

Foothills Presbytery Manual of Operations



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The mission of Foothills Presbytery, a governing body of the Presbyterian Church (USA), is to connect the PC (USA) congregations of Upstate South Carolina in Christian service to God and humanity.

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(to be added when completed)

FOOTHILLS PRESBYTERY

MISSION AND STRUCTURE

MISSION

The identity, mission and ministry of Foothills Presbytery is rooted in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA):

1. G-3.03 “The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of the congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become communities of faith, hope, love and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F-1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-10304).

In light of this charge, the presbytery has responsibility over Ecclesial ministry and the power to:

- a. Provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard;
 - b. Nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ;
 - c. Provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received.
-
2. G-2.0201 Diaconal ministry “as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service sharing the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures or anyone in distress.”

As the Council of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America for the congregations in the six Upstate Counties in South Carolina, by the Grace of God we gather to joyfully celebrate this Calling.

MANUAL OF FOOTHILLS PRESBYTERY

I. NAME AND AUTHORITY

This section of the Body of Christ shall be called Foothills Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It shall consist of all the Teaching Ministry and Presbyterian (U.S.A.) churches in six (6) counties: Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens, and Spartanburg.

Foothills Presbytery is a member of the Synod of the South Atlantic and has the duties and powers specified by the Book of Order.

Foothills Presbytery shall be incorporated as an Eleemosynary Corporation with by-laws according to the laws of the State of South Carolina.

II. CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of Foothills Presbytery is the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the Standing Rules for its organization and government shall always be subject to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

III. ORGANIZATION AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

A. MEETINGS

Presbytery shall ordinarily hold at least three stated meetings each year. Unless the Council varies its procedure for special reasons, these meetings are to be held on the following days: the third Tuesday of February, the third Saturday of May, and the second Tuesday of November (unless it is election day, then the first Tuesday.) Unless Presbytery decides otherwise in advance meeting shall convene at 10:00 a.m., take recess for lunch, and continue in session for an appropriate period after that meal when needed. The Tuesday meetings will usually consist of four elements: worship, business, fellowship (meal) and mission program. A moderator and a moderator-in-nomination shall be elected for a one year term. The term for the moderator will begin with the second meeting in the calendar year. The moderator shall preside at all stated or called meetings during the term of office. The moderator-in-nomination shall be the substitute when the current moderator is unable to attend.

Foothills 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-3.0304) the Quorum for a Virtual Meeting shall be three Teaching Elders and Three Ruling Elder Commissioners from three different congregations.¹

B. BASIS AND PLACES OF MEETINGS

Invitations for meetings shall be received by Council.

C. DOCKET FOR MEETINGS

The docket for each meeting shall be prepared by Presbytery's Coordinating Council in

¹ Approved at the May 16, 2020 Stated Meeting of Presbytery

consultation with the Stated Clerk. Copies of the docket shall be made available electronically at least two weeks before each meeting to all ministers, clerks of sessions, and others as requested. All meetings shall be opened with prayer. Normally there shall be a worship service during each meeting. The Worship Committee shall plan the services. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall usually be celebrated at the November meeting. Memorials to ministers and a list of ruling elders who have died in the preceding twelve months shall be read before the Communion Service.

In order to ensure fairness and access to all necessary information, any new business to be dealt with at a Presbytery meeting shall be introduced at the place assigned for new business and allocated an appropriate time on the Presbytery docket. Unless Council recommends otherwise, at least a portion of the meeting shall be reserved for an educational or inspirational program, with special emphasis given to theological and social issues, or to the missionary, evangelistic, and teaching tasks of the church.

D. RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The rules that shall govern all the transactions of business in all meetings of Presbytery shall be those found in the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order. The Stated Clerk and Parliamentarian will have a copy on hand.

E. MEMBERSHIP

All Teaching Elders who are members of the Presbytery and the Ruling Elder commissioners elected by their sessions comprise the voting membership of the body. For continuity and knowledge, all church sessions are encouraged to select their commissioners to attend stated and other meetings of Presbytery for a period of one year. Alternates should also be named. Other ruling elders should be encouraged to attend meetings of Presbytery as visitors and observers.

Signed registration forms shall indicate attendance of members of Presbytery. The appropriate forms shall be made available by the Stated Clerk.

The act of proper registration by a ruling elder is construed as that person's declaration that he or she is a person duly elected by his or her session as a commissioner to this meeting of Presbytery.

Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders are expected to arrive promptly at the announced hour for the convening of Presbytery and to remain throughout the meeting until adjournment unless specifically excused. Those who cannot attend or must be excused early shall send in writing prior to the meeting their reasons for absence or for being excused early. Repeated failure in the matter of attendance by ministers shall be reported to the Committee on Ministry as shall like failure of a congregation to send a commissioner. Normally no minister shall be excused from all the meetings of Presbytery in any one calendar year.

Regarding the issues of parity, Foothills Presbytery:

1. Will count all resident teaching elders in validated ministries, including parish ministry, chaplaincy, specialized ministry, etc. (Book of Order G-3.0306),
2. Will count resident retired teaching elders who attended at least one Presbytery

- meeting during the previous year,
3. Will give voice to Certified Christian Educators, and in the case of Certified Christian Educators who are ruling elders the privilege of voice and vote, at all its meetings. (G-2.1103b)
 4. Will grant Commissioned Ruling Elders the privilege of voice, and in the case of those moderating session a voice and vote, at all its meetings.

Foothills Presbytery invites ruling elders in the following categories to be commissioners to all meetings of Presbytery: (a) officers of the Presbytery, (b) chairpersons of commissions and committees, (c) members of Presbytery Council, (d) Stated Clerk and Presbytery Pastor, and Associate Stated Clerk and Presbytery Pastor.

Further, that these ruling elder commissioners be included in the consideration of parity.

F. THE OFFICERS OF PRESBYTERY:

1. The Moderator
2. The Moderator-in-Nomination
3. The Stated Clerk & Presbytery Leader
4. The Associate Stated Clerk
5. The Associate for Shared Mission & Ministry
6. The Treasurer
7. The Assistant Treasurer
8. The Parliamentarian
9. The Recording Clerk
10. The Assistant Recording Clerk ²

G. PRESBYTERY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:

1. Office Administrator and Bookkeeper
2. Communications Coordinator and Assistant Office Administrator

The Stated Clerk, the Associate Stated Clerk and the Parliamentarian shall be elected to three-year terms at the November meeting of Presbytery. The Treasurer, the Recording Clerk and the Associate Recording Clerk shall be elected to one-year terms at the November meeting of Presbytery.

