

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

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Mission Statement

Connecting and equipping pastors and congregations to live out the transforming grace of God.

**Presbytery of Des Moines
of the
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 Independent financial review or 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 and Ministry 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 role of the Presbytery in accordance with the membership size of the church.

7.1.2.1. Up to 99 members: 1 Ruling Elder Commissioner;

7.1.2.2. 100 to 249 members: 2 Ruling Elder Commissioners;

7.1.2.3. 250 to 499: 3 Ruling Elder Commissioners;

7.1.2.4. 500 and up: 4 Ruling Elder Commissioners;

7.1.2.5. 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.

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. The commission will elect a secretary annually from its membership. 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 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 18 months.
- 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.

13.3.16. The commission shall oversee the Presbytery's approved pulpit supply list including ensuring that all individuals on the list have, at a minimum, had a background check, completed boundaries training once every three years, and completed an examination interview with a 3-person team of COM members.

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 itineration 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. Request, receive and recommend approval of an independent review or audit of presbytery financial statements annually.

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 the 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

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.).

13.11.5.1 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.

Sexual Misconduct Response Committee

- 13.11.11** The Committee shall follow the guidelines as set out in the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Presbytery in accordance to the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- 13.11.12** 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.
- 13.11.13** 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.
- 13.11.14** 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.
- 13.11.15** 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.

13.12 Commissioners to the General Assembly and Synod of Lakes & Prairies

- 13.12.1** Guidelines for General Assembly (G.A.) Representation
- 13.12.1.1** 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.
- 13.12.1.2** Ordained Minister Guidelines for Nomination:
- 13.12.1.2.1** 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.
- 13.12.1.2.2** 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.
- 13.12.1.2.3** The Nominating Committee shall strive for a balanced mix

based on age, sex, race, ethnicity and theology.

13.12.1.2.4 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.

13.12.1.2.5 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.

13.12.1.2.6 Preference shall be given to those who have never been a commissioner, or those who have gone longest without being a commissioner.

13.12.1.3 Ruling Elder Guidelines for Nomination:

13.12.1.3.1 Session takes an initiative in submitting name to Nominating Committee and providing application completed by elder and session.

13.12.1.3.2 The Nominating Committee shall strive for a balanced mix based on age, sex, race, ethnicity, theology, and church: city, rural, suburban.

13.12.1.3.3 The Nominating Committee shall give consideration to how active a Ruling Elder has been in the life of the Presbytery.

13.12.1.3.4 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.

13.12.1.4 Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) Guidelines for Nomination:

13.12.1.4.1 Session takes an initiative in submitting name to the Nominating Committee and providing an application completed by the youth and session.

13.12.1.4.2 The YAAD must be between 17 and 23 years of age, per G.A. rules.

13.12.1.4.3 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.

13.12.2 Commissioners to the Synod of Lakes & Prairies, youngadult advisory delegates, and alternates are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery.

13.12.3 Criteria for commissioners include knowledge of and experience serving in the mission of the Presbytery.

13.12.4 Alternates are the primary pool of candidates for nomination as commissioners to

the next meeting of the synod.

13.12.5 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.

13.12.6 Commissioners to Synod of Lakes & Prairies and General Assembly report to the Presbytery through the Leadership Council and Presbytery.

13.12.7 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 Anti-Racism Policy

See Appendix 2

16 Harassment Policy

See Appendix 3

17 Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults

See Appendix 4

18 Social Media Policy

See Appendix 5

19 Social Media Guidelines

See Appendix 6

20 Crisis Response and Communication Plan

See Appendix 7

21 United Presbyteries of the Plains Operational Covenant

See Appendix 8

22 Suspension and Amendment of Manual of Operations

22.1 At any meeting, the Presbytery, by a two-third vote of those present and voting, may suspend specific sections of this Manual of Operations.

22.2 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

To address sexual misconduct, the **Commission on Ministry** 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 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 reference checks.

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.

Any member of this church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by this church or its congregations, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal

authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or 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 210th 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

Anti Racism Policy

F-1.0403 states, Unity in Diversity:

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female: for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27-29)

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U>S>A>) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

Racism is the opposite of what God intends for humanity. It is the rejection of the other, which is entirely contrary to the Word of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. Racism is a lie about our fellow human beings, for it says that some are less than others. Because of our biblical understanding of who God is and what God intends for humanity, the PC(USA) must stand against, speak against and work against racism. (GA policy reference)

G-3.0106 requires each Council to adopt an anti-racism policy.

