

THE OHIO PRESBYTERY  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
Presbytery Bylaws  
*Revised October 1, 2022*

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**PREFACE**

Our vision is to glorify God as we grow and multiply Ohio Presbytery by zealously preaching Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 1:23) and engaging in the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout this region. We are committed to function as a:

*Community* – God has called us to care for one another through worship, prayer, edification, fellowship, and accountability. We are passionate about God-centered worship as a priority in our churches and our Presbytery. We will pro-actively minister to one another and to the churches under our care. We will encourage and invest in the ministries of the men, women, youth and children in the Church.

*Court* – God has called us to uphold His truth and to maintain high expectations for those who lead His church. We are dedicated to exhibit mutual trust, encouragement and accountability of our committees, our commissions and ourselves. We will exhort our elders to be active participants in Presbytery and to be prepared for our meetings through the wise use of modern technology. We will seek to conduct our activities efficiently while not overlooking consequential matters of theology and church governance, striving to be respectful of the time commitments on our fellow elders.

*Mission* – God has called us to advance the Gospel of His kingdom to all people through church planting, church revitalization, campus ministry, and mercy ministry. We are dedicated to the forming and nurturing of healthy, growing, and reproducing churches and ministries. We will work with others of like faith and ministry, without compromising the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in order to communicate this Gospel and extend God's Kingdom.

This preface does not have the force of law but indicate the intent of the framers of these Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE 1 Name and Boundaries.**

1-1 The name of this Presbytery shall be: “THE OHIO PRESBYTERY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA.”

1-2 As ratified by the 44th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), the geographical boundaries of this Presbytery are: “All of Ohio north and east of and including the counties of Mercer, Auglaize, Shelby, Logan, Hardin, Marion, Morrow, Knox, Coshocton, Muskingum, Perry, Hocking, Vinton, and Meigs, and south and west of but not including the counties of Columbiana, Carroll, Harrison, Belmont, and Monroe.” (Appendix B)

## **ARTICLE 2 Doctrinal and Governmental Standards**

2-1 The Standards of this Presbytery shall be those of the Constitution of the PCA, “...which is subject to and subordinate to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the inerrant Word Of God, consists of its doctrinal standards set forth in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, together with the *Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, and the *Book of Church Order*, comprising the Form of Government, the Rules of Discipline and the Directory for Worship; all as adopted by the Church (*BCO*, Preface III).” These Presbytery Bylaws are not to conflict with the Constitution of the Denomination but are established to facilitate Presbytery business.

## **ARTICLE 3 Meetings**

3-1 **Stated Meetings.** This Presbytery shall hold at least three (3) stated meetings per year, with the specific dates and times to be finalized by the Executive Committee.

3-2 **Called Meetings.** Called meetings may be held as deemed necessary per *BCO* 13-12. Requests for Called Meetings must be made in writing to the Stated Clerk or Moderator according to *BCO* 13-12, and that request must be e-mailed or mailed out at least ten (10) days before the meeting according to the postmark date on the letter or e-mail.

3-3 **Time and Place of Meeting.** The place of each Stated Meeting shall be determined by Presbytery one (1) year in advance, or should Presbytery not make this decision, by the Executive Committee.

### **3-4 Meetings Held Electronically**

- a. Only when extraordinary circumstances prohibit or significantly impede the ability of the Presbytery to meet in person, stated or called meetings of Presbytery may be conducted through the use of Internet meeting services designated by the Moderator that support visible displays identifying those participating (including audio/call-in participants), identifying those seeking recognition to speak, showing (or permitting the retrieval of) the text of pending motions, showing the results of votes, and broadcasting the voice of the speaker.
- b. When such extraordinary circumstances arise, two-thirds of the entire membership of the Executive Committee must determine to conduct a meeting electronically and notice thereof shall be given to the entire membership of the Presbytery not less than seven days prior to the meeting.
- c. Any member of the Presbytery may lodge an objection to the decision with the Executive Committee, and the Executive Committee shall consider and respond to each objection in a timely manner.

- d. Under no circumstances shall electronic meetings of Presbytery include the business of (a) deliberation of guilt or innocence; (b) deliberation of a censure; or (c) final examination for ordination or licensure.