IV. **STRUCTURE**

- A. **Foothills Coordinating Council (FCC):** Council serves to oversee, coordinate and review all commissions, committees and work groups in Foothills Presbytery. The FCC is composed of the FCC Chair, the Presbytery Moderator and the Moderator-elect, and the Chairs of the following committees:

The Ecclesial Committees

Worship

² Approved at the May 16, 2020 Stated Meeting of Presbytery

Committee on Ministry
Committee on Preparation for Ministry
Bills and Overtures
Representation and Review
Finance and Stewardship
Personnel
Nominations

The Diaconal Committees

Committee on Shared Ministry
Racial Ethnic Cabinet

Ex Officio Members: The Stated Clerk, The Associate Stated Clerk, the Treasurer, and the Parliamentarian.

B. The Permanent Judicial Commission(PJC) *Note description on page 18*

COMMITTEES & COMMISSIONS

I. ECCLESIAL MISSION

In its Ecclesial Mission the Committees and Commissions of Foothills Presbytery will seek to encourage, promote and sustain congregational health and vitality.

A. Coordinating Council

Composition: Chair of Council, Moderator of Presbytery, Moderator-in-Nomination of Presbytery (3); and the Moderators of the Ecclesial and Diaconal Committees of Presbytery: Worship, Committee on Ministry, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Bills and Overtures, Representation and Review, Finance and Stewardship, Personnel, Nominations, Committee on Shared Ministry, and the Racial Ethnic Cabinet (10). The Stated Clerk, the Associate Stated Clerk, the Treasurer and the Parliamentarian shall be Ex-Officio members (4). [Total: 17 members] A quorum for a meeting shall consist of at least seven members and either the Stated or Associate Stated Clerk.

The Coordinating Council coordinates the meetings of Presbytery, and acts as instructed by Presbytery between meetings. It provides for communication among the committees and commissions of Presbytery and interprets their work to the Presbytery. The Coordinating Council functions as the Corporate Board of the Presbytery. By virtue of their election to Council, Council members are also elected to the Corporate Board. The Chair of Council serves as Chair of the Corporate Board. Per South Carolina State Law, the Coordinating Council designates the Stated Clerk, or upon his or her absence, the Associate Stated Clerk as "the Agent" of Foothills Presbytery. All Ruling Elder Committee Chairs are Commissioners to Presbytery during their terms of service (G-3.0301).

Council Responsibilities:

1. Provide for the worship of Presbytery.
2. Set the agenda of Presbytery meetings and make arrangements for Presbytery meetings.
3. Interpret and communicate the budget of Presbytery.
4. Facilitate communications among the commissions, and committees of the Presbytery and from the commissions and committees to the Presbytery.
5. Ensure a fair and clear decision-making process that is consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
6. Encourage maximum participation in Presbytery meetings.
7. Act on behalf of Presbytery between meetings as Presbytery deems appropriate and as instructed by Presbytery.
8. Make editorial changes to Presbytery's manual which do not materially change its intent and interpretation.
9. Act on Presbytery's behalf to approve requests from congregations to buy, sell or encumber property.
10. Function as the corporate board of Foothills Presbytery, Inc. with the authority to acquire property for Presbytery and to hold the same at the direction of Presbytery.
11. When the Presbytery shall purchase property and make deferred payments, the Council shall have the authority to execute a security deed to secure any unpaid balance of the purchase money and to execute all necessary papers in connection with such transaction.
12. Through the Personnel Committee oversee the operations of the Presbytery staff, the Treasurer, the Parliamentarian, and the Recording Clerk and the Assistant Recording Clerk.

B. Worship Committee

Composition: 6 persons elected by Foothills Presbytery.

The Foothills Presbytery Worship Committee exists to plan services of worship for Presbytery meetings to motivate the people in the pews to earnest praise of God. The committee attempts to design services that are sensitive to the business of Presbytery, the architecture and traditions of the local church or venue housing the meeting, and the musical gifts and styles of the community. The committee also attempts to put before the presbytery solid worship leaders of all stripes, hometowns, ages, and inspiring music of many styles and origins. Ideas are welcome and one does not need to be a member of this committee to suggest them.

Organization:

- The committee is a sub-committee of the Coordinating Council and the Chair will serve as the committee's representative on the Council.
- The committee will ideally consist of at least seven members, representing the diversity of the presbytery.
- The committee generally meets around six times a year depending on need.
- The committee will develop a theme for each worship service, provide appropriate

leadership and/or coordinate with the host venue to make sure all aspects of worship are planned for and staffed.

C. Committee on Ministry (COM)

Composition: 22 persons elected by Foothills Presbytery. *Ex-officio*: the Stated Clerk and the Associate Stated Clerk.

The Committee on Ministry is Foothills Presbytery's committee to "develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as pastor and counselor to teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and certified Christian educators of the presbytery; to facilitate relations between presbytery and its congregations, teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and certified Christian educators; and to settle difficulties on behalf of the presbytery where possible and expedient." (G-3.0307)

Responsibilities:

1. Counsel with congregations, sessions and teaching elders in a manner consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) regarding congregational relationships as outlined in G-3.0301 and G-3.0303.
 - a) Visit with each session of the Presbytery at least once every three years.
 - b) Promote the peace and harmony of the churches of the presbytery, especially in regard to matters arising out of the relations between teaching elders and churches, seeking to mediate and reconcile those involved.
 - c) Follow procedures outlined in G-3.0303d(1-3) as it counsels with churches within which there may be difficulties.
 - d) Make recommendations to presbytery concerning the location of new congregations and congregations desiring to move. (G-3.0303b)
 - e) Make recommendations to presbytery concerning congregations which are to be divided, dismissed or dissolved in consultation with their members. (G-3.0303b)
2. Counsel with congregations, sessions and teaching elders in a manner consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) regarding pastoral relationships as outlined in G-2.0504.
 - a) On behalf of presbytery, approve all changes in terms of calls for pastors, co-pastors and associate pastors serving in installed pastoral relationships. These changes shall be reported to the presbytery (G-2.0504a)
 - b) On behalf of presbytery, approve the terms of all temporary pastoral relationships. Such temporary pastoral relationships may be full time or part time, and are established by the session or commission of the presbytery with the approval of the presbytery through its Committee on Ministry. A temporary pastor is not installed and is not a member of the Session and therefore has no vote. (G-3.0102)
 - c) Make recommendations to presbytery concerning exceptions allowed in G-2.0504c.
 - d) Select Committee on Ministry members to serve on presbytery's Examinations with special attention to parity between Teaching and Ruling Elders.
 - e) Make recommendations to presbytery concerning designated pastor relationships. (See guidelines in appendix).