As a congregation within the PCUSA we will:

1. Seek to welcome and be open to all people (believers)
2. Educate ourselves to seek awareness of our own behavior and biases and the impact on our community of faith and the wider community.
3. Seek resources (curriculum, worship, preaching and music) which are reflective of all ethnic and racial backgrounds.
4. Study Matthew 25 materials and resources to increase our awareness of systemic racism and its impact. (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/matt-25/matt-25-resources/>)
5. Review our hiring practices to identify and address unintentional or systemic racism.

APPENDIX 3

Presbytery of Des Moines

Harassment Policy

1. Introduction: As the Church of Jesus Christ, love is the rule of our relationships.
 - a. Jesus said, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets,” (Matt. 7:12), and “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35).
 - b. The Book of Order states, “The Church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down.” (F-1.0301, “The Calling of the Church: the Church is the Body of Christ”)
 - c. Because we believe this, and because we seek to live it out in all aspects of our personal and corporate life, we believe that harassment in all its forms is incompatible with who we are as followers of Jesus.
2. What is harassment?
 - a. Harassment, simply put, is “*repeated unwanted behavior.*” To take the parts in reverse order:
 - b. *Behavior*: harassment consists of words or actions that demean, threaten, offend, or humiliate another person.¹ This could include, but is not limited to, name-calling in private or public, or in electronic communication such as email; offensive or demeaning social media posts (see the presbytery’s Social Media Policy); stalking; and mockery of another person’s appearance, demeanor, gender, or racial/ethnic identity.
 - c. *Unwanted*: teasing or humorous language that might appear offensive to an observer is characteristic of some relationships, but if the person who is being teased in this way finds that teasing offensive or demeaning, it has crossed the line into harassment. In these cases intention is irrelevant; it is how the language is received that is crucial.
 - d. *Repeated*: in an emotionally-charged setting, a person may use insulting or demeaning language. Ideally, this leads to apology, forgiveness, and reconciliation. But when the insulting or demeaning language is repeated, it becomes harassment.
3. How do we prevent harassment in the Church?
 - a. Jesus is our model for how we treat each other. But we don’t always live up to that standard. That means we must begin with ourselves in stopping harassment of our fellow believers. One way is to ask ourselves before we speak in a meeting or write in an email, “will what I am about to say or write tend to build up the community or break

¹ This language is adapted from the National Archives document, “Factsheet about Workplace Harassment,” <https://www.archives.gov/files/eo/policy/facts-about-workplace-harassment.pdf>

- b. down the community?” More specifically, “have I fallen into a pattern of using dismissive or demeaning language toward this person or this group?” This does not preclude legitimate criticism; it does mean that when criticism is necessary, it must be done in genuine love and concern not only for the body as a whole but also for the individual.
 - c. Jesus is our model for how we treat each other. But we don’t always live up to that standard. That means that we acknowledge together that harassment in all its forms is wrong, and we commit ourselves to repentance and genuine reconciliation whenever harassment occurs.
 - d. Jesus is our model for how we treat each other. But we don’t always live up to that standard. Those in positions of power like pastors, ruling elders, and youth leaders are particularly tempted to use insulting or demeaning language to those with less power. Men are more likely to harass women. If we are in a position of power, we need to test our words and actions by Jesus’ standards.
4. What do we do when harassment takes place?
- 1. Jesus’ words in Matthew 18:15-19 are a good place to begin:
If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.
 - 2. If you are being harassed, or if you witness harassment, call it out, if possible. It may be that the person engaging in harassing behavior will recognize their fault, repent and apologize.
 - 3. If that doesn’t work, others should be brought in.
 - 4. Finally, the session should counsel with the person engaging in harassing behavior. If that doesn’t lead to repentance and reconciliation, it may be necessary to initiate a Disciplinary Process under Chapter VII of Church Discipline section of the Book of Order, always remembering the purpose of church discipline (D-1.0301) and the duty to conciliate and mediate whenever appropriate (D-1.04)
 - 5. This policy takes effect when it is approved by the session/presbytery council. The session/council will review it every three years and change it as necessary to fulfill the requirements of the Book of Order. Each session member will be provided with a written copy of this policy. The policy will be included in the Presbytery Manual of Operations.

