

**PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND**

**BY-LAWS**

with

**ADDENDUM OF POLICIES**

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## **Introductory Note**

Since adopting its first By-Laws in 1977, the Presbytery of Southern New England has from time to time revised them to better accomplish its mission. The Presbytery adopted major revisions to the By-Laws on 11 January 1986 and 15 January 1994. This reprinting reflects all amendments made through the 107th Stated Meeting, which adjourned on 10 November 2001.

The Presbytery Council on 23 May 1996 directed that two recently-adopted policies be printed as an addendum to the By-Laws. These additional policies are not part of the By-Laws, but were adopted pursuant to the By-Laws. They are printed as an appendix to the By-Laws to ensure that those making decisions will find them easily.

SAP

The Presbytery Roundtable (formerly Council) voted on January 7, 2016 to recommend changes to section 15.01, Board of Trustees. The first reading was presented to the Presbytery of Southern New England at the February 6, 2016 stated meeting, with a vote sustaining such change taken at the May 7, 2016 stated meeting of the Presbytery of Southern New England.

WGT

**BY-LAWS**  
**THE PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND**

**The Synod of the Northeast**

**Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

Adopted 30 June 1977; revised  
19 November 1977; revised 5 May 1979;  
revised 16 February 1980; revised  
19-20 September 1980; revised 11 January  
1986; revised 10 January 1987; revised  
19 January 1991; revised 11 January 1992;  
revised 18 July 1992; revised 15 May 1993;  
revised 15 January 1994; revised 2 March

1996, revised 8 March 1997, revised 10  
January 1998, revised 7 March 1998,  
revised 16 May 1998, amended 15 May  
1999, amended 10 July 1999, amended 12  
September 1999, amended 26 February  
2000, amended 6 September 2000,  
amended 10 February 2001, amended 12  
May 2001.

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**SECTION ONE**

**PREAMBLE**

- 1.01 The name of this Presbytery shall be The Presbytery of Southern New England. This Presbytery and its member churches are an integral part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and as such are subject to its Constitution, which consists of the *Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order*. This Presbytery and all bodies subordinate to it, as appropriate, shall be conducted in accordance with the most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, except when otherwise provided by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or these By-Laws or required by the rules applicable to it as a corporation in the state or states where it is incorporated.
- 1.02 The geographic bounds of this Presbytery shall be the State of Connecticut, the State of Rhode Island, and those portions of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts west of the western boundary of the County of Worcester and south of the forty-second degree of latitude and including all of Cape Cod.
- 1.03 The Presbytery of Southern New England shall be the ecclesiastical and corporate successor to the former Presbyteries of Connecticut Valley and of Providence, and shall be entitled to all the rights, privileges, properties, funds, obligations, and liabilities of the two predecessor presbyteries, subject always to the provisions made by those who have given or bequeathed property or money to the two former presbyteries.

**SECTION TWO**

**MEMBERSHIP**

- 2.01 All ministers properly enrolled as active members or members-at-large of the Presbytery, and all elders who have been properly elected as Elder Commissioners by the sessions of member churches, and all elders who are serving as officers, as

members of Presbytery Council, or as chairpersons of committees as named in these By-Laws, shall be voting members of Presbytery. All persons who are elected officers, chairpersons of committees, members of committees or to any other position shall be ministers who are active members or members-at-large of Presbytery or elders, deacons or unordained persons who hold active membership in one of the member churches.

- 2.02 Each church which is a member of Presbytery shall be entitled to be represented in Presbytery by ruling elders elected to serve as Elder Commissioners. The number of Elder Commissioners from a particular church shall be determined initially by the most recent annual report of the number of active members of that church as follows:

1 - 500	1 Elder
501 - 1,000	2 Elders
1,001 - 1,500	3 Elders
1,501 - 2,000	4 Elders
2,001 plus	5 Elders

To redress any imbalance between the number of resident ministers who are voting members of Presbytery and the number of elders to which the churches altogether, by reason of the preceding formula, are entitled to send to Presbytery as Elder Commissioners, certain churches shall be eligible to elect additional commissioners. Annually, during the first week of January the Stated Clerk shall ascertain the number of resident ministers who are voting members of the Presbytery and the number of elders which the churches are entitled to send as commissioners to Presbytery meetings. When the number of ministers is larger, the Stated Clerk shall bring the imbalance to the attention of Presbytery at its first meeting of the year. The Presbytery shall redress the imbalance by assigning the additional numbers as equally as practicable among all the particular churches that have most recently reported having more than 100 members so that they may elect additional Elder Commissioners with special attention to the concerns of inclusiveness and participation. The total number of Elder Commissioners shall not exceed the total number of resident ministers who are voting members of Presbytery.

- 2.03 Elder commissioners shall normally be elected, and expected to serve, for terms of one full year, and may be reelected annually. Elders who by election or appointment to Presbytery positions are voting members of Presbytery, shall not normally be elected as commissioners to Presbytery while serving in such positions. Should a commissioner not be able to attend, the session may elect an alternate.

### **SECTION THREE**

#### **MEETINGS**

- 3.01 There shall be five stated meetings of Presbytery each year. All meetings of Presbytery shall be opened and closed with prayer; and a worship service, which may include the celebration of the Lord's Supper, shall be conducted during the course of the meeting.
- 3.02 The Committee on Arrangements shall consist of the Session of the host church, or the Presbytery staff when a meeting is not held in a local church.

