

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

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

**MANUAL OF OPERATIONS**

**1. The Presbytery of Des Moines, of the Presbyterian Church (USA)**

- 1.1. Presbytery of Des Moines is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Iowa.
- 1.2. The corporation is governed by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Articles of Incorporation, the By-laws of the corporation, and the Manual of Operations.
- 1.3. In accordance with the By-laws, the management of the affairs of the corporation is vested in a Board of Trustees which shall receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property, and facilitate the management of the civil affairs of the corporation in such manner as may be directed by the corporation from time to time.
- 1.4. The Officers of the Presbytery consists of: President – Moderator of the Presbytery; Vice President – Vice Moderator of the Presbytery; Secretary – Stated Clerk of the Presbytery; and Treasurer – Treasurer of Presbytery. The Officers of the Presbytery and the Moderator of Leadership Council are the Board of Trustees. Officers are either Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders or Ruling Elders. The Executive Presbyters are ex-officio members of the Board of Trustees with voice but not vote.

**2. General Rules**

- 2.1. The name of the Presbytery is Presbytery of Des Moines. “The Presbytery is the council comprised of presbyters elected by the people and organized for the task of bearing witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the world. The Presbytery is the council serving as corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and ministers of the Word and Sacrament within that district. (G-3.03)
- 2.2. The Presbytery shall communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many Ruling Elders each session should elect as commissioners to Presbytery, with a goal of parity of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders. This plan shall require each session to elect at least one commissioner and take into consideration the representation found in G.30301 The Presbytery is governed by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and shall be conducted as authorized and directed by the Presbytery of Des Moines By-laws, Articles of Incorporation and its Manual of Operations. The minimum composition of a Presbytery is 10 duly constituted sessions and 10 Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders.

- 2.3. Presbytery of Des Moines is a member Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (USA) composed of congregations and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders on its rolls within its geographical bounds. Its duties, responsibilities, governance, discipline, and faith statements are contained in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and this Manual of Operations.
- 2.4. Presbytery of Des Moines is a member Presbytery of the Synod of Lakes & Prairies and the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- 2.5. The Manual of Operations applies to all committees, councils and commissions of Presbytery of Des Moines.

### **3. Meetings of Presbytery**

- 3.1. There shall be three stated meetings of the Presbytery each year: second Saturday in February; third Tuesday in May; and second Tuesday in November. Per the Covenant with the Tri-Presbyteries of Iowa, the presbyteries hold an annual gathering. The November meeting will be the annual meeting of the corporation. The date of regularly scheduled Stated Meetings may be changed by the Leadership Council when circumstances arise that make it necessary to do so, such as weather concerns.
- 3.2. Special meetings of the Presbytery may be called by (1) Presbytery Moderator with the concurrence of two Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and two Ruling Elders, with the Ruling Elders being from different churches, (2) the Synod of Lakes & Prairies. Only business indicated in the call of special meetings may be transacted at a special meeting.
- 3.3. Notice for Stated Presbytery meetings shall be sent at least twenty days in advance to the session of every church and each Minister of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elder. Notice for Called Presbytery meeting shall be sent at least ten days in advance to the session of every church and each Minister of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elder. The notice gives the purpose of the meeting. A packet with all business coming before Presbytery meetings is posted on the Presbytery website at least ten days in advance.
- 3.4. Locations for stated meetings are set by the Presbytery Stated Clerk.
- 3.5. The docket for Presbytery meetings is prepared by the Stated Clerk, and Moderator of Presbytery, in consultation with the Executive Presbyters. The docket is proposed by the Stated Clerk to the Presbytery for adoption.
- 3.6. Presbytery meetings shall conform to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, and the Manual of Operations.
- 3.7. A quorum for Presbytery meetings is ten percent of the Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders currently on the roll of the Presbytery and one Ruling Elder

commissioner from ten percent of the congregations on the roll of the Presbytery.

- 3.8. The presbytery may meet by electric means if all Ministers of Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elder members and Ruling Elder commissions have reasonable notice of the electronic meeting and the ability to discuss, deliberate, discern the will of God, and vote on business items. The quorum for such a meeting is the same as a regular meeting.
- 3.9. New business presented at stated meetings of the Presbytery shall be referred (by the Stated Clerk) to the appropriate committee of the Presbytery for review and recommendation at the next stated meeting of the Presbytery. New business is not considered at the meeting in which it is presented unless approved by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.
- 3.10. Display space at stated meetings may be requested by the Presbytery and ministries of Presbytery of Des Moines, Synod of Lakes & Prairies and General Assembly. Displays are for information sharing, not fundraising. A common table may be provided for congregations to place materials about their ministries. Exceptions to these guidelines require approval by the Stated Clerk or the Mission Executive.

#### 4. **Officers**

- 4.1. Officers of the Presbytery are Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer. Officers of the Presbytery shall also serve as officers of the corporation as defined in the By-laws and Articles of Incorporation, Article VI.
- 4.2. The Presbytery Moderator and Vice Moderator are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery for a 1-year term and shall not serve consecutive terms.
- 4.3. The Treasurer is nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery for a 3-year term. Evaluation of the Treasurer shall be conducted by the Leadership Council who will report to the Presbytery at the November stated meeting.
- 4.4. The Stated Clerk is nominated by the Tri-Presbyteries Search Committee and is elected by the Presbytery (G-3.0104). Evaluation of the Stated Clerk shall be conducted by the Tri-Presbyteries Commission on Personnel in October and the results reported to the Leadership Council who will then present the report at the November Presbytery meeting.
- 4.5. The Presbytery Moderator, Vice Moderator and Treasurer are voluntary, unpaid positions. The Stated Clerk is a compensated position. The Recording Clerk for presbytery meetings receives an honorarium determined by the Personnel Commission. Officers and Staff shall not serve as members of standing committees.

## 5. Officers Duties

- 5.1 Moderator.** The Moderator shall preside over the meetings of the Presbytery, open and close Presbytery meetings with prayer, in consultation with the Stated Clerk appoint a parliamentarian and may appoint a recording **clerk** for each meeting. The Moderator shall serve on the Leadership Council. The Moderator or moderator designate will moderate all ordinations and installations. The individual serving as the Moderator of the Presbytery shall alternate by year between a Minister of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elder and Ruling Elder. The Moderator shall serve a term of one year.
- 5.2 Vice Moderator.** The Vice Moderator shall preside over meetings of the Presbytery at the request or in absence of the Moderator. The Vice Moderator **or their designee** will provide an orientation prior to each stated meeting for new commissioners. The Vice Moderator shall serve on the Leadership Council. The individual serving as the Vice Moderator shall alternate by year between Minister of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elder and Ruling Elder. The Vice Moderator shall serve a term of one year. It is expected the Vice Moderator be nominated to the office of Moderator.
- 5.3 Stated Clerk.** The Stated Clerk (see Administrative Executive in 6.4.) shall record the transactions of the Presbytery, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, maintain any required registers, preserve records and furnish extracts of records as may be required by a higher council. The Stated Clerk shall be either a Ruling Elder or a Minister of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elder. The Stated Clerk may appoint a Recording Clerk for each stated meeting. Duties of office fall under the provisions in the Form of Government (G-3.0104). The Stated Clerk shall report annually to the Synod and General Assembly statistics and information required by these higher councils. The Stated Clerk shall conduct an annual review of the minutes and records of each Session and report the findings to the Presbytery. The Stated Clerk and the Leadership Council are responsible for updating the Manual of Operations on a regular basis and having it on the Presbytery website.
- 5.3.1** The Stated Clerk and/or the Pastor to the Presbyteries shall serve as the presbytery's liaison to the Board of Pensions and coordinate retirement and memorial recognitions of ministers.
- 5.4 Treasurer.** The treasurer shall be a signatory on bank accounts, oversee the receipt and disbursement of funds and have full access to all financial records. The treasurer shall attend the Budget and Finance Committee having voice without vote in order to ensure a full and accurate account of all financial funds and securities to the Presbytery and Synod, and coordinate with the Presbytery accountant in preparing financial statements and the annual financial review and triennial audit of the Presbytery of Des Moines. The term of office is for three years.
- 5.5** The Treasurer, Stated Clerk, and Executive Presbyters and administrative staff are responsible for assuring all financial policies and procedures are followed.

## 6. Tri-Presbyteries Staff

- 6.1. In November 2019, Presbytery approved a Covenant with the Presbyteries of North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill to a shared staffing model with a seven-year commitment. The staffing model consists of the following:
- 6.2. **Mission Executive:** This person will focus on mission engagement in the state, presbyteries and communities. This includes taking the lead in mission initiatives in Iowa and coordinating mission opportunities (especially for smaller congregations who may not have enough to do such a trip on their own), and being a resource to Mission Committees of the presbyteries.
- 6.3. **Pastor to the Presbyteries:** This person will provide support to pastors and congregations and Pastor Nominating Committees. The focus is on health and vitality of congregations and leaders so will include peer cohort development and administration, educational events for congregational leaders, reference checks, and being a co-resource to the Commission on Ministry, Committees on Preparation for Ministry, congregational Personnel Committees and a primary resource to Pastor Nominating Committees.
- 6.4. **Administrative Executive:** This person will serve as Stated Clerk to all three presbyteries and as the Head of Staff. They will resource Finance and Property Committee, Nominating Committee, Permanent Judicial Committee, policy matters, and Presbytery meetings. He or she will also co-resource Commission on Ministry, Committee on Preparation for Ministry and congregational Personnel Committees.
- 6.5. **Full-time Office Administrator:** Support the work of committees, Stated Clerk's office, Administrative Executive, and be a point of contact for calls from congregations.
- 6.6. **Full-time Program and Communications Administrator:** This position will be ½ time program and staff support (support for events and programs from the work of the Pastor to Presbyteries and Mission Executive). The other half would be spent on communications that connect and communicate with Iowa Presbyterians (websites, minute for mission pieces, newsletters, etc.). This person will make sure stories are shared from every presbytery.
- 6.7. **Tri-Presbyteries Personnel Commission**
  - 6.7.1. The Presbytery authorizes the establishment of a shared Personnel Commission composed of three people from each participating presbytery in the Staffing Model. The three people from each presbytery shall be elected and commissioned for this service.
  - 6.7.2. These participants will serve in rotating three-year terms. Participants can serve two terms or a maximum of six years before being required to rotate off the Commission.
  - 6.7.3. Leadership of this Commission will rotate among the presbyteries on an

annual basis.

**6.7.4.** The Commission will report to each presbytery's Leadership Council.

**6.7.5.** The Commission will be authorized and expected to have the following responsibilities:

- **6.7.5.1** Develop a shared set of personnel policies that will guide the work and offer processes for the staff to use.
- **6.7.5.2** Review and support the staff. Conduct initial six-month review of all staff members. Conduct annual review of all staff members for the first year. The Commission will receive the annual reviews of the full-time administrators from the Administration Executive in subsequent years. Mentor the staff, provide support, clarify responsibilities and answer questions as needed. Discipline staff members as needed, following established policies for addressing issues and concerns that arise. Fire staff members who do not meet performance and/or behavioral expectations using due process as articulated in the adopted personnel policies. In the case of the Administrative Executive, which includes the Stated Clerk role, the Commission will recommend termination and an interim Stated Clerk candidate to each presbytery for action.