3-5 **Docket.** A Docket (see Appendix A) shall be prepared by the Executive Committee one (1) week prior to the convening of Presbytery. The following procedure will be used:

- a. All committee chairmen will be required to submit a synopsis of the business to be presented to Presbytery, along with an estimate of the amount of time needed to conduct the business. This synopsis should be submitted in writing two (2) weeks prior to the convening of Presbytery. If a committee chairman does not submit this synopsis, his committee report will be docketed at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- b. The Executive Committee shall agree on a proposed Docket, via e-mail or teleconference, at least one (1) week before the meeting. More important items of business should be placed early in the Docket. Special orders may be used to conduct urgent or weighty business at a specific time. The Docket should include only matters that require action of Presbytery. If ad interim committees are necessary, appointments should be made at the time the Presbytery approves the Docket.

3-6 **Attendance.** All Teaching Elders who are members of Presbytery shall be required to attend every Stated Meeting, and all church Sessions shall be represented at each Stated Meeting, unless providentially hindered. Presbytery suggests that Sessions delegate all of their Ruling Elders to attend at least one (1) Stated Meeting per year. When providentially hindered from such attendance, a Teaching Elder or Session shall submit an adequate excuse in writing to Presbytery (e-mail or regular mail), stating his/their reason for non-attendance. Exceptions to these requirements shall be granted automatically to Teaching Elders who have been honorably retired or declared infirm, and to overseas missionaries serving outside the bounds of Presbytery.

3-7 **Communications.** The deadline for communications to Presbytery and its committees shall be one (1) month prior to the convening of each Stated Meeting of Presbytery. Exceptions may be made by the Executive Committee.

3-8 **The Content of Each Stated Meeting.** Each Stated Meeting of Presbytery shall include a time of worship, typically led by the host Session.

3-9 Presbyters are expected to read through and prayerfully consider all materials to be discussed and come prepared to do the business of the Presbytery in an efficient and expeditious manner. Presbyters are expected to bring their own copies of the materials for Presbytery.

## **ARTICLE 4 Officers**

4-1 **Moderator.** The Moderator must be an elder and shall be elected at the last Stated Meeting of each year to serve for one (1) full year, until his successor is elected. He shall be eligible to be reelected once. He shall preside at all meetings of Presbytery and perform other duties as assigned by Presbytery and in conformity with the *BCO*. Ordinarily there shall be a rotation on successive years of Ruling and Teaching Elders.

4-2 **Vice Moderator.** The Vice Moderator will be elected to a one-year term that shall be concurrent with the one-year term of the Moderator. He shall not be eligible to serve consecutive terms as Vice Moderator. The office of Vice Moderator ordinarily will alternate between teaching elders and ruling elders, with the Vice Moderator being a ruling elder when the Moderator is a teaching elder and a

teaching elder when the Moderator is a ruling elder. It is expected that the Vice Moderator will stand for election as Moderator at the expiration of the term of the Moderator with whom the Vice Moderator is concurrently serving. He will assist the Moderator as requested by the Moderator and/or the Executive Committee.

4-3 **Stated Clerk.** The Stated Clerk must be an elder and shall be elected at the last Stated Meeting of each year for a term of three (3) years and shall be eligible for reelection. He will assume his office January 1 following. He shall receive an annual stipend to be fixed by Presbytery. He shall perform the following duties and any others assigned by Presbytery (and in conformity with the *BCO*).

- a. He shall notify the membership of Presbytery of a meeting four (4) weeks before a Stated Meeting and ten (10) days before a Called Meeting.
- b. He shall attend every Stated Meeting or make arrangements for a qualified substitute.
- c. He shall have available at each meeting the Constitution of the Denomination, the most recent Assembly Minutes, the most recent *PCA Yearbook*, the Bylaws of Presbytery, past Minutes of Presbytery, and a copy of *Robert's Rules of Order*. He shall open Stated or Called Meetings when the Moderator is not available. He shall preside until an acting Moderator may be elected.
- d. He shall present to Presbytery all communications, and/or refer them to the appropriate Presbytery committees.
- e. He shall advise the Moderator on procedural questions and serve as Presbytery's Parliamentarian.
- f. He shall promptly communicate all special orders of Presbytery and needed official correspondence.
- g. He shall have the Minutes, Proceedings, and Reports as adopted by Presbytery distributed following each Stated and Called Meeting. He shall send out the Minutes, via hardcopy and/or e-mail, no later than forty-five (45) days after each meeting, Stated or Called, and he shall carefully preserve the official copy of the permanent Minutes for annual submission to the General Assembly.
- h. He shall keep an accurate roll of Teaching Elders, Churches, Clerks of Session, Church Treasurers, Candidates, and Licentiates of Presbytery.
- i. He shall serve as liaison between the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and Presbytery.

