

# **PALMETTO PRESBYTERY MANUAL**

## **CONTENTS:**

- I. MISSION STATEMENT**
- II. GOVERNMENT**
- III. OFFICERS**
- IV. COMMITTEES**
- V. MEETINGS**
- VI. MISCELLANEOUS**

ADOPTED: JULY 23, 1992

REVISED: JULY 2008

## PALMETTO PRESBYTERY MANUAL

I. MISSION STATEMENT

101. The name of the Presbytery shall be Palmetto Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America.

102. The mission of the Presbytery is as follows:

“As one communion in the worldwide church, and the Presbyterian Church in America, Palmetto Presbytery exists to glorify God by extending the kingdom of Jesus Christ over all individual members of presbytery and through all areas of society even in all nations and cultures. To accomplish this end, we aim to fill Palmetto Presbytery with churches and church officers growing in vital worship, personal holiness, true fellowship, theological depth, assertive evangelism and deeds of compassion.

- A. The distinctiveness of the PCA and therefore Palmetto Presbytery lies in our stress on both reformation and revival. Without an emphasis on revival, “reformation” may become either a mimicking of political ideologies or sterile doctrinarism. Without an emphasis on reformation, “revival” may become a shallow pietism or mysticism. Only reformation and revival together can accomplish the Great Commission of our Lord.
- B. WE ARE COMMITTED to Scriptures and the historic Westminster Standards based firmly on a biblical theology that answers the questions and issues of each culture and people to which we minister.
- C. WE ARE COMMITTED to worship that practices the presence and power of God within the church to the transformation of the surrounding culture through biblical application in population centers around the world.
- D. WE ARE COMMITTED to the winning of new converts and their incorporation into the church through the ministry of

- the Word and to significant ministry to the needy through deeds of mercy and service.
- E. WE ARE COMMITTED to the freedom of every member to minister through spiritual gifts and also to the responsibilities to do so under spiritual authority and loving discipline.
  - F. WE ARE COMMITTED to dynamic, prophetic confrontation of non-Christian thought forms and behavior and also to the demonstration of the truth through the practice of holiness and love in Christian fellowship.
  - G. WE ARE COMMITTED to guarding and strengthening the biblical family and also to a ministry to the broken family forms such as the divorced, the widowed and the unwed parent.
  - H. WE ARE COMMITTED TO teaching and the discipline of men and women in the whole counsel of God and also to Ministering to the needs of the whole person.

#### I. GOVERNMENT

201. The foundation principles and the basic organizational structure of Presbytery shall conform to the BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER of the Presbyterian Church in America. In matters not otherwise covered, ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER shall prevail.

202. No part of this manual can be set aside. To change the manual is to do so by amendment. To amend the manual, the proposed amendment shall be read at one meeting of Presbytery, docketed for the next Stated Meeting, read again, then voted upon. To amend the manual, the required affirmative vote necessary shall be two thirds (2/3) of the presbyters enrolled at the meeting. The vote to suspend the manual shall be two-thirds (2/3) of the presbyters enrolled at the meeting.

203. Presbytery shall elect a permanent Parliamentarian, who is proficient in ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER, to assure the decency and orderliness of meetings.

#### II. OFFICERS

301. The officers shall be: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Stated Clerk, Treasurer, and Trustees.

302. MODERATOR: shall be elected at the October meeting and shall assume the office at the January Meeting and shall serve for one year until the following January Meeting and shall not succeed himself.

- A. At least two (2) nominees, gifted in conducting meetings, shall be submitted at the October Stated Meeting using the following procedure:
  - 1. Each nomination shall be made on a standard nomination form and submitted to the Administration Committee by September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. In the event no nominations are made, the Administration Committee shall secure two (2) nominees using the same procedure.
  - 2. Normally the position will be rotated between Ruling Elder and Teaching Elder.
- B. The chairman of any permanent committee shall not serve as Moderator as long as he chairs that committee.

303. HIS DUTIES ARE:

- A. to insure that Presbytery keeps in mind its mission statement and focus on reformation and revival. He shall be assisted in this by the Moderator's Committee, which he shall chair.
- B. to moderate all meeting in accordance with the BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER, this Manual, and ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER.
- C. to appoint Ad-Hoc committees and assemble the Judicial Committee, when needed.
- D. to be an ex-officio member of all permanent committees and commissions, excluding any Ad-Hoc Committees.

304. VICE-Moderator: shall ordinarily be the immediate past Moderator and shall serve at the request of the Moderator, or when the Moderator is unable to serve.