This policy statement is by its nature stated in negative terms. At the same time, it is written to be consistent with the Statement of Ethical Conduct of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),² in the belief that those who adhere to the ethical conduct set forth in that document will avoid the kind of harassing behavior the present document is meant to deal with.

²The Standards of Ethical Conduct can be downloaded here: [Standards of Ethical Conduct PCUSA](#)

APPENDIX 4

Presbytery of Des Moines

Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Presbytery of Des Moines' Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults is to implement and maintain a safe environment for children, youth, and adults that will help them participate freely in the presbyteries' ministries and programs.

OBJECTIVES

Protect Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults. Our intent is to provide a safe environment for children and youth to learn, grow, and experience God's love. We believe that effective ministry for children and youth requires relationships with trustworthy, caring, loving, and mature adults and youth leaders who can demonstrate God's love to them.

Protect Adults and Leaders. When adults and leaders are interacting with children and youth, they need to be in a safe place as well. Our intent is to create an environment that sets appropriate guidelines and boundaries and provide the support that staff and volunteers need to be effective in their roles with children and youth. Our intent is also to provide accountability for the actions of adults and leaders to other leaders and parents, by peer observance and mandatory reporting protocols, possibly involving law enforcement.

All ministry areas and programs will incorporate this policy into all activities involving minors and vulnerable adults, provide training for staff and volunteers working with children and youth, and communicate clear expectations for parents, guardians, children, and youth about adhering to the policy and procedures to keep minors and vulnerable adults safe.

GENERAL DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are to clarify the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults and its procedures:

- **Staff** – all personnel on the payroll of the Presbytery of Prospect Hill, whether lay or clergy, temporary or permanent.
- **Volunteer** – any person who enters into or offers himself or herself for presbytery-related service.
- **Worker** – anyone doing work for the church, paid or unpaid.
- **Child** – anyone under the age of 18 years, as defined by Iowa Code section 232.68.
- **Youth** – anyone from sixth grade through high school graduation.
- **Vulnerable Adult** – anyone 18 years or older who is unable to protect his or her own interests or unable to adequately perform or obtain services necessary to meet essential human needs, as a result of a physical or mental condition which requires assistance from another, as defined by Iowa Code 709. or section 726.2.
- **Misuse of Technology** – the use of technology to text or email suggestive messages and/or images to or of children, and includes the viewing and transmission of pornography.
- **Abuse** – all improper treatment of children, youth, or persons of diminished mental or physical capacity. Abuse discussed in this document includes, but is not limited to the following types defined by Iowa Code 232.68 (See Appendix B or full definitions):
 - Physical abuse

- Mental injury
- Sexual abuse
- Child prostitution
- Presence of illegal drugs in a child's body
- Denial of critical care
- Dangerous substance
- Bestiality in the presence of a child
- Allowing access to a registered sex offender
- Allowing access to obscene materials
- Child sex trafficking.

SAFE CHURCH COMPONENTS

The five components for ensuring a safe church are screening, training, supervision, responding, and accountability.

All staff and volunteers are expected to do everything reasonably possible to provide a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults. The following instructions, although not exhaustive, are practical actions that can be taken.

1. SCREENING

All employees of the presbytery shall be screened prior to employment. All workers eighteen years of age or older, who may have direct contact with children or vulnerable adults must comply with screening requirements before being allowed to serve. Screening will include a criminal background check. The information provided for, and obtained by the background check, shall be retained by the Presbytery of Des Moines.

2. POLICY TRAINING

Each applicant shall receive a copy of the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults and attest to having read and agree to follow the policy by completing the Acknowledgement of Receipt of Policy Form in Appendix A. Signed copies of this form will be retained by the Presbytery of Des Moines. Updated forms may be required if this policy changes.

3. SUPERVISION

Workers who are responsible for the supervision of children, youth, or vulnerable adults during ministry activities are expected to do everything possible to provide a safe environment.

The presence of two adults shall occur during all children's activities.

Verbal Interactions

Verbal abuse will not be used at any time. Speaking with children appropriately establishes respect. For example, children should always be called by name, rather than nicknames, generic terms (buddy, sweetie, honey, etc.) or derogatory names. Workers should avoid harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate children.

