

# BYLAWS OF POTOMAC PRESBYTERY

(November 26, 2009)

## ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this presbytery shall be Potomac Presbytery (hereinafter, the Presbytery).

## ARTICLE II. DENOMINATIONAL CONNECTION

The Presbytery is a presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America, and is governed by the Constitution of that denomination (*The Book of Church Order* [hereinafter *BCO*], Preface, III. The Constitution Defined).

## ARTICLE III. MEMBERS

**3-1.** The membership of the Presbytery shall consist of all the teaching elders and churches (through their permitted ruling elder representatives as defined in *BCO* 13-1) within its bounds that have been accepted by the Presbytery.

**3-2.** The bounds of the Presbytery shall be defined as follows:

Maryland counties, together with the cities contained in their border: Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince Georges, St. Marys, Washington and Howard west of US Route 29, south of Route 216 and east of MD Route 108;

Virginia counties, together with the cities contained in their border: Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, and Prince William;

Washington, DC;

West Virginia counties, together with the cities contained in their border: Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan.

## ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

**4-1. Officers.** The officers of the Presbytery shall be a Moderator, a Vice Moderator, a Stated Clerk, a Recording Clerk, a Treasurer, and the Trustees.

**4-2. Duties of the Officers.** The officers shall perform the duties prescribed by *BCO*, these bylaws, and the parliamentary authority adopted by the Presbytery.

### **4-3. The Duties of the Moderator.**

a. The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the Presbytery except when he may invite another commissioner to act temporarily as the presiding officer (cf. *Robert's Rules*, pp. 382-83; 436-37).

b. The Moderator shall, at the request of the chairman of a Presbytery committee, if a vacancy arises between the meetings of the Presbytery, appoint teaching or ruling elders of the Presbytery to serve on that committee until such vacancy can be filled through the regular election procedure.

c. The Moderator shall, as directed by the Presbytery, or if a vacancy arises, appoint teaching or ruling elders of the Presbytery to serve on a commission of the Presbytery.

d. The Moderator shall, as needed, appoint teaching or ruling elders of the Presbytery to serve as fraternal delegates from the Presbytery to Presbytery

meetings of member denominations of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Churches (NAPARC).

**4-4. The Duties of the Vice Moderator.**

a. The Vice Moderator shall act on behalf of the Moderator at the Moderator's request, or in any case where the Moderator is incapable of acting.

b. The Vice Moderator shall, as needed, receive instruction in the work of the Moderator and parliamentary procedure, as provided by the Presbytery.

**4-5. The Duties of the Stated Clerk.**

a. The Stated Clerk shall perform the duties assigned by the *BCO* (10-4) and these bylaws.

b. The Stated Clerk shall have the following responsibilities to the Presbytery:

1. he shall be the Parliamentarian of the Presbytery but may fulfill this function through the use of Assistant Parliamentarians whom he recommends to the Moderator for his appointment;

2. he shall refer items of business coming before the Presbytery to the appropriate standing committee or committees;

3. he shall refer all overtures proposed to the Presbytery for submission to the General Assembly to the appropriate standing committee for review and recommendation;

4. he shall order the reports of the Committee on Christian Education (CCE), the Committee on Administration and Stewardship (CAS), the Committee on Mission to North America (CMNA), the Committee on Mission to the World (CMTW), the Committee on Nominations (CN), the Committee on Reformed University Ministries (CRUM), the Committee on Presbytery Boundaries (CPB), and the Program Committee (PC) during the business session of a regular meeting of the Presbytery as needed, by request of the respective committee chairman, according to a rotating schedule of precedence prepared by the Stated Clerk.

5. he shall receive and publish reports and/or minutes from the standing committees, any special committees, and any commissions of the Presbytery;

6. he shall be responsible to keep attendance records of meetings of the Presbytery;

7. he shall be responsible for publishing the minutes of the Presbytery

8. he shall prepare and distribute the bylaws of the Presbytery, which shall be published in the format and size of the "Rules of Assembly Operations";

9. he shall prepare and distribute the roll of the Presbytery;

10. he shall be a member of the CAS and the CPB;

11. he shall be responsible for notifying all appropriate persons of the decisions of the Presbytery; and

12. he shall be authorized to make public statements for and on behalf of the Presbytery only insofar as such statements are warranted on the basis of specific actions of the Presbytery.

**4-6. The Duties of the Recording Clerk.**

a. The Recording Clerk shall have the following responsibilities to the Presbytery:

1. he shall assist the Stated Clerk in the recording, preparation, and publication of the permanent records of the Presbytery; and

2. he shall assist the Stated Clerk in keeping attendance at the meetings of the Presbytery.

**4-7. The Duties of the Treasurer.**

a. The Treasurer shall have the following responsibilities to the Presbytery:

1. he shall receive and act as the custodian for the funds of the Presbytery;

2. he shall disburse funds as directed by Presbytery, or at the request of a committee (cf. 6-1.f.), said request to be set forth in the following manner:

(a) the request shall be supported by documentation indicating the purpose of the expenditure and the account from which the funds are to be drawn; and

(b) the request shall be made under the signature of the committee chairman;

3. he shall present a report of financial condition at each regular meeting; and

4. he shall be a member of the CAS.

**4-8. The Trustees of the Corporation**

a. The Trustees of the Corporation shall consist of the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk and Treasurer.

b. The Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk and Treasurer shall serve, for corporate purposes, as the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, of the Corporation.

c. The Trustees of the Corporation shall have those powers specified in these bylaws and are subject in all respects to *BCO*. The powers and duties of the Trustees shall not infringe upon the powers and duties of the officers of the Presbytery.

d. The Corporation shall be the title holder of all property and assets of the Presbytery. The Trustees shall meet at least once annually to review the affairs of the Corporation.

**4-9. Election, Nomination Procedure.** Any ruling or teaching elder (or deacon, with respect to the Treasurer) of the Presbytery shall be eligible for election to office. When a ruling elder is elected, the Stated Clerk shall notify the Clerk of Session of which the ruling elder is a member, and request that the ruling elder be designated representative of that Session to the meetings of the Presbytery for the term to which he has been elected.

**4-10. Election, Term of Office.** The officers shall be elected annually at the November regular meeting to serve for one year beginning on the following January 1, or until their successors are elected.

**4-11. Office-holding Limitations.** No teaching or ruling elder shall be eligible to serve successive terms in the office of Moderator or Vice Moderator.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

**5-1. Regular Meetings.** The Presbytery shall meet in regular session:

- a. the fourth Tuesday of January;
  - b. the third Saturday of March;
  - c. the first Tuesday of June;
  - d. the third Tuesday of September, or on a date in September established by the Presbytery under 10-1.c.; and
  - e. the third Saturday of November.
- f. The day of the regular meeting may be changed at any meeting of the Presbytery by a two-thirds vote, provided the proposed change has been submitted in writing with the call of the meeting.

**5-2. Special Meetings.** Any request for a special meeting of the Presbytery shall be made in writing to the Moderator (*BCO* 13-12) through the office of the Stated Clerk.

