

Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse Bylaws and Standing Rules

Adopted November 19, 2011
Revised June 5, 2012

1.000 Theological Foundations

*I am the true vine and my Father is the vinegrower . . .
Abide in me as I abide in you.
Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine,
neither can you unless you abide in me.
I am the vine, you are the branches.
Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit,
because apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15: 1, 4-5 NRSV)*

- 1.010 In his departing words, our Lord Jesus Christ commanded his followers to fulfill the Great Commission as found in Matthew: 19-20. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
- 1.020 We remember that Jesus is with us, directing us and guiding us as we strive to continue his work on earth.
- 1.030 We remember that we are part of the larger Church, to which we are called, established by God to be Christ’s hands and feet in the world.
- 1.040 We remember that Christ is the Head of the Church, and so we seek to follow his direction, using the gifts of the Spirit which we are so freely given, and fulfilling our vows to serve God’s people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.
- 1.050 We are a connectional Church. We are connected in relationship to God, to one another, and to the world. “We affirm that together as a representative body, the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse, we have heard our Lord command and compel us all to carry out the Great Commission. We share a common mandate to cross streets and neighborhoods, cultures and continents to make disciples who reach levels of maturity capable of carrying out the will and purpose of Jesus Christ.” (*Quote from the Transition Team report, p. 9*)
- 1.060 As the blessed creation of God, branches on the vine rooted in Christ, united and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we seek to bear fruit for the kingdom of God, as we work together in order to fulfill the Great Commission as commanded by our Lord. Apart from him we can do nothing. Abiding in the vine, we claim the assurance that we will be faithful witnesses to the love of God through our service and ministry to others offered in Christ’s name and to the glory of God: Creator, Redeemer, and Friend.

2.000 A Connectional Church

- 2.010 Presbyterian congregations (PCUSA, or Federated, or United) agree to be part of a Presbytery together.
- 2.020 PCUSA Presbyterians share a common theology with other Reformed Churches (ELCA Lutherans,

UMC Methodists, UCC Congregationalists, RCA Reformed Churches), or as established by By-Laws and Articles of Agreement with ABC Baptist, DC Disciples, and ECA Episcopal congregations. What unites Cayuga-Syracuse as a Presbytery is our faith in the Triune God, trust (hope) in one another, and shared desire for connection (love) in communion, mission, worship, fellowship and accountability. While differing interpretations and cultures are present in each congregation's identity, what affects any one congregation affects the whole Presbytery; the mission, preaching, ministry and sacraments of each, are indicative of the whole of the Presbytery. Therefore, the many congregations are not alone or in competition with one another, but sharing strengths and weaknesses, concerns and opportunities for building up the body of Christ together. Together we are the Presbytery, we are one Vine with many branches. The Presbytery, so conceived, emphasizes the relationship of communion and shared ministry between representatives of congregations, and between Teaching Elders, rather than as a corporate and administrative institution.

- 2.030 The Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse as defined by the FOG is a “council,” composed of the 40 congregations (Presbyterian, Federated and United) bounded by Oswego, Mexico and Parish Hastings to the North; Whitelaw, Chittenango and Morrisville to the East; King Ferry to the South; and Aurora, Auburn and Port Byron to the West, as represented through the Ruling Elders of local Sessions/Councils, and the Teaching Elders (Minister Members) of this Presbytery regardless of denomination of ordination.
- 2.040 Responsibility of Voice without Vote shall be granted to all Certified personnel validated by the Presbytery (Commissioned Ruling Elders, Certified Christian Educators, Certified Business Administrators), who are not currently employed by a church;
- 2.041 whereas responsibility of Voice with Vote shall be granted to all Certified personnel as validated by Presbytery who are currently employed by the churches of this Presbytery.
- 2.050 Corresponding Membership (Voice without Vote) shall be granted to all ordained ministers/priests of other Religions and Christian denominations, as well as to those members of other Presbyteries, Synods and the General Assembly.
- 2.060 All currently serving Committee Members of Presbytery shall have voice without Vote. Parity of Teaching Elder/ Ruling Elder imbalance shall be established by granting all elected installed members of the Leadership Team responsibility of Voice and Vote.
- 2.070 No pastoral relationship may be established, changed or dissolved without the approval of the Presbytery (G-2.0502). The Presbytery shall review annually the work of all teaching elders engaged in validated ministries outside the congregation. Initiation of Annual Validation Reporting shall be the responsibility of the Teaching Elder seeking validation (G-2.0508) and shall occur prior to the Fall meeting of Presbytery each year.
- 2.800 Rather than the Institution of a Presbytery collecting and distributing funds to enable struggling congregations, individual congregations shall be encouraged to partner in support of growing and resurrecting healthy congregations.