4-4 **Recording Clerk.** The Recording Clerk must be an elder and shall be elected at the last Stated Meeting of each year to a term of three (3) years and shall be eligible for reelection. He will assume his office January 1 following. He shall receive an annual stipend to be fixed by Presbytery. His duties shall be to take a record of the meetings, to prepare a copy of the Minutes and send them to the Stated Clerk for editing, publishing, and distribution within thirty (30) days after each meeting, Stated or Called; and assist the Stated Clerk in his duties at the meetings of Presbytery, as needed.

4-5 **Treasurer.** The Treasurer must be an elder or deacon, and shall be elected at the last Stated Meeting of each year to a term of three (3) years, and shall be eligible for reelection. He will assume his office January 1 following. He shall receive an annual stipend to be fixed by Presbytery. He shall perform the following duties:

- a. He shall receive and record all funds contributed to Presbytery, these to include the General Fund from the operational askings of the Presbytery from the churches and Teaching Elders not in the pastorate and any other funds of the Permanent Committees of Presbytery.
- b. He shall disburse all designated funds as designated and all undesignated funds under the guidelines set by Presbytery and its annual budget. Committee disbursements must be approved by the respective Committee.
- c. He shall give a report and an accounting of these funds at each Stated Meeting of Presbytery.
- d. He shall prepare an annual General Fund Budget and receive the committees' annual budgets to be presented at the last Stated Meeting of each year. He shall propose the operational askings of the Presbytery from the churches at the last Stated Meeting of each year.
- e. He shall present all his books for auditing annually at the direction of the Executive Committee.

4-6 **Nominations and Elections.** All candidates for office in Presbytery will be nominated from the floor at the meeting at which they are to be elected, except that one (1) nominee for Moderator may be made at the last Stated Meeting of each year. Election shall be by majority vote of those present and voting (i.e., only "Yes" and "No" votes will be counted and abstentions will not be counted).

## **ARTICLE 5 Committees and Commissions**

### **5-1 Permanent Committees**

- a. Each Permanent Committee's minimum roster should consist of an equal number of Teaching and Ruling Elders, with at least two Ruling Elders and two Teaching Elders.
- b. Members of Permanent Committees other than the Executive Committee (see 5-2a below) shall be elected at the last Stated Meeting of each year, and members shall have a term of one year, renewable each year. Each committee shall have at least 4 members.
- c. The committee membership ordinarily should be representative of the geographical regions of the Presbytery.
- d. Campus ministers or church planters are ineligible to serve on the committee that is funding their work.
- e. Each committee shall have a Chairman and Secretary. The Chairman shall be responsible for calling and conducting the meetings of the committee, setting its agenda, reporting to Presbytery, and expediting the work of the committee. The Secretary shall be responsible for recording and distributing the Minutes of committee meetings, and for maintaining the records of the committee in conjunction with the Stated Clerk.
- f. Each committee Chairman and Secretary shall be elected annually by that particular committee. No one may serve as Chairman or Secretary of more than one (1) Permanent Committee at a time. The term of office for the Chairman and Secretary shall be one (1) year, renewable each year at the discretion of the committee.
- g. Unless otherwise noted, the quorum for committee meetings shall be at least one-half (1/2) of its members, as long as at least one (1) Teaching Elder and one (1) Ruling Elder are present.
- h. These committee meetings may take place either face-to-face and/or remotely (e.g., telephone or Internet conference). Balloting may be conducted by electronic means outside the committee

meeting. Committee meetings should not be held concurrently while the Presbytery is in session, except under extraordinary conditions by majority vote of the Presbytery.

- i. Reports will be given at each Stated Meeting of Presbytery, with Minutes and brief outline of the reports submitted to the Stated Clerk for the permanent records.
- j. The Permanent Committees consist of the Executive Committee, the Candidates & Credentials Committee, the Pastoral Care Committee, the Missions Committee, the Reformed University Fellowship Committee, and the Committee on Constitutional Business and Judicial Matters.