- 3.03 Excuses for absence from meetings or requests for leaves of absence shall be presented to the Moderator through the Stated Clerk, who shall report to the Presbytery.
- 3.04 Any session of a member church which shall neglect attendance for a period of more than one year without sufficient reason shall be required by the Stated Clerk to appear before Presbytery to answer for neglect of responsibility.
- 3.05 Any minister of Presbytery who shall neglect attendance for a period of more than one year without sufficient reason and shall neglect to report to Presbytery concerning residence and work shall be required to appear before the Committee on Ministry or, at that Committee's request, to appear before the Presbytery to answer for neglect of responsibility. Failure to appear thusly may warrant placement of the minister's name, without prejudice, on the inactive roll (*Book of Order* G-11.0415).
- 3.06 The Presbytery shall meet in **February**.
- 3.07 The Presbytery shall meet in **May**. This meeting shall be the Annual Meeting.
- 3.08 At the first meeting of the calendar year, the Presbytery Council shall announce a date in July to be reserved for a special meeting of the Presbytery. The meeting shall be for the purpose of receiving and acting on reports of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, the Committee on Ministry, and the Board of Trustees. Any other business to be transacted at the meeting shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk thirty days before the date so reserved, and shall be described in the call to the meeting.
- 3.09 The Presbytery shall meet in **September**.
- 3.10 The Presbytery shall meet in **November**.
- 3.11 Ordinarily all business matters coming to the Presbytery of Southern New England for consideration shall be presented at a stated meeting. If the delay in waiting for a stated meeting causes real hardship for the parties concerned, then special meetings of the Presbytery may be called as provided for in the *Book of Order* G-11.0201.
- A. The request for the meeting must be in the hands of the Stated Clerk no less than thirty days in advance of the special meeting, except that a majority of the Presbytery Council may call an emergency session by any means practicable.
- B. The Presbytery shall be reimbursed by the congregation or the individual(s) benefiting in the amount of \$400.00 for each special meeting, to cover the unbudgeted cost of such meetings. The Presbytery Council may waive or reduce this amount in cases where it would cause undue hardship.
- 3.12 A quorum of Presbytery shall be any twelve (12) voting minister members and twelve (12) elder commissioners representing at least six churches present at the appointed time and place of the meeting.
- 3.13 The fiscal year shall be the calendar year.

## SECTION FOUR

### OFFICERS

- 4.01 The officers of the Presbytery shall be a **Moderator**, a **Vice-Moderator**, a **Stated Clerk**, an **Assistant Stated Clerk**, a **Recording Clerk**, and a **Treasurer**.
- 4.02 All officers and persons to serve on the Presbytery Council shall be elected at the March meeting of Presbytery and installed at the May/June meeting of Presbytery. The Nominations Committee shall make nominations for all officers prior to the March meeting of Presbytery. Those nominations shall be distributed with the Call for the March meeting. Nominations from the floor may be accepted at the March meeting of Presbytery provided that each such nominee shall declare to the Presbytery his/her willingness to serve. All officers of the Presbytery shall be ministers or elders.
- 4.03 Any question of an officer's availability or absence shall be resolved by the Presbytery Council.
- 4.04 The **Moderator** shall be the presiding officer of Presbytery and shall fulfill all the functions of the Moderator as specified in the *Book of Order* G-9.0202. The term of office shall be one year with no re-election for a second consecutive year. The Moderator shall be a member ex officio of the Presbytery Council with vote, and ordinarily shall have no other responsibility in the Presbytery during the moderatorial year. If the Moderator and the Vice Moderator are absent at the opening of the meeting, the next previous Moderator present shall preside or, in the absence of any former Moderator, the Stated Clerk shall convene the meeting of the Presbytery and shall call for the nomination of a moderator pro tem who shall be elected to preside at that meeting of the Presbytery only. The Moderator shall have the freedom to attend and speak at any meeting of any committee or other group that he/she deems appropriate.
- 4.05 The **Vice-Moderator** shall be elected for a term of one year. At the end of that term, the Vice-Moderator shall be nominated as the next Moderator. The Vice-Moderator shall be a member ex officio of the Presbytery Council with vote.
- 4.06 The Vice-Moderator may discharge any or all of the functions of the Moderator when requested by the presiding officer to do so; when, at any meeting of Presbytery other than a stated meeting, the Moderator is absent or incapacitated; or upon the death of the Moderator or upon the Moderator's removal or withdrawal from the Presbytery or upon the Moderator's resignation from that office. The Vice-Moderator may concurrently serve as a chairperson or member of any committee.
- 4.07 The **Stated Clerk**, as directed by the Book of Order, is an officer of the Presbytery and responsible for recording transactions, keeping its rolls of members and attendees, preserving its records and furnishing extracts when requested by another governing body. [G-9.0200]

On behalf of the Committee on Preparation for the Ministry and the Presbytery, he/she receives recommendations for requests to be enrolled as inquirers or candidates for preparation as Minister of Word and Sacrament. [G-14.0303, G-14.0305]. The Stated Clerk maintains the roster of names and terms of members of

the Permanent Judicial Commission and, if necessary, selects former members to fill a quorum upon failure to reach a quorum. [D-5.0206b, D-5.0206a]

Other very specific responsibilities are assigned to the Stated Clerk throughout the Book of Order.

