall be held by the Presbyterian Historical Society.

**D. Members of Dissolved Congregations**

1. When the Presbytery receives members who were on the role of active members when a congregation is dissolved, according to G-3.0301c, the Presbytery shall keep their names on its roll of “miscellaneous members.” The stated clerk shall be authorized to issue letters of transfer of these members upon request, and report that fact to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting. After a period of two years from the dissolution of the congregation, the stated clerk shall attempt to contact any persons whose names remain on that roll, using the address provided at the time of dissolution of the church. This contact shall encourage the members to find a congregational home and shall provide a date, no later than three years from the time of the dissolution of the congregation, when the members’ names shall be deleted from the Presbytery’s roll of miscellaneous members.
2. If the stated clerk receives no response or is unable to contact these members, their names shall automatically be removed from that roll on the third anniversary of the dissolution of the church.

**IV. Rules Governing Communications with Other Councils**

- A. All formal communications between the Presbytery and other Councils is through the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. Formal communications are such things as requests for waivers from constitutional requirements; transfers of membership; notifications in judicial process; requests for official presbytery action; and other similar matters.
- B. When a Session or an entity of the Presbytery wishes the Presbytery to overture the Synod or the General Assembly to take some action, the proposal shall be presented through the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. The Stated Clerk shall provide advice on format, deadlines, and procedures, without bias as to the merit or advisability of the request.
- C. When another Presbytery requests the concurrence of this Presbytery on an overture to the Synod or the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall inform the Presbytery through some appropriate means within a reasonable time, so that Sessions or entities of the Presbytery may initiate action for concurrence.
- D. When the Presbytery receives proposed amendments to the Constitution, the Stated Clerk shall advertise the nature of those proposed amendments and invite interested persons to provide information on their merit. The Stated Clerk may further invite the cooperation of the Faith Education and Leadership Development Committee to create events to disseminate relevant information and discuss theological concerns before the meeting at which the Presbytery votes on these proposals.

**V. Commissioners to Other Councils** (*This section intentionally left blank.*)

**VI. Amendment**

- A. These standing rules may be amended at any meeting of the Presbytery by a majority vote of those presbyters present and voting.
- B. The Presbytery may, by two-thirds vote, determine at any time to suspend the Standing Rules.

## **Addendum I**

### **Presbytery of Missouri River Valley Family Medical Leave Policy for Installed Pastors**

Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving in an installed position within the bounds of Presbytery of Missouri River Valley shall have access to twelve (12) weeks of paid Family Medical Leave in compliance with the PC(USA)Book of Order (G-2.0804). The twelve (12) weeks of Family Leave shall be accessed for the following reasons: health issues of the pastor; parental leave following birth, adoption, or foster care; health issues of the pastor's immediate family (partner/spouse, child/foster child, parent); and for bereavement of the pastor's immediate family. This leave is available each calendar year and the time shall be recorded in the Session minutes.

## Addendum II

### Presbytery of Missouri River Valley Anti-Harassment Policy

#### 1. Introduction: As the Church of Jesus Christ, love is the rule of our relationships.

- a. Jesus said, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets,” (Matt. 7:12), and “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35).
- b. The Book of Order states, “The Church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down.” (F-1.0301, “The Calling of the Church: the Church is the Body of Christ”)
- c. Because we believe this, and because we seek to live it out in all aspects of our personal and corporate life, we believe that harassment in all its forms is incompatible with who we are as followers of Jesus.

#### 2. What is harassment?

- a. Harassment, simply put, is “*repeated unwanted behavior.*” To take the parts in reverse order:
- b. *Behavior*: harassment consists of words or actions that demean, threaten, offend, or humiliate another person.<sup>1</sup> This could include, but is not limited to, name-calling in private or public, or in electronic communication such as email; offensive or demeaning social media posts (see the presbytery’s Social Media Policy); stalking; and mockery of another person’s appearance, demeanor, gender, or racial/ethnic identity.
- c. *Unwanted*: teasing or humorous language that might appear inoffensive to an observer is characteristic of some relationships, but if the person who is being teased in this way finds that teasing offensive or demeaning, it has crossed the line into harassment. In these cases intention is irrelevant; it is how the language is received that is crucial.
- d. *Repeated*: in an emotionally-charged setting, a person may use insulting or demeaning language. Ideally, this leads to apology, forgiveness, and reconciliation. But when the insulting or demeaning language is repeated, it becomes harassment.

