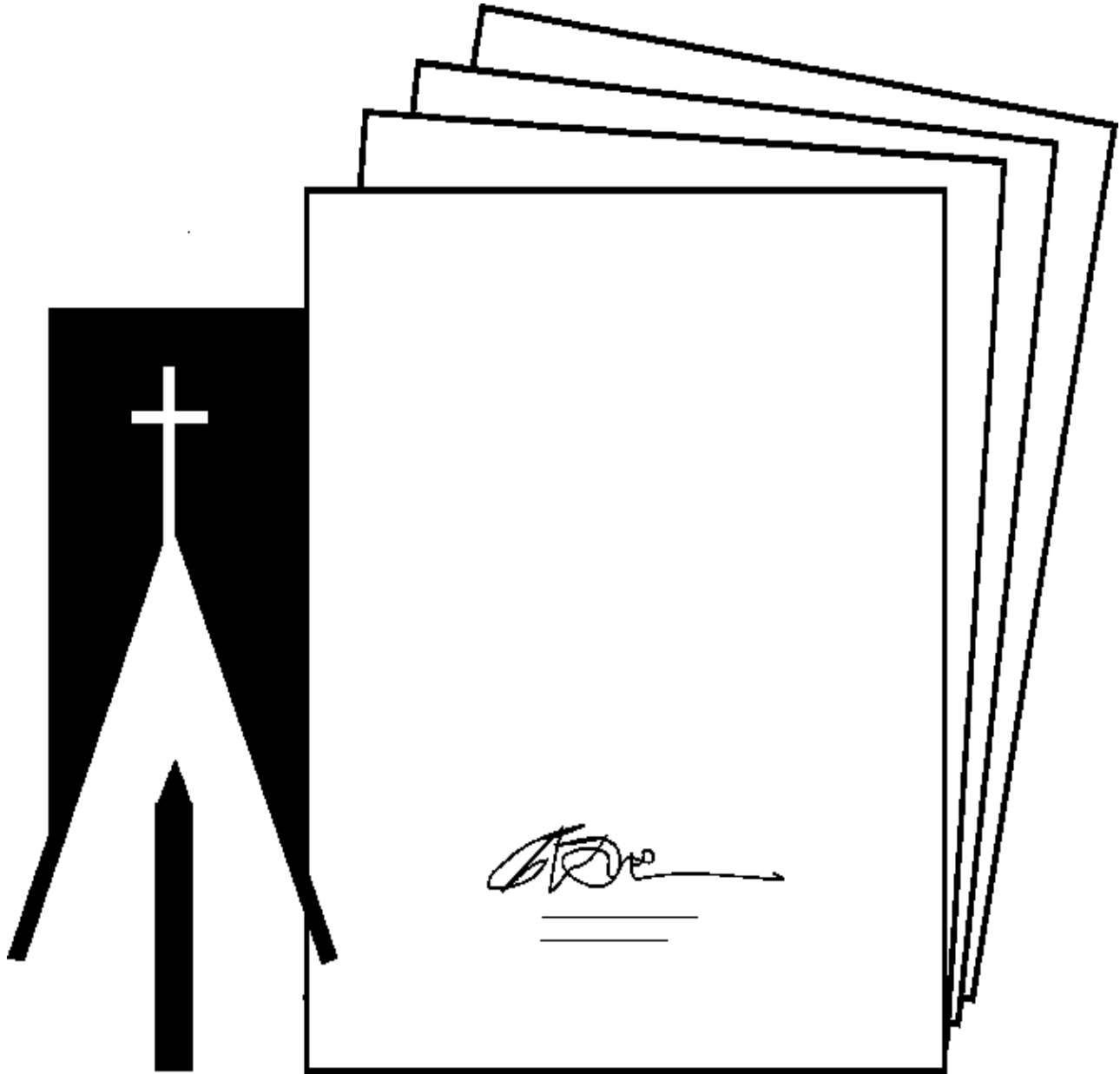


# Welcome to Presbytery!

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Information for new Elder Commissioners



