

**ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL
OF THE
PRESBYTERY OF CHARLOTTE**

Standing Rules

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Standing Rules of Presbytery

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Administrative Manual of the Presbytery of Charlotte

1.000 Governing Body

1.010 Name

This section of the Body of Christ shall be called Presbytery of Charlotte, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

1.020 Membership

The Presbytery of Charlotte shall consist of all teaching elders and churches of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in seven counties in North Carolina: Anson, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Richmond, Stanly, Union; and First Presbyterian Church of Pageland, Chesterfield County, South Carolina. The membership and jurisdiction shall be governed by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

1.030 Incorporation

The Presbytery shall cause a corporation to be formed and maintained. **Book of Order** G-4.0101
The Presbytery Council shall constitute the Board of Trustees of the corporation G-4.0102). The corporation so formed shall have the following powers:

To receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property, real or personal, for the Presbytery; to accept and execute deeds of title to such property; to manage any permanent special funds for the furtherance of the purposes of the Presbytery, all subject to the authority of Presbytery and its Council under the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (G-4.0101).

1.040 Governance

The Presbytery is governed during and between meetings by the **Book of Order** of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the standing rules of the Presbytery, and when none apply, the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order. The Presbytery may also vote to make decisions as a result of discernment/consensus process.

2.000 Meetings

2.010 Frequency of Meetings

Four Stated Meetings of the Presbytery of Charlotte shall be held annually, ordinarily in the months of February, May, August, and October. The first meeting of the year should be held at least one hundred twenty days in advance of the opening day of General Assembly meetings.

2.020 Special Meetings of Presbytery

Special meetings may be held as provided for in the **Book of Order** (G-.0304).

2.030 Place of Meeting

Any church, or agency of the church, may invite the Presbytery for any meeting. The time and place of the meeting shall be determined by the Council. A geographical distribution of meetings shall be considered.

2.040 Commissioners

When Presbytery meets, each church shall be represented by an elder commissioned by the session with the following additional provisions:

a. Churches with membership over 500 shall be represented as follows:

501 - 1000 - 2 elders

1001 - 1500 - 3 elders

1501 - 2000 - 4 elders

2001+ 5 elders, plus one additional for each increment of 500 thereafter

b. Annually, following completion of the Statistical Report to the Office of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall ascertain the number of resident teaching elders who are members of the Presbytery and the number of ruling elders which the churches are entitled to send as commissioners to Presbytery meetings. When the number of clergy is larger, the Stated Clerk shall bring the imbalance to the attention of the Presbytery at its first meeting after the completion of the statistical reports. The Presbytery shall redress the imbalance by inviting sessions of particular churches to elect additional elder commissioners or on some other basis acceptable to the Presbytery, with special attention to the concerns of G-3.0101

2.050 Quorum

A quorum of the Presbytery of Charlotte shall be any three teaching elder members and ruling elder members present provided that at least three churches are represented by ruling elders. This permits Administrative Commissions to function as the Presbytery of Charlotte as a whole.

2.060 New Business

Business to be introduced by a commissioner or a committee, which has not been previously placed on the docket, shall be submitted in writing to the Stated Clerk prior to the approval of the Presbytery Docket.

2.070 Privilege of the Floor for Christian Educators

The Presbytery shall welcome all employed Christian Educators within its bounds. During their term of service in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the presbytery, Certified Christian Educators are entitled to the privilege of the floor with voice only at all presbytery meetings, and in the case of Certified Christian Educators who are ruling elders, the privilege of voice and vote at all its meetings. (G-2.1103b)

2.080 Tellers

At each Presbytery meeting, ruling and teaching elder commissioners from five (5) churches will be assigned to serve as tellers. Duties and responsibilities include helping to pass out any documents and materials that need to be distributed to commissioners during meetings and serving as counters for votes on motions on the floor.

2.090 Electronic Meetings

The Presbytery may meet by electronic means if all ministers of Word and Sacrament members and ruling elder commissioners have reasonable notice of the electronic meeting and the ability to discuss, deliberate, discern the will of God, and vote on business items. The quorum for such a meeting is at least three ministers of Word and Sacrament and three ruling elder commissioners from three different congregations.

3.000 **Officers of the Presbytery**

3.010 Listing of Officers

Moderator
Vice Moderator
Stated Clerk
Parliamentarian
Comptroller/Treasurer
Recording Clerk
Temporary Clerk

3.020 Election and Duties

3.030 **Moderator**

The Moderator shall be elected to serve as the presiding officer of the Presbytery for a full calendar year for the Presbytery.

The Moderator shall be nominated by the Committee on Representation and/or from the floor at the last Stated Meeting of the calendar year prior to the year in which he or she is to assume office. He or she takes office January 1, and shall preside at all meetings of the Presbytery during his or her tenure in office. In case of his or her absence, the Vice-Moderator shall preside.

When a Moderator is a ruling elder, the ruling elder shall be enrolled as a member of Presbytery for that calendar year, whether or not elected as a commissioner by his or her Session. Book of Order (G-3.0301)

3.040 **Vice-Moderator**

The Vice-Moderator shall be nominated by the Committee on Representation and/or from the floor at the last Stated Meeting of the calendar year prior to the year in which he or she is to assume office. The Vice-Moderator takes office on January 1st, and shall be elected to serve for a full calendar year. He or she shall preside at Presbytery meetings in the absence of the Moderator. The Vice-Moderator ordinarily will be elected to serve as Moderator of the Presbytery for the next calendar year.

When a Vice-Moderator is a ruling elder, the ruling elder shall be enrolled as a member of Presbytery for that calendar year, whether or not elected as a commissioner by his or her Session. Book of Order G-3.0301)

3.050 **Stated Clerk**

A Stated Clerk, in accordance with Book of Order G-3.0104, shall be elected by Presbytery. The General Presbyter shall not be elected to serve in this office. The Stated Clerk fulfills the duties of that office as indicated in Book of Order G-3.0104.

The Stated Clerk may form one or more task forces to assist with a particular area of the Clerk's work including:

Sessional Records Review

Administers the process for annual review of the minutes of Sessions of churches according to the Book of Order.

Bills and Overtures

- (1) Receives, evaluates, and responds to overtures from sessions of the presbytery to ensure that overtures are in order for presbytery consideration;
- (2) Receives, evaluates, and responds to motions made during a presbytery meeting, when deemed necessary by the moderator or body;
- (3) Interprets amendments to the Book of Order or any other constitutional issues.

3.060 **Parliamentarian**

Presbytery meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, except when in contradiction to the Constitution of the PC(USA). Prior to a vote, methods of deliberation shall be consistent with the principles of Presbyterian government. (F-3.02 and G-3.0305) The Stated Clerk shall ordinarily serve as the parliamentarian of Presbytery, unless another parliamentarian is appointed by the Moderator.

3.070 **Recording Clerk**

The Recording Clerk shall be elected annually to take minutes for each presbytery meeting (stated and special meetings).

3.080 **Temporary Stated Clerk**

May be appointed by the Moderator in the absence of the Stated Clerk.

4.000 **Miscellaneous Procedures**

4.010 Expenses of Commissioners, Council Members, Committee Members and Invited Guests

The expenses of ruling elders as commissioners and teaching elders attending meetings of Presbytery may be defrayed by their respective sessions.

The expenses of persons conducting Presbytery business may be defrayed by Presbytery at the initiative of chairpersons or Presbytery staff.

4.020 Process for Submitting overtures and motions for presbytery consideration:

- (1) Overtures come from one governing body (session, presbytery, synod) requesting that a higher governing body take a particular action or approve or endorse a particular statement or resolution.
- (2) Motions for new business come from a member or committee of a governing body asking that body to take a particular action or approve or endorse a particular statement or resolution;
- (3) Session overtures for presbytery consideration should be received by the Stated Clerk at least 30 days prior to presbytery meeting day; the Stated Clerk shall forward the overtures to the Bills and Overtures Task Force for its action; *The Bills and Overtures Task Force shall meet with the Session to discuss the rationale for the overture(s) prior to presenting to the Presbytery for consideration.*
- (4) Overtures received by the Stated Clerk after the 30-day deadline shall not receive consideration until the following presbytery meeting unless an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the presbytery request action at the current meeting;
- (5) A motion for new business to be considered at a presbytery meeting should be in the hands of the Stated Clerk no later than the beginning of the presbytery meeting, and may be referred by the Moderator or Stated Clerk of the presbytery to the Bills and Overtures Task Force for evaluation and response;
- (6) If at least two members of the Bills and Overtures Task Force are not available at the presbytery meeting where new business is assigned for consideration, the Moderator may provide for a temporary Bills and Overtures Committee of at least three persons for the duration of the meeting; if any members of the standing Bills and Overtures Task Force are present, they shall be included in the temporary committee;
- (7) Council shall include overtures and prepared responses of the Bills and Overtures Task Force or Stated Clerk in the presbytery packet for commissioners;

Regarding concurrence to an overture by another presbytery:

- (8) A concurrence is itself an overture (or motion) and shall follow all the guidelines provided herein for the consideration of overtures or motions to presbytery;
- (9) The Bills and Overtures sub-committee shall assist the Stated Clerk in communicating to the presbytery in a timely way what overtures are before the General Assembly and whether they have received concurrence by the necessary deadlines;
- (10) A concurrence may also happen unintentionally, when the content of an original overture essentially matches that of another presbytery; in that case the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly may group the similar overtures together as "concurring overtures."

4.030 **Limits of Service**

Ordinarily, a person shall serve on only one committee, commission or Council.

5.000 **Committees and Commissions**

It is the intent of the Presbytery of Charlotte that all its committees and commissions be as inclusive as possible. Committees of the Presbytery should be balanced with regards to the number of teaching elders and ruling elders (or non-ordained persons for program committees). They should be balanced with respect to geography, age, gender, theological perspective, race/ethnicity and church size. These committees may establish work groups as needed and staff them with Presbytery members and other members of congregations within Presbytery of their choosing, bearing in mind, the principles of unity and diversity as outlined in the Book of Order. (F.1.403)

5.010 **General**

The mission of Presbytery shall be exercised through committees or commissions. These groups reflect the normal operating functions within the Presbytery and work to jointly advance the principles recorded in the Presbytery's Mission Statement.

