

STANDING RULES

The Presbytery of Muskingum Valley

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Adopted January 2006

SECTION I

ARTICLE A - NAME OF THE PRESBYTERY

The Presbytery shall be known as the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley, of the Synod of the Covenant, of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The Presbytery is incorporated under 1702.01 - 1702-50 of the revised code and domesticated under the laws of the State of Ohio. The fiscal year shall be the calendar year.

ARTICLE B - OBJECT OF THE ORGANIZATION

The objects and purposes for which this organization was formed and functions are to conduct ministry and mission in the name of Jesus Christ in the governing body known as the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley, and to transact any and all lawful business for which nonprofit corporations may be incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio to the extent that such business may be conducted by organizations exempt from federal income tax under Section 501c (3) of Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). We have selected the following manner to govern ourselves and direct our mission in conformity with our Call and with the *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)*. These Standing Rules shall serve as the operating by-laws for the corporation known as the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

ARTICLE C – VISION STATEMENT

The vision statement shall be: “Journeying with Jesus to touch the world -- Empowered by the Spirit to: make disciples, nurture our faith and serve the needs of the community.”

ARTICLE D – BOUNDARIES, AREAS AND CLUSTERS

The Presbytery of Muskingum Valley shall exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction according to the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and under the authority of the General Assembly of said denomination over Presbyterian churches now existing or which may in the future exist in these Ohio counties: Ashland, Carroll, western part of Columbiana, Coshocton, Guernsey, western part of Harrison, Holmes, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, eastern part of Richland, Stark, Tuscarawas, Washington, Wayne, and the village of Seville in Medina County.

The congregations shall be divided into four geographic areas for purposes of worship, fellowship, training, mission and representation on the Mission Coordinating Council and other committees and commissions. Ministers who are not serving a congregation but who reside within an area are also encouraged to participate. The areas are not governing bodies and the members are free to structure the area as will best suit their needs. Each area shall recommend three persons, elders and ministers, to serve on the Mission Coordinating Council, from which number the Nominating Committee shall nominate one person from each area for election by the Presbytery.

The congregations within each area shall be divided into clusters of congregations for the purpose of worship, fellowship, training, and mission. Ministers who are not serving a congregation but who reside within an area are also encouraged to participate. The clusters are not governing bodies and the members are free to structure the area as will best suit their needs.

ARTICLE E – MANDATED COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

There shall be the following committees mandated by the *Book of Order* (G-9.0901-0902): Ministry, Nominating, Preparation for Ministry, and Representation. In accord with the *Book of Order* there shall be a Permanent Judicial Commission. The Committees of Presbytery shall be formed, making every effort to assure representation of ministers, laywomen, and laymen, according to age, ethnic background, and geographical distribution with the Presbytery, according to the *Book of Order* G-0.0901.

Each committee member shall ordinarily be elected for three-year terms by classes, serving no more than a total of six consecutive years.

Chairpersons of committees shall be ministers or laypersons. Each standing committee shall elect a secretary from its membership, except for the Committee on Ministry. (Ordinarily, if the chair is a minister, the secretary shall be a layperson and vice versa.) Laypersons of the Committee on Ministry shall be elders. (*Book of Order* G-11.0501)

Each committee should meet on a timely basis with the date and time published on the website. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority.

All committees shall submit an annual report of their activities to the moderator of the Mission Coordinating Council for inclusion in the Annual Report.

Committees may have subcommittees to enable handling of work responsibilities. The membership of each subcommittee will be set forth in the Manual of Operations.

ARTICLE F – MISSION COORDINATING COUNCIL

There shall be a Mission Coordinating Council, hereafter Council, to which Presbytery delegates particular aspects of its tasks, but which is always accountable to Presbytery. (*Book of Order* G-9.0403, G-11.0103v)

The Mission Coordinating Council shall oversee the work and mission of the Presbytery, ensuring that the vision statement guides all that we do. It shall relate to the various Mission Interest Groups formed within the Presbytery, acting on their requests for time on the docket or funding.

ARTICLE G - ABSENTEEISM, RESIGNATIONS AND VACANCIES

If an elected person is absent three consecutive meetings without excuse or written notice the chairperson may contact the person inquiring about his/her future participation. If for some reason the elected person is unable to function he/she will be requested to write a letter of resignation. If no letter is sent, and there is no attendance at the next regular meeting, the chairperson will inform the person by mail that a letter is being submitted to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery requesting a replacement for his/her position.

Resignations shall be presented in writing to the committee chair or the Stated Clerk who shall bring that request to the attention of Presbytery Council for action. In case of vacancy or

inability to serve as a committee member or officer, Presbytery shall elect upon nomination by the Nominating Committee, a successor to serve for the unexpired term.

