

Organization and Structure

Preface

The Vision of the Presbytery of Arkansas is “to make visible the body of Christ.” To that end the presbytery adopts an internal structure that provides for both the decent and orderly work of the church and the creative engagement of the church with the world.

This structure is not the final word, nor should it be. As part of the church reformed always being reformed according to the Word of God, the Presbytery of Arkansas will remain open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the wisdom of the people of God as we continue to seek to live into Christ’s calling.

1) *The Presbytery*

- A. Name- The name of the presbytery shall be The Presbytery of Arkansas.
- B. Geographical Boundaries- The geographical area of the Presbytery of Arkansas includes the following counties within the State of Arkansas: Arkansas, Baxter, Benton, Boone, Carroll, Clark, Cleburne, Conway, Craighead, Crawford, Cross, Desha, Faulkner, Franklin, Fulton, Garland, Grant, Greene, Hot Spring, Independence, Izard, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Lawrence, Lee, Logan, Lonoke, Madison, Marion, Monroe, Montgomery, Newton, Perry, Phillips, Pike, Poinsett, Polk, Pope, Prairie, Pulaski, Randolph, St. Francis, Saline, Scott, Searcy, Sebastian, Sharp, Stone, Van Buren, Washington, White, Woodruff and Yell. This section shall be automatically amended by subsequent action of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- C. Membership- The membership of the Presbytery includes all Teaching Elders enrolled by the presbytery and all congregations within its boundaries. Ruling Elders elected as General Presbyter, Stated Clerk, Assistant Stated Clerk, or Treasurer; Commissioned Ruling Elders in current service; members of the General Committee; or current commissioners to General Assembly shall be enrolled as members of the presbytery during the term of elected service. Ruling Elders who are Certified Christian Educators as defined by the most recent edition of the Book of Order of the PC(USA) may be enrolled as members of the presbytery.

39 **2) Authority and Order**

40 A. Ecclesiastical Authority- The presbytery shall be governed by the most
41 recent edition of the Book of Order of the PC(USA).

42 B. Presbytery Organization- The presbytery shall maintain written rules,
43 policies and procedures in a Ministry Guide. In the event any rule or
44 policy is deemed in conflict with the Book of Order of the PC(USA), the
45 Book of Order shall have precedence.
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82 **3) Meetings and Membership of the Presbytery**

83 A. Stated Meetings- The presbytery shall meet no fewer than two times per
84 year.

85 B. Types of Meetings- In addition to its stated meetings, the presbytery may
86 meet in Special, Called, or Adjourned meetings.

87 C. Special Meetings- Special, Called, or Adjourned meetings shall be held on
88 a Saturday. Only those Teaching Elders and Ruling Elder
89 commissioners within a 75-mile radius of the place of meeting shall be
90 expected to attend a special meeting.

91 D. Membership- All Teaching Elders enrolled by the presbytery, Ruling
92 Elder commissioners duly elected by member congregations, and
93 Ruling Elder members as defined in section 1.3 of the Standing Rules,
94 shall be enrolled as members of the presbytery for a particular meeting.
95 All members shall have voice and vote.

96 1. Attendance- It is the duty and responsibility of all member
97 teaching elders of the presbytery (except those honorably
98 retired) to attend all meetings and it is the duty and responsibility
99 of member churches to be represented by duly elected ruling
100 elders at all meetings.

101 2. Parity- The presbytery may provide by rule to achieve numerical
102 parity between Teaching and Ruling Elder members at a
103 particular meeting.

104 3. Ruling Elder Commissioners- All congregations shall elect at least
105 one Ruling Elder commissioner for all meetings. Ruling Elder
106 commissioners shall be elected as follows:

107 a) One commissioner from churches of 300 or fewer reported
108 members;

109 b) Two commissioners from churches of 301-1000 reported
110 members;

111 c) Three commissioners from churches of 1001-1500 reported
112 members;

113 d) Four commissioners from churches of 1501-2000 reported
114 members;

115 e) One additional commissioner for every additional 500
116 reported members or major fraction thereof.