5.020 **Quorum**

The quorum of Presbytery committees and commissions shall be a majority of their membership.

5.030 **Terms of Service**

The terms of service for Presbytery committees are as follows:

- (1) Permanent Judicial Commission: Book of Order D-5.0103; one six (6) year term.
- (2) All other Committees:
Committee members shall be elected to a three-year term with eligibility for a successive term. Partial terms and/or regular terms shall not aggregate more than six years.

5.040 **Electronic Meetings**

Presbytery committees may hold electronic meetings which allow for "simultaneous aural communication among all participating members equivalent to those meetings held in one room or area", such as video or audio conference calls, Zoom, FaceTime, Skype, etc. Notice of electronic meetings must include description of how to participate (e.g. call-in number and code). Committee Moderators must ensure that there is a quorum for the meeting and must establish the following:

- Method of seeking recognition for all participants
- Handling of interrupting motions
- Method to submit motions in writing
- Method for taking and verifying votes

6.000 **Other Structural Components**

In addition to Standing Committees and Commissions, the "Strategic Planning Task Force Recommendations" report (Appendix C), which was adopted by Presbytery at its May 2017 meeting, established two additional structural components:

- (1) Ministry Teams: Ministry Teams are created by individuals, groups, or congregations as each discerns new mission and ministry by the leading of the Spirit. Ministry Teams involve individuals or groups from more than one church of the Presbytery. These teams exist as soon as those connections are established and last as long as there are people interested in actively participating.

- (2) Task Forces: Task Forces are flexible organizational components that provide the ability to focus on one topic or issue and the capacity to include people in the Presbytery with a passion for the work at hand. Task Forces are formed by action of the Presbytery, Council, Standing Committee, or the Stated Clerk.

7.000 **Permanent Judicial Commission**

7.001 **Definition**

The Permanent Judicial Commission has the powers prescribed by and conducts its proceedings according to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (D-4.0200, D-6.000, D-11.000)

7.010 **Membership and Officers**

The Committee on Representation shall nominate and the Presbytery shall elect a Permanent Judicial Commission of nine (9) members with teaching elders and ruling elders in equal numbers and with at least twenty-five percent from racial ethnic minorities. There shall be no more than one member from any one church on the commission.

The Committee on Representation shall nominate, and the Presbytery shall elect, the Moderator of the Permanent Judicial Commission.

The Commission shall elect from its members a clerk.

7.020 **Procedure and Responsibilities**

Membership, procedure, powers and responsibilities are those contained in the Book of Order D-4.000.

8.000 **Presbytery Council**

8.001 **Definition**

The Council is the coordinating body empowered by and responsible to Presbytery. The Council has the duties and responsibilities given to it by the Book of Order (G-3.0307) and by the Presbytery of Charlotte.

8.010 **Membership and Officers**

Nomination of members of Council shall be made by Presbytery's Committee on Representation. The Committee on Representation shall coordinate the rotation of the at-large members of Council to maintain an adherence to the principles of representation.

Ordinarily, when a person is nominated/recruited by the Committee on Representation for Council moderator, it will be for a 3-year term of attendance and participation. The person(s) to be elected will serve as follows:

Year 1: COUNCIL MODERATOR-ELECT, attending all meetings, sharing in the leadership of meetings as delegated by the Council Moderator.

Year 2: COUNCIL MODERATOR, leading all meetings, with sharing of leadership with the moderator-elect.

Year 3: COUNCIL MODERATOR-PAST, attending meetings, present as a connective resource to new leadership and council members; available for leadership if moderator and moderator-elect are unavailable.

If a moderator-elect finds out during the first year of the term that he or she cannot fulfill the term, another person shall be recommended by the Committee on Representation to replace him or her as early as possible.

If a moderator is unable to complete the term, the moderator-elect or moderator-past shall first be asked to fill the term.

If a moderator-past cannot complete the term on council, the position may go unfilled (or simply be filled by a new at-large council member)

There shall be nine elected members of the Council, including a Moderator, Moderator-elect and Moderator-past, all of whom shall be voting members of Council. Each elder elected a member of Council shall serve as a member of Presbytery for the term of office whether or not commissioned by his or her session (G-3.0101)

In addition, the Moderator or an elected representative of the following committees of Presbytery shall be seated annually on Council as ex-officio members with voice and vote: Committee on Ministry, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Ministry Resource Committee, and Administration Committee. If a committee has co-moderators, only one may be appointed, per meeting, to serve as an ex-officio member of Council.

8.020

Advisory Participants

Advisory participants (with voice only) shall include the Presbytery moderator, Presbytery vice-moderator, General Presbyter, Associate General Presbyter, Stated Clerk, Comptroller, and the Committee on Representation moderator.

Council may invite other advisory participants to its meetings with privilege of the floor. All Council meetings are open. By majority vote, Council may convene in Executive Session.

8.030

Quorum

The quorum of the Council shall be a majority of its elected membership.

8.040

Meetings

Ordinarily, the Council shall meet in months when Presbytery does not meet and at either the call of the Council Moderator or when requested by at least three elected Council members.

8.050

Responsibilities

The Council has the duties and responsibilities given by the Book of Order and Administrative Manual, including but not limited to the following:

- 1) To orient around a vision that derives from and nourishes the congregations, focusing on strengthening our shared vision in committees, Presbytery meetings, and throughout the Presbytery;
- 2) To serve assertively as an advocate for the implementation of the mission of Presbytery;
- 3) To serve as the coordinating body for all program committees and commissions;
- 4) To serve as an advisory body to the Presbytery providing encouragement, endorsement and/or recommendations to proposals which are to be presented to Presbytery;
- 5) To review recommendations involving finances before going to the floor of Presbytery;
- 6) To interpret the mission of the General Assembly, Synod of the Mid-Atlantic;
- 7) To prepare and recommend to the Presbytery for approval an annual budget;
- 8) To serve as Trustees of the Corporation of the Presbytery of Charlotte;
- 9) To approve Presbytery minutes.
- 10) To schedule the meetings of Presbytery; to coordinate with host churches, plan services of worship, prepare the docket and other details as necessary.
- 11) To evaluate, on a regular basis, the Presbytery meetings.
- 12) To establish the structure for Presbytery to review the minutes of Sessions of churches according to the Book of Order.

8.060

Council as Commission

- (a) The Council shall be granted authority by the Presbytery (W-2.4012a) to authorize the celebration of the Lord's Supper at Presbytery meetings and events.
- (b) In the event of unforeseen emergencies that causes the Presbytery of Charlotte to be unable to meet in convocation (in physical assembly or electronic assembly), the Presbytery authorizes the Presbytery Council to serve as an Administrative Commission to act on its behalf in all matters. All actions taken by Council will be reported to the Presbytery at the next Stated Presbytery Meeting.

8.070

Financial Policies and Procedures

- (1) The Council shall be responsible for the preparation of a comprehensive, detailed and balanced budget. The budget shall be based on the mission priorities of the Presbytery. The budget shall be developed through an intentional process. Council shall monitor the progress of the budget.
- (2) Council shall administer and monitor the adopted budget of the Presbytery, provide for and review the annual external audits, oversee the financial operation of the Presbytery, establish and review the financial controls systems for effectiveness and compliance, and review the financial policies and procedures for compliance with the standing rules. Once the budget is approved by Presbytery, Council is authorized to modify the budget for adjustments of \$5,000 or 10% of a budget item, whichever is less.
- (3) The Presbytery's Comptroller/Treasurer shall receive all funds contributed to the budget of the Presbytery and shall disburse these funds under the supervision of the Council in accordance with the budget adopted by the Presbytery.
- (4) Funds received, both restricted and unrestricted, which support the Presbytery shall be distributed in accordance with Council procedures. Restricted funds received shall be transmitted to the causes for which they are intended. The instructions of the donors shall be carefully followed.
- (5) Council may authorize and recommend special offerings. Any non-budgeted item must come to Council for approval before it can be acted upon.
- (6) Future proceeds from the sale of closed churches and other properties of the Presbytery shall be allocated to a restricted fund. Council will bring recommendations for any expenditures from this fund to Presbytery for approval.

9.000

Committee on Preparation for Ministry

9.001

Definition

To provide support and direction for those preparing to become Ministers of Word and Sacrament.

9.010

Membership and Officers

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall consist of twenty-four (24) members with ministers and elders in equal numbers. The names of the Moderator or Co-Moderators shall be submitted to the Committee on Representation by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry and elected annually by Presbytery.

9.020

Responsibilities

- (1) To implement the provisions of the Book of Order and other duties as outlined in the CPM Handbook and those the Presbytery may assign in this area.
- (2) To act as liaison with sessions of local churches to challenge youth and adults to consider church vocations;

- (3) To process all applications of those desiring to become Inquirers/Candidates for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament;
- (1) To support students under care, including those called to a ministry of Christian Education, through financial loans and payments of the cost of required testing at Ministry Development Services. A portion of travel expenses for annual consultations may be assumed by CPM (and the student's session, when funds are available); Students may complete Annual Consultations through electronic communications with at least two or more members of the CPM; or, two or more members of CPM may travel to students' location to conduct annual consultations.
- (2) To examine all Inquirers/Candidates, and recommend to Presbytery for reception those approved by the committee, and to conduct before Presbytery the examination for reception;
- (3) To counsel with and supervise those Inquirers/Candidates received by Presbytery, as well as those who are called to the ministry of Christian Education;
- (4) To orient sessions concerning the preparation for ministry process.

10.000 **Committee on Ministry**

10.001 Definition

The Committee on Ministry develops and maintains mechanisms and processes regarding ministers, commissioned lay pastors and certified Christian educators of the presbytery; facilitates relations between the presbytery and its congregations; and settles difficulties in those relationships on behalf of presbytery (G-3.0307).

10.010 Membership and Officers

The Committee on Ministry shall consist of thirty-six (36) members, with ministers and elders in equal numbers. The names of the Moderator or Co-Moderators shall be submitted to the Committee on Representation by the Committee on Ministry and elected annually by Presbytery. Eligibility for membership and replacement of a member of COM shall be according to Book of Order (G-3.0307).