In addition, the Stated Clerk shall fulfill such other duties as may be assigned by the Presbytery Council or at the appropriate request of the General Assembly or Synod. The Stated Clerk shall hold the seal of the corporation. The Stated Clerk shall have available copies of the By-Laws for any elder commissioner or minister member of Presbytery. The Stated Clerk shall serve as the Secretary and Recording Clerk of Presbytery Council, shall be Secretary of the Corporation, and Recording Clerk for the Committee on Ministry, in each case ex officio and without vote.

The Stated Clerk shall be elected by the Presbytery and shall serve for a term of five years and may be re-elected. The Stated Clerk shall be responsible to the Presbytery through the Presbytery Council and its Personnel Committee.

The work of the Stated clerk and all aspects of his or her compensation shall be thoroughly and constructively reviewed not less than annually by Presbytery Council, primarily through the agency of the Personnel Committee, with due regard for goals and priorities mutually agreed upon at the beginning of such period and with such consultation with higher governing bodies as may be required.

- 4.08 The **Assistant Stated Clerk** shall aid the Stated Clerk in all the duties of that office and shall be trained, guided and informed by the Stated Clerk in such fashion that the Assistant is qualified to, and shall, assume and fulfill all the responsibilities and authority of the Stated Clerk in the event of a temporary absence or disability of the Stated Clerk. The Assistant Stated Clerk may serve concurrently as a member or chairperson of a standing committee or subcommittee of Presbytery, or as a member-at-large of Presbytery Council. The Assistant Stated Clerk shall be elected for a term of five years, and may be reelected, but shall not serve consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than ten years.
- 4.09 The **Treasurer** shall be the keeper of all monies controlled by Presbytery and shall perform all the duties normally connected with the office of Treasurer. The Treasurer shall also be a member of the Board of Trustees and Presbytery Council ex officio without vote. The Treasurer shall be elected for a term of five years and may be reelected, but shall not serve for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than ten years.
- 4.10 The **Recording Clerk** shall record the minutes at each meeting of Presbytery and shall deliver them to the Stated Clerk, for correction, and for approval by Presbytery. The Recording Clerk shall be elected for a term of five years, and may be reelected, but shall not serve for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than ten years.
- 4.11 The **Assistant Treasurer** shall be nominated by the Board of Trustees and elected for the sole purpose of co-signing checks as established in the check-writing procedures developed for the Presbytery of Southern New England. This Assistant Treasurer shall be elected for a term of five years, and may be reelected, but shall not serve for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than ten years.



## SECTION FIVE

### EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER

- 5.01 The **Executive Presbyter** serve as chief administrator of the Presbytery, accountable to the Council and the Presbytery for implementation of decisions and matters of strategy, program, and resources. The Executive Presbyter supervises and provides staff services for the agencies and committees of the Presbytery. [G-9.0700] Administration on behalf of the Presbytery requires working with and through persons to accomplish the goals of the Presbytery and includes developing leadership, planning and organizing, budgeting, communicating, and evaluating. [G-9.0400]

In addition, the Executive Presbyter shall fulfill such other duties as assigned by the Presbytery or the Presbytery Council. They include worship, prayer, nurture and support for our pastors, congregations and church leaders. The Executive Presbyter is to serve as a resource for new ideas and fresh approaches to problems and challenges within the Presbytery.

- 5.02 The Executive Presbyter shall be nominated and elected as specified in the *Book of Order* G-9.0701, and the Presbytery's *Manual of Administrative Operations*, and shall serve for an indefinite period.
- 5.03 The Executive Presbyter shall be administratively responsible to the Presbytery Council, through its Personnel Committee.
- 5.04 The work of the Executive Presbyter, and all aspects of his or her compensation, shall be thoroughly and constructively reviewed not less than annually by Presbytery Council primarily through the agency of the Personnel Committee, with due regard for goals and priorities mutually agreed upon at the beginning of such period, and with such consultation with such higher governing bodies as may be required.

When an Executive Presbyter is elected, a call shall be issued enumerating the terms of the call, which shall be governed by the Personnel Policies and Procedures of Presbytery. The Executive Presbyter shall give not less than two months written notice to Presbytery Council of his or her intention to resign. Presbytery shall give the Executive Presbyter not less than two months written notice, or pay in lieu thereof in whole or in part, of its intention to terminate his or her services.

## SECTION SIX

### PRESBYTERY COUNCIL

- 6.01 There shall be a **Presbytery Council** (*Book of Order* G-11.103v) composed of the chairperson of the Presbytery Council, the Moderator of the Presbytery, The Vice Moderator of the Presbytery, the chairperson of the Committee on Ministry, the chairperson of the Board of Trustees, the chairperson of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, the chairperson of the Committee on Church Development, the chairperson of the Committee on Congregational Resources, the chairperson of the Committee on Ecclesiastical Relations, the chairperson of the Committee on Stewardship and Mission, the chairperson of the Committee on Nominations, the chairperson of the Personnel Committee, the chairperson of the

