

The Presbytery of Ohio Valley: Design for Mission and Ministry

From the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), G-3.0301: The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304).

The Presbytery of Ohio Valley adopts this design for mission and ministry, seeking to be faithful to the Scriptures and Confessions of the Church, as well as to Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship and the Rules of Discipline of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). We recognize that our structures are provisional in nature, and that their purpose is to give us a framework as we seek to be both faithful and effective in service to our member congregations, the larger church, and the mission field into which God sends us.

The design that follows:

- identifies the formal entities of the Presbytery, setting forth their primary responsibilities and authority, including those areas in which commission powers are granted;
- suggests possibilities for other networks and partnerships; and
- provides a brief description of the major responsibilities of the offices of Presbytery Moderator, Vice-Moderator, and Immediate Past Moderator.

This design is not intended to say everything that can be said about these entities, networks, and offices, nor does it set describe how they will do their work. We hope that this design will help give shape to the work we are called to do together. Above all, we hope that our presbytery will continue to explore new ways to be responsive to the great good news of Christ Jesus.

Glory to God in the Church and in Christ Jesus, from generation to generation, forever!

Presbytery Council

Membership: The moderators of each of the standing committees of the Presbytery, the moderator of the Personnel Committee, four at-large members representing the geographical diversity of the presbytery, the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, and immediate past Moderator of the Presbytery, the Stated Clerk, Treasurer (if that person is a ruling or teaching elder), and Executive Presbyter (who shall serve as moderator)

Responsibilities (* indicates a commission power):

Attend to the orderly and faithful functioning of the Presbytery, and guide the Presbytery in strategic planning and process

Work with Presbytery committees and staff to develop and maintain positive, supportive connections with POV congregations

Act for and on behalf of the Presbytery of Ohio Valley as needed between regular Assemblies *

Prepare an annual budget and present it to Assembly for approval

Authorize non-budgeted expenditures and act as needed, in other areas of budget administration *

Provide for appropriate adult leadership and oversight for the Presbyterian Youth Triennium and other youth events

Authorize the celebration of sacraments for worshipping communities in the absence of a session *

Appoint moderators of session for congregations without a pastor *

Provide for coordination and collaboration among presbytery committee and other entities

Act on requests for grants and loans from presbytery funds

Receive overtures to presbytery, synod or general assembly, and make recommendations for presbytery action, in consultation with synod and/or general assembly commissioners as appropriate

Provide for a Disaster Response Team to develop and implement a disaster response plan.

Nominate, for Presbytery election, persons to serve on the Presbytery Nominating Committee

Participate in staff evaluation and review through its Personnel Committee

Board of Trustees (a standing committee of presbytery).

Membership: Three elected members, teaching elders and ruling elders, to a term of no more than three years, renewable to a total of no more than six consecutive years. The Presbytery Treasurer, Stated Clerk, and Executive Presbyter shall serve ex-officio without vote. The Stated Clerk shall serve as the Secretary of the Board

Responsibilities: (* indicates a commission power)

Act for the Presbytery in matters pertaining to "The Presbytery of Ohio Valley, Inc." *

Act on requests by a congregation for a mortgage or other encumbrance of property *

Execute deeds and other transfer of property on behalf of the Presbytery *

Co-sign, as appropriate, loan applications for congregations through the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program *

Assist and advise as requested on matters pertaining to church property

Provide for the management of presbytery investments

Provide for necessary insurance for the presbytery.

Receive and review requests for loans from congregations, and refer them to Council for action.

Designate one or more of its members to execute legal documents. *

Committee on Ministry (a standing committee of presbytery)

Membership: Twelve elected members, teaching elders and ruling elders, to a term of no more than three years, renewable to a total of no more than six consecutive years

Responsibilities: (* indicates a commission power)

Act on matters related to calling installed pastors and entering into agreements with temporary pastors, commissioned pastors, and other contracted pastoral staff, including, but not limited to:

- + Authorize, at a time it deems appropriate, the formation of a pastor nominating committee or search committee following the departure of a pastor *
- + Resource and guide the work of pastor nominating committees and search committees *
- + Approve congregational profiles (such as the Ministry Discernment Profile) prior to their use in the search process *
- + Provide guidance and permission on the merits, suitability, and availability of those being considered to serve in a pastoral relationship, and, at a time it deems appropriate, clear the way for the session to call a congregational meeting (in the case of installed pastors) or to act on pastoral agreements (in the case of temporary pastors) *
- + Establish pastoral relationships as agreed upon by congregations or sessions *
- + Review and act on agreements for pastoral services, counseling with pastors and sessions *

