

PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERY



MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

Approved _____

Mission:

Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Mission of Providence Presbytery is to Equip, Support and Connect our congregations as they faithfully serve Jesus Christ in a changing world.

Introduction:

As an effective instrument of mission, the Presbytery must be able to delegate to its various components, where appropriate, the powers to act in the name of the Presbytery and in carrying out well defined and clearly stated policies and positions that have been made by the Presbytery. Therefore, this Manual reflects an effort to coordinate the work of the Presbytery through its Community of Love (Coordinating Team), Communities of Care, and their Ministry Teams so that the work of these groups serves the unified mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

**ARTICLE ONE
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

A. Organization:

Presbytery organization and operations shall be conducted according to the following priorities: (1) the Word of God as contained in the Holy Scripture, (2) the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA), (3) The Book of Confessions of the Presbyterian Church (USA), (4), the Manual of Administrative Operations of Providence Presbytery, and (5) the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

B. Name of Governing Body:

The name of this organization shall be Providence Presbytery, a presbytery of the Synod of South Atlantic and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

C. Geographical Definition:

Providence Presbytery shall include within its geographical bounds all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) churches located in the following counties of South Carolina: Chester, Kershaw, Lancaster, Union, and York; as well as Hopewell Presbyterian Church in Cherokee County, South Carolina, and Tirzah Presbyterian Church in Union County, North Carolina.

D. Membership and Representation:

Presbytery is a corporate expression of the church consisting of all churches and teaching elder members within its bounds. When Providence Presbytery meets, each church shall be represented by ruling elders commissioned by the session as follows:

0 – 125 members	1 ruling elder
126 – 300 members	2 ruling elders
301 – 750 members	3 ruling elders
751+ members	4 ruling elders

Providence Presbytery shall determine the teaching elders who shall be its continuing members. Teaching elder members of Providence Presbytery shall be engaged in a ministry validated by the presbytery, a member-at-large as determined by the presbytery, or honorably retired. Criteria for validated ministry are pursuant to The Book of Order, G-2.0503(a).

ARTICLE TWO PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

- A.** Providence Presbytery shall have four stated meetings per year (winter, spring, summer, fall) at times, places, and dates determined by the body. Those determinations are normally made at the fall meeting of Presbytery for the ensuing year.
- B.** Special meetings of the presbytery shall be called by the moderator at the request, or with the concurrence, of two teaching elders and two ruling elders, the ruling elders being of different churches. Should the moderator be unable to act, the stated clerk shall, under the same conditions, issue the call. If both moderator and stated clerk are unable to act, any three teaching elders and three ruling elders, the ruling elders being of different congregations, may call a special meeting. The synod may direct the presbytery to convene a special meeting for the transaction of designated business. Notice of a special meeting shall be sent not less than ten days in advance to each teaching elder and to each 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.
- C.** Invitations from churches to host Presbytery meetings are submitted to the Coordinating Team. Churches offering to host Stated meetings may be expected to provide a light meal and/or refreshments for the commissioners as appropriate.
- D.** All minister members of Presbytery, with the exception of those honorably retired, the constitutionally determined number of elder commissioners from each member church, and all Communities of Care Moderators are responsible for attending all Presbytery meetings unless an excuse is submitted for approval to be absent for all or part of any meeting. All Moderators of Communities of Care, the Moderator of the Committee on Ministry, the Moderator of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, and the Presbyterian Women Moderator providing they have been previously ordained as either elders or ministers of Word and

Sacrament, not listed as members of Providence Presbytery shall be enrolled as members of Presbytery with voice and vote for the length of their term as Moderator. All members of the Community of Love (Coordinating Team) of Presbytery, all full-time Christian Educators and all Certified Christian Educators employed by Providence Presbytery churches, and all candidates under care of Providence Presbytery not otherwise enrolled in the Presbytery, shall be accorded the privilege of the floor at meetings of the Presbytery.

