

BYLAWS  
HOMESTEAD PRESBYTERY  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

**ARTICLE I**  
**Object**

- Section 1: Homestead Presbytery, hereafter referred to as the Presbytery, is a council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), hereafter referred to as the PCUSA. The Presbytery comprises an area included within the counties of Antelope, Boone, Burt, Butler, Cedar, Colfax, Cumming, Dixon, Dodge, Fillmore, Gage, Greeley, Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Lancaster, Madison, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Pierce, Platte, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Stanton, Thayer, Thurston, Wayne, Wheeler, and York.
- Section 2. As a council, the Presbytery is a sign of the unity of the one Church of Jesus Christ. It unites the congregations within its jurisdiction and it unites those congregations with the larger church.
- Section 3. As a council, the Presbytery exists to help the congregations in its jurisdiction and the church as a whole to be more faithful participants in the mission of Christ. The Presbytery is to nurture, guide, and govern those who witness as part of the PCUSA, to the end that such witness strengthens the whole church and gives glory to God.

**ARTICLE II**  
**Members**

- Section 1. Members of the Presbytery are Ministers of the Word and Sacrament who have been received by the presbytery.
- Section 2. Ministers of other Christian churches enrolled by the presbytery and serving temporarily in a validated ministry within the presbytery, or in an installed relationship under the provisions of the Formula of Agreement, shall hold temporary membership.
- Section 3. A ruling elder commissioned to limited pastoral service shall hold membership during their commission.
- Section 4. A ruling elder elected moderator, vice moderator, moderator of a standing committee or commission or member of Council shall be enrolled as a member of the presbytery for the term of office, whether commissioned by his or her session.
- Section 5. Ruling elder commissioners elected by a session from a particular congregation are members when they present themselves at the meeting and are enrolled by the presbytery for that meeting. Their membership terminates upon adjournment of that meeting.

**ARTICLE III**  
**Officers**

- Section 1. There shall be the following officers of the Presbytery: moderator; moderator-elect, who shall serve as vice moderator of the presbytery, stated clerk and treasurer. The

Manual of Operations of the Presbytery shall include a current position description of all officers.

Section 2. The corporation officers shall be:

- A. The moderator of the Committee on Administration and Finance shall be the president of the corporation.
- B. The moderator of council shall be the vice-president of the corporation.
- C. The stated clerk of the presbytery shall be the secretary of the corporation.
- D. The treasurer of the presbytery shall be the treasurer of the corporation.

Section 3. The officers of the Presbytery shall carry out all responsibilities as outlined in the *Book of Order* of the PC(USA), and Homestead Presbytery Manual of Operations.

Section 4. A moderator of the Presbytery shall serve for a term of one year and until a successor is elected. If the office of moderator becomes vacant, the vice-moderator becomes the moderator for the remainder of the term.

Section 5. A vice moderator's term of office shall be concurrent with that of the moderator.

Section 6. A stated clerk shall be elected for a renewable term, no longer than three years. The compensation and length of term of this office shall be determined by the Presbytery.

Section 7. A treasurer shall be elected for a term of three years. The compensation shall be determined by the Presbytery.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Meetings**

Section 1. **STATED MEETINGS.**

- A. The stated assemblies of the Presbytery will ordinarily be held on the following dates, unless otherwise ordered by the Council:
  - 1) Third Saturday in February (winter).
  - 2) Third Thursday in May (spring).
  - 3) Third Saturday in August (summer).
  - 4) Third Thursday in November (fall).
- B. The annual meeting shall be the fall assembly.

Section 2. **CALLED MEETINGS.**

- A. The moderator may call a special meeting. The moderator shall call a special meeting at the request of two ministers and two elders, the elders being of different churches. Should the moderator be unable to act, the stated clerk shall, under the same conditions, issue the call. If both the moderator and stated clerk are unable to act, any three ministers and three elders, the elders being of different churches, may call a special meeting.
- B. The synod may direct the Presbytery to convene a special meeting for the transaction of designated business.
- C. Notice of a special meeting shall be sent by email or other means no less than ten days in advance to each minister and to the session of every church. The notice shall set out the purpose of the meeting, and no other business than that listed in the notice shall be transacted.