- 117 f) In no case shall the total number of Ruling Elder
 118 Commissioners allotted to a particular congregation be less
 119 than the total number of installed or interim Teaching Elders
 120 serving that congregation.
- 121 E. Other Attendees- The presbytery may enroll as corresponding members
 122 or visitors with voice but not vote:
- 123 1. Youth Advisory Delegates- Each member congregation may elect
 124 up to two (2) Youth Advisory Delegates (YADs).
- 125 a) Eligibility- Active confirmed members of member congregations
 126 from 9th to 12th grades are eligible to serve as YADs.
- 127 b) Attendance- No less than one stated meeting per year shall be
 128 designated for participation by YADs.
- 129 c) Advisory Role- YADs serve as advisors to the presbytery in its
 130 work. Prior to a vote by the full presbytery, an advisory vote of
 131 YADs should be taken on those issues they have studied as
 132 group. The results of the advisory vote will be reported to the
 133 presbytery prior to the vote of commissioners.
- 134 2. Young Adult Advisory Delegates- Each member congregation or
 135 recognized campus ministry of the presbytery may elect up to two
 136 (2) Young Adult Advisory Delegates (YAADs).
- 137 a) Eligibility- Active confirmed members of member congregations
 138 who are 18-28 years old and active members of a recognized
 139 campus ministry who are also confirmed members of any
 140 PC(USA) congregation are eligible to serve as YAADs.
- 141 b) Attendance- No less than one stated meeting per year shall be
 142 designated for participation by YAADs.
- 143 c) Advisory Role- YAADs serve as advisors to the presbytery in its
 144 work. Prior to a vote by the full presbytery, an advisory vote of
 145 YAADs should be taken on those issues they have studied as
 146 group. The results of the advisory vote will be reported to the
 147 presbytery prior to the vote of commissioners.
- 148 3. Presbyterian Women- The Moderator of Presbyterian Women, if a
 149 Teaching or Ruling Elder in good standing, shall have voice and
 150 vote.
- 151 4. Others- By majority vote of commissioners present and voting, the
 152 presbytery may enroll other visitors and grant privilege of voice
 153 but not vote.

154 **4) Officers and Staff**

- 155 A. Officers- The officers of the presbytery shall be the Moderator, Vice-
156 Moderator, Treasurer, and Stated Clerk. The presbytery may provide
157 for the election of an assistant Stated Clerk or assistant Treasurer if
158 needed.
- 159 B. Election- The Moderator and Vice-Moderator shall be elected to a one-
160 year term at the last meeting of the year preceding the year of service.
161 The Vice-Moderator shall normally be elected to serve as Moderator the
162 following year. The Stated Clerk and assistant Stated Clerk shall be
163 elected to a three-year term at the last meeting preceding the
164 commencement of service.
- 165 C. Installation- The Moderator and Vice-Moderator shall normally be
166 installed at the first meeting in the year of service.
- 167 D. Authority- The Moderator shall have such authority as granted by the
168 most recent edition of the Book of Order of the PC(USA) and such other
169 authority granted by vote of the presbytery. The Vice-Moderator shall
170 have the authority to serve in the Moderator's place when the office of
171 Moderator is vacant or when requested by the Moderator. The Stated
172 Clerk shall have such authority as required by the most recent edition of
173 the Book of Order of the PC(USA) and such other authority granted by
174 vote of the presbytery.
- 175 E. Parity- The office of Moderator shall normally alternate between Ruling
176 and Teaching Elders.
- 177 F. Vacancy- In the event of vacancy in the office of Moderator, the Vice-
178 Moderator shall serve as Moderator for the remainder of the term of
179 service. In the event of vacancy in the office of Vice-Moderator, a new
180 Vice-Moderator shall be elected at the next stated meeting of the
181 Presbytery. In the event of vacancy in the office of Stated Clerk, the
182 General Committee shall appoint a temporary clerk from among past
183 Stated Clerks or otherwise qualified candidates. The Acting Stated Clerk
184 shall serve until a replacement is elected.
- 185 G. Staff- The presbytery staff shall normally include an Executive/General
186 Presbyter, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer and may include such other staff
187 approved by the presbytery for the fulfillment of the presbytery's
188 mission and ministry.
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190 **5) Ministry Areas and Standing Committees**

191 A. Ministries of the Presbytery- In order to more fully and effectively live
192 into its vision, the work of the presbytery shall be partitioned into four
193 broad ministry areas: *Administration, the Church and Its Ministries, the*
194 *Church and Its Mission, and Ministries with Youth, Campus, and Young*
195 *Adults*. Within these areas, the presbytery shall maintain such
196 committees necessary to carry-out the functions of the presbytery as
197 required by the most recent edition of the Book of Order of the PC(USA)
198 and the vision set forth by the presbytery.

199 B. Administration- The Administration Ministry Area shall oversee the
200 budget and financial operations of the presbytery, act as the Personnel
201 committee of the presbytery, and relate to the constitutionally required
202 committees and commissions of the presbytery,

203 1. Membership- One member from each of the five regions of the
204 presbytery shall be elected for a three-year term. Terms should
205 be staggered to ensure even distribution over each yearly class.
206 Up to three at-large members may be elected if the principle of
207 representation or a need for specific skills or gifts requires.