3.000 Definitions

- 3.010 The Presbytery is that body of the Church comprised of all of the Presbyterian (United or Federated) congregations (as represented by particular Ruling Elders), all Teaching Elders and Certified personnel, within a geographic area; accountable to both the particular churches, the Synod and the General Assembly.

- 3.020 The Leadership Team of the Presbytery is what has at various times been described as “The Council, The General Council, The Executive Committee, etc.
- 3.030 Teaching Elders are ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament, whether serving a congregation, in a validated ministry, serving at large, serving outside the geographic bounds of the Presbytery, or Honorably Retired.
- 3.040 Ruling Elders are the Ordained Elders of a particular church.
- 3.050 The quorum for any regular (stated) or special (called) meeting of the Presbytery shall be a minimum of five Teaching Elders who are members of the Presbytery, and five Ruling Elders, from five different congregations.

4.000 Officers and Staff of Presbytery and Leadership Team

- 4.010 The Officers of the Presbytery shall be: Moderator of Presbytery; Vice Moderator of Presbytery; Chair of Leadership Team; Vice Chair of Leadership Team; Stated Clerk; and Treasurer, elected with parity (fair representation) between Teaching and Ruling Elders.
- 4.011 All officers shall be elected according to G-3.0111; election to occur at the October meeting of Presbytery; installation to occur at the following May Presbytery; with the intervening months, to be a time of transition and training.
- 4.012 Presbytery Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer shall be ex officio members of the Leadership Team, with Voice and without Vote.
- 4.020 The Moderator of Presbytery shall be elected for a two (2) year term, without renewal and shall have authority and responsibilities according to G-3.0104; shall be a member of the Leadership Team without Vote; and shall have responsibility to speak on behalf of the Presbytery.
- 4.021 The Vice Moderator of Presbytery shall be elected for a two (2) year term, without renewal, concurrent with the Moderator of Presbytery. In the absence or at the request of the Moderator of Presbytery, the Vice Moderator may discharge any or all of the functions of the Moderator.
- 4.022 The Chair of the Leadership Team shall be elected for a three (3) year term, without renewal, and shall have authority necessary for preserving order and for conducting efficiently the business of the Leadership Team.
- 4.023 The Vice Chair of the Leadership Team shall be elected for a three (3) year term, without renewal, concurrent with the Chair. In the absence or at the request of the Chair of the Leadership Team, the Vice-Chair may carry-out any or all of the functions of the Chair of the Leadership Team.
- 4.030 The Stated Clerk shall be employed full-time (exempt) and elected for a five (5) year term; having the responsibilities outlined in G-3.0104; as well as serving as Web-spinner, creating, updating and posting to the Presbytery's Website and/or future means of communications, accountable to the Leadership Team and Presbytery. The Stated Clerk shall serve as parliamentarian and communicator within the Presbytery and to other Councils. In case of an absence of the Stated Clerk, the Stated Clerk may appoint a Teaching Elder or Ruling Elder within the Presbytery to serve as Acting Clerk. The Stated Clerk is directly accountable to the Leadership Team through the Chairperson of the Leadership Team. If after a diligent search the presbytery is unable to find a person to take this full time position, it may be divided into two, stated clerk and webspinner.

