

IOWA PRESBYTERY
Presbyterian Church in America

Standing Rules
Updated November 11, 2013

STANDING RULES
Iowa Presbytery
Presbyterian Church in America

1. NAME, MISSION, STANDARDS, BOUNDARIES, AND POWERS

1.1 Name. The name of this presbytery shall be “Iowa Presbytery.”

1.2 Mission. The mission of Iowa Presbytery shall be to proclaim faithfully the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world, as taught in the Holy Scriptures, and to edify faithfully the Church according to the teachings of Jesus Christ as set forth in the Holy Scriptures.

1.3 Standards. Iowa Presbytery is a presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), and as such, the standards of this presbytery shall be those stated in the *Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America (BCO)*; and any and all Standing Rules of this presbytery shall be in accord with the *BCO*.

1.4 Boundaries. The area of Iowa Presbytery shall include all of the state of Iowa except Pottawattamie County.

1.5 Powers. The presbytery shall have and exercise all rights, powers, and privileges conferred upon, granted, and delegated to the presbytery by the Book of Church Order (chapter 13) of the Presbyterian Church in America

2. MEETINGS

2.1 Stated Meetings. Three stated meetings shall be held each year, convening on the second Saturday of March, the second Saturday of July, and the second Saturday of November.

2.2 Adjourned Meetings. Adjourned meetings of stated meetings may be held as deemed advisable. Matters permissible for such consideration at such adjourned meetings shall be those which would have been eligible for consideration at the stated meeting which resulted in such adjourned meeting.

2.3 Called Meetings. The Moderator shall call a special meeting at the request or with the concurrence of three teaching elders and three ruling elders from at least three different churches. Should the Moderator for any reason be unable to act, the Stated Clerk shall, under the same requirements, issue the call. If both the Moderator and Stated Clerk are unable to act, any three teaching elders and three ruling elders of at least three different churches shall have power to call a meeting. In all the preceding circumstances the teaching elders and ruling elders concurring with or requesting the called meeting shall do so with full intent of attending and participating in the called meeting. Notice of the special meeting shall be sent not less than twenty-one days in advance to each teaching elder and to the Clerk of Session of every church. In the notice, the purpose of the meeting shall be stated, and no business other than the named notice is to be transacted.

2.4 Quorum. The quorum for all meetings shall be three teaching elders and three ruling elders, representing at least three different churches.

2.5 Docket. A proposed docket setting forth the order of business shall be prepared and mailed at least two weeks before each stated meeting of presbytery by the Stated Clerk. A docket shall be adopted by the presbytery, by a majority vote, and may be amended at any time during the meeting by the moderator.

2.6 Place of Meeting. Meetings of Iowa Presbytery will ordinarily be held at one of the member churches on a rotating basis. The schedule of meeting locations will be determined and maintained by the Moderator and Stated Clerk. The host church will be responsible for organization of the worship service and lunch. In the event of a scheduling conflict it is the responsibility of the host church to arrange a swap with another congregation and communicate this to the Stated Clerk.

2.7 Approval of Minutes. Minutes shall be approved at the succeeding meeting.

2.8 Distribution of Minutes. The official minutes of Iowa Presbytery are **not** published. Draft copies of the minutes are circulated to members of presbytery for the convenience of presbytery. Further dissemination is **not authorized**, except for legitimate presbytery purposes such as providing each member of a session with a copy.

3. MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

3.1 Membership. The membership of the presbytery shall be in accordance with BCO13-1.

3.2 Mission Churches. Mission churches, while not yet organized, may be represented at presbytery. The representative shall be appointed by the evangelist, session, or commission charged with the governance of such mission church in accordance with BCO 5-3.

3.3 Corresponding Members. Corresponding members from recognized judicatories shall be seated with the right to the floor but without the power to vote.

3.4 Attendance.

- A. Teaching elders and ruling elder delegates **shall** be expected to arrive on time and to attend all sessions unless specifically excused by the presbytery.
- B. Teaching elders laboring outside the boundaries of the presbytery shall report at each November stated meeting concerning their location and activities. The term “outside of boundaries” shall include teaching elders serving churches and ministries not under the jurisdiction of the presbytery.

- C. Teaching elders who are honorably retired or permanently disabled are exempt from the above requirements, provided they are not serving a church as stated supply.

4. OFFICERS

4.1 Officers/Directors. The affairs of the corporation shall be managed by the following four (4) officers: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Stated Clerk and Treasurer, which shall also be known as and shall constitute the Board of Directors for purposes of Iowa law.

4.2 Moderator. The presbytery shall elect a Moderator annually. The moderator shall preside at all meetings of presbytery. Every effort shall be made to alternate between teaching elder and ruling elder. He shall appoint members of all special committees and commissions unless in specific cases presbytery reserves this matter to itself.

4.3 Vice-Moderator. The presbytery shall elect a vice-moderator annually. He shall preside at any meeting in the absence of or by the request of the moderator.

