

Bylaws

Last Amendment 10-08-2021



1.000 NAME & CONSTITUTION – The name shall be, “The Presbytery of the Northwest Coast,” of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” It operates under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.¹

2.000 OBJECTIVE

2.100. Mission Statement: Guided by the Triune God, the mission of the Northwest Coast Presbytery is: “To engage, equip and encourage congregations and their leaders, dispersed yet connected throughout the region, as together we faithfully serve Jesus Christ to transform the world.”²”

2.200. Vision Statement: For each congregation to be: vital in its ministry; supported in meeting existing and emerging needs and connected in Christ-like ways for shared mission all to the glory of God;

3.000 MEMBERSHIP

3.100. The Presbytery of the Northwest Coast is a representative governing body of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A; a corporate expression of the church consisting of all the churches and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament within the following districts:

The Washington counties of Adams (that portion known as the Panhandle), Benton, Chelan, Clallam, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Island, Jefferson, King (that portion north of NE 160th Street, Seattle), Kittitas, Klickitat (that portion east of Rock Creek), Okanogan, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Walla Walla, Whatcom, Yakima,³ that portion of Pierce bounded by South Fruitland Street, 96th Street East, 21st Street Southwest and 31st Ave SW; and the geographical area of Alaska that includes all of that portion of the State of Alaska known as the "Panhandle" or Southeastern Alaska, extending from Dixon Entrance in the south to and including the Yakutat region in the north⁴.

3.200. When the Presbytery meets, each church shall be represented by a ruling elder(s) commissioned by the session as provided by G-3.0301 and bylaw 3.600.

3.300. Teaching **elders** are those enrolled according to G-3.0306

3.400. Ruling Elder Members – Each ruling elder, whether or not commissioned by his or her session, elected moderator of Presbytery, an officer, moderator of a Presbytery standing commission or committee, member of the Executive Board, or executive staff shall be enrolled as a member of Presbytery for his or her term of office (G-3.0306).

3.500. Ruling Elders commissioned by the presbytery to limited pastoral service in a validated ministry may be enrolled during terms of elected service and shall be counted as an ruling elder commissioner for purposes of parity⁵

3.600 For the purposes of balance (G-3.0301), the number of eligible voting ruling elders shall be at least equal to or greater than the number of eligible voting teaching elders on the current roll including only those honorably retired teaching elders who have attended at least one stated meeting during the previous two years. Any imbalance shall be redressed annually at the stated meeting following the completion of the G.A. Annual Statistical Report.

4.000 OFFICERS

4.100. Officers of the Presbytery shall be the Presbytery Moderator, Moderator (Presiding Officer), Presbytery Vice Moderator, Moderator of the Executive Board, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer.⁶ These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these Bylaws, the Constitution, and Robert's Rules of

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Order. Terms of office shall begin January 1st and end on December 31st of the appropriate year or until their successors have been elected.⁷

4.200 Moderator – A moderator shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year, or until a successor has been elected, and may be reelected for no more than two additional contiguous terms. At the time of election, the moderator must be a continuing member of, or a commissioner to, the Presbytery. Should the office become vacant, the Vice Moderator Elect shall assume the office for the remainder of the term. The Moderator shall be an ex-officio member of Presbytery commissions and committees with the exception of the Nominating Committee.⁸

4.300 Vice Moderator – A Vice Moderator shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year, beginning January 1 of the year following the election, or until a successor has been elected, and may be reelected for no more than two additional contiguous terms. At the time of election, the Vice Moderator must be a continuing member of, or a commissioner to, the Presbytery (G-3.0104). The Vice Moderator shall perform the functions of the moderator's office upon the moderator's request, absence or inability to serve. The Vice-moderator ordinarily will be the nominee for Moderator when the moderator's term has ended.⁹