208 2. Sub-committees and Task Forces- The Ministry Area may establish
209 such sub-committees and task forces needed to carry out their
210 duties. In no case shall a sub-committee or task force be
211 established for longer than 12 months without the approval of
212 the presbytery or provided by rule.

213 C. The Church and Its Ministries- The Church and Its Ministries Area shall be
214 responsible for oversight of the enrolling and dismissing of Teaching
215 Elders, the call process for congregational ministry, validation of other
216 ministries, the training and oversight of Commissioned Ruling Elders,
217 the oversight of Inquirers and Candidates for ministry, the health and
218 welfare of member congregations in times of need or pastoral
219 transition, and the support and nurture of church professionals.

220 1. Permanent Committees- There shall be two permanent
221 committees in the Ministries of the Church Area: the Committee
222 on Leadership Development (CLD) and the Committee on the
223 Church's Ministries (CCM).

224 a) Committee on Leadership Development- The Committee on
225 Leadership Development (CLD) shall oversee the training,
226 certification, and commissioning of Inquirers and
227 Candidates for the office of Teaching Elder and candidates
228 for the role of Commissioned Ruling Elder. The CLD shall
229 also provide for the certification of qualified Christian
230 Educators and Associate Christian Educators.

231 (1) Membership- One members from each region of the
232 presbytery shall be elected to serve a three-year
233 term. Four additional at-large members
234 representing the diversity of the presbytery shall be
235 elected. At least one member of the CLD shall be a
236 Certified Christian Educator or Certified Associate
237 Christian Educator.

238 (2) Co-Opting- CLD may co-opt members of the
239 presbytery for particular duties including liaising
240 with inquirers and candidates, teaching and training
241 CREs, and assisting with the certification process for
242 Christian Educators.

243 b) Committee on the Church's Ministries- The Committee on
244 the Church's Ministries shall oversee the enrollment and
245 dismissal of teaching elders, the call process for both
246 teaching elders and CREs, the care and nurture of church
247 professionals, and, in cooperation with the Future of the
248 Church Ministry Area, inquire into difficulties in
249 congregations per presbytery policies.

250 (1) Membership- Two members from each region of the
251 presbytery shall be elected to serve a three-year
252 term. Eight additional at-large members
253 representing the diversity of the presbytery shall be
254 elected to serve a three-year term.

255 (2) Co-Opting- CCM may co-opt members of the
256 presbytery for particular duties including liaising
257 with congregations, examining candidates for
258 enrollment in the presbytery, or inquiry into
259 congregational difficulties.

- 260 (3) Regional Cooperation- The unified mission and
 261 ministry of the presbytery are essential to the
 262 corporate witness of the church. When possible, the
 263 work of the presbytery and its ministries and
 264 committees should be done in the most
 265 representative and inclusive way. This commitment
 266 must be balanced by the demands of the geographic
 267 diversity of the presbytery. In order to more
 268 effectively meet the needs of the presbytery, the
 269 CCM may organize its routine work regionally
 270 provided the final decision on matters of policy,
 271 recommendations for presbytery action, and
 272 enrollment/dismissal remain with the full
 273 committee.
- 274 2. Ministry Coordination- The Leadership of the Church and
 275 Ministries of the Church committees should meet together at
 276 least annually to review shared goals and priorities and to
 277 coordinate their work for the benefit of the whole church.
- 278 D. The Church and Its Mission- The Church and Its Mission Area provides
 279 oversight, planning, and support for programs that connect our
 280 congregations in practicing our faith through mission and outreach,
 281 Christian education, and spiritual development. The Mission of the
 282 Church Area will provide guidance and resources to help connect
 283 congregations in mission and ministry.
- 284 1. Membership- Two members from each of the five regions of the
 285 presbytery shall be elected for a three-year term. Up to three at-
 286 large members may be elected if the principle of representation
 287 or a need for specific skills or gifts requires. The Moderator of
 288 Presbyterian Women or her designee shall be a member with
 289 voice and vote.
- 290 2. Sub-committees and Task Forces- The Ministry Area may establish
 291 such sub-committees and task forces needed to carry out their
 292 duties. In no case shall a sub-committee or task force be
 293 established for longer than 12 months without the approval of
 294 the presbytery unless provided by rule.
- 295 3. Permanent Sub-Committee- One permanent sub-committee of no
 296 less than five (ideally one from each of the five regions)
 297 members shall be elected for the Disaster Preparedness Sub-
 298 Committee.