4.040 The Treasurer shall be elected for a five (5) year term and shall have the responsibility for all monies collected and distributed by the Presbytery as defined by the Manual of Operations.

4.050 The Bookkeeper shall continue to be shared with neighboring Presbyteries according to the existing contract.

4.060 The CRE Dean is as defined by the CRE Manual.

5.000 Stated Meetings of the Presbytery

5.010 Regular Stated meetings shall be held in accordance with G-3.0105 and G-3.0301.

5.020 There shall be two (2) regular Stated meetings a year (May & October) as directed under G-3.0304.

5.030 The Annual Meeting shall be in May.

6.000 The Leadership Team

6.010 Leadership Team shall consist of 15 members made up of representation of diversity of Churches. Leadership Team membership will be for a three (3) year term without possibility for immediate renewal.

6.011 Following the example of the particular churches, the Leadership Team shall serve as “session” and “trustees” of Presbytery. The Leadership Team members are therefore elected to serve with all responsibility as The Trustees of the Presbytery.

6.012 Responsibilities of the Leadership Team shall include all functions of: Preparation of Candidates; Examination of Candidates; Calling of Pastors; Validation of Ministries as outlined in G-3.0307; CRE Dean; Moderators for Sessions; Keeping of Records; Review and Action on Overtures; Review of Minutes; Finance; Property Legal Actions; Leadership Development;

6.013 The Leadership Team is responsible to appoint Administrative Commissions, Investigative Commissions, and Ad Hoc Committees as needed; each to be dissolved upon completion of their charge, or with the re-constitution of the Leadership Team. Said Ad Hoc committees may be reconstituted at the discretion of the Leadership Team.

6.014 Meetings of the Leadership Team, Committees, and Commissions may be conducted by electronic means, providing there is opportunity for simultaneous aural communication and the usual standards for providing notice of the meeting are followed. Consensus reached through the exchange of information by email shall be considered advisory until the next regular meeting of the body, when it shall be confirmed or rejected by vote.

6.020 Commissioned Ruling Elder Program

Refer to the Commissioned Ruling Elder Manual and CRE Dean

6.030 “Preparation for Ministry and Examination of Candidates”

6.031 As set forth in G-2.06 the Presbytery, through the Leadership Team, has responsibility for the covenant relationship with those preparing to become Teaching Elders, their Sessions and congregations.

6.032 Examination of Candidates for Ordination shall be done by the Presbytery.

6.040 “Calling, Validating Ministries, Moderators of Session”

6.041 As set forth in G-3.0303 the Leadership Team has specific authority and responsibilities (a through f) for relationship with Teaching Elders and Sessions. The Leadership Team shall have authority for fulfilling these functions and/or delegating these responsibilities to an ad hoc group as needed, reporting these actions to the Presbytery in a timely manner.

6.042 Routine Business shall be resolved by the Leadership Team:

- 6.042a. Appointing Moderators for Churches without an Installed Pastor,
- 6.042b. Approving and Presenting Calls for Ministry,
- 6.042c. Transferring Membership of Clergy to other Presbyteries and between Denominations,
- 6.042d. Dissolving Pastoral Relationships in cases where pastor and congregation concur,
- 6.042e. Granting Permission to Labor outside the geographic Bounds of the Presbytery,
- 6.042f. Granting Validation of Ministries outside the Parish,
- 6.042g. Approving Ministerial and Certified Personnel Compensations and Benefits,
- 6.042h. Encouraging Teaching elders to engage in Continuing Education,
- 6.042i. Encouraging Sessions to support the Certification processes for other-than Teaching Elders,
- 6.042j. Encouraging all Clergy and Congregations to participate in the Benefits Plan of the PCUSA,
- 6.042k. Ministering to Widows of Clergy,
- 6.042l. Administer the Presbytery's Salary Supplement Fund,
- 6.042m. Assist and Counsel Retired Clergy regarding necessary changes due to Retirement.