**5-3. Attendance at Meetings.** Teaching and ruling elder delegates are expected to attend all meetings of the Presbytery.

a. Requests for excused absence should be made in writing to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery, stating the reason for requesting such excused absence. In the event of last-minute emergencies, requests for excused absence may be made by telephone. Requests for excused absence received after a regular meeting of the Presbytery may be accepted upon sufficient warrant.

b. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery shall forward to the Committee on the Minister and the Ministry of the Word attendance records and any requests for excused absence.

c. Commissioners may depart before the docketed time of adjournment only with permission of the Presbytery.

**5-4. Ruling Elder Representation.** The Clerk shall regularly remind the churches of the Presbytery that the expenses of ruling elders in their attendance at the meetings of the Presbytery shall be defrayed by the Sessions they represent (*BCO* 10-6). Such defrayal of expenses may properly include compensation for whatever loss may be suffered due to attendance at meetings of the Presbytery.

**ARTICLE VI. STANDING COMMITTEES**

**6-1. General Provisions.**

a. Standing committees of the Presbytery shall consist of seven members unless otherwise noted.

b. Members of the committees shall be elected and serve in the following manner. 1. Members shall be elected for a three-year term, in three classes, one class annually, at the September regular meeting.

2. Members may serve two successive terms only, except as each additional term may be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Presbytery.

3. Members shall serve until their successors be elected.

4. Vacancies shall be filled at the next regular meeting of the Presbytery.

5. In the event of vacancy, terms of office shall be determined as follows:

(a) a man elected to a vacant office for an unexpired term that is greater than one-half (1/2) of the total term shall be considered as having served a full term;

(b) a man elected to a vacant office for an unexpired term that is less than one-half (1/2) of the total term shall not be considered as having served a term.

c. Each committee shall elect a Chairman from among its membership, which Chairman shall serve until his resignation or the completion of his term of service.

d. Each committee shall meet according to a schedule of regular meetings as adopted by the committee, upon the call of the Chairman, at the direction of Presbytery, or upon the request of any three members of the committee.

e. Each committee shall prepare annually a draft budget for submission to the CAS (cf. 6-5.g.2.).

f. No committee may expend funds of the Presbytery without the express consent of the Presbytery, such consent granted either through adoption of a motion to that effect, or by approval of the committee's budget and the line items specified therein.

**6-2. Committee on Credentials (hereinafter, CC)**

a. The CC shall consist of nine members.

b. In general, the CC shall consider and make recommendation on all matters referred to the CC by the Presbytery concerning the credentials of those who would come under the care and authority of the Presbytery.

c. The CC shall oversee all Candidates under care of Presbytery, as such care is defined in *A Manual For the Care of Candidates for the Gospel Ministry*. The *Manual* may be amended by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Presbytery, the amendment having been proposed in writing in the call of the meeting of the Presbytery.

d. The CC shall examine each prospective candidate (oral), licentiate (written and oral), ordinand (written and oral) and transfer (oral, if from within the PCA or from a NAPARC denomination; written and oral if from some other branch of the visible church) and make recommendation to the Presbytery concerning his fitness for the privileges or office in question according to the provisions of these bylaws, Article VIII.

e. The CC shall consider and make recommendation concerning the required sermon (in both written and oral form) from all candidates for licensure and ordination.

f. The CC shall examine and make recommendation concerning the Call of ordinands and transfers (*BCO* Chapter 20-6).

g. For the purposes of *BCO* 13-9.f.(to ... receive new churches'), four members of the CC, as appointed by the chairman, shall serve, along with three other presbyters as appointed by Presbytery, as the receiving commission.

**6-3. Committee on the Minister and the Ministry of the Word (hereinafter, CMMW)**

a. In general, the CMMW shall consider and make recommendation on all matters referred to the CMMW by the Presbytery concerning the work and responsibilities of Teaching Elders and their relation to the churches of Presbytery.

b. The CMMW shall consider and make recommendations concerning any proposed amendment to or change in call of a member of the Presbytery (*BCO* 20-6) or a call of a member to a church within the Presbytery or a work to be approved by the Presbytery.

c. The CMMW shall communicate with the Session of a church within the Presbytery having no pastor and, at the invitation of the Session, assist the Session in establishing interim arrangements (*BCO* 12-3, -5; 13-9.f).

d. The CMMW shall consider and make recommendation for the Presbytery concerning all requests for Stated Supply (*BCO* 22-5, -6).

e. The CMMW shall consult with teaching elders without call and prepare recommendations for the Presbytery (*BCO* 13-2 and -9.a. and f.; 34-10). To that end the Stated Clerk shall deliver to each teaching elder upon his designation as on the roll without call, and thereafter annually before the June meeting of the Presbytery to each teaching elder continuing on the roll without call, the “Annual Report for Teaching Elders Without Call.” This report is to be completed and returned to the Stated Clerk, and thereafter forwarded to the chairman of the CMMW by the September meeting of Presbytery. Upon consideration of the report, and in consultation with the teaching elder in question if called by the Committee, the CMMW shall make recommendation concerning the continuing status of such teaching elders at the November meeting of Presbytery.

f. The CMMW shall consider and make recommendation for the Presbytery concerning all requests for dissolution of pastoral relation (*BCO* 23-1), requests for honorable retirement (*BCO* 23-2, -3), request for divestiture without censure (*BCO* 38-2), and members of the Presbytery who renounce the communion of the PCA by joining some other denomination (*BCO* 38-3)

g. The CMMW shall report to the Presbytery annually at the September meeting, regarding the general well-being of each of its honorably retired Teaching Elders. This report shall include information concerning:

1. the TE’s spiritual health and continued connection to the body of Christ;
2. his physical, emotional, and financial well-being; and
3. any recommendations for appropriate administrative actions relevant to such Teaching Elders and the Presbyteries within which they live or labor

h. The CMMW shall consider and make recommendation concerning the administrative procedures for all Cases of, or Without Process (*BCO* 33-1; 32; 34; and 38), References (*BCO* Chapter 41), Appeals (*BCO* Chapter 42), and Complaints (*BCO* Chapter 43) submitted to the Presbytery.

i. The CMMW shall investigate problems that may arise with respect to Teaching Elders, Sessions, or Congregations and, where possible, give counsel and advice to resolve such problems, and, if necessary, recommend for the Presbytery suitable action to protect the honor of Christ, the reputation of the Church, and the dignity of the office of Teaching Elder. Such investigations shall be:

1. as directed by Presbytery (with respect to Presbytery’s responsibilities under *BCO* 13-9.d.,f.;32-2.-7.; and 32-2.); or
2. as requested by any three teaching elders and three ruling elders belonging to the Presbytery who are not members of CMMW, provided that in CMMW’s judgment the requirements of Mat. 18 have been followed, or
3. at the request of a session or the pastor of a congregation (with respect to the internal affairs of said session or congregation).

j. The CMMW shall oversee arrangements for the annual report to the

Presbytery to be given by each teaching elder engaged in a “needful work.” In determining what constitutes a “needful work” CMMW shall determine

1. it is a work that requires a specialized ability within the gifts of a minister of the Word;
2. the work must be needful to the church; and
3. the work must make possible that the one called can “make full proof of his ministry by disseminating the Gospel for the edification of the church (*BCO* 8–4).”

k. As it is a primary responsibility of presbyters to attend five regular meetings of the Presbytery (*BCO* 8–3, 12–5.f.) and as it is the duty of the Presbytery to require presbyters to fulfill this responsibility (*BCO* 13– 9.b.d.e.) the CMMW shall:

1. consider and make recommendations to the Presbytery concerning any request for an excused absence from a meeting of the Presbytery (*cf.* BPP 5-3). An absence shall be counted as excused only when some urgent or unavoidable family or ecclesiastical responsibility or some providential hindrance (e.g. sickness, car failure, natural disaster) interposes. An excused absence shall not be counted as an absence in CMMW’s review of Presbytery attendance, nor shall absences from special meetings be so counted.

