

PRESBYTERY OF WABASH VALLEY STANDING RULES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLE I - GUIDING PRINCIPLES	2
ARTICLE II - CONSTITUENCY	3
ARTICLE III - OFFICERS	4
ARTICLE IV - DUTIES OF OFFICERS	5
ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF PRESBYTERY STAFF	6
ARTICLE VI - PRESBYTERY ASSEMBLY.....	6
ARTICLE VII - COUNCIL.....	7
ARTICLE VIII - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR STANDING COMMITTEES AND MINISTRY TEAMS	8
ARTICLE IX - STANDING COMMITTEES.....	9
ARTICLE X - MINISTRY TEAMS.....	10
ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSIONS.....	13

STANDING RULES

ARTICLE I - GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Section 01 The Presbytery of Wabash Valley creates, connects and nurtures congregations and other ministries to fulfill Christ's mission.
- Section 02 **Vision** We live out our love for God by:
- a. An openness to fresh movements of the Spirit
 - b. A dynamic network of Christ-centered partnerships
 - c. Healthy congregations
 - d. Vigorous non-parish ministries
 - e. An atmosphere which fosters vibrant leadership
 - f. An environment in which diversity thrives and can be celebrated
 - g. Open and collaborative communication
 - h. An abundance of opportunities and resources
 - i. Sharing of faith stories and celebrations of fruitful ministries.
- Section 03 **Action** We commit to:
- a. Center in Christ
 - b. Proclaim the Gospel
 - c. Pursue God's justice
 - d. Foster spiritual maturity
 - e. Nurture trusting relationships
 - f. Cultivate diversity
 - g. Embrace faithful change
 - h. Gather in the Holy Spirit
 - i. Serve and care for our congregations and ministries
 - j. Value and care for our congregational and presbytery leaders
 - k. Strategize with our congregations for spiritual transformation
- Section 04 **Life Together in the Community of Faith: consistent with Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA)** As ordained officers in the Presbyterian Church (USA), in obedience to Christ Jesus, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our Confessions, we will conduct our lives in a manner that is faithful to the Gospel, in conformity with our ordination vows, and consistent with our public ministries.
- Section 05 **Conflict of Interest** All individuals acting for the Presbytery of Wabash Valley shall act first in the best interests of the presbytery rather than in one's own interests or the

interests of another related entity or person. In order to avoid the appearance of any impropriety the following guidelines will apply:

- a. Each individual acting for the Presbytery shall complete an annual disclosure of interest questionnaire to be filed at the presbytery office; and accessible to any member of the presbytery upon request.
- b. If a potential conflict of interest arises during the ongoing work or ministry of the presbytery, any such conflict shall be reported and discussed.
- c. When a conflict of interest exists, the moderator of a meeting shall excuse all persons implicated in the conflict during the process of deliberation and voting, other than to make a proposal or to respond to questions.
- d. Former members and pastors of a congregation being discussed shall be excused from the meeting by the moderator.
- e. Any conflict of interest and the procedure followed must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Section 06 **Use of Technology**

- a. All presbytery entities may use technology for conducting its business provided the method used abides by the principles of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, the Presbytery's Bylaws, Standing Rules and Manuals of operations and Policies.
- b. Such meetings shall not create barriers of participation, will value inclusivity, and must provide for simultaneous communication.
- c. Such meetings shall have the same requirements for roll counting, quorum, minutes and reporting as face-to-face meetings.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

Section 01 **Assembly Membership**

- a. When the number of ministers entitled to vote in the presbytery is greater than the number of elders so entitled, the Stated Clerk shall redress this imbalance annually after the last stated meeting of the year. Any such redress will be reported to the next assembly. The stated clerk shall consider whether remedying a numerical imbalance is necessary when active participation of honorably retired minister members is considered. "Active participation" shall be defined as attendance at a minimum of two assembly meetings in any given year.
- b. When additional elders are needed to provide balance, the Stated Clerk will use the following criteria⁺:

1. An alphabetical listing of congregations, maintained by the Stated Clerk. After a congregation has sent an additional elder, that congregation will be moved to the bottom of the list.⁺
2. A congregation needs to have been represented by an elder commissioner at a presbytery assembly within the past 12 months to be eligible to send an additional elder.