6.043 Business Needing to be brought before the Presbytery for Action:

Annually establish Minimum Terms of Call and Salaries for the Teaching Elders and Certified Persons (G-3.0303c).

6.044 Business Needing to be delegated through “the Committee On Ministry” Member of Leadership Team:

- 6.044a Developing Strategy for the Mission of each Church within the Presbytery (G-3.0303a),
- 6.044b Controlling location of congregations, congregations desiring to move, divide, dissolve or be dismissed (G-3.0303b),
- 6.044c Counseling Sessions concerning reported difficulties within a congregation (G-3.0303d),
- 6.044d Assuming original jurisdiction when a Session cannot exercise its authority (G-3.0303e),
- 6.044e In cooperation with the congregation and those exercising the Trustee function within the Leadership Team acting upon requests for permission regarding property (G-3.0303f),
- 6.044f Guiding Sessions/Councils through the Pastoral Search Process,
- 6.044g Guiding Congregations through Discernment of Transitions,
- 6.044h Guiding Sessions in conversations with other Denominations,
- 6.044i Any Question of Ministerial Misconduct,
- 6.044j Guiding Congregations through Training of Commissioned Ruling Elders, Educators, Business Administrators.
- 6.044k Annually, the Leadership Team shall appoint opportunities for the Sessions of local churches to have their Minutes and Rolls reviewed.

6.050 Finance and Property

6.051 As set forth in G-3.0113, the Leadership Team shall be led by a member knowledgeable in finance to prepare, adopt, report and review on a budget in the following way:

- 6.051a The Leadership Team shall receive budgetary requests from all Standing and Ad Hoc committees and work groups.
- 6.051b The Leadership Team shall enter into dialogue with a representative from each group requesting funds.
- 6.051c The Leadership Team shall prepare a unified budget for the following year, based on stated priorities of the Presbytery and available financial resources.

- 6.051d In presenting the budget, the Leadership Team shall communicate to the Presbytery all requests for funding, along with its recommendation concerning the advisability of approving each request and the amount and timing of funding if approved.
- 6.052 The Leadership Team shall submit financial reports and per capita and mission giving reports quarterly to every local Church and Minister/CRE/CE/BA.
- 6.053 The Leadership Team shall have a full financial review as delineated in G-3.0113.
- 6.054 As set forth in G-4.01, the Leadership Team, serving as Trustees of the Presbytery, has specific authority and responsibilities as delineated in G-4.0101 and G-4.02. The Leadership Team shall be led by a member knowledgeable in Finance and by the Treasurer of the Presbytery to carry out these responsibilities in the following way:
 - 6.054a The Treasurer of Presbytery shall be the Treasurer of the Leadership Team ex-officio, without vote.
 - 6.054b The Leadership Team shall administer the Presbytery's Investments.
 - 6.544c The Leadership Team shall have full authority and discretion to endorse funding applications to GA & Synod, etc.
 - 6.054d The Leadership Team shall have charge over all legal matters of the Presbytery, funded as needed by the Investments.
 - 6.054e The Leadership Team shall provide appropriate liability insurance coverage for the Presbytery, its officers, and its staff.
- 6.060 Response Coordination Team and Conflict Resolution Team shall continue as previously created by the Leadership Team (and its predecessor Council).

7.000 Leadership Development

- 7.010 Taking advantage of ever-developing forms of communication, the Presbytery shall take advantage of webinars, discussion groups and distance learning opportunities.
- 7.020 The Presbytery personnel (All Teaching Elders, CREs, Cert. C.E.s, Cert. B.A.s) are encouraged to gather in small groups for book discussion, sharing leadership skills, sharing common interests and concerns.
- 7.030 The Teaching and Ruling Elders and all Certified Personnel are strongly encouraged to meet together at least annually for debate of issues of contemporary concern to the church in joint assembly or separately.
- 7.040 Any member of Presbytery may invite others to join in these learning opportunities and/or debates. All shall be provided with expectation of transparency and openness, accessibility and emphasis on ministry and witness.
- 7.050 In the absence of others creating Leadership Development opportunities, the Leadership Team shall make recommendations to the body of the Presbytery.

