

John Calvin Presbytery Manual of Operations

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Preamble

“Where there is no vision, the people perish. . .” Proverbs 29:18. The churches of John Calvin Presbytery intend to keep our vision clear and, by God’s grace, to thrive in the 21st Century. With that confident hope and prayer in mind, the Presbytery adopted this Vision Statement:

John Calvin Presbytery

Joyful, holy community of Christian believers diverse yet united,
Committed to serving Christ in the church and in the world,
Prepared by God through the Holy Spirit for mission and ministry.

(Adopted by John Calvin Presbytery on January 7, 2007.)

As we, the member churches of John Calvin Presbytery, work together to make that vision a reality, we embrace certain specific goals for ourselves. We seek as Presbytery:

- To love God, love our neighbor, and work together out of that love in a way that bears witness to our faith in Christ.
- To enable our congregations to make disciples for Jesus Christ.
- To give support and resources to our congregations.
- To serve as pastor to our ministers and churches.
- To serve as the connective tissue of the Body of Christ between our congregations.
- To nurture healthy congregations and vital pastoral relationships of congregations in mission.

May the Lord bless and guide us as we seek to make this vision and these goals a reality, so that we might bear much fruit in this part of God’s creation where we have been called to live and serve.

MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

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Chapter One PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 1.00** This manual will contain all the approved policies and procedures of John Calvin Presbytery except those contained by the *Bylaws* and the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Chapter Two MEETINGS

- 2.00** The meetings of the Presbytery are occasions for furthering and enhancing the ministry, mission and work of Jesus Christ through the Presbyterian Church in this area. They are the times when the people of Presbytery gather for worship, inspiration, instruction, sharing of ideas, and to conduct necessary business. The General Council will be responsible for designing the meetings of Presbytery.
- 2.10** Presbytery meetings are ordinarily face-to-face. Telephone conference calls and electronic communications may, with approval of the General Council, be used for stated or called meetings, including voting on business matters, unless a simple majority of the body requests a face-to-face meeting. Meetings held by conference call or electronic means abide by the same policies and procedures as face-to-face meetings. In all meetings the participants should be able to see and hear one another. Participants should state their name, role (Ruling Elder or Teaching Elder), and church when they begin speaking.

Chapter Three GENERAL COUNCIL

3.00 MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the General Council consists of eight (8) voting members including:

The Moderator of the Presbytery

Immediate Past Moderator of Presbytery who will be the Moderator of the General Council

Moderator-elect of Presbytery who will serve as the Vice-Moderator of General Council

Moderator of the Presbyterian Women

The Moderator or designated representative of each of the four standing committees of Presbytery:

Administrative Ministries Committee

Mission and Nurture Committee

Committee on Representation

Committee on Ministry

Ex-Officio members of the General Council, with voice, but not vote, are the Moderator of the Subcommittee on Preparation for Ministry, the Executive Presbyter, the Stated Clerk, and the Treasurer.

3.10 RESPONSIBILITIES

The General Council will:

Perform those functions between the meetings of Presbytery which are committed to it by the Presbytery

Provide communication between congregations and other governing bodies of the church

Consider and report upon all appeals for funds not allocated by the Presbytery budgets.

Any extra budget requests for funds by committee groups or individuals will automatically be referred to General Council.

Direct the work of called and employed personnel of the Presbytery

Nominate members of the Committee on Representation at the last stated Presbytery meeting of the year

Recommend the following to the Presbytery: the mission budget and the amount of per capita apportionment needed to support it; the percentage distribution of benevolence giving necessary to support the mission causes of the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly; and fiscal policies for the Presbytery

Be responsible for ongoing stewardship education, evaluation and gratitude among the churches of JCP. This will include communicating the ministry and mission needs of the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly.

Oversee and provide grants through the Creative Ministries Grant, the Small Church Resource Grant, and the Transformation Grant funds of John Calvin Presbytery

Work with the Stated Clerk to provide for annual review of Church Minutes, Rolls and Registers

Elect, as needed, a group of three to four people to work with the Stated Clerk to provide clarity and direction for the Presbytery with regard to amendments to the *Book of Order* coming from the General Assembly

Encourage and oversee the start of new congregations and efforts to revitalize existing congregations.

