

10/16/01 Adopted
5/20/02 Revised (section 1.2), 10/21/02 Revised (section 1.2), 2/21/03 Revised (section 3.2), 10/20/03 Revised (section 4.4 B),
no revisions 2004 & 2005, 9/11/06 Revised (section 1.1), 6/2/07 Revised (section 3.2), 11/16/07 Revised (section 1.2),
6/7/08 Revised (section 3.3), 10/10/08 (section 3.3, 4.4, 5.2), 6/6/2009 (section 1.2), 10/9/2009 (sections 8.2, 8.3, 4.3 D, 1.2),
2/20/2010 (section 3.5 added)

STANDING RULES

OF

THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS

*A Member of
The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

THE MISSION OF PRESBYTERY (adopted October 1998)

The Presbytery of Arkansas is a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) which is a part of the Reformed family of Churches within the Universal Church of Jesus Christ. As such, our mission is to: inspire, challenge, and help our congregations, agencies, ministers, and leaders to fulfill the call to service as faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

Priorities of the Presbytery of Arkansas:

To help congregations learn faithful and effective ways of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with younger generations and people of all racial and socio-economic groups.

To help existing congregations be vital and develop new congregations.

To provide Christian Education resources, opportunities for spiritual growth, and leadership development.

To help in the process of calling pastoral leadership.

To provide oversight and pastoral care for Church professionals.

To help develop ministries of justice and compassion in our communities and to coordinate regional and ecumenical efforts.

To expand our global vision.

To deepen and develop our connectional relationships as Presbytery.

ARTICLE I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1.1 – Boundaries of the Presbytery

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.

Section 1.2 Membership

The membership of the Presbytery includes all ordained ministers enrolled by the presbytery and the Elder commissioners from each Presbyterian Church (USA) congregation within the presbytery's boundaries, Elders who are employed as General or Executive Presbyter or Associate General or Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery, and Elders serving as Stated Clerk, Treasurer or their interims, and Elders who are Certified Christian Educators as defined in the *Book of Order*.

Elders who are active members of their congregation and:

- i. Moderators of presbytery committees or Moderator of Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Arkansas or Moderator of the Presbytery.
- ii. Commissioned Lay Pastors
- iii. Members of General Council
- iv. Members of Committee on Clusters, or
- v. Current commissioners to General Assembly

shall have voice and vote at Presbytery meetings.

ARTICLE II. RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURES

Section 2.1 Standing Rules

The Standing Rules shall establish the general organization of the presbytery and shall define the general areas of authority and responsibility of its various officers and administrative agencies.

Section 2.2 Manual of Operations

The Manual of Operations shall define the internal organization, operating procedures and interrelationships of the various offices and administrative agencies, and for the organization and procedures of presbytery.

Section 2.3 Suspension of Standing Rules

Any standing rule of presbytery, except that providing for the amendment of the Standing Rules, may be suspended for a particular meeting or until the next Stated Meeting by consent of two-thirds of the members present.

ARTICLE III. MEETINGS OF THE PRESBYTERY

Section 3.1 Classification

Meetings of the presbytery may be: Stated Meetings, Adjourned Meetings or Special meetings.

Section 3.2 Stated Meetings

The Presbytery of Arkansas shall hold at least three meetings annually. The first meeting each year shall be held alternately on the campuses of Lyon College and the University of the Ozarks. Youth Advisory Delegates (YADs) will be present at this meeting every year and the scheduling of this meeting should consider the YADs need to be in school on Friday. The second and third stated meetings each year shall be held in various areas of the presbytery. Subject to these requirements, meetings shall be held at such times and such places as the presbytery may determine in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order*.

Section 3.3 Attendance at Presbytery Meetings

- A. It is the duty and responsibility of all member ministers of the presbytery (except those honorably retired) to attend all meetings thereof; and it is the duty and responsibility of member churches to be represented by duly elected elders (in a ratio as specified by the *Book of Order* G-11.0101) at each stated meeting of the presbytery. As special meetings of the presbytery may

be called from time to time, beginning in 2010 these shall be held on Saturdays. Only those ministers and elders who are within 75 miles of the place of meeting will be expected to attend.