Presbytery of Genesee Valley  
OFFICES AND RESOURCE CENTER

1190 Winton Road South, Rochester, New York 14618

TEL: 585-242-0080 FAX: 585-242-0086 Website: [www.pbygenva.org](http://www.pbygenva.org)

# Overview of The Presbytery Structure

## Local

The **PRESBYTERY OF GENESEE VALLEY** consists of 62 churches within the bounds of Monroe, Livingston, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming counties, with one church in Ontario County. There are nearly 9,713 members, including 123 ministers of Word and Sacrament within this region. As a governing body or local court of the church, the Presbytery meets five times per year. The voting membership consists of all ministers and an equal number of elder commissioners (at least one from each church). The Presbytery is responsible for the mission and government through its geographic district.

## State

The **SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST** consists of 1,075 churches in 21 presbyteries in New York, New Jersey, and all of New England. There are two Synod meetings each year. Synod membership consists of a representation of elders and commissioners from each presbytery. It is responsible for supporting the mission and ministry of a wider regional area.

## National

The **GENERAL ASSEMBLY** is the most inclusive court of the church. It meets bi-annually and its membership consists of a representation of ministers and elders from each presbytery. It is responsible for the total program of the denomination and its budget. The Office of the General Assembly is located in Louisville, Kentucky.

The **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)** consists of over 10,000 congregations within 172 presbyteries and 16 synods across the United States.

## WEB ADDRESSES

Presbytery of Genesee Valley      [www.pbygenval.org](http://www.pbygenval.org)

Synod of the Northeast            [www.synodne.org](http://www.synodne.org)

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)      [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org)

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# 2017-2018 Presbytery Officers

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<b>MODERATOR</b>	Hezekiah Simmons (Pittsford) 200-8260 <a href="mailto:hsimmons@monroecc.edu">hsimmons@monroecc.edu</a>
<b>MODERATOR ELECT</b>	Rev. Sue Thaine (Penfield) 416-8444 <a href="mailto:suethaine@gmail.com">suethaine@gmail.com</a>
<b>STATED CLERK</b>	Elder Susan Orr (Laurelton) 585-242-0080 <a href="mailto:statedclerk@pbygenval.org">statedclerk@pbygenval.org</a>
<b>CHAIR OF COUNCIL</b>	Rev. Brandi Wooten (Chili) 490-8807 <a href="mailto:revbrandi@gmail.com">revbrandi@gmail.com</a>
<b>TREASURER</b>	Bob Mecredy (Pittsford) 381-6430 <a href="mailto:bobmecredy@aol.com">bobmecredy@aol.com</a>

## Presbytery Office Staff

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<b>PRESBYTERY LEADER</b>	<b>Rev. Amy Williams Fowler</b> 242-0080 <a href="mailto:presbyteryleader@pbygenval.org">presbyteryleader@pbygenval.org</a>
<b>PRESBYTER FOR HEALTHIER CONGREGATIONS/STATED CLERK</b>	<b>Elder Susan Orr</b> 242-0099 <a href="mailto:resourcecenter@pbygenval.org">resourcecenter@pbygenval.org</a> <a href="mailto:statedclerk@pbygenval.org">statedclerk@pbygenval.org</a>
<b>FINANCIAL &amp; PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR</b>	<b>Cheryl Battaglia</b> 242-0080 <a href="mailto:financialadmin@pbygenval.org">financialadmin@pbygenval.org</a>
<b>OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR</b>	<b>Beth Weaver</b> 242-0080 <a href="mailto:officeadmin@pbygenval.org">officeadmin@pbygenval.org</a>



The Presbytery

Resource Center

1190 Winton Rd. S, Rochester N.Y

Telephone: 242-0099

email: [resourcecenter@pbygenval.org](mailto:resourcecenter@pbygenval.org)

The Resource Center supports, equips and encourages congregations and neighborhoods of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley and the Genesee Valley Association of the United Church of Christ. The Center offers a wide variety of materials to be borrowed free of charge, and services of personal assistance, research and guidance. The Resource Center is staffed by Susan Orr, Presbyter for Healthier Congregations/Stated Clerk and is overseen by the Healthier Congregations Team/Resource Center Working Group.