- Committee on Representation, the Chairperson of the Committee on Social Justice, a representative of Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Southern New England, and four members-at-large. The balance between ministers and elders who are voting members of Council shall be as equal as possible. Elders or ministers elected at large shall serve three-year terms and shall be divided into three classes, one class to terminate service each year, and may be reelected, but shall not serve as members-at-large on the Presbytery Council for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years and shall be ineligible to be elected thereafter to a new term until one year shall have elapsed.
- 6.02 The Executive Presbyter, the Stated Clerk and the Treasurer shall be members of the Presbytery Council ex officio without vote.
- 6.03 The chairperson of the Presbytery Council shall be elected by Presbytery to serve a three year term and may serve a total of not more than two consecutive terms, but shall be ineligible thereafter to be elected to a new term until one year shall have elapsed. The chairperson of the Presbytery Council shall be either a minister or an elder. The chairperson of the Presbytery Council shall be a member ex-officio of all Presbytery committees with the right to speak but not vote. Attendance at Presbytery committee meetings will be at the discretion of the Council chairperson.
- 6.04 If the presiding officer is not able to moderate a meeting of Presbytery Council, then the Moderator of Presbytery shall preside.
- 6.05 The duties and responsibilities of the Presbytery Council shall be:
- A. To supervise and coordinate the total work of the Presbytery; and to divide the Presbytery into geographic regions so that congregations will be associated together, regionally, for program development, mission outreach, and mutual support. The Presbytery Council shall review such divisions, triennially.
  - B. To oversee, approve or amend the annual plans and objectives of each committee, and to monitor the work of and advise each committee regarding those plans and objectives;
  - C. To receive from the Committee on the Ministry summaries of the triennial reviews of sessions and congregations.
  - D. To report to each stated meeting of Presbytery actions and decisions of the Council since the last such report;
  - E. To prepare the docket of business for meetings of Presbytery with the assistance of the Stated Clerk;
  - F. To plan and arrange for the implementation of the theme(s), emphases and services of worship for meetings of Presbytery;
  - G. to review and approve all materials necessary to the life and work of the governing body to be available or distributed at meetings of Presbytery except materials approved by committees named in these By-laws and materials published by denominational agencies.
  - H. To ensure effective communication throughout the Presbytery;

- I. To nominate to the Presbytery candidates to serve as chairperson and members of the Nominations Committee. A special sub-committee of Presbytery Council consisting of Council's four at-large members and the representative for Presbyterian Women shall be charged with recommending to Council candidates to serve as chairperson and members of the Committee on Nominations. Nominees will be forwarded by Council for election by the Presbytery.
- J. To correspond with the councils of Synod and General Assembly;
- K. To establish, appoint and dismiss such ad hoc subcommittees and task forces of the Council as may from time to time be deemed necessary;
- L. To direct the work of employed staff through the Presbytery Executive;
- M. To review, regularly, the work of the Personnel Committee;
- N. To review and evaluate at least annually through the Personnel Committee the work of the Presbytery Executive, of the Stated Clerk, and of all other staff;
- O. To assure maintenance of and compliance with the *Manual of Administrative Operations*;
- P. To implement in all its actions the principles of participation and inclusiveness;
- Q. To consider and make recommendations to Presbytery on:
  - 1. all budget items, including the per capita apportionment;
  - 2. all solicitations of funds except those initiated by a session for that local church's mission and those previously endorsed by General Assembly;
  - 3. the budgets of the missionary and benevolent causes and agencies as adopted by the General Assembly;
  - 4. all proposals and appeals for money from funds controlled by the Presbytery before Presbytery may act on the same;
  - 5. all committee proposals for policy changes for the Presbytery, making appropriate comments thereon, but not amendments thereof, before they are submitted to Presbytery.
- R. To fill, on recommendation of the Committee on Nominations, any vacancy occurring in any office or position normally filled by election by Presbytery, excluding the Executive Presbyter and the Stated Clerk. Presbytery shall confirm the action at its next stated meeting, or elect someone else for the balance of the unexpired term.
- S. To promote and preserve the welfare of the Presbytery, the Presbytery Council may take appropriate actions between stated meetings of Presbytery.
- T. To evaluate and make recommendation on programs or proposed programs of organizations within Presbytery bounds for which requests for funding have been received by a denomination-wide agency seeking Presbytery's endorsement of such funding.

- 6.06 Decisions of Presbytery Council implementing any of the responsibilities listed in the By-Laws shall become operative immediately, but are subject to review and reversal by the Presbytery at its next stated meeting.
- 6.07 Presbytery Council shall meet at least five times each year, including at least once between the March and Annual Meetings of Presbytery, to which meeting those elected, but not seated, as members of Council shall be invited. Special meetings of Council may be called by its presiding officer, and shall be called at the request of any three voting members of Council. A quorum of Council shall be a majority of its voting members assembled at the designated time and place.

### **THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

- 6.08 **The Personnel Committee** shall be composed of a chairperson and four members. The members of this committee shall be ministers or elders or deacons or unordained active church members. The Personnel Committee is a sub-committee of the Presbytery Council.
- 6.09 The Personnel Committee shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To act as the agent of the Presbytery Council in providing the Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk with administrative supervision, and in reviewing thoroughly and constructively the work and all aspects of compensation of the Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk at least annually;
  - B. To recommend to Presbytery Council personnel policies and procedures, including policies for Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action;
  - C. To review personnel matters referred to it by the Executive Presbyter; or referred by the personal initiative of any staff member, after following the procedures outlined in the Manual of Administrative Operations, and providing a full and impartial hearing for all parties involved.
  - D. To serve as the nominating committee for temporary or permanent administrative staff other than the Executive Presbyter and the Stated Clerk, excluding clerical staff;
  - E. In consultation with the Committee on Nominations to serve as the nominating committee for the Stated Clerk.
  - E. To relate to the Executive Presbyter and the Stated Clerk and other staff in terms of care and support;
  - F. To develop, in consultation with Synod, a proposed annual budget for executive and administrative services, for submission to the Board of Trustees and Presbytery Council;
  - G. To work with the Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk on behalf of the Presbytery Council, in terms of their goals, objectives, and work schedule.