10.020 Responsibilities

- (1) To discharge the duties of G-3.0307 as outlined in the *Framework for the Committee on Ministry, revised February 2018. (*APPENDIX A);
- (2) To coordinate its work with that of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (in the case of pastors seeking ordination to a call);
- (3) To submit a report of its actions and its current recommendations at each Stated Meeting of Presbytery.

11.000 **Committee on Representation**

11.001 Definition

The Committee on Representation nominates prospective members of Presbytery Ecclesiastical and Program Committees in accordance with the Book of Order and Presbytery of Charlotte guidelines. (see 5.000)

11.010 Membership and Officers

The membership of the Committee on Representation shall consist of nine (9) persons elected by Presbytery. The Moderator of the Committee on Representation shall be elected annually by the Presbytery. The Moderator is eligible for three one-year terms.

The committee shall consist of three classes, each serving a three-year term and commencing upon election by Presbytery at the last meeting of the year.

The Stated Clerk shall convene a special committee of the current Presbytery Moderator, Vice-Moderator, and other past Moderators of Presbytery, to nominate members of the Committee on Representation to be elected annually by the Presbytery.

11.020 Responsibilities

- (1) To nominate persons to fill all vacancies on continuing committees (except the Committee on Representation), Council, boards, and any other bodies that require election by the Presbytery; Members of Council, Committee on Ministry, Preparation for Ministry Committee, and Permanent Judicial Commission must be ordained teaching or ruling elders.
- (2) To observe the relevant provisions of the Book of Order bearing in mind the principles of F-1.0403.
- (3) To report to Presbytery meetings when there are recommendations to be made for persons to be elected to serve on Presbytery committees.
- (4) To nominate commissioners to the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic and the PC(USA) General Assembly.

12.000 **Presbytery Program (Non-Ecclesiastical) Committees**

12.010 General

Program Committees shall have responsibilities in the areas of ministry as defined below. The committees may establish sub-committees or ad-hoc task groups. Reports to the full Presbytery come through a Standing Committee.

12.020 Nomination of committee members, including the Moderators, shall be made by Presbytery's Committee on Representation. The Committee on Representation shall coordinate the rotation of the membership of committees to maintain an adherence to the principles of representation.

Elected members of program committees shall be divided into three classes. Terms begin on January 1, following the election by Presbytery. Vacant, unexpired terms shall be filled by Presbytery upon nomination by the Committee on Representation.

12.030 Meetings

Presbytery Program Committees shall meet as needed.

12.040 Quorum

The quorum for all Program Committees shall be a simple majority of the elected membership

13.000 **Administration Committee**

13.001 Definition

The Administration Committee is responsible for the fiduciary areas of property, stewardship, personnel, and finance. This committee is authorized to act on behalf of Presbytery on items necessary to the normal conduct of the Presbytery's business with Council approval and in accordance with the By-Laws and Standing Rules. The Administration Committee may form task forces to accomplish its work.

13.010 Membership and Officers

The Administration Committee shall consist of six (6) persons. The Moderator of the Administration Committee shall be elected by the Presbytery.

13.020

Responsibilities

Personnel:

- (1) To keep current Presbytery personnel policies;
- (2) To nurture and evaluate Presbytery staff;
- (3) To establish rationale for salary administration;
- (4) To recommend search committees for elected staff of the Presbytery.
- (5) To be actively involved in the employment process – including the creation of job descriptions, recruitment, and completion of background and reference checks for potential Presbytery employees.
- (6) To recommend search committees for called staff of the Presbytery, with attention given to the guidelines of the Committee on Representation.

Property:

- (1) To provide oversight of the management of Presbytery-controlled property;
- (2) To review requests from churches and other entities regarding loans, loan guarantees, selling and encumbering of property.

Financial:

- (1) Presbytery Budget development;
- (1) monitoring of the budget and investment accounts;
- (2) Oversight of activities such as rental of office space; office equipment acquisition and contracts and other operational considerations.

Stewardship:

- (1) Designing and developing an annual stewardship campaign for the Presbytery;
- (2) Offering educational and enrichment opportunities for congregations to deepen generosity;
- (3) Contacting pastors by telephone at least twice a year—information, gratitude, support;
- (4) Consulting with individual churches as requested by Presbytery;
- (5) Other duties as assigned by Presbytery

14.000

Ministry Resource Committee

14.001

Definition

The Ministry Resource Committee (MRC) endeavors to build relationships and strengthen congregations around the shared vision of the Presbytery.

14.010

Membership and Officers

The Ministry Resource Committee shall consist of thirteen (13) persons. The Moderator of the Ministry Resource Committee shall be elected by the Presbytery.

- 14.020 **Responsibilities**
 The Ministry Resource Committee (MRC) is structured to build relationships and strengthen congregations around the shared vision of the Presbytery. The MRC will offer and develop a range of resources and support (funding, partnership, training, coaching) around the priorities of our shared vision: discipleship, evangelism, pastoral care, mission, worship, community-building, and risking new ministry and mission. New worshipping communities and transformation are foundational to the resourcing work of the MRC. The MRC also supports Ministry Teams throughout the Presbytery (See Appendix C, “Strategic Planning Task Force Recommendations”, which was adopted by the Presbytery on May 15, 2017, for more information about how the MRC relates to Ministry Teams).
- 15.000 **Revisions to Administrative Manual**
- 15.010 The Administrative Manual shall be kept current by Council oversight.
- 15.020 Initial June 6, 1991
 Revision No. 1 September 21, 1993
 Revision New Structure September 20, 1994
 Revision No. 1 February 27, 1996
 Revision No. 2 May 21, 1996
 Revision No. 3 September 17, 1996
 Revision No. 4 February 25, 1997
 Revision No. 5 May 16, 2000
 Revision No. 6 May 16, 2006
 Revision No. 7 October 25, 2016
 Revision No. 8 August 19, 2017
 Revision No. 9 February 10, 2018
 Revision No. 10 October 29, 2019
 Revision No. 11 May 19, 2020
- 16.000 **Amendments and Suspension of the Standing Rules**
- 16.010 The standing rules of Presbytery may be amended by a two-thirds majority affirmative vote at two consecutive regular Stated Meetings of Presbytery.
- 16.020 When changes in the Book of Order occur which place a standing rule in contradiction, the Book of Order prevails.
- 16.030 The standing rules of Presbytery may be suspended by a two-thirds majority affirmative vote of those members present and voting at any Stated Meeting of Presbytery.
- 17.000 **Staffing Rationale**
- 17.010 **General**
 This staffing rationale follows mission design and priorities of the Presbytery of Charlotte. Competency and inclusiveness are important considerations in staffing for the Presbytery of Charlotte.
- 17.020 **Presbyters**
 The positions of Presbyters described here follow the mission design and priorities identified in the Presbytery of Charlotte. Together, the persons who occupy these positions are to be advocates for the mission of Presbytery and ministers to all members of the Presbytery, to the sessions of the member congregations, as well as to Christian Educators serving within the Presbytery.
- Leadership by these Presbyters consists of:
- ❖ Boldly sharing a contemporary vision of the Gospel of Jesus Christ among the members, educators, and congregations of the Presbytery;
 - ❖ Fervently seeking to persuade all committees, sessions, ministers and educators to embody the common mission of Presbytery;

- ❖ Compassionately visiting with, listening to, praying for and with members, educators and sessions within Presbytery;
- ❖ Courageously describing their own perceptions of the call of God to the Church in this time and place;
- ❖ Effectively using their position and authority in ways which encourage others in the Presbytery to fulfill their responsibilities; and
- ❖ Diligently fulfilling with competence the particular tasks which fall to their respective offices.
- ❖ Presbyters are to serve as resource persons to the Presbytery of Charlotte

17.030

Called Staff

Staff assignments are proposed below, but open to review and change by Council on the basis of workloads and talents of individual staff.

General Presbyter

Serves as overall administrative/executive leader of the Presbytery of Charlotte. Current job description is to be maintained by the Administration Committee.

A Presbytery General Presbyter is the called position deemed vital for the effective functioning of this Presbytery. This call shall be by the Presbytery with search committees recommended by the Administration Committee. Any ruling elder elected by Presbytery to these positions shall be enrolled as a member of the Presbytery for the duration of service in the position, whether or not commissioned by his/her Session (G-11.0101c).

17.040

Additional Staff

Beyond the General Presbyter called to serve Presbytery, additional staff are to be employed as follows:

Associate General Presbyter

Serves as the primary staff member responsible for partnering with the Ministry Resources Committee. This position may be called and installed, or may be a hired staff position.

Stated Clerk

A Stated Clerk, in accordance with Book of Order G-9.0203b, shall be elected by Presbytery. The General Presbyter shall not be elected to serve in this office. The Stated Clerk fulfills the duties of that office as indicated in Book of Order G-9.0203a and D-8.1800, D-8.1900.

Presbytery Comptroller/Treasurer

The Comptroller/Treasurer employed by Presbytery at the recommendation of the Administration Committee. Current job description is to be maintained by the Administration Committee.

17.050

Program and Support Staff

Program and support staff are employed by action of the Administration Committee. Current positions and job descriptions are to be maintained by the Administration Committee.

17.060

All staff members are subject to the provisions of the Personnel Manual of the Presbytery of Charlotte.

17.070

Minor revisions to comply with changing church regulations and legal proceedings may be made by the Administration Committee. Significant changes in the Personnel Manual must be made by the Presbytery of Charlotte.

17.080

Position Descriptions

The Administration Committee shall maintain current job descriptions for all called staff and other employees of the Presbytery of Charlotte.

Child, Youth and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy

It is the policy of the Presbytery of Charlotte that all church members, church officers, nonmember employees and/or contractors, and volunteers of congregations, councils, and entities of the church are to maintain the strongest sense of integrity, safety, nurturing, and care involving all interactions with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. This policy applies to all Presbytery of Charlotte sponsored activities that involve children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

DEFINITIONS

The following is a comprehensive list of definitions of terms and their intended use in this particular policy. For purposes of this policy:

Child: A child is a person between the ages of 0–11.

Youth: A youth is a person between the ages of 12–17.

Minor: A minor is any child or youth.

Child/Youth Worker: Any person, volunteer or paid staff or contractor, who participates at any level at General Assembly entity sponsored events or activities involving children and/or youth.