## **7. Membership**

**7.1.** Commissioners at Presbytery meetings with voice and vote are the following:

**7.1.1.** All Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders on the roll of the Presbytery and Commissioned Ruling Elders currently commissioned to ministries in the Presbytery.

**7.1.2.** At least one Ruling Elder elected by the session of each congregation on the roll of the Presbytery in accordance with the membership size of the church.

**7.1.2.1.** Up to 250 members: 1 Ruling Elder commissioner;

**7.1.2.2.** 251 to 1,000 members: 2 Ruling Elder commissioners;

**7.1.2.3.** 1000 members and over: 3 Ruling Elder Commissioners.

**7.1.2.4.** Sessions are encouraged to elect Ruling Elder commissioners to serve a one-year term to ensure continuity and full participation by the Ruling Elders.

**7.1.3.** Ruling Elder Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators during their term of service in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of Presbytery of Des Moines but are not otherwise elected as a commissioner from a session.



- 7.1.4. Ruling Elder officers of the Presbytery and Ruling Elder committee moderators.
- 7.1.5. Ruling Elder commissioners to the General Assembly and Young Adult Advisory delegates during their term of service but are not otherwise elected as a commissioner from a session.

7.1.6. The following have voice, but not vote at Presbytery meetings:

- 7.1.6.1. One Ruling Elder elected from each new church development Steering Committee.

- 7.1.6.2. Christian educators employed by congregations of Presbytery of Des Moines who are not certified or are not Ruling Elders.

7.2. The Presbytery, through the stated clerk, shall adopt a plan at the first stated meeting of each year to fulfill the requirements of G-3.0301 concerning numerical parity of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in G-3.0301.

## 8. **Organization**

8.1. All committees and the Leadership Council are divided into three classes, with members in numbers as nearly equal as possible, serving three-year staggered terms.

8.2. A quorum for Standing Committees, the Leadership Council and task forces is fifty percent of its members, unless otherwise specified by the Manual of Operations.

8.3. All Standing Committees and the Leadership Council shall report all actions taken at the next stated meeting of the Presbytery

8.4. Presbytery, Standing Committees, and the Leadership Council may appoint temporary task forces for specific work. Task groups shall be given necessary authorization as delegated by the Presbytery, committee, or council. They report to the body which constituted them.

8.5. Standing Committees and Leadership Council may invite non-members who have special expertise to assist temporarily with specific expertise. Such individuals have voice but not vote.

8.6. All Standing Committees and Leadership Council shall be guided by the Manual of Operations of Presbytery of Des Moines which includes all policies and procedures approved by the Presbytery.

8.7. The following report directly to the Presbytery: Leadership Council, Commission on Ministry (COM), Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM), Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC), Property Committee, Nominating Committee/Committee on Representation, New Worshiping Communities Committee, Sexual Misconduct Response Committee, Presbytery Worship Committee, Living Legacy Committee, Committee on the Promotion of Social Righteousness (CPSR) and Camping and Youth Ministry Committee.

Budget and Finance Committee and Tri-Presbyteries Personnel Commission shall first report to Leadership Council. Leadership Council will then jointly present a report to Presbytery.

- 8.8.** Electronic Meetings: Committees, commissions, boards and other official entities of the Presbytery may arrange to meet and conduct business via electronic video and/or audio teleconference. Reasonable notice of the date, time and set-up procedures of electronic meetings will be given by the group's chairperson or moderator.

**9. Commissions**

- 9.1.** A commission is empowered to consider and conclude matters referred to it by the Presbytery of Des Moines. The Presbytery guided by The Book of Order shall state specifically the scope of the commission's powers and any restrictions on those powers.
- 9.2.** Commissions, their moderator and members are elected by the Presbytery.
- 9.3.** There are two kinds of commissions: Administrative and Permanent Judicial.

**9.3.1. Administrative Commission**

- 9.3.1.1.** An administrative commission shall consider and conclude matters not involving ecclesiastical judicial process, except to refer to the Stated Clerk any matters that may require judicial action. There shall be a minimum of three members.
- 9.3.1.2.** An administrative commission is nominated by the Leadership Council, the Moderator, and Vice Moderator of Presbytery. In all cases, the administrative commission is governed by the Form of Government and the Rules of Discipline. ( G.3.0109 b)
- 9.3.1.3.** All minutes of an administrative commission become a part of Presbytery minutes.

**9.3.2. Permanent Judicial Commission**

- 9.3.2.1.** A Permanent Judicial Commission shall hold only the powers prescribed by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The Permanent Judicial Commission fulfills the responsibilities specified by the Book of Order and the Rules of Discipline (D-5.0000).
- 9.3.2.2.** The Permanent Judicial Commission consists of seven members elected in even-numbered years for six-year terms. (D-5.0102, 5.0103). To begin class rotation: one class shall serve for two years, the second class for four years and the third class for six years. Upon expiration of the six-year term, there shall be a lapse of four years before a member may serve another term.

## **10. Terms of Service**

- 10.1.** New Presbytery officers, new members of Presbytery Standing Committees, the Leadership Council and Committee on Nominating members are elected by the Presbytery at the last stated meeting each year with service beginning January 1 of the next calendar year.
- 10.2.** The moderator of each standing committee will be elected by Committee members for a one-year term which may be renewed only once during a six-year period.
- 10.3.** Resignations from Standing Committees and the Leadership Council should be submitted in writing to the Stated Clerk. Unexcused absence from one-half of annual meetings constitutes a resignation. When this takes place, the committee moderator shall notify the Stated Clerk indicating that the person be removed from membership of the committee or council and the committee member should be officially notified.
- 10.4.** Vacancies for the unexpired portion of a term are filled from nominations made by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Leadership Council. Any person so elected will serve until the end of the unexpired term.
- 10.5.** Standing committees shall give full expression to the diversity of the presbytery's membership, including as near equal as possible participation of Ruling Elders and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders.

## **11. Electronic Voting**

- 11.1.** In accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* and in accordance with the 216th General Assembly authoritative interpretation of F-3.0205, Standing Committees, the Leadership Council, task forces and other organizations of the Presbytery may vote electronically on motions.
  - 11.1.1.** Members should reply with one of following: (1) yes to the motion, (2) no to the motion, (3) abstention, (4) a request to discuss the motion in a face-to-face or conference call meeting, or (5) a request to deal with a parliamentary question at the next face-to-face or telephone conference meeting. Members should reply only to the moderator or clerk (and should not reply to all members) so that earlier voters do not influence later voters.
- 11.2.** If a quorum of members does not reply prior to the deadline, if a member requests discussion of the motion, or if a member requests discussion of a parliamentary question, the motion must be postponed until the next face-to-face or telephone conference meeting.

## **12. Leadership Council**

- 12.1.** Members of the Leadership Council include 9 members at large. The members at large should ordinarily not be from the same congregation. The Leadership Council is composed of Ruling Elders and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders in numbers as

nearly equal as possible.

- 12.2.** Members with voice and vote are the Presbytery Moderator, Vice Moderator, Immediate Past Moderator and members-at-large.
- 12.3.** Ex-officio members with voice but not vote include the Executive Presbyters and Stated Clerk.
- 12.4.** The elected members will serve 3-year terms, and no one may serve more than 6 consecutive years. The Moderator is elected by committee members for a 1-year term.
- 12.5. The duties of the Leadership Council include:**
  - 12.5.1.** The Leadership Council shall meet before a stated meeting of Presbytery and review the docket as prepared by the Stated Clerk and the Moderator. A special meeting may be called by the Moderator of Leadership Council.
  - 12.5.2.** Implements the priorities of the Presbytery, coordinates and jointly reports to Presbytery the work of Personnel Commission and Budget and Finance Committee.
  - 12.5.3.** Develop, communicate and shepherd the ongoing vision, strategy and design of the Presbytery. Submit recommendations to the Presbytery concerning the mission of the Presbytery. Implement a method for planning and evaluating the work of the Presbytery.
  - 12.5.4.** Train elected members to standing committees and Leadership Council or appoint a training team.
  - 12.5.5.** Address matters between meetings of the Presbytery as may be necessary or assigned by Presbytery.
  - 12.5.6.** Coordinate the work of the Personnel Commission and Budget and Finance Committee and present report jointly to Presbytery. Moderators of the Personnel Commission and Budget and Finance Committee will be first on the agenda of Leadership Council and can leave after their report or be invited to stay for remainder of meeting.
  - 12.5.7.** Propose an annual budget jointly with the Budget and Finance Committee to Presbytery.
  - 12.5.8.** Oversight and coordination of Ecumenical Relationships.
    - 12.5.8.1.** Ecumenical Relationships are relationships, working agreements, or cooperative endeavors with denominations or religious groups beyond the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
    - 12.5.8.2.** Receive reports from representatives of related institutions and reviewing annually the proceedings and actions of all such organizations under the direction of the Presbytery.

- 12.5.9. Remain current on issues of theology and culture that affect the Presbytery.
- 12.5.10. Relate to Standing Committees in an empowering style. Each member of Leadership Council will serve as liaison to one or more committees, providing support, guidance and directions for mission on a regular schedule
- 12.5.11. Respond to ministry opportunities in relation to the Presbytery's vision.
- 12.5.12. **Administrative Duties**
  - 12.5.12.1. Review and recommend changes to Presbytery's By-Laws and Manual of Operations.
  - 12.5.12.2. Nominate members of the Nominating Committee for election by Presbytery.
  - 12.5.12.3. Perform a yearly review of the Treasurer.
- 12.5.13. Develop and submit a budget request to Budget and Finance Committee for the Leadership Council's ministry.
- 12.5.14. At the last stated meeting of each year, the Leadership Council will nominate for election by the Presbytery two members to a new class of the Nominating Committee.
- 12.5.15. The retiring Moderator of Presbytery of Des Moines will install the newly elected officers at the last stated meeting of the year.

### 13. **Standing Committees**

- 13.1. Each committee has a moderator that is selected by the members of the committee. The moderator begins service on January 1 of the new calendar year. A committee may request a vice moderator who is nominated in the same manner. When nominating committee members, the Nominating Committee shall make every effort to represent the diversity of the Presbytery. All minutes of standing committees are public information except for personnel which is confidential information. Personnel files are confidential.
- 13.2. **Nominating Committee/Committee on Representation (Nom Comm/COR)**
  - 13.2.1. The Nom Comm/COR consists of 6 persons, including the Moderator, nominated by the Leadership Council and elected by the Presbytery.
  - 13.2.2. The purpose of the Nom Comm/COR is to cooperate with all committees to achieve as nearly as possible a fair and balanced constituency of the Presbytery membership to its council, committees, the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission, Synod and General Assembly Commissioners. The Nom Comm/COR shall make a conscientious, deliberate effort to secure persons to serve on

committees who fulfill the racial, ethnic, and minority requirements of the Book of Order.