2. consider and make recommendations to the Presbytery concerning appropriate Presbytery response to any case of habitual absence from regular meetings of Presbytery, whether by a TE or Sessional representative. The manner of consideration shall be as follows:

(a) Concerning TEs

- (1) When a TE is absent from a regular meeting without excuse a letter will be sent drawing his attention to the fact and reminding the TE in question of his responsibilities.

- (2) When a TE is absent without excuse from two of the five regular meetings of a given year he will be asked to meet with the CMMW to discuss the reasons for his delinquency, whereupon the CMMW shall recommend to the Presbytery any disciplinary action that may be necessary.

(b) Concerning Session Representatives

- (1) When a Session, without excuse, fails to be represented at regular meeting a letter will be sent to the clerk of Session drawing attention to the fact and reminding the Session in question of its responsibilities.

- (2) When a Session, without excuse, fails to be represented at two of the five regular meetings of a given year the CMMW shall recommend proceedings under *BCO* 40–5.

l. The CMMW shall hear and make recommendation concerning Teaching Elders who report changes in views related to ordination vow 2 (*BCO* Chapter 21-5(2)).

m. When the Presbytery has received a request for dissolution of the pastoral relation, or a request from a teaching elder to be dismissed to another presbytery, but the Presbytery is not scheduled for a meeting in sufficient time to dissolve the pastoral relationship, grant permission to leave the field, or grant a letter of dismissal, the CMMW is hereby commissioned by the Presbytery with the authority to so act, and shall, if necessary, hold a special meeting for that purpose. The CMMW shall submit a report of any action under this section at the next regular meeting of the Presbytery. This power shall be exercised by the CMMW under the following circumstances:

1. in all cases, only when the teaching elder is in good standing, with no charges pending nor problems known to prejudice his relationship with the Presbytery; and

2. in the case of dissolution, only when there has been an uncontested request to dissolve the pastoral relation (*BCO* Chapter 23-1), which matter has been handled through a duly called congregational meeting.

n. CMMW shall encourage informal gatherings of members of the Presbytery for mutual support and fellowship.

**6-4. The Committee on Christian Education (hereinafter, CCE)**

a. The CCE shall have the responsibility of formulating and carrying through all plans regarding the total educational program as the Presbytery may deem necessary for Christian growth. Oversight areas shall include: youth work, children's work, adult work, men's and women's organizations, camp and conference programs, and day schools.

b. The CCE shall have the responsibility for the development and oversight of the Presbytery's Internship Program (cf. *BCO* 19-7 through 19-16), in cooperation with: the CC; the Committee on Christian Education and Publications of the General Assembly; and the theological seminaries.

**6-5. The Committee on Administration and Stewardship (hereinafter, CAS)**

a. In addition to the elected members (*BPP* 6-1.a.) the Treasurer and the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery shall be members of the Committee.

b. The CAS shall have oversight of the work of the Stated Clerk.

c. The CAS shall have oversight of the work of the Treasurer, and shall see that the financial records are audited annually. Such audits shall consist of an internal review done annually by the CAS or representatives they appoint. Every third year, or whenever there is a change in Treasurer, the CAS shall arrange for an annual audit performed by an independent certified public accounting firm in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS) with its financial statement prepared in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

d. The CAS shall make administrative decisions or recommendations, as appropriate, and shall make recommendation to the Presbytery concerning any matter of civil or criminal law requiring the attention of the Presbytery.

e. The CAS shall formulate for the Presbytery's approval long range stewardship programs for the Presbytery.

f. The CAS shall promote Christian stewardship in all the churches of the Presbytery.

g. The CAS shall recommend at the September regular meeting, an annual budget for the Presbytery's consideration and adoption at the November regular meeting.

1. The budget shall be developed in consultation with the various committees of the Presbytery and the Treasurer.

2. Committees or personnel desiring to be included in the Presbytery's budget shall submit their requests to the CAS before August 1st of each year.

3. At the time of the CAS's presentation of the proposed budget at the September regular Presbytery Meeting, the CAS shall indicate the budget items that would be reduced if the CAS determined, following the procedure described in 6-5.g.4., that the Presbytery would be unable to support the proposed budget.

4. Following the September regular meeting, the CAS shall make an assessment of the Presbytery's ability to support the proposed budget. Such assessment shall include a determination of the level of expected giving from the Churches within the Presbytery and from other sources. The giving requested from the Churches will be based on a percentage of each church's offerings as reported in Section IV, Line 1 of its most recent annual statistical report to the Office of the Stated Clerk of the PCA. The CAS will recommend the specific percentage based on the amount needed to meet the proposed budget

5. At the November regular Presbytery Meeting, the CAS shall present a budget for final approval that is equal to the CAS's assessment of expected giving.

**6-6. The Committee on Mission to North America (hereinafter, CMNA)**

- a. The CMNA shall consist of nine members.
- b. The CMNA shall promote the cause of evangelism and church growth throughout the Presbytery.
- c. The CMNA shall have the responsibility to promote the establishment of new churches within the Presbytery, focusing especially upon communities within the Presbytery lacking a Reformed and Presbyterian witness. To that end, CMNA shall work to establish church-planting apprenticeships as follows:
  1. The church planting apprentice (hereafter CPAp) is a man who has been provisionally qualified by the Church Planting Assessment Center and is in need of further training under a church planting mentor. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.
  2. The apprenticeship shall last from 1 to 3 years during which time the CPAp shall be evaluated as to his readiness to plant a church. If approved, he shall be expected to plant a church in Potomac Presbytery, preferably, or elsewhere in the PCA.
  3. CPAs and their mentors shall give a quarterly report to the MNA committee.
  4. Upon approval of the Presbytery, the CMNA shall be authorized to grant a one-time distribution of \$5,000.00 to a CPAp from the Church Planting Apprentice Fund.
- d. The CMNA shall have the responsibility to recommend to the Presbytery new locations of churches planted by the Presbytery within its bounds.
- e. The CMNA shall confer with organized churches seeking admission to the Presbytery and make recommendations to the Presbytery concerning the same.
- f. The CMNA shall promote the cause of mission to North America in cooperation with the Committee on Mission to North America of the General Assembly
- g. The CMNA shall promote the cause of diaconal ministry.
- h. The CMNA shall promote ministries to unchurched youth.
- i. The CMNA shall promote the ministry of the chaplains.
- j. The CMNA shall provide oversight for specialized ministries of the Presbytery as the Presbytery shall from time to time direct

**6-7. The Committee on Mission to the World (hereinafter, CMTW)**

- a. The CMTW shall correspond with churches of the Presbytery to:
  - 1. call to their attention the needs in other lands;
  - 2. report the work being done;
  - 3. enlist their interest and zeal in the cause of world missions;
  - 4. encourage churches to invite missionaries to visit and to share their work; and
  - 5. arrange itineraries for missionaries traveling within the Presbytery, as needed.