4.4 Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk shall be elected for a term of three years. He shall be eligible to succeed himself in office. He shall perform the duties as outlined by BCO 10 & 32 and any other assigned by the presbytery.

4.5 Treasurer. The presbytery shall elect for a term of three years, with eligibility for reelection at their discretion, a treasurer, whose duties it shall be to receive funds sent to presbytery by the churches, other organizations or individuals and to disburse funds as designated by contributors and, in the approved budget of Iowa Presbytery.

4.6 Terms of Office. The vice-moderator, stated clerk, and treasurer shall be elected at the November stated meeting and shall assume their duties 1 January. Vacancies in any of the offices may be filled at any meeting of the presbytery.

5. MINISTRIES OF PRESBYTERY

5.1 Election and Terms. Members of committees specified in Section 5.3 hereof shall be elected at the November stated meeting for terms of two years and in two yearly classes designated by the last full year of service of the term, which shall be completed at the end of the November meeting. Those elected to committees shall assume their duties at the end of the November meeting. Each Committee must have at least two ruling elders and two teaching elders in its membership. Any member in good standing of Iowa Presbytery or of a church that is a member of Iowa Presbytery is eligible for committee membership.

5.2 Composition and Records.

- A. Each committee shall be composed of no less ruling elders than teaching elders.

- B. Each committee of presbytery shall keep minutes of its meetings and records of other proceedings. Each committee shall determine its own method of making such records, but the official records shall be on file with the chairman or convener.

5.3 Committees and Their Responsibilities. The committees which shall report to each stated meeting of presbytery are as follows:

A. Administration/Nomination Committee (Ad/Nom)

- 1. The affairs of the Church in the areas of administration and nominating men for presbytery committees are assigned to the Ad/Nom Committee, whose duties and authority shall be designated by the presbytery.

B. Candidates and Credentials Committee (C&C)

- 1. The affairs of the Church relating to candidates for the gospel ministry and the credentials of teaching elders are assigned to the C&C Committee, whose duties and authority shall be designated by the presbytery.

C. Care of Churches

- 1. The affairs of the Church regarding the pastoral care of teaching elders and congregations of the presbytery including ministerial changes of call (Dissolution of Pastoral Relations) are assigned to the Care of Churches Committee
- 2. When the Care of Churches committee is addressing church conflict, it shall do so in accordance with Biblical principles (e.g. Ken Sande's book *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*).
- 3. Care of Churches Committee (or appointed members) shall ordinarily conduct an exit interview with every installed TE before he leaves his pulpit through resignation, dismissal, or retirement. At the same time, the Care of Churches Committee shall also request to conduct an exit interview with the session of the same church. Said session is under no obligation to comply with the request.

D. Mission to Iowa

- 1. Mission to Iowa includes but is not limited to ministries generally under the auspices of Mission to North America (MNA) or Reformed University Ministry (RUM). These include Church Planting, Campus Ministries etc.
- 2. Inquiries of churches within Presbytery borders seeking information and possible membership in the PCA shall be referred to this committee.

3. This committee's responsibilities shall include other duties and authority as designated by Presbytery.

E. *World Missions Committee*

1. This committee shall communicate with current members of Presbytery serving in ministries around the world.
2. This committee shall communicate with churches the opportunities in World Missions.
3. This committee shall be the Presbytery voice in communications with the denomination's Mission to the World Committee (MTW).
4. This committee's responsibilities shall include other duties and authority as designated by Presbytery.

5.4 Committee Expenses. Committees of the presbytery shall prepare a budget for their committee work and submit it to the Administration/Nomination Committee by six (6) weeks prior to the November meeting each year. Requests should cover funds that are expected to be required for the work of the committee. The Ad/Nom Committee will summarize such requests and submit them to the presbytery at the November stated meeting of each year.

5.5 Meetings of Committees. Committees may meet at their discretion, except during the sessions of any presbytery meeting unless authorized by the presbytery to do so.

6. CALLING OF PASTORS AND SUPPLIES

6.1 Extending Calls. Churches may extend calls to pastors and supplies after receiving the counsel of the Candidates and Credentials Committee, noting that no call is official until approved by presbytery.

6.2 Changes in Terms of Call. Changes in terms of the calls of all teaching elders shall be reported to the presbytery (annual raises excepted). The presbytery, sessions and pulpit committees of churches of the presbytery shall have access to the terms of call of any teaching elder of the presbytery.

7. COMMISSIONS

7.1 Size, Quorum, Powers, Records.

A commission of the presbytery shall consist of at least two teaching elders and two ruling elders, and the presbytery shall at the time of its appointment specify what shall constitute a quorum. The presbytery may clothe a commission with powers judicial and authoritative to conduct judicial process or with power such as to ordain a teaching elder of the Gospel.

Each commission shall keep minutes and any other necessary documents needed to comply with *BCO 15-1*, and at the conclusion of the business referred to it, the commission must submit these records as a part of their report to the presbytery which, when approved, shall become a part of the presbytery minutes.