- 299 4. Other Relating Entities- Unless otherwise required by charter or
300 covenant with the Presbytery, all partner agencies (i.e. Ferncliff,
301 PW, Presbyterian Pilgrimage, etc.) shall report to the presbytery
302 through the Church and Its Mission Area.
- 303 E. Ministries with Youth, Campus, and Young Adults- The Committee on
304 Ministries with Youth, Campus, and Young Adults shall oversee the
305 ministry of the church with middle school and high school youth,
306 college and campus based ministries within the bounds of the
307 presbytery, and ministries with Young Adults up to age 35.
- 308 1. Membership- Two members from each of the five regions of the
309 presbytery shall be elected for a three-year term. Additionally,
310 one member from each UKirk sanctioned campus ministry or
311 congregation-based campus ministry within the bounds of the
312 presbytery may elect one member with voice and vote. Two
313 members of the Youth Ministry Team shall be appointed by the
314 Youth Ministry Team to serve with voice and vote.
- 315 2. Sub-committees and Task Forces- The Ministry Area may establish
316 such sub-committees and task forces needed to carry out their
317 duties. In no case shall a sub-committee or task force be
318 established for longer than 12 months without the approval of
319 the presbytery.
- 320 3. Permanent Sub-Committees- Two permanent sub-committees
321 shall be appointed to oversee Youth and Campus ministries
322 respectively.
- 323 a) Youth Ministry Team: The Youth Ministry shall consist of
324 youth and adults from across the presbytery. The Youth
325 Ministry Team shall establish a process to annually invite
326 youth and adults to join the team.
- 327 b) The Campus Ministry Sub-Committee: The Campus Ministry
328 Sub-committee shall consist of up to two representatives
329 from each UKirk sanctioned campus ministry or
330 congregation-based campus ministry within the bounds of
331 the presbytery.

- 332 F. The Future of the Church Ministry Area- The Future of the Church serves
333 as a catalyst to engage congregations and Presbytery Ministry Areas in
334 creative thinking and planning beyond current models of ministry and
335 programming to meet the challenges of new demographics and trends
336 as society continues to change. The Future of the Church area assists
337 with visioning, branding, technology, and development of new
338 ministries. It provides new church development functions of the
339 Presbytery.
- 340 1. Membership- Two members from each of the five regions and
341 four at-large members shall be elected to three year terms.
- 342 2. Sub-committees and Task Forces- The Ministry Area may establish
343 such sub-committees and task forces needed to carry out their
344 duties. In no case shall a sub-committee or task force be
345 established for longer than 12 months without the approval of
346 the presbytery.
- 347 G. Required Committees- The presbytery shall maintain the following
348 committees and commissions to meet constitutional requirements: a
349 Permanent Judicial Commission, a Committee on Representation, a
350 Nominating Committee, and such other committees and commissions
351 required by the most recent edition of the Book of Order of the
352 PC(USA).
- 353 H. Coordinating Team- The Coordinating Team shall serve as the
354 coordinating and program oversight body of the presbytery between
355 meetings. When necessary, the Coordinating Team may act on behalf of
356 the presbytery for routine business or when a called, special, or regular
357 meeting of the presbytery is impractical.
- 358 1. Membership- There shall be no more than 16 and no fewer than
359 10 members of the Coordinating Team.
- 360 a) Members from Ministry Areas: Two elected members from
361 each of the four ministry areas shall be elected each January
362 to represent that area on the Coordinating Team.
- 363 b) At-Large Members: Five additional members shall be elected
364 from the presbytery (one from each region.) Three
365 additional at-large members may be elected to meet the
366 principles of representation and parity.
- 367 c) Ex-officio Members: The General/Executive Presbyter,
368 Treasurer, and Stated Clerk and/or Associate Stated Clerk
369 shall be ex-officio members with voice but not vote. Other
370 ex-officio members may be provided for by policy.

371 d) Geographic Limitations: At no time shall more than three
372 members of Coordinating Team be from the same geographic
373 region.

374 2. Terms- Terms of service shall be for two years. The terms of
375 Ministry Area representatives and at-large members should be
376 staggered to ensure consistent representation and continuity of
377 leadership. Members may be elected for up to two successive
378 terms. No member may serve for more than four consecutive
379 years without approval of the presbytery.

380 I. Nominations and Elections- The presbytery shall provide by rule for the
381 nomination and election of members to serve on all permanent
382 committees, sub-committees, and commissions. The principles of
383 representation and parity shall apply to all committees, sub-
384 committees, commissions, task forces, and other extensions of the
385 presbytery.