Section 02 **Non-Members' Right to Speak** Individuals who are not members of the presbytery of Wabash Valley but are serving as pastoral leadership in a congregation or a validated ministry of this presbytery, shall have the right to speak in Presbytery Assemblies, but shall not have the right to vote.

ARTICLE III - OFFICERS

Section 01 **Moderator and Vice-Moderator of the Presbytery Assembly**

- a. **Election and Installation** The moderator and vice-moderator of the Presbytery Assembly shall be elected at the May assembly and installed at the November assembly. Normally, the vice-moderator of the Presbytery Assembly will be the candidate presented for election as moderator of the Presbytery Assembly.
- b. **Terms** The moderator and vice-moderator of the Presbytery Assembly shall serve a one-year term beginning at the time of installation of officers or until their successors are installed, and shall not be eligible for any consecutive terms in their respective offices.

Section 02 **Moderator of Council**

- a. **Election and Installation** The moderator of Council shall be elected at the May assembly and installed at the November assembly. Normally, the moderator of the Presbytery Assembly will be the candidate presented for election as moderator of council.
- b. **Terms** The moderator of Council shall serve a one-year term beginning at the time of installation of officers or until his or her successor is installed, and shall not be eligible for any consecutive terms.

Section 03 **Stated Clerk**

- a. **Election and Installation** The presbytery shall elect and employ a stated clerk to normally be elected at the May Assembly and installed at the November Assembly.
- b. **Term** The Stated Clerk shall serve for a term of two years or until his or her successor is installed, and is eligible for re-election.
- c. **Compensation** The Stated Clerk shall receive compensation that is to be recommended by Council and approved by Presbytery.

⁺Superseded by G-3.0301: The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and teaching elders within that district. The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many ruling elders each session should elect as commissioners to presbytery, with a goal of numerical parity of teaching elders and ruling elders. This plan shall require each session to elect at least one commissioner and shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103.

Section 04 **Vacancies**

- a. Whenever a vacancy occurs during the term of any office except that of moderator of the assembly, the office shall be filled by election of the Presbytery Assembly for the remainder of the unexpired term
- b. Upon the death, removal, or resignation of the moderator of the Presbytery Assembly, the vice-moderator shall serve as moderator of the Presbytery Assembly for the balance of the unexpired term and upon election, the entirety of the next.

ARTICLE IV - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 01 **Moderator of the Assembly** The moderator shall:

- a. Preside at all installations and ordinations or approve a designee to do so.
- b. In consultation with the other officers of the presbytery, appoint an investigating committee when informed by the stated clerk that a statement of an alleged offense has been received.
- c. In consultation with the other officers of the presbytery appoint a committee of counsel when necessary.
- d. With the exception of administrative commissions for the purposes of ordinations and/or installations in accordance with the *Book of Order* (G-9.0503a(1)), in consultation with the other officers of the presbytery appoint members of administrative commissions. These appointees, along with the scope of power given to a commission are ratified by the Presbytery Assembly.
- e. Detailed duties of the moderator of the Assembly are included in the Presbytery of Wabash Valley Manual of Operations and Policies.

Section 02 **Vice-Moderator of the Assembly** The vice-moderator shall:

- a. In consultation with the other officers of the presbytery and staff prepare and coordinate all worship aspects of each Presbytery Assembly.
- b. Appoint one elder commissioner and one minister from each assembly to read the minutes of the Assembly and make recommendations to amend and/or approve.
- c. Detailed duties of the vice-moderator are included in the Presbytery of Wabash Valley Manual of Operations and Policies.

Section 03 **Moderator of Council** The moderator of council shall:

- a. In consultation with the other officers and the current moderator of the nominating committee, appoint at the first stated council meeting of the year a task force of three for the specific purpose of securing new nominating committee members for filling vacancies as well as the next incoming class; and to propose the next nominating committee moderator. Council will nominate these people at the next Presbytery Assembly for election.
- b. Detailed duties of the moderator of Council are included in the Presbytery of Wabash Valley Manual of Operations and Policies.

Section 04 **Stated Clerk** The stated clerk shall:

- a. Fulfill those duties prescribed by the *Book of Order**
- b. As the Registered Agent, support and advise all presbytery entities in regards to corporate matters.
- c. In consultation with the other officers of the presbytery and the general presbyter draft the functions for administrative commissions. These functions, along with the appointees are ratified by the Presbytery Assembly, with the exception of administrative commissions for the purposes of ordinations and/or installations in accordance with the G-9.0503a(1).
- d. In consultation with the general presbyter, appoint a recording* clerk for a one-year term. The recording* clerk shall report to the stated clerk.
- e. Detailed duties of the stated clerk are included in* the job description approved by Presbytery Council.

ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF PRESBYTERY STAFF

Section 01 **General Presbyter** The general presbyter shall:

- a. Serve of head of staff, and in consultation with the officers, coordinate the presbytery in fulfilling its vision for mission.
- b. Nurture the community of the presbytery.
- c. Enhance our partnership in ministry with other governing bodies and ecumenical communities.
- d. Serve and support the ministry teams of the presbytery.
- e. Detailed duties of the general presbyter are included in the Presbytery of Wabash Valley Manual of Operations and Policies.

Section 02 **Financial Consultant** The financial consultant shall:

- a. Oversee the preparation and submission of financial statements at each meeting of the Presbytery Assembly, council and stewardship ministry team.
- b. Report to the council through the stewardship ministry team.
- c. Detailed duties of the financial consultant are included in the Presbytery of Wabash Valley Manual of Operations and Policies.

ARTICLE VI - PRESBYTERY ASSEMBLY

Section 01 **Stated Meetings** Meetings shall be held in the months of February, May, September and November according to a schedule determined annually by the council, setting the time, place and date.

Section 02 **Organizational Details**[^] The officers of the presbytery... shall arrange for all details of each assembly meeting, such as agenda, registration, meals, etc. Assembly Docket shall be established by the moderator of the Assembly in consultation with the Stated Clerk, Council Moderator and Vice Moderator no later than 10 days prior to any Assembly

meeting, stated or called. Any proposed action item presented after the distribution of the proposed docket or on the floor of the Assembly without a recommendation from a commission or Council shall be referred to the appropriate ministry team, task force, committee or commission prior to Assembly action. Moderator shall have the right to decide emergency issues to be allowed on the floor of Assembly.

Section 03 **Change in Place, Date, or Time** The place, date, or time of any stated meeting of the Presbytery Assembly may be changed by the Presbytery Assembly or council provided that notice be sent not less than 21 days in advance to each member of the assembly and each clerk of session, who is responsible to notify elder commissioners. The option to cancel/reschedule due to weather or other emergencies may be made by the officers.

Section 04 **Presbytery Minutes** The stated clerk shall publish the proposed minutes of each meeting in a way that provides appropriate privacy safeguards. The appointed readers will report to the next stated Presbytery Assembly with the recommendation to amend and/or approve the minutes. A printed copy of the minutes will be supplied to any commissioner upon request.

ARTICLE VII - COUNCIL

Section 01 **Membership** In addition to the voting members detailed in the Bylaws, the following are ex-officio members, without vote:

1. The general presbyter
2. The associate presbyter(s)
3. The financial consultant
4. One commissioner to synod, elected by the synod commissioners.
5. One commissioner to General Assembly, elected by the General Assembly commissioners.
6. Any person from the Presbytery of Wabash Valley serving on any General Assembly council, committee or task force.
7. The moderators of all special committees and task forces established by the Council.

Section 02 **Meetings** Council normally meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at Geneva Center. At its retreat in January, Council may choose to move a particular meeting.

Section 03 **Responsibilities** The council shall:

- a. Propose missional priorities and goals each year to the first meeting of the Presbytery Assembly.
- b. Oversee and ensure the coordination of the committees, ministry teams, commissions and ministry groups of the presbytery in meeting the missional priorities and goals.
- c. Make recommendations for communications with other governing bodies when necessary.