#### 3. How do we prevent harassment in the Church?

- a. Jesus is our model for how we treat each other. But we don’t always live up to that standard. That means we must begin with ourselves in stopping harassment of our fellow believers. One way is to ask ourselves before we speak in a meeting or write in an email, “will what I am about to say or write tend to build up the community or break

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<sup>1</sup> This language is adapted from the National Archives document, “Factsheet about Workplace Harassment,” <https://www.archives.gov/files/eeo/policy/facts-about-workplace-harassment.pdf>

down the community?” More specifically, “have I fallen into a pattern of using dismissive or demeaning language toward this person or this group?” This does not preclude legitimate criticism; it does mean that when criticism is necessary, it must be done in genuine love and concern not only for the body as a whole but also for the individual.

- b. Jesus is our model for how we treat each other. But we don’t always live up to that standard. That means that we acknowledge together that harassment in all its forms is wrong, and we commit ourselves to repentance and genuine reconciliation whenever harassment occurs.
- c. Jesus is our model for how we treat each other. But we don’t always live up to that standard. Those in positions of power like pastors, ruling elders, and youth leaders are particularly tempted to use insulting or demeaning language to those with less power. Men are more likely to harass women. If we are in a position of power, we need to test our words and actions by Jesus’ standards.

#### 4. What do we do when harassment takes place?

- a. Jesus’ words in Matthew 18:15-19 are a good place to begin:  
*If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.*
  - b. If you are being harassed, or if you witness harassment, call it out, if possible. It may be that the person engaging in harassing behavior will recognize their fault, repent and apologize.
  - c. If that doesn’t work, others should be brought in.
  - d. Finally, the session should counsel with the person engaging in harassing behavior. If that doesn’t lead to repentance and reconciliation, it may be necessary to initiate a Disciplinary Process under Chapter VII of Church Discipline section of the Book of Order, always remembering the purpose of church discipline (D-1.0301) and the duty to conciliate and mediate whenever appropriate (D-1.04)
5. This policy takes effect when it is approved by the session/presbytery council. The session/council will review it every three years and change it as necessary to fulfill the requirements of the Book of Order. Each session member will be provided with a written copy of this policy. *The policy will be included in the Presbytery Manual of Operations.*

This policy statement is by its nature stated in negative terms. At the same time, it is written to be consistent with the Statement of Ethical Conduct of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),<sup>2</sup> in the belief that those who adhere to the ethical conduct set forth in that document will avoid the kind of harassing behavior the present document is meant to deal with.

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<sup>2</sup> The Standards of Ethical Conduct can be downloaded here: [Standards of Ethical Conduct PCUSA](#)

## Addendum III

### Presbytery of Missouri River Valley Anti Racism (Diversity) Policy

#### F-1.0403 states, *Unity in Diversity*:

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than

those stated in this Constitution.

Racism is the opposite of what God intends for humanity. It is the rejection of the other, which is entirely contrary to the Word of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. Racism is a lie about our fellow human beings, for it says that some are less than others. Because of our biblical understanding of who God is and what God intends for humanity, the PC(USA) must stand against, speak against and work against racism. (GA policy reference)

G-3.0106 requires each Council to adopt an anti-racism policy.

As a congregation within the PCUSA we will:

1. Seek to welcome and be open to all people (believers)
2. Educate ourselves to seek awareness of our own behavior and biases and the impact on our community of faith and the wider community.
3. Seek resources (curriculum, worship, preaching and music) which are reflective of all ethnic and racial backgrounds.
4. Study Matthew 25 materials and resources to increase our awareness of systemic racism and its impact. (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/matt-25-resources/>)
5. Apply to hiring practices and church leadership