## **SECTION SEVEN**

### **COMMITTEES OF THE PRESBYTERY**

- 7.01 The work of the Presbytery shall be carried out by committees. Functions outlined in the *Book of Order* are not necessarily restated here.

- 7.02 The chairperson of each committee shall be elected by Presbytery, unless otherwise specified, to serve a one year term and may serve a total of not more than three consecutive terms, but shall be ineligible thereafter to be elected to a new term until one year shall have elapsed. The chairperson of each committee shall be either a minister or an elder.
- 7.03 The members of each committee, including the chairperson, shall be divided into three classes as nearly equal as possible, one class of which shall be elected each year for a three year term. In any committee with a complement of more than five members, the numbers of ministers and of elders in any class shall be as nearly equal as practicable. In any committee with a total complement, including the chairperson, of six, the numbers of ministers and of elders shall be as nearly equal as practicable, except in the case of the Nominations Committee, whose numbers are specified by the *Book of Order* G-9.0801. However, in a committee on which deacons and unordained active church members may serve, the total number of ministers and elders together shall constitute a majority of the total complement, including the chairperson. No member of any committee shall serve on it for consecutive terms, either full or partial, as a member or chairperson, aggregating more than six years, and shall be ineligible thereafter to be elected to a new term thereon until one year shall have elapsed.
- 7.04 A quorum for a committee shall be a majority of its membership.
- 7.05 Normally, no minister or elder shall have more than one committee assignment concurrently.
- 7.06 Committee members shall take office when elected.
- 7.07 In any committee or other group, absences from three scheduled meetings within any twelve month period, on the part of a member who has failed to give the chairperson prior explanation or excuse, shall be sufficient grounds for the chairperson to declare that member's position to have been vacated, to notify the member accordingly, and to advise the Nominations Committee of the need for a replacement to serve out the balance of the term.
- 7.08 Any committee may appoint temporary task forces to deal with specified matters wholly within the responsibilities of that parent committee as set forth in these By-Laws or as assigned by Presbytery or Presbytery Council. Appointments of persons other than members of the parent committee to such a group shall involve the Nominations Committee in advance. If the proposed group requires or may require funding beyond the budget of the parent committee or, if (in the opinion of the parent committee chairperson or the Executive Presbyter) its prospective activities may impinge upon a responsibility of another committee, creation of the task force shall require prior approval by Presbytery Council. The existence of each task force or other subordinate group shall terminate automatically twelve months after the appointment of its members, unless the committee shall have found justification for its continuance then and at least annually thereafter.
- 7.09 Each committee ordinarily shall hold at least four scheduled meetings each year. At a meeting to be held promptly after the Annual Meeting of Presbytery, each committee shall establish dates for its meetings during the ensuing twelve months, with primary

- regard for the convenience of all its members and for the lead time needed for presentation of material to Presbytery Council and/or Presbytery. Normally, a committee shall not schedule a meeting that would draw its members away from participating in the business and fellowship of a meeting of Presbytery. Exceptions to this last guideline shall be sought from the Stated Clerk, who shall note in the minutes the exceptions granted.
- 7.10 No voting on any matter shall be done by proxy at any meeting of any group.
- 7.11 Copies of all reports and recommendations from committees to be made to the Presbytery shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk before they are presented on the floor of Presbytery. Any recommendation affecting policy, budget and/or operational procedures of the Presbytery shall be submitted to the Presbytery Council for consideration prior to submission to Presbytery.
- 7.12 The chairperson of any committee shall have access to Presbytery Council at the request of the Council, or having given the Stated Clerk advance notice, at his or her own request.
- 7.13 The committees shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To administer the projects and funds as assigned by the Presbytery;
  - B. To present budget or funding requests to the Board of Trustees or Presbytery Council, as appropriate, and to operate within the approved budget;
  - C. To present an annual work plan of each committee to the Presbytery Council;
  - D. To clear with the Presbytery Office the proposed time, date, and location of each meeting, conference, workshop and other event as far in advance as possible, and to advise of any change in such matters as promptly as possible;
  - E. To report to the Presbytery at least annually in writing and to include in the report all recommendations written as motions for actions by Presbytery.

## **SECTION EIGHT**

### **THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

- 8.01 **The Committee on Ministry**, in addition to meeting the requirements of the *Book of Order*, G-11.0501, shall be composed of co-chairperson and sixteen other members. All members of this committee shall be ministers and elders, and their numbers shall be as nearly equal as possible.
- 8.02 The Committee on Ministry shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To fulfill the duties mandated in the *Book of Order*, G-11.0500 series, and all other parts thereof that come within its purview;
  - B. To assist each church in a goal setting and review process, and to provide for review of pastoral work and compensation;
  - C. To make counseling available for professionals in the parishes and specialized ministries as the need may arise;
  - D. To provide for the spiritual and emotional development of all clergy and their spouses;

