

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 including Standing Rules and a Manual of
44 Operations. In the event any rule or policy is deemed in conflict with
45 the Book of Order of the PC(USA), the Book of Order shall have
46 precedence.
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83 **3) Meetings and Membership of the Presbytery**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

155 **4) Officers and Staff**

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

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

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

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

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

214 C. The Church and Its Ministries- The Church and Its Ministries Area shall be
215 responsible for oversight of the enrolling and dismissing of Teaching
216 Elders, the call process for congregational ministry, validation of other
217 ministries, the training and oversight of Commissioned Ruling Elders,
218 the oversight of Inquirers and Candidates for ministry, the health and
219 welfare of member congregations, the founding and dissolution of
220 congregations and fellowships, and the support and nurture of church
221 professionals.

222 1. Permanent Committees- There shall be four permanent sub-
223 committees: *Committee on Call and Enrollment (CCE), Committee*
224 *on Congregational Vitality and Revitalization (CCVR), Committee*
225 *on Leadership Development (CLD) and Committee on Professional*
226 *Development and Support (CPDS).*

- 227 a) Committee on Call and Enrollment- The Committee on Call
228 and Enrollment (CCE) shall oversee the enrollment of
229 Teaching Elders, examination of candidates for
230 membership in the presbytery, establishment and
231 dissolution of calls, validating ministries, and liaising with
232 member congregations and related agencies seeking
233 leadership.
- 234 (1) Membership- Two members from each region of the
235 presbytery shall be elected to serve a three-year
236 term. Two additional members may be elected to
237 meet the needs of the committee or the principles of
238 representation.
- 239 (2) Co-Opting- CCE may co-opt members of the
240 presbytery for particular duties including liaising
241 with search committees, serving on regional
242 examination committees, or liaising with
243 Transitional Teaching Elders. Co-opt members shall
244 serve in an advisory capacity. Decision making
245 power shall remain with the elected committee.
- 246 b) Committee on Congregational Vitality and Revitalization- The
247 Committee on Congregational Vitality and Revitalization
248 (CCVR) shall oversee the health and welfare of member
249 congregations, inquire into difficulties within member
250 congregations, with the Committee on Professional
251 Development and Support inquire into difficulties
252 involving Teaching Elders and member congregations,
253 promote the well-being of member congregations, oversee
254 the establishment of new churches and fellowships,
255 revitalization of existing congregations and fellowships,
256 and dissolution of congregations and fellowships.
- 257 (1) Membership- Three members from each region of
258 the presbytery shall be elected to serve a three-year
259 term. Two additional members may be elected to
260 meet the needs of the committee or the principles of
261 representation.

- 262 (2) Co-Opting- CCVR may co-opt members of the
 263 presbytery for particular duties including working
 264 directly with congregations in conflict, guiding
 265 congregations through a revitalization process,
 266 making regular visits to inquire into the health and
 267 vitality of congregations, or dissolving
 268 congregations. The CCVR may, with concurrence
 269 from the General Committee or presbytery, give
 270 limited commission powers to co-opted working
 271 groups.
- 272 c) Committee on Leadership Development- The Committee on
 273 Leadership Development (CLD) shall oversee the training,
 274 certification, and commissioning of Inquirers and
 275 Candidates for the office of Teaching Elder and candidates
 276 for the role of Commissioned Ruling Elder. The CLD shall
 277 also provide for the certification of qualified Christian
 278 Educators and Associate Christian Educators.
- 279 (1) Membership- Two members from each region of the
 280 presbytery shall be elected to serve a three-year
 281 term. Two additional members may be elected to
 282 meet the needs of the committee or the principles of
 283 representation. At least one member of the CLD
 284 shall be a Certified Christian Educator or Certified
 285 Associate Christian Educator.
- 286 (2) Co-Opting- CLD may co-opt members of the
 287 presbytery for particular duties including liaising
 288 with inquirers and candidates, teaching and training
 289 CREs, and assisting with the certification process for
 290 Christian Educators.
- 291 d) Committee on Professional Development and Support- The
 292 Committee on Professional Development and Support
 293 (CPDS) shall encourage the professional development of
 294 church professionals, with the Committee on
 295 Congregational Vitality and Revitalization inquire into
 296 difficulties involving Teaching Elders and member
 297 congregations, and promote the wellbeing of Teaching
 298 Elders, CREs and Certified Christian Educators.
- 299 (1) Membership- Two members from each region of the
 300 presbytery shall be elected to serve a three-year
 301 term. Two additional members may be elected to
 302 meet the needs of the committee or the principles of
 303 representation.