4.400 Co-Moderators – Co-Moderators may be elected in lieu of a Moderator and Vice Moderator for a term of one year to fulfill and share equally all of the duties of those offices, according to the preceding sections. If a Co-Moderator is unable to serve, the other Co-Moderator shall become the Moderator, and a Co-Moderator or Vice Moderator shall be elected at the next stated or meeting called for that purpose¹⁰

4.500 Moderator of the Executive Board – 4.400 Moderator of the Executive Board – The Executive Board shall, at its first meeting of the year, shall elect a moderator from its own members, who shall serve in the office for one year, or until a successor has been elected. Should the office become vacant, the Board shall elect from its own members a moderator to complete the term of the previous moderator.¹¹

4.600 Treasurer - A treasurer shall be elected for a term of three years at the last stated meeting of his or her term, and shall assume the duties of the office January 1 following election.¹²

4.700 Stated Clerk – The stated clerk shall be elected for a term beginning January 1st, and ending December 31st three years hence. Election shall be at the last stated meeting of the term, and the Stated Clerk shall assume the duties of the office January 1 following election. There is no limit on the number of consecutive terms that may be served. An annual performance review shall be conducted by the Executive Board.

a. Nomination to the office of Stated Clerk shall be by the Nominating Committee.¹³

b. The Stated Clerk shall serve as the parliamentarian of the Presbytery, and shall carry out all functions stipulated by the Constitution, these Bylaws, and other duties as the Presbytery may direct.

5.000 EXECUTIVE STAFF

5.100 The Presbytery may elect an executive(s), as required by its mission, accountable to the Presbytery through the Executive Board, for the implementation of decisions and matters of strategy, program and resources [G-3.0110]

5.200 Nomination of executive staff is by an executive nominating committee elected by the Presbytery which shall be representative of the whole Presbytery. The Executive Board shall submit nominees for the committee to the Presbytery.

5.300 Executive staff shall be an ex-officio member(s), without vote, of Presbytery commissions and committees, and the Executive Board and its agencies.

6.000 MEETINGS

6.100 Stated Meetings shall be held in accord with G-3.0105, and shall constitute meetings of the corporation. One meeting shall be designated as the annual meeting when elections shall occur. The places, dates, times and medium of the stated meetings will be proposed by the Stated Clerk and designated by the Executive Board. Whenever possible, practical and reasonable, attendance by electronic means shall be permitted.¹⁴ The current schedule of meetings will be distributed with any meeting docket. The docket and a record of the transactions Presbytery and its Executive Board shall be distributed to each voting member and congregation at least ten days prior to the next stated meeting.¹⁵

6.101 Special Meetings – Special meetings shall be called upon written request of six elders, one half of that number being ruling elders and one half being teaching elders, the ruling elders must represent at least three different churches.¹⁶ The Presbytery Executive Board may also call a special meeting. Notice of a special meeting shall be sent not less than ten days in advance to each teaching elder and to the session of every church. The notice shall set out the purpose of the meeting and no other business than that listed in the notice shall be transacted.¹⁷

6.102 - A quorum shall be according to G-3.304, any three teaching elders and three ruling elder commissioners from three different congregations.

6.103 - Nominations from the floor for any office or position elected by the Presbytery shall be allowed before nominations are closed.

7.000 ORGANIZATION & STRUCTURE - The structures of the Presbytery are:

a. An **Executive Board** (herein referred to as “the Board”) established in accord with G-3.0109 to superintend the presbytery’s work, providing for the regular review of the functional relationship between presbytery’s structure and its mission. The presbytery may, by these rules, assign to its Executive Board responsibility for action between meetings of presbytery on such specific areas of its responsibilities as it shall deem appropriate for its mission (2.100), vision (2.200) and responsibilities as defined by G-**3.0301**.

b. Agencies **established by the Executive Board** (Committees, Groups, and Task Forces) for the execution of its work.

c. Standing Committees and Commissions of the Presbytery as allowed and provided by G-3.0109 of the Constitution:

- i. Commission on Ministry.
- ii. Commission on Preparation for Ministry.
- iii. Nominating Committee.
- iv. Permanent Judicial Commission.
- vi. Administrative Commissions created by the Presbytery.

d. When any member of an entity of the presbytery, a board, commission, unit, division, committee, task force, or any other body authorized by the presbytery or its Executive Board does not attend two successive sessions of that body and such absence is unexcused, the membership of that person shall be automatically vacated, and that person shall be notified by the Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk shall be notified of the vacancy by the chairperson of the entity, and the Stated Clerk shall announce the vacancy and shall notify the Nominating Committee or other body that originated the nomination, election or appointment of the person who has been absent without excuse, in order that the vacancy may be filled in the manner by which the same position had been filled originally.¹⁸

8.000 PRESBYTERY EXECUTIVE BOARD

8.100 The Executive Board shall coordinate, plan, implement, and facilitate the work of the Presbytery beyond that which is delegated by the Constitution to the Committees and Commissions of the Presbytery. It shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Presbytery between meetings, make recommendations to Presbytery, and shall perform other such duties as are specified by these Bylaws.

The Board shall be subject to the orders of the Presbytery;

- a. all of its actions shall be reported to the next stated meeting of Presbytery,
- b. none of its acts shall conflict with actions taken by the Presbytery, and
- c. its criteria for action shall be the mission and vision statements of the Presbytery.

8.200 The Executive Board shall constitute the Board of Trustees of the Corporation established under the State of Washington Nonprofit Corporations Act, RCW 24.03. For the purposes of this Act, which states, "The affairs of a corporation shall be managed by a board of directors, [RCW 24.03.095]," The Moderator of the Executive Board shall be the President of the Corporation, the Presbytery Vice Moderator shall be the Vice-President, the Stated Clerk shall be the Secretary and registered agent, the Presbytery Treasurer shall be the treasurer, and the remaining members of the Board shall be the directors.

8.300 Composition - The Board shall be composed of the Presbytery Vice Moderator, the current Moderator of the Presbytery, and the immediate past Moderator of the Presbytery if that person served as Presbytery Moderator less than three years, and no fewer than nine men and women elected by the Presbytery from Alaska and Washington. Members shall be teaching elders in good standing and ruling elders in numbers as equal as possible. It shall conform to the principles of unity in diversity established in F.1-0403. The Stated Clerk, who shall serve as clerk of the Board, Executive Staff and the Treasurer shall be ex-officio members without vote for the duration of their service.

8.400 Term of service shall be three years, with members divided into three equal classes, one of which shall be elected annually at the last stated meeting of Presbytery. The term of office shall begin January 1 of the year following election. No member shall serve consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. A member having served a total of six consecutive years shall be ineligible for reelection for at least one year.

8.500 Meetings - The Board shall meet not less than prior to every stated meeting of Presbytery. The Moderator may call a special meeting of the Board when he or she judges it necessary and shall do so when requested in writing by any two members. In the absence or incapacitation of the Moderator, the Stated Clerk may convene a special meeting when requested in writing by any three members. Except in the case of an emergency, at least three days' notice shall be given.¹⁹ A quorum shall be a majority of the voting members.

8.600 Responsibilities – The Executive Board has the responsibility and power to:

a. relate to Other Councils of the Church, Boards, Agencies, and Ecumenical Organizations – the Board shall represent and act on behalf of the Presbytery when relating to other entities outside the Presbytery. It may appoint representatives other than commissioners to committees, commissions and task forces of other PCUSA councils;

- b. manage the Presbytery's Finances and Corporate Affairs, including
 - i. recommending an inclusive annual budget to the Presbytery prior to the beginning of the fiscal year,
 - ii. authorizing revisions or exceptions to the Presbytery approved budget,