- E. To appoint a moderator of a session where the pulpit is declared vacant;
  - F. To counsel with a member church if the various constituencies of the congregation are not fairly represented on the session;
  - G. To appoint a commission for the ordination and/or installation of a minister who has received a properly approved call to labor within the bounds of Presbytery;
  - H. To dismiss ministers, in good standing, who are without pastoral charge, in the intervals between stated meetings of Presbytery;
  - I. To dissolve pastoral relationships and dismiss ministers in good standing to a calling Presbytery, in the interval between stated meetings of Presbytery, when requested by both the congregation and the minister;
  - J. To appoint established members of the Presbytery to serve as advisors to counsel newly ordained solo pastors for not more than two years.
- 8.03 The Committee on Ministry shall have the Presbytery's authority to dissolve the pastoral relationship in cases where the congregation and pastor concur, to grant permission to labor within or outside the bounds of the presbytery, and to dismiss ministers to other presbyteries, with the provision that all such actions be reported to the next stated meeting of the Presbytery.
- 8.04 The Committee (COM) shall establish a subcommittee composed of three committee members, all three of whom shall be elders, for the purpose of making all recommendations to the Committee concerning ministerial compensation.
- 8:05 The Committee on Ministry shall recommend any changes to the Standards for Ministerial Compensation to the Annual Meeting of the Presbytery, to become effective not earlier than the following January.

## **SECTION NINE**

### **THE COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY**

- 9.01 **The Committee on Preparation for Ministry** shall be composed of eight members and a chairperson who shall be a minister. The members of this committee shall be ministers or elders, and their numbers shall be as nearly equal as possible.
- 9.02 The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To comply with the provisions of the *Book of Order* G-14.0300 and G-14.0400 series, and all other parts thereof regarding the selection, care and supervision of candidates for the professional ministry;
  - B. To see to the observance of all such parts of the *Book of Order* by each candidate under care of Presbytery and by each prospective candidate;
  - C. To enroll inquirers on behalf of the Presbytery with the provision that the action shall be reported to the next stated meeting of the Presbytery (G-14.0303e);
  - D. To fulfill such other related functions as may be properly assigned to the committee by Presbytery or Presbytery Council.

## **SECTION TEN**

### **THE COMMITTEE ON CHURCH DEVELOPMENT**

- 10.01 **The Committee on Church Development** shall be composed of a chairperson and nine other members. They may be ministers, elders, deacons or unordained active church members. The majority of the committee shall be ministers and elders.
- 10.02 The Committee on Church Development shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To encourage, plan, implement, and follow through on Presbytery's overall program for the effective development of new churches within its bounds;
  - B. To assist in studies prior to establishment of a fellowship or other preliminary group, whether sponsored by Presbytery alone or otherwise;
  - C. To nominate a Pastoral Nominating Committee when the Presbytery decides to call an Organizing Pastor for a new church development;
  - D. To assist the Organizing Pastor and the members of such a group, in all their activities, up to the time when they are recognized and organized as a church;
  - E. To monitor and assist (with due regard for the responsibility and prerogatives of the Committee on Ministry) in the guidance of the newly organized church for a period of not less than two years; and until such time as the church is self-sufficient;
  - F. To consult with the Committee on Ministry (and others as appropriate) in identifying those existing congregations that may need assistance and guidance in their redevelopment, as in reversing downward trends in membership, finances or vitality;
  - G. To evaluate the needs and potential of member churches that seek such guidance and assistance;
  - H. To devise and work through, always in cooperation with the affected congregation and with appropriate Presbytery committees, acceptable and constructive short- and long-term solutions for each situation;
  - I. To implement within available funds, manage in cooperation with the Committee on Ministry and others as appropriate, and evaluate, Presbytery's policy of limited term salary supplementation when linked to an expressed mission strategy regarding the particular church and community, after developing and gaining approval from Presbytery Council for the necessary guidelines and procedures;
  - J. To recommend, in cooperation with the Committee on Ministry, that Presbytery Council move, when such action seems to be the logical solution, to encourage merger, federation, or dissolution of a member church.

## **SECTION ELEVEN**

### **THE COMMITTEE ON CONGREGATIONAL RESOURCES**

- 11.01 **The Committee on Congregational Resources** shall be composed of a chairperson and six members. The members may be ministers, elders, deacons or



unordained active church members with the majority of the committee ministers and elders.

- 11.02 The Committee on Congregational Resources shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To provide essential program resources for the Presbytery and its member churches in the areas of Christian education, officer training, evangelism, and worship, as needs and opportunities arise.
  - B. To prepare budget requests for Presbytery's financial support of camps and church resource centers, based upon regular, periodic evaluation of their needs, effectiveness and service to the Presbytery, and upon the availability of funding for them from other sources.

## **SECTION TWELVE**

### **THE COMMITTEE ON STEWARDSHIP AND MISSION**

- 12.01 **The Committee on Stewardship and Mission** shall be composed of a chairperson and eight members. The members may be ministers, elders, deacons or unordained active church members with the majority of the committee ministers and elders. One member of the committee shall be elected from each of the regions of the Presbytery established by the Presbytery Council.
- 12.02 The Committee on Stewardship and Mission shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To work with the churches in the regions designated by the Presbytery Council to survey and support mission opportunities and projects.
  - B. To recommend to Presbytery mission opportunities and projects to be supported by the Presbytery Budget.
  - C. To interpret the mission work of the various governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
  - D. To provide stewardship resources to the churches of Presbytery.