## **5-2 Executive Committee**

- a. For the more efficient functioning of Presbytery between Stated Meetings, an Executive Committee shall work between those meetings, to be composed of the Moderator, the Stated Clerk, the Chairmen of the other Permanent Committees, the Recording Clerk, the Treasurer and two (2) members of Presbytery elected at the same time as the Moderator, to serve one (1) year with eligibility to be reelected. The Moderator will chair the Executive Committee, and the Stated Clerk will report on the actions of this Committee at the earliest practicable time at every Stated Meeting.
- b. The responsibilities of this Committee include the dismissing of Teaching Elders to other presbyteries when no difficulties exist, the coordination of all Presbytery committees and commissions, the appointment of substitute officers and committee members until the next Stated Meeting, and any other matters that Presbytery may ask this Committee to do. A quorum of two (2) Teaching Elders and two (2) Ruling Elders of this Committee is required for it to meet and act.
- c. This committee shall nominate to Presbytery suitable persons to serve on Presbytery's Permanent Committees (last Stated Meeting of each year), suggest to Presbytery suitable persons for its nominations to the General Assembly's Permanent Committees (first Stated Meeting of each year) and Committees of Commissioners (second Stated Meeting of each year), and present nominations to fill unexpired terms whenever such vacancies occur.
- d. This committee shall help prepare the annual budget with the Treasurer and promote stewardship throughout the Presbytery. This committee shall ensure that an audit of the Presbytery's financial records is done annually, and a report of the audit findings shall be presented to the Presbytery.
- e. This committee shall be responsible for the miscellaneous details surrounding any given Presbytery meeting, including liaisons with the host church. It may make recommendations to Presbytery regarding matters not within the jurisdiction of other Permanent Committees.
- f. This committee shall be Presbytery's liaison with the General Assembly's Committees except Mission to North America (MNA) and Mission to the World (MTW), and Reformed University Fellowship (RUF).
- g. This committee shall promote the work of Christian education and nurture throughout Presbytery, including the areas of Sunday School, Christian day schools, leadership training, Christian family education, men's work, women's work, youth work, and camps, as well as continuing education for all elders.

### **5-3 Candidates & Credentials Committee**

- a. This committee shall examine candidates for the Gospel ministry seeking to come under the care of Presbytery, candidates seeking licensure, candidates seeking ordination, ministers seeking admission into the Presbytery, and shall recommend the dismissal of all of the above to other presbyteries. It shall function in accord with *BCO* 16 to 21 and other appropriate sections.
- b. It shall also work with the Missions Committee in identifying, recruiting, and nurturing potential pastors for church planting within the bounds of the Presbytery, provide ministerial and theological training seminars, and develop position papers that are acceptable to the Presbytery on issues which are important to the on-going work of the Presbytery. It shall also oversee the Presbytery's Internship Program.
- c. Between Presbytery meetings only this committee may grant permission to a Teaching Elder or candidate to move on the field following a preliminary examination.
- d. A member of this committee must recuse and dismiss himself from final deliberations and vote whenever a man appears before the committee for examination as a member of that committee member's church (e.g., in the case of a candidate for licensure) or as one being called to that committee member's church (e.g., in the case of ordination or transfer). All members may ask questions during examinations and give their view of the candidate to the whole committee. In any case, if the committee does not have a quorum available to meet and act on any matter, the Moderator may appoint temporary members of the committee to arrive at a quorum. Such action must be recorded in the minutes of the committee and delivered to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting.

### **5-4 Pastoral Care Committee**

- a. This committee shall serve as a resource for reconciliation and mediation, and encourage mutual shepherding and mentoring within the Presbytery. This committee shall consult with and advise Sessions of churches without pastors, counsel with churches and Teaching Elders experiencing difficulties, counsel parties to disputes, handle emergency situations between Presbytery meetings, and deal with all related matters.
- b. This committee shall oversee the work of Teaching Elders serving outside the bounds of Presbytery, review changes in pastoral calls, and review the reasons for absences from meetings of Presbytery.

### **5-5 Missions Committee.**

- a. This committee shall promote a concern for world missions, as well as the work of evangelism and church growth throughout the Presbytery and recommend to Presbytery any matters that should come before it regarding the home and world mission of the Church.
- b. This committee shall support and assist new church plants throughout the Presbytery in whatever form that the Lord sees fit to plant His Church (e.g., mother-daughter churches, tentmakers, church network). It will coordinate efforts between specific churches seeking to plant churches, and recruit and identify potential church planters for the Presbytery in coordination with the Candidates & Credentials Committee. This committee shall also provide supervision of mission churches, and guide them through the process of particularization.
- c. This committee shall bring before the Presbytery important MTW concerns, including missionaries with home churches in our Presbytery, potential missionaries to support and to

speaking at churches, and Presbytery-wide short-term mission trips. It shall assist local churches and missions in recruiting missionary candidates from the congregations within the Presbytery.

- d. This committee shall be the Presbytery's liaison with the General Assembly's Committee on Mission to the World (MTW) and Committee on Mission to North America (MNA).