3.20 The General Council will have the authority to establish sub-committees as it may find necessary or desirable to carry out its work.

The moderator of Administrative Ministries Committee and the moderator of the General Council (2 signatures) are authorized to sign documents for the sale or transfer of property of a dissolved or dissolving church owned by the PC(USA) in John Calvin Presbytery

Chapter Four STANDING COMMITTEES

4.00 MEMBERSHIP

The standing committees include the following:

Committee on Ministry
Administrative Ministries Committee
Mission and Nurture Committee
Committee on Representation*

*** denotes Book of Order mandated committee**

- 4.01** Each standing committee will strive to be equal in number of ministers and elders or lay members when possible, and will be divided into three (3) classes. No member may serve more than two (2) full three (3) year terms in succession, but those elected initially to short terms and those elected to fill unexpired terms may be elected to two (2) full terms.
- 4.02** After election of new committee members, each committee of Presbytery will provide a time of orientation to its members so that they can be prepared for the work to which they have been called.
- 4.03** When a member of a standing committee is absent without excuse from three (3) consecutive meetings of that committee, that person's membership on the committee will automatically terminate and he or she will be notified in writing by the Moderator of the committee.
- 4.04** Members of standing committees will ordinarily be elected and installed at the last stated Presbytery meeting of the year. Terms of service will be from January 1 to December 31. When vacancies occur, the Committee on Representation will be informed by the Moderator of the appropriate committee. The Committee on Representation will present a nominee to fill the vacancy at the next stated meeting of Presbytery. Committee members elected to fill unexpired terms will take office immediately upon election.
- 4.05** The Moderators of each standing committee will be elected annually by the Presbytery from the membership of the committee

4.10 RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a.) Each standing committee will fulfill those responsibilities assigned to it by the *Book of Order* and the Presbytery.
- (b.) Each standing committee may organize as it deems necessary in order to carry out its work. For particular tasks, committees may invite participation from the whole membership of the churches in the Presbytery.

4.20 REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

Each standing committee will communicate with General Council through its representative on the Council and will report to the Presbytery as its business demands or at least

once a year. Minutes of meetings of each committee will be forwarded to the Stated Clerk.

4.30 COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

The Committee on Ministry will have sixteen (16) members including the Moderator and the members of the Subcommittee on Preparation for Ministry. The Moderator will not have liaison responsibilities but will instead oversee the work of the committee. The fifteen (15) members-at-large will be composed of an equal number of ministers and elders in equal classes.

4.31 The committee is responsible for those duties assigned to it by the *Book of Order*, G-3.0307.

4.32 Between stated meetings of Presbytery, the committee may exercise the following powers:

- (a.) Finding calls in order
- (b.) Approving and presenting calls
- (c.) Approving the examination of ministers of other Presbyteries as required by G-2.0502
- (d.) Dissolving the pastoral relationship when both the congregation and the pastor concur
- (e.) Dismissing ministers to other Presbyteries
- (f.) Giving ministers permission to labor within and without the bounds of the Presbytery

In exercising these powers, the Committee acts on behalf of the Presbytery and will report all such actions to the next stated meeting of Presbytery.

4.33 The examination of ministers, as referenced in 4.32 (c.), will be conducted by the Committee on Ministry with at least four (4) members present, including two (2) ministers and two (2) elders.

4.34 SUBCOMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

The Subcommittee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) will have two (2) members and be responsible for the promotion of church vocation and, as provided in the *Book of Order*, for the enrollment and examination of all inquirers and candidates for church vocations, including persons working to become Commissioned Ruling Elders. The Moderator of CPM is an advisory (ex-officio) member of General Council who, during seasons of life in the presbytery when there are individuals under care, regularly attends General Council meetings, but in seasons when there are no individuals under care may choose not to attend meetings. The CPM moderator would be given voice but no vote so as not to impact quorum of General Council.