- 13.2.3.** At the last stated meeting of each year, the committee will nominate for election by Presbytery a Presbytery Moderator and Vice Moderator for one-year term, and a Treasurer for three-year term.
- 13.2.4.** Members to fill new classes on Presbytery committees and the Leadership Council will be considered for their faithfulness, skills, abilities, interests and experiences needed.
- 13.2.5.** Nominations to fill vacancies may be made at any meeting of the Leadership Council or Presbytery.
- 13.2.6.** When making nominations, the committee will insure the following principles are followed: (1) representation of the broad theological, cultural, racial, geographical, and generational diversity of the Presbytery, (2) competence of nominees in their area of service, (3) willingness of nominees to work in a collaborative and collegial manner, (4) commitment of nominees to the inclusiveness and diversity of the Presbytery, and (5) commitment of nominees to the mission of the Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- 13.2.7.** For purposes of continuity, the Nom Comm/COR may nominate some persons to serve a second consecutive term on a committee, but ordinarily at least half of the nominated slate for every committee is made up of persons not currently serving on that committee. No person may serve more than six consecutive years on a committee. After two terms, no person may be re-elected to the same committee without a one-year lapse between terms.
- 13.2.8.** The Committee will maintain a referral system to identify qualified and interested persons to serve the Presbytery and maintain records of service to ensure adequate rotation.
- 13.2.9.** Nominations from the floor are permitted whenever the Presbytery conducts an election. However, all nominees shall have agreed to serve and must fulfill the categories of inclusion specified in the Manual of Operations. A vacancy in the Nom Comm/COR may be filled by election at any meeting of the Presbytery upon nomination by the Leadership Council.
- 13.2.10.** A permanent file of racial/ethnic and handicapped members in the churches shall be made. Identifying information concerning racial/ethnic and handicapped church members shall be obtained in so far as possible from the Annual Statistical Report filled out by churches.

- 13.2.11. When a racial/ethnic or handicapped person joins a church during the year, the church is requested to supply pertinent information regarding that person within a month to the Nom Comm/COR either through the moderator of the Nom Comm/COR or to the Presbytery Stated Clerk.

### **13.3. Commission on Ministry**

The Commission on Ministry (COM) consists of 18 Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible. The Nominating Committee will nominate the members of the COM for election by Presbytery. Committee members shall elect the moderator and vice moderator.

- 13.3.1. The Pastor to the Presbyteries shall serve as a resource for the Commission without vote.
- 13.3.2. The quorum of the Commission shall be one-third of its voting members with at least one Minister of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elder and one Ruling Elder.
- 13.3.3. The Commission shall have an executive committee made up of the Commission moderator, vice-moderator, secretary of the Commission, and the Pastor to the Presbyteries. Duties for this executive committee shall be to:
  - 13.3.3.1. Schedule boundaries/ethics training every year and to keep a record of those who have attended such events.
  - 13.3.3.2. Review the terms of call, terms of interim contracts, and terms for commissioned Ruling Elders annually.
  - 13.3.3.3. Propose to the Commission for recommendation to the Presbytery the minimum terms of call for the next year.
  - 13.3.3.4. Consider requests for financial assistance for pastors in need as confidential.
- 13.3.4. The Commission's Responsibilities:
- 13.3.5. The Commission is authorized to act on behalf of Presbytery:
  - 13.3.5.1. To confirm calls issued by churches.
  - 13.3.5.2. To approve and present calls for services of ministers.
  - 13.3.5.3. To approve the examination of and approve membership of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders.

- 13.3.5.4. To dissolve pastoral relationships in cases where the congregation and pastor concur.
- 13.3.5.5. To grant permission to labor within or outside the bounds of the Presbytery; and to dismiss ministers and Commissioned Ruling Elders to other presbyteries, with the provision that all such actions will be reported to the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery.
- 13.3.6. Commissioned Ruling Elders: The Commission shall recommend to Presbytery for approval of all actions with regard to Commissioning Ruling Elders.
- 13.3.7. Members of Presbytery: The Commission shall present to the February Stated Meeting of Presbytery an annual review of the terms of call for Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and shall recommend by the May meeting minimum terms of call for the next calendar year.
- 13.3.8. Administration of the Lord's Supper: The Commission shall report to Presbytery specific elders to administer or preside at the Lord's Supper for a period of time not to exceed one year.
- 13.3.9. Membership Categories: The Commission shall recommend to Presbytery membership status.
- 13.3.10. Strategy for Churches: The Commission shall consult with churches about strategy relating to matters of pastoral staff, property, resources, and program and shall recommend or report to Presbytery appropriate changes.
- 13.3.11. Pension Representative: The Pastor to the Presbyteries shall serve as the Board of Pensions Representative, to resource the Commission and the Presbytery and to coordinate retirement and memorial recognitions of ministers.
- 13.3.12. Continuing Education and Pastoral Care: The Commission shall review regularly the continuing education and personal well-being of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders.
- 13.3.13. The Commission shall provide for boundaries/ethics training opportunities every year.
- 13.3.14. Through its liaisons conduct biennial visits.
- 13.3.15. Through its liaisons, work with Pastor Nominating Committees to conduct searches for pastoral leadership.

**13.4. Committee on Preparation for Ministry**

- 13.4.1. The committee consists of 5 Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible. The committee will meet a minimum of 4 times a year.



**13.4.2.** The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall oversee preparation of persons who seek to be ordained as Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and those persons who seek to become Commissioned Ruling Elders.

**13.4.3. Responsibilities**

**13.4.3.1.** Responsibilities are found in the Book of Order and the General Assembly's "Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry."

**13.4.3.2.** Committee members will maintain contact with mentees, via personal visits and/or electronic means, throughout the year. Committee member mentors will conduct annual consultations to review progress and establish goals for the next year with all inquirer and candidate mentees.

**13.4.3.3.** The Committee will secure and nominate to Presbytery for election annual "readers" for Ordination Examinations.

**13.4.3.4.** Committee member mentors will review progress, via personal visits and/or electronic means, and assist in exploring potential applications for training.

**13.4.4. Evaluations**

**13.4.4.1.** The Committee on Preparation for Ministry will conduct background checks, including sexual abuse, prior to a seeker being approved as an inquirer or during the first term of Commissioned Ruling Elder training. Cost will be paid by the committee.

**13.4.4.2.** Psychological evaluation/professional vocation evaluation will be completed by an inquirer before being approved as a candidate. The inquirer will normally undergo evaluation at the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center. In lieu of the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, the inquirer may undergo evaluation and counseling at the LeaderWise Center in New Brighton, Minnesota, the Midwest Career Development Center in Chicago, or another regional counseling center. The cost of the counseling/evaluation will be split between the committee, the inquirer's local session, and the inquirer. The Moderator of the sub-committee will inform the inquirer and session of financial responsibilities.

**13.4.5. Financial Support**

**13.4.5.1.** The Committee recognizes that seminary and theological training for inquirers, candidates, and Commissioned Ruling Elders is a time of financial stress for the seeker. It is the Presbytery's position it will aid and help the seekers in every way possible to reduce the financial hardship for the seeker. Individual congregations and the seeker's own congregation should and can be solicited for financial aid.

- 13.4.5.2.** The Swan Fund is administered by the Presbytery. Persons seeking grants from this fund may apply annually. Grants are made on an irregular schedule and are made based on funds available. The Presbytery will receive special offerings at services of installation and ordination for the Swan Fund.
- 13.4.5.3.** The Omaha Seminary Foundation offers several types of support to persons seeking ordination as Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and to lay persons seeking theological education to become Commissioned Ruling Elders/Commissioned Lay pastors. In addition to scholarships, loans are available that will be forgiven if the recipient engages in ministry within The Synod of Lakes and Prairies or the state of Missouri.

### **13.5. New Worshiping Communities Committee**

- 13.5.1.** The New Worshiping Communities Committee consists of six members. A majority of the members must be Ruling Elders and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders. The moderator is elected by committee members for a term of one year.
- 13.5.2.** The Committee educates the Presbytery and its churches about the nature of New Worshiping Communities, encourages members of the Presbytery and its churches to envision new forms of worshiping communities, and assists them in bringing promising visions to fruition through training, coaching, encouragement, accountability, and grant funding.
- 13.5.3.** The Committee recommends to the Leadership Council partnerships with new worshiping communities. Recommendations shall include a vision for ministry, development goals, and a plan for spiritual and financial support and sustainability.
- 13.5.4.** The Committee responsibilities include (1) supporting new worshiping community leaders and congregational sponsors, (2) guiding them in polity, process, evangelism, and healthy, sustainable development, (3) helping them meet goals determined by their leadership team and Presbytery concerning participation, ministry and funding, (4) meet with them at least quarterly, (5) evaluating them at least twice a year, and (6) explore and recommend alternative forms of new worshiping communities.
- 13.5.5.** The Committee reports biannually to the Leadership Council on the status of each new worshiping community and makes recommendations concerning funding each year.

### **13.6. Camping and Youth Ministry Committee**

- 13.6.1.** The Camping and Youth Ministry Committee consists of 5 members with experience in youth ministry, at least two of whom shall be Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders or Ruling Elders.
- 13.6.2.** The Committee provides for the nurture, faith development, and leadership skills of youth in the Presbytery, as well as the adults who work with youth. It is responsible for conducting programs, retreats, and events that affirm youth as children of God and enables and challenges youth to minister to others.
- 13.6.3.** Responsibilities
  - 13.6.3.1.** The Committee shall develop a program of scholarships, grants and registration waivers for participants in programs, retreats and events that affirm youth. In addition, the Committee will develop guidelines and an application process for these scholarships, grants and registrations waivers. Funds for these scholarships, grants and registrations waivers shall come from the budget for the Committee and the Knox Knolls and Walther Funds following the guidelines established by the Committee on Living Legacy Fund.
  - 13.6.3.2.** The Committee shall implement programs for junior high/middle school youth, including but not limited to, events such as Triennium.
  - 13.6.3.3.** The Committee shall provide a program of outdoor ministries for the youth in the Presbytery by setting dates and locations of the camping program, securing directors and counselors and selecting curriculum.
  - 13.6.3.4.** The Committee shall train directors and counselors in the curriculum and child-safely policies.
  - 13.6.3.5.** Background checks should be conducted on all staff and volunteers.
  - 13.6.3.6.** The Committee shall initiate new and innovative youth programs.
  - 13.6.3.7.** The Committee shall evaluate the camping program.

