

MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS AND STANDING RULES

Presbytery of the James
3218 Chamberlayne Avenue
Richmond, VA 23227

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

October 20, 2018

SECTION ONE

DEFINITION AND ORGANIZATION of the Presbytery of the James

A. Definition of the Presbytery: This Governing Body shall be known as the Presbytery of the James (POJ) of the Synod of Mid-Atlantic of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Presbytery shall consist of all Teaching Elders who have been received into membership and all member churches within the geographic bounds of the Presbytery.

The Presbytery is established by the authority of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic and has those duties, authorities, powers and responsibilities specified by the *Book of Order*.

In our statement of the Presbytery's vision and mission, we declare our dependence upon God, reliance upon God's revealed will in Scripture, the grace of Christ in our individual and corporate lives, and the life-giving breath of the Spirit. We reaffirm, as faithful expressions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, *The Book of Confessions*.

Therefore, as part of the Church universal, we, the Presbytery of the James, in the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), hereby declare our mission as disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Presbytery of the James strives to bring the rich history, tradition, faith and hope of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Central Virginians through its congregations and ministries. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Holy Scripture, the Reformed Tradition, and our Confessions, we commit ourselves personally and communally to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. God calls individuals, groups, and congregations to fulfill the Great Commission. God also provides talents and opportunities for persons and congregations to fulfill the Great Commission. The Presbytery of the James is called to provide ways and means by which persons and congregations can be faithful beyond their own selves or their own congregation. Our calling is to enable God's mission to be fulfilled where an individual, a group, or an individual congregation cannot full that mission.

To that end, our vision as disciples of Jesus Christ is to be involved in mission, leadership, and coordination and communication efforts serving our Lord. Specifically, the Presbytery of

the James will fulfill its obligations and responsibilities under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and be guided by our vision. The following are ways through which we will be faithful:

Mission and Service: seeking ways to be involved in mission and service to Jesus Christ as a presbytery.

Leadership Connections: seeking ways to develop leaders in our congregations and in our presbytery to be more faithful disciples.

Coordination and Communication: seeking ways to share among our congregations and members the rich resources God has provided and empowering persons and congregations to network with one another in our common mission.

Constitutional Committees: seeking ways to fulfill constitutional responsibilities in accordance with the *Book of Order* through the required committee structure.

B. Policies and Guidelines:

1. Policies: Teams and Constitutional Committees of the Presbytery may develop policies. All policies which carry the force of law within the Presbytery must be approved by a majority vote of the Presbytery. Policies of Teams and Constitutional Committees may be altered or changed by a majority vote of the Presbytery.

2. Guidelines: Each Team or Constitutional Committee may develop operational guidelines consistent with the requirements of the *Book of Order* which do not necessitate vote and approval by the Presbytery.

C. Articles of Agreement: As a member Presbytery of the Synod of Mid-Atlantic, the Presbytery of the James is subject to the covenant commitments of the Articles of Agreement for the Presbyteries of Blue Ridge, Fincastle, Hanover, Norfolk, and Southern Virginia approved on February 20, 1988.

SECTION TWO

MEETINGS OF THE PRESBYTERY

A. Time and Date of Meetings: The dates for the Stated Meetings of the Presbytery shall usually be the Third Saturday in February; Third Tuesday in June; (this date shall be adjusted to avoid conflict with meetings of the General Assembly); and Third Saturday in October. Special Meetings may be called in accordance with Section **G-3.0304** of the *Book of Order*. The Moderator shall call a special meeting at the request of three Teaching Elders and three Ruling Elders from three different congregations.

B. Location of Meetings: Invitations from Sessions to host Presbytery should be sent to the Stated Clerk for presentation to the Communication and Coordination Team.