- E.** Persons eligible to vote at meetings of presbytery include teaching elder members of Providence Presbytery, commissioned ruling elders, ruling elder commissioners of each church, certified Christian educators who are ruling elders; all Moderators of the Communities of Care, and the Moderator of Presbytery Presbyterian Women – provided they are teaching or ruling elders.
- F.** The quorum for a meeting of Providence Presbytery shall be not fewer than three teaching elders who are members of the presbytery and three ruling elder commissioners from three different congregations. (G-3.0304)
- G.** Standing Committees for any meeting of Presbytery may be the Thanks Committee which may form suitable resolutions of appreciation for those responsible for the meeting.
- H.** The docket for each meeting shall be prepared by the Stated Clerk in consultation with the Community of Love (Coordinating Team) and the Executive Presbyter.
 - a. The docket will be emailed to the Moderator of Presbytery, the Vice Moderator of Presbytery, each minister member, the clerk of every congregation, Christian educators serving churches of the Presbytery, and Moderators of the Communities of Care.
 - b. Minister members and clerks are to ensure elder commissioners receive a copy.
 - c. The Stated Clerk may also email or mail copies to other interested individuals as may be deemed wise.
- I.** Providence Presbytery may meet by electronic means if all Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elder Commissioners have reasonable notice of the electronic meeting and the ability to discuss, deliberate, discern the will of God, and vote on business items. While we shall strive for full participation, per the Book of Order (G-3.034) the Quorum for a Virtual Meeting shall be three Teaching Elders and Three Ruling Elder Commissioners from three different congregations.

ARTICLE THREE PRESBYTERY OFFICERS

A. Moderator

The presiding officer for each meeting of Presbytery shall be the Moderator. The Moderator shall normally be nominated by the Nominating and Representation Committee or from the floor and elected to serve for a period of one year, beginning at the first stated presbytery meeting of the year, being installed at the beginning of that meeting, and serving until the first stated meeting of the following year. Once installed, the Moderator shall preside at any meeting of Presbytery (including all adjourned or called meetings) during their year of service.

In the event of the absence of the Moderator of Presbytery, the Vice Moderator shall preside in place of the Moderator at Presbytery Meetings. If the Moderator and the Vice Moderator are both unable to be present, the most recent Moderator present shall preside; if no past Moderators are present, the minister with the longest time of service in the Presbytery shall convene the meeting and preside until the election of a Moderator pro tempore can be held for that meeting.

The Moderator shall ordinarily be alternated between teaching and ruling elders. As in all Presbytery affairs, the selection of Moderators should be inclusive and represent the diversity of the body.

The normal powers and duties of the Moderator are spelled out in the Book of Order (G-3.0104). In addition the Moderator is vested with the power to appoint Standing Committees, interim members of the Community of Love (Coordinating Team), the other Communities of Care, and their Ministry Teams; interim representatives to agency boards which require Providence Presbytery participation, representatives to meetings or functions at which Providence Presbytery representation has been requested, ad hoc committees when such are deemed appropriate, and to represent Presbytery on occasions when the Moderator's presence is appropriate (services of ordination/installation, etc.).

In addition, the Moderator, Executive Presbyter, and the host congregation shall be responsible for planning worship for Presbytery Meetings and, if desired, choosing someone to preach. Communion should be celebrated at least once each year.

The Moderator shall ordinarily be considered for election as Moderator of the Community of Love (Coordinating Team) for the year following their service as Moderator of Presbytery, if duly nominated by the Nominating and Representation Committee.

B. Vice Moderator

The Vice Moderator shall normally be nominated by the Nominating and Representation Committee or from the floor and elected to serve for a period of one year, beginning at the first stated presbytery meeting of the year, being installed at the beginning of that meeting, and serving until the first stated meeting of the following year.

The Vice Moderator shall ordinarily serve as Co-chair of the Community of Love (Coordinating Team) during their year of service as Vice Moderator.

The Vice Moderator shall ordinarily be considered for election as Moderator of Presbytery for the year following their service as Vice Moderator, if duly nominated by the Nominating and Representation Committee.

C. Stated Clerk

The Stated Clerk's responsibilities are defined in the Book of Order (G-3.0104) and in a Presbytery-approved job description. The Stated Clerk shall act as parliamentarian of Presbytery. The Stated Clerk shall be nominated by a Stated Clerk Nominating Committee appointed by the Presbytery Community of Love (Coordinating Team) and be elected by the Presbytery for a three-year term. The Stated Clerk may be elected to successive terms.