**6-8. The Committee on Review of Session Records (hereinafter, CRSR)**

- a. The CRSR shall consist of nine members.
- b. The CRSR shall provide for the annual examination of the Session records of each church in the Presbytery. The Stated Clerk, in cooperation with the CRSR, shall prepare a schedule providing for the examination of the records of an approximately equal number of the churches at each regular meeting.
- c. The CRSR shall examine the records of Sessions in accordance with Article VII of these bylaws.
- d. The CRSR shall notify the Clerk of Session whose records are not approved, noting the reason for same, and offering counsel where it is needed.

**6-9. The Committee on Nominations (hereinafter, CN)**

- a. The CN shall bring a report to regular meetings, making nominations for the vacancies that will normally occur, in the following manner.
  - 1. At the September meeting the CN shall provide nominations for the standing committees of Presbytery. The CN shall seek to provide nominations that insure balanced teaching elder and ruling elder representation on the standing committees, and, as much as possible, avoid nominating a presbyter for service on more than one standing committee.
  - 2. At the November meeting the CN shall provide nominations for the office of Moderator, the office of Vice Moderator, the office of Stated Clerk, the office of Recording Clerk, the office of Treasurer; and membership on General Assembly permanent committees.
  - 3. At the March meeting the CN shall provide nominations for membership on General Assembly Committees of Commissioners.
- b. The CN shall bring a report, as necessary, to each regular meeting of nominations for any vacancy that has occurred.

**6-10. The Committee on Reformed University Ministries (hereinafter, CRUM)**

- a. The CRUM shall serve the Potomac Presbytery with respect to the campus ministries within the boundaries of the Presbytery.
- b. The CRUM, and the teaching elders serving under its care, shall function in accordance with the “Manual for Campus Ministries Presbyterian Church in America” as approved by the Seventh General Assembly of the PCA. (*M7GA* (1979), pp. 205. ff.). Or as later amended.
- c. The CRUM shall administer the Presbytery’s supervision of campus ministry within its bounds.
- d. The CRUM shall ascertain the needs of campus ministry within the boundaries of the Presbytery, inform the Presbytery of the same, and recommend priorities of new ministries.
- e. The CRUM shall inform the Sessions and Congregations of the Presbytery of campus ministries’ purpose, progress and needs.
- f. The CRUM shall recommend to the Presbytery, and carry out upon approval, the organization of new ministries on campuses.
- g. The CRUM shall seek out and train qualified staff for those ministries, and upon approval of the Presbytery, initiate the call for campus ministers by the Presbytery.

**6-11. The Committee on Presbytery Boundaries (hereafter CPB)**

- a. The CPB shall consist of the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, and the chairman (or his representative) of CC, CMMW, CCE, CAS, CMNA, CMTW, CRSR, CN, CRUM, and PC.
- b. The Moderator shall be the chairman of the CPB. The Vice Moderator shall be the vice chairman. The Stated Clerk shall be the secretary. .
- c. In general, the CPB shall consider and make recommendation on all matters referred to the CPB by the Presbytery concerning boundaries of Presbytery.
- d. In particular, the CPB shall annually study and make recommendation for the development of the Presbytery in view of approved projections for future division. To this end the CPB shall consider: what Biblical principles may apply; natural, social, political and economic boundaries of the region; the benefits of increased focus on a particular region; demographic data from all the counties under jurisdiction; relative strength, e.g., spiritual, numerical, financial, staff, physical plant, of existing congregations; number of teaching elders and their status (pastors, ob, wc, etc.) number of ruling elders; statistics of other presbyteries; budget projections; “elder-power” needs of Presbytery; the experience of the Presbytery in previous divisions; and General Assembly Guidelines.
- e. The CPB shall consider the development of the Presbytery and as

appropriate recommend to the Presbytery a proposal for division for General Assembly approval.

f. The CPB shall communicate to and negotiate with other presbyteries and General Assembly's Committee on Mission to North America concerning the external boundaries of the Presbytery and make recommendation to the Presbytery concerning the same.

g. The CPB shall report to the Presbytery at least annually at the November meeting.

**6-12. The Program Committee (hereafter PC)**

a. In general, the PC shall make arrangements for the devotional session of each regular meeting of the Presbytery (cf. Article X, Rule 10-3.).

b. In its planning the PC shall be guided by the desire to glorify God in the nurturing of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, seeking specifically to plan such gatherings as will serve to impart and sustain a shared vision among the elders for the Presbytery's calling to faithfully serve the Lord in its particular time and place.

c. The PC shall be responsible for the organization of the worship service as follows:

1. the PC shall invite one to preach who is judged by the PC to be qualified, competent and likely to serve for the edification of the Presbytery;

2. the PC shall, in consultation with the staff of the host church, make preparations for the other aspects of the worship service;

3. the PC shall, at the worship service for the November meeting of the Presbytery, see that a collection is taken in support of the efforts of the Committee on Insurance, Annuities and Relief of the General Assembly for ministerial relief, or some like benevolence for the care of brother ministers in need, as determined by the CMMW; and

4. the PC shall, at the worship service for the January meeting of the Presbytery, arrange for a memorial to all those teaching and ruling elders within the Presbytery who died during the preceding year.

d. The PC shall invite an experienced and noteworthy speaker to prepare a lecture for the edification of the Presbytery, or arrange for such informational presentations likely to serve that same end, by representatives of General Assembly Committees and Agencies, or other Christian ministries, or ordinands or ministers seeking admission to the Presbytery with respect to their testimony and call, in each case including time for answers to questions proposed by commissioners.

e. The PC shall organize the time of public prayer as follows:

1. the PC may arrange for a general gathering for public prayer, or may divide the Presbytery into smaller sub-divisions;

2. the PC, in consultation with the standing committees, shall prepare a guide for prayer to be distributed for use the during the time of public prayer; and

3. the PC may also arrange for a brief presentation of prayer needs by church planters, missionaries, or other interested parties.

**ARTICLE VII. REVIEW OF SESSION RECORDS**

**7-1.** It is the right and duty of the Presbytery to review, at least once a year, the records of the Sessions within its bounds (*BCO* 12-7; chapter 40).