Section 3. **ELECTRONIC MEETINGS.** The Presbytery may meet by electronic means, if all ministers of Word and Sacrament members and ruling elder commissioners have

reasonable notice of the electronic meeting and the ability to discuss, deliberate, discern the will of God, and vote on business items.

Section 4. **QUORUM.** A quorum of a Presbytery meeting shall be three Ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are members of the Presbytery and three ruling elder commissioners from three different congregations.

Section 5. **PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR.** Any individual and/or organization that is called upon by the presbytery or any of its committees or commissions to make a report or a presentation on the floor of presbytery shall be awarded the privileges of the floor without specific action of the presbytery.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Committees and Commissions**

#### **Section 1. General Provisions**

- A. Presbytery may create standing committees and commissions, as needed to accomplish its stated mission goals. These Presbytery standing committees and commissions shall meet the requirements of the Form of Government. Presbytery units shall ordinarily consist of church members, temporary members of Presbytery, and teaching and ruling elders elected to three-year terms and arranged in classes, with one class retiring each year. A commission shall consist of teaching elders and ruling elders. No members of committees and commissions shall be eligible to serve more than six consecutive years, and a member who has served six consecutive years shall be ineligible for election to the same committee or commission for at least one year.
- B. Members of the Permanent Judicial Commission shall be elected in three classes, with no more than one half of the members in one class. The term of each member of the Permanent Judicial Commission shall be six years. No person who has served on the Permanent Judicial Commission for a full term of six years shall be eligible for reelection until four years have elapsed after the expired six-year term.
- C. The moderator may appoint temporary or special committees or commissions (including appointment of a moderator), except in cases in which the Presbytery shall decide otherwise.
- D. Membership on Presbytery Council, or the committees, and commissions, of the Presbytery shall have as nearly as possible fair representation of male and female ministers of the Word and Sacrament, male and female elders, racial and/or ethnic categories, and generations.
- E. All committees of the Presbytery, except the Permanent Judicial Committee, shall meet quarterly, or as needed, and report activities and actions to the Presbytery. A quorum for a meeting of any Presbytery unit is a majority of the membership. Each Presbytery unit may name from among its members a vice moderator and a secretary. Committees shall not have co-moderators.
- F. The Presbytery authorizes its commissions, committees, boards, and agencies to take action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting with like effect between meetings of the entity, provided that every member is contacted either in person or via email and no member objects. If contacted via email, verification must

consist of an email reply stating “no objection,” or words to that effect. If any member objects or wishes to have discussion on the motion, then a special meeting is required to take the action. Discussion via email in lieu of a meeting is not sufficient. Such action, if taken, shall be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the entity as an action taken by unanimous consent between meetings in accordance with the rules.

- G. Missing three meetings in a twelve-month period by any member of Presbytery Council, the standing committees, or commissions, shall ordinarily constitute resignation.
- H. Any unit of the Presbytery may co-opt additional members for special responsibilities, making sure that fair representation is taken into consideration.
- I. These are the standing units of Homestead Presbytery:
  - 1) Presbytery Council
  - 2) Commission on Ministry
  - 3) Committee on Preparation for Ministry
  - 4) Nominating Committee
  - 5) Permanent Judicial Commission
  - 6) Committee on Administration and Finance
  - 7) Program – Grant
  - 8) Committee on New Worshipping Communities and Church Vitality
  - 9) The Disaster Preparation Response Team and Beyond
  - 10) Bills and Overtures Committee

## **Section 2. Presbytery Council**

- A. Membership: Moderators of the standing committees and commissions; Presbytery moderator; presbytery moderator-elect, who shall serve as vice-moderator of the Council; stated clerk, who shall serve as clerk of Council; the executive presbyter; a representative of Presbyterian Women of Homestead Presbytery; and three at-large members elected by the Presbytery for a three-year term, one member per class. Moderator of the Council shall be the immediate past Presbytery moderator. Vice-moderator of the Council shall be the moderator-elect of the Presbytery.
- B. Meetings and Quorum. Meetings of Council shall occur at least two weeks before Presbytery assemblies. A quorum shall be one-third of the Council membership plus its moderator. Special meetings of the Council shall be called by the Council moderator at his/her discretion or upon the request of one-fourth of the membership.
- C. Responsibilities:
  - 1) Shall coordinate the mission and program of the Presbytery.
  - 2) Shall be responsible for long-range planning, goals, and policies of the Presbytery.
  - 3) Shall propose the docket for stated assemblies in consultation with the stated clerk, Presbytery moderator, and executive presbyter.
  - 4) Shall receive and provide for the study of proposals from individual churches and make recommendations to the Presbytery for appropriate action.
  - 5) Shall review and recommend updates to the Homestead Presbytery Manual of