- B. Excuses for absence for ministers and elder commissioners shall be communicated to the stated clerk prior to the convening of the stated meeting of the presbytery. The stated clerk, at the direction of the presbytery, shall communicate the displeasure and will of the presbytery to those absent without sufficient reason.

Section 3.4. Youth Advisory Delegates

- A. Youth Advisory Delegates (YADs) shall be active confirmed members of one of the member churches in the Presbytery of Arkansas who are selected to attend the February meeting of the presbytery in an advisory role so that presbytery may be assured of hearing and taking cognizance of their special viewpoints.
- B. Each member church may send up to two YADs of high school age (grades 9-12) who have been appointed by their respective sessions.
- C. The YADs shall have privilege of the floor without vote.
- D. An advisory vote of the YADs shall usually be taken during the presbytery meeting on those issues which the YADs have studied as a group. The results of the vote will be reported to the body prior to the vote of the commissioners.

Section 3.5 Young Adult Delegate Advisors (YADAs)

Young Adult Delegate Advisors (YADAs) shall be active members of one of the member churches in the Presbytery of Arkansas or one of the campus ministries of the presbytery (and a member of the PC(USA) who are selected to attend meetings of the presbytery so that presbytery may be assured of hearing and taking cognizance of their special viewpoints. Each member church and college ministry may send up to two delegates ages 18-28 who have been appointed by their respective sessions or campus ministry. The YADAS may have privilege of the floor with advisory vote on those items of business designated by the General Council.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS and PRESBYTERY STAFF

Section 4.1 Officers

The officers of the presbytery shall be a moderator, a vice moderator, and stated clerk. Assistant stated clerk and/or assistant treasurer may be elected when and as presbytery determines such offices are needed.

Section 4.2 Moderator and Vice Moderator

- A. The moderator and vice moderator shall be elected for one year at the last Stated Meeting of the presbytery during the previous year, and the moderator shall be installed at the first Stated Meeting of presbytery during the following year. The vice moderator normally will succeed to the office of moderator. Their duties are those provided in the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) and those recommended by the Committee on Administration, adopted by the presbytery and attached to the *Manual of Operations*.
- B. These two offices will be filled by an elder and a minister so that one ordinarily succeeds the other.

Section 4.3 Stated Clerk and Assistant Stated Clerk

- A. The presbytery shall elect a stated clerk upon nomination by the Committee on Nominations or upon nomination from the floor in conformity with the *Book of Order* (G.-9.0203a,b) for a three-year term with re-election possible. The presbytery may elect an assistant stated clerk.
- B. The stated clerk, with the help of the assistant stated clerk, shall faithfully discharge duties as stated in the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and those recommended by the Committee on Administration, adopted by the presbytery and attached to the *Manual of Operations*.
- C. The stated clerk shall have an annual review and evaluation by the Committee on Administration.
- D. If the stated clerk resigns or is unable to serve during the three-year term, the General Council of the presbytery shall immediately contact previous stated clerks within the presbytery and ascertain the willingness and availability of any one of these persons to serve immediately as acting stated clerk. The Committee on Nominations will meet in a timely fashion and bring to the next Stated Meeting of the presbytery the name of a nominee for stated clerk to fill the unexpired term.