ARTICLE VIII - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR STANDING COMMITTEES AND MINISTRY TEAMS

- Section 01 Membership shall be, as much as possible, representative of the geography and membership of the congregations within the presbytery.
- Section 02 Any person from the Presbytery of Wabash Valley serving on any General Assembly or Synod committee shall be welcomed as an ex-officio member, without vote, to the corresponding committee or ministry team of presbytery.
- Section 03 **Terms of Office** Members are elected for a calendar year term of no more than three years and may serve consecutive terms, either full or partial, for an aggregate of no more than six years. After serving six years, a person shall be ineligible for election to the same committee or ministry team for a period of at least one year.
- Section 04 **Moderators and Vice-Moderators** of committees and ministry teams shall be nominated by the nominating committee and elected by the presbytery at the May assembly. This allows for adequate time for orientation as well as input for the nomination of new committee and team members. *These moderators and vice moderators are elected for a one year term, and are eligible for re-election.*
- Section 05 **Membership** Presbytery shall elect committee and ministry team members at the September assembly. Committees and teams are invited to propose names for members to the nominating committee. Vacancies shall be filled by election at other assemblies as they occur and as the nominating committee brings nominations.
- Section 06 **Meeting Schedules** Each committee and ministry team shall set an annual schedule of its meetings. This schedule shall be sent to the stated clerk following the first meeting of the committee or ministry team each year.
- Section 07 **Minutes** Each committee and ministry team shall keep a record of its proceedings including conference calls and/or electronic meetings. A copy of these minutes, both proposed and approved, shall be sent to the stated clerk within 10 days of each meeting.
- Section 08 **Reports** Each committee and ministry team shall submit a written report to each council meeting and Presbytery Assembly detailing its actions and ongoing work in fulfilling the missional priorities and goals of the presbytery.

Section 09 **Budget** Each committee and ministry team shall submit a written budget proposal to the stewardship ministry team. The timing and form will be decided by council upon recommendation by the stewardship ministry team.

Section 10 **Manual of Operations and Policies** Each committee and ministry team shall develop and maintain a manual of operations and policies submitted to the council for approval.

Section 11 **Augmentation** Committees and ministry teams may co-opt additional persons, drawn from the membership and congregations of the presbytery, for specific tasks and periods of time. Committees and ministry teams may establish work groups to carry out their responsibilities.

ARTICLE IX - STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 01 **Committee on Ministry**

a. **Detail Responsibilities**

1. In consultation with the moderator of the assembly, to appoint administrative commissions for the purposes of ordinations and/or installations in accordance with the G-9.0503a(1).

Section 02 **Committee on Preparation for Ministry**

a. **Detail Responsibilities**

1. To prepare an annual report to the assembly concerning its annual consultations with Inquirers and Candidates.
2. To recommend to the nominating committee for election by the Assembly readers for ordination exams.

Section 03 **Committee on Representation**

a. **Detail Responsibilities**

1. To serve as advocate and resource for the fair representation of all members and congregations of the presbytery within the life of the presbytery.
2. To review the performance of the presbytery in these matters and shall report annually to it and the synod with recommendations for any needed corrective action.
3. To be represented at the nominating committee as an observer and to advise the nominating committee on matters of fair representation.

Section 04 **Nominating Committee**

a. **Detail Responsibilities**

1. Ensure Presbyterian Church (USA) constitutional requirements for inclusiveness, fairness and equal representation.
2. Present nominees for officers of the presbytery for election by the Presbytery Assembly at the second stated assembly and at such other times as may be required to fill vacancies;
3. Present nominees for other positions for election by the Presbytery Assembly at the third stated Assembly and at such other times as may be required to fill vacancies;
4. Eligibility requirements for all officers and positions for election shall be detailed in the Manual of Operations and Policies.
5. Develop and maintain a resource file of people qualified and able to serve within the presbytery structure and higher governing bodies.

Section 05 **Permanent Judicial Commission**

ARTICLE X - MINISTRY TEAMS

Section 01 **General** Membership of ministry teams shall be divided, as equally as possible, between ministers and members of congregations. Moderators of Ministry Teams shall be elders or minister members.

Section 02 **Geneva Center Ministry Team**

a. **Detail Responsibilities**

1. Assure the ministry of Geneva Center lives out the nature and purpose of the Church while also recognizing the need for financial viability.
2. Administer Geneva Center facilities and related resources to maximize their usefulness to all entities of the Presbytery of Wabash Valley and to other organizations with religious, charitable, or educational purposes consistent with the mission of the Church.
3. Create awareness of the possibilities Geneva Center offers for the congregations and entities of the presbytery, as well as other organizations.
4. Develop, promote, and provide Christian activity programs for all ages.