Vulnerable Adult: Any person eighteen-years-old or older without the developmental or cognitive capacity to consent.

Vulnerable Adult Abuse: Any act or failure to act that results in the physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional mistreatment, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult.

Child/Youth Abuse: Any act or failure to act that results in the physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional mistreatment, neglect, or exploitation of a child or youth.

Sexual Abuse: As defined in the Book of Order, sexual abuse is “any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to (1) any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent; or (2) any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position” (Book of Order, D-10.0401c).

Misuse of technology: The use of technology that results in the harassing or abusing of a child/youth. This includes using technology to send suggestive message and images to a child or youth. Adults should not have any technological contact with a child or youth that is not either preapproved by the child/youth’s legal guardian with a signed waiver, or the contact is on an open public medium, such as a church website or other social media program.

Safe Child Response Team: The Safe Child Response Team is a team comprised of a minimum of three members of or appointed by the Permanent Judicial Commission who are specifically trained to respond to allegations and reports of child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse.

SCREENING, TRAINING, AND BACKGROUND CHECKS

The following is required for every child/youth worker, whether on a paid staff, contractor, or volunteer basis:

- (1) The presbytery must receive completed, signed, and approved application and background check authorization forms, including a signed form verifying the event policy has been read. The application should include a minimum of two references.
- (2) All child/youth workers must be at least twenty-years-old and four years older than the oldest youth whom they are serving.
- (3) The applicant must consent to a criminal background check. These checks shall be run no more than six months prior to the event. (This time restraint is also at the discretion of the presbytery’s insurance company’s requests. Child/Youth workers who participate annually in

events may only be required to have one background check per calendar year, depending on insurance company standards.)

- (4) All child/youth workers, paid, contracted, or volunteer, must participate in training sometime within the year prior to the event. The training is to be provided by the presbytery and shall cover the event child/youth protection policy thoroughly as well as methods of abuse prevention and a detailed plan of reporting. The presbytery may contract with others to provide these trainings.
- (5) No person may serve as a child/youth worker who has a conviction on his/her record of certain felonies or misdemeanors, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
 - Criminal homicide;
 - Aggravated assault;
 - Crimes related to the possession, use, or sale of drugs or controlled substances;
 - Sexual abuse;
 - Sexual assault;
 - Injury to a youth;
 - Incest;
 - Indecency with a youth;
 - Inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance of a youth;
 - Possession or promotion of child pornography;
 - The sale, distribution, or display of harmful material to a minor;
 - Employment harmful to youth;
 - Abandonment or endangerment of a youth;
 - Kidnapping or unlawful restraint;
 - Public lewdness or indecent exposure; and enticement of a youth;
 - Any crime that involves sexual misconduct or sexual abuse, particularly if it involves misconduct or abuse with a minor;
 - Any crime that involves misuse of technology for sexual purposes, such as collecting or distributing photographs of minors who are naked or in sexual or inappropriate poses (child pornography);
 - Any crime that involves the use of force, such as assault or endangerment;
 - Any crime that involves abduction and kidnapping;
 - Any crime that involves drinking and driving, such as driving while intoxicated.

In addition, if the presbytery or a local congregation is aware that a child/youth worker has a prior conviction for one of the aforementioned crimes or a related crime, the child/youth worker shall automatically be ineligible to attend a child/youth event in any capacity.

- (6) Whenever the presbytery organizes an event for minors that invites minors from local congregations who will be supervised by child/youth workers, the sponsoring entity of the presbytery shall:
 - a. Provide guidance to the congregations that are sending child/youth workers about best practices for securing child/youth workers and eligibility requirements.
 - b. Provide guidance to the congregations that are sending child/youth workers concerning the requirement that the presbytery perform and pay for background checks for potential child/youth workers and how to evaluate the background check for offenses that would disqualify a person from being a child/youth worker with minors.
 - c. Provide guidance to congregations on when to perform the background checks and with what background check provider.
 - d. Identify someone on the presbytery staff to be the designated recipient of background checks and train that person:
 - i. To review every background check received;
 - ii. To identify criminal convictions on background checks that should disqualify a person from being a child/youth worker;

- iii. To notify the event sponsor if the staffer believes the council has erred in selecting a child/youth worker whose background check indicates that the person should not act as a child/youth worker;
- iv. Report to the event sponsor of the event of each potentially disqualifying background check and related concerns so that a formal decision can be made to inform the council that the person whose background check is in question is not eligible to attend the event as a child/youth worker.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

The presbytery shall maintain all child/youth worker applications, results of background checks, and related information in confidential, secured files.

REPORTING

The sponsoring entity of the presbytery will publicize a procedure for reporting any prohibited actions and have copies available at all times in a public place at the event. Anyone suspecting or having knowledge of a violation of child abuse may report such violation to any leader of the presbytery sponsored event. Any child or youth who suspects or has knowledge of any type of minor abuse is invited to share the knowledge with any adult leader of the presbytery sponsored event. Anyone who has knowledge or suspicion of child/youth abuse should be made aware that state law requires the immediate reporting of such abuse to the civil authorities. Any adult leader should report such violation to the Stated Clerk.

SAFE CHILD RESPONSE TEAM

The Safe Child Response Team is a team comprised of a minimum of three members of or appointed by the Permanent Judicial Commission who are specifically trained to respond to allegations and reports of child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse. The response team will familiarize itself with the terms of this policy as well as established procedures under the Rules of Discipline, Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for responding to complaint(s) of alleged child/youth abuse against any teaching elder, ruling elder, employee, or volunteer in a leadership position(s) with the sponsoring entity and any events they may sponsor.

The Safe Child Response Team shall have the following responsibilities in response to allegations of child/youth or vulnerable adult abuse or neglect incurred against any child/youth worker or event participant:

1. Immediately provide for the safety of the alleged victim(s) involved.
2. If the report alleges abuse or harassment of a minor, the response team will:
 - a. immediately ensure the allegation is reported to the civil authorities under state law;
 - b. immediately notify the parents or guardian of the minor;
 - c. notify the insurance company of the allegation and that no investigation has yet occurred.
3. Make immediate decisions concerning the temporary removal of the individual accused from any contact with children or youth pending an investigation and/or removal of the accused from the event until a resolution of the allegations has occurred.
4. Notify designated people at the presbytery immediately of the report of alleged abuse/neglect. Any possible media requests will be handled by a designated person or office with advice from the on-call attorney, taking care to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
5. Consult the presbytery about resources available for victims of the alleged abuse prior to each event and have those resources readily available at every event. This will provide victims and their families' immediate resources that may aid in the particular spiritual, psychological, or emotional needs and trauma that arise from the devastation of abuse.
6. Provide pastoral counseling for the principal parties involved (accuser(s), possible victim(s), accused, family members).

7. A written summary of any proceedings in such cases will be maintained by presbytery.
8. Any person bringing a report of abuse or assisting in investigating will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment, church membership or affiliation, or otherwise discriminated against or discharged.

MANDATORY EVENT RULES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The sponsoring entity of the presbytery shall ensure that the following measures be in place and actions taken for each event or activity involving children and youth:

1. Two-adult rule: Two non-related adults must always be present in groups of children and youth. The only exception is if an emergency situation deems this not immediately possible. All child and youth workers and volunteers must be a minimum of four years older than the age group they lead or supervise.
2. Ratios: The adult to child ratio for all child-related events/activities is 2:10. The adult to youth ratio for all youth-related events/activities is 2:17. There shall also be one adult of each gender when there is one or more minors of each gender in a group. Only in emergency situations may the ratios and gender diversity be compromised.
3. View Windows and Open Doors: When minors and adult workers or volunteers are in a room, if the door is closed, the door must have a view window installed. If no view window is installed in the door, the door must remain open at all times.
4. Adult workers/caregivers should respect the privacy of the children to whom they provide care. Responsible use of digital devices and cell phones is required in all situations.
5. Age appropriate training to children and youth should be provided regarding behavior that should be reported to caregiver or leader of the event.
6. Transportation: All adult drivers at child/youth events must have proper licensure and insurance on file with the organizing council. All vehicles used must have seat belts for the driver and each passenger. No minor under eighty-five pounds may sit in the front seat of any vehicle. All drivers transporting minors and vulnerable adults must be over the age of twenty-five and must be informed that if their vehicle is used, their insurance would be primary if an accident occurs. If a charter bus is rented, or any outside carrier is contracted, the company hired must ensure criminal background checks on their drivers. Each vehicle must follow the ratio rules noted in point 2 in this section. Lastly, no minor may be a driver at any event or activity (this includes golf carts at events).
7. Forms: The legal guardians of each minor must provide the appropriate information and medical forms for each activity/event. The information form should include all contacts for legal guardians and the medical form must include a copy of the minor's health insurance card. Further consent forms must be signed by legal guardians for any off campus events. Any photos at the event that are used in social media or published material by the organizing council must be released by a signed consent form from a participant's legal guardian as well as the minor. All such forms must be stored at the event site, in a secure place with restricted access.
8. Each event/activity must ensure that rules are gone over with participants at each event/activity. These rules shall include but are not limited to a code of conduct specific to the event/activity, as well as a list prohibited and expected behaviors for the specific event/activity. The code of conduct and prohibited and expected behaviors list should be given in written form to each participant and legal guardians, as well as discussed thoroughly at the beginning of the event/activity.
9. All volunteers and employees at any presbytery entity sponsored events must also abide by a code of conduct that emphasizes the following prohibited behaviors. Some of these prohibited behaviors include but are not restricted to:

- a. Display of sexual affection toward a child.
- b. Use of profanity or off-color jokes.
- c. Discussion of sexual encounters with or around children or in any way involving children in personal problems or issues.
- d. Dating or becoming “romantically” involved with children (under the age of eighteen).
- e. Using or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of children.
- f. Possessing sexually oriented materials—including printed or online pornography—on church property or property being utilized for a church event.
- g. Having secrets with youth/children.
- h. Staring at or commenting on children’s bodies.
- i. Engaging in inappropriate or unapproved electronic communication with children.
- j. Working one-on-one with children in a private setting.
- k. Abusing youth/children in anyway, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - Physical abuse: hit, spank, shake, slap, unnecessarily restraint.
 - Verbal abuse: degrade, threaten, or curse.
 - Sexual abuse: inappropriately touch, expose oneself, or engage in sexually oriented conversations.
 - Mental abuse: shame, humiliate, act cruelly.
 - Neglect: withhold food, water, shelter.
 - Permit children or youth to engage in the following: hazing, bullying, derogatory name-calling, ridicule, humiliation, or sexual activity.