### **13.7. Committee on Promotion of Social Righteousness**

- 13.7.1.** The Committee on Promotion of Social Righteousness consists of 5 members, including the moderator. No less than two members shall be Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders. The moderator is elected by committee members.
- 13.7.2.** The purpose of the Committee is to equip and encourage the Presbytery to be a community of witness, pointing beyond itself to the good news of God's transforming grace in Christ Jesus its Lord (F-1.0301). Drawing from the historic

great ends of the Church (F-1.0304), “social righteousness” points to a proactive and comprehensive understanding of God’s intention for human community

### **13.7.3 Responsibilities**

- 13.7.3.1** Support and encourage mission partnerships among local churches.
- 13.7.3.2** Facilitate networking and partnerships for common mission between congregations and entities within the Presbytery.
- 13.7.3.3** Commend priority areas for coordinated mission work.
- 13.7.3.4** Oversee uses of Presbytery mission budget, Peace & Global Witness Offering, and consult with the Living Legacy Committee regarding mission grants.
- 13.7.3.5** Connect to denominational and ecumenical/interfaith mission.
- 13.7.3.6** Promote and interpret the ministries of the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to local Congregations, including mission coworker/peacemaker itinerations and hands-on opportunities such as the Young Adult Volunteer Program.
- 13.7.3.7** Represent the Presbyter to ecumenical or interfaith networks addressing broader mission and issues of social righteousness, including public advocacy consistent with Presbytery-approved mission priorities.
- 13.7.3.8** Promote and interpret general mission giving and the Special Offerings of the PC(USA).

### **13.8. Budget and Finance Committee**

**13.8.1** The Budget and Finance Committee consists of five members: four at large members (including the moderator of the committee) and the moderator of the Living Legacy Committee. Two members should have professional training or experience in accounting. The following are ex-officio members with voice but not vote:

Administrative Executive (or appointee),  
Treasurer, and a representative from the accounting/financial services of the Presbytery.

**13.8.2** The committee provides financial and budgetary oversight and guidance to the Presbytery. They shall provide assurance the financial resources of the Presbytery are managed in accordance with the vision and mission direction of the Presbytery. They are responsible for established policies and procedures under which sound financial management can be governed.

### **13.8.3 Responsibilities**

**13.8.3.1** Receive budget requests, mission pledges, and per capita information.

**13.8.3.2** Coordinate with the Living Legacy Committee, Presbytery's accountant/financial services, and staff to monitor investments.

**13.8.3.3** Request, receive and recommend approval of a review of presbytery financial statements two out of every three years, and request, receive, and recommend the approval of an audit of presbytery financial statements every third year, and submission of Form 990 when required.

**13.8.3.4** Review and make recommendations to the Leadership Council concerning insurance, tax issues, asset inventories, special offerings and funds, and other matters involving the expenditure of funds. All budget reports go to Leadership Council and are jointly presented to Presbytery.

### **13.9 Property Committee**

**13.9.1** The Property Committee consists of five members with Ruling Elders and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders, at least one shall be a real estate professional. Ex-officio members with voice and without vote include the Administrative Executive and the Presbytery Treasurer. The Moderator will be elected by committee members.

**13.9.2** The Committee implements the responsibilities of the Presbytery concerning property as specified in the Book of Order (G-4.02) including the property trust clause in G-4.0203.

**13.9.3** The Committee is authorized to approve loan requests from congregations considering their overall financial health and after consultation with the Commission on Ministry. Requests over \$100,000 need the additional approval of the Presbytery.

**13.9.4** The Committee is authorized to recommend renewals or extensions of existing congregational loans with the same lender unless there is a substantial change in the loan or the liability of the Presbytery for that loan. If so, the additional approval of the Presbytery is required.

**13.9.5** Subject to the guidance of the Presbytery, the Committee is authorized to negotiate for the acquisition, lease (including mineral leases), granting of easements, sale of timber, sale or other disposition of property owned by the Presbytery, and do all things reasonably necessary to accomplish any transaction directed by the Presbytery.

- 13.9.6** The Committee receives title to property on behalf of the Presbytery when a congregation is dissolved, when property is donated to the Presbytery, or wherever property of a congregation ceases to be used for the ministry of a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in accordance with G-4.0204 and G-4.0205.
- 13.9.7** Subject to the guidance of the Leadership Council, the Committee is authorized to acquire, manage, supervise, and protect property owned by the Presbytery by taking necessary actions to provide for insurance, maintenance, repairs, payment of taxes, and satisfaction of other obligations.
- 13.9.8** Subject to the guidance of the Presbytery, the Committee is authorized to dispose of property owned by the Presbytery (sale, investment, or use of the property for another purpose). However, if the property was used for worship purposes, the Committee will recommend, and the Presbytery will decide on the disposition of the property.
- 13.9.9** The Committee provides consultation, advice, and resources to congregations concerning property transactions, including acquisitions, transfers, and financing options.
- 13.9.10** The Committee assists congregations with their responsibilities concerning property, and the Committee is authorized to respond on behalf of the Presbytery concerning congregations selling, purchasing, mortgaging, or leasing property as specified in G-4.0206 and G-4.0208.
- 13.9.11** The Committee shall report quarterly to the Leadership Council and Presbytery concerning new loan approvals, any financial implications, and the status of all property owned by the Presbytery including all expenses incurred.

### **13.10 Presbytery Worship Committee**

- 13.10.1** The Presbytery Worship Committee consists of five members, including the moderator. Committee members will elect the moderator. Other persons may be asked to participate in the worship of the Presbytery. The moderator and vice moderator of the presbytery are ex-officio members of the committee.
- 13.10.2** The main work of the Committee on Presbytery Worship is to plan and carry out worship for the Stated Meetings of the Presbytery. The Presbytery authorizes the observance of the Lord's Supper at each Presbytery worship. Themes for worship may be developed by the committee or suggested by Presbytery entities or

members. Either at the end of the November Presbytery meeting or during worship at the February Presbytery meeting, the officers of the Presbytery will be installed as necessary and committee moderators will be commissioned.

Specific tasks in planning for Presbytery worship:

- Develop theme.
- Develop liturgy.
- Recruit leaders, including preacher and musicians.
- Plan bulletin and coordinate printing of it.
- Coordinate with the Pastor of the local congregation hosting the meeting.

### **13.11 Living Legacy Committee**

**13.11.1** The Living Legacy Committee will be five individuals with two being Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and three being ruling elders who have knowledge or can gain knowledge of financial investment, with the majority vote resting with ruling elders. It is also desirable that the members of the committee have some geographical diversity within the Presbytery. The moderator will be elected by committee members.

#### **13.11.2 Statement of Purpose**

**13.11.2.1** The Presbytery of Des Moines established the Living Legacy Fund to empower and support the churches of the Presbytery in growing mission of the Church of Jesus Christ. The Living Legacy Fund has been built upon the proceeds of the sale of church properties within the Presbytery and with donations directly to the Fund. The Fund therefore is intended to be managed to grow and continue in perpetuity and to stress long-term total return (income and capital gains) that is consistent with a moderate amount of short-term risk of principal. As of December 2020, proceeds from the sale of church properties at Highland Park, Clifton Heights, Colfax, Albia, Pitzer, and Knox Knolls comprise the Living Legacy Fund.

**13.11.2.2** This policy is to provide guidelines on the investment and use of income from the Living Legacy Fund.

**13.11.2.3** Donor-restricted endowments – namely the Swan Fund, Walther Fund, and McCahon Fund – are not part of the Living Legacy Fund and shall be kept in separate accounts. The Living Legacy Committee will oversee the investment of donor-restricted endowments along with the Living Legacy Fund. However, in keeping with donor specifications, disbursement of grants from the Swan Fund will be in the purview of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. Interest earnings from the Walther Fund shall be used at the discretion of the Camping and Youth Committee of the Presbytery for scholarship aid for children in need to attend youth

conferences and activities. Interest earnings from the McCahon Fund shall be used at the discretion of the Commission on Ministry for the benefit of small congregations in south-central Iowa.

### **13.11.3 Use of the Living Legacy Fund**

**13.11.3.1** For definition purposes, the term “investment” means any financial asset owned by the Presbytery of Des Moines that is not cash deposited with an FDIC insured institution (including Certificates of Deposit) or Money Market funds with assets guaranteed by the U.S. government.

- All investments will be held in accounts with institutions recommended by the Living Legacy Committee and approved by the Leadership Council.
- The Presbytery accepts a moderate level of investment risk. This precludes investments in high-risk securities. This requires a balance asset allocation strategy to diversify risk.
- The Living Legacy Committee is responsible to review investment performance, risk, and advisor performance (after receipt of the quarterly statement from the Investment Advisor) and make recommendations for changes to the Leadership Council.
- The Living Legacy Committee will set aside each year a specified amount to be available for grants. This amount will be 4.5% of the 12-quarter rolling average of the total market value of the fund. The first grant allocations will begin no sooner than one year after the funds are invested.

### **13.11.4 Responsibilities for the Committee**

**13.11.4.1** The Living Legacy Committee will oversee the assets of the fund, new donations to the fund and distribution of the funds. The Committee will manage the fund to conserve capital while obtaining returns that will enable the granting of funds to support requests using established criteria.

**13.11.4.2** The Living Legacy Committee will also oversee the investment of donor-restricted endowments such as Swan Fund, Walther Fund, and McCahon Fund.

### **13.11.5 Management of the Account**

**13.11.5.1** The principal of the fund will be managed by New Covenant Trust Company, subsidiary of the Presbyterian Foundations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).



**13.11.5.2** The social criteria for investing will be met, as much as is feasibly possible, by adhering to the General Assembly guidelines for social responsibility through investment.

**13.11.6** Presbytery Reserve

**13.11.6.1** The Presbytery shall maintain at least \$250,000 as reserve. In case of shortfall in presbytery cash, funds from this account shall be available on request of the Budget and Finance Committee. Replenishment of the reserve account will not be from the Living Legacy Fund.

**13.11.7** Categories of Grants from the Living Legacy Fund

**13.11.7.1** Congregational Revitalization Grants. 15% of the annual allocation will be available for grants for congregational revitalization. These grants will be made in consultation with the Commission on Ministry and are intended to enable and support initiatives towards congregational growth and vitality. Accordingly, these grants cannot be used for property repair or payment of loans and are not intended for cases in which long-term financial support is needed.

**13.11.7.2** Leadership Development Grants. 10% of the annual allocation will be available for grants for leadership development. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders pursuing ministry-related continuing education or theological education may apply for grants. (Additional funds are available for leadership development events through the Pastors' Seminar Fund).

**13.11.7.3** Mission Grants. 10% of the annual allocation will be available for grants for churches or committees of the presbytery to be used for mission activities or mission trips.

**13.11.7.4** Youth Ministries. 15% of the annual allocation will be available for camping and youth ministries of the presbytery. Additional funds for camping and youth ministries of the presbytery are available from the Walther Fund. These funds can be accumulated for up to three years to be used as scholarship for the Presbyterian Youth Triennium.