Act on matters relating to the dissolution of pastoral calls:

- + Provide for and guide the process for the dissolution of pastoral calls when necessary *
- + Dissolve pastoral calls when there is concurrence between pastor and congregation *
- + Review and bring to the presbytery for action matters related to the dissolution of pastoral calls when there is not concurrence between pastor and congregation.
- + Provide for a minister member of presbytery to moderate congregational meetings per G-2.0903 (Dissolution of pastoral relationships at the request of the congregation) *

Act on matters related to presbytery membership, by receiving and dismissing minister members who are in good standing *

Act on requests for validated ministries and approve ordainable calls *

Recommend, for presbytery action, minimum requirements for compensation and benefits for pastors in installed or temporary pastoral relationships, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, certified Christian educators, and certified associate Christian educators

Maintain a pulpit supply list

Provide for a Sexual Misconduct Response Team

Provide assistance and counsel in the event of conflict within congregations

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Committee on Preparation for Ministry (a standing committee of presbytery)

Membership: Six elected members, teaching elders and ruling elders, to a term of no more than three years, renewable to a total of no more than six consecutive years.

Responsibilities (* indicates a commission power):

Manage and direct the process of preparation for the Ordered Ministry of Minister of the Word and Sacrament *

Review and counsel with Inquirers and Candidates at all levels of preparation.

Authorize and manage such third-party evaluations as may be required, including psychological evaluations and background screening. *

Admit persons to Inquirer status and present them to Presbytery. *

Admit persons to Candidate status and present them to Presbytery for confirmation. *

Upon request from the Committee on Ministry, evaluate the preparation of ministers from other denominations seeking membership.

Manage and direct the process of preparation for those considering/seeking to serve as a Commissioned Pastor

Certify ruling elders who have completed their education and satisfied any additional requirements, and whose gifts are suitable for commissioning, and endorse such individuals to the Committee on Ministry *

Approve opportunities for continuing education in order to maintain eligibility for current or future service as a commissioned pastor

Maintain records of those who have been certified as eligible to be commissioned, receive and record their annual continuing education reports, and maintain contact with those who keep their continuing education current

Committee on Representation

Membership: The Moderators of the Presbytery of Ohio Valley, the Nominating Committee, and the Presbytery Council

Responsibilities:

Assist the presbytery in the organization, which includes the diversity of the Presbytery itself.

Counsel with the Nominating Committee and report to the full presbytery on matters of appropriate representation.

Mission and Witness Resource Committee

Membership: Six elected members, teaching elders and ruling elders, to a term of no more than 3-years, renewable to a total of no more than six years.

Responsibilities:

Cultivate within the congregations of the Presbytery of Ohio Valley a faithful response to opportunities for mission and ministry within the local and global community

Connect congregations to resources in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Synod of Lincoln Trails in support of congregational mission and witness

Collect and share stories of congregational mission within the presbytery

Encourage, nurture and resource existing congregations in their efforts to spread the good news, make disciples, and offer hospitality to those who may be seeking a community of faith or wishing to deepen their spiritual lives

Receive, review, and refine grant requests from congregations desiring to partner with the presbytery in ministry to their communities and make recommendations to the Presbytery Council for disbursement

Encourage collaboration among or between congregations for mission, social justice, and peacemaking projects

Recommend to the Presbytery Council the distribution of the presbytery's portion of the Peacemaking Offering

Explore and refine our presbytery's evolving relationship with Pyoca Camp and Retreat Center, in light of Pyoca's corporate status and in keeping with any covenants between the two entities, recommending any modifications to the Presbytery Council

Explore opportunities for mission partnerships between the presbytery and other agencies

Nominating Committee (a standing committee of presbytery)

Membership: Six elected members, teaching elders and ruling elders, to a term of no more than three years, renewable to a total of no more than six consecutive years.