Social Media—Electronic Communications

General Social Media Policy - No minister, employee, contractor, or volunteer of the presbytery and its entities shall create or use a media site (Web, Facebook, YouTube, or similar) in the name of or purporting to represent the Presbytery of Charlotte without the explicit written permission of the sponsoring council, presbytery, or event leadership. When clergy or staff, acting in their capacity as a representative of the presbytery or its entities, lead or coordinate a group activity using social media, each may use only official Presbytery of Charlotte entity sites/channels when they have been made available by the presbytery. These may include Web pages, Facebook, e-mail, and similar means.

Social Media Communications

Persons who shall create public pages on behalf of Presbytery of Charlotte entity programs are responsible to monitor communications and to assure that employees and volunteers do not have private (and possibly inappropriate) conversations with children and youth.

Persons having social media privileges on behalf of the Presbytery entity shall treat unsolicited communication or “friending” from children or youth under age as an unauthorized text message. No reply may be given except to indicate by a posting that accepting a “friend” invitation by under-age children is a violation of the code of conduct.

If a child or youth reveals abuse or inappropriate interactions with an adult, the person must report this information in the manner of any “suspected abuse.”

When using social media to communicate with children or youth, the authorized administrator shall inform parents/guardians of each child or youth that the latter is communicating with the person via social media, providing the parent/guardian the opportunity to disapprove or to participate in a group.

Social Networking Code of Conduct

Each person who leads using the resources of social media shall apply this Social Networking Code of Conduct:

- Prohibit comments that are, or could be construed by any observer, to be harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
- Prohibit sexually oriented conversations or discussions about sexual activities.
- Prohibit private messages between employees and volunteers and children or youth.
- Prohibit posting inappropriate pictures (for example, sexually suggestive, exploitive, or voyeuristic) or inappropriate comments on pictures.

- Provide children, youth, and their parents with this Social Networking Code of Conduct.
- Encourage parents to play a role in monitoring their children's and youth interactions with employees and volunteers.
- Continuously remind children and youth how to interact appropriately through social networking sites.
- Deny participation by individuals who repeatedly violate the code of conduct.

At the institution of the use of social media, the authorized administrator shall present this Social Networking Code of Conduct to children or youth and parents/guardians.

SIGNING OF POLICY AND APPLICATION TO SERVE

Each adult engaged in the leadership of a Presbytery of Charlotte entity event shall acknowledge receipt of the Presbytery of Charlotte Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Its Procedures by signing an application to be employed, volunteer, or supervise. In addition, each person engaged in the leadership of a Presbytery of Charlotte entity event shall consent to all comprehensive background checks required and shall comply with any consequences of a reported violation of this policy.

19.000

Sexual Misconduct Policy

The Presbytery of Charlotte will follow the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures adopted by the 219th General Assembly [2010], updated October 2013 (*APPENDIX B)

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that all church members, church officers, non-member employees, and volunteers of congregations, councils, and entities of the church are to maintain the integrity of the ministerial, employment, and professional relationship at all times. Persons who engage in sexual misconduct are in violation of the principles set forth in Scripture, and also of the ministerial, pastoral, employment, and professional relationship. It is never permissible or acceptable for a church member, officer, employee, or volunteer to engage in sexual misconduct. The basic principles of conduct guiding this policy are as follows:

1. Sexual misconduct is a violation of the role of pastors, employees, volunteers, counselors, supervisors, teachers, and advisors of any kind who are called upon to exercise integrity, sensitivity, and caring in a trust relationship. It breaks the covenant to act in the best interests of parishioners, clients, co-workers, and students.
2. Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power that breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relation to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure in an abusive, exploitative, and unjust manner. If the parishioner, student, client, or employee initiates or invites sexual content in the relationship, it is the pastor's, counselor's, officer's, or supervisor's responsibility to maintain the appropriate role and prohibit a sexual relationship.
3. Sexual misconduct takes advantage of the vulnerability of persons who are less powerful to act for their own welfare, including children. It is antithetical to the gospel call to work as God's servant in the struggle to bring wholeness to a broken world. It violates the mandate to protect the vulnerable from harm.

Committee on Ministry Presbytery of Charlotte

Background and Rationale

The Committee on Ministry develops and maintains mechanisms and processes regarding Teaching Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders and Certified Christian Educators of the Presbytery; facilitates relations between the Presbytery and its congregations; and settles difficulties in those relationships on behalf of Presbytery (G-3.0307). The Committee on Ministry (COM) is a standing committee of the Presbytery of Charlotte charged with fulfilling this Book of Order mandate.

In July, 2009, the Presbytery adopted "*Framework for a New Direction*" (revised February, 2011), a new approach to the Committee on Ministry structure which decentralized much of the work of the COM into geographical areas called Clusters.

Among the outcomes hoped for were:

- Better relationships between pastors, Certified Christian Educators, and congregations in geographical areas;
- Greater shared identity and ownership by cluster partners;
- The development of regional strategies;
- Wider participation in cluster celebrations and events such as ordinations, anniversaries, barbecues, etc.; and,
- A working experience of connectionalism and being Presbyterian.

In the time since this organization approach was adopted, various strengths and weaknesses have been realized. The original Framework document stated that "Keys to success will include keeping working parts to a minimum and keeping those parts flexible and functional". The changes being proposed now seek to fulfill that statement. In making these changes now, it is intended that improvements be realized in the following areas:

- Better training of committee members
- Allowing decisions regarding individual churches to be made by those who are closest to the church (Clusters)
- Allowing the full COM to focus more on policies, procedures, and larger issues which might arise
- More consistency in working with churches, in training, in how Clusters operate, and in how COM policies and procedures are applied
- Making changes to the Clusters as needed to balance size, ministry effectiveness, and liaison workloads
- Allowing the committee flexibility in how it organizes itself (clusters, subcommittees, etc.) so that it can operate in the most productive manner

Committee on Ministry/Cluster Organization and Membership

The COM is governed by the Book of Order, as well as the policies, guidelines, and regulations of the Presbytery. It is comprised of teaching and ruling elders, in equal number, elected by the Presbytery to serve on the COM. The Presbytery will be divided into four geographic clusters, with each member of the COM normally serving on the Cluster in which the member resides or serves. The size of the COM should be 36 members (three classes of 12).

As of February, 2016, there shall be four (4) geographic Clusters:

- North Cluster – serving churches primarily in Cabarrus County and the upper part of Mecklenburg County
- South Cluster – serving churches primarily in Union County and the southern part of Mecklenburg County
- East Cluster – serving churches primarily in Anson, Richmond, Montgomery, and Stanly Counties
- West Cluster – serving churches primarily in the central part of Mecklenburg County

A list of the churches in each cluster, as of February 2016, is attached as part of this document. This list may be modified from time to time as needed by the COM.

COM Moderator(s): The Presbytery COM shall have a Moderator or Co-Moderators nominated by the COM and elected by the Presbytery. The term of office for the COM Moderator(s) shall be up to two (2) years starting in January. The duties of the COM Moderator(s) will continue to be those traditionally assigned by Presbytery.

Cluster Co-Moderators: Ordinarily each Cluster will have Co-Moderators who are appointed annually by the COM Moderator(s). As with all Cluster members, Co-Moderators shall be elected members of the COM. In the case where Co-Moderators cannot be appointed for a Cluster, a single Moderator is allowed.

The responsibilities of the Cluster Co-Moderators include:

- Scheduling regular Cluster meetings and communicating the meeting schedule to Presbytery staff.
- Moderating Cluster meetings and reporting the business conducted at those meetings to the COM Moderator(s).
- Assigning all churches within the cluster to Cluster members who will serve as their liaisons.
- Informing each church within the Cluster who their liaison is and how to get in touch with him/her.
- Overseeing the work of the Cluster and ensuring that the assigned tasks (listed below) are being accomplished.

Cluster Membership:

Size: The ratio of Cluster members to churches should be approximately one Cluster member for every three or four churches. All Cluster members shall be elected members of the full COM.

COM Members: Each elected COM member will be assigned to a Cluster except the COM Moderator(s). It is recommended that they serve in the cluster where they reside, but exceptions may be determined by the COM Moderator(s). The Presbytery Committee on Representation will be asked to be intentional about nominating representatives from each cluster area to the COM so that the desired ratio of Cluster members to churches be maintained.

Voting: Clusters will conduct and approve the routine business of the COM in their Cluster area. Issues out of the routine or with implications beyond the Cluster will go to the full COM for action.

Committee on Ministry Responsibilities (full committee)

- Approve severance agreements when pastors leave a church
- Approve training requests for individuals wishing to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE); examine and recommend commissioning for particular pastoral service for CRE's to a church
- Approve terms of call for new calls
- Approve Installation Commissions for new calls
- Approve Pastors to labor outside and inside the bounds of the Presbytery
- Maintain contact with and receive annual reports of activities from members of presbytery who are laboring outside the bounds of presbytery
- Validate specialized ministries and maintain records and annual certifications of pastors serving in them
- On an annual basis, review of the status of members-at-large within the Presbytery
- Approve Temporary Pastor and Moderator assignments for the Presbytery as a whole
- Dissolve relationships between churches and pastors
- Dismiss pastors to other Presbyteries
- On an annual basis, establish minimum terms of call for new calls for pastors and Certified Christian Educators
- Act on recommendations from the Conciliation Team
- Make recommendations to the Presbytery regarding the need to establish an Administrative Commission in a church
- Maintain the Pulpit Supply List

Committee on Ministry Cluster Responsibilities

- Assign liaisons to establish positive working relationships with churches and pastors
- Conduct Triennial Visits
- Work with churches to ensure compliance with Minimum Terms of Call Salaries and Board of Pensions
- Assist churches in transition
 - Conduct an Exit Interview with installed pastors and Certified Christian Educators when they leave a church
 - Work with churches without a pastor to conduct a Mission Study (when needed)
 - Approve formation of PNC's and APNC's
 - Train and work with Pastor Nominating Committees (PNC's) and Associate Pastor Nominating Committees (APNC's) during the call process
 - Approve Ministry Information Forms (MIF's)
 - Grant permission to eliminate installed positions
 - Work with churches seeking an Interim Pastor
 - Work with churches seeking a Temporary Pastor
 - Work with churches seeking a Parish Associate
 - Approve contracts between Temporary and Interim Pastors and a church, using a template provided by COM
 - Work with churches in need of Pulpit Supply Pastor/Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE)/Certified Christian Educators
 - Appoint Moderators for church sessions when there is no called pastor
 - Assign mentors to new pastors and Certified Christian Educators

Liaisons: The primary role of Cluster members is to be in relationship with the churches they serve as liaisons. Liaisons are the primary link between pastors and congregations and the Committee on Ministry and Presbytery. This is an important role, one which requires commitment and diligence. Liaisons will be in regular communication with their assigned churches, in addition to conducting formal Triennial Visits. The goal is to be a known “face of the Presbytery” that pastors, sessions, and congregations can go to for assistance. Knowing that prevention of problems is always preferable to intervention, the focus of liaisons is on fostering healthy congregations. A Cluster member shall not serve as liaison to the church where he or she has an established relationship (e.g. congregation member, pastor, staff member, etc.).