**13.11.7.5** New Worshiping Communities. 50% of the annual allocation will be available to the New Worshiping Committee with the approval of the presbytery for use in starting and supporting new worshiping communities (Manual of Operations 13.5). These funds can be accumulated for up to five years.

**13.11.8** Procedure for Requesting Grants.

**13.11.8.1** Funds may be requested through an application process established by the Living Legacy Committee. Application may be made by the session of a local congregation or a committee of the presbytery. Seminary students, Ministers of

the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders, and Ruling Elders may submit applications with the endorsement of the appropriate committee of the presbytery.

**13.11.8.2** Congregations applying for a grant must have paid their per capita assessment, thus demonstrating their commitment to the unity and interdependence of the church and their commitment to strengthening the church's witness to the mission of God (G-3.0106).

**13.11.8.3** Each application will establish the limit for funds to be requested.

**13.11.8.4** Normally applications for funds will be for one time only per project.

**13.11.9** Review.

**13.11.9.1** The Living Legacy Committee will review this policy at their first meeting every year. A recommendation for any changes or for confirmation of the policy without changes will be made to the Leadership Council and reported to the presbytery at its next regular meeting.

**13.11.10** Procedures for Soliciting, Receiving and Acknowledging Gifts.

**13.11.10.1** The Living Legacy Fund may receive donations with restrictions from individuals or churches within the presbytery.

**13.11.10.2** The Living Legacy Committee will develop a strategy for promoting the Living Legacy Fund within the bounds of the Presbytery of Des Moines. This might include but not be limited by some of the following:

**13.11.10.2.1** Developing and sending promotional materials to the churches in the presbytery.

**13.11.10.2.2** Promoting the Living Legacy Fund as a possible recipient of the Wills Emphasis Program.

**13.11.10.2.3** The Living Legacy Committee might meet with individual donors or sessions to explain the options available.

**13.11.10.2.4** Unrestricted donations are always preferred in the interest of administering funds more effectively.

**13.11.10.2.5** Donations below \$10,000 are not eligible for separate-account treatment.

## LIVING LEGACY COMMITTEE

The committee is responsible to oversee the investment of all unrestricted and donor-restricted funds. Their purpose, policies and procedures can be found in Manual of Operations (MOO), section 13.11.

All unrestricted funds from past and future sale of church properties will be combined to make up the **LIVING LEGACY FUND.**

Responsible for distributions of Living Legacy Fund.

**Applications for grants** can be found on Presbytery of Des Moines' website under Resources –Documents (Living Legacy Fund Policies)-Forms.

## DONOR-RESTRICTED FUNDS

Each committee below is responsible for distribution of that

### Swan Fund

This is designated for seminary student's assistance.

**Committee on Preparation for Ministry**  
Their purpose, policies and procedures can be found in MOO, section 13.4.

### Walther Fund

This provides scholarship aid for children in need to attend youth conferences and activities.

**Camping and Youth Committee**  
Their purpose, policies and procedures can be found in MOO, section 13.6.

### McCahon Fund

This provides funds for the benefit of small congregations in south-central Iowa.

**Commission on Ministry**  
Their purpose, policies and procedures can be found in MOO, section 13.3.

### **13.12 Sexual Misconduct Response Committee**

- 13.12.1** The Committee shall follow the guidelines as set out in the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Presbytery in accordance to the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- 13.12.2** Members to the Sexual Misconduct Response Committee shall be nominated by the Presbytery's Nominating Committee to the Presbytery for election. The Moderator is elected by committee members.
- 13.12.3** The Committee of seven members will serve in terms of three years rotation. Four members of this team are to be women. One of the team members must be a legal consultant, one a trained mental health professional and one an insurance consultant.
- 13.12.4** The Committee will work with and be available to the accuser, the accused, the alleged victim (if not the same person as the accuser), the families involved, the congregation, co-workers of the parties involved and the governing body or entity.
- 13.12.5** The Committee shall report to the Stated Clerk unless the accused is the Stated Clerk. In such cases the Committee will report to either the Mission Executive or Pastor to the Presbyteries.

### **13.13 Commissioners to the General Assembly and Synod of Lakes & Prairies**

- 13.13.1** Guidelines for General Assembly (G.A.) Representation
  - 13.13.1.1** Commissioners to each General Assembly shall be nominated at the October stated meeting prior to the assembly according to the guidelines approved by the Presbytery. The Moderator of Presbytery shall ordinarily be one of these nominees and when elected, shall serve as coordinator of the General Assembly Commissioners. The Moderator shall also serve as liaison for the Presbytery with all persons serving from this Presbytery on General Assembly units. Should the Moderator not be elected as Commissioner, the elected Commissioners shall elect a coordinator from among themselves to fulfill the above responsibilities.
  - 13.13.1.2** Ordained Minister Guidelines for Nomination:
    - 13.13.1.2.1** The Nominating Committee will solicit applications from Ministers of the Word and Sacrament/Teaching Elders but will not be limited to only those who apply.
    - 13.13.1.2.2** Ministers are representatives of their own membership in Presbytery, not the place of service. Generally, only one G.A. Commissioner is sent from any church.

- 13.13.1.2.3** The Nominating Committee shall strive for a balanced mix based on age, sex, race, ethnicity and theology.
  - 13.13.1.2.4** Members who have been and are currently active in the life of the Presbytery shall have higher priority. “Currently active” means regular attendance at Presbytery stated meetings and service on at least one committee of the Presbytery.
  - 13.13.1.2.5** The Minister commissioner should be a member of Presbytery for at least one year and should not plan on transferring out of the Presbytery until their term is over.
  - 13.13.1.2.6** Preference shall be given to those who have never been a commissioner, or those who have gone longest without being a commissioner.
- 13.13.1.3** Ruling Elder Guidelines for Nomination:
- 13.13.1.3.1** Session takes an initiative in submitting name to Nominating Committee and providing application completed by elder and session.
  - 13.13.1.3.2** The Nominating Committee shall strive for a balanced mix based on age, sex, race, ethnicity, theology, and church: city, rural, suburban.
  - 13.13.1.3.3** The Nominating Committee shall give consideration to how active a Ruling Elder has been in the life of the Presbytery.
  - 13.13.1.3.4** The Nominating Committee shall give preference to elders from churches that have never had a commissioner or which have gone the longest time without sending a commissioner.
- 13.13.1.4** Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) Guidelines for Nomination:
- 13.13.1.4.1** Session takes an initiative in submitting name to the Nominating Committee and providing an application completed by the youth and session.
  - 13.13.1.4.2** The YAAD must be between 17 and 23 years of age, per G.A. rules.
  - 13.13.1.4.3** The Nominating Committee shall give preference to YAADs from churches that have never had a YAAD or which have gone the longest time without sending a YAAD.
- 13.13.2** Commissioners to the Synod of Lakes & Prairies, youngadult advisory delegates, and alternates are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery.
- 13.13.3** Criteria for commissioners include knowledge of and experience serving in the mission of the Presbytery.

- 13.13.4** Alternates are the primary pool of candidates for nomination as commissioners to the next meeting of the synod.
- 13.13.5** Expenses of General Assembly commissioners are paid by the General Assembly. Expenses of synod commissioners are paid by the synod. If alternates are asked or choose to attend, up to one half of the expenses of alternates are paid by the Presbytery.
- 13.13.6** Commissioners to Synod of Lakes & Prairies and General Assembly report to the Presbytery through the Leadership Council and Presbytery.
- 13.13.7** Commissioners to General Assembly will receive and present to the Presbytery-proposed overtures to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, General Assembly and proposed amendments to the Constitution of the of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

**14 Sexual Misconduct Policy and Forms**

See Appendix 1

**15 Crisis Response and Communication Plan**

See Appendix 2

**16 United Presbyteries of the Plains Operational Covenant**

See Appendix 3

**17 Suspension and Amendment of Manual of Operations**

- 17.1** At any meeting, the Presbytery, by a two-third vote of those present and voting, may suspend specific sections of this Manual of Operations.
- 17.2** The Manual of Operations may be changed or amended at any stated meeting of the Presbytery by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting when advanced notice as required by the Manual of Operations has been given to the Presbytery.

## APPENDIX 1

### Presbytery of Des Moines

#### Sexual Misconduct Policy and Forms

#### INTRODUCTION

Our faith in Jesus Christ and Holy Scripture calls us to standards of responsible conduct in all of life, including sexual behavior. Human sexuality is an integral part of who we are. It can, however, become the central element within oppressive contexts in which trust relationships are breached and persons are abused. The Presbytery of Des Moines endeavors to promote the peace, unity, and purity of the Church by preventing sexual misconduct through the maintenance of professional and ethical behaviors consistent with the Reformed tradition and by adjudicating sexual misconduct according to the procedures of and in conformity with church law.

#### PURPOSES OF THIS POLICY

The purposes for which this policy is written and affirmed by the Presbytery of Des Moines include:

1. To work to safeguard the Church's members and staff within the Presbytery of Des Moines from abuse through any form of sexual misconduct.
2. To seek justice by assuring the effectiveness of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s administrative, investigative, and judicial processes in determining truth, protecting the innocent, and in dealing appropriately with those who victimize others.
3. To promote healing of all persons against which, and congregations in which, sexual misconduct has occurred.

#### OPERATIVE DEFINITION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

**Sexual misconduct is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include: sexual abuse of children or adults, rape or sexual assault, and sexual harassment.** Sexual misconduct constitutes an abuse of authority and power, breaching Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relationship to gain advantage over another for personal gratification in an abusive, exploitative and unjust manner. Categories of sexual misconduct are explicated below.

1. **Sexual abuse** occurs whenever a person in a position of trust or authority engages in a sexual act or sexual contact with another person to whom he or she owes a professional responsibility. Such abuse shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a. Sexual acts or sexual contact with a minor.
  - b. Sexual acts or sexual contact involving inducement, threat, coercion, force, violence, or intimidation of another person.
  - c. Sexual acts or contact between ministers and anyone with whom they have a pastoral relationship, *even if such acts or contact are consensual.*
  - d. Sexual acts or sexual contact with another person who is incapable of appraising the nature of the conduct or physically incapable of declining participation in, or communicating unwillingness to engage in, sexual acts or sexual contact.