The Center is located on the second floor in the Presbytery Office at 1190 Winton Rd. South, Rochester, NY and is open from 8:30am-4:30pm. We have a drop box located in the door facing Winton Rd. for the 24-hour return of materials. And there is a display of new materials at each Presbytery Meeting. You are Welcome to use that gathering as a pick up/delivery point if you need to return resource or receive them from the center.

There are over 3000 books, DVDs, periodicals, curriculum and games available in the following topics: Congregational Transformation; Leadership Training; Spirituality and Disciplines; Youth Activities; Worship; Retreats; Education; Bible & Theology; Race Relations; Stewardship; Peacemaking & Social Advocacy; Evangelism; Church Seasons; Children's Story Books; Teacher Training; Mission; Ecumenism.

Check out the [Resource Center](#) page and [Online Catalog](#) on the [Presbytery Website](#). There you will find a monthly listing of our latest resources, child safety, lending and copyright policies.

# Presbytery of Genesee Valley Committees

*Descriptions, Meeting Times, and Other Areas of Service*

**Board of Trustees:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday 3 pm. Responsible for property and investments of presbytery and those held in trust by congregations

**Budget Development and Oversight:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 3 pm. Prepares annual budget, recommends per capita, oversees current budget and maintains three year income projection.

**Council:** Meets every other month at various times and places. Responsible for regular review and coordination of the functional relationship between the Presbytery's structure and mission, plans long-range goals and programs, provides for presbytery worship.

**Committee on Ministry:** 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday 9:15 am at Gates Presbyterian. Furthers spiritual and temporal welfare of congregations, ministers, certified Christian educators, and commissioned lay pastors of presbytery. Responsible for churches going through pastoral transitions,

**Healthier Congregations Coordination Council:** Information to follow.

**Nominating:** 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday 4:30 pm. Nominates members to presbytery standing committees, Council, commissioners to higher governing bodies as well as members to any committees or entities of those higher governing bodies.

**Pastoral Care and Development:** Meets every other month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 12:15pm. Provides opportunities for clergy and commissioned ruling elders to further their spiritual and professional development and to stimulate theological reflection and dialogue, advocates for and works with members of the Benefits Plan regarding Board of Pensions and benefits issues and promotes clergy wellbeing by providing arenas for fellowship, mutual support and creative interaction.

**Permanent Judicial Commission:** Meets as required. Serves as the "law court" for presbytery.

**Personnel:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday 12-1 pm. Oversees presbytery personnel, develops staff position descriptions, develops and reviews personnel policies.

**Preparation for Ministry:** 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, 5:30 pm at CRCDS. Assists inquirers, candidates and Elders as they prepare to become Ministers of the Word and Sacraments or as Commissioned Lay Pastors.

**Representation:** Restructuring. Responsible for implementing church's commitment to inclusiveness and to insure representation in Presbytery decision making and to give full expression to rich diversity within Presbytery's membership.

**Self Development of People:** 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday 12pm. Evaluates and approves proposals for funding of Self Development of People projects within the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.

# Presbytery Officers/Representatives

*Descriptions, Meeting Times, and Other Areas of Service*

**Moderator Elect:** Presides over presbytery meeting at the request of or in the absence of the Moderator. Serves on Council. Ordinarily, nominated to serve as Moderator the following year.

**Commissioner to Synod or General Assembly.** Commissioned by presbytery to meet at Synod or General Assembly to consider business before the Assembly.

**Youth Advisory Delegate.** Person, between 17 and 23 years of age, serves in advisory capacity at Synod or General Assembly.

**Kirkhaven Board and Rochester Presbyterian Home Board.** Represents presbytery on a board responsible for elder care.

**Greater Rochester Community of Churches.** Serves as presbytery representative to GRCC.

**Interfaith Forum.** Serves as presbytery representative to Interfaith Forum.

**Genesee Area Campus Ministries.** Serves as presbytery representative to Genesee Area Campus Ministries.

Detailed descriptions of committees may be found at <http://www.pbygenva.org/committees/>.

## Glossary

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**AMENDMENT:** A change that is made in the wording of the original motion.