#### **5-6 Reformed University Fellowship Committee.**

- a. This committee shall develop, and present for approval, a strategic plan for campus outreach through Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) within our Presbytery, oversee these ministries by providing oversight and supervision to the campus ministers and campus ministries, and initiate new RUF campus ministries on the campuses within our bounds as the Lord provides.
- b. This committee shall be the Presbytery's liaison with General Assembly's Permanent Committee, Reformed University Fellowship (RUF).

#### **5-7 Committee on Constitutional Business and Judicial Matters.**

- a. This committee is designed to assist the Ohio Presbytery in its relations with higher and lower courts, to assist with judicial matters, and to assist the Presbytery in upholding the Constitution of the PCA and the Bylaws of the Ohio Presbytery.
- b. This committee shall review the Session minutes and records of churches within the bounds of the Ohio Presbytery under the authority of *BCO* 40 and as described in *RAO* 16-1, -2, -3, -5, -6, and -10, to the extent that *RAO* 16 can apply to Presbyteries reviewing Session records. The committee shall ensure that Sessions are operating in accordance with the Constitution of the PCA, the Bylaws of the Ohio Presbytery, and the bylaws or other rules of the local Session.
  - (1) Sessions shall deliver two copies of their records of the previous calendar year to the committee at the February Stated Meeting of Presbytery or otherwise transmit them in electronic or physical form to the chairman of the committee by the same date.
  - (2) All minutes shall be reviewed by at least two members of the Presbytery who do not sit on the Session being reviewed, and the committee shall make the final recommendations to the Presbytery.
  - (3) Notations and exceptions of form (see *RAO* 16-6 c.) shall normally be sent to the Clerk of Session by the committee without being read before Presbytery or recorded in its minutes. Exceptions of substance shall be reported to Presbytery as recommendations to take action upon.
  - (4) Records shall be approved as without exception or with exception of form and/or substance.
  - (5) Sessions shall respond to exceptions of substance by the next stated meeting of Presbytery. This committee will also receive these responses and report those to Presbytery with their recommendation.
- c. All overtures, miscellaneous motions, and personal resolutions of a general nature (not specifically related to the work of another permanent committee) shall be referred to this committee, which shall bring appropriate recommendations to Presbytery. These matters shall be docketed for the next stated meeting of Presbytery if they are received by the committee at least one month prior to the meeting (see Bylaws 3-7), and, if docketed, they will be circulated to the Presbytery along with the docket for the meeting.



- d. All amendments to the Bylaws of the Ohio Presbytery, whether arising from another committee or by personal motion, shall be referred to this committee before it may come to the floor of Presbytery. The committee shall advise whether the proposed amendment is inconsistent with any other part of these Bylaws or the Constitution of the PCA, and the committee may give its opinion of the proposed amendment. These matters shall be docketed for the next stated meeting of Presbytery if they are received by the committee at least one month prior to the meeting (see Bylaws 3-7), and, if docketed, they will be circulated to the Presbytery along with the docket for the meeting.
- e. All references, appeals, complaints, and other matters arising under the Rules of Discipline (i.e., *BCO* 27–46) shall be referred to this committee. When an appeal or complaint is received, this committee shall advise the Presbytery regarding whether the appeal or complaint is in order (*BCO* 42-8; 43-2, -8). When a reference or other matter is received, this committee shall make recommendations to Presbytery regarding the disposition or next steps in disposing of the reference or other matter. The committee may recommend judicial commissions be appointed or the Presbytery take other steps in order to proceed with any judicial matter.
- f. This committee shall be available, formally and informally, to advise the Presbytery, committees, commissions, Sessions, and church members in the Ohio Presbytery regarding the church’s power of jurisdiction (*BCO* 3-2) and the rights of members. It shall refer shepherding matters under the church’s power of order (*BCO* 3-2) to the Pastoral Care Committee.
- g. Upon receiving a report of the General Assembly’s Review of Presbytery Records, this committee shall coordinate with other committees of the Presbytery to provide recommendations to the Presbytery to respond to the General Assembly.
- h. A member of this committee should recuse himself from any proceeding before this committee in which his impartiality might reasonably be questioned. A member must recuse himself whenever a judicial matter, other than the Review of Session Records, before the committee involves the church or a member of the church where he is a member or to which he has received a pastoral call. In any case, if the committee does not have a quorum available to meet and act on any matter, the Moderator may appoint temporary members of the committee to arrive at a quorum. Such action must be recorded in the minutes of the committee and delivered to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting.