- e. Sexual acts or sexual contact arising from the administration to another person of a drug or intoxicant that substantially impairs the ability of that person to appraise or control the nature of the conduct.
2. **Child sexual abuse** includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third person. This behavior may or may not involve touching. Child sexual abuse between an adult and a child is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child. *Child sexual abuse is a crime in all states and must be reported to civil authorities.*
3. **Rape or sexual assault** is a crime in all states and should be reported to civil authorities and to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. The Federal Criminal Code of 1986 (Title 18, Chapter 109A, Sections 2241-2233) does not use the term rape, but uses the term *aggravated sexual abuse* to define what is typically described as rape. Two types of *aggravated sexual abuse* are identified: (a) aggravated sexual abuse by force or threat of force, and (b) aggravated sexual abuse by other means. *Aggravated sexual abuse by force or threat of force* is defined as follows: when a person knowingly causes another person to engage in a sexual act, or attempts to do so, by using force against that person, or by threatening or placing that person in fear that that person will be subjected to death, serious bodily injury, or kidnapping. *Aggravated sexual abuse by other means* is defined as follows: when a person knowingly renders another person unconscious and thereby engages in a sexual act with that other person; or administers to another person by force or threat of force without the knowledge or permission of that person, a drug, intoxicant, or similar substance and thereby (a) substantially impairs the ability of that person to appraise or control conduct and (b) engages in a sexual act with that person.
4. **Sexual harassment** includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexually offensive nature when:
  - a. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment or their continued status in an institution;
  - b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; or
  - c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment can consist of a single, intense or severe act, or multiple, persistent or persuasive acts. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:
    - i. Sexually-oriented jokes or humor
    - ii. Sexually demeaning comments
    - iii. Verbal suggestions of sexual involvement or sexual activity
    - iv. Questions or comments about sexual behavior
    - v. Unwelcome or inappropriate physical contact
    - vi. Graphic or degrading comments about an individual's physical appearance
    - vii. Express or implied sexual advances or propositions
    - viii. Display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures
    - ix. Repeated requests for social engagements after an individual refuses.

## **PRESBYTERY POLICY STATEMENT ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

1. Sexual misconduct is never permissible. It is a violation of the principles set forth in Scripture and constitutes a refutation of ordination vows and standards of ministry, as well as of pastoral, employment, and professional relationships.



2. The Presbytery of Des Moines shall educate ministers and ministerial candidates in an understanding of sexual misconduct so that they may avoid such conduct. All minister members shall be required to attend training offered by the Presbytery concerning the nature and prevention of sexual misconduct.
3. The Presbytery of Des Moines shall not approve calls that involve pastoral responsibilities for a permanent ministerial member who has been convicted of sexual misconduct by a church or a secular court.
4. Whereas this policy addresses sexual misconduct by ministers, each congregation and organization in the Presbytery of Des Moines is responsible for developing a sexual misconduct policy consistent with this document for church professionals, officers, members, non-member employees, and volunteers.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY ~~PRESBYTERY~~**

To address sexual misconduct, the **Commission on Ministry Presbytery of Des Moines** bears responsibility for the following duties:

1. Consultation with the Sexual Misconduct Response Committee to meet the reasonable needs of the person(s) involved.
2. Collaboration with relevant parties to meet the needs of the affected congregation(s).
3. Work with the Sexual Misconduct Response Committee in setting annual i events for the Presbytery and its members concerning sexual misconduct and appropriate ministerial relations.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATED CLERK**

**The responsibilities of the Stated Clerk are per the procedures detailed in Chapter 10 of *The Book of Order: Rules of Discipline*.**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SEXUAL MISCONDUCT RESPONSE COMMITTEE**

1. The Sexual Misconduct Response Committee shall consist of five members and be convened by the Stated Clerk following receipt of a written allegation of offense by the Stated Clerk and/or a clerk of session of the Presbytery. Committee members are elected to a term not to exceed three years and shall be eligible for re-election, not to exceed six consecutive years.
2. Work with the Stated Clerk and, when appropriate, moderator(s) of appropriate Presbytery committees in contacting the accuser and alleged victim(s) and family(ies) to secure resources for meeting the reasonable needs of the accuser, victim and family(ies). If the Stated Clerk is accused of sexual misconduct, the Presbytery shall contract with the Stated Clerk of another presbytery to staff the Sexual Misconduct Response Committee.
3. Contact the accused and family(ies) to secure resources for meeting the reasonable needs of the accused and family(ies).
4. Work with the Commission on Ministry and Presbytery staff to provide annual and ongoing educational events concerning sexual misconduct and appropriate ministerial relations.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF DES MOINES**

#### **Availability of Policy and Procedures**

Each current and future minister working within the bounds of the Presbytery of Des Moines shall be provided a copy of the Sexual Misconduct Policy and shall be required to sign an acknowledgement of receipt, which shall be placed in their personnel file. All Presbytery employees shall receive a copy the Sexual Misconduct Policy as a supplement to the Presbytery personnel

policies. This policy document shall also be available to all church members and to members of the public upon written request to the Stated Clerk.

### **Resource Documents**

The responsibilities, structures, and procedures for responding to allegations of sexual misconduct are mandated by *The Book of Order*. Specifically, *The Book of Order* details the role of the Presbytery in “warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within its bounds; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.” (G-3.0301c) as well as the role of an Investigating Committee (D-10.0103, D-10.0200).

### **Liability and Insurance**

The Presbytery of Des Moines will include in every employee’s personnel file (including all current and future ministers) the employee information sheet, the Pastor Personal Information Form or similar application for employment with employment history, any employment questionnaires, reference responses, and other documents related to this policy, including the signed form indicating receipt of the Sexual Misconduct Policy (which form is included in this Appendix IV).

## **MANAGEMENT OF ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

### **Disciplinary Process**

All allegations of sexual misconduct will be investigated using appropriate processes. In cases of members under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Des Moines, judicial process as provided in *The Book of Order: Rules of Discipline* will be followed. In cases involving employees, the provisions of the Personnel Policy will be followed. For employees who are members of the Presbytery, both personnel policy and disciplinary process will apply.

### **Judicial Process**

As a part of the allegation process, if the Stated Clerk receives written allegations as provided in D-10, an Investigating Committee shall conduct its investigation in accordance with D-10.0200.

### **Administrative Process**

Following an accusation of misconduct against a staff member of the Presbytery of Des Moines, the Personnel Commission shall consult with the accuser, the accused, and any other involved parties (e.g., staff, presbytery units, or other governing bodies) first to determine if administrative leave for the accused is warranted. If the staff member is under the jurisdiction of Presbytery, the Personnel Commission (through the Stated Clerk) shall then refer the matter to an Investigating Committee. If the staff person is not under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery, the Personnel Commission shall then investigate and may make a recommendation to the Presbytery for resolution of the issue and possible termination of employment. The Presbytery may proceed in its judgment under G-2.0904 or may employ its Personnel Policy.

If the Stated Clerk is the accused and is a member of the Presbytery of Des Moines, the Moderator, in conjunction with the Personnel Commission, shall place the Clerk on administrative leave and appoint a Clerk *Pro Tem* to fulfill the responsibilities of the Clerk until the matter is resolved.

If the Stated Clerk is the accused and is *not* a member of the Presbytery of Des Moines, the charges will be filed with the Clerk’s presbytery of membership, and the Moderator, in conjunction

with the Personnel Commission, shall place the Clerk on administrative leave and appoint a Clerk *Pro Tem* to fulfill the responsibilities of the Clerk until the matter is resolved.

### **Reporting Sexual Misconduct to the Presbytery of Des Moines**

Known or strongly suspected sexual misconduct by a minister member shall be reported to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Des Moines and to other civil authorities where required. Sexual misconduct involving children shall be reported to civil authorities and to any applicable related church entity (e.g., the Session of a congregation) as well as to the Stated Clerk. Ministers are subject to inquiry and discipline under *The Book of Order: Rules of Discipline*. As required, a final report, including any charges filed and actions taken, shall be made by the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. A copy of the report will be filed in the permanent personnel file of the accused. A written complaint to the Stated Clerk alleging sexual misconduct by a minister member of the Presbytery subjects that minister member to any applicable provisions of the Presbytery of Des Moines administrative leave policy and to any administration of applicable policies in consultation with the Commission on Ministry. A minister member may make a written confession of misconduct without a victim complaint being transmitted to the Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk shall then proceed with the disciplinary process according to the provisions of *The Book of Order: Rules of Discipline*.

### **Pastoral Care of Accusers and Victims**

**Presbytery Advocate** is the person, appropriately trained in the issues of sexual misconduct, who provides support, and emotional and physical presence to one of the following: the alleged victim(s) and family(ies), the accused, family members of the accused, or the congregation involved in a sexual misconduct case. In consultation with the Stated Clerk, the Advocate ~~Liaison~~ may provide clarification of the investigative and judicial processes of the church to the persons with whom he or she provides support. The role of the Advocate is to provide support and consultation (D-10.0203). The Advocate may accompany the person to whom he or she provides support to meetings of presbytery entities when that person is testifying.

## **PRESBYTERY STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

### **Education**

The Presbytery of Des Moines maintains a commitment to offer, provide resources for, and publicize educational opportunities to prevent sexual misconduct in the church. Presbytery staff, ministers, ministerial candidates, and all persons and committees working with the issue (including local congregations) will be invited to read the resources and attend sexual misconduct prevention educational events. All minister members of the Presbytery are required to attend annual educational programming on the current Sexual Misconduct Policy offered by the Presbytery of Des Moines, and each time that policy is substantially amended.

### **Pre-Employment Screening**

Pre-employment screening shall include specific inquiry into previous complaints of sexual misconduct. The Commission on Ministry shall review Part VI, Sexual Misconduct Information, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Personal Information Form when interviewing persons seeking ministerial calls. The **Pastor to the Presbyteries** is responsible for conducting reference checks through the Synod Executive, presbytery leaders directly knowledgeable about the individual, seminary liaisons, or other authorized persons with directly relevant knowledge to ascertain whether the applicant/candidate has any history of sexual misconduct. The **Pastor to the Presbyteries** shall report to the Commission on Ministry and/or the Committee on Preparation for Ministry either that

there was no reported sexual misconduct, or that the appropriate body should inquire into reported sexual misconduct. A written record of conversations and correspondence with references will be kept in the minister's/employee's permanent personnel file.

All persons within the Presbytery authorized to give references are obligated to provide truthful information regarding complaints, inquiries, and administrative or disciplinary action related to sexual misconduct by individuals employed by or who hold membership in the Presbytery. Applicants shall be given an opportunity to correct or respond to information regarding sexual misconduct obtained from

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Accused** is the person or persons against whom a claim of sexual misconduct is being made.

**Accuser** is the person or persons claiming knowledge of sexual misconduct by a person covered by this policy. The accuser may also be the victim.

**Victim** is the person or persons claiming to have been the subject of sexual misconduct by a person covered under this policy. The victim may also be the accuser.

**Mandated Reporter**, as legally defined by the State of Iowa, is a person who is required to report any and all suspected incidents of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, that come to their attention. State law shall be consulted as to the current specific definition of this mandate to determine when persons having knowledge of such abuse become "mandated reporters" in a legal sense and the current specific list of professions whose members are to report child abuse.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

### **Sexual Misconduct Policy The Presbytery of Des Moines**

This Acknowledgement Form to the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Presbytery of Des Moines is to be signed by all candidates, ministers, employees and volunteers of the presbytery.

By signing this Acknowledgement Form you acknowledge that you have received, have read, and understand the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Presbytery of Des Moines and the Guidelines for Ministerial Conduct as stated in *Standards of Ethical Conduct* (Approved by the 210<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (1998) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)).