A vacancy may be filled temporarily between meetings of Presbytery by appointment of the Stated Clerk. If the vacancy is the Stated Clerk, the Moderator of Presbytery shall make the appointment.

ARTICLE H- AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Standing Rules shall be submitted to the Mission Coordinating Council. Proposed amendments shall be presented for a first reading at a meeting of Presbytery, with action on the amendments at the next stated meeting. A two-thirds affirmative vote of those present is necessary for amendment.

Any rule not mandated by the *Book of Order* may be suspended for a specific reason at any meeting of Presbytery by a two-thirds vote of those present, unless otherwise specified.

ARTICLE I- MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

The Manual of Operations shall provide detail for all activities of Presbytery. It shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of Presbytery. A simple majority at any meeting of Presbytery may amend it.

SECTION II

ARTICLE I - MEMBERS

The membership of Presbytery shall be those Ministers of the Word and Sacrament who, according to the *Book of Order* G-11.0406, are classified as continuing members.

When Presbytery meets, an elder commissioned by its Session shall represent each church. Following are additional provisions for churches with memberships over 500 according to the *Book of Order* G-11.0101a.

- 501- 1,000 - 2 elders
- 1,001- 1,500 - 3 elders
- 1,501- 2,000 - 4 elders
- Over 2,000 - 5 elders

If there is an imbalance between minister and elder membership of the Presbytery, action shall be taken in accordance with the *Book of Order* G-11.010b.

All elder members of the Mission Coordinating Council shall be enrolled as members of Presbytery for the term of office, whether or not commissioned by their Sessions.

Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators employed by churches of our Presbytery will, for the duration of their professional service within that church, be granted privilege of the floor at all meetings of Presbytery without vote (G-14.0705c).

ARTICLE II - OFFICERS AND OTHER PERSONNEL

The officers of Presbytery shall be: Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, Journal Clerk, and Treasurer.

The Moderator and Vice Moderator shall be elected for a one-year term and each shall serve until a successor has been installed.

The Stated Clerk shall be elected for a three-year term and may be re-elected to successive terms without restriction.

The Journal Clerk shall be elected annually by Presbytery at the recommendation of the Stated Clerk.

The Treasurer shall be elected for a three-year term and may be re-elected to successive terms without restriction.

ARTICLE III - STAFF

Presbytery shall elect such staff as is necessary to fulfill its administrative and mission function, including General Presbyter, and other staff members as negotiated with the Synod. (*Book of Order* G-11.0303)

ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS

Stated meetings of Presbytery for 2006 shall be Saturday January 21, April 29, July 15, and October 14. The April stated meeting shall be the annual meeting. The Mission Coordinating Council will provide a new schedule for meetings in successive years.

Special meetings of Presbytery shall be called in accordance with the *Book of Order* G-11.0201.

The docket for all meetings shall be prepared by the Stated Clerk, approved by the Mission Coordinating Council, and posted on the Presbytery website at least 14 working days prior to the date of the meeting. Each minister, clerk of session, designated elder commissioner, and lay council member shall receive e-mail notification that the docket has been posted.

Presbytery shall ordinarily require a second reading of (1) position statements on social issues, (2) overtures originating in this Presbytery, and (3) presbytery policies.

The places of meetings shall be determined by the Council with due consideration being given to invitations from particular churches.

The quorum of Presbytery shall be any ten minister members and ten elder members, provided those elders represent at least five churches.

All meetings of Presbytery, its Council, Commissions, and Committees shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, except in those cases where the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) provides otherwise. (*Book of Order* G-9.0302).

When the Chair of Council or a Committee determines that action must be taken between regularly scheduled meetings, voting by e-mail may be used as long as there is full disclosure of such to all eligible to vote on the issue and diligent effort is made to secure the vote of any member who cannot submit his/her vote by e-mail. A majority approval of the entire committee, not merely of those who actually vote, is necessary to pass an item via e-mail voting. If any member objects to voting on a particular matter by e-mail, the vote shall be delayed until the next stated or duly called special meeting of Council or the Committee. The use of e-mail voting shall be noted in the appropriate Council or Committee minutes.

ARTICLE V - MISSION COORDINATING COUNCIL

Membership of the Mission Coordinating Council shall include: Chair of Council (elected for three-year term), Presbytery Moderator, Chairs of Ministry, Nominating, and Administration Committees, and Representatives from each of the four Area Coordinating Councils.

Members without vote shall be the Stated Clerk, who shall serve as secretary, General Presbyter, Treasurer, and Chairs of special task groups or committees appointed by Council for the duration of their responsibility. A representative from any Mission Interest Group having business to present to the Council may also have voice. A representative from the current Synod Commissioners will be asked to report at least annually.