5-8 **Ad Interim (Temporary) Committees.** These committees may be appointed by the Moderator to examine, consider and report to Presbytery, as needed (*BCO* 15-1). Their membership may vary as needed, but should reflect parity between Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders.

5-9 **Special Commissions.** Commissions may be appointed, as needed, according to *BCO* 15-1 through 15-3. When Presbytery establishes a commission to ordain and/or install a pastor, or to examine officer candidates, and/or to organize a church, the quorum shall be set at two (2) Teaching Elders and two (2) Ruling Elders.

## **ARTICLE 6 Expenses of the Presbytery**

6-1 Funds for the current expenses of Presbytery shall be provided by an operational asking from each congregation and each Teaching Elder not in the PCA pastorate, in the amount to be determined annually by the Presbytery at the last Stated Meeting of each year upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee. The asking is to be based on a church’s membership in the latest *PCA Yearbook*.

6-2 Disbursements from this fund are authorized for the following:

- a. The stipends and expenses of the Stated Clerk, Recording Clerk and Treasurer.
- b. Expenses of members of Presbytery's committees and commissions.
- c. Any other disbursements authorized by specific action of Presbytery.

6-3 The Missions Committee is authorized to have its own Treasury, to be disbursed and kept by the Presbytery Treasurer. Other committees may have their own Treasuries as they are authorized by Presbytery action, and these are to be disbursed and kept by the Presbytery Treasurer.

## **ARTICLE 7 Presbytery Position on Properties of Congregations**

7-1 This Presbytery forever declares that it does not have nor will ever have an interest in or claim on the real property and the personal property of the constituent congregations. Such properties will forever remain within the control, management, and ownership of the membership of that congregation. Presbytery through its officers shall never claim the right to determine who is the congregation in matters regarding property.

## **ARTICLE 8 Men Laboring Outside the Ecclesiastical Bounds of Presbytery.**

8-1 The Teaching Elder shall provide to the Credentials Committee a paper which explains the ministry he seeks to engage in, his reasons for laboring outside of this Presbytery's ecclesiastical boundaries, and his commitment to the principles of Presbyterianism. The Teaching Elder shall also provide as much documentation as the Candidates & Credentials Committee may require to determine the legitimacy and viability of the ministry, which would include such things as bylaws, articles of incorporation, list of directors, and any affiliations of that organization with other organizations (either as affiliates or associates).

8-2 The Teaching Elder shall provide a written statement signed by the appropriate and authorized agent of the ministry acknowledging the ministry's realization that the Teaching Elder's credentials are held by this Presbytery, and he is subject to the Constitution of the PCA and the Bylaws of this Presbytery. The statement should also include a commitment by the ministry to resolve conflicts with the Teaching Elder following the guidelines in the PCA *BCO* as appropriately adapted to a non-PCA setting. This may include asking the ministry to commit in principle to designate this Presbytery as the court of jurisdiction in resolving issues concerning the Teaching Elder. State laws requiring non-profit organizations and/or incorporations to specify arbitration agents should be satisfied by naming this Presbytery with reference to Teaching Elder-related matters.

8-3 The Teaching Elder shall ordinarily provide evidence that either he or the ministry has obtained professional liability insurance to cover him in his official duties at said ministry, or an appropriate notarized waiver of some form should this expectation violate the conscience of either the minister or the ministry. In any event, this Presbytery shall obtain liability insurance to protect herself from any problems that might arise in connection with her indirect involvement with this particular ministry.

8-4 The Teaching Elder shall provide updated information with his annual report and request to renew his permission to labor out of bounds so as to keep the Presbytery current on matters documented in 8-1 – 8-3 above.

8-5 Presbytery realizes circumstances will vary, but commits to strive to maintain a level of consistency in the expectations and requirements placed on ministries who desire to have one of our Teaching Elders serve in their midst.

8-6 Presbytery shall provide to ministries with which we are indirectly involved by virtue of having a Teaching Elder in their midst a copy of the “Peacemaker’s Pledge” as a guideline concerning conflict resolution (Appendix C).

## **ARTICLE 9 Parliamentary Procedure**

9-1 It is the responsibility of the Moderator to preside over meetings equitably and efficiently, protecting the privileges of parliamentary minorities while refusing to allow the meeting to become mired in minutiae of procedural rules. Likewise, it is the responsibility of all commissioners to exercise proper humility and deference to one another, remembering their ordination vows to submit to one another in the Lord.