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This document will be placed in your permanent personnel file. Forms for presbytery volunteers will be kept by the Stated Clerk in a confidential file.

**Employee/Volunteer Questionnaire**

**Sexual Misconduct Policy  
The Presbytery of Des Moines  
(Confidential)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

All other names by which you have been known \_\_\_\_\_

Most recent addresses other than current:

\_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Is your name currently listed on a registry for sexual offenders? Yes No

If yes, where and since what date? \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I certify by the signature below that no civil, criminal, or church complaint is pending or has ever been sustained against me for sexual misconduct, and that I have never resigned or been terminated from a position for reasons related to sexual misconduct.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ I am unable to make the above certification. I offer, instead, the following description of the complaint, termination, or outcome of the situation with explanatory comments.

(Please use the back of this form or additional sheets, if necessary)

2. \_\_\_\_\_ I grant my permission for the Presbytery of Des Moines to contact primary and secondary references, and to secure criminal records and credit history as needed.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Syllabus for Annual Sexual Misconduct Workshop**

The Presbytery of Des Moines will offer a workshop on sexual misconduct to all ministers, employees, and volunteers new to the presbytery on an annual basis.

The content of the workshop will include at least the following, and may address specific relevant issues:

- The General Assembly's statements on ethical behavior for members, volunteers, employees, and ordained officers
- Why the Presbytery of Des Moines maintains a sexual misconduct policy
- What the policy does and does not say—how the policy should be interpreted
- Why each congregation needs to establish its own sexual misconduct policy and procedures
- Model congregational policies
- Why each congregation needs to maintain its own liability insurance for misconduct

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Presbytery of Des Moines Crisis Response and Communication Plan**

#### **I Rationale**

The Presbytery of Des Moines consists of people and systems – elected staff, support staff, congregations, minister members and the wider Presbyterian community. This crisis response and communication plan has been developed to facilitate the work and mission of the Presbytery of Des Moines during a crisis. This plan enables the Presbytery to:

- Reinforce its role as a caring and compassionate organization
- Offer sensitive and timely responses
- Assign communication responsibilities and other duties
- Enhance staff communication when relating to and working with media and other audiences
- Minimize potential liabilities

Preparing for the response to a crisis before one occurs minimizes stress and confusion for the staff while maximizing competence, courtesy and personal care for those involved and the community as a whole. Further, this crisis response and communication plan helps assure that crucial response efforts and information are delivered with as much accuracy and timeliness as possible under the circumstances.

The intent of this plan is to not compromise nor detract from the mission of the Presbytery, but rather to support the integrity of ministry which the Presbytery is called to provide. Implementation of this plan is to be accomplished in ways that demonstrate truth, fairness, concern and pastoral care for all involved.

This crisis response and communication plan is designed to assist the Presbytery staff in a crisis situation involving some aspect of the Presbytery, e.g., the Presbytery staff, the community or the greater church. As a partner in ministry, the Presbytery also stands ready to assist congregations (in consultation with the Commission on Ministry) and subsidiary and affiliate organizations when a crisis arises within their settings. In all circumstances, the Presbytery will apply the principles in this crisis response and communication plan.

#### **II Goals**

- The Presbytery will reach out in a coordinated manner to those impacted by a crisis and communicate with the media with promptness, accuracy and on a continuing basis, as needed.
- Throughout a crisis the Presbytery will seek to maintain the integrity of the church and the effectiveness of the Presbytery's ministry.
- The Presbytery will recognize any crisis situation as an opportunity to witness as the church and will seek to minimize negative publicity.
- The Presbytery will be guided by its vision and mission when connecting with pastors and congregations during these stressful times.
- The Presbytery will manage the flow of information in ways designed to limit stress and prevent misunderstandings.
- The crisis response and communication plan will be carried out with openness, truthfulness, accessibility and responsiveness.



### **III Crisis Team Membership and Roles**

The Crisis Team will consist of the following, all of whom will have voice and vote:

- Presbyteries Stated Clerk
- Presbyteries Executive for Mission
- Presbyteries Pastor to the Presbyteries
- Moderator of the Presbytery
- Vice-Moderator of the Presbytery
- Immediate Past Moderator of the Presbytery
- Commission on Ministry Moderator
- Leadership Council Moderator

When appropriate to a particular crisis, upon recommendation from the Crisis Team, the crisis coordinator may invite others to join the crisis team. (For example: Moderator of the Committee on Preparation for of Ministry; legal counsel, local pastor or church members).

The names and contact information for persons currently serving on the Crisis Team and for other Presbytery staff are found in the Presbytery Directory, online at: [www.dmpresbytery.org](http://www.dmpresbytery.org). Crisis Team members will also be asked to share their cell phone and home phone numbers, but they will not be listed on the web.

The Crisis Team will appoint:

- A crisis coordinator (this should be the Executive who would have jurisdiction over the situation)
- A spokesperson for the Presbytery
- A recorder to document all actions, statements and media contacts
- A liaison for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, as appropriate
- A contact for police/public safety, as needed

These appointments shall be made at the annual training meeting. Also, the Crisis Team will assign team members to carry out specific duties, as necessary. Duties might include, but are not limited to: identifying pastoral concerns, gathering information, notifying families and others involved, communicating with volunteers and staff, and notifying the insurance company.

### **IV Annual Training Meeting**

The Presbytery Leadership Council will arrange for the Crisis Team members to receive annual training immediately before or after the first of the year. This document will be distributed to all members of the team prior to the gathering for training. During the training, individuals will be appointed to fill positions (see section III), and the plan will be reviewed and updated as needed. At these meetings it also will be the responsibility of the Crisis Team to engage in risk and issues analysis and determine potential crisis scenarios, i.e., what aspects of the Presbytery's ministry are susceptible to adverse publicity? What future events and situations in the life of the Presbytery might create a crisis?

### **V Operational Guidelines**

When the Presbytery faces a crisis, the following response and communication strategies will be employed at the direction of the Crisis Team:

- Any one of the team members may convene the Crisis Team.
- The team will convene immediately upon learning of a crisis or in anticipation of a crisis. The Crisis Team will gather facts about the crisis and immediately analyze the

situation, drawing upon other resources as necessary to complete the analysis perception.

- The Crisis Team will identify needs and develop the key message(s) to be conveyed during the crisis. The key message(s) allow the Presbytery to present its particular viewpoint on the information that is released. To the extent possible, the key message(s) will downplay any negative while proactively promoting any positive.
- With the key message(s) as a guide, the Crisis Team will draft an official statement regarding the crisis, and make it available upon request.
- Using the media guidelines provided in Section VI, the Crisis Team will determine the means and frequency of communication with internal and external audiences, including the media. The notification process will then commence.

**Internal audiences include:** Presbytery of the Des Moines staff, Presbytery officers, the Presbytery Leadership Council, the Commission on Ministry Moderator, and other appropriate Presbytery of Des Moines entities; leadership of subsidiary and affiliate organizations; and the Presbytery clergy, elders and other lay leaders of the congregations in the Presbytery.

**External audiences include:** Presbyterian Disaster Assistance; presbyteries within the synod; the staff of other governing bodies in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council of the PC(USA); the Presbyterian News Service; ecumenical and community leaders within the Presbytery's bounds and the news media.

- Using the media guidelines provided in Section VI, the spokesperson will be the primary speaker to the media on the Presbytery's behalf. This allows the Presbytery's point of view to be heard clearly and unambiguously. There will be situations where others might be asked to speak publicly to certain aspects of a crisis. When appropriate, the spokesperson, in consultation with the Crisis Team, will select these people. Those additional persons speaking on behalf of the Presbytery will communicate fully with the Crisis Team before and after acting in this role.
- The Crisis Team will follow these operational guidelines until the crisis is determined by the team to be over, at which time the crisis team will carry out a post-crisis evaluation.

## VI Media Guidelines

The following media guidelines will be followed so that the crisis communication plan can be implemented effectively.

- Relating to the media in a cooperative manner is an important element of the crisis communication plan. The Crisis Team, especially the spokesperson, needs to follow these basic principles in maintaining positive media relations:
  - Be accessible and accommodating to the media.
  - Avoid delaying responses to media requests, unless absolutely necessary.
  - Answer all questions directly and briefly as possible, in a straightforward manner.
  - Respond to questions factually and not in a reactionary or defensive manner.
  - Do not argue with reporters, and never speak "off the record".
  - Avoid speculation and allocation of blame.
  - Provide supplemental information in the form of fact sheets.
  - Do not use church and ecclesiastical jargon without a clear definition or explanation.
  - When an answer is not available, explain the reason and offer to respond within a specific time frame.
- Depending upon the particular crisis and time constraints, the Crisis Team will make appropriate use of communication tools such as in-person contacts, virtual meetings, telephone,

email, website, newsletters, regular mail, and express services.

- Whenever practical, communications with both internal and external audiences are to contain the key message(s) identified by the Crisis Team.
- The designated recorder will maintain a media log throughout the crisis. The log will include a listing of all media calls received, issues raised by the media, and media coverage of the crisis.
- The recorder will also be responsible for keeping copies of all documents prepared and distributed to internal and external audiences throughout the crisis and will maintain a file of final reports.

## **VII Possible Crises**

The following categories and examples are noted in an attempt to anticipate the kinds of crises that are possible. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list. They are offered to reduce the element of surprise and to better prepare for dealing with them.

### **Natural disasters**

- Examples: flood, tornado, fire, blizzard, windstorm, earthquake and epidemic

### **Terrorist acts, demonstrations, violent deaths or injuries**

- Examples: bomb threat; explosion; hostage situation; threat against staff; acts of war; demonstrations against the Presbytery of Des Moines; injury, homicide or suicide of presbytery staff or member

### **Criminal acts**

- Examples: staff, member, volunteer, vendor or anyone affiliated with the presbytery charged with a crime, burglary, robbery, arson, etc.

### **Legal crises**

- Examples: sexual harassment, lawsuit or wrongful termination action brought against the Presbytery of Des Moines

### **Pastoral crises**

- Examples: situations involving ministers which demand further follow-up beyond the Commission on Ministry (in consultation with COM); minister charged with crime; death or suicide of a minister.