**BOOK OF ORDER:** The rules and guidelines under which Presbyterians have agreed to live.

**CALL THE QUESTION:** When someone thinks they have heard enough discussion and feels ready to vote, he or she can "call the question." At that point, debate stops while a vote is taken on whether the majority is ready to vote.

**COMMITTEES OF THE PRESBYTERY:** Elders and clergy are elected to committee positions to implement the mission and ministry of the Presbytery. A detailed listing of committees is listed on page five of this booklet.

# Glossary (continued)

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**COUNCIL:** A body of elders and clergy elected annually to provide review and coordination of the functional relationship between the presbytery's structure and its mission. Council has authority to act on behalf of presbytery when matters require action before the next regularly scheduled meeting of presbytery.

**DEBATE:** A discussion of the proposal (motion) that is carefully managed by the Moderator in order to be sure that all sides of the issue are heard.

**DOCKET:** The listing of things that the presbytery wants to accomplish and the amount of time allotted for each item. If items are not on the docket, you can't talk about them.

**JUDICATORY:** A governing body of the church: a Session, Presbytery, a Synod, the General Assembly.

**MODERATOR:** A person elected to preside over a judicatory of the church. The pastor, called by the congregation, is moderator of the Session. An elder or pastor may be moderator of a higher judicatory, the Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly.

**OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH:** Ministers of the word and Sacrament, Commission Ruling Elders, Elders and Deacons.

**OVERTURE:** A proposal to change the Book of Order. An overture starts at the local level but must be voted on at all levels of the church before it can become a new "law."

**POINT OF ORDER:** An interruption of the debate process made by someone to ask a question about the process. When someone has called a point of order, all debate stops until the question is answered.

**REPORT:** The sharing of information of a group or committee within our presbytery.

**STATED CLERK:** Records everything that happens at a presbytery meeting, keeps records on everything that happens in between presbytery meetings, writes letters and receives letters from other churches, and other organizations in the church. Knows all the rules for discussions at presbytery and answers questions about procedural problems.

**SUBSTITUTE MOTION:** another motion offered to replace a motion being debated. A substitute motion is usually substantially different from the main motion; otherwise, the maker of the motion would simply amend the motion.

**VOICE AND VOTE:** not everyone at a presbytery meeting can speak and vote on issues. Only those designated as "commissioners" can vote. Permission of the whole presbytery is required for non-commissioners who wish to speak at a meeting.

# Parliamentary Procedure

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## *Basic Principles*



Parliamentary procedure is designed to facilitate decision-making by groups of people. Parliamentary procedure balances the expression of individual conscience with the will of the majority. Therefore, parliamentary procedure seeks always to protect the four rights of individual members:

- ▶ the right to know
- ▶ the right to speak
- ▶ the right to vote
- ▶ the right to hold office

Action that affects any of the four rights requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

## RULES OF DECORUM

**The Moderator must recognize all speakers before they speak.**

This includes those rights of speech, which interrupt, including a point of personal privilege or a point of order.

Please stand to be recognized. To interrupt, you may stand and say, "Madam Moderator, I rise to a point of order/personal privilege." Then wait to be officially recognized.

**Each person may speak twice on a particular subject.** However, you may not speak a second time until everyone who wishes to speak has done so.

(Generally) **Allow 3 minutes for remarks.** Plan carefully what you intend to say. There is nothing wrong with having some notes to guide you; in fact, notes are encouraged.

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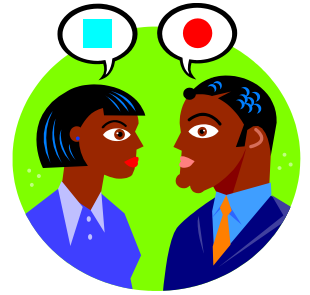


# Parliamentary Procedure

*Commissioner Agendas*

## DEBATE AND ACTION

We'll be making a few decisions that we may need to talk about before we vote - to clarify an issue, share different views, to understand alternatives. Not all actions require debate. Your role is to listen, share in debate as you are spiritually led, and vote your conscience. If you don't understand what is happening, **LET THE MODERATOR KNOW**. Stand up and call "Point of Order." We'll take time to see the issue more clearly.



