

# 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 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> 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.



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