Touching

Physical punishment will not be used at any time. Workers who feel inadequate regarding guidance of children's behaviors should consult with a leader and/or staff.

Touching should be initiated by the child. A child's preference to not be touched should be respected by all workers. Physical affection should be appropriate for the age of the child. For

example, it is generally appropriate for a four-year-old to sit in a worker's lap and give a hug. It is not appropriate for a teenager and adult worker to engage in this conduct.

Injury and Medications

Medications will be administered by a parent or guardian, if possible and practicable, except in potentially life-threatening conditions when a worker may administer medication. Parents and guardians may provide signed written instructions to the staff for other medical conditions that may occur.

Workers may provide aid for minor injuries, scrapes and bruises as appropriate. The worker will notify the child's parent or guardian of the reason for the injury and the treatment in writing. A copy of the accident report will be retained in the church files.

Parents will give prior instructions regarding procedures for emergency situations involving their child(ren). Workers will attempt to contact parents or guardians for injuries requiring treatment beyond simple first aid. If parents are unavailable, or give permission by telephone, workers may call an ambulance. Workers will document all emergency situations in writing to parents or guardians, and a copy kept in the church files.

Transportation

Individual workers will not transport children except their own. At least two adults must be present in any vehicles transporting minors and/or vulnerable adults.

4. RESPONDING

First and foremost, all workers shall do whatever is necessary to ensure that all persons are safe. All workers have a responsibility to report actual or suspected abuse of children, youth, or vulnerable adults, whether the suspected abuse occurred during church ministry activities or on church property, or elsewhere.

Reporting and Documenting Child Abuse

If a worker suspects a child has been abused, the worker will report it to the leader or pastor within 24 hours. Workers are not mandatory reporters, but are expected to report any suspected abuse for the welfare of the children.

Only professionals trained in child abuse investigations should question a child about the suspected or actual child abuse.

In the event of founded child abuse for a child or vulnerable adult engaged in an outside program, the pastor will provide a written report to the Session as soon as possible.

All workers should be familiar with the Iowa Abuse Reporting Hotline phone number:
1-800-362-2178.

Policy Violations by Workers

Any worker who is aware of mistreatment of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, must report to the stated clerk.

If the report is a minor infraction not meeting the abuse definition of the Iowa Code:

- the supervising staff will meet with the worker involved and remind him or her of the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults.
- A second infraction of the policy will result in a suspension of the worker for a specific period of time.
- A third infraction will result in the worker being removed from the program.

If the worker’s behavior meets or appears to meet the abuse definition of the Iowa Code, the worker will be suspended from working with children while the case is under review. A founded case of abuse shall result in termination of the worker’s status in the program.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY

All workers are responsible for ensuring that the Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults is understood and followed.

Only professionals trained in child abuse investigations should question a child about the suspected or actual child abuse.

References

Iowa Code 232.68. (2018). Iowa Department of Human Services. Retrieved from <http://dhs.iowa.gov/child-abuse/what-is-child-abuse/victims>

Dependent Adult Abuse. (2018). Iowa Department of Human Services. Retrieved from http://dhs.iowa.gov/dependent_adult_abuse

Presbyterian Church (USA) Book of Order. (2017/2019).Section G-3.0106. Retrieved from <https://www.pcusastore.com/Products/OGA17010/book-of-order-20172019-pdf.aspx>

**Acknowledgement of Receipt of Policy Form
Presbytery of Des Moines
Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults**

I hereby acknowledge that I, _____ ,
(printed name)

representing _____ have received copy
(name of group)

of the Presbytery of Des Moines Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults, adopted on XXXX, 2023.

I certify that I have read and understand this policy, and that I will comply with its procedures.

(Signature)

(Date)

A copy of this signed acknowledgement shall be kept on file in the Presbytery of Des Moines. The agreement shall be in effect for five years, or until a change in group leadership occurs, or a change in the policy occurs.

APPENDIX 5

Presbytery of Des Moines

Social Media Policy

Social media has become a normal, integral part of society, and covers an ever-evolving collection of programs and devices like Twitter, Instagram, email, texting and Facebook. It might be tempting to dismiss these technologies as tangential to the Presbytery and to our congregations and churches. While they can be ignored, banned, or acknowledged, what we can't do is to expect that social media is not a normal part of life for most of our members, and for those outside social media "friends" of our Presbytery and congregational members. Social media is not a fad – it is a fundamental shift in the way we communicate.