4.40 MISSION AND NURTURE COMMITTEE

The Mission and Nurture committee will have twelve (12) members.

4.41 Responsibilities include oversight, planning, and implementing of:

- (a) Christian education ministry, to include: youth, young adults, older adults and teacher training
- (b) Camp and Conference ministry
- (c) Congregational enrichment ministry
- (d) Mission work beyond that which a particular congregation may undertake
- (e) Oversight of mission initiatives from within the presbytery from groups like Peacemaking or Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
- (f) Coordination of visits of International Peacemakers or Mission Workers
- (g) Approving grants for mission projects commensurate with the committee's approved budget
- (h) Evangelism training for congregations

4.50 ADMINISTRATIVE MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

The Administrative Ministries Committee will have nine (9) members consisting of ministers and elders, plus the Treasurer who will have voice but not vote.

4.51 Responsibilities shall include the duties outlined in the Bylaws (5.40) and other duties that General Council may request of the Committee, or that Presbytery may assign to it

4.60 COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION

The Committee on Representation will consist of nine (9) members of equal number of males and females making sure, if possible, to include:

- One racial ethnic male
- One racial ethnic female
- One youth male or female
- One person with disability

4.61 The duties of the Committee on Representation will be those specified in the *Book of Order* G-3.0103. The Committee on Representation will also serve as the Nominating Committee. This committee will nominate to the Presbytery the following at the last stated Presbytery meeting of the year or when vacancies occur:

- (a.) Moderator of Presbytery
- (b.) Moderator-elect of Presbytery
- (c.) Moderator of each standing committee and the Subcommittee on Preparation for Ministry, except the Committee on Representation
- (d.) Members of each standing committee and the Subcommittee on Preparation for Ministry,

except the Committee on Representation

- (e.) Commissioners and alternates to the General Assembly
- (f.) Youth advisory delegates and alternates to the General Assembly
- (g.) Members of the Permanent Judicial Commission of Presbytery
- (h.) Representatives to serve on various committees and structures of the Synod and the General Assembly

No person will be nominated by the Committee who has not previously agreed to serve. When approached for service, the person will be told the nature and scope of the work involved.

4.62 GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMISSIONERS

Election of persons to serve as commissioners to General Assembly:

- (a.) Election of persons as commissioners to the General Assembly is not to be construed as an honor or privilege which is granted in turn to the ministers and churches of the Presbytery. It should be considered primarily as the assignment of a function or responsibility with due regard to how this Presbytery, the Synod, the General Assembly, and thus the whole church may be served. Commissioners to the General Assembly and their alternates will be nominated and elected at the last stated Presbytery meeting of the year. Ordinarily ministers, elder commissioners, and youth advisory delegates will not be from the same church.
- (b.) In order for the most qualified ministers to be nominated and elected, consideration will be given to service in this Presbytery. Ministers should have regularly attended meetings of Presbytery and participated in its work to have sufficient experience and awareness of how this Presbytery and higher governing bodies function. A minister who has any unexcused absences from stated meetings of Presbytery during the twenty-four (24) months preceding nomination will not be nominated.
- (c.) In order for the most qualified elders to be nominated and elected, serious consideration will be given to their qualifications, their service to their churches, and to this Presbytery. The following will be considered as minimum criteria to insure this:
 - 1. Each elder commissioner or alternate will be from a church whose session has been regularly represented at a majority of the stated meetings of Presbytery during the two (2) years preceding nomination.
 - 2. The commissioner or alternate should have regularly attended meetings and participated in the work of the Presbytery to have sufficient experience and awareness of how this Presbytery and higher governing bodies of the church function.
- (d.) Alternate commissioners will be designated by the Committee by number (1, 2, 3. etc.). In the event that a commissioner cannot attend the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk will be authorized to secure an alternate from among those elected beginning with the lowest number.