For 2006 Council shall determine its meeting schedule with the requirement that it meet at least four weeks prior to the next Presbytery meeting. The meeting date and time will be posted on the website. Council shall develop a regular meeting schedule for successive years.

A quorum shall be five (5) voting members, at least one of whom shall be a minister and one of whom shall be an elder.

Duties:

1. Encourage participation in mission opportunities to fulfill the vision statement, reviewing and recommending changes to the mission goals as needed.
2. Coordinate the planning and strategy of Presbytery.
3. Have general oversight of Presbytery officers and Staff.
4. Develop the docket and meeting places for Presbytery.
5. Nominate members to the Presbytery Nominating Committee.
6. Develop the budget for Presbytery approval.
7. See that an external audit is done yearly.
8. Consider and recommend to Presbytery changes in the Standing Rules.
9. Prepare, if requested, overtures to General Assembly or suggested changes to the *Book of Order*.
10. Receive all overtures from congregations and present them to the Presbytery.
11. Give guidance and advice pertaining to maintenance of Presbytery office and equipment.
12. Compile the Annual Report and have it ready for the annual meeting.
13. In the event that the Committee on Ministry is unable to do one or more of the following:

- a. Approve and present calls to ministers and receive ministers from other presbyteries upon recommendation of the Committee on Ministry.
 - b. Appoint Administrative Commissions to Ordain and/or Install pastors upon recommendation of the Committee on Ministry.
 - c. Dismiss ministers to other presbyteries.
 - d. Dismiss ministers to other presbyteries.
14. Any other duties assigned by Presbytery.

An Administration Committee of nine members shall oversee the financial and personnel matters of the Presbytery.

ARTICLE VI- MINISTRY

Membership: Chair and twenty-eight members from the Presbytery at-large. Six shall be from each designated geographical area, totaling 24. Four shall be the chairpersons of the following subcommittees: Specialized Ministries, Session Visits, Congregational Consultants, and Lay Pastor. All shall be elected by Presbytery through the normal nominating and electing process. A quorum shall be 16. The Stated Clerk shall serve as secretary for the committee.

Duties: The duties of Committee on Ministry shall be those set forth in the *Book of Order G-110502*, and any others assigned by the Presbytery.

Duties of this committee and its subcommittees, as well as their membership, are set forth in the Manual of Operations.

ARTICLE VII- NOMINATING

Membership: Three ministers, three lay women, three lay men, one of the nine of whom shall be elected chairperson by presbytery, and one member of the Committee on Representation who shall be ex-officio, with vote. They shall be broadly representative of the member churches of presbytery and shall not serve for more than six years. The chairperson and members shall be nominated by Presbytery Council and elected by Presbytery.

Duties of this committee and its subcommittees, as well as their membership, are set forth in the Manual of Operations.

ARTICLE VIII - PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION

There shall be a Permanent Judicial Commission, elected by Presbytery, with members serving six-year terms in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order* (D-5.0000).

ARTICLE IX- COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

Membership: Chairperson and eleven members from the Presbytery at-large and the liaison for Theological Education Fund.

Duties of this committee are set forth in the Manual of Operations.

ARTICLE X - REPRESENTATION

Membership: Chairperson and five members from the Presbytery at-large. There shall be equal

numbers of men and women, with the majority selected from racial ethnic groups within the governing body. Membership shall include persons from (1) majority male membership (2) majority female membership, (3) racial ethnic male membership (4) racial ethnic female membership, (5) youth male and female membership, (6) persons with disabilities in accordance with *Book of Order* G-9.0105a.

One member shall serve as ex-officio member with vote on the Nominating Committee. They shall serve according to principles in the *Book of Order* G-9-0105, G-11.0302.

Duties of this committee are set forth in the Manual of Operations.

ARTICLE XI - MISSION INTEREST GROUPS

Ministers and members of the congregations of the Presbytery of Muskingum Valley may organize themselves for the purpose of promoting or carrying out one or more facets of mission, theological reflection or issue advocacy. These groups shall be known as Mission Interest Groups. These groups shall relate to the Mission Coordinating Council, submitting a statement of purpose, plan of organization and an annual report. The Mission Interest Groups may request to meet with the Mission Coordinating Council, and the Mission Coordinating Council likewise may request a meeting with a Mission Interest Group. The Mission Interest Groups may request time on the presbytery meeting docket and funding for specific mission projects.

ARTICLE XII- IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

A team of nine members of Presbytery, three from the Self-Study Task Force, three from the General Presbyter Search Committee, and three chosen from the Presbytery at large, will aid in the transition to the new structure and in the orientation of the new General Presbyter. The Implementation Team will begin on January 1, 2006, and end on December 31, 2006. Its life may be extended if the Presbytery decides by majority vote that it is expedient.