9-2 All parliamentary procedures shall be in accordance with the provisions of the *BCO* and these Bylaws. The Stated Clerk shall serve as Parliamentarian, and in his absence, a commissioner of Presbytery may be appointed by the Moderator to assist him in these matters, who shall serve only for the term of the actual meeting in which he is appointed. It is the intention of Presbytery that meetings be conducted according to generally-accepted procedures of parliamentary bodies found in *Robert’s Rules of Order*.

9-3 Discussion and debate of any main motion shall be limited to thirty (30) minutes. This time may be extended by majority vote for a period of no more than fifteen (15) additional minutes at a time.

## **ARTICLE 10 Suspension and Amendment**

10-1 Requirements within these Bylaws may be temporarily suspended, amended, or revised for a period not exceeding one year at any Stated Meeting of Presbytery by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting, except for Articles 1, 2, 7 and 10 or if such suspension, amendment, or revision would be in violation of any part of the *BCO*.

10-2 Permanent amendments, the repealing of a Bylaw, or the adoption of an additional Bylaw, to be valid, must be proposed in writing at a Stated Meeting, approved by two-thirds (2/3) vote of that meeting, and ratified by another two-thirds (2/3) vote at the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery. Article 1 can be changed only by action of the General Assembly; Articles 2 and Article 7 are unamendable.

10-3 “Those present and voting”, as described in this Article, means that only “Yes” and “No” votes will be counted, and abstentions will not be counted.

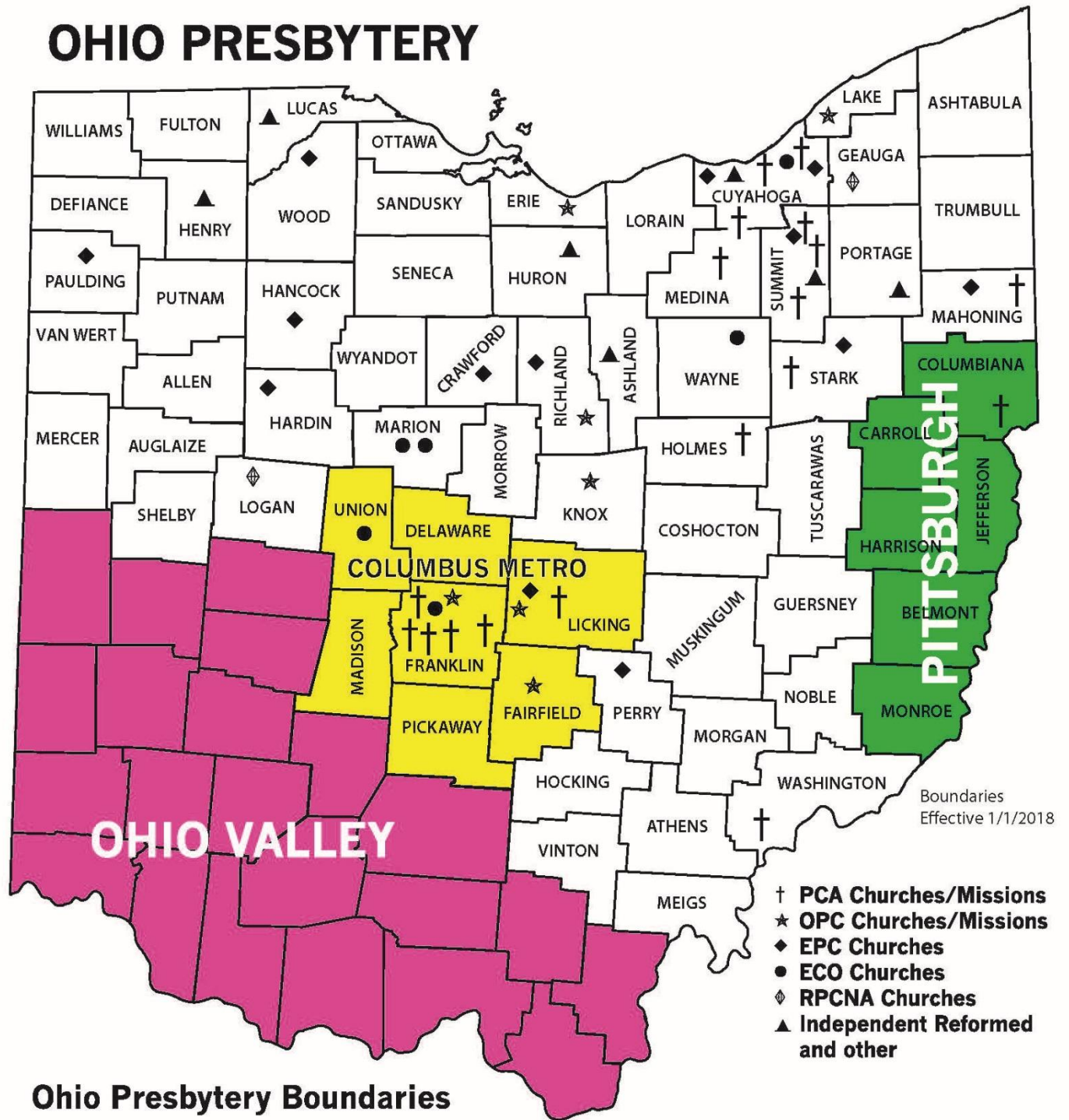
## **APPENDIX A. Sample Docket for Stated Meetings**