C. Membership: The members of the Presbytery shall consist of the following:

1. Teaching Elders who have been received into membership in the Presbytery;

2. Ruling Elders who are:

a. Elected by each Session in accordance with the **Book of Order**, G-3.0301

b. Proposed each year by the Stated Clerk to insure equal balance between Teaching Elder members and Ruling Elder Commissioners to

Presbytery meetings.

c. Certified Christian Educators who are Elders and member of a POJ congregation.

d. A Ruling Elder serving as Moderator of Presbytery or as Moderator of a Presbytery Team or Constitutional Committee.

e. Commissioned Ruling Elder serving a POJ congregation as a Commissioned Ruling Elder.

D. Other Participants:

1. Other Certified Lay Employees: Certified lay employees shall have the privilege of the floor but not vote at Presbytery meetings;
2. Corresponding Members: Ecumenical representatives, Ruling Elders who are former POJ Moderators, and Teaching Elder members of other Presbyteries or denominations who are supplying churches of the Presbytery are invited and encouraged to attend meetings of the Presbytery and may enjoy privilege of the floor but not vote at those meetings.
3. Members of Teams and Constitutional Committees: Ruling Elders and other lay persons who are members of Teams and Constitutional Committees of the Presbytery, but who are not commissioners to Presbytery, shall have privilege of the floor without vote.

E. Quorum: A quorum shall be twelve Teaching Elders and twelve Ruling Elders, assembled at the time and place appointed provided that at least ten churches are represented by Elders.

F. Docket: The docket for meetings of the Presbytery shall be prepared by the Communication and Coordination Team (C& C Team). The proposed docket with reports and recommendations of Teams and Constitutional Committees shall be distributed to Teaching Elders, Ruling Elder commissioners and Christian Educators at least two weeks before Presbytery meets.

G. Overtures: Overtures to Presbytery by Church Sessions shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk in writing at least eight weeks prior to a meeting of Presbytery. The C& C Team shall consider each overture and make a recommendation to Presbytery at its next stated meeting. In cases of emergency an "Overture of the Day" may be submitted at the Presbytery meeting and docketed for discussion as new business by a majority vote of the Presbytery. Ordinarily the C & C Team shall meet to consider such an overture prior to action by the Presbytery.

H. Presbyterian Order: Presbytery shall be governed in its meetings by the *Book of Order* and this Manual, and where neither of these applies, by the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

**SECTION THREE
OFFICERS OF THE PRESBYTERY**

The officers of the Presbytery of the James, elected by the Presbytery, shall be the Moderator and the Stated Clerk.

A. The Moderator: A Moderator shall serve for one calendar year, and may concurrently serve on an elected team, commission or constitutional committee. The Moderator shall perform his or her duties according to the Book of Order and the Manual of the Presbytery of the James. The Moderator shall be responsible for conducting the meetings of Presbytery. In the absence of the Moderator, the Vice Moderator shall moderate. In the event that both Moderator and Vice-Moderator cannot serve, the most recent, past Moderator being present shall moderate. While serving as Moderator, the Moderator shall also sit on the Communication and Coordination Team, with voice and vote.

B. The Vice Moderator: A Vice Moderator shall serve for one calendar year and may concurrently serve on an elected team, commission, or constitutional committee. The Vice Moderator may perform any duties delegated to him or her by the currently serving Moderator. The Vice Moderator shall also sit on the Communication and Coordination Team during his or her one year of service as Vice Moderator, with voice, but without vote.

C. The Election of the Moderator and Vice-Moderator: At the Summer stated meeting of the Presbytery, the Committee on Nominations shall announce a nominee for Moderator and Vice Moderator for the following calendar year. Election shall take place at the fall stated meeting. At the fall stated meeting, the floor shall be open for other nominations. Any person being nominated shall have been notified prior to nomination and shall have given his or her consent to such nomination. The Moderator and Vice Moderator elected at the fall stated meeting shall be installed and begin serving at the winter stated meeting. At the completion of the Moderator's one-year of service, the Vice Moderator will ordinarily be nominated for election to the office of Moderator for the following year.

