

BYLAWS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF PHILADELPHIA

1. THE PRESBYTERY

1.1 **Stated Meetings** The Presbytery shall hold six stated meetings during the year, on the fourth Tuesday of the month, as follows:

January
March
May
July
September
November

The date of the March meeting shall be subject to change by action of the Committee on Mission Oversight, to avoid a conflict with Holy Week. Meetings shall begin at 10:00 a.m. or at 4:00 p.m., as designated by the Committee on Mission Oversight, upon recommendation of the Presbytery Meetings and Worship Committee. The Presbytery Meetings and Worship Committee shall be responsible for encouraging and accepting invitations from particular churches and other appropriate sites for Presbytery meetings. Notice of stated meetings shall be given as provided in Section 2.3(c)(5).

1.2 **Special Meetings** A special meeting of the Presbytery may be called by the Presbytery or by the Committee on Mission Oversight, on not less than ten days written notice to each member of the Presbytery and each clerk of session, setting forth the date, time, and place of the meeting and the specific business for which the meeting is called.

1.3 **Attendance and Members**

- a. Except as set forth in Section 1.3(b), all ministers are expected to communicate to the Stated Clerk their reasons for absence from any stated meeting. When a minister has been absent for a year without excuse, that minister shall be liable to the censure of the Presbytery.
- b. Retired ministers, ministers on the inactive roll, and ministers working outside the bounds of the Presbytery, while most welcome to attend any meeting of the Presbytery, are deemed excused unless they register for a particular meeting.
- c. It is the duty of each session to be represented at each stated meeting by an elder, and elders so appointed shall make a report of the meeting of the Presbytery to their sessions.

- d. Elders serving as officers of the Presbytery, as members of the Committee on Mission Oversight, or the Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery or as moderators of standing committees shall be enrolled as members of the Presbytery for their terms of office.
 - e. An elder who has served as moderator of the Presbytery shall continue to be enrolled as a member of the Presbytery upon expiration of her or his term of office. An elder who has been elected a commissioner to the General Assembly shall be enrolled as a member of the Presbytery from the date of her or his election through the adjournment of the General Assembly meeting following the meeting to which he or she is a commissioner.
- 1.4 **Expenses** Expenses of each meeting of the Presbytery (other than the expenses of individual members and commissioners), including the expenses of giving notice, will be paid from the Ecclesiastical Expense Budget of the Presbytery. A sexton's fee of \$50 per day will be paid to the host church.
- 1.5 **Meeting Arrangements** The Presbytery Meetings and Worship Committee shall adopt and make available to each church hosting a meeting of the Presbytery the minimum requirements, including seating capacity, child care, meal service, and meeting and registration facilities.
- 1.6 **Docket** The Presbytery Meetings and Worship Committee shall be responsible for planning each Presbytery meeting subject to approval by the Presbytery at the beginning of the meeting. When adopted by the Presbytery, the order of business set forth in the docket shall supersede for that meeting any contrary provisions of these Bylaws. Any procedures for the conduct of any item of the Presbytery's business set forth in the docket for a particular meeting shall, upon adoption of the docket by the Presbytery, govern the conduct of such business at that meeting. Committee moderators wishing to report at a stated meeting of the Presbytery should communicate to the Stated Clerk the amount of time needed before the Presbytery Meetings and Worship Committee meeting. Any such request for time on the docket will be subject to approval or adjustment by the Presbytery Meetings and Worship Committee, in light of all other business scheduled to come before a particular stated meeting.
- 1.7 **Business Not Included in the Docket** Members of the Presbytery and elder commissioners to a Presbytery meeting may propose, subject to other limitations contained in these *Bylaws*, that the Presbytery consider a motion on a matter not included in the docket. Any such motion shall be

in writing and shall be handed to the Stated Clerk no later than the recess for the meal of the day. As promptly as practicable thereafter, the Stated Clerk shall notify the persons then present that there are matters of New Business and shall succinctly state the nature thereof. The Presbytery shall thereafter consider no additional item of New Business, except with the permission of the Moderator and the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members and commissioners then present.

- 1.8 **Worship at Presbytery Meetings** A worship service shall be provided at each stated meeting, under the direction of the Presbytery Meetings and Worship Committee. It shall be no longer than 45 minutes and shall model various styles of worship appropriate to the Reformed tradition. The worship service at the January stated meeting each year (which shall be scheduled for an appropriately longer period of time) shall include the installation of the Moderator and Vice Moderator and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, providing occasion for the remembrance of ministers and elders who have died since the last observance of the Sacrament.
- 1.9 **Order of Business at Stated Meetings** The order of business at each stated meeting of the Presbytery shall be as approved by the Presbytery upon recommendation of the Presbytery Meetings and Worship Committee.
- 1.10 **Committee on Arrangements** The Moderator and Clerks of the Presbytery, together with the pastor(s) and the elder commissioner(s) of the church at which a meeting is to be held, the planning team designated by the Presbytery Meetings and Worship Committee shall constitute a Committee on Arrangements for that meeting.
- 1.11 **Standing Orders** Standing Orders constitute the required events and reports at meetings throughout the year, as follows:
- January
 - Installation of the Moderator and Vice Moderators
 - Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
 - Report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures
 - July
 - Approval of Mission Budget
 - Annual Elections
 - September
 - Annual Report of Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Philadelphia
 - November