3. Counsel with congregations, sessions and teaching elders in a manner consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) regarding relationships between sessions and certified Christian Educators. (GH-2.1103)
 - a) Include interviews with certified Christian Educators in all formal visits and work with congregations, especially in those situations in which the head of staff position has become vacant.
 - b) Encourage educators to seek certification, provide guidance through the Educator Certification advisor, and encourage sessions to make continuing education funds and time available to educators seeking certification.
 - c) Provide support to certified Christian Educators through a service of recognition and establishing compensation and benefit standards.
 - d) Serve as pastor and counselor to certified Christian Educators, including support and mediation in conflict situations.
4. Work with Commissioned Ruling Elders in a manner consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
 - a) Supervise and approve training of ruling elders preparing to be commissioned to pastoral service.
 - b) Approve commissions of Commissioned Ruling Elders and authorize functions that they are to perform in accordance with G-2.10.
 - c) Assign a Teaching Elder as a mentor and supervisor (G-2.1004) and when necessary consult with the Examinations Commission concerning continuing education of Commissioned Ruling Elders.
5. Work with other presbytery committees and subcommittees as needed.
6. Continually look for ways to think creatively about the areas of responsibility assigned to the committee and when appropriate recommend and implement such changes within the structure of the Presbytery.
7. Work as a Commission on Ministry for the following:
 - a) When the Committee on Ministry needs a subcommittee to be a Commission for Special Inquiry to investigate matters of potential ethics violations or personal concerns of Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders that impact their role and function
 - b) The actions of a Commission of Special Inquiry may require referral to the Rules of Discipline but efforts will be made to follow the guidelines of D-1.0103 to avoid formal proceedings under the Rules of Discipline. Usually this commission would be formed when expedient action is required for the health of the minister or congregation in order that that ministry of Jesus Christ will not be harmed.
 - c) Administrative Responsibilities of the Committee on Ministry:
 - 1) To approve and remove teaching elders from Temporary Positions
 - 2) To approve teaching elders serving in Validated Ministries permission to celebrate the sacraments
 - 3) To approve the sermons of Ruling Elders Commissioned to Pastoral Service

- d) Make recommendations to presbytery concerning the appointment of administrative commissions in those situations where it has determined that such action is necessary, as outlined in G-3.0303e.

The Examination Commission, The Sexual Ethics, Child, Youth and Vulnerable Adult Committee, and The Small Church Working Group report to The Committee on Ministry.

1. Examinations Commission

Composition: 12 persons (including chair and vice chair), typically with no more than one person serving from a particular church. Members will reflect the diversity of Foothills Presbytery. Five members will be selected by the COM from the COM. Two members (1 teaching elder, 1 ruling elder) will be selected by and from the Bills and Overtures Committee. Two members (1 teaching elder, 1 ruling elder) will be selected by and from the Committee on Shared Ministry. Members from the COM, Bills and Overtures Committee and Committee on Shared Ministry will serve a one-year term, renewable up to six years total. The remaining three members will be nominated by the Nominating Committee of Presbytery and elected by Presbytery as at-large members, comprised of three classes of one person elected to a three-year term.

The Examinations Commission shall maintain an active list of those who have served on the Commission in the 10 previous years. In circumstances where the duly chosen and elected members cannot be gathered in such numbers to have a quorum (6 members), then the Chair and/ or the Vice Chair will choose persons from that list to assure a quorum.

The Examinations Commission of Foothills Presbytery is elected by the presbytery to examine candidates and ministers (G-3.0306) who are seeking membership in the Presbytery, and elders seeking to serve as commissioned ruling elders (G-2.1002).

Responsibilities:

- a. All ministers, candidates and commissioned ruling elders shall be examined in the areas of their Call to ministry, Bible, theology, sacraments and church polity. For their first commissioning Commissioned Ruling Elders will preach before the Commissioned Ruling Elder subcommittee of the Committee on Ministry per their Manual of Operations. Candidates for Ministry will usually preach before the Commission on a text chosen by the Commission. The Commission may choose to have the Candidates preach either in a member congregation of Foothills Presbytery during regular Sunday worship or on the Floor of a meeting of Presbytery.
- b. Examine and take action on previously ordained pastors transferring into Foothills Presbytery, and report this action to the Presbytery. Approve Terms of Call and approve Installation Commissions. In conjunction with the Committee on Ministry approve Validated Ministers to serve the sacraments with those whom they minister. The Committee on Ministry will oversee the service of the sacraments.
- c. Examine Candidates for ordination and Commissioned Ruling Elders, and make recommendations concerning the candidate's or Commissioned Ruling Elder's examination on the floor of Presbytery. In the event of a questionable examination, the Examinations Commission will refer the candidate or Commissioned Ruling Elder to the

Committee on Ministry for determination of the call. Approve Candidates moving onto the field.

In every case introduce Pastors, Candidates or Commissioned Ruling to the floor of presbytery for the opportunity of dialogue.

- d. Appoint mentors for all newly Ordained Teaching Elders and consult with transferring members regarding their need/ desire for a mentor.

2. Sexual Ethics Committee: Child, Youth and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policies

Composition: 6 persons elected by Foothills Presbytery.

The Sexual Ethics and Child Protection Committee shall work with other entities of the Presbytery in dealing with matters regarding sexual ethics and misconduct and child protection.

Responsibilities:

- a. Train committee members in issues regarding sexual ethics and misconduct.
- b. Recommend changes in the Foothills Presbytery Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct, Appendix II, to the Presbytery that are consistent with G-3.0106.
- c. Train and form care teams as outlined in the Foothills Presbytery Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct.
- d. Ensure that teaching elders serving in validated ministries in Foothills Presbytery acknowledge receipt of the Foothills Presbytery Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct.
- e. In partnership with the Committee on Shared Mission provide continuing education on sexual ethics and misconduct for teaching elders, educators, church professionals, congregations and sessions.
 - 1) Recommend changes in the Foothills Child Protection Policy that are consistent with G-3.0106.
 - 2) Assist congregations and Sessions with developing and maintaining congregational Child Protection Policies.
 - 3) Assist presbytery and congregations in promoting best practices regarding child safety.