- Operations at least every third year for action by the Presbytery.
- 6) Shall, when a stated clerk for the presbytery is to be elected, appoint a task force. Such task force shall inform the presbytery they are receiving nominations for the stated clerk, and nominate one person to the presbytery for election.
  - 7) Shall constitute the COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION with the following Responsibilities:
    - i. Shall advise and assist the Presbytery in implementing principles insuring fair and effective representation.
    - ii. Shall advocate for the representation of racial/ethnic members, different age groups, both sexes, persons with disabilities, and persons from differing geographical locations on the units of Presbytery and endeavor, in consultation with the Presbytery Nominating Committee; to discover and to encourage nominations of persons in these categories.
    - iii. Shall advise the Presbytery on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of participation and representation, and in conformity with the church wide plan for equal employment opportunity.
    - iv. Shall review the performance of the Presbytery in these matters and shall report annually to it and to the next more inclusive council with recommendations for any needed corrective actions.

### Section 3. **Commission on Ministry**

- A. Membership: Fifteen people, in numbers nearly equal as possible between teaching and ruling elders, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the Presbytery upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee.
- B. Responsibilities:
  1. Shall fulfill the responsibilities designated for a committee on ministry by the *Form of Government* [G-3.0307]:
    - i. to find terms of calls of teaching elders in order;
    - ii. to examine and receive into Presbytery membership teaching elders seeking admission to Presbytery;
    - iii. to dismiss teaching elders to other presbyteries;
    - iv. to authorize teaching elders to labor within or without the bounds of Presbytery;
    - v. to visit particular sessions or congregations reported to be affected with disorder, and inquire into and settle the difficulties therein [G-3.03d., e.], except that no pastoral relationship may be dissolved without the specific action of Presbytery;
    - vi. and to approve the honorable retirement of teaching elder members;
    - vii. all such actions taken pursuant to this section are to be reported to the next stated assembly of the Presbytery.
  2. Shall conduct a pastoral visitation with each session in the Presbytery at least triennially.
  3. Shall make recommendations to Presbytery concerning minimum salary for pastors and all other matters relating to compensation, benefits, allowances, and reimbursements, and conduct annually a review of total compensation for

- all ministers and report that to the Presbytery.
- 4. Shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as pastor and counselor to teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and certified Christian educators of Presbytery.
- 5. Shall be responsible for the annual review of session minutes and records.
- 6. Shall appoint moderators for sessions without pastoral leadership.
- 7. Shall administer the Personal Assistance Fund for ministers, and the Ministry Support Fund for churches.

#### **Section 4. Committee on Preparation for Ministry**

- A. Membership: Nine people, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the Presbytery upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee.
- B. Responsibilities:
  - 1. Shall provide oversight, guidance, nurture, and examination of inquirers and candidates as directed by the Form of Government.
  - 2. Shall designate readers for the ordination examinations conducted by the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates.
  - 3. Shall work in consultation with the committee on ministry on the identification and preparation of persons certified as commissioned lay pastors.

#### **Section 5. Nominating Committee**

- A. Membership: Nine people, one of whom shall be the moderator, nominated by the Council and elected by the Presbytery. Members are eligible to serve one three-year term. Any member having served a total of three years shall be ineligible for re-election to this committee for a period of one year.
- B. Responsibilities
  - 1. Shall nominate for election by the Presbytery:
    - i. all Presbytery standing committees and commissions, except the Nominating Committee,
    - ii. members of the permanent judicial commission.
    - iii. Moderator and vice-moderator of the presbytery.
  - 2. Shall nominate for election by the Presbytery moderators of all Presbytery committees, commissions, except the Nominating Committee and the Permanent Judicial Commission.
  - 3. Shall nominate to the Calvin Crest Camp and Conference Retreat Center Board of Directors, persons to serve as directors.
  - 4. Shall nominate for election by the Presbytery commissioners and youth advisory delegates to General Assembly and synod; and nominate persons for election to committees, councils and agencies of synod or General Assembly.
  - 5. Shall consider a representative geographical distribution of participants in making nominations.
  - 6. Shall give consideration to "expertise" in making nominations.
  - 7. Shall be responsive to the need for inclusiveness.
  - 8. Shall nominate no more than one person per vacancy.
  - 9. If more than one name is placed in nomination, elections shall be by ballot. A