Section 4.4 Presbytery Staff

- A. General Presbyter and Associate General Presbyter
 - 1. The offices of general and associate general presbyter are established to give focus, pastoral support to pastors and educators, administrative oversight to programs and policies of the presbytery, vision, leadership, and support to the presbytery in fulfilling its responsibilities to the governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its involvement in all ecumenical relationships. These duties are recommended by the Committee on Administration, adopted by the presbytery and attached to the *Manual of Operations*.
 - 2. The general presbyter and associate general presbyter ordinarily shall be elected to a term of five years with re-election possible, following the review and evaluation by the Committee on Administration provided for in the job description. The term of the general presbyter and associate general presbyter will begin following election and installation. The presbytery may grant permission to move onto the field prior to installation.
 - 3. Associate general presbyters may be elected to serve the presbytery. These duties are recommended by the Committee on Administration, adopted by the presbytery and attached to the *Manual of Operations*.
- B. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer
 - 1. The treasurer shall be elected on recommendation by the Committee on Nominations or upon a motion from the floor for a two-year term by the presbytery. The Treasurer shall ordinarily be the past moderator of the Committee on Administration, and shall serve without financial compensation. The treasurer shall be responsible to the presbytery through the general presbyter and shall report through the Committee on Administration. The responsibilities of the treasurer are those contained in the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and those recommended by the Committee on Administration, adopted by the presbytery and attached to the *Manual of Operations*.
 - 2. The presbytery may elect an assistant treasurer whose duties are those contained in the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and those recommended by the Committee on Administration, adopted by the presbytery and attached to the *Manual of Operations*.
 - 3. The treasurer will oversee the handling of the receipts and disbursement of presbytery's General Mission Fund and Reserve Funds in keeping with the responsibilities and directives recommended by the Committee on Administration, adopted by the presbytery and attached to the *Manual of Operations*.

ARTICLE V. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCIES OF PRESBYTERY

Section 5.1 General Council

- A. The presbytery shall have a General Council to serve as the visioning, community building, mission and program monitoring agency of the presbytery.
- B. The membership and duties of the General Council shall be determined by presbytery and provided for in the *Manual of Operations*.

Section 5.2 Names of Committees

- A. The presbytery shall have the following constitutionally-mandated committees or commissions reporting directly to the presbytery:
 - Committee on Ministry
 - Committee on Nominations
 - Committee on Preparation for Ministry
 - Committee on Representation
 - Permanent Judicial Commission

The duties, membership and procedures of these committees shall be governed by the *Book of Order* and the *Manual of Operations*.

- B. In addition, the presbytery shall have the following Standing Committees reporting through the General Council to the presbytery:

- Committee on Administration
- Committee on Care and Nurture of Church Professionals
- Committee on Christian Education and Nurture
- Committee on Clusters
- Committee on Congregational Care and Development
- Committee on Disaster Preparedness and Response
- Committee on Mission

The membership and duties of these committees shall be determined by presbytery and provided for in the *Manual of Operations*.

- C. Presbytery will also provide oversight and support to the Presbyterian Women of Arkansas Presbytery through the General Council. The moderator of the Presbyterian Women of Arkansas Presbytery, if an elder, and whether or not commissioned by the Session of her home church, shall have both voice and vote on the floor of presbytery.
- D. Presbytery shall maintain a covenant relationship with the Board of the Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center. The Terms of said Covenant shall be a part of the *Manual of Operations* of the presbytery renewed every five years.

Section 5.3 Membership of Committees

- A. The membership of all committees except the Committees on Ministry and Representation (whose membership is defined by the *Book of Order*) shall be determined by presbytery and provided for in the *Manual of Operations*.
- B. Ordinarily membership of all committees except the Committee on Representation (whose membership is defined by the *Book of Order*), and the Committee on Ministry, will be equitably balanced among laymen, laywomen, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament insofar as possible. The moderator of each committee shall be elected annually by the presbytery. Members shall be ineligible to serve more than two consecutive three-year terms, or a part thereof, and moderators shall be ineligible to serve as such for more than three consecutive years. Terms will be for calendar years.

- C. Filling of Vacancies: A committee position may be declared vacant by the Committee on Nominations when it:
1. Receives official word of the death or incapacity of a committee member
 2. Receives a letter of resignation from a member.
 3. Receives a formal request from a committee to declare a position vacant after a member has had two or more consecutive unexcused absences. Before taking any action, the Committee on Nominations shall ascertain the facts of the situation; and, if the person involved can no longer serve effectively, shall declare the position vacant.

When vacancies occur, they may be filled by election of the presbytery upon nomination by the Committee on Nominations at any stated meeting after the vacancy occurs.

- D. When it becomes necessary under Chapter X of the “Rules of Discipline” to appoint an investigating committee, the moderator of the presbytery, the moderator of the Committee on Ministry, and the stated clerk of the presbytery shall, without undue delay, designate the members of such a committee, as described in D.-10.0200.
- E. With the exception of the members of the Permanent Judicial Commission, Committee on Representation, and any investigating committees, no person shall serve on more than one committee named in Part IV in the *Manual of Operations*, or on the General Council at the same time.