3. Small Church Working Group

The Small Church Working Group is a mission and ministry support group for Foothills Presbytery. The Small Church Working Group Leaders usually meet four times a year to plan programs to support the unique ministries of the smaller membership churches in Foothills Presbytery.

D. Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

Composition: The CPM shall be composed of 18 members elected by Foothills Presbytery, Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders in approximately equal number, bearing in mind the principles of unity in diversity in F-1.0403.

The purpose of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry is to help all church members discern and fulfill their Christian vocation and to provide the best possible leadership for the church by

assuring that persons who feel called to be Teaching Elders (Ministers of the Word and Sacrament) receive the fullest personal and professional preparation for this office.

Our goals are to facilitate the care process for pre-inquirers, inquirers and candidates in the most caring and efficient manner possible, to be sensitive to the many issues confronting persons under care, and to provide continuity of service to members of the commission and those under care.

Note: The CPM also serves as a commission and is responsible for following the designated processes associated with pre-inquirers, inquirers and candidates. "The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is the authority by which the Committee on Preparation for Ministry may act as a Commission to fulfill its constitutional functions. All requirements and procedures of the current Book of Order must be followed in the Inquiry and Candidacy process (G-2.06)" Particular to Foothills Presbytery's policy and procedure are:

- On behalf of Presbytery, CPM will act as a commission by interviewing individuals recommended by their Sessions for inquiry and decide whether to enroll them as inquirers, reporting the Committee's action at the next stated meeting of presbytery
- Instruct and train Sessions on their role in inquiry and the candidacy process.
- Make recommendation to the presbytery through the Stated Clerk with respect to inquirers' applications for candidacy.
- Provide oversight of inquirers and candidates in matters relating to the preparation for ministry.
- Make decisions regarding applications for financial aid.
- Provide for annual consultations with each inquirer and candidate. Report to the Presbytery on annual consultations. (G-2.0604)
- Recommend an inquirer's move to candidacy and arrange for them to share their faith statement, faith journey and sense of Call to a meeting of presbytery. Questions posed from commissioners may only include questions about inquirer's statement of faith, faith journey, Christian service and Call. Note: Statement of faith must be in writing.
- Conduct final assessments of candidates' readiness for ministry. Report candidate's readiness to Presbytery. (G-2.0607)
- On behalf of Presbytery, the CPM will act as a commission and make decisions concerning the transfer and removal from covenant relationship of inquirer under its care.
- In case of candidate, make recommendation to the presbytery concerning the transfer and removal from covenant relationship of candidates under its care. (G-2.0608 and G-2.0609)

All actions carried out as a result of delegated authority must be reported to the presbytery at its next regular meeting." Book of Order G-3.0307

E. Bills and Overtures Committee

Composition: 9 members elected by Foothills Presbytery.

The Bills and Overtures Committee receives all overtures and amendments which have been referred to Presbytery and provides advice to the Presbytery regarding the action on such overtures and amendments.

Responsibilities:

1. Provide regular opportunities for theological conversation and for the discussion of difficult and timely issues that may come before the Presbytery and the larger church
2. Receive all overtures and Constitutional Amendments which have been referred to Presbytery and provide advice to the Presbytery regarding action on such overtures. Presbytery shall vote on all such overtures and amendments to the Constitution.
3. Voting on Amendments to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) shall be done by secret ballot and the committee in cooperation with the Stated Clerk and the Coordinating Council will assure this is done in an effective way.
4. Select a Ruling Elder and Teaching Elder member to serve on Presbytery's Examinations Commission.

F. Representation and Review Committee

Composition: 6 members elected by Foothills Presbytery.

The Representation and Review Committee advises Presbytery with respect to its membership and of its bodies by making sure the principles of participation and inclusiveness are met (see G-30103), and in addition is responsible for the review and control of Sessions and congregations.

Responsibilities:

1. Advocate for the inclusion of racial ethnic members, women, different age groups and persons with disabilities in the life and leadership of Presbytery. (see F-1.0403)
2. Review the performance of the Presbytery in matters pertaining to representation and inclusiveness and reports findings annually. (see G-3.0103)
3. Make recommendations to Presbytery for corrective action which may be necessary to enhance inclusiveness and fair representation.
4. Consult with the Nominating Committee of Presbytery concerning inclusiveness and representation. A member of R&R will attend meetings of the Nominations Committee.
5. Encourage listening and mutual sharing through the annual required review of Session minutes. Communicate information of concern and interest to the Committee on Ministry. (see G-3.0108)
6. To annually review and evaluate Session Minutes. (see G-30108a)
7. To provide ongoing training regarding Minutes and Record Keeping for Sessions and Clerks of Session.
8. Report to Presbytery directly.

G. Finance and Stewardship Committee

Composition: 9 persons elected by Foothills Presbytery. (The Committee will be chosen by expertise in Finance and Stewardship. At least one member will be selected from each of the three Regional Gatherings of Presbytery.)

The Finance and Stewardship Committee provides financial planning and fiscal oversight for the Presbytery. It promotes stewardship in the congregations of the Presbytery and interprets the budgets of Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly.

Responsibilities:

1. Receive budget information and requests from the committees and commissions of Presbytery.
2. Oversee budget process; form an annual budget to submit to Council for consideration, interpretation, and communication to Presbytery.
3. Oversee the finances and report regularly to Presbytery.
4. Oversee the investments of Presbytery.
5. Ensure that an annual independent audit is performed and reported to the team and the Presbytery.
6. Encourage stewardship in the congregations of the Presbytery through training and education. Develop guidelines for the three Regional Gatherings to foster responsible Stewardship and Financial Principles (Best Practices) which will be implemented within the Regional Gatherings.
7. Encourage sessions to make budgeted benevolent allocations for the work of Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly causes.
8. Recommend approval and promotion of special offerings as authorized by the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly.
9. Recommend scheduling and approval of capital funds campaigns to the Presbytery.

H. Personnel Committee

Composition: 6 persons elected by Foothills Presbytery: three Ruling Elders and three teaching Elders. (At least one person should be nominated from each of the three Regional Gatherings of Presbytery.)