- majority vote is required for election.
10. Shall ordinarily present its slate of nominees at the fall assembly. Those persons elected shall take office on January first of the next year, except for the Presbytery moderator and vice moderator who take office immediately following election.
  11. Elections to fill unexpired terms shall be held when appropriate. They shall take office immediately upon election.

#### **Section 6. Permanent Judicial Commission**

- A. Membership: seven people, with no more than one of its ruling elder members from any one of its constituent churches, elected by the Presbytery upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee in conformity with the requirements specified in the Rules of Discipline. The moderator, stated clerk, or any member of the staff of the Presbytery or the staff of any of its entities shall not serve on the Commission.
- B. The moderator and clerk of the Commission shall be elected by members of the Commission.
- C. Responsibilities: The permanent judicial commission shall carry out those duties and obligations assigned to it in the Rules of Discipline.

#### **Section 7. Committee on Administration & Finance**

- A. Membership: The committee shall consist of nine persons serving in three classes of three each.
- B. The Committee shall have three work groups:
  1. Finance & Investments
    - i. Prepare an annual budget for Presbytery in consultation with all units and program staff.
    - ii. Manage the finances of Presbytery through supervision of the Treasurer, regular reports to Presbytery, and an annual financial review/audit.
    - iii. Oversee and manage Presbytery investments.
  2. Personnel & Administration
    - i. Oversee office administration and business practices.
    - ii. Provide for all Presbytery office operations and equipment.
    - iii. Provide support to all staff of Presbytery.
    - iv. Carry out performance evaluations and recommend changes in terms of call for program staff and assist in the evaluation of support staff.
    - v. Maintain descriptions of and terms of call for all staff positions.
    - vi. Employ ministry specialists in consultation with the Executive Presbyter and the units of Presbytery.
  3. Stewardship & Communications
    - i. Request sessions to covenant with Presbytery for financial support of the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
    - ii. Provide education and resources to sessions for the development of financial stewardship.
    - iii. Oversee Presbytery communications and social media platforms to best interpret the mission and ministry of the Presbytery to its constituents.
    - iv. Provide editorial guidelines for Presbytery publications.
- A. The Committee shall have three resource persons:

1. Treasurer
2. Executive Presbyter
3. Administrative Assistant

#### Section 8. **Program — Grant**

- A. Membership: six people, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the Presbytery upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee.
- B. Responsibilities:
  1. The Program — Grant Committee appoints Ministry & Missions task groups (M & Ms) for specific tasks or areas of responsibility. The M & Ms must be authorized each year by the Committee, contingent upon their goals, action plan, and a written report of objective and accomplishments. M & Ms may be allotted a budget through the Program — Grant Committee funds. Membership in an M & M task group shall be appointed by the Program-Grant Committee.
  2. The Program — Grant Committee, in conjunction with Committee on Administration and Finance, shall establish categories of funds available for individuals, congregations, task forces, commissions, committees, and other groups, and develop a fair application process with stipulations for awarding of funds.
  3. The Program — Grant Committee shall evaluate grant applications from individuals and congregations.

#### Section 9. **Committee on New Worshipping Communities and Church Vitality**

- A. Membership: seven ruling and teaching elders, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the Presbytery upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee.
- B. Responsibilities:
  1. Understanding that church in our changing culture takes on varied forms, the Standing Committee on New Worshipping Communities, Church Development and Redevelopment seeks to make and renew worshipping communities in Homestead Presbytery as they seek to form disciples of Jesus Christ through
    - i. Worship gathered by the Spirit to meet Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament.
    - ii. Community that practices mutual care and accountability while developing sustainability in leadership and finances.
  2. Oversee development and redevelopment of new and existing worshipping communities establishing their identity as members of the larger Presbyterian Church (USA) worshipping community.
  3. Familiarize all committee members with the PCUSA information on New Worshipping Communities and Homestead Presbytery's redevelopment process.
  4. Develop a discernment process for all new worshipping communities.
  5. Oversee the redevelopment process currently in use in Homestead Presbytery.
  6. Recommend to the Committee on Administration and Finance of Homestead Presbytery all financial requests of both new worshipping communities and church redevelopment projects.