### **Financial crises**

- Examples: embezzlement by staff member or volunteer at Presbytery or church, failure of bank that holds Presbytery funds, sharp drop in the Presbytery of Des Moines income

### **Denominational crises**

- Examples: churches within the Presbytery submit dissolution forms to cut ties with denomination over a General Assembly vote; Presbytery receives a pledge for a large bequest, however the donor is not financially able to donate the funds

## APPENDIX 3

### United Presbyteries of the Plains Operational Covenant

#### 1. Purpose

- a. The following Presbyteries covenant to faithfully share staff as set forth in the separate document titled ***Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report***:
  - Presbytery of Des Moines, as approved Nov 12, 2019*
  - Presbytery of North Central Iowa, as approved Nov 3, 2019*
  - Presbytery of Prospect Hill, as approved Oct 26, 2019*
- b. This covenant is a supplement to the ***Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report*** and serves as a guide to operational matters and responsibilities of the Personnel Commission. If the need arises to modify provisions contained in this covenant, then the matter shall be referred to the leadership councils of all member presbyteries for review, revision, and final approval.
- c. The presbyteries have agreed to share staff for a period of seven years through 2027.
- d. The five shared staff positions consist of the following:
  - Mission Executive*
  - Pastor to the Presbyteries*
  - Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk*
  - Office Administrator*
  - Program and Communications Administrator*

#### 2. Finances

- a. Banking
  - i. The Presbytery of North Central Iowa will establish a separate bank account under the name of United Presbyteries of the Plains.
  - ii. The Presbytery of North Central Iowa agrees to serve as the custodian of the funds for a period of three years (2021-2023). After that time, this arrangement can be renewed by each presbytery's leadership council or moved to another of the member presbyteries.
  - iii. Each presbytery contributing to the financial activities under this covenant will own their share of the account balance in proportion to their contributions.
- b. Budgeting
  - i. *The Personnel Commission will manage the shared budget as follows:*
    1. *Adjusting line items, as needed, without exceeding the budget as approved in the ***Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report*** (See Appendix).*
    2. *Develop procedures for approval of financial transactions per financial policies.*
    3. *Act, jointly with executive staff, regarding office locations and related matters.*
  - ii. Each member presbytery will manage their own budgets for their non-shared ministries.
- c. Shared staff compensation
  - i. The Presbytery of North Central Iowa agrees to serve as the common paymaster for all five shared employees who will be concurrently employed by the Presbytery of Des Moines, Presbytery of Prospect Hill, and Presbytery of North Central Iowa.

- ii. The Presbytery of North Central Iowa shall serve as common paymaster for a period of three years (2021-2023). After that time, this arrangement can be renewed by each presbytery's leadership council or moved to another of the member presbyteries.
- iii. Details of the common paymaster arrangement are as follows:
  - 1. *Relevant law:* Internal Revenue Code Sections 3121(s) and 3306(p) enable a related corporation (the "common paymaster") to be treated as a single employer solely for purposes of certain payroll tax provisions if the common paymaster (1) employs the same employees concurrently with one or more related corporations, and (2) disburses compensation on behalf of itself and the other related corporations that concurrently employ the employees.
  - 2. *Application of the law:* A common paymaster relationship exists because (a) the Presbyteries of Des Moines, North Central Iowa and Prospect Hill are a "related" group of corporations since at least 30% of the employees of one presbytery are concurrently employed by the other presbyteries, (b) the employees receive their remuneration through one member of the related group – the common paymaster (i.e. the Presbytery of North Central Iowa), and (c) the employees are concurrently employed by all three presbyteries (including the common paymaster).
  - 3. *Responsibilities:*
    - a. The common paymaster will disburse remuneration to the shared staff on behalf of all three presbyteries.
    - b. The common paymaster is responsible for keeping books & records for the payroll of the shared staff.
    - c. The common paymaster will pay concurrently employed individuals by one combined paycheck, drawn on a single bank account.
    - d. The common paymaster is treated as the only employer but only for purposes of FICA, FUTA and income tax withholding.
    - e. The common paymaster is responsible for withholding, depositing, and paying FICA and FUTA taxes and filing and furnishing information returns associated with wages it disburses.
    - f. If the common paymaster fails to remit payroll taxes, it remains liable for the full amount of the unpaid portion of these taxes. In addition, each of the other related corporations (i.e. presbyteries) using the common paymaster is jointly and severally liable for its appropriate share of these taxes.
- d. Financial reporting and policies
  - i. The Presbytery of North Central Iowa will utilize a cloud-based solution (QuickBooks Online or similar) showing each presbytery's contributions and share of expenses.
  - ii. Quarterly financial reports will be sent to each member presbytery's finance committee and to the Personnel Commission.
  - iii. *The Personnel Commission is authorized to adopt financial policies to clarify roles, authority, and responsibilities for essential financial management activities considering segregation of duties for internal control purposes where possible.*

### 3. Liability of each presbytery

- a. For purposes other than paying compensation, the shared staff are employed concurrently by the Presbytery of Des Moines, Presbytery of North Central Iowa, and Presbytery of Prospect Hill.
- b. All presbyteries are responsible for acquiring and maintaining separate or group liability insurance and worker's compensation insurance policies for the shared staff.

### 4. Personnel Commission

- a. The oversight, evaluation and support of the shared staff is under the authority of a Personnel Commission as approved by the presbyteries in the ***Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report***.
- b. *Composition of the Personnel Commission:*
  - i. Three people from each presbytery will be elected and commissioned for this service.
  - ii. Members will serve in rotating three-year terms.
  - iii. Members can serve two terms or six years before being required to rotate off.
  - iv. Leadership of the Commission will rotate among the presbyteries annually.
  - v. The Commission will report to each presbyter's leadership council.
- c. *Authority and expectations of the Personnel Commission:*
  - i. Develop a shared set of personnel policies.
  - ii. Execute employment agreements, if desired or advised.
  - iii. *The Personnel Commission is authorized to hire an accountant to perform banking and accounting activities including the receipt of funds and remittance of funds in accordance with the approved shared budget.*
  - iv. *The Personnel Commission will manage the shared budget as set forth in this covenant in 2.b.i. and is authorized to adopt financial policies as set forth in this covenant in 2.d.iii.*
  - v. Review and support the shared staff:
    1. Conduct initial six-month reviews of all staff (Jun 30, 2021).
    2. Conduct annual reviews of all staff for the first year (Dec 31, 2021).
    3. *Conduct annual reviews of all executive staff for the second and succeeding years.*
    4. Supervisors will conduct annual reviews of the full-time administrators and submit to the Personnel Commission.
    5. Mentor the staff, provide support, clarify responsibilities, and answer questions.
    6. Discharge staff members who do not meet performance and/or behavioral expectations using due process as set forth in the personnel policies. In the case of the Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk, the Commission shall recommend termination and an interim Stated Clerk candidate to each member presbytery for action.
    7. *In the case of vacancy in the Office Administrator or Program and Communications Administrator positions, the Personnel Commission and the three executives, shall jointly act to fill the vacancy.*
    8. *In the case of vacancy in the Mission Executive, Pastor to the Presbyteries or Administrative Executive/Stated Clerk positions, the Personnel Commission shall notify all member presbyteries and request activation of a search*

*committee.*

9. Note: Italicized wording in 2.b., 2.d., and 4.c. of this covenant represent changes to what was already approved by the presbyteries in the ***Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report.***

vi. If the Personnel Commission is unable to resolve a given matter, it shall be brought to a meeting of the moderators of the presbyteries' leadership councils.

## **5. Other matters**

a. If a dispute or disagreement occurs that is not covered in this covenant, it shall be referred to the Personnel Commission to resolve the matter. If the dispute requires revisions to this covenant, then the matter shall be referred to the leadership councils of all member presbyteries for review, revision, and final approval.

Appendix – Detailed Shared Budget, as approved in the *Joint Presbytery Staffing Plan Final Report*:

<b>Contributions:</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>
<b>DM</b>	272,000	278,800	284,376	290,064	295,865	301,782	307,818
<b>NCI</b>	204,000	208,080	212,242	216,486	220,816	225,232	229,737
<b>PH</b>	111,000	113,220	115,484	117,794	120,150	122,553	125,004
<b>Total</b>	<b>587,000</b>	<b>600,100</b>	<b>612,102</b>	<b>624,344</b>	<b>636,831</b>	<b>649,567</b>	<b>662,559</b>

<b>Expenses:</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>
<b>Salaries:</b>							
Executive: Mission	80,000.00	81,600.00	83,232.00	84,896.64	86,594.57	88,326.46	90,092.99
Executive: Pastor to the Presbyteries	80,000.00	81,600.00	83,232.00	84,896.64	86,594.57	88,326.46	90,092.99
Executive: Admin/Stated Clerk	80,000.00	81,600.00	83,232.00	84,896.64	86,594.57	88,326.46	90,092.99
Office administrator	45,000.00	45,900.00	46,818.00	47,754.36	48,709.45	49,683.64	50,677.31
Program & Comm administrator	45,000.00	45,900.00	46,818.00	47,754.36	48,709.45	49,683.64	50,677.31
<b>Total salaries</b>	<b>330,000.00</b>	<b>336,600.00</b>	<b>343,332.00</b>	<b>350,198.64</b>	<b>357,202.61</b>	<b>364,346.66</b>	<b>371,633.59</b>
<b>Benefits:</b>							
Medical	82,500.00	84,150.00	85,833.00	87,549.66	89,300.65	91,086.67	92,908.40
Pension	36,300.00	37,026.00	37,766.52	38,521.85	39,292.29	40,078.13	40,879.70
Death & disability	3,300.00	3,366.00	3,433.32	3,501.99	3,572.03	3,643.47	3,716.34
Cont educ: Execs	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
Cont educ: Admins	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
FICA	25,245.00	25,749.90	26,264.90	26,790.20	27,326.00	27,872.52	28,429.97
Professional exp	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Travel: Execs	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00
Travel: GA	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Travel: Prog/Comm	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
<b>Total benefits</b>	<b>196,845.00</b>	<b>199,791.90</b>	<b>202,797.74</b>	<b>205,863.70</b>	<b>208,990.97</b>	<b>212,180.79</b>	<b>215,434.41</b>
<b>Office expense:</b>							
Rentals & utilities	11,000.00	11,275.00	11,556.88	11,845.80	12,141.94	12,445.49	12,756.63
Supplies	10,000.00	10,250.00	10,506.25	10,768.91	11,038.13	11,314.08	11,596.93
Phones	8,000.00	8,200.00	8,405.00	8,615.13	8,830.50	9,051.27	9,277.55
Postage	3,500.00	3,587.50	3,677.19	3,769.12	3,863.35	3,959.93	4,058.93
Zoom accounts	500.00	512.50	525.31	538.45	551.91	565.70	579.85
Equipment	8,000.00	8,200.00	8,405.00	8,615.13	8,830.50	9,051.27	9,277.55
Insurance	13,000.00	13,325.00	13,658.13	13,999.58	14,349.57	14,708.31	15,076.01
Janitorial	7,200.00	7,380.00	7,564.50	7,753.61	7,947.45	8,146.14	8,349.79
Laptops	2,000.00	2,050.00	2,101.24	2,153.75	2,207.62	2,262.81	2,319.38
<b>Total office</b>	<b>63,200.00</b>	<b>64,780.00</b>	<b>66,399.50</b>	<b>68,059.48</b>	<b>69,760.97</b>	<b>71,505.00</b>	<b>73,292.62</b>
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>590,045.00</b>	<b>601,171.90</b>	<b>612,529.24</b>	<b>624,121.82</b>	<b>635,954.55</b>	<b>648,032.45</b>	<b>660,360.62</b>