Location or familiarity no longer defines the number or immediacy of those with whom we are in communication. Social media gives people a chance to share ideas and think aloud with multiple communities. People engaging in social media are potentially listening to, talking, and reflecting with many people at the same time, many of whom may come from different experiences, cultures, practices, and beliefs, on any number of topics. Being present with someone engaging in social media does not necessarily mean that you are the person getting their primary attention. And in some ways, in contrast with this shift in the way we communicate, are the principles of Presbyterian polity and governance.

A major affirmation of our faithfulness together is a trust in the power of discernment when people gather to speak and listen to each other and to the voice of the Holy Spirit. Our Presbytery, Presbytery office staff, churches, congregations, and committees are clearly defined in membership and Reformed theology. The guiding principle for using social media within this context is to be attentive and present to the community gathered immediately around us, the breadth of acceptable practice and position, and to the mysterious and wondrous movement of the Spirit of Christ in our ministries. Whatever our thumbs may be doing, our work calls us to respectfully engage our hearts with each other in every moment.

Policy of the Presbytery

1. Sharing positive messages, as in an invitation to an event or worship service, or a celebration, are encouraged!
2. Staff and members of Presbytery may not speak on behalf of the Presbytery, or list affiliation with the Presbytery in a public opinion statement, without prior permission from the Administrative Executive.
3. Staff and members of congregations may not speak on behalf of the congregation, or list affiliation with the congregation in a public opinion statement, without prior permission from the Session.
4. Staff and members of both Presbytery and individual congregations should be clear when they are authorized to speak on behalf of their respective institutions and when they are sharing personal opinions. In situations where there may be confusion between speaking in a personal and professional voice, a clear disclaimer is strongly encouraged.

5. Please remember that in many cases you are already publicly identified with your church or the Presbytery and be mindful that even with a disclaimer you may be seen as representing that entity.
6. Staff and members shall pursue any necessary conflict resolution by bringing negative feedback directly to the Presbytery or church rather than drawing attention to it indirectly on social media.
7. The social media sites of the Presbytery are administered from the office of the Presbytery or with permission of the Presbytery.

Please also refer to the Presbytery of Des Moines' Social Media Guidelines (below) for best practices and guidance on implementation of this policy.

APPENDIX 6

Presbytery of Des Moines

Social Media Guidelines

Please refer to the Presbytery of Des Moines' Social Media Policy for requirements in communication and social media. Below are best practices and guidance in the implementation of that policy. If there are questions, please contact the Office of the Presbytery or Administrative Executive.

Commonly Accepted Principles of Healthy Boundaries and Safe Church

1. Remember that anything you write can be copied and distributed, and mis-attributed as the opinion of an institution instead of just the individual.
2. All clergy, adults engaged in ministry with youth or committees, Session members, and Presbytery staff should consider the content and nature of any post. Your voice is often considered the voice of the church and Presbytery.
3. It is important to remember that you are holding out a public witness in your personal life, so please should be careful and prudent on your personal social networking communications. As appropriate, particularly when discussing ministry related issues, you should let it be known that private personal postings are your own opinions and not that of the congregation or Presbytery.
4. Help protect staff and members from fraud.
5. Make sure that church staff and volunteer leaders are using church computers appropriately.

Power Bases

1. Adults have more power than children and youth.
2. Clergy have more power than people with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
3. The mutuality of friendship cannot exist when there is a disparity of power.
4. Two unrelated adults must be able to maintain visual contact with each other any time they engage in ministry with children or youth.
5. Windows in doors allow transparency of interactions with children, youth and adults who may be vulnerable.

General Information about Digital Communications

1. All communication sent digitally (email, social networking sites, notes or posts, etc.) is NOT CONFIDENTIAL and may be shared or reposted to others.
2. Interactions in the virtual world need to be transparent, as a window in the door provides transparency in the physical world.
3. In the virtual world healthy boundaries and safe church practices must be adhered to as they are in the physical world.