Liaison Referral Procedures: Liaisons will encounter situations that require referral to either the larger COM or one of its centralized subcommittees. They may also find it necessary to receive assistance from the presbytery's Church Development or Leadership Development committees. When a referral is made, it is the responsibility of the liaison to inform the Cluster and/or COM Co-Moderators.

Referrals to General Presbyter

1. Inquiries about or expressions of desire for churches to separate from the PCUSA or seeking dismissal to another denomination shall be referred to the General Presbyter.

Referrals to Stated Clerk

1. Indications of sexual misconduct shall be immediately reported to the Stated Clerk for investigation.
2. Inquiries about or expressions of desire for teaching elders to separate from the PCUSA or seeking dismissal to another denomination shall be referred to the Stated Clerk.

Committee on Ministry and Cluster Meetings

Beginning in January, 2016, meetings of the full COM will be held six times a year, while Clusters will meet in the other six months in order to ensure that Presbytery business is conducted in a timely manner. This schedule may be modified by the Committee as needed to achieve the most productive and efficient approach to serving our churches. Committee members who are unable to be present for a meeting may participate by conference call. Minutes will be recorded for all meetings of the COM and individual Clusters.

Authority to Act

Actions taken at Cluster meetings go to the COM for *information only*. If necessary due to scheduling constraints, any duty normally delegated to a Cluster may be referred to and handled by the full COM if necessary. When doubt exists about a Cluster's authority or appropriateness to act, the matter shall be referred to the COM. Delegation of duties between the full committee and the clusters may be modified as appropriate by the COM.

The Presbytery authorizes the COM, its Clusters and its subcommittees (as applicable) to act on it's behalf in performing the responsibilities listed in this document.

*Timely but routine matters as determined by the COM Moderator(s) can be voted on by an electronic ballot.

Committee on Ministry Subcommittees (may be modified by the committee from time to time as necessary)**Transfers and Certification**

- Conducts examinations of all candidates for call as Pastor, Associate Pastor, or Minister at Large.
- Provides certification of credentials of ordained pastors entering the Presbytery of Charlotte from other reformed denominations.

Conciliation

The Conciliation Team is comprised of specifically trained individuals in the areas of conflict and conciliation. While these individuals are not ordinarily members of the COM, the Team serves as an arm of COM and is responsible for providing coaching to churches and individuals in conflict situations, along with listening and mediating services.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality shall be a high priority for all COM work.

Conflict of Interest

COM members shall recuse themselves in all matters where there is a conflict of interest, at both the full committee and cluster levels.

Presbytery of Charlotte Church Clusters

NORTH CLUSTER

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Bellefonte, Harrisburg | 16. Hopewell, Huntersville |
| 2. Bethpage, Kannapolis | 17. Kirkwood, Kannapolis |
| 3. Bethpage United, Concord | 18. Locust, Locust |
| 4. Catawba, Huntersville | 19. Mallard Creek, Charlotte |
| 5. Cedar Grove, Concord | 20. Meadowlake, Huntersville |
| 6. Cornelius, Cornelius | 21. New Friendship, Huntersville |
| 7. Covenant, Concord | 22. New Hampton, Charlotte |
| 8. Covenant, Kannapolis | 23. Newell, Newell |
| 9. Davidson, Davidson | 24. Pleasant Grove, Charlotte |
| 10. Davidson College, Davidson | 25. Poplar Tent, Concord |
| 11. Derita, Charlotte | 26. Ramah, Huntersville |
| 12. First, Concord | 27. Rocky River, Concord |
| 13. Flow-Harris, Concord | 28. Second, Kannapolis |
| 14. Gilwood, Concord | 29. Statesville Avenue, Charlotte |
| 15. Harrisburg, Harrisburg | 30. Williams Memorial, Charlotte |

SOUTH CLUSTER

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Amity, Charlotte | 16. MorningStar, Matthews |
| 2. Avondale, Charlotte | 17. Myers Park, Charlotte |
| 3. Ben Salem, Charlotte | 18. Philadelphia, Charlotte |
| 4. Bethany, Monroe | 19. Providence, Charlotte |
| 5. Beulah, Monroe | 20. Quail Hollow, Charlotte |
| 6. Black's Memorial, Monroe | 21. Saint Andrews, Charlotte |
| 7. Carmel, Charlotte | 22. Sardis, Charlotte |
| 8. First, Monroe | 23. Selwyn Avenue, Charlotte |
| 9. First, Pageland, SC | 24. Sharon, Charlotte |
| 10. First, Waxhaw | 25. South Mecklenburg, Charlotte |
| 11. Good Shepherd, Charlotte | 26. Stephenson, Monroe |
| 12. Henderson Grove, Charlotte | 27. The Fellowship Place, Charlotte |
| 13. Indian Trail, Indian Trail | 28. Third, Charlotte |
| 14. Matthews, Matthews | 29. Trinity, Charlotte |
| 15. Matthews-Murkland, Charlotte | 30. Turner, Monroe |

EAST CLUSTER

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Candor, Candor 2. Ebenezer, Morven 3. First, Albemarle 4. First, Hamlet 5. First, Mount Gilead 6. First, Norwood | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. First, Rockingham 8. First, Wadesboro 9. Macedonia, Candor 10. Marks Creek, Rockingham 11. Morven, Morven 12. Star, Star |
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WEST CLUSTER

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. C.N. Jenkins, Charlotte 2. Caldwell Memorial, Charlotte 3. Central Steele Creek, Charlotte 4. Christ, Charlotte 5. Cooks Memorial, Charlotte 6. Covenant, Charlotte 7. First, Charlotte 8. First United, Charlotte 9. Grier Heights, Charlotte 10. H.O. Graham Metropolitan, Charlotte 11. Johnston Memorial, Charlotte 12. McClintock, Charlotte 13. Memorial, Charlotte 14. Mount Olive, Charlotte | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Mulberry, Charlotte 16. Paw Creek, Paw Creek 17. Plaza, Charlotte 18. Pleasant Hill, Charlotte 19. Robinson, Charlotte 20. Saint Paul, Charlotte 21. Smallwood, Charlotte 22. South End, Charlotte 23. Steele Creek, Charlotte 24. Sugaw Creek, Charlotte 25. The Avenue, Charlotte 26. The Grove, Charlotte 27. Woodland, Paw Creek |
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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND ITS PROCEDURES

I. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (hereinafter referred to as PC(USA)) that all church members, church officers, non-member employees, and volunteers of congregations, councils, and entities of the church are to maintain the integrity of the ministerial, employment, and professional relationship at all times. Persons who engage in sexual misconduct are in violation of the principles set forth in Scripture, and also of the ministerial, pastoral, employment, and professional relationship. It is never permissible or acceptable for a church member, officer, employee, or volunteer to engage in sexual misconduct.

Distribution

Copies of this policy and its procedures shall be made available to all council and entity offices. It is intended as guidance for churches, mid-councils, and related entities and if properly implemented by them can be used by church members, church officers, employees, and volunteers. This is a policy of the General Assembly of the PC(USA), which governs and protects employees of the General Assembly Mission Council and the Office of the General Assembly. This policy and its procedures should be made available to persons who accuse others of misconduct, including those who are or claim to be victims of sexual misconduct and their families. Other councils of the PC(USA) may use this policy as a guide to develop their own policies and procedures related to sexual misconduct.

II. Standards of Conduct

... As [God] who called you is holy, be
holy yourselves in all your conduct;
... Tend the flock of God that is in your charge, ...
not under compulsion but willingly, ...
not for sordid gain but eagerly. ...
not lord it over those in your charge,
but be examples to the flock.

... You know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

1 Pet. 1:15; 5:2–3; Jas. 3:1, NRSV

The ethical conduct of all who minister in the name of Jesus Christ is of vital importance to the church because through these representatives an understanding of God and the gospel's good news is conveyed. "Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world" (*Book of Order*, G-2.0104a).

The basic principles of conduct guiding this policy are as follows:

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1. Sexual misconduct is a violation of the role of pastors, employees, volunteers, counselors, supervisors, teachers, and advisors of any kind who are called upon to exercise integrity, sensitivity, and caring in a trust relationship. It breaks the covenant to act in the best interests of parishioners, clients, co-workers, and students.
2. Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power that breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relation to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure in an abusive, exploitative, and unjust manner. If the parishioner, student, client, or employee initiates or invites sexual content in the relationship, it is the pastor's, counselor's, officer's, or supervisor's responsibility to maintain the appropriate role and prohibit a sexual relationship.
3. Sexual misconduct takes advantage of the vulnerability of persons who are less powerful to act for their own welfare, including children. It is antithetical to the gospel call to work as God's servant in the struggle to bring wholeness to a broken world. It violates the mandate to protect the vulnerable from harm.

Definitions

Sexual Misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include:

Child sexual abuse; including, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the sexual abuse definition of a child is anyone under age eighteen.