STANDING COMMITTEES

8.000 The Nominating Committee of Presbytery

- 8.010 The Nominating Committee shall consist of nine persons: the five members of Leadership Team, who have just finished their three year term, to then serve a one year term on Nominating Committee; the Nominating Committee chair shall be a previous Moderator of Presbytery, without vote unless in the case of a tie; three members that have been nominated by Nominating Committee and elected by Presbytery at the Presbytery's Annual Meeting. The Nominating Committee shall consist of no more than five Teaching Elders. No person shall hold office for more than a one year term, without a one year interval.
- 8.020 The Nominating Committee shall present all nominations to the Presbytery at its annual meeting in

May.

8.030 The Nominations shall include:

- 8.031 Officers: Moderator of Presbytery, Vice-Moderator of Presbytery, Chair of Leadership Team, Vice Chair of Leadership Team, Treasurer and Stated Clerk;
- 8.032 Members of the Permanent Judicial Commission, except as otherwise provided in the standing rules;
- 8.033 Members of Committee on Representation;
- 8.034 Members of the Leadership Team.
- 8.034a If a vacancy is to be filled on a standing committees (Nominating, Representation, and PJC), Leadership Team has the authority to fill that vacancy for the remainder of that year without the vote of Presbytery.
- 8.035 Representatives to Synod Nominating Committee;
- 8.036 Representatives to inter-presbytery, inter-denominational agencies.
- 8.037 At the annual meeting in May, The Nominating Committee shall present nominations for:
- 8.038 Teaching & Ruling Elder Commissioners (and Alternates) to the next General Assembly;
- 8.039 Teaching & Ruling Elder Commissioners (and Alternates) to the Synod of the Northeast Assembly (3 year term);
- 8.040 Youth Advisory Delegates to both General Assembly and Synod Assembly.
- 8.041 If a vacancy is to be filled on The Leadership Team or an Officer, the matter shall be brought before a Regular Stated meeting of Presbytery or a Special meeting of the Presbytery shall be called.

9.000 Record Keeping; Overtures; Minutes Review

- 9.010 Annually, the Leadership Team shall appoint opportunities for the Sessions of local churches to have their Minutes and Rolls reviewed.
- 9.020 In preparation for the first meeting of the Calendar year in alternate years, the Stated Clerk/Webspinner shall make available to every local Church, Teaching Elder, Commissioned Ruling Elder, and Certified Christian Educator, the Overtures as arising from the last General Assembly meeting, for action of ratification by the Presbytery.

10.000 The Committee On Representation

- 10.010 The Committee on Representation shall consist of three (3) members of the Leadership Team, appointed annually.
- 10.020 This committee shall fulfill the functions as defined in G-3.0103

11.000 The Permanent Judicial Commission

- 11.010 The Presbytery shall elect a Permanent Judicial Commission consisting of seven (7) members, divided as evenly as possible between Teaching and Ruling Elders. It shall meet and elect from its members a moderator and a clerk (D-5.0201) Members of this commission shall serve six year terms according to D-5.0102.
- 11.020 This Commission shall have powers and responsibilities and shall conduct its proceedings as prescribed by the Book of Discipline.

12.00 Amending and/or Suspension of Standing Rules

- 12.01 These Standing Rules, insofar as they are not part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), may be suspended at any Stated Meeting of the Presbytery by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting. They may be amended at any Stated meeting by two-thirds vote of members present and voting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been previously

submitted to the Leadership Team for its consideration. Leadership Team shall transmit the proposed amendment to members of Presbytery along with the docket, which is mailed ten days in advance.