D. Recording Clerk

At the discretion of the Stated Clerk, and with the approval of Presbytery, a Recording Clerk may be named to assist in the accurate recording of Presbytery proceedings.

ARTICLE FOUR PRESBYTERY STAFF

The Community of Love (Coordinating Team), in consultation with the Synod, shall make recommendations to the Presbytery for specific additions, deletions, revisions for administrative and programmatic staff positions, including that of an Executive Presbyter (BOO G-3.0106, G-3.0110). All recommendations shall include a staffing rationale and a job description for specific staff positions. Upon adoption by the Presbytery, these positions shall continue until a recommendation for change has been made by the Community of Love (Coordinating Team) and said recommendation has been received and approved by the Presbytery. A current list of administrative and programmatic staff with each approved job description will be maintained by the Community of Love (Coordinating Team).

ARTICLE FIVE ORGANIZATION FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY - COMMUNITIES OF CARE

The Church is the body of Christ. Christ gives to the Church all the gifts necessary to be his body. The Church strives to demonstrate these gifts in its life as a community in the world (1 Cor. 12:27–28):

- The Church is to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life.
- The Church is to be a community of hope, rejoicing in the sure and certain knowledge that, in Christ, God is making a new creation. This new creation is a new beginning for human life and for all things. The Church lives in the present on the strength of that promised new creation.
- 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.
- The Church is to be a community of witness, pointing beyond itself through word and work to the good news of God's transforming grace in Christ Jesus its Lord.

Book of Order, F 1.0301,

To this end, Providence Presbytery is organized as **5** Communities of Care, attached to the **4** criteria listed above.

- A. Community of Love (Coordinating Team)
- B. Community of Faith (Faith Formation and Christian Education)
- C. Community of Hope (Administration and Support)
- D. Community of Witness (Ministerial Services)
- E. Community of Witness (Mission and Advocacy)

A. Community of Love (Coordinating Team)

The Community of Love oversees and implements the adaptive/generative work of the presbytery.

Membership of this Community of Love (Coordinating Team), with voice and vote, will include the following seven individuals who are elected for one-year terms. The Moderators of the 5 Communities of Care may be reelected to two additional one-year terms.

- The Moderator of the Community of Love (Coordinating Team)
- The Moderators of each of the other four Communities of Care
- The current Moderator of Presbytery
- The current Vice-Moderator of Presbytery

Membership of the Community of Love (Coordinating Team), with voice and vote, will also include the Presbytery's four elected Synod and General Assembly Commissioners. These Commissioner members will begin serving immediately after

their election as a commissioner to their respective council and will serve until their successor has been elected.

The Executive Presbyter and the Stated Clerk will serve as ex officio members of the Community of Love (Coordinating Team) with voice but without vote.

The Membership of the Community of Love (Coordinating Team) will be presented to the Presbytery each year by the Nominating Committee. Additional members may be nominated by the Nominating Committee or from the floor at a Presbytery meeting to ensure the diversity of the Presbytery is represented.

The Community of Love (Coordinating Team) may also invite others to meet and consult with them.

Responsibilities

As the coordinating body of Providence Presbytery, the Community of Love (Coordinating Team) is responsible for overall communication strategy, As the executive council, the Community of Love (Coordinating Team) shall have the authority to act on matters between Presbytery meetings, unless prohibited by the *Book of Order* or the Manual of Administrative Operations of the Presbytery. The Community of Love (Coordinating Team) is to use this authority sparingly in order that Presbytery's authority is not eroded:

The responsibilities of the Community of Love shall be:

1. Assess Presbytery and local church needs, identify potential areas of service, witness, and develop mission priorities and plans through appropriate ministry teams of Presbytery.
2. Evaluate the mission direction and effectiveness of the structure of the Presbytery, including priorities, plans, policies, programs, and the Mission Statement and Goals, and to recommend revisions. This includes reviewing and recommending appropriate revisions to the Presbytery concerning the *Manual of Administrative Operations of Providence Presbytery, Procedural Manual for Dealing with Sexual Misconduct, and Safe Place Policy*. This is an ongoing process but is required to be done in an intentional manner every five years, with a report and recommendations to be presented to the Presbytery.
3. Develop programs and policies for the Presbytery that are consistent with the adopted Mission Statement and Goals, present the same to Presbytery for appropriate action, and implement the policies and decisions of Providence Presbytery through the Presbytery staff and Communities of Care.