## **SECTION THIRTEEN**

### **THE COMMITTEE ON ECCLESIASTICAL RELATIONS**

- 13.01 **The Ecclesiastical Relations Committee** shall be composed of a chairperson and eight other members. They may be ministers, elders, deacons or unordained active church members. The majority of the committee shall be ministers and elders.
- 13.02 The Ecclesiastical Relations Committee shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To receive and study the reports and act upon recommendations of commissioners and representatives to the Synod and General Assembly and their units, and of representatives to ecumenical and interfaith bodies, and to report, as appropriate, significant information pertinent to the life of the Presbytery to Presbytery Council or Presbytery;
  - B. To propose to the Presbytery such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the whole church for forwarding to Synod and General Assembly;

- C. To review the records of the sessions of each member church annually (but not during meetings of Presbytery) to ascertain whether the proceedings have been correctly recorded, and whether they are in accord with the Constitution, and whether they are prudent and equitable for the promotion of the mission and spiritual welfare of the Church, and whether the lawful injunctions of a higher governing body have been obeyed (*Book of Order* G-11.0103x, D-3.0300).
- D. To oversee and maintain those ecumenical relationships established by the Presbytery which enlarge the life and mission of the church in its area, and to nominate to Presbytery representatives to such ecumenical and inter-church agencies.
- E. To review, in consultation with appropriate committees of Presbytery, all overtures received from the General Assembly, and to make recommendations to the Presbytery regarding concurrence.

## **SECTION FOURTEEN**

### **THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS**

- 14.01 **The Committee on Nominations** shall be composed of a chairperson and eight other members. The members of this committee, including the chairperson, shall be ministers and elders, with one third ministers, one third laywomen, and one third laymen (*Book of Order* G-9.0801).
- 14.02 The Committee on Nominations shall have the following responsibilities:
  - A. To nominate candidates to serve as officers, chairpersons, committee members and other personnel assignments in or related to the Presbytery's structure, except the Executive, the Stated Clerk and the support and clerical staff. It is understood that nominations may be made from the floor provided that each nominee shall declare to the Presbytery his/her willingness to serve;
  - B. To develop, in cooperation with pastors and nominating committees of the member churches, and maintain a file of persons with special skills and talents drawn from throughout the Presbytery, which may be helpful as a pool from which to make nominations;
  - C. To take care for the inclusion of and participation by the diversity of persons and churches within the membership of the Presbytery.

## **SECTION FIFTEEN**

### **THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

- 15.01 The Board of Trustees shall be composed of a chairperson elected by Presbytery for a one-year term and eight other members, divided into three as nearly equal classes as possible, one class of which shall be elected each year at the May/June meeting for a three-year term. The chairperson who shall be the President of the Corporation shall serve a total of not more than four consecutive terms, and shall be ineligible thereafter to be elected to a new term until one year shall have elapsed. Four of the Trustees shall be ministers, and four of the Trustees shall be elders, and the chairperson of the Trustees may be either a minister or an elder. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery shall

be Secretary of the Corporation and the Treasurer of the Presbytery shall be Treasurer of the Corporation.

- 15.02 The Trustees and corporate structure of the Presbytery and each local church, together with all property, real and personal, held by them, shall be clearly identified as Trustees, corporate structure and property of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- 15.03 The Board of Trustees shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property, both real and personal, on behalf of the Presbytery and to facilitate the management of its corporate affairs, when directed by the Presbytery in accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.);
  - B. To recommend to Presbytery through the Presbytery Council, after reviewing the requests of the committees of Presbytery, the Budget for the total life and work of the governing body;
  - C. To recommend to Presbytery through the Presbytery Council the annual per capita apportionment;
  - D. To supervise all fiscal matters, including but not limited to accounting, investment, insurance, bonding, and auditing;
  - E. To be the committee on buildings and grounds for all physical property belonging to the Presbytery;
  - F. To receive from local churches, and to recommend to Presbytery as to, all requests relating to the sale, encumbering or leasing of real estate, in accordance with *Book of Order* G-8.0501 and .0502;
  - G. To develop, when appropriate, a uniform system of accounting and to encourage its adoption and use by member churches;
  - H. To ensure that the records of the Presbytery represent accurately, fairly, and openly, its actual financial condition;
  - I. To suggest to the Presbytery, changes in financial practice which will enable and further the Presbytery's mission or improve its administrative efficiency;
  - J. To arrange in such detail as deemed appropriate for an external, independent audit annually;
  - K. To report directly to the Presbytery the results of each said audit.
  - L. To be responsible for the development of corporate stewardship commitments from the churches of the Presbytery.

## **SECTION SIXTEEN**

### **STUDY AND ADVOCACY GROUPS**

- 16.01 Ministers, elders, deacons, and members of congregations which are part of the Presbytery may associate together to study and/or be an advocate for issues, causes,

or institutions which further the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or the Presbytery.