Section 03 **New Ministry Development Team**

a. **Detail Responsibilities**

1. New Church Development
 - A) Serve the presbytery as its agent in establishing new congregations by recommending to the assembly the selection and purchase of sites, proposing to the Assembly organizing pastors following established COM procedures, overseeing the chartering and incorporating processes, and overseeing the development of these congregations following their chartering, until such time as the ministry team, the session of the new

congregation, the organizing pastor, and COM concur that the congregation is no longer to be considered a new church development.

- B) Recommend to council the expenditure of Church Development funds for unbudgeted support of new church developments.
- 2. New Ministry Opportunities
 - A) Explore, promote, initiate, nurture, celebrate, as well as evaluate, new ministry opportunities such as: ethnic programs, special education opportunities, campus ministries, etc.
- 3. Recognition
 - A) The ministry team shall prepare suitable celebrative occasions within the presbytery when new development projects are released from the oversight of the ministry team.

Section 04 **Personnel Ministry Team**

a. **Detailed Responsibilities**

- 1. Propose personnel guidelines and policies for approval by the council, presentation to the presbytery, and oversee the implementation of these guidelines and policies.
- 2. Review, at least annually, all staff members, allowing for the input from other staff members and appropriate leaders of presbytery entities and reporting on its findings to council.
- 3. Make recommendations to the stewardship ministry team concerning remuneration of staff.

Section 05 **Response Coordinating Team (RCT)**

a. **Detail Responsibilities**

- 1. Any member of the RCT may call a meeting of the team to timely discuss and determine the level of presbytery response to any matter arising that might require an immediate coordinated response.
- 2. Determine the appropriate committees and ministry teams needed to effectively make such a response.
- 3. Determine the level of confidentiality needed to effectively make such a response, taking into account the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and legal requirements.

Section 06 **Stewardship Ministry Team**

a. **Detail Responsibilities**

- 1. Encourage a culture of generosity based on faith and trust among the entities of the presbytery including the congregations.
- 2. Prepare and recommend to council the annual budget, allowing enough time for congregations to consider and incorporate related obligations into their stewardship programs.
- 3. Review regularly the financial position of the presbytery including all related ministries and making recommendations in consultation with appropriate committees and ministry teams to council.

4. Maintain accurate records of each church's financial position, reporting potential issues to the council.
5. Arrange for an external audit of the books of the presbytery and all related ministries annually.
6. Serve as an internal audit and review committee, hearing reports at least twice a year from the presbytery staff on the current state of the presbytery's budget and finances.
7. Make recommendations to staff on financial management matters.
8. Make recommendations to the council and presbytery relating to the financial life of the presbytery.
9. Recommend to council appropriate action on the sale, purchase, or encumbrance of church property, in keeping with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) that states all property is held in trust for the use and benefit of the denomination.
10. Advising any committee or ministry team regarding a request for funds beyond the approved budget prior to any recommendation being made to the council and/or the Presbytery Assembly.

Section 07 **Transformation Ministry Team**

a. **Detail Responsibilities**

1. Church Transformation
 - A) Serve the presbytery as its agent in transforming existing congregations.
 - B) Establish guidelines by which existing congregations can be accepted as transformation projects.
 - C) Oversee the development of mission designs, project descriptions, goals and objectives, and the implementation of such designs, descriptions, and objectives for church transformation projects.
 - D) Recommend to Council the expenditure of Church Development funds for unbudgeted support of transformation projects.
 - E) Work in partnership with the committee on ministry to provide guidance and support for congregations involved in transformation projects.
2. Recognition
 - A) The ministry team shall prepare suitable celebrative occasions within the presbytery when church transformation projects are released from the oversight of the ministry team.

Section 08 **Visioning Ministry Team**

a. **Detail Responsibilities**

1. Evaluate the presbytery's progress in achieving approved priorities and goals.
2. Consult with committees, ministry teams, congregations and other entities within the presbytery to develop and present priorities and goals for discernment by council.
3. Present to the Presbytery Assembly these priorities and goals and engage with the presbytery in implementing them.

ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSIONS

- Section 01 The Standing Rules may be amended at any meeting of the presbytery by a two-thirds vote of commissioners present, provided notice of such a proposal has been given at least 60 days in advance or at the previous stated meeting.

- Section 02 The Standing Rules may be suspended for a definite purpose at any stated assembly of the presbytery, without previous notice, by a two-thirds vote of all members present and voting.

Amended and approved: November 23, 2010, effective January 1, 2011; *amended May 21, 2013; ^amended November 23, 2015.

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