4. Work with the Executive Presbyter and the Stated Clerk to prepare the agenda for each meeting of the Presbytery, coordinate reports and presentations to the Presbytery, produce a handbook for distribution at least ten days prior to each Stated Meeting and Called Meeting, and give approval to institutions, organizations, and individuals wishing to have displays or to distribute materials at Presbytery meetings.
5. Hear reports and communications as needed from Communities of Care and the ministry teams of Presbytery, and at least annually from Presbyterian Women, Institutional representatives, the Permanent Judicial Commission, and the Nominating and Representation Committee.
6. Coordinate denominational programs through correspondence, communication, cooperation, and consultation with the General Assembly, the Synod of South Atlantic, and their agencies. Coordinate the work of the Presbytery with other governing bodies, institutions and agencies of PC(USA), as well as ecumenical entities.
7. Provide for an annual outside audit or financial review of the books and financial records of the Presbytery and any groups responsible to the Presbytery as provided by the Stewardship and Finance Ministry Team; and to ensure that the results of the audit or financial review are included in the minutes of the Presbytery.
8. Receive a report of performance evaluation of the work of the Executive Presbyter and the Stated Clerk. Evaluations will be conducted at least annually by the Personnel Ministry Team.
9. Recommending a method for considering and acting on proposed changes in the *Book of Order* with an ad hoc Bills and Overtures Committee.
10. Present nominations for members to serve on the Nominating and Representation Committee.

B. Community of Faith (Faith Formation and Christian Education)

The Community of Faith seeks to be a resource to ensure adequate and appropriate education, communication, equipping, resourcing, and training for and with local congregations.

Membership of the Community of Faith will include the Moderator of the Community of Faith who is elected by the Presbytery to this office, and at least six other members and may include non-ordained persons, ruling elders, and Ministers of Word and Sacrament.

C. Community of Hope (Administration and Support)

The Community of Hope seeks to be a resource for the administrative ministry and organization of the Presbytery as required by the Book of Order.

Membership of the Community of Hope will include the Moderator of the Community of Hope who is elected by the Presbytery to this office, and a representative from the Stewardship and Finance Ministry Team, Personnel Ministry Team, Nominating and Representation Committee, the Permanent Judicial Commission, and the Trustees of the Presbytery.

Responsibilities of these Ministry Teams/Committees within the Community of Hope include:

1. Stewardship and Finance Ministry Team
Membership and Responsibilities: 6 (six) members to oversee the stewardship and financial operations of the Presbytery including budget, financial matters, and stewardship education.
2. Personnel Ministry Team
Membership and Responsibilities: 3 (three) members to work with the Executive Presbyter to create personnel policies, job descriptions, and perform annual evaluations of the Presbytery staff.
3. Nominating and Representation Committee
Membership and Responsibilities: 6 (six) persons elected by the Presbytery according to the principles established in the Book of Order (G-3.0111). The Moderator of the committee shall be elected annually by the Presbytery and may serve no more than three consecutive years.

The Nominating and Representation Committee will be responsible for nominations for the Moderator and Vice Moderator of the Presbytery, the Moderators of each Community of Care, the membership of other Ministry teams specified in this manual as elected by the Presbytery, commissioners to the Synod and General Assembly, representatives to institutional boards which require Providence Presbytery representation (including Bethelwoods), and any other positions requiring direct Presbytery election. The committee is expected to be familiar with the operational style, climate, and other factors within the various bodies so that nominees may have a clear expectation of what might be required of them in participation. Particular care should be taken with nominations to include the broad diversity and inclusiveness within the Presbytery.