D. The Stated Clerk: The Presbytery shall elect a Stated Clerk for a term of office not to exceed three years. He/she shall be eligible for re-election. The General Presbyter may be elected as Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk shall perform his or her duties according to the **Book of Order**, the Manual, Presbytery of the James, and the approved position description. Presbytery may elect a Recording Clerk whose duties shall be performed according to the Manual of the Presbytery and under the supervision of the Stated Clerk

SECTION FOUR

THE CORPORATION AND TRUSTEES

A. The Corporation: The name of the corporation is Trustees of Presbytery of the James, Inc. The Presbytery shall elect Trustees to the Corporation which is incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Its charter shall be subject to approval and modification from time to time by the Presbytery. The Communication and Coordination Team of the Presbytery shall serve as the Trustees of the Presbytery.

B. Membership: The Trustees shall be nine in number consisting of one member from each

Nominating Region, Moderator and Vice-Moderator of Communication and Coordination Team, and the Presbytery Moderator. Members are elected for three (3) year terms and may serve no more than six consecutive years. The Trustees shall elect their own officers at their annual meeting. The General Presbyter and Staff Accountant shall ordinarily serve as ex officio members of the Trustees and may be elected as Secretary and Treasurer.

C. Duties: The Trustees shall act in accordance with their charter.

The Trustees are empowered by the Presbytery to act as a Commission between presbytery meetings with the powers of section G-4.0206 a, b of the **Book of Order**. The commission powers granted to the Trustees shall not include authority to authorize the presbytery's trustees to incur new debt (as guarantor, co-obligor or otherwise) for amounts in excess of \$50,000, or to sell or encumber presbytery assets not held by particular churches. Such authority is reserved to the whole presbytery. The commission powers granted to the Trustees shall only be exercised by the Trustees if at least two-thirds of the Trustees voting determine that the timing of presbytery meetings would negatively affect a congregation's property needs significantly and unavoidably. The Trustees shall give annually a written account of all assets entrusted to them at a stated meeting of the Presbytery.

SECTION FIVE

THE WORK AND STRUCTURE OF THE PRESBYTERY

The work and mission of the Presbytery of the James shall be planned and carried out through Teams and Constitutional Committees which shall be directly responsible to and report directly to the Presbytery at regularly stated meetings. Each Team or Constitutional Committee may establish sub-committees and/or task forces to help plan and carry out its work.

A. Election, Quorum, Membership and Term on Teams and Constitutional Committees/Commissions: All members of Teams (except Nominations and Committee on Representation), and Constitutional Committees shall be placed in nomination by the Committee on Nominations and elected by the Presbytery. All persons nominated to and who serve on any team or constitutional committee of the Presbytery of the James must be a member in good standing of a congregation or a Teaching Elder member of the Presbytery. After reviewing the qualifications of the persons who have been suggested, the Committee on Nominations shall recommend the nominees to the Presbytery for election. Moderators and Vice Moderators of Boards and Constitutional Committees shall be members at large.

Members of the Committee on Nominations and Committee on Representation shall be nominated by the C & C Team and elected by the Presbytery.

Unless otherwise stated, a quorum for Teams and Constitutional Committees of the Presbytery shall be as prescribed in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, which is "...a majority of the members."

Election to a Team or Constitutional Committee of Presbytery is viewed as a call to service in the church. Team and Constitutional Committee members are expected to carry out their

responsibilities in faithfulness. If a Team or Constitutional Committee member has an unexcused absence from three consecutive meetings, the Committee on Nominations may nominate a replacement if requested by the Moderator of the Team or Constitutional Committee.

Each member of a Team or Constitutional Committee of Presbytery shall serve, unless otherwise provided herein, a term of three years and may not serve more than six successive years. Service for a part of a calendar year shall be counted as a full year of service. The Moderator and the Vice-Moderator of a Team or Constitutional Committee shall serve term(s) not to exceed six successive years and ordinarily the Vice-Moderator shall succeed the Moderator.

The Committee on Nominations shall arrange to stagger the terms of the members of Teams and Constitutional Committees so that ordinarily no more than one third of the membership of the body will be required to retire at the same time. The Committee on Nominations shall ensure that all Nominating Regions are represented equally on the Teams and Constitutional Committees.

