

BYLAWS

**The Presbytery of Des Moines
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

January 1, 1995

**Bylaws for The Presbytery of Des Moines,
Synod of Lakes and Prairies – Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

January 1, 1995

**Article I
NAME OF THE PRESBYTERY**

The Presbytery shall be known as The Presbytery of Des Moines of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Presbytery is incorporated under Chapter 504A, Code of Iowa.

**Article II
GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The Presbytery values and is instructed by the following statements:

- A. Believing that the attitudes of individual persons are more important to the efficient functioning of the Presbytery than is the structure, all presbyters should be guided by “forbearance in love” in whatever they say or do.
- B. Presbytery’s fundamental life is in and through local congregations: affirming and supporting all congregations, wisely using and continuing to discover the varied gifts of its people, and responding to issues as they arise from the local churches.
- C. In stead of trying to be everything to everyone, Presbytery will focus on three key ministries: (1) extending the ministry of local churches, (2) supporting local churches, and (3) providing efficient governance.
- D. Because of the disorder and injustice that so easily pervert our common life when authority is only personal and there is no accepted way of deciding issues that inevitably arise among us, we are clearly a church of law and seek to follow it with diligence. Because our law depends upon and is rightly used in light of relationships of love and trust with one another and with God through Jesus Christ, we seek to build and maintain relationships within the Presbytery and its parts.
- E. The Presbytery as part of the Body of Jesus Christ understands itself as a Christian community, seeking a balance of worship, business, education, fellowship and service.
- F. The Presbytery values the spiritual growth of persons and seeks to nurture spiritual growth in all the work and worship of the church.
- G. The Presbytery cares for persons by building up ministers of the word, training elders, supporting the ministry of the laity, being inclusive of all persons, and in all ways enabling the effective participation of all members of Presbytery.
- H. The Presbytery values an equal role for women and men, laity and clergy, in the life and leadership of the church.
- I. The Presbytery values intentional calling of persons to service.
- J. The Presbytery values education as a means of building up both individual lives and the Body of Christ through leadership development and continuing education of laity and clergy.
- K. The Presbytery values the small church as a viable and necessary vehicle for worship and caring community.

- L. The Presbytery values its committees and council as people gathered by the Holy Spirit to be caring and sharing communities through which delegated responsibilities for Presbytery planning and coordination are carried out thoughtfully and effectively.
- M. The Presbytery values a cooperative spirit which anticipates and prepares in advance for the work of the church and convenes persons to establish consensus and coordination of mutual concerns and responsibilities (i.e., communication and coordination).
- N. The Presbytery as an employing body values the work of paid staff and is committed to providing a work environment that encourages staff, growth and development, and policies and procedures that adequately and fairly define positions and compensate staff, and is committed to the employment and support of staff who are productive, professional, competent, and compatible.

Article III BOUNDARIES

The area of this Presbytery shall include the following counties in the State of Iowa: Audubon, Guthrie, Dallas, Polk, Jasper, Cass, Adair, Madison, Warren, Marion, Mahaska, Keokuk, Adams, Union, Clarke, Lucas, Monroe, Wapello, Taylor, Ringgold, Decatur, Wayne, Appanoose, Poweshiek, and Davis.

Article IV MEMBERSHIP

All ministers enrolled by action of the Presbytery shall be full voting members, **except those on the inactive roll**. Every congregation shall be represented by at least one elder. Congregations with memberships in excess of 500 will be represented in accordance with chapter G-11.O101 of the *Book of Order*. If additional elder representation is necessary to correct a lay-clergy imbalance, the procedure will be followed as set forth in the *Manual of Operations*.

Lay persons not representing their churches, but members of permanent committees, have the standing of advisory members. They are without vote, and are entitled to speak only on matters pertaining to their particular committee. Certified Educators related to this Presbytery shall have the standing of advisory members, with privilege of the floor, but not vote. Presbyters (ministers of the word or elders) in good standing in other governing bodies of this Church or in any other Christian Church, who are present at any meeting of the Presbytery, may be invited to sit as corresponding members, with voice but without vote. Ministers who are laboring within the bounds of the Presbytery of Des Moines may be invited to sit as corresponding members with voice, but without vote, for the period of their service. The Moderator of the Presbyterian Women of Des Moines Presbytery has the standing of an advisory member, having voice but without vote.

Elder Commissioners: Sessions shall normally elect elders to serve as commissioners to Presbytery for a term of not less than one calendar year but not more than three calendar years. Churches not represented by an elder at Presbytery for one calendar year will be notified by the Congregational Care and Development Committee of this failure and be requested to give reasons for its absence.

Minister/Elder Balance: If, in examining the number of resident ministers and the number of elders eligible for election by local congregations, the Stated Clerk finds the number of ministers to be larger, he/she shall invite churches to send additional commissioners until the categories are balanced. Those churches to be asked to send additional commissioners will be those closest to, but not over, five hundred members.

Minister Members: Unless honorably retired or excused, ministers who are on the “Active” or “Members-at-large” roll of Presbytery are expected to be commissioners to Presbytery on a regular basis. Any such member who fails to attend at least two Presbytery meetings during one calendar year shall be counseled by the Professional Care & Development Committee, and considered for “Inactive” status.

Article V MEETINGS

Stated Meetings: There shall be four (4) stated meetings a year: Third Saturday in January; Third Tuesday in May; Third Saturday in August; Second Tuesday in November. The November meeting will be the annual meeting of the corporation.

The Coordinating Council shall meet at least three weeks before each stated meeting of Presbytery, and may be called for special meetings by the Moderator through the Stated Clerk.

Adjourned Meetings: An adjourned meeting shall be regarded as a continuation of the stated meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be sent to all ministers and clerks of session.