**7-2.** The Presbytery shall carry out this review through its CRSR.

**7-3. Guidelines for Keeping Session Minutes**

a. The Stated Clerk of each Session is responsible for the custody of the minutes of the Session.

b. The minutes shall be printed.

c. The minutes shall be kept in a locking-type record book, in chronological order, on consecutively numbered loose leaf pages; no pages may be rearranged or destroyed.

d. Large blank spaces on the page, such as those which might occur between records of different meetings, shall have a line drawn through the space.

e. The minutes shall contain the following information:

1. The kind of meeting: regular, special, adjourned regular, or adjourned special. In the case of a special meeting the portion of the call stating the purpose of the meeting should be recorded verbatim in the minutes.

2. The name of the congregation.

3. The date, time and place of the meeting.

4. The name of the Moderator, and if someone other than the regular Stated Clerk served as a clerk *pro tem*, his name should be indicated.

5. That meetings were opened and closed with prayer (*BCO* 10-5).

6. The names of officers present at the meeting, indicating whether they were teaching elders, or ruling elders, and the presence of a quorum.

7. The full names of visitors present.

8. Officers not attending should be listed as excused or unexcused.

9. Approval of current or previous minutes.

10. All that is vital to the transaction of business shall be recorded, including but not limited to:

(a) motions adopted (note: ordinarily motions that are lost are not included in the record, unless an affirmative vote for the lost motion is recorded, in which case the lost motion must be shown), as well as the date and/or page(s) on which a previous motion appears concerning which a subsequent action has been taken;

(b) names of officers requesting votes;

(c) vote tallies, if counted vote taken;

d) points of order ruled against by the chair and appeals from the decision of the chair, whether sustained or lost, together with the reason given by the chair for his ruling, should be included for the sake of any

case that may be carried to a higher court and for the protection of a minority; so too the record of the Session's actions shall be recorded;

(e) dissents, protests, and objections;

(f) plans adopted;

(g) significant communications received;

(h) list of important reports;

(i) commission reports, and when a commission has been charged with carrying out a task prescribed in the Constitution, the minutes of Session should show the completion of each action prescribed in the respective constitutional provision;

(j) the full name and basis for receiving each new member, i.e., by profession of faith, having been baptized in infancy; by profession of faith, baptism to be administered at the time of public profession; by letter of dismissal from another church (including full name, city and state/country); or by reaffirmation of faith;

(k) the full name of all children (with the full name of their parents) and adults baptized, with the date and place;

(l) the dates of the administration of the Lord's Supper and, if feasible, the number of communicants served;

(m) the full name of all persons dismissed, with the full name of the receiving church, its denomination and location, and, if useful for the clarity of the record, the reason for the dismissal with appropriate *BCO* reference;

(n) the full name of communicant and non-communicant members deceased, with date of death;

(o) the full name of any member removed from the roll, *BCO* reference for constitutional authority, and sufficient facts to make plain the reason for the Session's action;

(p) ordination examinations, listing all specific requirements and trials for ordination which have been accomplished; Session minutes shall record elder and deacon candidates' stated differences with the doctrinal standards of the PCA by recording whether:

(i.) the candidate stated that he had no differences; or

(ii.) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be merely semantic; or

(iii.) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but not "out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine" (*BCO* 21-4); or

(iv.) the court judged the stated difference(s) to be "out of accord," that is "hostile to the system" or "striking at the vitals of religion" (*BCO* 21-4);

(q) the ordination and installation of elders and deacons, giving their full names;

(r) the full name of ruling elders and their alternates appointed as commissioners to the meetings of the Presbytery and the General Assembly, noting the date and place of the meeting in question, or the exact period of the commissioner's appointment;

(s) the Session's review of the minutes of the Board of Deacons;

(t) the *BCO* chapter(s) and section(s) involved in judicial cases, along with the final disposition of each action and the full names of all parties and witnesses. Note: minutes of Session dealing with judicial cases shall not be dealt with by the CRSR (*BCO* 40-3) when notice of appeal or complaint has been given the Session, but still must be submitted for review as part of the record.

f. The minutes shall be signed by the Clerk.

g. Recording Guidelines:

1. Each item of business or main motion shall be recorded in a separate paragraph. Subsidiary and procedural motions may be recorded in the same paragraph with the main motion to which it pertains.

2. Notation of the subject matter of a paragraph shall appear in the margin or as a paragraph heading.

3. Erasures, interlineations and footnotes after the fact are to be avoided.

4. If a serious mistake has been made, the erroneous matter shall be lined out with a single line, and the notation signed and dated in the margin. If a correction is made at a latter date, the place where the corrected material is to be found shall be noted in the margin.

5. If a necessary correction would alter minutes that have been approved by the Presbytery, the Session minutes of the meeting at which the correction is made shall clearly reflect that change and reference the page number and date of the minutes which were corrected.

6. Note "HISTORICAL" in the margin to denote an event of special historical significance to the church.

7. If a special bulletin is designated for safe-keeping an envelope may be attached inside the front cover to contain such matter.

8. Minutes of congregational meetings may be kept in a separate book, in a separate place in the Session Minutes Book, or kept in chronological sequence within the Session minutes.

9. Minutes of executive Sessions are not exempt from the general requirement that Session's actions shall be recorded in the Session's minutes and that these minutes (even if kept in a separate section on executive Sessions) shall be submitted to the Presbytery for review (*BCO* 12-7; 40-1). A

Session may ask that the Committee on Review of Session Records deal with these minutes confidentially. However, any exceptions to these minutes must be submitted to the Presbytery through the normal procedures.

10. Minutes are not to be recorded in permanent form until they have been read and approved by the Session.

**7-4. Guidelines for Submitting of Session Records:**

a. The Stated Clerk of each Session is to provide a copy of all minutes to be reviewed to the members of the CRSR who have been designated to read them, the names and addresses of those members having been provided by the Chairman of the CRSR.

b. The minutes to be reviewed shall include the unreviewed minutes of all Session meetings that have been held through the end of the period under consideration (cf. 6-8.b.).

c. In addition to the minutes themselves, the Session shall submit to each designated member of the CRSR a copy of the following items:

1. A current roll of the congregation, listing the full name of all communicant and non-communicant members, and a list of all officers, with their addresses and phone numbers, identifying the Clerk of Session.

2. An up-to-date copy of the Standing Rules of the Session, if any.

d. The minutes to be reviewed and the items listed under 7-4.c. shall be provided to the designated members of the CRSR not less than forty-five (45) days prior to the meeting of the Presbytery.

e. If a Session repeatedly fails to submit its minutes, or its responses to exceptions of substance, the CRSR may recommend to the Presbytery that the provisions of *BCO* 40-1, 4 and 5 be applied.

**7-5.** The Stated Clerk of each Session, or his representative, should be prepared to meet with the CRSR to answer questions and to clarify any possible discrepancy. The CRSR should make every reasonable effort to consult with the Clerk of the Session (or his designee) on any questions before finalizing the report to the Presbytery.

**7-6. Guidelines for Examining Session Records**

a. Session minutes shall be examined for conformity to:

1. The Scriptures and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America as to the substance of the actions recorded (*BCO* 40-2), and

2. The Presbytery Guidelines for Keeping Session minutes, as to form, structure, and minimum content (*BPP* 7-3).

b. Each set of Session minutes and other materials submitted under *BPP* 7-4.c should be read by at least two members of the Committee on Review of Session Records.

c. The findings of the committee with respect to the minutes of each Session shall be noted under the following categories as appropriate:

1. Exceptions of substance: apparent violations of the Scripture or serious irregularities from the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, actions out of accord with the deliverances of the Presbytery or General Assembly, and matters of impropriety and important delinquencies, shall be reported under this category.