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iii. managing the Presbytery's accounts, reserves, holdings, investments, insurance, legal matters of the Presbytery; and all other pertinent corporate and financial business of the Presbytery;
iv. providing the Presbytery with an annual report of all financial and corporate matters.
v. Appoint a committee, consisting of at least 5 teaching and ruling elders selected from both of the former presbyteries, with the majority being residents of Alaska, to approve the use of and disbursement of Alaska mission funds and income from endowments for Alaska mission. This committee may approve grant requests up to the amount of \$5,000, and make recommendations to the Executive Board for amounts surpassing \$5,000.

c. provide for the administration of the program and responsibilities of the Presbytery, including
i. employment of staff, consultants and contractors, with concern for equal employment opportunity, fair employment practices, personnel policies, and the annual review of performance and adequacy of compensation;
ii. developing and maintaining a manual of administrative operations as required by G-9.0405 and G3.0106;
iii. reviewing these Bylaws as needed.

d. To provide, facilitate and direct access to the Presbytery through
i. the establishment and maintenance of a communications network within and among the congregations, members and entities of the Presbytery;
ii. determination of the agenda of stated Presbytery meetings, as proposed by the Presbytery Moderator, Presbytery Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk and Executive Presbyter.

e. To encourage, coordinate, resource and fund emerging mission common to the Presbytery, including the development of new and existing congregations, in response to the needs or ministry interests expressed by its members, commissioners and churches within the principles established in Scripture, the Constitution, and according to these Bylaws, particularly 2.000.

f. To nominate candidates to the Nominating Committee for Presbytery election.

g. Appoint commissioners and commissioner alternates to Synod or General Assembly when a commissioner or alternate is unable to serve and there is no stated meeting of Presbytery scheduled from the time of notice to the meeting of the judicatory. Such action shall be reported at the next stated meeting of Presbytery.

h. Establish and superintend the agencies necessary for its work. Committees of The Executive Board must include at least one of its members.

i. develop procedures and mechanisms for promoting and reviewing the presbytery's implementation of the church's commitment to inclusiveness and representation established by G-3.0103 of the Constitution., reporting at least annually the numbers of Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders, men, women, and ethnicity to the presbytery, and to the Nominating Committee before they report to the presbytery.²⁰

j. designate, between standing meetings of the presbytery, an administrative commission, fill vacancies or add additional members to an existing administrative commission, or fill vacancies or add additional members to a standing commission or committee of the presbytery (7.000c), to be reviewed and confirmed at the next standing meeting of the presbytery.²¹

9.000 STANDING COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES²²

9.100 Membership, reporting, quorum.

a. Commission members must be teaching elders or ruling elders of a particular church; committee members must be teaching elders or members of a particular church.²³ Standing commissions and committees are elected at the year's last stated meeting for three year terms beginning January 1 of the year following election. Members shall be divided into three equal classes, one of which shall be elected annually. No member shall serve consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. A member having served a total of six years shall be ineligible for reelection for at least one year. The Nominating Committee shall nominate candidates for the standing commissions and committees of the Presbytery itself being excepted. Standing Commissions and Committees shall be composed of members from both Alaska and Washington. Members of the Nominating Committee shall be nominated by the Executive Board.

b. Standing Commissions and Committees shall report to Presbytery in writing.

c. A quorum shall be a majority of the elected voting members.

9.200 Commission on Ministry

a. This commission shall be composed of ruling elders and teaching elders in numbers as equal as possible, bearing in mind the principles of unity in diversity in F-1.0403.

b. The Commission on Ministry is delegated the authority of the presbytery to be "pastor, counselor and advisor to teaching elders and congregations" as delineated in G-3.0307, except for the "oversight of inquirers and candidates." All actions carried out as a result of delegated authority must be reported to the presbytery at its next regular meeting. The following specific tasks are delegated to this commission:

- i. Find in order calls issued by churches.
- ii. Approve and present calls for services of teaching elders,
- iii. Dissolve the pastoral relationship in cases where the congregation and pastor concur,
- iv. Grant permission to labor within or outside the bounds of the presbytery,
- v. Dismiss teaching elders to other presbyteries,
- vi. Approve the examinations of and receive teaching elders transferring from other presbyteries and present them at the next stated meeting of the presbytery.
- vii. Appoint a moderator of session where a pulpit is vacant or is filled by a temporary pastoral relationship.
- viii. Appoint a commission for the purpose of installing a teaching elder.
- ix. Provide consent on behalf of the presbytery to a change in a call to a pastor or associate pastor made at the request of the pastor or associate pastor or at the request of the church by action of the congregation
- x. Grant permission for a teaching elder to engage in a validated ministry "in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church (G-2.0503),
- xi. Designate a teaching elder as honorably retired (G-2.0503c).
- xii. Release a teaching elder from the exercise of ordained ministry upon application by the teaching elder (G-2.0507).
- xiii. Approve the restoration of a teaching elder previously released under G-2.0407.
- xiv. Train, authorize and commission specific ruling elders to administer or preside at the Lord's Supper when the presbytery deems it necessary to meet the needs for the administration of the Sacrament.²⁴
- xv. When the presbytery's strategy for mission requires it, authorize a ruling elder to be commissioned to limited pastoral service in a validated ministry of the presbytery, according to all provisions of G-2.10, including training, examination, supervision, and withdrawing "commissions for reasons it deems good and sufficient."²⁵

9.300 Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

a. This commission shall be composed of ruling elders and teaching elders in numbers as equal as possible, bearing in mind the principles of unity in diversity in F-1.0403.

b. The commission, on behalf of the presbytery shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to guide, nurture and oversee the process of preparing to become a teaching elder while providing oversight of inquirers and candidates (G-3.307)

c. The following specific tasks are delegated to this commission²⁶:

- i. enroll inquirers,
 - ii. determine the phase of inquiry or candidacy,
 - iii. grant permission for inquirers or candidates to engage in some form of supervised service to the church,
 - iv. authorize inquirers or candidates previously ordained as a ruling elder to preside at the Lord's Supper when invited by a session;
 - v. certify a candidate ready for examination for ordination pending a call;
 - vi. grant permission to a candidate to enter into negotiations for his or her service (G-2.0607)
- d. The commission shall appoint readers to the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations.

9.500 Nominating Committee – This committee shall be composed of teaching elders, ruling elders¹, men, women, and persons of differing ethnicities.²⁷ The committee shall nominate persons to fill all offices, vacancies on continuing committees, councils, commissions, and their moderators, and to other governing bodies that require election by the Presbytery, except for the Nominating Committee.

The committee may nominate person to the committees of the Executive Board, at the Board's request, to better fulfil the principles of unity in diversity in F-1.0403.

10.000 DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

10.100 Permanent Judicial Commission – The Commission shall be elected according to and shall have the responsibilities and powers established by G-3.0109 and D-5.000 of the Constitution.

10.200 Investigative Committees - In accordance with D-10.0201b, when an investigative committee is required, members and a moderator shall be appointed by a committee composed of the Executive Staff, Stated Clerk, Presbytery Moderator and Presbytery Vice Moderator, a quorum of which shall be three. The Stated Clerk shall have the responsibility for informing the investigative committee of its powers, processes and responsibilities.

11.000 COMMISSIONERS TO SYNOD

Teaching elder and ruling elder commissioners to Synod shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery at the last annual stated meeting of Presbytery for two year alternating terms according to the Bylaws of the Synod.²⁸

12.000 *Section deleted and relocated into the Manual of Operations May 15, 2014.*

13.000 *Section deleted and relocated into the Manual of Operations May 15, 2014.*

14.000 – *This section deleted by amendment March 15, 2014.*

¹ The nominating committee may include members of congregations who are not elders per 9.100(a).