Responsibilities:

1. Define the process and review the annual evaluations of Presbytery staff.
2. Conduct the reviews of the Presbytery Leader/ Stated Clerk
3. Make recommendations for action to the Council concerning compensation of Presbytery staff.
4. Enforce the policies in the Presbytery's Personnel Manual
5. Annually prepare and propose a budget for the Personnel related expenses
6. Administer the Personnel Committee budget
7. Record minutes of all meetings and maintain accurate record of the work of the Personnel Committee, which shall be filed in the Presbytery office.

I. Nominations

Composition: 9 persons elected by Foothills Presbytery: six Ruling Elders and three Teaching Elders. (At least one person should be nominated from each of the three Regional Gatherings of Presbytery.) A member of the Representation and Review Committee will be an ex-officio member and attend all meetings.

The Nominating Committee nominates persons to fill all vacancies on continuing committees, councils, boards, and other bodies that require election by the presbytery. (G-3.0111)

Responsibilities:

1. Paying attention to:
 - a) The nomination of equal numbers of women and men,
 - b) Implementation of the *Book of Order's* principles of inclusiveness in G-3.0103 (in consultation with presbytery's Committee on Representation and Review),
 - c) Consultation with chairpersons of teams and committees concerning committee members who might be inactive and/or suggestions for new persons who might serve, this committee will nominate persons to serve in the following capacities:
 - As officers of presbytery, including the moderator of the Coordinating Council
 - Members for all committees and their chairpersons
 - Commissioners to the General Assembly, following the procedures adopted by presbytery and outlined in the Presbytery Manual, Appendix V.2.6.
 - Commissioners to Synod
 - Members of boards of institutions supported by the presbytery, synod, and General Assembly.
2. This committee will nominate persons for General Assembly committees and agencies as required.

II. PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION

Composition: 8 persons elected by Foothills Presbytery as required in D-5.0000 of the Rules of Discipline of the *Constitution* of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The Permanent Judicial Commission addresses all matters referred to it which are related to judicial process as required in the Rules of Discipline of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA). It reports directly to the Presbytery.

Responsibilities:

1. Hear remedial cases and appeals which are under its jurisdiction. (See D-6.000-D-8.000)
2. Hear disciplinary cases which are under its jurisdiction. (See D-9.000-D.13.000)
3. Act on requests for reference which are under its jurisdiction. (See D-4.000)
4. Act on any other matters related to judicial process as required by the *Constitution* of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

III. DIACONAL MISSION

In its Diaconal Mission the committees and regional diaconal groups will seek to encourage, promote and sustain effective and faithful shared works of compassion, learning and care in and between congregations and between the Church and the world.

A. Committee on Shared Ministry (CSM)

Composition: CSM shall be composed of 22-24 Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders and Christian Educators in approximately equal number, bearing in mind the principles of unity in diversity in F-1.0403.

Mission: To equip, connect, and nurture the churches of Foothills Presbytery.

Core Values: We will celebrate an adaptive environment where grace abounds while striving to strengthen our connectional church and share mission in a spirit of experimentation.

How: We will explore our mission by offering opportunities for faith formation, gatherings, fellowship, service, encouragement, resources, and support.

This may include organizing around such ministries as:

- Leadership Development
- Mission Outreach
- Pastoral Support and Peer Groups
- Technology and Communication
- Hospitality
- Curriculum and Resources
- Outdoor Ministry
- Presbytery Youth Council
- Campus Ministry
- Safe Place
- Presbyterian Women
- Regional Connectors

The following support and peer groups report to the Committee on Shared Ministry:

- The Youth Leaders Roundtable
- The Children's Ministry Roundtable
- Regional Minister Gatherings
- Women Clergy Gatherings

B. Racial Ethnic Cabinet

Composition: Two representatives from each racial ethnic congregation; Any racial ethnic teaching elders, commissioned ruling elders and educators presently serving within the Presbytery. Approximately 21 persons.

The Racial Ethnic Cabinet serves as an advocate and interpreter for racial ethnic opportunities and concerns to the Presbytery.

Responsibilities:

1. Advocate for the mission and witness of racial ethnic churches within the Presbytery.
2. Support the development of a broad base of potential lay leadership for Presbytery from within racial ethnic congregations.

3. Consult with the Committee on Representation and Nominating Committee concerning representation within Presbytery structures and leadership.
4. Provide an opportunity for networking and fellowship among racial ethnic congregations.
5. Advocate for financial support of ministries within the racial ethnic community and churches.
6. Address and offer effective witness regarding race relations, peacemaking, human suffering and other pressing issues within society that affect the racial ethnic community.

APPENDIX I - DEFINITION OF TERMS

The designations, committee and commissions, are employed in conformity with the definitions given in the Book of Order.

Standing Committee:

A Standing Committee is one appointed by the Moderator of the Presbytery who shall name its Chair. Its members shall serve during one stated meeting unless otherwise directed.

Ad Hoc Committee:

Presbytery may elect or may direct the Moderator to appoint an Ad Hoc Committee to examine any question. This Ad Interim Committee shall make its report and recommendations at the following stated meeting, or at a designated meeting of Presbytery. It shall be discharged when the report is received and acted upon by Presbytery, unless that body orders otherwise. The convener of the committee shall be appointed by the Moderator, and the committee shall organize itself.

Ex-Officio Member:

An ex-officio member of any committee shall be a person who holds membership in it by virtue of his or her office. Ex-officio members have full privileges in the committee, except that of voting.

Task Force:

A task force is not a part of the permanent structure of Presbytery, but is a group enlisted to serve for a definite period of time and for the purpose of making some special study or of rendering some specific service, or of both. When the particular assignment given a task force is completed, the group shall be dissolved with appreciation expressed.

If the duties and responsibilities of a task force extend over more than the twelve months, there shall be a careful review of its work.

By-Laws of Foothills Presbytery

Foothills Presbytery, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), is a Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), governed by the Book of Order of said Church and having the authority and the duties and responsibilities of such as the Book of Order shall from time to time vest in and impose upon it.