4. In the virtual world, “friend” can mean anyone with whom you are willing to communicate through that medium, and friend-of-a-friend may also have access to your communication, regardless of the presence of a shared ideology.
5. Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse/neglect/exploitation of children, youth, elders and vulnerable adults apply in the virtual world as they do in the physical world.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Children and Youth

Social Networking Sites-Relationships

1. Adults who minister to children and youth are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile.
2. Individual personal profiles are to be used to interact with real friends, family and peers.
3. Adults should not submit “friend” requests to minors or youth. Youth may not be able to decline such requests due to the disparity of power between youth and adults.
4. Youth may ask to be “friends” and adults should discern the level of contact they want to maintain with youth prior to responding to these requests.
5. If an adult chooses to accept friend requests from minors or youth who are associated with their community of faith, other adult leaders must have full access to all aspects of that adult’s profile and correspondence.
6. Adults who want to connect via a social networking website with youth to whom they minister are strongly encouraged to set up a closed group account that youth may join.
7. Youth requesting to “friend” an adult can then be invited to join this group rather than be accepted as a friend on an adult’s personal profile account.
8. The purpose of these two separate accounts/profiles is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with youth and real family, friends and colleagues.
9. Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy and/or Child Protective Services (CPS) in the state in which the child resides. If the material is on a church affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with CPS/police.

Groups on Social Networking Sites

1. Groups should have at least two unrelated adult administrators as well as at least two youth.
2. Closed groups, but not “hidden” groups, should be used for youth groups.
3. Invitations to youth to join the group should be made by youth administrators, unless a youth previously asked an adult administrator to invite him/her to join the group.
4. Behavioral covenants should be created to govern what content is appropriate and inappropriate for an online youth group.
5. Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately reported to the clergy and/or Child Protective Services. If the material is on a church affiliated site, that material should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with CPS/police.

6. Inappropriate material that does not raise suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should immediately be removed from the site.
7. Any content that details inappropriate behavior (outside of the bounds of the established behavioral covenant) during a church sponsored event or activity should be addressed by adult youth leaders and parents.
8. Social networking groups for youth should be open to parents of current members.
9. Parents should be informed that the content of youth pages or groups that are not sponsored by the church are NOT within the purview of adult youth leaders.
10. Adult leaders of youth groups and former youth members who, due to departure, removal from position, or are no longer eligible because they “aged-out” of a program should be immediately removed from digital communication with youth groups via social networking sites, list serves, etc.

Recommended Practices and Guidelines for Interactions with Adults

Social Networking Sites-Relationship

1. Clergy are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile to shield both adult and youth members from viewing content that may be inappropriate.
2. Individual personal profiles of clergy should be used to interact with real friends, family and peers.
3. Clergy should consider whether to submit “friend” requests to congregants and others to whom they minister. The disparity of power may not give the other person the ability to decline such a request.
4. Clergy who want to connect via a social networking website with congregants are strongly encouraged to set up a group account that all congregants may join. The purpose of having a personal profile and church group is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with congregants and real family, friends and colleagues.
5. Clergy should consider the impact of declining a “friend” request from congregants. These encounters may create a tension in “real world” relationships. Clergy can direct “friend” requests from congregants to the church’s group page.
6. Clergy who work directly with youth are encouraged to establish church sponsored digital communications groups to maintain contact with youth members.
7. When a pastor’s ministry at a church or other ministry setting ends, the pastor should consider removing congregants as “friends” or contacts in all forms of digital communications.

Recommendations for Digital Communications and Content

Behavioral Covenants

1. Covenants should acknowledge that materials posted on church sponsored sites (and/or group pages) are NOT CONFIDENTIAL.
2. Covenants should acknowledge that content deemed inappropriate will be removed from the site or group page.

3. Covenants for communities of faith should address the following issues:
 - a. Appropriate language
 - b. Eligibility of membership to join a social networking group. Things to consider include whether you have to be a member of a church or youth group and whether there are age requirements/restrictions for participation for youth groups.
 - c. Loss of eligibility of membership and removal from the social networking group. Consider how and when members will be removed from the group due to moving away, leaving the faith community, becoming too old for youth group, clergy leaving to minister to another church or exclusion from ministry positions for other reasons.
 - d. Who, how and when may photos be tagged (members identified by name; for example, individuals may tag themselves in photos but should not tag others)
 - e. Appropriate and inappropriate behavior of members (bullying, inappropriate content) and the consequence for inappropriate behavior.
 - f. Compliance with mandated reporting laws regarding suspected abuse.