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15.000 AMENDMENTS – The Bylaws may be amended at any stated meeting of Presbytery by a two-thirds vote, provided that notice of a proposed amendment is provided in writing or by electronic means to the presbytery at least ten days prior to the meeting and that the exact proposed changes are included in the notice.²⁹

Standing Rules

Standing rules, are rules (1) which are related to the details of the administration of a society rather than to parliamentary procedure, and (2) which can be adopted or changed upon the same conditions as any ordinary act of the society. An example of such a rule might be one setting the hour at which meetings are to begin, or one relating to the maintenance of a guest register. Standing rules generally are not adopted at the time a society is organized, but individually if and when the need arises. Like special rules of order, standing rules may be printed under a separate heading in the booklet containing the bylaws A standing rule can be adopted by a majority vote at any business meeting without previous notice. Although such a rule remains in effect until rescinded or amended, it does not bind future sessions if a majority desires to suspend it temporarily for the duration of a particular session.” RONR 11th Ed. p. 18

Approval of the Minutes – The Stated Clerk will draft the minutes and distribute them, in the case of the presbytery, to the continuing members and the churches, in the case of the Executive Board, to its members, for review and suggested additions, corrections or deletions. After ten days of the distribution and reviewing any suggestions, the moderator, vice moderator and immediate past moderator may approve the minutes. Adopted October 25, 2019.

Annotated Amendments

1. 9-14-2011: Revised nomenclature to conform to the new PCUSA Form of Government.
2. 11-4-2016: Revised mission statement in light of merger with former Central Washington Presbytery.
3. 6-25-2016: List of Washington Counties revised when the merger between the former Central Washington Presbytery and the Presbytery of the Northwest Coast was approved by the 222nd General Assembly.
4. 5-26-2014: Revised several sections to incorporate the former Presbytery of Alaska in terms of territory, meeting requirements, and representation on the Executive Board, Committees and Commissions.
5. 7-7-2013: Was not permitted by the New Form of Government (2011); restored by BoO amendment July 7, 2013; paragraph revised to conform.
6. 10-20-2017: Clarified Presbytery and Board Moderators and Presbytery Vice Moderator.
7. 2-11-2016: To allow for continuation of office if an election does not occur
8. 10-20-2017: To allow the Presbytery Moderator to serve up to three continuous one year terms if reelected by the presbytery.
9. 10-20-2017: Revised “Moderator Elect” to “Presbytery Vice Moderator.” Nomenclature was revised accordingly elsewhere.
10. 10-08-2021: To allow for Presbytery Co-Moderators.
11. 2-11-2016: To allow the Board to elect its own moderator.
12. 10-16-2015: Eliminated term limits for Treasurer.
13. 2-11-2016: Eliminated separate Stated Clerk nominating committee to conform to current practice.
14. 10-08-2021: Removed commute time requirement for electronic attendance.
15. 10-16-2015: Number of meetings per year revised.
16. 10-8-2021: Restored simpler process for calling a special meeting.
17. 11-18-2011: Changed requirements for calling a special meeting.
18. 2-11-2016: Added from Standing Rules of General Assembly to prevent lack of a quorum.
19. 2-11-2016: Provides for calling of a special meeting if Moderator cannot.
20. 11-18-2011: Added this paragraph
21. 2-23-2017: Added subsection j.
22. 11-18-2011: 9.200 Committee on Representation was deleted and responsibility for inclusiveness and representation was assigned to the Executive Board.
23. 2-11-2021: Allow church members who are not elders to serve on standing committees.
24. 3-15-2014: Paragraph added.
25. 10-16-2015: COM authorized to commission CRE’s.
26. 10-16-2015: CPM authorized to fully administrate preparation for ministry process.
27. 2-25-2012: Revised composition from “one third lay men, one third lay women, one third ministers.”
28. 3-15-2014: Synod Commissioners revised to conform to the Synod bylaws.
29. 2-11-16: Revised amendment process.