The membership of the Presbytery and representation at its meetings, the holding of meetings and the giving of notices thereof, the determination of a quorum, the keeping and transmittal of minutes, and the designation and selection of essential officers are prescribed by the Book of Order. Having authority under the Book of Order, as a governing body of the Church to "establish rules for" its government "agreeable to the doctrines related thereto in the Scriptures," Foothills Presbytery adopts the following by-laws:

1. In the event of inconsistency between these by-laws and the Book of Order, the Book of Order shall prevail.

2. This Presbytery shall be chartered in perpetuity as an eleemosynary corporation under the Laws of South Carolina. It shall adopt a seal, to be kept by its Stated Clerk and impressed as required.
2. The property of the Presbytery, both real and personal, shall be owned and held by it in its corporate name.
3. The real property of the Presbytery and the permanent special funds entrusted to it for the furtherance of its purposes shall, subject to directions of Presbytery at its lawfully convened meetings, be managed by the Foothills Presbytery Council, made up of 17 voting members. (See description of Council in this document for listing of members.)
4. Any vacancies among the elected members shall be filled for the unexpired term by the Presbytery at its next stated meeting.
5. The Council may, without meeting, take any action within its authority when agreed to by all its members in writing.
6. Acting solely under the directions of Presbytery given at a stated meeting or at a special meeting called for the purpose, the Council shall be responsible for the buying, selling and mortgaging of all real property of the Presbytery and the acquiring and conveying to title to such property and, after acquisition, the holding and defending of the title to the same.

The Council, through the Finance and Stewardship Committee, unless otherwise directed by Presbytery, shall see to the retention, investment, and reinvestment of all permanent special funds of Presbytery and shall pay out the income there from and the principal of such funds as Presbytery shall direct. The Council, through the Finance and Stewardship Committee, shall, by its resolutions, establish and may terminate such bank accounts, savings accounts, and investment accounts as it determines to be reasonably required for such purposes and may rent deposit boxes or similar facilities for the protection of its documents and shall designate the person or persons to deposit to and to draw upon said accounts and to have access to said deposit boxes.

7. The seal as impressed at the foot of the by-laws shall be the seal of Foothills Presbytery.
8. These by-laws may be amended at any stated meeting of Presbytery if notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given with notice of the stated meeting. Such notice shall be given upon action of Presbytery's Council.

**APPENDIX II – SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY
(No Changes – Not included in this document)**

APPENDIX III – CHILD YOUTH AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY

POLICY APPLICATION STATEMENT ³

It is the policy of Foothills Presbytery that all church members, church officers, nonmember employees and/or contractors, and volunteers of congregations, councils, and entities of the church are to maintain the strongest sense of integrity, safety, nurturing, and care involving all interactions with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. This policy applies to all activities sponsored by Foothills Presbytery that involve children, youth or vulnerable adults. Individual churches within Foothills Presbytery are expected to create and implement their own policies that are consistent with the Foothills Presbytery Protection Policy for Children, Youth, or Vulnerable Adults.

POLICY RATIONALE

The implementation and documentation of a Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy strives to reduce the risk of abuse and neglect for the following reasons:

- Children, youth, and vulnerable adults are a gift from God and the Church has a divine mandate to provide for their safety and nurturing. The Church is called to be a place that reflects the open arms of Jesus. In Matthew 19:14, Jesus says, “Let the little children come to me.” The Church is to be, at all levels of council and in all entities, a place of safety and nurture reflective of the arms of Christ.
- Children and youth are not only persons of care and service in the church, but they are also co-recipients of the graces and love of God. Jesus exemplified this in the Gospel of Mark 10:15–16 when he urged his followers to receive the kingdom of God as a little child. And he specifically takes up the children into his arms and blesses them. So also the Church, as the body of Christ, is to be the presence of Christ’s love, in the same way taking up all children and youth into its arms and blessing them; providing for them a safe, thriving, and nurturing environment in which to grow in every way.
- The *Book of Order* states, “The congregation as a whole, on behalf of the Church universal, assumes responsibility for nurturing the baptized person in the Christian life,” and Presbyterians believe this baptismal commitment to be a serious one, understanding it to apply to all in the church’s care, including children, youth, and vulnerable adults (*Book of Order* W-2.3013).

1. A Vision for Children and the Church

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of

³ Adapted from the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) CHILD/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY AND ITS PROCEDURES approved GA, 2016.

God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. Mark 10:14-16

Because we affirm that all children are a gift of God, created by God and created good;
all children are a gift to the whole of the human community;
all children have a real faith, and gifts for ministry;
all children have the right to be children;
and all children are not just tomorrow, they are today.

Because we believe that all children depend upon adults for safety and security in a world that does not always value children;
all children are affected first and most deeply by those things that work against health and wholeness:
where there is disease, children sicken and die;
where there is homelessness, children sleep on the streets and in other dangerous places;
where there is war, children are frightened and without a safe place;
where the air and water are polluted, children feel the effect in their bodies and in their futures;
where there is shame, children's spirits are wounded.

Therefore we hope for a world where all children can find a safe place;
where all ages, races, genders, creeds, and abilities are recognized, valued, and celebrated;
where all adults hear the voices of children and speak with as well as for them;
where all children have "first call" on the world's resources and first place in the minds and hearts of the world's adults.

Because Jesus welcomed children and encouraged us to welcome them in his name; Jesus lifted up a child as an example of what the realm of God is like;
Therefore we hope for a church where we take seriously our baptismal vow to nurture all children committed to our care;
where we bring good news to all those places where children are in need;
where adults and children alike share in ministry.

We covenant to act so that this vision may be made real for all children, now and in times to come.

Adopted by the 205th General Assembly, 1993

For the purpose of the Foothills Presbytery Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adults Policy, the word Children in this statement refers to ALL of God's Children.

2. Definitions- Capitalized terms not defined below shall be as defined in the PCUSA Book of Order.

Abuse:

- **Sexual Abuse**

- **Child and Youth:** Sexual contact or interactions with a child or youth, including physical contact (such as fondling, genital/oral stimulation, sexual intercourse) and non-physical contact (such as exhibitionism, child prostitution, pornography, sexting, and voyeurism).
- **Vulnerable Adult:** Unwanted, unwelcomed, and solicited sexual contact or interactions with a vulnerable adult, including physical contact (such as fondling, genital/oral stimulation, sexual intercourse) and non-physical contact (such as exhibitionism, prostitution, pornography, sexting and voyeurism).

Sexual abuse between a child, youth, or vulnerable adult is always considered forced whether or not by consent.