4.63 SYNOD COMMISSIONERS

According to the guidelines of the Synod of Mid-America, the Committee on Representation shall bring to the presbytery at the last stated Presbytery meeting of the year the names of commissioners to the Synod. John Calvin Presbytery has two teaching elder commissioners and two ruling elder commissioners. The terms of service are two years and a commissioner may serve consecutive terms. The Committee will also bring names for an alternate ruling elder and an alternate teaching elder who may serve at a Synod meeting if the principal commissioner is unable to attend.

Chapter Five OFFICERS AND STAFF

5.00 Officers

The officers of John Calvin Presbytery shall be the Moderator of Presbytery and the Stated Clerk as outlined in the *Book of Order* G-3.0104.

5.10 Stated Clerk

- (a.) Presbytery shall elect a Stated Clerk for a term of three (3) years. He/she will perform the duties outlined in the *Book of Order* G-3.0104. The Stated Clerk shall provide staff support for the Committee on Ministry and its Subcommittee on Preparation for Ministry.
- (b.) The work of the Stated Clerk shall be reviewed annually by the Administrative Ministries Committee.

5.20 *Section rescinded November 3, 2012.*

5.30 Staff

The staff of John Calvin Presbytery shall consist of a part-time Executive Presbyter and a part-time Stated Clerk. Temporary, contract, or regular support staff may be hired to facilitate the work of the Presbytery.

5.40 Executive Presbyter

- (a.) Presbytery shall elect an Executive Presbyter for an indefinite term who shall serve the Presbytery by providing leadership, vision, nurture, support, and encouragement in order to promote the ministry and mission of the Presbytery through its committees, congregations, and members as outlined by the Executive Presbyter Position Description.
- (b.) The Executive Presbyter shall be an ex-officio member, with voice, but without vote, of the General Council and all standing committees, and shall have those responsibilities approved by presbytery. When a ruling elder is called as Executive Presbyter, that person shall be seated with voice and vote in Presbytery.
- (c.) The Executive Presbyter shall be accountable to the Presbytery for implementation of Presbytery decisions through the General Council and the Administrative Ministries

Committee.

(d.) The work of the Executive Presbyter shall be reviewed annually by the Administrative Ministries Committee.

5.50 Administrative Staff

The Administrative Ministries Committee shall delineate the need for administrative staff to support the work of the Presbytery. The committee will be responsible to recommend the hiring or dismissal of administrative staff.

5.60 Job descriptions will be developed and appended to the *Personnel Manual*.

**Chapter Six
FINANCIAL POLICIES**

6.00 Presbytery shall elect a Treasurer for a term of (3) three years. The Treasurer will guide the Presbytery in matters of finances and will relate to the Administrative Ministries Committee and the General Council.

6.05 The Administrative Ministries Committee, in consultation with the Treasurer, will provide financial policies for the Presbytery. Such policies will be appended to the Manual of Operations and will be reviewed annually.

**Chapter Seven
HOW AMENDED**

7.00 The General Council will annually review the efficacy of this structure and *Manual of Operations*. This *Manual of Operations* may be amended by a majority of members present and voting at any meeting of John Calvin Presbytery provided notice of the proposed amendment has been included with the docket. It will be the responsibility of the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, in consultation with the Executive Presbyter and with access to full services of the Presbytery office and office staff, to edit, update, and publish this manual. The Stated Clerk will include only items approved by the Presbytery, and shall have editorial privilege to reorganize or reword for clarity unless Presbytery acts to change the wording of a particular section. Changes of policy or procedure shall be made using appropriate parliamentary processes with the manual simply reflecting changes made.

**Chapter Eight
HOW DISTRIBUTED**

8.00 The current copy of the Manual of Operations will be available for download on the presbytery website, allowing four weeks after presbytery meetings for updates to be reflected online. The Stated Clerk may provide printed copies and revisions to others and may collect a copy and mailing fee in doing this.

Chapter Nine
APPENDIX

9.00 Existing or newly-created documents relating to such matters as personnel policies, fiscal policies, or the endowment fund, shall be appended to this *Manual of Operations*.

APPENDICES

Sexual Misconduct Policy

Approved June 4, 2009

Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures

approved May 20, 2021