305. STATED CLERK: shall be elected at the October Stated Meeting to serve for three years, beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>, following, and shall perform the duties prescribed for this office in the BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER and this Manual. He shall be eligible to succeed himself, and shall have access to the floor for all meetings.

306. HIS DUTIES ARE:

- A. to report to and be supervised by the Administration Committee.

- B. to send a copy of the docket and previous Presbytery meeting minutes to each Teaching Elder and Clerk of the Session, at least ten days prior to each stated, or called meeting.
- C. to receive, and consider all communications and refer these to the appropriate committees.
- D. To provide an annual cumulative attendance record of all Teaching Elders and Session Commissioners for the Shepherding Committee to give pastoral attention.
- E. To keep the following permanent records in a secure manner.
  - a book of the ministers, containing the obligations to be signed upon admission into Presbytery and thereafter reaffirmed on an annual basis during registration at the January Stated Meeting, or by correspondence if the minister is absent.
  - a list of elders, deacons, clerks of session, church treasurers.
  - a book of candidates for the ministry showing when and how received and current status.
- F. to perform such other duties relating to his office as the court through the Administration Committee may direct. Expenses, supplies and equipment for performing his duties and the keeping of records shall be provided by Presbytery through its budget.

307. RECORDING CLERK: may be employed by the Administration Committee to record the minutes of each meeting. This person may be a member of the court and shall be under the jurisdiction of the Stated Clerk. Any salary shall be determined by the Administration Committee and included in its budget for approval by Presbytery.

308. TREASURER: shall be elected by Presbytery for a term of three years beginning at the January Meeting. He shall report to and be supervised by the Administration Committee who may also determine his salary. He shall be bonded, the cost of which shall be provided by Presbytery.

309. HIS DUTIES ARE:

- A. to receive from churches and individuals the funds necessary to defray the current expenses of Presbytery and disburse all funds in accordance with its directions. These are provided on an asking basis under a unified budget.

B. to prepare a financial statement for each Stated Meeting and compute the annual askings per church according to the budget.

C. to keep an account of all receipts and disbursements and report in written form to the Stated Meetings. Prior to the July Meeting an annual audit shall be prepared by qualified people other than those on the Administration Committee, at no expense to Presbytery, and submitted to the Administration Committee. If possible this audit will be at no expense to the Presbytery. (Amended: See Motion #41-10b(1/1994).

310. TRUSTEES: shall consist of six (6) Ruling Elders, elected by Presbytery upon nomination by the Administration Committee. Three trustees shall constitute a quorum. They shall be divided into three classes of three-year terms. They shall meet as often as necessary or when requested to do so by Presbytery.

A. THEIR DUTIES SHALL BE:

- 1. to receive, hold and manage, when occasion requires, the properties of the Presbytery and shall convey and dispose of the same according to the terms of the trust, in conformity with the Standards and policies of the Presbyterian Church in America.

311. EMPLOYEES: shall be approved by Presbytery by two-thirds vote prior to employment. No employee of Presbytery shall serve on a Permanent Committee to which they report, except in an advisory capacity or when requested to do so.

III. COMMITTEES:

401. PERMANENT COMMITTEES ARE:

- |                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| ADMINISTRATION         | MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA |
| CANDIDATES/CREDENTIALS | MISSION TO THE WORLD     |
| JUDICIAL               | MODERATOR                |
| SHEPHERDING            | WORSHIP                  |

- A. all permanent committees shall seek to have an equal number of Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders. The committee members shall be divided into three classes as equal as possible numerically, and shall serve for three years and shall be eligible for re-election to succeeding terms. The quorum for each committee shall be one-third of its membership.

(Amended by Motion #39-68b (July 1993))

402. ELECTIONS: of permanent committee members shall be held at the October Stated Meeting and those elected shall begin their term of office after the January Stated Meeting.

- A. Permanent Committee officers shall be elected by each Committee between the October and January Stated Meetings of each year. Newly elected officers shall assume their duties after the January Stated Meeting. Each permanent committee shall elect at least a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary.
- B. The Administration committee, after consulting Permanent Committee Chairmen, and after all nominees have been contacted before their nomination for their consent and willingness to actively serve if elected, shall submit their nominees at the October Stated Meeting.
- C. The Administration Committee shall endeavor to involve every church in the work of Presbytery by seeking to place at least one Ruling Elder from each church on some Presbytery committee in order to facilitate Presbytery wide parity.
- D. Vacancies on any permanent committee shall be filled by Presbytery upon recommendation by the Administration Committee, at the request of the committee which has the vacancy.