Sexual abuse as defined in the *Book of Order*: "Sexual abuse of another person is any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to (1) any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent; or (2) any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position" (*Book of Order*, D-10.0401c).

Sexual harassment; defined for this policy is as follows: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- a. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or their continued status in an institution;
- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual;
- c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an

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individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment; or

d. an individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual jokes, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children.

Rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.

Sexual conduct is offensive, obsessive or suggestive language or behavior, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome touching or fondling that is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.

Sexual Malfeasance; is defined by the broken trust resulting from sexual activities within a professional ministerial relationship that results in misuse of office or position arising from the professional ministerial relationship.

Misuse of technology; use of technology that results in sexually harassing or abusing another person, including texting or emailing suggestive messages and images to persons with whom one has a ministerial relationship. It is never appropriate to view pornography on church property. When this includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse. There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or church entity or within the context of ministry.

III. Church Response to Allegations of Sexual Misconduct

A. *Principles*

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, officers, and employees of the church should seek healing and assure the protection of all persons. Where possible, the privacy of persons should be respected and confidentiality of communications should be maintained.

In responding to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, officers, and employees of the church should seek to uphold the dignity of all persons involved, including persons who are alleging harm, persons who are accused of sexual misconduct, and the families and communities of each.

The PC(USA) has jurisdiction over its members, officers, and employees such that if a member, officer, or employee is alleged to have committed an offense against Scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution, the church has the duty to inquire into the allegations and, if the allegations are proven, to correct the behavior of the member, officer, or employee and ensure the safety of others in the community. Allegations of sexual misconduct are always considered allegations of offense against Scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution that trigger the disciplinary processes of the PC(USA) set forth in the *Book of Order*. In the case of an active non-member who is employed or volunteers with the church, the individual will be covered by

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the procedures of the written personnel policies of the council or entity.

If the person accused of sexual misconduct is no longer a member, officer, or employee of the PC(USA), but the conduct occurred while the person was acting on behalf of the PC(USA), the church does not have jurisdiction to correct the behavior, but it does have a duty to hear the allegations of offense and to take measures to prevent future occurrences of harm. The council may appoint an administrative committee or commission to hear the allegations of sexual misconduct. The council may also take measures to prevent future occurrences of harm through education and policy.

B. *Reporting Requirements*

1. *Reporting Sexual Misconduct*

A person needing to report that a member, officer, employee, or volunteer of the PC(USA) has committed sexual misconduct is encouraged to seek guidance from a PC(USA) teaching elder or ruling elder regarding filing the report.

Congregation: If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a member, ruling elder, deacon, volunteer, or employee of a congregation, the report of allegations should be made to the teaching elder, the clerk of session, or the chair of the personnel committee. If the accused is a member or officer of the church, the church will respond by using the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If the accused is a nonmember employee or volunteer, the church will respond by using procedures set forth by the session of the congregation.

Presbytery: If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a teaching elder member, the report of allegations should be made to the stated clerk of the presbytery. If the report of allegations is placed in writing, the presbytery will respond by using the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is a volunteer or nonmember employee of the presbytery, the report of allegations may be made to any of the staff or volunteers of the presbytery. The presbytery will respond by using procedures set forth by policy or bylaws of the presbytery.

Higher Council or Entity of the General Assembly: If the person who is accused of committing sexual misconduct is an employee or volunteer of the higher council or entity, contact the council or entity directly for the appropriate person to receive the

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report of allegations. The report of allegations may be made to any person with supervising capacity. The entity will respond by using procedures set forth by policy or bylaws of the entity.

2. *Receiving Reports of Sexual Misconduct*

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct will occur in a variety of ways.

Because a council or entity cannot control to whom the victim of sexual misconduct will speak first, it is important that officers, employees, and persons highly visible to church members and visitors understand how reports of incidents are channeled to the proper person. The allegations may come from persons who have or who do not have a formal relationship with the PC(USA) and may be made to a variety of officers or leaders within the PC(USA). It is the duty of these officers to see that any allegation of sexual misconduct is reported appropriately keeping in mind the mandatory reporting requirements for allegations of child abuse.

Reports of allegations of sexual misconduct should never be taken lightly or disregarded and allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the victim, the accused, and the church. Reports of allegations should be dealt with as matters of highest confidentiality, both before and after they have been submitted to appropriate authorities as outlined below.

The first person to learn of an incident of sexual misconduct should not undertake an inquiry alone or question either the victim or the accused unless the incident is divulged in the process of pastoral care, counseling, or a therapy session. If the victim is hesitant to talk to “higher authorities,” the person who has received the initial report has a special pastoral responsibility to build trust and willingness to speak with the accuser, lest the church be unable to respond because no one is able to give firsthand information.

The person receiving the initial report of allegations of sexual misconduct shall analyze the relationship of the person accused of sexual misconduct with the PC(USA) and shall make sure that the allegations of offense are filed with the council with jurisdiction over the person accused. This may be done by the person alleging harm or by any member of the PC(USA).

If the report is made orally, the person receiving the report of allegations should request that the person making the report of allegations place it in writing. A report of allegations of sexual misconduct in writing from a member of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed an offense must be acted on according to the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If a clerk or stated clerk receives a report of allegations in writing from a nonmember of the PC(USA) alleging another member or officer of the PC(USA) committed sexual misconduct, the report also should be acted on according to the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. If the person who makes the report is unwilling or unable to place it in writing,

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any member of the PC(USA) may make the written statement that will automatically trigger the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*.

3. *Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse*

All ruling elders, deacons, Certified Christian Educators, and teaching elders are required to report knowledge of child abuse to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities according to the *Book of Order*. The *Book of Order* requires that

- “Any member of this church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by this church or its congregations, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse” (G-4.0302)

Further

“In the exercise of pastoral care, teaching elders (also called ministers of the Word and Sacrament) and ruling elders who have been commissioned by a presbytery to limited pastoral service (G-2.10), shall maintain a relationship of trust and confidentiality, and shall hold in confidence all information revealed to them in the course of providing care and all information relating to the exercise of such care.

When the person whose confidences are at issue gives express consent to reveal confidential information, then a teaching elder or a ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service may, but cannot be compelled to, reveal confidential information.

A teaching elder or a ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service may reveal confidential information when she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of imminent bodily harm to any person (G-4.0301). All persons covered by this policy have an additional duty to report knowledge of child sexual abuse to the employing entity, supervisor, or council representative. All persons should be informed of and must comply with state and local laws regarding incidents of actual or suspected child sexual abuse. These reports should be made within a reasonable time of receiving the information.

These provisions of the *Book of Order* attempt to balance conflicting moral duties for officers of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

For teaching elders, the provision strives to balance the duty to protect children from future harm with the duty of a teaching elder to hold in confidence any information revealed to them during the exercise of pastoral care in any ministry setting as defined in G-4.0301 in the *Book of Order*.

For ruling elders, deacons, and certified Christian educators, the provisions strive to balance the duty of an officer of the church to protect children from harm and any secular duty the officer may have to hold in confidence any information revealed as a result of a secular relationship such as attorney/client, counselor/client, or physician/patient. The secular duties will be a function of secular law and may vary from state to state.

C. *Responding*

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The appropriate council or entity response will vary according to the relationship of the PC(USA) with the person who is accused of sexual misconduct. Church members and officers are subject to inquiry and discipline (censure and correction) under the *Book of Order*. Non-church member employees and volunteers are subject to oversight and correction by the council or entity that employs them.

1. *Accused Covered by Book of Order*

When an allegation of offense of sexual misconduct has been received by the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery, the clerk of the council will report to the council that an offense has been alleged and that the council will proceed according to the procedures set forth in the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order*. The council should appoint an investigating committee to inquire into the allegations. The investigating committee must promptly begin its inquiry into the allegations. Delay may cause further harm to the victim and/or the accused.

Councils and entities must cooperate with civil authorities in an investigation of child sexual abuse or other criminal sexual misconduct. Church disciplinary proceedings cannot interfere with a criminal investigation by civil authorities and may have to be suspended until these are completed.

The session has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving members, ruling elders, and deacons of the church, each congregation having jurisdiction only over its own members.

A presbytery has original jurisdiction in disciplinary cases involving teaching elders. A presbytery may dissolve a pastoral relationship when the “Word imperatively demands it” (G-2.0904). However, a presbytery may only place a teaching elder on administrative leave when allegations of child abuse have been received and the presbytery has followed the *Book of Order* procedures to conduct its risk evaluation to determine whether or not a teaching elder member accused of child abuse should be placed on administrative leave (D-10.0106). It is recommended that the permanent judicial commission (PJC) members who will conduct this risk evaluation based upon the allegations and a hearing should also take into account secular legal advice.

When a church officer renounces jurisdiction, the clerk or stated clerk shall report the renunciation at the next meeting of the council and shall record the renunciation in the minutes of the council. The status of any pending charges may be shared with the council at that time.

2. *Accused Not Covered by Book of Order*

When a council or entity of the General Assembly receives an accusation of offense of sexual misconduct against a nonmember employee or volunteer, the procedural response of the council or entity will be guided by the written personnel policies of the council or entity. Usually the council or entity will have a personnel committee that will be responsible for the

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inquiry. If a council does not have a personnel committee, it may appoint either a committee or administrative commission for the review of the allegation.

The committee or commission that will respond to the allegation of offense of sexual misconduct will do the following:

- a. Determine whether or not the allegation gives rise to a reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct by the accused.
- b. If so, gather additional information necessary to make a decision about correcting the behavior.
- c. Determine any remedies, including limiting ministry, suspension, or termination necessary and advisable under the circumstances. If the accused is a member of another denomination, that denomination will be notified of the allegations and the response.
- d. Inform the victim and the accused of the remedy.
- e. In all cases, the personnel committee shall prepare a written report, which shall be included in the accused's permanent personnel file. The accused shall be allowed to attach any written statements to said documents, also for permanent inclusion in the permanent file.

All procedures shall follow the guidelines set forth by the council, employing agency, or entity of the General Assembly.