2. Exceptions of form: violations of the Presbytery's Guidelines for Keeping Session Minutes (*BPP* 7-3), rules of order, etc. shall be reported under this category. When a minor irregularity from a *BCO* provision is noted, it may be treated as an exception of form (*BCO* 40-3; *RAO* 14-6.c.2). If subsequent minutes continue to reflect the same particular exception of form, it may become an exception of substance.

3. Notations: The Committee shall report to the Clerk of Session those minor variations in form and clarity (e.g., typographical errors, misspellings and improper punctuation) that affect the clarity of the record. These are to be given as advice for the respective clerks.

#### **7-7. Guidelines for Reporting on Session Records**

The report of the CRSR shall be concise. It shall include the following:

- a. a list of the minutes, by Sessions, received by the CRSR;
- b. a list of the Sessions which have not submitted minutes, if any; and
- c. a recommendation concerning the minutes of each Session which shall include:

1. minutes approved without exception;
2. minutes approved with exceptions of form, which shall be reported directly to the Session;
3. minutes approved with exceptions of substance which shall be presented to the Presbytery, which presentation shall include citation of any relevant Scriptural and/or Constitutional references, and provide the CRSR's rationale for finding the exception of substance;
4. responses to exceptions, if any; and
5. recommendations concerning all responses to exceptions taken previously that have not been disposed of suitably;
- d. any other recommendation to the Presbytery; and
- e. a statement of the division of the vote on each recommendation.

#### **7-8. Guidelines for Responding to Presbytery**

a. Sessions shall be advised of exceptions of form; however, they shall take note in their minutes of exceptions of substance taken by the Presbytery, together with the responses adopted by the Session.

b. At the next regular meeting of the Presbytery following the meeting of Presbytery at which their minutes were reviewed, Sessions shall communicate to

the Presbytery through the CRSR the disposition they have made of the exceptions of substance, with specific reference to Session's action as recorded in its minutes. Responses shall be in one of the following forms:

1. Session agrees with the exceptions and corrects its record (if possible), corrects its actions (if possible) and promises to be more careful in the future; or
2. Session respectfully disagrees with the exception, states its grounds and refers the exception back to the Presbytery.

**ARTICLE VIII. EXAMINATIONS**

**8-1. Rehearsal of the CC’s Proceedings.**

a. The chairman of the CC shall regularly remind commissioners, at the beginning of the examination of candidates, of the extensive written tests required by the Presbytery, and the oral examination before the CC already sustained by a candidate presented with the CC’s recommendation, and shall urge commissioners, without in any sense abridging their right and responsibility to satisfy their conscience with respect to the approval of a candidate, to focus whatever questions that may be raised from the floor on topics of current interest or particular concern.

b. At the time of examination of a candidate by the Presbytery, the chairman of the CC shall have available for inspection by presbyters two copies of all written material prepared by the candidate as a part of his trial for privileges or office.

c. The chairman of the CC shall provide the Presbytery with a statement of the division of the vote of the CC on each area of examination.

**8-2. Examination for Coming Under Care**

a. The CC shall report its favorable recommendation to the Presbytery concerning each candidate for coming under care in the following or like language:

1. the chairman shall report that the candidate has fulfilled all the Constitutional requirements (*BCO* 18-2);

2. the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate on experiential religion and on his motives for seeking the ministry to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery, the candidate having been dismissed from the floor;

3. the chairman shall ask that the candidate return to the floor, and shall communicate to him the decision of the Presbytery, after which, as appropriate, the Moderator shall fulfill his Constitutional obligations (*BCO* 18-3).

b. If a candidate seeks to come before the Presbytery without a favorable recommendation from the CC, the chairman shall report to the Presbytery the CC’s reasons for withholding such recommendation, and the vote of the CC to that effect.

**8-3. Examination for Licensure**

a. The CC shall report its favorable recommendation to the Presbytery concerning each candidate for licensure in the following or like language:

1. the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in Christian experience and inward call to preach the Gospel to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions concerning his views from

the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

2. the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in his basic knowledge of Bible doctrine to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions concerning his views from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

3. the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in his practical knowledge of Bible content to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions concerning his views from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

4. the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in his basic knowledge of the government of the Presbyterian Church in America as defined by the *BCO* to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

5. the chairman shall report what exceptions the candidate may take to the Constitutional Standards, and shall recommend to the Presbytery the manner in which any exceptions should be considered, i.e., whether:

(a) the candidate stated that he had no differences; or

(b) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be merely semantic; or

(c) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but not “out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine” (*BCO* 21-4); or

(d) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be “out of accord,” that is “hostile to the system” or “striking at the vitals of religion” (*BCO* 21-4) After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

6. the chairman shall ask that the candidate be dismissed from the floor;

7. the chairman shall move “that having considered a sermon from the candidate (both in written and oral form) to its satisfaction, the sermon be sustained.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

8. the chairman shall move “that the Presbytery sustain the trials for licensure and that the Moderator propose the Constitutional questions to the candidate.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery.

9. the chairman shall ask that the candidate return to the floor, and shall communicate to him the decision of the Presbytery, after which, as appropriate, the Moderator shall fulfill his Constitutional obligations (*BCO* 19-4).

b. If a candidate seeks to come before the Presbytery without a favorable recommendation from the CC, the chairman shall report to the Presbytery the CC's reasons for withholding such recommendation, and the vote of the CC to that effect.

#### **8-4. Examination for Ordination**

a. The CC shall report its favorable recommendation to the Presbytery concerning each candidate for office in the following or like language:

1. the chairman shall report that the candidate has fulfilled all the Constitutional requirements (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 14-3.e.5);

2. the chairman shall report any change (if any) in the candidates views with respect to the Constitution since his licensure;

3. the chairman shall move "that, having examined the candidate in experiential religion, especially his personal character and family management, to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor." After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

4. the chairman shall move "that the candidate's seminary degree, which includes study in the original languages, be accepted in lieu of oral examination in the knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages." After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

5. the chairman shall move "that, having examined the candidate in Bible content to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor." After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

6. the chairman shall move "that, having examined the candidate in theology to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor." After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

7. the chairman shall move "that, having examined the candidate in the Sacraments to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor." After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

8. the chairman shall move "that, having examined the candidate in church history to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor." After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

9. the chairman shall move "that, having examined the candidate in the history of the Presbyterian Church in America to its satisfaction, the exami-

nation be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

10. the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in the principles and rules of the government and discipline of the church to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

11. the chairman shall report what exceptions the candidate may take to the Constitutional Standards, and shall recommend to the Presbytery the manner in which any exceptions should be considered, i.e., whether:

(a) the candidate stated that he had no differences; or

(b) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be merely semantic; or

(c) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but not “out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine” (BCO 21-4); or