Recommendations for Video Chats, Blogs or Video Blogs

1. Adults should refrain from initiating video chats with youth.
2. Participants in a video chat or blog should consider what will be shown in the video such as their surroundings, their clothing/state of dress, etc.
3. All transcripts of on-line text chats, video chats, blogs or video blogs should be saved when possible.

Recommendations for Publishing/Posting Content Online

1. Congregations must inform participants when they are being videoed because church buildings are not considered public space.
2. Any faith community that distributes video of its worship services or activities on the web or via other broadcast media MUST post signs that indicate the service will be broadcast.
3. All communities of faith should take care to secure signed media release forms from adults and guardians of minor children who will or may participate in activities that may be photographed or videoed for distribution outside a closed group.
4. Photos that are published on church sponsored public sites should not include name or contact information for minor children or youth.

Recommendations for Use of Email or Texting (Includes Twitter)

1. Email can be an appropriate and effective means of communicating basic factual information such as the time of an event, agenda for a meeting, text of a document, etc.
2. Email is not an appropriate communication method for matters that are pastorally or legally sensitive, emotionally charged or require extensive conversation.
3. If an email message is longer than a couple of sentences, then the matter might more properly be addressed via live conversation.
4. Humor and sarcasm can be easily misinterpreted in an email.
5. All email users should take a moment to consider the ramifications of their message before clicking on the "send" or "reply to all" button.

Best Practices to Use Social Media Successfully

1. **Be responsive.** Set up notifications to be informed when someone posts to your page and be prepared to respond quickly—within the hour if possible and certainly the same day—even during evenings or weekends. Get someone to cover for you if you expect to be unavailable. If you don't know the answer, it is better to say "We will find out and get back to you" than to not answer at all.
2. **When controversial actions, events, or decisions are anticipated,** discuss with leadership what strategy and steps will be followed when someone posts or tweets about the issue in a critical way. Have church leadership decide who will respond to comments and when approval may be required.
3. **Dealing with negative comments.** While obvious spam posts can be deleted, comments should be allowed on blogs, Facebook pages, and other places. Do not automatically delete negative posts. Instead, respond kindly with accurate information. If the person wants to engage in a lengthy battle or appears to be promoting an agenda, just stop answering.
4. **Be responsible.** The fast pace and transparency of social media mean we will get things wrong sometimes. That is okay if you handle it gracefully, starting with acknowledging your error. If you make a mistake, admit it—be upfront and quick with your correction. What you write is ultimately your responsibility. Participation in social media on behalf of [CHURCH NAME] is not a right but a ministry, so please treat it seriously and with respect.
5. **Questions.** If the poster has specific questions about programs or policies, direct them to an email address for the person who can answer those questions, or to the private message function on your organization's Facebook page. Also, notify the person whom you have identified as a point person for questions that this person will be contacting them and ask them to respond as quickly as they can to avoid any further public postings. Criticisms or questions are best answered in private, and every care should be taken to avoid a protracted comment battle.
6. **Page moderation.** On Facebook, in the administration portal, block users from posting comments with obscenities. You will find it under Settings and then Page Moderations.
7. **Display guidelines for comments on your page.** A good guideline for Facebook, YouTube and other social menu venues is to post something similar to this disclaimer in the bio or "about us" section: We welcome your thoughts in this space. We ask that you be respectful in what you post and in your comments about other members of the community here. If you'd like to know more about us, visit our web site at [WEBSITE HERE].
8. **Use proper hashtags.** Never use a hashtag without first being sure you know the origins and proper use. Search online through www.hashtagify.me or other means to see if and how it's already being used on social media.
9. **Post context for links.** If you want to share a news story on Twitter, Facebook, etc., add a sentence or two that tells what the story is about, so potential readers will know what they're going to visit when they click on the link. Avoid lengthy posts. For example, a good length for a Facebook post is two to three sentences.
10. **Avoid acronyms.** They are difficult for readers to figure out.
11. **Do not use first-person-singular language on a page you manage.** Use "we" to refer to a group of people or the church by name, but do not use "I." There is no entity represented by a single person.