Section 5.4 Sub-Committees and Task Forces

The General Council shall establish subcommittees and task forces as necessary to do its work. It shall, upon the establishment of each sub-committee or task force, set forth the sub-committee or task force’s responsibilities, its term, its organization, and its members.

ARTICLE VI. FINANCIAL OPERATION

Section 6.1 The Budget

- A. The presbytery will operate annually under a single General Mission Budget. This budget shall be prepared using procedures recommended by the Committee on Administration, adopted by the presbytery and attached to the *Manual of Operations*.
- B. The General Mission Budget will include the total needs of the presbytery to operate during the fiscal year. It shall include:
1. The equipment, supplies, and contracts of presbytery’s office; all salaries of paid staff employed regardless of whether they be permanent, annual, special, *ad interim*, *ad hoc*, or other established by the presbytery .
 2. The total needs of presbytery’s operational expenses and its mission program.
 3. Presbytery’s share of the Mission Budget of the General Assembly and the Synod.
 4. The receipts from churches, investments, special gifts and other sources, to apply to presbytery’s General Mission Budget shall come from the acceptance of apportioned askings made annually to each local church by the presbytery and other sources.
- C. The General Mission Budget will be formulated on the basis of what the General Assembly and Synod request the presbytery to approve, plus per capita request from General Assembly and any additional per capita added by Synod or presbytery, plus the total operational expense and mission program of the presbytery. Apportionments will be made to each member church on an equitable basis, taking into consideration the number of members, past giving performance, present abilities, and potential. The presbytery on recommendation of the Committee on Administration must approve the apportionments. Each church session will indicate on the forms provided the amount of its acceptance of the presbytery’s General Mission Budget for the next year. Upon receipt of all acceptances, the Committee on Administration will make all necessary adjustments and present budgetary recommendations to the presbytery no later than the first

Stated Meeting each year. The budget may be adjusted at a stated presbytery meeting.

Section 6.2 Management of Funds

- A. The treasurer will be bonded annually, and the books of the presbytery shall be reviewed in accordance with the *Book of Order* (G11.0307).
- B. Presbytery shall provide for receiving and disbursing of all monies from member churches and persons in the presbytery.

ARTICLE VII. INCORPORATION

Section 7.1 Incorporation

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

Section 7.2 Meetings of the Corporation

Meetings of the presbytery shall be meetings of the corporation.

Section 7.3 Officers of the Corporation

Officers of the corporation shall be the moderator, and the stated clerk of the Presbytery of Arkansas.

Section 7.4 Counselor-at-Law

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

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

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

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

ARTICLE VIII. GENERAL

Section 8.1 Governing documents of the Presbytery

In any conflict between these Standing Rules and the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) the *Book of Order* shall take precedence.

Section 8.2 Amendments and Suspensions of Standing Rules

- A. Amendments to the Standing Rules shall be proposed at stated meetings of the presbytery, having been distributed to member ministers and clerks of session fourteen days in advance. The Standing Rules may be amended as follows:

1. Amendment may be proposed through the General Council, by its own initiative, by a member of the presbytery, or by a church session and come to the presbytery with the council's recommendation. For enactment, it shall be necessary to have either a three-fourths majority of the votes cast at that stated meeting, or a simple majority of the votes cast at that stated meeting and at the next stated meeting.
2. Amendment may be proposed directly to the presbytery. The proposed amendment will require a simple majority of the votes cast both at that stated meeting and at the next stated meeting.

When presbytery adopts amendments to the Standing Rules, these shall go into the main body of this document, replacing portions changed.

- B. Any one of these Standing Rules may be suspended by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at any stated meeting of the presbytery for that particular matter in question only.

The Standing Rules in their entirety may not be suspended at any time.

Section 8.3. Amendment of Manual of Operations

The *Manual of Operations* may be amended by simple majority vote of the votes cast at any stated meeting of the presbytery.

Section 8.4 Legal Signatures

The stated clerk and the moderator of the presbytery or their designees may sign legal documents for the presbytery.