Special Meetings: Special meetings may be called in accordance with the Book of Order, G-11.0201. The church(es) or minister(s) on whose behalf a special meeting is called shall bear the cost of the meeting which is **one hundred dollars** (\$100.00)

Quorum: Any four ministers, and as many elders as may be present belonging to the Presbytery provided that at least four churches are represented by elders, meeting the time and place appointed, shall be a quorum competent to proceed to business. Proxy voting is not allowed.

Invitation to Entertain Presbytery: All invitations shall be extended to Presbytery through the Moderator and Stated Clerk with the acceptance to be determined by Presbytery. In the absence of invitations the Moderator and Stated Clerk shall recommend arrangements to Presbytery. The Moderator and the Stated Clerk shall have the authority to set the hour of all stated meetings.

Use of Time in Regular Meetings: It is the responsibility of the Moderator of Coordinating Council, the Moderator and Vice-moderator of Presbytery, and Stated Clerk to present for adoption a docket for each meeting of Presbytery.

Article VI OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION

The Presbytery's officers shall serve as officers of the Corporation as follows: Moderator - President; Vice Moderator - Vice President; Stated Clerk - Secretary; and Treasurer - Treasurer, each of whom shall be a minister or elder of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and shall be enrolled as a member of the Presbytery for the duration of their terms of service if not continuing members.

Terms: The term of office for the Moderator and the Vice Moderator shall be one year. Ordinarily, the Vice Moderator will be nominated as Moderator at the end of his/her term as Vice Moderator. The Moderator serves as Moderator for a one year term and the succeeding year as Moderator of the Coordinating Council. The term of office for Stated Clerk and Treasurer shall be three years.

Election: All officers shall be elected by the Presbytery at the Stated Meeting in November, taking office on January 1 of the following year. Election at other times shall be for completion of a regular term.

Duties of all officers are set forth in the Manual of Operations or Form of Government. The directors of the corporation shall be the same as the members of the Coordinating Council and shall perform the duties of directors as prescribed by the Articles of Incorporation of the Presbytery and the Laws of the States of Iowa.

Article VII REPORTS AND RECORDS

Reports and Apportionments: All church sessions shall be required to present to the Stated Clerk not later than the twentieth-day of January complete statistical reports on blanks furnished by the Stated Clerk. General Assembly, Synod, and Presbytery apportionments are to be paid by the twentieth day of January of the year in which they are due unless an exception is granted by the Stated Clerk as authorized by Presbytery.

Article VIII COMMITTEES & COMMISSIONS

The Presbytery shall have the following Ecclesiastical Committees and Commissions: Committee on Representation, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Nominating Committee, Judicial Commission, Personnel Committee, Budget and Finance Committee, Congregational Care and Development Committee, and Professional Care & Development Committee.

Membership, duties and responsibilities of all Committees shall be as specified in either the *Book of Order* or Manual of Operations with membership always reviewed by the Committee on Representation. Representatives from the Presbytery to meetings of synod and General Assembly shall be selected as specified in the Manual of Operations.

Ecclesiastical (Administrative) Commissions may be appointed at any meeting of the Presbytery for specific administrative responsibilities. They shall function according to the provisions of the *Book of Order* and the direction of the Presbytery. Task Forces and Task Groups may be established as provided by the *Manual of Operations*. Resignations from any Presbytery elected position shall be made to the Coordinating Council through the office of the Stated Clerk. Resignation from all other positions shall be handled in accordance with the *Manual of Operations*.

Quorum: A quorum for a committee meeting shall be at least fifty percent of its membership, except as provided elsewhere in these Bylaws.

Article IX COORDINATING COUNCIL

The duties and powers of the Coordinating Council shall be those conferred upon it by action of the Presbytery, detailed in the *Manual of Operations*.

Membership, duties and responsibilities of all committees will be as specified in the *Manual of Operations* and always with membership reviewed by the Committee on Representation.

The Coordinating Council shall report in writing at each stated meeting of the Presbytery every action it takes. Its decisions shall be immediately operative wherever power has been conferred, but may be reviewed and reversed by Presbytery.

Membership: Immediate Past Moderator of Presbytery, who shall be Moderator, Moderator of Presbytery, Vice Moderator of Presbytery, Regional Facilitators, General Presbyter/Stated Clerk, Moderator of the Worship Task Group... and ex-officio members: Moderators of: Congregational Care and Development Committee, Professional Care & Development Committee, Budget and Finance Committee, Personnel Committee, and Moderator of Presbyterian Women (PW).

Article X FINANCIAL APPORTIONMENTS

The monies for the usual administrative expenses of Presbytery shall be provided by a per capita apportionment upon its churches by vote of Presbytery. A motion for a special apportionment shall be presented in writing at one stated meeting, but tabled for vote until the next stated meeting.

Article XI AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be suspended as to their temporary application by a two-thirds vote; and may be altered or amended by a majority vote at any stated meeting, provided due notice of the change proposed has been given in writing at least thirty days prior to proposed action.

Article II
MANUAL OF OPERATIONS & PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Details for the operation of Presbytery shall be outlined in a *Manual of Operations* that may be amended by a majority vote at any meeting of Presbytery. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised* except in those cases where the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provides otherwise.

Bylaws for the Presbytery of Des Moines; Adopted June 28, 1983, Amended April 11, 1984, Amended Nov. 19, 1985, Amended Nov. 18, 1986, Amended July 16,1988, Amended July 15,1989, Amended May 15,1990, Amended July 21,1990, Amended March 16, 1991, Amended Jan. 28, 1992, Amended May 19, 1992, Amended March 20, 1993, Amended May 19, 1992, Amended Sept. 20, 1994.