7.2 Commission Organization. Any teaching elder or ruling elder named to preside and propound the constitutional questions in a commission appointed to ordain and install a minister is to be recognized as the chairman of the commission. In other particulars, such as the election of a secretary, the commission shall effect its own organization.

7.3 Eligibility of Members. All commission members must be either a teaching elder who is a member of the presbytery in good standing or a ruling elder of a church that is on the presbytery rolls.

8. PREPARATION FOR PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

8.1 Timing and Distribution of Reports. Committee reports with their recommendations that are to be presented at a meeting of presbytery shall ordinarily be furnished to the stated clerk and the members of presbytery at least three (3) weeks prior to such meeting. With the submission of the report to the clerk, the committee shall indicate which recommendations should be included in an omnibus motion.

8.2 Timing and Distribution of Overtures. All overtures that are to be presented at a meeting of presbytery shall be furnished to the stated clerk at least four (4) weeks prior to such meeting. All overtures for a prospective meeting of the presbytery are to be duplicated in full by the stated clerk or under his direction, and these, together with proposed docket, mailed (in a form and manner determined by the stated clerk) at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting of presbytery. One copy of said overture(s), proposed docket and other applicable communication is to be sent to each church of the presbytery and to any teaching elder of the presbytery who is not in a pastoral relationship with a church of the presbytery.

9. SESSION RECORDS

9.1 Sessional Records. Sessions are to keep an accurate record (minutes) of all their proceedings, baptisms, communing members, non-communicant members, weddings, funerals, church officers and dismissal of members in accordance with the *BCO*.

9.2 Examination of Session Records. Session records are to be presented for an annual review at the call of the Administration/Nomination Committee.

10. SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

10.1 Lord's Supper. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be observed at the opening of each stated meeting of the presbytery. The pastor of the host church shall be responsible for conducting this service and appointing teaching and ruling elders to assist him.

10.2 Memorials. When elder dies, he shall ordinarily be memorialized at the next stated meeting following his departure and a portion of the minutes of presbytery shall be set apart for a brief account of his life and work. Memorials shall ordinarily be observed after approval of Minutes and before committee reports. The moderator or the stated clerk of presbytery shall arrange for someone to present to the presbytery the proper memorial.

10.3 Presbytery Openings. Meetings of presbytery shall be opened with a time of worship and reporting of churches with arrangements being made by the host pastor. An offering shall be received at the opening worship service with the proceeds divided equally between the presbytery and the host church.

11. SUBSCRIPTION

11.1 Subscription to the Standards. Each teaching elder received into the presbytery and each candidate examined for ordination shall, upon the presbytery's vote to receive the teaching elder or upon the presbytery's vote to approve the examination of the candidate and his ordination, subscribe his name to a Ministerial Obligation in accordance with *BCO* 13-7.

11.2 Exceptions to the Standards. Each teaching elder shall record his exceptions to the standards of the church (the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Westminster Catechisms, and the *BCO*) with the stated clerk. The stated clerk shall notify presbytery of each exception not previously recorded.

11.3 Records of Subscriptions. The subscriptions shall be kept by the stated clerk as part of the records of the presbytery in a book and readily available.

12. EXPENSES OF THE PRESBYTERY

12.1 Source of Funds. Necessary funds for the current expenses of the presbytery shall be provided by gifts from members of the church in the aggregate amount voted by presbytery when it votes to receive the budget at its November stated meetings. The "asking" will be a per capita amount based on membership reported to the last General Assembly and each congregation of the presbytery shall be encouraged to contribute on a monthly basis to finance the work of presbytery.

13. LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND OUT-OF-BOUNDS MINISTRY

13.1 Annual Requests and Exceptions. Leave of absence from the presbytery or permission to labor outside its bounds, when given by the presbytery, shall be requested annually prior to the first meeting of the year, except that in the case of missionaries serving outside the United States or of chaplains. This permission shall be granted for the duration of their service.

13.2 Communication Requirement. Missionaries or chaplains shall be expected to communicate with the presbytery at least once a year as set out in these standing rules.

13.3 Missionaries/Chaplains as Evangelist. Missionaries serving in foreign countries in ministry in the interest of the PCA and military chaplains shall be regarded as having evangelistic authority for use in such service according to *BCO* 8-6.

14. OF PROPERTY

14.1 Particular Church Responsibility. As the discipline of a presbytery is to be only spiritual and moral in its object and attended with no civil effects, the particular churches of the presbytery shall own and hold title for their property, both real and personal.

15. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

15.1 Authority. The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be the parliamentary authority governing the presbytery in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with these standing rules, the *Book of Church Order*, and the current *Rules of Assembly Operation*.

16. SUSPENSION AND AMENDMENT OF STANDING RULES

16.1 Suspension of Rules. The standing rules may be suspended upon motion by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting.

16.2 Amendment of Rules. The standing rules may be amended by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting at any stated meeting of presbytery, provided that the proposed amendment was distributed with the call of the stated meeting.