403. AUTHORITY: of each permanent committee shall be an executive nature in order to accomplish the duties assigned to it by Presbytery. Each permanent committee shall make annual budgeting requests to the Administration Committee not later than September 1<sup>st</sup>.

404. ADMINISTRATION: shall consist of six (6) at large members elected by Presbytery, together with one (1) representative from each permanent committee (except Judicial). The committee shall elect its officers from the 6 at large members. It shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill its primary duties of administration, stewardship, nominations, supervision of the stated clerk and implementation of Mission Statement 102-E.

405. ITS DUTIES SHALL BE:

- A. to supervise the work of the Stated Clerk and Treasure and to nominate persons to fill these offices.
- B. to prepare and present to Presbytery at its October Stated Meeting a budget for the following year which shall be subject to amendments by Presbytery (ref. 604-606).
- C. Deleted (See Motion #41-10b-January 1994).
- D. to promote stewardship within the congregations of Presbytery.

- E. to prepare the docket for each Stated Meeting using the approved format in keeping with the themes and emphasis as established by the Worship Committee.
- F. to provide for all nominations of the Permanent Committees, the filling of any vacancies, the Moderator and nominees to G.A.
- G. to review and present the minutes of every Presbytery meeting.
- H. to make other recommendation to Presbytery for its welfare and efficient operation and to assign to the Clerk and Treasurer any duties as may be necessary.

406. CANDIDATES AND CREDENTIALS: shall consist of fifteen (15) members who shall met as often as necessary to fulfill its primary duties of examination, internships, candidates and implementations of Mission Statement 102-B.

(Amended by #39-68b-July 1993-Stated Meeting)

407. ITS DUTIES SHALL BE:

- A. to encourage men to consider the Gospel Ministry.
- B. to determine the fitness of men recommended as candidates by Sessions, and to present them for examination.
- C. to counsel and oversee candidates in regard to their preparation for the ministry and to arrange for further specific study as may be needed.
- D. to promote and supervise the internship [p program, i.e. Theological Education Sub-Committee.
- E. to examine candidates for licensure and ordination, according to the BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER, ensuring that all written parts of the examinations shall be presented to the Candidates and Credentials Committee Chairman at least four (4) weeks prior to the meeting of Presbytery, at which the candidate expects to apply for ordination or licensure in order that he may be examined by the Committee.
- F. to give a detailed examination of all applicants, as well as a majority vote of the committee before recommending candidate to Presbytery, with a disclosure of the vote.
- G. to examine ordained ministers seeking admission to the Presbytery according to the BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER. All such ministers shall be examined by the Committee before they are presented to Presbytery.

- H. To see that biographical and positional statements are sent to Commissioners before any candidate is presented to Presbytery or admission.
- I. to oversee the work of the Internship Sub-Committee which is responsible for the Internship Program of Palmetto Presbytery. This sub-committee shall consist of six (6) members, three (3) appointed by the Candidates and Credentials committee, and three (3) appointed by the Moderator from the Presbytery as large (Motion #39-68c-July 1993)(amended to take out 3 appointed by Christian Education Committee (See Motion #99-8-July 24, 2008).

408. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Amended @ Ninety-Ninth Stated Meeting @ Motion #99-10 (Removed the entire Christian Education Committee & its duties (July 24, 2008) Note: @Motion #99-9 funds previously in the Christian Education Committee's Budget be moved to the Campus Ministry Budget, since Campus Ministry is operating in a "deficit budget status." Motion approved by a 2/3-majority vote.

409-Removed Duties of Christian Education Committee-Amended @ Ninety-Ninth Stated Meeting (See Motion #99-10 (Remove entire Christian Education Committee & its duties (July 24, 2008).

410. JUDICIAL: shall consist of a standing committee chairman and a secretary elected by Presbytery for a three-year term. One of these men shall be a teaching elder and one a ruling elder not from the same church. They shall be called upon as needed to implement. Mission Statement 102-F.

411. ITS DUTIES SHALL BE:

- A. to be available to deal with personal or general, private or public offenses as regulated by the Rules of Discipline, Chapter 29.
- B. to call at least two (2) other presbyters to look into an offense when made aware of such.
- C. to contact the Moderator requesting the appointment of at least two (2) Teaching Elders and two (2) Ruling Elders to examine, consider and report the offense, if justified, to Presbytery.
- D. to make sure that a full record of its proceedings are kept.

412. MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA: shall consist of sixteen (16) members who shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill its primary duties of evangelism, church

planting, special ministries, (i.e., minorities mercy works, and implementation of Mission Statement 102-D (Amended at Motion #50-48b-January 2004).

413. ITS DUTIES SHALL; BE:

- A. to assist churches of presbytery in evangelism & revitalization.
- B. To establish new congregations within the bounds of Presbytery according to methods prescribed in the MNA Policy Manual.
- C. To provide financial aid to churches and guide them toward a self-supporting status, when possible.
- D. To assist aid-receiving churches in their building plans, budget planning, pulpit supply and procurement of full-time pastors and staff.
- E. To establish evangelist and church planting salaries.
- F. To oversee and guide special ministries, such as campus work, minorities and mercy ministries. An advisory board of six (6) deacons shall be selected and guided by this committee to oversee mercy works.

414 MISSION TO THE WORLD: shall consist of six (6) members who shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill its primary duties of encouraging mission candidates, short-term missions, liaison with churches and implementation of Mission Statement 102-D.

415. ITS DUTIES SHALL BE:

- A. to promote the cause of world missions.
- B. to act as liaison between the General Assembly, MTW Committee and the Churches of Presbytery.
- C. to examine and counsel with members of congregations who desire to serve as foreign missionaries.
- D. to promote and coordinate involvement in short-term missions (IMPACT) summer missions and short-term projects among churches.
- E. to sponsor MTW candidates and missionaries in their deputation and home ministry assignments.

416. MODERATORS: shall consist of four (4) members (including the current moderator) who shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill its primary duties of advisory support for the Moderator as well as insuring that Presbytery keep in mind its Mission Statement and focus on reformation and revival (Ref. 102 A-H).

## 417. ITS DUTIES SHALL BE:

- A. to assist the Moderator as necessary, especially when there is a need for a Judicial Committee.
- B. to develop ways for the overall implementation of the Presbytery Mission Statement (102 A-H).
- C. to advise the Moderator as necessary when public or media statements are called for, being careful to use restraint.
- D. to review each permanent committees work annually advising and encouraging creativity in the fulfilling of their Mission Statement.

418. SHEPHERDING: shall consist of twelve (12) members who shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill its primary duties of pastoral oversight of ministers and particular churches and implementation of Mission Statement 102-G.

## 419: ITS DUTIES SHALL BE:

- A. to advise and communicate with teaching elders in their relation to sessions, and churches, and offer assistance to ministers without pastoral charge and oversee ministers laboring out of bounds. The Chairman, with the concurrence of the Vice-Chairman and at least two other committee members, after receiving written notice from a Teaching Elder in good standing of his resignation, constituting an uncontested resignation, may constitute themselves a Commission and dissolve the relationship, declare the pulpit vacant, and grant the Teaching Elder permission to leave the field, or dismiss him to another Presbytery. A Report of this action will be made at the next stated meeting. (Amended at Motion #19-18).
- B. to provide churches without pastors information to help in securing a pastor.
- C. to be award of problems in churches and to offer assistance to pastors and sessions or when requested to do so by pastors and/or sessions.
- D. to examine original pastoral calls and to recommend them for action and provide salary and benefit information and keep records of such information for review and advice.

- E. To maintain oversight of retired or incapacitated ministers and widows and orphans and to represent their interest before Presbytery and the General Assembly.
- F. to review Sessional Records at the January Stated Meeting.
- G. To memorialize deceased Teaching and Ruling Elders as part of its report to Presbytery.
- H. to receive written State of the Church Reports from at least three (3) churches for presentation or inclusion in each written committee report to Presbytery.
- I. To coordinate a prayer chain for special needs.

420. WORSHIP: shall consist of six (6) members who shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill its primary duties of overseeing Presbytery worship services, ministry times and implementation of Mission Statement 102-C.

421. ITS DUTIES SHALL BE:

- A. to insure that Presbytery begins in a worshipful manner and that nothing preempts the worship service.
- B. to plan and implement each worship service and to select and schedule as the preacher an ordained minister or commissioner of Presbytery.
- C. to plan and implement the Lord's Supper at each Stated Meeting.
- D. To select and coordinate the themes of worship and ministry times at each Stated Meeting.
- E. To foster concerted prayer during the Presbytery meeting.
- F. To prepare a resolution of thanks to the host church or institution for each meeting.

422. CAMPUS MINISTRIES: shall consist of four (4) members, two (2) Ruling Elders and two (2) Teaching Elders, which shall serve as three (3) representatives and one (1) alternate on the Carolina Area Committee on Campus Ministry.