386 J. Additional and at-Large Members of Committees: When the
387 Organization and Structure provides for the option of additional
388 members, a committee may request that the Nominating Committee put
389 forward the name(s) of at-large members to meet particular needs of
390 the committee. The Nominating Committee may, at its own discretion,
391 also put forward at-large members for election if the committee deems
392 it necessary to meet the demands of representation and parity.

393 K. Representation and Parity- The principles of representation and parity
394 shall apply to all committees, sub-committees, commissions, task forces,
395 and other extensions of the presbytery.

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414 **6) Standing Rules**

415 A. Definition- A standing rule of the Presbytery is any action of the
416 Presbytery of a general nature that will govern the actions of Presbytery
417 for an indefinite period of time. Standing rules may order the
418 operations of Presbytery; elaborate on existing policies and practices;
419 direct its officers, staff, or agencies; establish procedures; or provide
420 any kind of specific guidance. However, they must be within the
421 framework of existing policies of the Presbytery; they may not establish
422 policy nor modify parliamentary procedure. Policy is established by this
423 Manual or by specific procedures established by the Manual.

424 B. Expiration- Any action of the Presbytery that meets the definition of
425 standing rule, but which is not so identified and numbered in the
426 minutes will expire one year from the date of its passage, unless
427 readopted.

428 C. Records- The Stated Clerk will keep a Compendium of Standing Rules,
429 numbering each chronologically, or by another numbering system,
430 assigning each a number immediately after passage, which number will
431 appear in the minutes.

432 The list of Standing Rules should not be renumbered following repeal of
433 a rule. When a rule expires or is repealed, a note shall be added to the
434 Compendium in place of the rule.

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456 **7) Incorporation**

457 A. Incorporation- The Presbytery of Arkansas is incorporated as a not for
458 profit ecclesiastical corporation in accordance with the constitution of
459 the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as well as in compliance with the laws
460 of the State of Arkansas, and in conformity with appropriate sections of
461 the Federal Internal Revenue Code.

462 B. Meetings of the Corporation- Meetings of the presbytery shall be
463 meetings of the corporation.

464 C. Officers- Officers of the corporation shall be the moderator and stated
465 clerk of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

466 D. Counselor-at-Law- The presbytery shall elect a counselor-at-law and may
467 elect associate counselors-at-law, each of whom shall be active
468 members of churches in the Presbytery of Arkansas. Terms shall be for
469 three years and reelection shall be permitted.

470 The counselor shall be an advisory member of the General Committee of
471 the presbytery, and shall advise the General Committee and the
472 presbytery on such legal matters as may become of concern to the
473 General Committee and the presbytery. The counselor may seek the
474 advice and assistance of the associate counselors when necessary.

475 The counselor and associate counselors shall serve without
476 compensation, but they shall be reimbursed for such reasonable
477 expenses as they may from time to time incur.

478 The counselor may, at the direction of the presbytery, retain or employ
479 such additional attorneys as may be deemed necessary to represent the
480 presbytery from time to time.

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485 **8) Amendment**

486 A. Amendments- The **Organization and Structure** may be amended by
487 vote of the presbytery as follows:

488 1. Amending Organization and Structure- The **Organization and**
489 **Structure** section may be amended by 3/5 vote of the
490 presbytery present and voting if the proposed amendment is
491 distributed to all members and member congregations no less
492 than 30 days prior to the meeting during which the vote is to
493 take place. This rule may be waived by a 2/3 vote of the
494 presbytery present and voting.

495 2. Ministry Duties and Presbytery Policies- The Ministry Duties and
496 Presbytery Policies sections may be amended by majority vote
497 of the presbytery.

498 3. Standing Rules- A Standing Rule may be adopted by a 3/5 vote of
499 the Presbytery present and voting.

500 4. Covenants and Partnerships- Once adopted by the presbytery, all
501 covenants and partnership agreements shall be deemed added
502 to the Ministry Guide.

503 B. Suspension- A particular provision of this manual may be suspended by
504 a 2/3 vote of the presbytery. No provision may be suspended if such
505 suspension violates the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church
506 (USA).

507 C. Editorial Changes- The Stated Clerk shall provide for annual review of
508 this Manual and its contents. The Stated Clerk, in consultation with the
509 Moderator and General Presbyter, is empowered to make minor
510 changes to correct grammar or spelling, to eliminate redundancies, or
511 to make such changes necessitated by action of the General Assembly of
512 the PC(USA) or the GAPJC. Any changes (other than scrivener's
513 corrections) shall be reported to the presbytery at its next stated
514 meeting. At least annually, the Stated Clerk shall provide each Clerk of
515 Session in the presbytery the updated contents to this manual.