## EDUCATION

Being here is an opportunity to learn about our Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Visits from mission volunteers or other guests, educational exercises and activities--those are examples. Your role is to share what you are learning with appropriate groups in your own congregation.

## INFORMATION

You will receive lots of information to share with your own Session and church. You will hear committee reports that let you know what the Presbytery is doing. Also, you will hear about presbytery-wide training events, resources, and programs. You'll hear about programs in other congregations that might benefit your own. Your role is to communicate - to pass the good news along to your Session and local leaders.



## CELEBRATION OF OUR COMMUNITY

We'll worship and sing at each meeting, pray for each other and for our world, share in the Lord's Supper from time to time, enjoy mealtime fellowship, give thanks for special accomplishments, say "hello" and "goodbye", and just enjoy each other's company. Your role is simple: **JOIN THE PARTY!**



## The Inquiry/Candidacy Process

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A person indicates to session a desire to explore becoming a Minister of Word and Sacrament. (G-14.0303a,b)

**\* Must have been a member of the particular church at least 6 months.**



Session contacts presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, for orientation to the presbytery's process and to the process of ordination as outlined in the Book of Order. (G-14.0303c)



### **ORIENTATION MEETING WITH SESSION**



Session consults with the person and makes recommendation to the presbytery, through the Stated Clerk, that the person be enrolled as an inquirer. (G-14.0303d)



Committee on Preparation for Ministry interviews the person and makes recommendation to the presbytery regarding inquiry. (G-14.0303e)



<p><b>APPROVAL OF INQUIRY BY THE COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY</b>  <b>ENROLLMENT AS AN "INQUIRER" BEGINS HERE</b></p>
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*(Inquiry lasts at least two years, at least one of which must be as a candidate)*



Inquiry period (G-14.0303f):

- + Information provided by inquirer
- + Personal references
- + Counseling resources
- + Session evaluation
- + (Where applicable) Reports from inquirer's institution of learning
- + Annual consultations with Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry



By the end of the Inquiry Phase, the Inquirer presents (G-14.0303g):

- + Statement of his/her understanding of Christian vocation
- + Statement of personal faith (including understanding of the Reformed tradition)
- + Analysis of one concept from the faith statement
- + Statement of what it means to be Presbyterian (related to the life of a particular church)
- + Statement of self-understanding (personal and cultural background of inquirer and concern for spiritual, physical, and mental health)
- + Statement of understanding of the task that Ministers of Word and Sacrament perform (including his/her gifts for ministry and areas of needed growth)

### **CANDIDACY PHASE**

Inquirer applies for candidacy, through his/her Session. (G-14.0305a)



Session consults with Inquirer, using evidence of the inquiry phase; makes recommendation to the presbytery through the Stated Clerk. (G-14.0305b)



Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry confers with Inquirer as to readiness to proceed to candidacy, reviewing evidence of the inquiry phase. (G-14.0305c)



## The Inquiry/Candidacy Process (continued)

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Committee on Preparation for Ministry makes a definite recommendation to presbytery, regarding whether the Inquirer should be received as a Candidate. Presbytery must act on every recommendation regarding application for candidacy. (G-14.0305d)



### **PRESBYTERY MEETING** (G-14.0305e-h):

- + Receives CPM's recommendation
- + Examines Inquirer (Christian faith, forms of service, motives for seeking the ministry)
- + If candidacy is approved, service of reception and charge

*(It is possible for reception to occur in home church)*



Annual Consultations with Candidate, by whole CPM or representatives thereof (G-14.0309c.1-3)

- + **Prior to Seminary** - preparation for theological education and personal growth
- + **First Year of Seminary** - general assessment of progress and implications for future ministry; ordinarily the *Bible Content Exam* is taken during the first year of seminary
- + **Second Year of Seminary** - general assessment, similar to that in first year; progress toward ordination; preliminary statement of faith; review of grades; field education reports; and other appropriate evaluations; certificate of passing grade on *Bible Content Exam*
- + **Final Assessment** (G-14.0310) - *in final year of seminary or when Candidate has satisfied the requirements of 14.0310* - assessment of outcomes of Inquiry and Candidacy; review of each of the certifications set forth in G-14.0310b-e