(d) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be “out of accord,” that is “hostile to the system” or “strik[ing] at the vitals of religion” (BCO 21-4). After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

12. the chairman shall report concerning the candidate’s theological thesis and exegesis paper, and shall move “that the Constitutionally required papers’ be found acceptable.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

13. the chairman shall move “that having considered a sermon from the candidate to its satisfaction, the sermon be sustained.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery, a three-fourths (3/4) being required to sustain (cf. *BCO* 21-4.d);

14. the chairman shall ask that the candidate be dismissed from the floor;

15. the chairman shall move “that the Presbytery sustain the trials for ordination.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

16. the chairman shall ask that the candidate return to the floor, and shall communicate to him the decision of the Presbytery;

17. if appropriate, the chairman shall recommend “that the call of the candidate as \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, be approved.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery; and

18. if appropriate, the chairman shall recommend “that a commission to install the candidate as \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed as follows: \_\_\_\_\_, with quorum set as in *BPP* Rule 10-7.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery.

b. If a candidate seeks to come before the Presbytery without a favorable recommendation from the CC, the chairman shall report to the Presbytery the CC’s reasons for withholding such recommendation, and the vote of the CC to that effect.

#### **8-5. Examination of Teaching Elders Seeking Admission to the Presbytery**

a. The CC shall report its recommendation to the Presbytery concerning each minister seeking admission to the Presbytery in the following or like language (cf. *BCO* 13-6; 20-9):

1. If the minister comes from a Presbytery of the PCA:

(a) the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in Christian experience to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(b) the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in his views in theology to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(c) the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in his views in the Sacraments to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(d) the chairman shall move “that, having orally examined the candidate in his views in church government to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(e) the chairman shall report what exceptions the candidate may take to the Constitutional Standards, and shall recommend to the Presbytery the manner in which any exceptions should be considered, , i.e., whether:

(1) the candidate stated that he had no differences; or

(2) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be merely semantic; or

(3) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but not “out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine” (BCO 21-4); or

(4) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be “out of accord,” that is “hostile to the system” or “strik[ing] at the vitals of religion” (BCO 21-4). After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(f) the chairman shall ask that the candidate be dismissed from the floor;

(g) the chairman shall move “that the candidate be admitted as a member of Potomac Presbytery upon his dismissal from \_\_\_\_\_ Presbytery.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery (if the Presbytery denies admission, see 8-5.c., *infra*);

(h) the chairman shall ask that the candidate return to the floor, and shall communicate to him the decision of the Presbytery;

(i) if appropriate, the chairman shall move “that the call of the candidate as \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_, be approved.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery.

(j) if appropriate, the candidate shall sign the ministerial obligation form (BCO 13-7) and thereby be admitted as a member of the Presbytery;

(k) if appropriate, the chairman shall move “that a commission to install the candidate as \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed as follows: \_\_\_\_\_, with quorum set as in BPP Rule 10-7.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery.

2. If the minister comes from another denomination:

(a) the chairman shall report that the candidate has fulfilled all the Constitutional requirements (BCO 21-4);

(b) the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in experiential religion, especially his personal character and family management, to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(c) the chairman shall move “that the candidate’s seminary degree, which includes study in the original languages, be accepted in lieu of oral examination in the knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(d) the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in Bible content to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(e) the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in theology to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(f) the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in the Sacraments to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(g) the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in church history to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(h) the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in the history of the Presbyterian Church in America to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(i) the chairman shall move “that, having examined the candidate in the principles and rules of the government and discipline of the church to its satisfaction, the examination be sustained, pending questions from the floor.” After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(j) the chairman shall report what exceptions the candidate may take to the Constitutional Standards, and shall recommend to the Presbytery the manner in which any exceptions should be considered, i.e., whether:

(1) the candidate stated that he had no differences; or

(2) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be merely semantic; or

(3) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but not “out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine” (BCO 21-4); or

(4) the court should judge the stated difference(s) to be “out of accord,” that is “hostile to the system” or “strik[ing] at the vitals of religion” (BCO 21-4). After sufficient opportunity for questions from the floor, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(k) the chairman shall ask that the candidate be dismissed from the floor;

(l) the chairman shall move “that the candidate be admitted as a member of Potomac Presbytery upon his dismissal from \_\_\_\_.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery;

(m) the chairman shall ask that the candidate return to the floor, and shall communicate to him the decision of the Presbytery, after which, the Moderator shall require of the candidate an affirmative answer to the questions put to candidates at their ordination (*BCO* 21-5, qq. 1-7);

(n) if appropriate, the chairman shall move “that the call of the candidate as \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church, \_\_\_\_, \_\_, be approved.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery.

(o) if appropriate, the candidate shall sign the ministerial obligation form (*BCO* 13-7) and thereby be admitted as a member of the Presbytery;

(p) if appropriate, the chairman shall move “that a commission to install the candidate as \_\_\_\_ be appointed as follows: \_\_\_\_, with quorum set as in *BPP* Rule 10-7.” After sufficient opportunity for debate, the Moderator shall put the question to the Presbytery.

b. If a candidate seeks to come before the Presbytery without a favorable recommendation from the CC, the chairman shall report to the Presbytery the CC’s reasons for withholding such recommendation, and the vote of the CC to that effect.

c. Concerning Ministers of the PCA Seeking Admission to Potomac Presbytery.

1. With respect to the examination of a teaching elder seeking admission to the Presbytery from another Presbytery of the PCA (*BCO* 13-6), upon CC recommendation and after oral examination, the Presbytery shall vote either yea or nay concerning the question to sustain. Should the Presbytery fail to sustain the examination, representatives of the majority, at that meeting of Presbytery, shall be appointed to prepare a statement of the erroneous views alleged, citing how the views are out of accord with the Constitution of the PCA, which statement shall at the same meeting be submitted to the teaching elder in question.

2. If at that same meeting the teaching elder in question so requests, a special meeting of the Presbytery shall be called, no sooner than 10 days, but within 30 days, of adjournment to receive the written answer and hear the oral defense of that answer by the teaching elder in question (or his representative), which teaching elder shall have consulted further with the CC *ad interim*, and who shall have the right to counsel from among the mem-

bers of the Presbytery who may be willing to serve. If after further examination and consideration the Presbytery fails to sustain the examination, that fact, along with the written statements herein require, shall be entered on the minutes of Presbytery, and shall be conveyed to the Presbytery of which the teaching elder in question is a member.

3. If the teaching elder does not so request a special meeting, or if he (or his representative) does not appear at the special meeting called for a hearing, the facts shall be recorded in the minutes, as well as the written statement of allegations, and there the matter shall end. Nothing specified in this provision (8-5.c.), however, shall abridge the right of Complaint (*BCO* chp. 43) to any member of Presbytery.

**ARTICLE IX. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's 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, *The Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America*, and any special rules of order the Presbytery may adopt.