01. Worship, Constituting Prayer, and Seasons of Prayer
02. Formation of the Roll
03. Election of the Moderator (last Stated Meeting of each year)
04. Reading and Approval of Previous Minutes
05. Presentation and Adoption of the Docket
06. Introduction of Visiting Brethren
07. Appointment of Ad Interim Committees (if needed)
08. Reports of Commissions and/or Ad Interim Committees
09. Report of the Executive Committee (as needed)
10. Report of the Stated Clerk
11. Reports of the Permanent Committees
12. Reports of the Churches
13. Miscellaneous Business
14. Set Place and Time of the Next Meeting
15. Adjournment with Prayer

### NOTES:

1. Church reports (optional) will be channeled through the Stated Clerk for distribution to the Presbytery as needed.
2. The Executive Committee may rearrange the necessary committees and order of business in the above Docket.

**APPENDIX B. Presbytery Boundaries**



## APPENDIX C. Peacemaker's Pledge

*(Adapted from The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict. © 1997 by Ken Sande)*

### A Commitment to Biblical Conflict Resolution

As people reconciled to God by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we believe that we are called to respond to conflict in a way that is remarkably different from the way the world deals with conflict.<sup>1</sup> We also believe that conflict provides opportunities to glorify God, serve other people, and grow to be like Christ.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, in response to God's love and in reliance on His grace, we commit ourselves to respond to conflict according to the following principles:

**Glorify God** — Instead of focusing on our own desires or dwelling on what others may do, we will seek to please and honor God—by depending on His wisdom, power, and love; by faithfully obeying His commands; and by seeking to maintain a loving, merciful, and forgiving attitude.<sup>3</sup>

**Get the log out of your own eye** — Instead of attacking others or dwelling on their wrongs, we will take responsibility for our own contribution to conflicts—confessing our sins, asking God to help us change any attitudes and habits that lead to conflict, and seeking to repair any harm we have caused.<sup>4</sup>

**Gently Restore** — Instead of pretending that conflict doesn't exist or talking about others behind their backs, we will choose to overlook minor offenses, or we will talk directly and graciously with those whose offenses seem too serious to overlook. When a conflict with another Christian cannot be resolved in private, we will ask others in the body of Christ to help us settle the matter in a biblical manner.<sup>5</sup>

**Go and be reconciled** — Instead of accepting premature compromise or allowing relationships to wither, we will actively pursue genuine peace and reconciliation—forgiving others as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us, and seeking just and mutually beneficial solutions to our differences.<sup>6</sup>

By God's grace, we will apply these principles as a matter of stewardship, realizing that conflict is an opportunity, not an accident. We will remember that success, in God's eyes, is not a matter of specific results but of faithful, dependent obedience. And we will pray that our service as peacemakers brings praise to our Lord and leads others to know His infinite love.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 6:27-36; Gal. 5:19-26; Matt. 5:9.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 10:31-11:1; Rom. 8:28-29; James 1:2-4.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 10:31; James 4:1-3; Psalm 37:1-6; Phil. 4:2-9; Col. 3:1-4; 1 Peter 2:12; John 14:15; James 3:17-18; Rom. 12:17-21; Mark 11:25.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 7:3-5; 1 John 1:8-9; Prov. 28:13; Col. 3:5-14; Luke 19:8.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 18:15-20; James 5:9; Prov. 19:11; Gal. 6:1-2; Eph. 4:29; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; 1 Cor. 6:1-8.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. 5:23-24; Matt. 6:12; Eph. 4:1-3, 32; Matt. 7:12; Phil. 2:3-4.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. 25:14-21; 1 Peter 2:19, 4:19; Rom. 12:18; John 13:34-35.