Annual Report of the Committee on Representation

- 1.12 **Rules of Order** The latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be the rules for the transaction of the business of the Presbytery and all of its committees.
- 1.13 **Bylaws** These Bylaws, insofar as they are not the law of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), may be suspended at any stated meeting of the Presbytery by a two-thirds vote of the members present. They may be amended as follows:
- a. a proposed amendment shall be submitted to the responsible committee for its approval;
 - b. thereafter the proposed amendment shall be submitted to Committee on Mission Oversight for its approval and recommendation to the Presbytery; and
 - c. the proposed amendment shall be subject to approval by a two-thirds vote at any stated meeting, provided notice has previously been given of the intention to submit the proposed amendment and its proposed wording in accordance with Section 2.5(c)(v)(D).
- 1.14 **Appendices to the Bylaws** The Appendices to the Bylaws include:
- a. information subject to change without the necessity for Presbytery approval, such as lists of meeting dates and places and assignments of Presbytery staff to committees, which shall be amended by the Stated Clerk from time to time, as changes are communicated to the Stated Clerk, by issuing replacement pages; and
 - b. rules adopted by a committee as its policies and procedures, which shall be amended by recommendation of the committee, subject to approval by the Committee on Mission Oversight by majority vote.
- 1.15 **Executive Session** When the Presbytery votes to sit in private or executive session, the following rules shall apply:
- a. Only members of the Presbytery in good standing and elder commissioners properly appointed by their sessions and registered as commissioners may remain in the meeting to participate in the consideration of business and to vote.
 - b. By a two-thirds vote of the members and elder commissioners present after the Presbytery has been declared to be in executive session by the Moderator, one or more corresponding members may be seated for all or part of the executive session for good reason, without the privilege of voting; but the motion to seat each corresponding member must be considered and voted on separately. By a two-thirds vote of the members and elder

commissioners present in executive session, other persons considered to possess information pertinent to the business to be considered and acted on may be invited to present such information and to answer questions, and shall then retire from the meeting.

- c. Members and elder commissioners may not leave an executive session of the Presbytery before it is concluded, unless excused by the Moderator in response to a personal request from the floor; nor may any minister or elder commissioner be admitted to an executive session after the business to be considered has been introduced. The Temporary Clerks and other members and commissioners appointed by the Moderator shall guard the doors to insure observance of this rule.

1.16 **Minutes of Meetings**

- a. The Stated Clerk, with the assistance of the Journal Clerk, shall prepare minutes of each meeting of the Presbytery, reflecting all actions taken by the Presbytery.
- b. A digest of such minutes shall be made available on the Presbytery's Website (with any confidential information, such as terms of call, excised) promptly after each meeting, shall be sent by e-mail to members of the Presbytery and churches of the Presbytery upon their request, and shall be placed on the table at the next Presbytery meeting.
- c. A committee of four shall be appointed by the Presbytery to examine the minutes of each meeting of the Presbytery. The report of this committee shall be presented for adoption as part of the Stated Clerk's report at the next stated meeting of the Presbytery.
(Approved November 30, 2010)

1.17 **Administrative Commissions**

- a. When an administrative commission is appointed under *Book of Order* G-9.0503a(3), it shall investigate the alleged disorder and report thereon to the Presbytery, together with any recommendations as to the delegation of specific powers deemed adequate for dealing with the task assigned.
- b. The members of an administrative commission of the sort referred to in Section 1.17(a) shall be appointed by the Moderator and announced at the next stated meeting.
- c. Pursuant to *Book of Order* G-9.0504b(3), all administrative commissions appointed for ordinations and installations shall be composed of the Moderator or his or her designee and no less than five nor more than seven commissioners, no less than three of

whom shall be elders of the Presbytery who are members of different churches of the Presbytery. The commission shall include women and racial/ethnic minority representatives.

1.18 Corresponding Members

- a. Members of other presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and ministers of churches with which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in full communion or in correspondence shall register as corresponding members if attending a meeting of the Presbytery and shall be admitted as such by majority vote of the Presbytery.
- b. Candidates and inquirers who are serving as temporary supply pastors of churches of the Presbytery shall be corresponding members of the Presbytery for the term of such service.
- c. Corresponding members shall have voice but not vote.