3. *Council or Entity Record Keeping*

The council or entity should keep detailed records of its actions and minutes of its deliberations and its conversations with the accuser, the accused, and other parties involved, correspondence, and copies of the reports received from committees or commissions. Such records will be kept confidential as far as possible. In Case # 208-6, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission (GAPJC) interpreted the Rules of Discipline to say that a council or entity may share the contents of inquiry reports with other councils or entities of the PC(USA) when necessary. The clerk of the council or director of the entity will maintain the records while the inquiry is in process.

IV Prevention and Risk Management

A. *Implementation*

The Book of Order requires that all councils adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy (G-3.0106). The General Assembly urges all councils and related entities including colleges, universities, and theological institutions to establish policies, procedures, that make it a violation of the employer's work rules to engage in sexual misconduct and that encourage reporting of sexual misconduct. Councils and entities are strongly encouraged to take appropriate steps to inform members, employees, volunteers, and students of the council's sexual misconduct policy and the standards of conduct and

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the procedures for effective response when receiving a report of sexual misconduct.

B. Liability and Insurance

A council or entity can be held liable for harm caused by sexual misconduct of an officer, teaching elder or employee based on a number of legal theories. Councils and entities should take such potential liability into consideration when establishing hiring and supervisory practices.

Councils and entities should regularly inform their liability insurance carriers of the activities and programs they operate or sponsor and of the duties and responsibilities of officers, employees, and volunteers. The standard insurance policy should usually be enhanced by endorsements to cover specific exposures such as camps, day-care operations, shelters, or other outreach programs.

It is also recommended that councils and entities obtain an endorsement to their general liability insurance policy specifically covering sexual abuse and molestation. Such coverage may provide for legal defense expenses and judgments in civil suits brought against the council or entity, its officers, directors, or employees.

C. Employment Practices

1. Record Keeping

Accurate record keeping is an essential part of hiring and supervision practices of churches, middle governing, bodies and related entities. Every council and entity should maintain a personnel file on every employee, including teaching elders. The file should contain the application for employment, any employment questionnaires, background checks, references responses, and all other documents related to an employee's employment, except records which may be required, by law, to be kept in separate files.

2. Prescreening Applicants

Councils and entities are urged to establish thorough and consistent hiring practices. If an applicant is unknown to the employer, the employer should confirm the applicant's identity by requiring photographic identification such as a driver's license. The council should perform a background check, including a national criminal background check, on all applicants that may have interaction with children and youth.

Part of pre-employment screening should include specific questions related to discovering previous complaints of sexual misconduct. See Appendix B: Sample Exhibit E.

3. References

The employing council or entity is responsible for contacting references for prospective

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teaching elders , employees, or volunteers. A written record of conversations or correspondence with references should be kept in the teaching elder or employee's personnel file. (See Appendix B: Sample Exhibit B for a sample reference form).

A council should delegate responsibility for previous employer reference checks.

The person within the council or entity authorized to give a reference is obligated to give truthful information regarding allegations, inquiries, and administrative or disciplinary action related to sexual misconduct of the applicant.

If false or misleading information is given by the applicant, or relevant information is withheld, the applicant should be eliminated from consideration.

Applicants should be informed of negative comments regarding sexual misconduct and shall be given an opportunity to submit additional references or to give other evidence to correct or respond to harmful information obtained from a reference.

V. Educating and Training- Awareness

Since the issue of sexual misconduct has become an ever more present reality, there is an emerging need to educate and train a wide variety of persons. Persons needing this specific education include: teaching elders ; volunteers; officers; nonprofessional and professional staff; ministerial candidates; professionals who will be working with this issue within the denomination; members of the congregation; and council staff including supervisors, employees, and stated clerks.

Education for these persons and groups will be different on a group-by-group basis. A primary requirement for all persons should be common knowledge regarding professional and ministerial boundaries, the General Assembly Sexual Misconduct policy and their own specific council or entity policy.

Theological institutions should include material in their existing curriculum on sexual ethics including the appropriate use of ministerial power, the General Assembly policy and its procedures on sexual misconduct, and other resources. It is further urged that the appropriate presbytery committee(s) include training for inquirers, candidates, newly ordained pastors, and new pastors to their presbyteries regarding sexual misconduct, especially including education on their specific policy and procedures.

Much of a congregation's education currently happens in response to an actual case of sexual misconduct. However, it is recommended that the congregation be as proactive in this area as possible offering education in a variety of settings. There are already numerous resource materials available that could be adapted to a congregation's setting.

Employing entities need to make sure all employees are well acquainted with, understand, and abide by their policy and procedures. Employing entities should offer additional training and resources, such as: a workshop during staff meeting; lunchtime discussion group; articles and books made available; etc.

Any professional (therapists, attorneys, advocates, mediators, arbitrators) used by a council should have access to experts qualified in the field of sexual misconduct if they themselves are not.

**Presbytery of Charlotte Policy for
Mandatory Dismantling Racism Training
February 6, 2021**

1. The Presbytery makes a commitment to offer, provide resources for, and to publicize educational opportunities that focus on dismantling racism within our church institutions (Presbytery and congregations) and the communities we serve. The Presbytery will provide a training that incorporates the following elements:
 - A theological grounding in our call to a Beloved Community
 - Our regional history, including history of the former Catawba, Mecklenburg, Concord, and Fayetteville Presbyteries
 - Core concepts of systemic racism and its manifestation at the individual level
 - A new awareness of the impact of Presbytery and church policies and decisions on people of color
 - Tools and strategies to develop anti-racist behavior and culture within our presbytery and church life
2. The Dismantling Racism training shall be required at least once every three (3) years for:
 - All Teaching Elders who are serving as pastors to a congregation or otherwise engaged in a Validated Ministry are required to attend Charlotte Presbytery's educational program on Dismantling Racism, within one year after their arrival. Failure to fulfill this requirement within the specified time will result in being listed as not in good standing in the Presbytery until training is completed. The Presbytery of Charlotte will communicate to Pastoral Nominating Committees and presbyteries who are requesting references on the status of candidates with respect to this requirement.
 - Commissioned Local Pastors (CLPs) and Ruling Elders elected to serve on the Council, Committee on Ministry (COM) and the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) are required to participate in a training within one year of being commissioned (CRE) or elected to Council, COM or CPM.
 - All Candidates for Ministry are required to attend a Dismantling Racism training or similar training (approved by the Presbytery). In the event that the timing or location of a training is not feasible, the candidate may work with CPM to determine an alternative means to meet this requirement.
 - All Presbytery staff is required to attend within one year of hire/election.
3. The Presbytery strongly encourages honorably retired teaching elders, and any persons serving on Presbytery committees or ministry team to participate in such trainings.
4. Training Administration & Oversight

This policy will be administered by the Anti-Racism Ministry Team, who shall provide oversight and authorize the hiring of training consultants. The Anti-Racism Ministry Team is responsible for reviewing attendance of training participants and evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the trainings.

The office of the Stated Clerk is responsible for ensuring notation of TE and CRE participation is made in their permanent files and notifying them of compliance deadlines. The Presbytery of Charlotte will communicate to Pastoral Nominating Committees and presbyteries who are requesting references on the status of candidates with respect to this requirement.

The General Presbyter will serve as staff support to the Team.

5. Provision for Training Evaluation & Policy Review

The Anti-Racism Ministry Team shall also undertake an initial review of this policy by the end of 2022.

Funding

The Presbytery shall designate funding to provide these trainings.

Scriptural and Theological Framework for Anti-Racism Training in the Charlotte Presbytery

The Matthew 25 invitation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) based on Matthew 25:31-46, calls for Presbyterians to actively engage the world by embracing and working towards one or more of three focuses: building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty. The Presbytery of Charlotte has accepted the invitation of the PC(USA) to be a Matthew 25 Presbytery and is committed to living out the Matthew 25 call to action. Thus, given the current racial climate of our nation and world, the Presbytery of Charlotte, in addition to building congregational vitality, and eradicating systemic poverty, is especially called in this season to engage efforts that lead towards the dismantling of structural racism.

As followers of Christ, we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39) and to fully embrace the fact that all people are equally loved by God (John 3:16, Romans 5:8) and equally valued by God (Galatians 3:28).

These New Testament passages rest on the foundation of the Old Testament. From the Pentateuch's outline of a covenant community built on pillars of justice and mutual responsibility to the prophets' fiery presentations of God's expectations and calls for fairness that echo through the Wisdom literature, the Old Testament reminds us again and again about God's call to full inclusion and equity.

The creation story portrays God's creation of humankind in one image, without race, that of the Lord. The Mosaic law makes clear that to love neighbor is to love the Lord. When God's people err, we hear the thunderous correction of the prophets speaking for God.

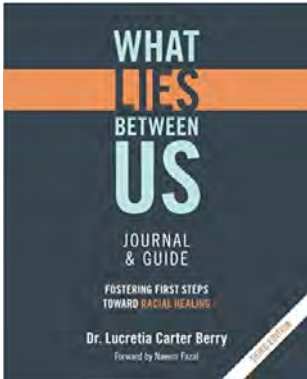
Amos 5:21-24: The Lord's rejection of worship without justice: *²¹I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. ²²Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. ²³Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. ²⁴But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.*

Isaiah 40:4-5: The Lord's vision of equality, equity, and fairness: *⁴Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain...*

Micah 6:8: What God Requires: *⁸He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

From cover to cover, scripture portrays God's vision of equality, equity, fairness, and justice. To fully live into this vision and love our neighbor as ourselves, we must seek to know and understand the effects of racism on our neighbors of color. Understanding racism and its traumatic effect on those who experience it, is of paramount importance if divisive racial barriers are to be torn down and structural racism is to be dismantled.

Curriculum: *“What LIES Between Us”*



A 5-Week Self-paced Anti-racism Educational Course from brownicity.com

About The Course: Anti-race/ism Curriculum Specialist, Dr. Lucretia Berry and Team Brownicity designed the What LIES Between Us series to guide, support, and equip ‘new comers’ with an analytical framework for examining race and racism in the United States.

Learners will be equipped with a historical, political, and social context for understanding race/ism and how it is sustained. The content will allow participants to build a sound knowledge base and develop a perspective beyond popular discourse and uninformed opinions. With a practical understanding of contributing ideologies—like white supremacy, meritocracy, colorblindness—and interpersonal and systemic dynamics—like unconscious bias, and power and privilege – participants will have a broadened awareness of themselves, “others,” and our interconnected society.