**ARTICLE X. SPECIAL RULES OF ORDER****Rule 10-1. Meeting Arrangements.**

a. The location of each regular meeting, except the September meeting according to 10-1.c., shall be McLean Presbyterian Church (MPC), McLean, Virginia. If for some reason a regular meeting cannot be held at MPC, the meeting place shall be determined by the Stated Clerk in consultation with the PC.

b. The noon meal shall be provided under the supervision of the staff of MPC, costs to be covered by a charge to the commissioners partaking.

c. The September meeting of the Presbytery may be held at a location and on a date set by the Presbytery at the June regular meeting in response to an invitation by the Session of a church in the Presbytery, or upon recommendation from the PC. Upon approval of the proposed meeting, revised meeting times and a revised docket for the devotional session and business session for that meeting shall be prepared by the Moderator, with the assistance of the Stated Clerk and the chairman of the PC, if the special circumstances of that meeting so require. Meal arrangements shall be as in 10-1.b., as applicable.

**Rule 10-2. Meeting Time.** Regular meetings shall be called to order at 8:30 a.m. and adjourn at 5:00 p.m.

**Rule 10-3. Regular Meetings. Devotion to Prayer and the Ministry of the Word.** The order of business of the devotional session of a regular meeting of the Presbytery shall include:

- 10:00 a.m. Call to Order by the Moderator.
- A service of worship, normally including celebration of the Lord's Supper
- Recess
- Lecture/presentation
- 12:15 p.m. Recess for the noon meal
- 1:00 p.m. Ministry and Missionary Reports/Testimonies
- Prayer time

**Rule 10-4. Regular Meetings. Business Session.** The order of business of the business session of a regular meeting of the Presbytery shall be as follows:

- 2:00 p.m. Call to Order by the Moderator
- 2:05 p.m. Report of Officers

	Report of the Stated Clerk
	Report of the Treasurer
2:15 p.m.	Unfinished Business
2:30 p.m.	Commission and/or Special Committee Reports
2:45 p.m.	Reports of Standing Committees
	Report of the CC
	Report of the CMMW
	Report of the CRSR
	Other committee reports as ordered under 4-5.b.4.
4:45 p.m.	New Business
5:00 p.m.	Adjourn

**Rule 10-5. Special Meetings. Order of Business.** The order of business of a special meeting of the Presbytery shall be prepared by the Moderator, with the assistance of the Stated Clerk.

**Rule 10-6. Privileges of the Floor.** With respect to the seating of visiting brethren (*BCO* 13-13), or the grant of “privileges of the floor,” such seating or privileges shall be understood to grant that, at the discretion of the moderator, non-commissioners may be recognized to speak at a meeting of the Presbytery, except that non-commissioners shall not be recognized to speak in debate on a pending motion unless granted such right through the suspension of this rule.

**Rule 10-7. Quorums for Commissions.** All commissions appointed by the Presbytery shall have as a quorum two teaching elders and two ruling elders. In the case of a commission appointed to install, or ordain and install, a teaching elder, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, or the convener of the commission, shall have the power to appoint such substitute members of a commission as shall be necessary to achieve a quorum.

**Rule 10-8. Written Reports of the Officers and Standing Committees.**

a. In general each officer and committee shall prepare for the Presbytery a printed report as need may require. This report shall be transmitted to the Stated Clerk to be received by him 17 days before the meeting of the Presbytery at which the report is to be considered. The Stated Clerk shall publish these reports, according to that means judged by him, in consultation with the CAS, as most efficient and economical, prior to the meeting of the Presbytery.

b. The CN, in its report, shall provide a printed list of nominees, showing positions to be filled and biographical data on nominees.

**Rule 10-9. Presentation of Reports by Officers and Standing Committees.**

a. Only matters in the written report requiring Presbytery action shall be presented orally.

b. If a minority of a committee seeks to present a minority report, that report shall be presented to the Presbytery as follows:

1. after the chairman has moved the committee's report, a member of the minority shall present the report of the minority;
2. the representative of the minority shall then move the minority report as a substitute for the portion of the majority report affected.

c. The officer/chairman shall lead the Presbytery in a brief prayer at the conclusion of the report.

**Rule 10-10. Debate.**

a. No commissioner may speak to the same question more than once until all seeking the floor have been recognized.

b. Neither a question addressed to the Chairman, or to a commissioner through the Moderator, nor an answer to such a question, shall be considered as a speech for the purposes of 10-10.a.

c. The Moderator shall recognize proponents and opponents of a motion in turn, so far as possible.

d. The chairman shall have the right to make the final speech in support of the committee's motion before the question on that motion, even upon the adoption of a motion to order the *Previous Question*.

**Rule 10-11. Putting the Question.**

a. When debate appears to have closed, the Moderator shall ask, "Is the Presbytery ready to vote?" If no one rises to claim the floor, he shall proceed to put the question by saying, "The question is on the adoption of a motion to [or "that"]. . . ."

b. The Moderator shall then ask: "Is there objection?" After a suitable pause, if no commissioner calls out, "I object," the Moderator shall announce, "It is adopted."

c. If any commissioner objects, the Moderator shall say, "The question is on the adoption of the motion to [or "that"]. . . ." After stating the motion the Moderator shall say, "Those in favor of the motion say *aye*." After a suitable pause the Moderator shall say, "Those opposed, say *no*."

d. Immediately after the vote the Moderator shall announce, "The *ayes* [or *noes*] have it; the motion is adopted [or "lost"]," and direct the Presbytery's attention to the next item of business.

**Rule 10-12. Closed Session.**

From time to time Presbytery may go into closed session by a majority vote of those voting. In considering such a proposal, Presbytery shall be reminded that "ecclesiastical discipline ... can derive no force whatever" apart from "the approbation of an impartial public" ( Preliminary Principle 8; cf. Rom. 12:17; 2

Cor. 4:2), and Presbytery shall always record in its minutes, in general, the reason for the closed session. A closed session shall be understood as a meeting or portion of a meeting wherein only commissioners, and others specifically invited by Presbytery, are present. Unlike executive session, however, the proceedings shall not be secret, but rather discussion of such matters outside of the meeting shall be at the discretion of each commissioner, and the minutes of such a closed session may be read and approved in open session.

**Rule 10-13. Meeting by Teleconference or Videoconference**

a. A special meeting of Presbytery, or any meeting of a commission or committee, may be conducted by teleconference or videoconference, provided that the meeting does not conduct any of the following kinds of business: (a) the gathering of evidence; (b) deliberation of guilt or innocence; (c) deliberation of a censure; or (d) an examination.

b. The opportunity for simultaneous communication being central to the deliberative character of a meeting, a meeting conducted by teleconference or videoconference shall employ technical means that ensure that all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time, or, if a videoconference, to see and hear each other at the same time.

c. In a meeting conducted by teleconference or videoconference, a participant shall seek the floor by announcing his name and church affiliation. The chair of the meeting shall recognize a speaker by name. Participants shall take care to avoid speaking at the same time. Participants in the same room shall not converse with each other while another has the floor.

**ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS AND SPECIAL RULES OF ORDER.**

These bylaws and special rules of order may be amended at any meeting of the Presbytery by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing with the call of that meeting, and provided that the quorum of any special meeting called for the amendment of these bylaws and special rules shall be one-half of the membership.

**[END OF BYLAWS]**