Team and Constitutional Committees may elect Co-opted members to assist in their work. Such members will serve one year terms which may be renewable and are limited to six consecutive years. Co-opted members shall have privilege of the floor but without vote at the Team or Constitutional Committee level. They may also have vote at subcommittee level.

B. Conflict of Interest Policy: All entities of the Presbytery of the James are entrusted by the members of the Presbytery with responsibilities which affect the whole of the Presbytery. Therefore, it is important that all persons related to the Presbytery honor that trust. This requires honesty, competence and care in managing the financial arrangements of the entities. No elected or appointed member of any entity or its Teams or Constitutional Committees shall accept any gift, gratuity, service or any special favor from any person or persons, agents, or businesses which provide or receive goods and services or which seek to provide or receive goods and services to or from the entities of the Presbytery of the James.

No elected or appointed member shall be eligible during the term for which he or she is elected or appointed to become an employee of or otherwise render compensable services to that entity unless approved by the Communication and Coordination Team and the Presbytery. However, members of Presbytery entities may apply for staff positions within the Presbytery that come open.

C. Nominating Regions: The Presbytery of the James shall be divided into six Nominating Regions for the purpose of electing persons to Teams and Constitutional Committees.

D. Teams and Constitutional Committees of the Presbytery:

The structural design of the Presbytery of the James provides for the following Teams and Constitutional Committees: The Communication and Coordination Team, Mission and Service Team, Leadership Connections Team, Committee on Ministry and Committee on Preparation for Ministry. In addition, there are mandated Constitutional Committees: Committee on Nominations, Committee on Representation, Permanent Judicial Commission.

1. Communication and Coordination Team: The purpose of the Communication and Coordination Team is to facilitate effective and efficient communication between the various teams, purpose groups, and members of the Presbytery and to provide for coordination of the

operations of the Presbytery. The Communication and Coordination Team consists of a representative from each Nominating Region and a Moderator and Vice-Moderator (“at large” positions), the Presbytery Moderator, and the Presbytery Vice Moderator. The Presbytery Vice-Moderator will have voice, but no vote. The responsibilities of the Communication and Coordination Team include

- (a) Oversight of Presbytery personnel and Presbytery office operations;
- (b) Budget development and oversight;
- (c) Preparing the docket for Presbytery meetings;
- (d) Annual review of session records;
- (e) Nominating to Presbytery members of the Committee on Representation and all members of the Committee on Nominations;
- (f) Receipt and forwarding of overtures to the Presbytery;
- (g) Arranging for votes on matters referred by the General Assembly to the Presbytery.

The Communication and Coordination Team shall also serve as the Trustees of the Corporation of the Presbytery of the James, Inc.

2. Leadership Connections Team: The Leadership Connections Team will encourage, support and review progress of purpose groups that develop leadership skills among people in the Presbytery of the James, including: Teaching Elders, lay persons and recognized groups that are part of the Presbytery's strategic plan. The Team shall consist of a representative from each region and a Moderator and a Vice- Moderator.

3. Mission and Service Team: The purpose of the MAST is to inspire, equip, and connect individuals and congregations with missional ministries, working within all areas of the Presbytery of the James, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the world. The Team shall consist of a representative from each region and a Moderator and a Vice-Moderator.

4. Committee on Ministry: The function of the Committee on Ministry is set forth in G-3.0303 of the Book of Order. It shall consist of a Ruling Elder and a Teaching Elder from each Nominating Region, a Moderator, a Vice-Moderator and as many as two Ruling elders and two Teaching Elders serving as members-at-large. The Stated Clerk shall be an advisory member. The Committee shall maintain a manual of operations which shall contain all duties and powers delegated to it by the Presbytery.

5. Committee on Preparation for Ministry: The function of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry is set forth in G-2.06 of the Book of Order It shall consist of an elder and a minister from each Nominating Region, a Moderator and Vice-Moderator and as many as two Ruling elders and two Teaching Elders serving as members-at-large.