304 (2) Co-Opting- CPDS may co-opt members of the
305 presbytery for particular duties including working
306 directly with pastors experiencing difficulties,
307 making regular visits to inquire into the health and
308 vitality of pastors, CREs and Certified Christian
309 Educators, or, in cooperation with CCVR, working
310 with congregations in crisis. The CPDS may, with
311 concurrence from the General Committee or
312 presbytery, give limited commission powers to co-
313 opted working groups.

314 2. Ministry Coordination- Each of the four standing sub-committees
315 shall appoint two members to serve on the Ministries of the
316 Church Coordinating Committee (MCCC). The MCCC shall act as
317 a coordinating body for the four permanent committees of the
318 Ministries of the Church Area. If needed, the MCCC may co-opt
319 up to three members with needed expertise with voice but not
320 vote.

321 D. The Church and Its Mission- The Church and Its Mission Area shall
322 oversee the mission and outreach of the presbytery including relations
323 with church-related agencies and non-PC(USA) entities, coordinating
324 mission activities of the presbytery, providing grants to mission
325 initiatives within the presbytery, connecting congregations in mission
326 and ministry, encouraging the spiritual development of individuals and
327 the presbytery as a whole, and oversight of the Resource Center.

328 1. Membership- Three members from each of the five regions of the
329 presbytery shall be elected for a three-year term. Up to three at-
330 large members may be elected if the principle of representation
331 or a need for specific skills or gifts requires. The Moderator of
332 Presbyterian Women or her designee shall be a member with
333 voice and vote.

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

339 3. Permanent Sub-Committee- One permanent sub-committee of no
340 less than five (one from each of the five regions) and no more
341 than 15 members shall be elected for the Disaster Preparedness
342 Sub-Committee.

- 343 4. Other Relating Entities- Unless otherwise required by charter or
 344 covenant with the Presbytery, all partner agencies (i.e. Ferncliff,
 345 PW, Presbyterian Pilgrimage, etc.) shall report to the presbytery
 346 through the Church and Its Mission Area.
- 347 E. Ministries with Youth, Campus, and Young Adults- The Committee on
 348 Ministries with Youth, Campus, and Young Adults shall oversee the
 349 ministry of the church with middle school and high school youth,
 350 college and campus based ministries within the bounds of the
 351 presbytery, and ministries with Young Adults up to age 35.
- 352 1. Membership- Three members from each of the five regions of the
 353 presbytery shall be elected for a three-year term. Additionally,
 354 one member from each UKirk sanctioned campus ministry or
 355 congregation-based campus ministry within the bounds of the
 356 presbytery may elect one member with voice and vote. Two
 357 members of the permanent sub-committee on Youth Ministry
 358 shall be appointed to serve with voice and vote.
- 359 2. Sub-committees and Task Forces- The Ministry Area may establish
 360 such sub-committees and task forces needed to carry out their
 361 duties. In no case shall a sub-committee or task force be
 362 established for longer than 12 months without the approval of
 363 the presbytery.
- 364 3. Permanent Sub-Committees- Two permanent sub-committees
 365 shall be appointed to oversee Youth and Campus ministries
 366 respectively.
- 367 a) Youth Ministry Team: The Youth Ministry shall consist of
 368 youth and adults from across the presbytery. No more than
 369 two adults and two youth from a particular church should
 370 serve at the same time. Three members of the Committee
 371 on Youth, Campus, and Young Adults will serve on the Youth
 372 Ministry Team.
- 373 b) The Campus Ministry Sub-Committee: The Campus Ministry
 374 Sub-committee shall consist of up to two representatives
 375 from each UKirk sanctioned campus ministry or
 376 congregation-based campus ministry within the bounds of
 377 the presbytery. Three members of the Committee on Youth,
 378 Campus, and Young Adults will serve on sub-committee.