- **Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcomed and unsolicited sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, obscene or suggestive language or behavior, gender discriminating behavior, and other unwelcomed verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- **Sexual misconduct** includes, but is not limited to the following:
 1. Sexual abuse as defined above.
 2. Sexual harassment as defined above.
 3. Rape or sexual contact by force, threat or intimidation.
- **Emotional Abuse** is intentional, non-physical conduct, which results in impaired physiological growth and development including bullying, belittling, rejection, constant unequal treatment, verbal assaults, excessive and unreasonable demands on child's performance, and isolation from normal social activities.
- **Spiritual Abuse** is that which occurs when a teacher, leader, or volunteer uses his or her position or religious influence to control, manipulate or dominate another person regardless of the ramification to other's life and well-being.
- **Physical Abuse** is that which results in physical injury, including but not limited to bruises, burns, cuts, welts, fractures and internal injuries and is caused by intentional or grossly negligent conduct.
- **Neglect** is that which occurs when persons responsible for the well-being of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult fail to take reasonable steps to adequately provide

for the child. This may include failure to keep children clean, lack of appropriate supervision, or withholding food, clothing, shelter, and medical care.

Accused: A person who is alleged to have violated this policy.

Accuser: A person who makes a report or provides information indicating that someone may have violated this policy.

Advocate: A person who is permitted to accompany the Accused or Accuser to meetings in order to give moral support and advice.

Allegation: A claim or assertion that someone has done something illegal or wrong.

Alleged Victim: The person who is the subject of alleged misconduct or abuse as defined in this policy.

Book of Order: Part II of the PC(USA) Constitution. It contains the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, Form of Government (operating rules), Directory of Worship (sacerdotal matters), and Rules of Discipline (judiciary procedures) of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Certified Authority: The designated person(s) of Foothills Presbytery, who submits, reviews, evaluates, and maintains background checks and other documents associated with Foothills Presbytery's Protection Policy for Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults.

Certified Christian Educator: Certified Christian educators are persons certified and called to service in the ministry of education in congregations or councils.

Child or Youth: Persons under the age of eighteen years old.

Commissioned Ruling Elder: A Ruling Elder commissioned to limited pastoral service as assigned by the presbytery.

Deacon: Persons elected by a congregation for the ministry of "compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress."

Employee/Staff Member: Any person who is employed and/or compensated by the Presbytery.

Pastoral Care Givers: A Pastoral Counselor fits the category of persons defined in the *Book of Order* as "a person duly appointed by a governing body." The *Book of Order* further specifies that such persons "shall not testify before a ... Permanent Judicial Commission..." See Book of Order, D-14.0203 (new version of Rules of Discipline.)

Required Reporter: A person who has a legal obligation to report information regarding harm, or risk of harm, involving abuse or misconduct involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults under applicable state law or the PC(USA) Order.

- Refer to APPENDIX C: South Carolina Definition of Abuse Law & Abuse Reporting Law.
- PC(USA) book of Order reference G-4.0302: **Mandatory Reporting** Any member of this

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

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

Ruling Elder: Persons elected by a congregation who have wisdom, maturity of faith, demonstrated skills in leadership and a compassionate spirit. Ruling elders, together with Ministers of Word and Sacraments, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships.

Sexting: The act of transmitting sexually explicit messages through cell phone text messaging, emails, cyber chat, social media, websites, or other means of electronic communication.

Sexual Ethics Team: The six-member team nominated by the Nominating Committee of Foothills Presbytery and elected by the entire Presbytery. A full description of this team, its makeup and function is found in Foothills Presbytery's Manual of Operations.

Stated Clerk/Associate Stated Clerk: Chief ecclesiastical officers of Foothills Presbytery. They are to further the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world through vision, interpretation, and inspiration. The position exists to carry out the responsibilities and functions outlined in the *Book of Order*. The work of the Stated Clerks must be undertaken as a conscious act of discipleship to Jesus Christ. It always bears elements of a pastoral style, both with individuals to whom the Stated Clerk(s) relates, and as a leader for Foothills Presbytery.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament: An ordained minister or pastor in the PC(USA) is known as a Ministers of Word and Sacrament, or a teaching elder. They may serve in a variety of ministries, as authorized by the presbytery: preachers, teacher, worship leader, pastor and presbyters.

Volunteer: Persons working directly with children, youth and vulnerable adults at any Foothills Presbytery sponsored or co-sponsored events.

Vulnerable Adult: Is a person who may be unable to take care of him/herself, or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm, or exploitation due to disability, age or illness.

3. POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND VULNERABLE ADULTS ENGAGED IN OUR MINISTRIES

A. Policy

Foothills Presbytery adopts the following covenant to provide a safe place for our children, youth or vulnerable adults to experience the kingdom of God.

Foothills Presbytery sponsored events, activities, and programs are subject to the following:

1. Employees are required to have a background check and be approved according to this policy in order to work with children, youth and vulnerable adults.
 - Sign background check consent form (Appendix A).
 - Background Check consists of: Credit report, SSN verification, national criminal search, state criminal bureau search, sexual offender search and motor vehicle record search.
2. Foothills Presbytery strives to provide two unrelated adults, older than eighteen years of age, to supervise or lead activities involving children, youth or vulnerable adults. Supervising adults must have a completed and approved background check.
 - Complete Foothills Presbytery Volunteer Release Form (Appendix A)
 - Sign background check consent form
 - Background check consists of: SSN verification, national criminal search, state criminal bureau search, sexual offender registry search and in the case of those who will be transporting, a motor vehicle record search.
 - In the case of individuals who do not possess a social security card, an international search may be done.
3. All volunteers and supervising adults shall have been an official or affiliate member with a congregation within the Foothills Presbytery for at least six months prior to contact with children, youth and vulnerable adults. For church-employed staff workers who have gone through the church pre-hiring process and whose background screening has been approved, the six-month rule is waived.
4. Foothills Presbytery strives to have supervising adults be at least five (5) years older than those being supervised.
5. All persons transporting children, youth or vulnerable adults must be at least 25 years of age, have a current valid driver's license, up-to-date auto liability insurance coverage, and have an acceptable driving record as confirmed by Motor Vehicle Record search (MVR). An MVR for persons transporting children, youth and vulnerable adults will be done annually.
6. Drivers should not engage in any cell phone or digital diversion while transporting children, youth and vulnerable adults. Driver must pull over to a safe parking area to make that communication.
7. A Foothills Presbytery church may adopt a policy that is more stringent than this

Foothills Presbytery policy so long as it is consistent with applicable laws and regulations. If a Foothills Presbytery church that is hosting a Foothills Presbytery activity has a policy that is more stringent than this policy the more stringent policy will apply.