Committee on Preparation for Ministry reports to presbytery when it has certified a Candidate ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. (The next stages proceed at G-14.0507)



### **Examination for Ordination**





### WHAT IS MY ROLE DURING THE PRESBYTERY MEETING?

You have the right to speak. You have the right to ask questions. You have the right to vote, if you are a registered commissioner. You do not have to ask for permission to exercise any of these rights. Come with an open heart, to listen to what others say. Come prepared to ask if you need to, or speak if the Spirit moves you. Pray in preparation for the meeting and even during it.

### WHAT IS THE BOOK OF ORDER?

The Book of Order is an important part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA). It provides guidance for the ministry and mission of congregations, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. The Book of Order has three sections.

The **Form of Government** provides the basic structure for the mission of the Church. It lays out foundational principles of the church's mission, outlines the meaning of church membership, describes the roles of church officers, and states the responsibilities of the governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (USA), sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly.

The **Directory for Worship** provides the theological foundations and general guidelines for Presbyterian worship. As well as describing and interpreting the Sunday worship service, the Directory provides guidelines for proper celebration of the Sacraments, an overview of the liturgical calendar and its role in the worship life of the Church, and a wonderful chapter on the importance of service to others.

The **Rules of Discipline** provide guidance for the church in times of controversy and error. It is the "judicial" portion of our Constitution, outlining the process for dealing with controversies arising from actions of governing bodies or from the actions of individuals. The Rules of Discipline provide a clear grievance process, as well as a clear process for trial and appeal.



### WHY DOESN'T THE STATED CLERK VOTE?

The Stated Clerk's primary role during presbytery meetings is that of a parliamentarian (with respect to both Robert's Rules of Order and the Book of Order). Robert's specifies that the parliamentarian should vote only when there is a secret ballot. The reason for this principle is that the parliamentarian is the servant of the Moderator and of the body as a whole. Therefore, it is important that the parliamentarian maintain public neutrality on issues before the body.

The Stated Clerk will not speak to issues before the presbytery, but will speak when asked to by the Moderator, and like all other participants, will address comments to the Moderator.

### WHAT IS A POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE?

Personal privilege is the means by which an individual member of a voting body has his or her needs met, so that he or she may vote in an intelligent, informed manner. All remarks must be addressed to the Moderator, and be made respectfully and in decorous language. When the Moderator recognizes you, state your name and where you are from, and continue facing the Moderator as you make your remarks. Some examples are below.

*"Madam Moderator, would you please ask the Clerk to read the motion before we vote?"*

*"Madam Moderator, some of us are freezing. Is there any way we can get more heat?"*

### WHAT IS A MOTION?

A motion is a proposal that the assembly take a stand or take action on some issue. It may be a statement of action, of policy, or of opinion. Only one main motion can be on the floor at one time. A "second" to the motion ensures that more than one member of the body wishes to consider the issue. Motions which come from committees do not need a "second."

## Presbytery of Genesee Valley

### Our Vision: Know Christ, Live Christ, Share Christ

#### Preamble

Today we lift up our vision for the Presbytery of Genesee Valley. We have a vision that begins with the faithfulness of those who have preceded us. We have a vision that emerges in a context of turbulence and rapid change in church and society. We have a vision that grows in the hearts of our diverse people as we commit to serve Christ together.

#### Vision Statement

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley glorifies God by Knowing Christ, Living Christ, and Sharing Christ.