Opportunity for nominations from the floor of Presbytery shall always be available. However, no person shall be nominated to any position whose willingness to serve has not been expressed. Nominations shall, as much as possible, conform to denominational guidelines concerning diversity and inclusiveness.

As it seeks to nominate Minister and Elder Commissioners to the General Assembly and Synod, the Nominating and Representation Committee shall consider the call, gifts, and availability of the individual to serve not only as a commissioner but also as a member of the Community of Love (Coordinating Team), commitment to the ministry of the Presbytery and local congregations, geographic location, diversity, and the principles of fair representation.

While part of the Community of Hope (Administration and Support), the Nominating and Representation Committee is responsible directly to the Presbytery and normally makes its nominations at the fall meeting.

4. Permanent Judicial Commission:

Membership and Responsibilities: 9 (nine) members - composed of ministers and elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible, with not more than one of its elder members from any one of its constituent churches.

The Permanent Judicial Commission shall be elected by Presbytery, shall have terms, shall be organized, and shall function as provided in the Book of Order.

The Permanent Judicial Commission shall receive all pertinent papers and questions. It shall, following investigation, recommend to the Presbytery orders of procedure in all judicial and administrative cases. Nothing in this section shall prevent the Presbytery from electing special judicial or administrative commissions at its own discretion. Members of the Permanent Judicial Commission may also serve on the Presbytery's other Communities of Care, Ministry Teams and Committees of Presbytery.

Providence Presbytery has authorized the Moderator of the Committee on Ministry, the Moderator of the Community of Love (Coordinating Team), in consultation with Stated Clerk, to appoint a committee of counsel in accordance with D.6032 of the *Book of Order* when remedial cases arise and the power to appoint an investigating committee in accordance with D.10.0.201b when a disciplinary case arises.

5. Trustees of Presbytery:

The Board of Trustees of Providence Presbytery shall be comprised of 3 (three) persons to be elected by Presbytery for a term of three years with

members of the board eligible for re-election to a second term.

The Trustees of Presbytery hold title to all the real property of Presbytery, and any other possessions and holdings assigned to their care. Under the direction of the governing body, the trustees acquire, hold, buy, sell, mortgage, and exercise options concerning real property. The signatures of at least two trustees are required to execute any contract in the name of the Presbytery.

D. Community of Witness (Ministerial Services)

The Community of Witness (Ministerial Services) serves pastors and congregations through ministries of support and care so that our common witness to Christ's transforming work in our lives and the world might be strengthened.

Membership of the Community of Witness (Ministerial Services) will include the Moderator of the Community of Witness (Ministerial Services) who is elected by the Presbytery to this office, and twenty members who are divided as needed into two subcommittees:

1. Committee on Ministry:

Ordinarily, fifteen members of the Community of Witness (Ministerial Services) will serve on the Committee on Ministry with, as far as possible, an equal balance of elders and ministers.

The responsibilities of the committee shall include, but are not limited to, the examination, processing, and oversight of new pastoral relationships, encouraging pastoral support systems, resourcing professional development; providing for retirement services at Presbytery meetings, care for churches with vacant pulpits, relationships between churches and ministers, salary studies, and any constitutional requirements.

Providence Presbytery has empowered the Committee on Ministry with the authority and power of the full governing body as an Administrative Commission for the following specific purposes:

1. Approve a minister's call to another Presbytery; and dissolve the pastoral relationship existing between a minister and a congregation when there is concurrence between all parties;
2. Dismiss a minister to another Presbytery at the minister's own request following consultation with the receiving Presbytery;
3. Appoint or remove Moderators of sessions of churches without a pastor until the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery;