423. ITS DUTIES SHALL BE:

- A. to carry out and oversee by advising and supervising the Campus Ministry under its jurisdiction according to the principles and policy set fourth in the "Manual For Campus Ministries, Presbyterian Church in America" (Passed by the 1979 General Assembly of the PCA).
- B. To be responsible for funding of the ministries under its jurisdiction to be responsible for determining the budget for such ministries.
- C. To determine the needs of campus work within the boundary of Presbytery and priorities of new works.
- D. To inform the churches and people of the Presbytery of the campus work, its purpose, progress and needs.
- E. To organize new works on campuses and to seek out and train qualified staff workers for these ministries.
- F. To initiate the call for campus ministries. (Revised April 2004 @ Motion #82-46).

#### IV. MEETINGS:

501. STATED MEETINGS: shall ordinarily be held on the fourth Thursday of January, April, July and October convening at 9:00 A.M. and adjourning by 4:00 P.M.

- A. The Presbytery shall meet at a place determined at the previous meeting upon invitation of the host church or institution. If no place has been selected the Moderator Committee shall secure an invitation for the next meeting.

502. CALLED MEETINGS: shall normally not be held except as provided for in the BOOK OF CHURCH ORDER.

503. ABSENCES: All Presbytery Commissioners should attend every meeting unless providentially hindered. When providentially hindered from attendance the Presbyter must request Presbytery for an excuse, stating, in writing, his reason for his non-attendance. Failure to comply with this will mean his absence is unexcused. Members of Presbytery are expected to arrive on time and to attend all sessions. No excused absence will be granted before the stated adjournment.

504. SPECIAL PROVISIONS:

- A. Teaching Elders without charge, or laboring outside the geographical bounds and/or jurisdictions of Presbytery, shall present a written report through the Shepherding Committee to each October Stated Meeting concerning their activities. Those who are honorably retired, or permanently disabled, are exempt from this requirement.
- B. Leave of absence and permission to labor outside the bounds of Presbytery shall be granted on a yearly basis, except for missionaries outside the United States and military chaplains, for whom this permission shall be regarded as granted for the duration of their ministry. Missionaries and chaplains shall be expected to communicate with the Presbytery, through the Stated Clerk, at least once a year.

#### VI MISCELLANEOUS

601. THE LORD'S SUPPER: will be observed at each of the Stated Meetings as part of the worship service. The Worship Committee shall be responsible for the planning and conducting of the worship service.

602. MINISTRY TIME: shall be optional at the direction of the Administration Committee and coordinated by the Worship Committee. The time should reinforce the mission statement of the Presbytery and seek to bring revival and reformation to the Presbytery. (Amended at the 98<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting held on 4/24/2008 @ Motion #98-5).

603. SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY: may be scheduled by the Administration Committee limited to no more than two (2) for each Stated Meeting and shall be scheduled **ONLY** at the set place on the docket.

604. FUNDS for current expenses of Presbytery shall be provided by an operational asking from each congregation, at an annual rate as established by the Administration Committee. This asking is to be based on a church's current communing membership. Disbursements from this fund are authorized in keeping with the approved budget within the following guidelines:

- a.) **NO DEFICIT SPENDING.**
- b.) Funds may be redistributed by recommendation of the Administration Committee with the approval of Presbytery, with the exception of designated funds.
- c.) Presbytery shall operate under a unified budget that allows for designated giving in particular instances.
- d.) Designated gifts may not be applied to the unified budget.

605. STEWARDSHIP GUIDELINES: Since the stewardship priority of Presbytery is the advancement of the church by evangelism and church planting, then when any permanent committee budget balance (Other than NA, MTW and Candidates), exceeds 100% of current askings, the Administration Committee shall propose to Presbytery the disbursement of those excess funds in the following priority manner:

- a.) gifts to MNA for church planting work within the Presbytery;
- b.) gifts to MTW for Palmetto Presbytery Missionaries/Candidates;
- c.) gifts to Presbytery candidates for ministry preparation.

606. DOCKET FOR STATED MEETINGS:

The Docket will be proposed by the Administration Committee for the approval by the Presbytery at each stated meeting. The following docket is given as a sample only:

WORSHIP SERVICE  
CALL TO ORDER  
ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS  
PERMANENT COMMITTEE REPORTS  
LUNCH  
MANDATORY ADJOURNMENT

Committees are requested to report verbally only if a written report is insufficient, or if Presbytery must approve an action of the Committee. (Amended at the Ninety-Eighth Stated Meeting, April 24, 2008 @Motion #98-5)