12. **Update your status regularly and strategically.** Social media channels should be updated frequently. You can use a free timing tool like hootsuite.com to schedule posts in advance to various social media channels for days you won't be working. If you use a scheduling tool, be aware of events in the larger world. If a major national news event has just occurred, posting about something completely unrelated is usually seen as a blunder.
13. **Use analytics to plan.** Based on your social media goals, track and measure people reached and/or impressions and engagement rate. These numbers will help gauge success and improve what types of content to post in the future.

Best Practices for Using Social Media to Promote Events

1. Do not create separate social media pages or accounts just for the event itself.
2. Pre-event planning:
 - a. Meet with the social media manager and/or church leadership six months prior to the event and again one month before the event starts to discuss goals and messaging.
 - b. Develop a web page early with information about the event. This is the place to refer people from Twitter, Facebook, etc.
 - c. Choose a hashtag for the event that is short and unique and use it on all posts in all social media. Hashtags make social media searchable. Search online through hashtagify.me to be sure your hashtag is not being used by anyone else. Adding a year to your hashtag is one way to help make it specific. Avoid generic hashtags (#presbyterian, #church) in favor of tags like #BigTent14, #GA221, #PYT13, etc.
 - d. Be responsive. As the event gets closer, be ready with answers to questions that people are likely to ask about the event.
 - e. Plan social media posts around early-bird dates, registration deadlines, and start dates and times.
 - f. Tag other churches or organizations that are involved with your event (when possible), so they can share your content and help you spread the word.
3. During the event:
 - a. Don't "overpost" on Facebook. Group photos in albums, so you don't flood the Facebook feed for people who may not be interested.
 - b. Post as soon as possible after a session ends. Very current content keeps followers engaged. Be sure to proofread carefully.
 - c. Use the names of people in photos as much as you can. Taking a photo of the badge of a person at a conference separate from their portrait is a good trick that helps you keep track of those involved. You may need their name later.
 - d. Tag photos of your Facebook friends to help spread the photos through social networks.
 - e. Live-tweet events, but not excessively. Pick up a few key points from each session and hashtag them with the event hashtag.
4. After the event:
 - a. Continue to post a few items for a short time to wrap up any loose ends.

Best Practices for Personal Social Media Usage

As staff of a church or the Presbytery, you are likely viewed by friends, family, and other followers as a representative of that institution.

1. Be transparent and honest about your identity, and you may want to say something like, “The views I express are not necessarily those of the [CHURCH NAME].”
2. Be accurate. Before posting, take a moment to Google a news story to be sure you have facts correct. Rely on mainstream, reputable news sources.
3. Be respectful. Long, drawn-out arguments on social media consume energy and cause emotions to flame. It is easy to become angry and post insults. This damages your reputation and the reputation of the [CHURCH NAME] and is best avoided.
4. Maintain confidentiality. Do not post confidential or inside information about the community members of [CHURCH NAME] or staff. In general, don’t post anything about your work that you would not present at a conference.
5. Posting events, photos, videos. You may post about official [CHURCH NAME] events on your personal page, but the best practice for page administrators is to post on the organization’s page first. You may share to your own personal page or create an entirely new post, but you should tag your organization’s page when doing so. This will encourage more people to like and interact with your page.
6. Be aware of liability. You can be held legally liable for what you post on your personal site and on the sites of others. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be copyrighted, defamatory, libelous, or obscene (as defined by the courts).
7. Protect your identity. Don’t provide personal information (home address, telephone number, or email address). It is a good practice to create a separate, non-work email address that is used only with your social media site.

APPENDIX 7

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. 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.
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.

VI 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 8

Presbytery of Des Moines 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 and Ministry 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*:

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

Expenses:	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Salaries:							
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
Total salaries	330,000.00	336,600.00	343,332.00	350,198.64	357,202.61	364,346.66	371,633.59
Benefits:							
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	3000.00	3000.00	3000.00	3000.00	3000.00	3000.00	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
Total benefits	196,845.00	199,791.90	202,797.74	205,863.70	208,990.97	212,180.79	215,434.41
Office expense:							
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
Total office	63,200.00	64,780.00	66,399.50	68,059.48	69,760.97	71,505.00	73,292.62
Grand total	590,045.00	601,171.90	612,529.24	624,121.82	635,954.55	648,032.45	660,360.62