- 379 F. Required Committees- The presbytery shall maintain the following
 380 committees and commissions to meet constitutional requirements: a
 381 Permanent Judicial Commission, a Committee on Representation, a
 382 Nominating Committee, and such other committees and commissions
 383 required by the most recent edition of the Book of Order of the
 384 PC(USA).
- 385 G. Coordinating Team- The Coordinating Team shall serve as the
 386 coordinating and program oversight body of the presbytery between
 387 meetings. When necessary, the Coordinating Team may act on behalf of
 388 the presbytery for routine business or when a called, special, or regular
 389 meeting of the presbytery is impractical.
- 390 1. Membership- There shall be no more than 16 and no fewer than
 391 10 members of the Coordinating Team.
- 392 a) Members from Ministry Areas: Two elected members from
 393 each of the four ministry areas shall be elected each January
 394 to represent that area on the Coordinating Team.
- 395 b) At-Large Members: Five additional members shall be elected
 396 from the presbytery (one from each region.) Three
 397 additional at-large members may be elected to meet the
 398 principles of representation and parity.
- 399 c) Ex-officio Members: The General/Executive Presbyter,
 400 Treasurer, and Stated Clerk and/or Associate Stated Clerk
 401 shall be ex-officio members with voice but not vote. Other
 402 ex-officio members may be provided for by policy.
- 403 d) Geographic Limitations: At no time shall more than three
 404 members of Coordinating Team be from the same geographic
 405 region.
- 406 2. Terms- Terms of service shall be for two years. The terms of
 407 Ministry Area representatives and at-large members should be
 408 staggered to ensure consistent representation and continuity of
 409 leadership. Members may be elected for up to two successive
 410 terms. No member may serve for more than four consecutive
 411 years without approval of the presbytery.
- 412 H. Nominations and Elections- The presbytery shall provide by rule for the
 413 nomination and election of members to serve on all permanent
 414 committees, sub-committees, and commissions. The principles of
 415 representation and parity shall apply to all committees, sub-
 416 committees, commissions, task forces, and other extensions of the
 417 presbytery.

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

447 **6) Standing Rules**

448 A. Definition- A standing rule of the Presbytery is any action of the
449 Presbytery of a general nature that will govern the actions of Presbytery
450 for an indefinite period of time. Standing rules may order the
451 operations of Presbytery; elaborate on existing policies and practices;
452 direct its officers, staff, or agencies; establish procedures; or provide
453 any kind of specific guidance. However, they must be within the
454 framework of existing policies of the Presbytery; they may not establish
455 policy nor modify parliamentary procedure. Policy is established by this
456 Manual or by specific procedures established by the Manual.

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

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

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

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489 **7) Incorporation**

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

495 B. Meetings of the Corporation- Meetings of the presbytery shall be
496 meetings of the corporation.

497 C. Officers- Officers of the corporation shall be the moderator and stated
498 clerk of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

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

503 The counselor shall be an advisory member of the General Committee of
504 the presbytery, and shall advise the General Committee and the
505 presbytery on such legal matters as may become of concern to the
506 General Committee and the presbytery. The counselor may seek the
507 advice and assistance of the associate counselors when necessary.

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

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

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518 **8) Amendment**

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

521 1. Amending Organization and Structure- The **Organization and**
522 **Structure** section may be amended by 3/5 vote of the
523 presbytery if the proposed amendment is distributed to all
524 members and member congregations no less than 30 days prior
525 to the meeting during which the vote is to take place. This rule
526 may be waived by a 2/3 vote of the presbytery.

527 2. Ministry Duties and Presbytery Policies- The Ministry Duties and
528 Presbytery Policies sections may be amended by majority vote
529 of the presbytery.

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

534 C. Editorial Changes- The Stated Clerk shall provide for annual review of
535 this Manual and its contents. The Stated Clerk, in consultation with the
536 Moderator and General Presbyter, is empowered to make minor
537 changes to correct grammar or spelling, to eliminate redundancies, or
538 to make such changes necessitated by action of the General Assembly of
539 the PC(USA) or the GAPJC. Any changes (other than scrivener's
540 corrections) shall be reported to the presbytery at its next stated
541 meeting. At least annually, the Stated Clerk shall provide each Clerk of
542 Session in the presbytery updated contents to this manual.