#### What does this Vision look like?

- ✦ **We Know Christ** when we worship God through Scripture, prayer, songs, and preaching; when we live as disciples of Jesus Christ within a faithful community of congregations; and when we experience the Holy Spirit leading us into the world with purpose and conviction. Our vision calls for the Presbytery to train and equip the people of God for faithful service in the life of our churches and surrounding communities.
- ✦ **We Live Christ** when we model the truth and integrity of the Gospel as we build trust and work with one another and our neighbors; when our elders, pastors and church leaders feel strong spiritual encouragement and support for their vocation; and when we demonstrate our calling in ways that capture the attention of people who live throughout the Genesee Valley. Our vision calls for the Presbytery to demonstrate the wonder and joy of Christian faith as we eat, work, play and reach out together.
- ✦ **We Share Christ** when we initiate emerging faith communities, develop new churches, and support existing churches; when our congregations join hands for shared mission endeavors; and when we engage in ministries of healing, comfort, renewal, justice, and peace. Our vision calls on the Presbytery to be a gathering of faithful congregations in which we mourn our defeats, celebrate our successes, and seek God's confidence and strength as we embrace the future.

adopted by Presbytery January 29, 2005

## STRATEGIES FOR KNOWING, LIVING AND SHARING CHRIST IN THE PRESBYTERY OF GENESEE VALLEY

### Preamble

#### **What**

Underlying our vision and all our strategies, plans, actions, and attitudes, we strive to create a culture in our presbytery where compassion, cooperation, social justice, leadership and playfulness flourish. We strive to become a model for the spiritual transformation of congregations.

#### **Why**

Like all faith activities, participation in presbytery should be a meaningful, challenging, spiritually nourishing and rewarding experience. *We are God's glad and faithful people.* As a Presbytery, we celebrate the work of pastoral ministry accomplished through our shared actions and through that of our seventy-three congregations.

#### **Hows**

1. Affect: Council and committees promote hospitality, joyful service, enjoyment, satisfaction, and fun.
2. Action: Council and committees encourage, support, and bless innovation and risk-taking. We celebrate successes and gladly learn from failures. *"It is better to move forward and stumble than to stand still and grumble."*
3. Relationships: The Presbytery when gathered and apart promotes and affirms the values of forgiveness and reconciliation as well as encourages authenticity, safety, and freedom in its processes.
4. Faith: We rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

### Strategy One

#### **What**

We encourage, equip and empower Presbyterian leaders so that they may more directly provide evangelism, faith development, social justice and charity to their communities.

#### **Why**

Enable church and community transformation by developing the spirit and capability of members. *Equipping the saints.*

#### **Hows**

1. Presbytery proactively promotes the physical, emotional and spiritual health of clergy so that they in turn may support the health of their congregations.
2. Presbytery sponsors action-reflection groups for faith development and evangelism.
3. Committees of the Presbytery develop and implement a variety of training programs for elder and clergy leaders.
4. Presbytery continues to develop and implement training in church transformation.<sup>1</sup>
5. Presbytery provides resources and support to congregations that want to find new ways to relate to their communities.

### Strategy Two

#### **What**

We focus resources into churches (both present and potential) who are motivated to respond to God's calling in the midst of a changing culture and community.

#### **Why**

Churches are vehicles for God's mission in the world. *"The harvest is in the field, not in the barn."*

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<sup>1</sup> Congregational Transformation is a redirection of a congregation's energy towards finding new ways to respond to God's calling today. The Transformation movement has been central to the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s strategy for moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century for at least a decade.

**Hows**

1. Through grants, Presbytery allocates funds to a congregation or groups of congregations for mission work, projects and connections.
2. Presbytery acts as a liaison between congregations and mission opportunities.
3. Presbytery develops and implements a plan to create one innovative (new, changed, expanded) congregation in the next three years.

**Strategy Three**

**What** We are a presbytery, a gathered presence both pastoral and prophetic through voice and action in the world. Through spiritual discernment, presbytery carries out its calling as a partner with other Christian denominations, other faith traditions and social justice agencies.

**Why** Presbytery, as a unique form of the church of Jesus Christ, gathers the strength of all its churches into mission. Presbytery, as well as congregations, gives voice and action to the Good News. Our mission arises from discerning the movement of God's Spirit in the world.