4. Certify to another Presbytery a call of a congregation of Providence Presbytery to a minister member or a candidate of that Presbytery;
5. Permit a minister to move to the field between meetings of Presbytery subject to the satisfactory completion of the constitutionally required examination and a three-fourths affirmative vote of the Committee on Ministry;
6. Receive and dismiss a candidate following consultation with the Preparation for Ministry Committee when a call is pending;
7. Grant a minister permission to labor outside the geographical bounds or in work not under the jurisdiction of Presbytery until the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery;
8. Approve ordained ministers of other Christian churches to be employed by the session of a particular church in a temporary pastoral relationship until the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery;
9. Approve the relationship of Parish Associate between a minister and a particular church until the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery;
10. Assure that training is offered for Ruling Elders who have been presented by a session to be evaluated and enrolled as Ruling Elder trained for a Commission, or is commissioned to a particular congregation in Providence Presbytery.COM will assign liaisons to each Commissioned Ruling Elder;
11. Oversee those members and ruling elders who are enrolled in the Lay School program. The COM will keep a roll of these students and will communicate with them at least once each year;
12. Conduct an Exit Interview with an Installed Pastor, a Temporary Supply, or an Interim Pastor before the termination date of their service with a congregation. An Exit Interview will also be held with the session during this transition;

When acting as an Administrative Commission, the Committee on Ministry shall submit a report of each action taken to the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery for admission to record.

2. Committee on Preparation for Ministry:

Ordinarily, six members of the Community of Witness (Ministerial Services) will serve on the Committee on Ministry with, as far as possible, an equal balance

of elders and ministers.

The committee shall respond to persons within the bounds of Providence Presbytery who express a sense of God's calling them to service as ministers of Word and Sacrament by counseling with them and providing information on responsibilities, procedures, and requirements for moving into such service.

Once individuals are accepted as inquirers or candidates, the committee shall have all responsibilities to both Presbytery, inquirers, and candidates outlined in the Book of Order (G-2.0601). The committee shall also see that candidates meet any specific requirements that might be set forth by Providence Presbytery (e.g., a basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education, etc.) for those under its care.

The committee shall also assist inquirers and candidates requiring financial aid in seeking out sources of funding. Part of that responsibility shall include encouraging churches to support inquirers and candidates that come from those congregations with financial aid, summer employment, and by showing interest in the inquirers' or candidates' progress in preparation for ministry. In addition, the committee shall be responsible for recommending and administering any financial aid offered by Providence Presbytery to inquirers and candidates under its care as need dictates and funds are available.

This committee shall be the liaison between Providence Presbytery and Presbyterian seminaries. This committee will provide a resource person for the Fund for Theological Education or its successor.

E. Community of Witness (Mission and Advocacy)

The Community of Witness (Mission and Advocacy) serves pastors and congregations through ministries of connection, outreach, and compassion so that our common witness to Christ's transforming work in our lives and the world might be strengthened. The focus of this community's ministry is with local congregations, not Presbytery initiated projects and programs.

Membership of the Community of Witness (Mission and Advocacy) will include the chair of the Community of Witness (Mission and Advocacy) who is elected by the Presbytery to this office, and the Chair or Coordinator of each Mission Neighborhood.

Within the Community of Witness (Mission and Advocacy) individuals and congregations are encouraged to form Mission Neighbor groups around common interests and concerns. Mission Neighbor groups are volunteer groups gathered as each discern new mission and ministry by the leading of the Spirit. They will exist as connections are established and will continue as long as there are people interested in actively participating.

Current contact and ministry information for all the Mission Neighbor groups in Providence Presbytery will be maintained by the Executive Presbyter and Presbytery Staff on the Presbytery website. As Mission Neighbor groups determine their meetings, programs, missions, and invitations to participate, they will be shared with all the ministers and congregations of Providence Presbytery in the usual way.

Current Mission Neighbor Groups include:

- Presbyterian Women
- Committee on Racial and Religious Reconciliation
- Anti-racism
- Living Waters
- Central America Task Force
- Hunger Action Team
- Syria/Middle East Action Team

ARTICLE SIX BETHELWOODS

Providence Presbytery, to provide and maintain a uniquely Christian environment set apart for people to grow in their relationships with each other and with God, has entered a covenant relationship with Bethelwoods Camp and Conference Center, LLC.

Each year the Presbytery elects 6 members of the Board of Directors upon nomination by the Nominating and Representation Committee.

ARTICLE SEVEN AMENDMENTS

The provisions contained within this Manual of Administrative Operations can be changed by simple majority vote of those eligible to vote at a meeting of Providence Presbytery after a second reading of the proposed changes.