- 16.02 Such groups may apply to Presbytery through the Presbytery Council for recognition. If the Presbytery approves of the goals and statement of purpose of the group that group may:
1. use the mailing lists of the Presbytery at the group's expense.
  2. request time on the docket of Presbytery meetings for reports and programs.  
Requests for docket time are to be made to the Stated Clerk and will be scheduled by the Presbytery Council.
  3. distribute literature at meetings of Presbytery.
  4. visit sessions and congregations at their request.
- 16.03 Recognized groups will not be funded through the budget of Presbytery and will not receive staff support, unless specifically voted by Presbytery. Any request for such funding must be made through the Presbytery Council.
- 16.04 Recognized groups shall present a written report to Presbytery at its May/June meeting, annually. The report will detail the group's activities for the year and will show how that group has fulfilled its stated goals and statement of purpose.
- 16.05 Recognition of a group shall be for a term of three years, and such recognition may be renewed by the Presbytery through the Presbytery Council.

## **SECTION SEVENTEEN**

### **PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION**

- 17.01 There shall be a Permanent Judicial Commission of four ministers and three elders in accordance with the *Book of Church Discipline*, D-4.0100.
- 17.02 Should it be necessary between stated meetings of the Presbytery, a special disciplinary committee may be appointed by the Presbytery Council.

## **SECTION EIGHTEEN**

### **COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION**

- 18.01 There shall be a **Committee on Representation** consisting of a chairperson and eight members, whose members shall be composed of as nearly equal numbers of men and women as possible. These eight members shall be nominated and elected so as to implement the following pattern of membership for the Committee: five members shall be from the racial ethnic minority membership of the Presbytery, of whom, at least one shall be male and one shall be female; one member from the majority male membership; one member from the majority female membership; and one member from the youth male and female membership.
- 18.02 The committee shall fulfill all the duties assigned to it by the *Form of Government* (G-9.0105), and shall report directly to the Presbytery.

- 18.03 Despite By-law 7.05, any member of this Committee may serve concurrently as a member of Presbytery Council, as an officer of the Presbytery or as a member or chairperson of any other Presbytery committee, except the Nominations Committee.

## **SECTION NINETEEN**

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

- 19.01 The Presbytery of Southern New England shall indemnify each of its directors, officers, trustees, voting members and employees to the fullest extent permitted by law in connection with any actual or threatened action or proceeding arising out of his or her service to the Presbytery or to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), another church, another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefits plan or other enterprise at the Presbytery's request. This article applies to past, present and future directors, officers, trustees, voting members and employees and to their heirs, executors and administrators.

## **SECTION TWENTY**

### **AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION**

- 20.1 These By-Laws may be amended by a two thirds vote of the members present at any stated meeting of the Presbytery, provided that the amendment shall have been presented in writing at the previous stated meeting of Presbytery with all major proposed changes clearly noted, and provided that such amendment does not conflict with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- 20.02 These By-Laws may be suspended at any meeting of Presbytery by a vote of three quarters of the members present, provided that such suspension does not conflict with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or with any rule of the General Assembly. A separate vote shall be taken for each rule that is to be suspended.

## **SECTION TWENTY-ONE**

### **THE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL JUSTICE**

- 21.01 The Committee on Social Justice shall be composed of nine members including a chairperson. The members of this committee shall be ministers, elders, and/or laypersons.
- 21.02 The Committee on Social Justice shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To carry out its purposes with thoughtful and prayerful consideration in the context of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.
  - B. To identify social justice concerns to be addressed by the Presbytery.
  - C. To recommend appropriate action for such concerns.
  - D. To develop and implement programs to involve members of the Presbytery and its congregations in social justice matters.
  - E. To review materials referred by the Presbytery and other PC (USA) bodies and identify appropriate responses to them.

- F. To facilitate interaction among laity, clergy, and appropriate levels of church administration to further the cause of social justice in an appropriate manner.
- G. To develop, provide, and identify resources and offer guidance for study and action on select issues of social justice.
- H. To advocate for social justice concerns as appropriate to government, businesses and charitable institutions.

## **SECTION TWENTY-TWO**

### **THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH MINISTRIES**

- 22.01 The Committee on Youth Ministries shall be composed of a chairperson and six members. The chairperson of the Committee shall serve on the Presbytery Council. The members may be ministers, elders, deacons or unordained active church members with a majority of the committee ministers and elders. It is strongly urged that the committee represent itself, if possible, with at least one youth member.
- 22.02 The Committee on Youth Ministries shall have the following responsibilities:
- A. To aid churches by providing resources and materials for youth ministry.
  - B. To plan events on a Presbytery-wide basis for youth, including the Youth Triennium.
  - C. To plan, coordinate, or publicize events which help prepare and equip local churches and their members in the work of youth ministry.

# **ADDENDUM OF POLICIES**

## **Disciplinary Proceedings**

Adopted by the Presbytery on 1/16/93 (p. 2190)

- A. It shall be the policy of the Presbytery of Southern New England to inform each member church and each continuing member of presbytery of the commencement of disciplinary proceedings.
- B. It shall be the policy of the Presbytery of Southern New England to call and moderate a local church session meeting when disciplinary proceedings have concluded in anything other than a finding of “innocent” against a Presbytery member who labors in a local church. No decision of the Permanent Judicial Commission shall diminish the fulfillment of this responsibility.

## **Calls and Dockets for Presbytery Meetings**

Adopted by Council on 6/21/94

- 1. That items of potential controversy, which need the full attention of Presbytery, will, as much as possible, be placed early on the docket of the Presbytery meetings.
- 2. The Presbytery Council report for each upcoming Presbytery meeting will be mailed with the call to each Presbytery meeting.
- 3. That a 15-minute reading period will be incorporated into the early part of the meetings of the Presbytery.