**Hows**

1. Realizing our ministry is always in response to God, we seek spiritual discernment among ourselves and in partnership with others to understand the work to which God is calling us.
2. Participates actively in and with other governing bodies of PC(USA)
3. Through grants, Presbytery allocates funds to ecumenical and interfaith groups, coalitions, and ministries of the counties of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.
4. Encourages members of Presbytery's congregations to engage in missions of social justice by discerning our region's (rural, suburban and urban) social justice needs and creating projects to respond. Areas that cry out for churches' moral concern include poverty, racial and ethnic equality, and domestic violence. Many other dilemmas in our lives are candidates for these prophetic responses. *"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream."* (Amos 5:24)

**Strategy Four****What**

Develop and implement a structure for Presbytery that supports the vision and strategies.

**Why**

Enable presbytery to be both efficient and effective by focusing resources on the vision and strategies. *To make straight the way of the Lord.*

**Hows**

1. Council, committees, and ministry teams are responsive to needs of congregations and prioritize their activities in order to better serve congregations.
2. Council, committees, and ministry teams work to provide opportunities for meaningful and transforming service that makes use of member interests and gifts and enables members to experience our vision to Know, Live, and Share Christ.
3. Council and every committee annually self-evaluates its size, tasks, processes, ministry teams, and member participation for alignment with the presbytery vision and strategy.
4. The Presbytery reviews manuals and policies and eliminate what is no longer relevant or in support of the vision.
5. In order to free committees from the tyranny of the urgent so that they may attend to the important, presbytery creates, trains, and empowers special ministry teams for crisis intervention in congregations.
6. In order to encourage creativity and speed implementation, officers, committees and ministry teams act to the limits of their responsibility, without further approval.

November 29, 2005



# STATED CLERK'S EDUCATIONAL MOMENT

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## EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES

One of our responsibilities as presbyters is to examine candidates for ordination. The **Committee on Preparation for Ministry** introduces such candidates to the presbytery. You can be confident that prior to their appearance on the floor of presbytery, candidates for ordination have already successfully completed the following steps:

- They have completed three years of seminary, including fieldwork experience and often including an internship.
- Candidates who have been under care of our presbytery have completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education.
- They have completed the five comprehensive examinations required by the denomination: Bible Content, Bible Exegesis, Theological Competence, Worship & Sacraments, and Church Polity.
- They have been certified as ready for examination for ordination, pending a call.
- They have received and accepted (pending approval of presbytery) a call to serve in a particular ministry (congregational or specialized).
- They have prepared and presented a sermon to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry.
- The Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) has examined them. (If they are a candidate under care of another presbytery, that CPM has examined them.)

Those requirements having been met, the *Book of Order* requires candidates to appear before the presbytery. Here are the relevant sections from the *Book of Order*:

*The candidate shall appear before the presbytery, in which he or she shall make a brief statement of personal faith and of commitment to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament... The presbytery... shall conduct any further examination of his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Bible, the Sacraments, and the government of the church as it deems necessary. (G-14.0402a)*

Here are some suggestions for participation in the examination of candidates for ordination:

- The process is the same as for motions: come to the microphone and when recognized by the Moderator, introduce yourself and where you are from, and ask your question.
- You will find it helpful to write your question down before you come to the microphone.
- It is always appropriate to ask a question from one of the categories mentioned in the above reference from the Book of Order.
- Remember that the personal statement of faith is just that: a personal statement of faith. What is of concern with the presbytery is whether the statement of faith is consistent with Reformed theology. It is difficult, if not impossible, to include all categories of faith and belief on one page of paper. If a particular category is not included in the statement, it is appropriate to ask the candidate to speak briefly to it.

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## STATED CLERK'S EDUCATIONAL MOMENT (continued)

## EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES

- Look for the organizing theme or themes of the faith statement. Some interesting questions might arise from the theme that guides the statement.
- The candidate for ordination is a potential colleague in ministry. Questions are an opportunity to get to know something about this colleague: how they envision their ministry, the passions and themes that will shape their ministry.

At some point, someone will move that the examination be arrested and that the candidate be approved for ordination. Our presbytery's practice is to excuse the candidate while the presbytery discusses the motion. The discussion process is the same as for any motion: presbyters are invited to speak for or against the motion before the body. However, **it is inappropriate and out of order** to continue the examination of the candidate during this discussion. The discussion must be limited to the merits of the motion itself.