6. The Committee on Nominations: The purpose of the Committee on Nominations is to nominate persons for election by the Presbytery to the various Teams and Constitutional Committees of the Presbytery. The responsibilities of the Committee include, but are not limited to, nominating to the Presbytery, for election: moderator of the presbytery; members of Teams and Constitutional Committees of the Presbytery; moderators and vice moderators of Teams and Constitutional Committees of the Presbytery; Commissioners to the Synod and General

Assembly; members of the permanent judicial commission; and other nominations as may be requested by Presbytery from time to time. The Committee shall consist of a representative from each Nominating Region and a Moderator and Vice-Moderator. (Members are nominated to the Presbytery by the C & C Team)

7. The Committee on Representation: The purpose of the Committee is to ensure that the principles of inclusiveness as outlined in the Book of Order are implemented G-3.0103. The Committee shall consist of a Moderator, Vice-Moderator, and its other members shall be divided into three classes of one person per class. (Members are nominated to the Presbytery by the C & C Team).

8. Permanent Judicial Commission: The purpose and role of the Permanent Judicial Commission and its organization are provided for in Chapter V of the Rules of Discipline and G-3.0301c and other relevant sections of the Constitution. The Permanent Judicial Commission of the Presbytery shall consist of nine members whose term of office shall be for six years. The Commission shall elect its own moderator and clerk as provided for in the Book of Order. (D-5.0201)

E. The Presbytery Budget: Each year, the Budget Committee of the C & C Team shall develop a consolidated line item budget with underlying line item details, for review, amendment, and action by the Presbytery. The budget process is outlined in the Financial Operating Procedures.

F. Commissioners to the General Assembly and Synod: Commissioners to the General Assembly and Synod are to be elected at the Fall meeting of Presbytery preceding the next meeting of the higher governing body. Ordinarily persons elected as alternate commissioners shall be nominated as Commissioners to the following meeting of the higher governing body. In choosing persons for nomination the Committee on Nominations shall follow the policy established by the Presbytery.

G. Administrative Commissions: Administrative Commissions elected by the Presbytery shall consist of at least three Teaching Elders and three Ruling Elders from three different congregations and authorized by the Presbytery with specific powers from the Book of Order.

SECTION SIX

PRESBYTERY STAFF

In accord with the Book of Order (G-3.0110) the Presbytery may authorize the administrative services of a General Presbyter and other staff as needed to assure that Presbytery's adopted aims and programs are fulfilled. The role of Presbytery staff persons shall be to facilitate and enable the entire work of the Council. They are expected to serve in ways which shall enable the parts of the interdependent system to work together.

Personnel Policies: Policies and procedures related to the employment, classification, work, supervision, rights and benefits of all staff members are defined in the Personnel Policies of the Presbytery of the James. The Personnel Policies of the Presbytery of the James can be amended

by a majority vote of the C & C Team upon recommendation from the Personnel Committee. Changes are to be reported to the next Stated Meeting of the Presbytery.

SECTION SEVEN

AUTHORITY DELEGATED BY THE PRESBYTERY

From time to time, the presbytery delegates authority to various persons, Teams, and/or Constitutional Committees. These authorities are contained in Appendix I of the Manual.

SECTION EIGHT

AUTHORITY, AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSIONS

The Manual establishes the basic organization of the Presbytery of the James for its functions both during and between meetings of the Council.

The Manual may be amended as follows: A proposed amendment shall be presented in writing to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery who shall in turn refer it to the C & C Team which shall submit its recommendation in writing to the next meeting of the Presbytery. Proposed amendments are presented as a first reading at a meeting of Presbytery for discussion, amendment and preliminary approval. To become effective they must be approved after a second reading and further amendment if necessary, at a subsequent meeting. Both approvals shall be by a majority of those present and voting. Any particular provision of the Manual may be suspended for a meeting of the Presbytery by a two thirds vote of members present at that meeting of the Presbytery.

POJ, October 20, 2018