7. Provide a liaison to new and redeveloping worshipping communities within Homestead Presbytery.
8. Recommend to Presbytery administrative commissions to act as session for new worshipping communities that are not a ministry of a Homestead Presbytery congregation's session. Such commissions shall be composed of five members. A quorum of the administrative commission is a majority of members.
9. Recommend to Homestead Presbytery of all new worshipping communities within the bounds of Homestead Presbytery. Determination of new worship communities shall be based on the General Assembly definition of a new worshipping community.

#### **Section 10. The Disaster Preparation Response Team and Beyond**

- A. Membership: twelve ruling and teaching elders, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the Presbytery upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee.
- B. Responsibilities:
  1. Create, maintain and oversee Disaster Plan for the Presbytery
  2. Encourage every congregation to create a Disaster Plan unique, and specific for each congregation
  3. Maintain communication with the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program and assist in requesting grants as needed
  4. Serve on Long Term Recovery Groups as appropriate
  5. Organize work days/weeks within the Presbytery as appropriate
  6. Provide "Minute for Missions" at Assembly meetings regarding PDA and the Homestead Disaster Fund
  7. Maintain communication with retired clergy and their families currently on the Presbytery roles

#### **Section 11 Bills and Overtures Committee**

- A. Membership:
  1. Commissioners and delegates to the immediate past General Assembly and the commissioners-elect and delegates-elect to the next General Assembly.
  2. Commissioners to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies.
  3. The Stated Clerk and Executive Presbyter of Homestead Presbytery.
  4. One of the committee members (excluding staff) shall be the moderator, elected by the Presbytery upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee.
- B. Responsibilities:
  1. To receive from a session or entity of the presbytery any overtures to Synod or General Assembly, provide advice on format, deadlines, and procedures, without bias as to the merit or advisability of the request, and submit it to the presbytery for presbytery's action.
  2. To propose overtures to Synod or General Assembly, and present to Presbytery for action.

3. For overtures originating from Homestead Presbytery, seek concurrence from other presbyteries, and work with the appropriate General Assembly entity concerning overture advocates and others speaking to the overtures at General Assembly.
4. To receive any requests from other presbyteries for concurrence on their overtures to General Assembly and to recommend to the presbytery any action on those requests.
5. Shall receive and provide for the study of proposed amendments to the *Book of Order* or the *Book of Confessions* from the General Assembly and recommend to the presbytery the presbytery's answer to those amendments.
6. To keep the Presbytery apprised of the work of the General Assembly and Synod.
7. To provide education to the Presbytery on issues coming before Synod or General Assembly.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Staff**

The Presbytery may authorize staff positions as described in the *Book of Order* (G3.0110).

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Indemnification**

The Presbytery shall indemnify any director, officer, employee, or volunteer or former director, officer, volunteer, or employee of the Presbytery, or any person who may have served at its request as a director, officer, volunteer, against expenses and costs (including attorney's fees) actually and necessarily incurred by him or her, and any amount paid in satisfaction of judgment in connection with any action, suit or proceeding, whether civil or criminal in nature, in which he or she is made party by reason of being or having been such a director, officer, volunteer, or employee (whether or not a director, officer, volunteer, or employee at the time such costs or expenses are incurred by or imposed upon him or her) except in relation to matters as to which he or she shall be adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding to be liable for gross negligence, willful misconduct, or intentional criminal acts in the performance of duty. The corporation may also reimburse to any director, officer, volunteer, or employee the reasonable costs of settlement of any such action.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Parliamentary Procedure**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Presbytery in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws, any special rules of order the Presbytery may adopt, or the *Book of Order*.

**ARTICLE IX**  
**Amendment of Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Presbytery by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous stated meeting.

Revision of bylaws adopted November 12, 2020.  
Amendments adopted August 21, 2021