Responsibilities:

Nominate to the Presbytery of Ohio Valley for its election:

- + The Moderator and Vice-Moderator of the Presbytery of Ohio Valley
- + Moderators and members of Presbytery Committees, and other entities
- + Commissioners and Young Adult Advisory Delegates to the Synod of Lincoln Trails and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- + Readers of Ordination exams and leadership in other entities of the larger church as requested
- + Other leaders, as requested by the Presbytery or its Council

Nominate corporate officers to The Presbytery of Ohio Valley, Inc., for its election

Consult with the Committee on Representation concerning principles of inclusion, non-discrimination, and balance in nominations

Consult periodically with the moderators of Presbytery Committees and other entities to determine needs for membership

Personnel Committee (a committee of the presbytery council)

Membership: A Moderator elected by the Presbytery of Ohio Valley, the Moderator and immediate past Moderator of the Presbytery, the Moderator of the Committee on Ministry, the President of the Board of Trustees, and two additional members elected by the Presbytery Council

Responsibilities:

Review annually the work of all paid Presbytery staff and paid elected officers of the Presbytery and to report the results to the Presbytery through the Presbytery Council

Review the work of the Stated Clerk and the Treasurer prior to the expiration of their terms, and make recommendations to the Presbytery Council regarding the advisability of re-election.

Review the staff position descriptions and to update them as necessary

Make recommendations for changes in staff compensation for budgetary purposes

Recommend to the Presbytery through the Presbytery Council the dismissal of elected staff for cause

Assist in conflict management among staff, in accord with the Personnel Policies and the Constitutional Standards of the PC(USA).

Provide assistance and guidance as needed to the Executive Presbyter who serves as Head of Staff.

Review and refine, as necessary, the Personnel Policies of the Presbytery

Stewardship Committee (a standing committee of presbytery)

Membership: Three elected members, teaching elders and ruling elders, to a term of no more than three years, renewable to a total of no more than six consecutive years.

Responsibilities:

Provide for the development of a stewardship program within the life of the Presbytery.

Provide interpretation of the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) including local, presbytery, synod and General Assembly.

Provide guidance and assistance to congregations in areas related to stewardship.

Interpret opportunities for mission and ministry through the Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Commissions of the Presbytery

A Permanent Judicial Commission consisting of nine teaching and ruling elders in as equal number as possible is elected by the Presbytery and functions as set out in the Church Discipline section of the Book of Order.

Administrative Commissions are created by the Presbytery as needed and are charged to act as Presbytery in specific matters according to the provisions of G-3.0109b. Administrative Commissions to Ordain Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and/or Install Pastors, Co-Pastors and Associate Pastors are appointed by the Moderator of Presbytery, in consultation with the person being ordained and/or installed.

Other networks / partnerships

In addition to the formal committee and commission structure of the Presbytery, networks and partnerships may be created around such commonalities as geographical proximity, churches or pastors of churches of a similar size, pastors serving in transitional ministries, long-term pastors, newly ordained pastors, congregations wishing to share in joint projects (such as youth ministry, spiritual formation or mission to the community). Some networks may be ongoing, while others are formed for a specified amount of time as need and opportunity arise. Networks may request funds through the Presbytery Council to support their mission and ministry.

Moderator of Presbytery

Moderate Presbytery Assemblies

Appoint Commissions to Ordain Teaching Elders and/or Install Pastors, Co-Pastors and Associate Pastors, in consultation with the pastor, and serve as the Moderator of these Commissions when able

In consultation with the Stated Clerk and Executive Presbyter (or Committee on Ministry Leadership should either need to be recused) appoint an Investigating Committee when an allegation has been made against a minister member of the Presbytery, or in other matters over which the Presbytery has jurisdiction

Serve as a member of the Presbytery Council, as well as other entities as requested or set forth in Presbytery policy

Vice-Moderator of Presbytery

Serve as a member of the Presbytery Council, as well as other entities as requested or set forth in Presbytery policy

In the absence of the Moderator, serve as Moderator of Commissions to Ordain Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and/or Install Pastors, Co-Pastors and Associate Pastors

Assist in the preparation of the Lord's Supper for Assemblies

Immediate Past Moderator of Presbytery

Serve as a member of the Presbytery Council, as well as other entities as requested or set forth in Presbytery policy

In the absence of the Moderator or Vice-Moderator, serve as Moderator of Commissions to Ordain Teaching Elders and/or Install Pastors, Co-Pastors and Associate Pastors.

Moderate meetings of the Presbytery Council in the absence of the Council Moderator