8. A copy of this policy is available to each congregation within the bounds of Foothills Presbytery by contacting Foothills Presbytery Office or website.
9. The Foothills Presbytery Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults is a part of the Operational Manual of the Presbytery and is shared as a regular part of presbytery, employee, committee and council orientation.

B. Standards of Behavior

Sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct by Presbytery employees and volunteers are prohibited.

Consuming or being under the influence of alcohol, or drugs (legal or illegal), juuling, or vaping, while leading or participating in a ministry program of Foothills Presbytery involving children, or youth is prohibited.

Foothills Presbytery maintains supervision responsibility when registration begins and during the event.

C. Screening

As described above, national background checks must be completed on employees and volunteers of the Foothills Presbytery before they supervise activities involving Children, Youth, or Vulnerable Adults. After the initial check, follow-up background checks should be completed at three year intervals. Employees and volunteers who serve in positions requiring such background checks complete the Foothills Presbytery Release Authorization in Appendix A. [Note: the release form is not just for volunteers.]

D. Training

The Committee on Ministry shall include Child, Youth and Vulnerable Adult policy training in conjunction with their scheduled Ethics, Boundaries Awareness and Sexual Misconduct Policy training.

E. Reporting Procedures

In order to maintain a safe environment for all children, youth and vulnerable adults, all persons serving Foothills Presbytery and its churches (both as employees and as volunteers) should be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation thought to be in violation of this policy by following

steps detailed in this section (Appendix C). **South Carolina State Law requires prompt reporting of suspected abuse.** Your efforts can help protect a child, youth or vulnerable adult with one simple phone call. Nothing in this policy is intended to require anyone to divulge religious, medical, or legally privileged communications.

Any employee or volunteer covered by this policy that witnesses or receives an allegation of any of this policy must follow these steps listed below to insure the security and protection of all persons involved:

1. Personally ensure the safety of children, youth or vulnerable adults. Do not abandon or leave the child/children, children, youth or vulnerable adult in order to report the incident.
2. FOLLOW the steps in Appendix C if the suspected abuse occurred in the State of South Carolina. In the event the suspected abuse occurred in another state, the law of that state will inform next steps.
3. Report the incident to the program or ministry supervisor. A copy of the Incident Report (Appendix B) should be sent to the Foothills Presbytery Stated Clerk and/or Associate Stated Clerk.
4. Do not personally confront the accused violator of the policy.
5. Maintain the confidentiality of the accused, the accuser, and the victim.
6. Do not contact parents or legal guardians of those involved. This responsibility is handled by law enforcement or other social services authorities.
7. Do not investigate the accusation. Allow professional/law enforcement officials this responsibility.
8. Until an investigation is complete, the accused and accuser should not participate in Presbytery meetings or Presbytery-sponsored events. This policy does not prohibit attendance at regular worship services.

F. Right to Exclude from Service

Foothills Presbytery reserves the right to exclude from serving or terminate any volunteer or employee who has been found in violation of this policy or for whom potentially negative or questionable information has been discovered in background screenings, interviews or reference checks.

4. THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

- **See Foothills Presbytery Sexual Misconduct Policy**
 - o The Sexual Ethics Team (SET) and Committee on Shared Ministry (CSM) will work with the Presbytery as they create systems for churches to write and adopt policies and procedures for preventing and reporting child, youth, and vulnerable adult misconduct and abuse.

5. THE FOOTHILLS PRESBYTERY SEXUAL ETHICS TEAM (See Operations Manual for Definition)

6. AMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS TO THIS POLICY

This policy, in its entirety, is to be revised and applied under the primary supervision of Foothills Presbytery's Coordinating Council and Sexual Ethics Team (SET).

Every three (3) years, CSM and will review this policy and suggest any revisions which seem prudent or necessary to ensure the safety of children, youth and vulnerable adults.

Coordinating Council of Foothills Presbytery has the responsibility:

1. To receive and act upon recommendations for changes which are received from CSM (Foothills Presbytery's Protection Policy for children, youth and vulnerable adults sub-team) and SET.
2. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Ministry (COM) to be compliant with the current Sexual Misconduct Policy as it relates to any portion of this policy.
3. To review the Policy as a whole to ensure cohesion and the consistent use of this Policy across Foothills Presbytery.
4. To take any changes approved by the Coordinating Council of Foothills Presbytery to the whole Presbytery for action so the Policy may be amended by Presbytery:
 - a. After the adoption of the original Policy, this Policy may be revised at any Foothills Presbytery Stated Presbytery Meeting as long as:
 - i. Suggested revisions come from CSM and/or COM and have been discussed and voted on by those bodies.
 - ii. The suggested revisions passed on by those entities are made available to the entire Coordinating Council of Foothills Presbytery at least 3 days prior to the meeting when suggested revisions are to be considered, and the proposed revisions are approved by a majority of the Coordinating Council of Foothills Presbytery.
 - iii. The suggested revisions, thus approved by Coordinating Council of Foothills Presbytery, are listed on the Agenda of a Stated Meeting of Foothills Presbytery and the text of the revisions are made available to at least voting members of Foothills Presbytery
 - iv. After these requirements are met, revisions may be made by a majority vote of Foothills Presbytery at that Stated Meeting and will become official upon approval.
5. To make this policy available to all Moderators of Foothills Presbytery Committees, Ordered Ministry, Clerks of Sessions and professional church leaders/staff on an annual basis and to ensure that training and education is carried out as it seems appropriate and necessary.

7. Foothills

PRESBYTERY APPENDICES

- Appendix A:** Release Authorization
- Appendix B:** Incident Report
- Appendix C:** SC Definition of Abuse Law and Abuse Reporting Law
- Appendix D:** Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordered Ministries of the PCUSA

APPENDIX A: FOOTHILLS PRESBYTERY RELEASE AUTHORIZATION

Applicant Complete the Following

In connection with my service through Foothills Presbytery, I understand that a thorough background check will be required.

I acknowledge that a telephonic facsimile (FAX), photographic, or scanned copy shall be as valid as the original. This release is valid for most federal, state and county agencies.

I hereby authorize, without reservation, any law enforcement agency, institution, information service bureau, school, employer, reference or insurance company contacted during a background check, to furnish the information described in Section

1. The following information is required by law enforcement agencies and other entities for positive identification purposes when checking public records. It is confidential and will not be used for any other purposes. I hereby release the employer and agents and all persons, agencies and entities providing information or reports about me from any and all liability arising out of the requests for or release of any of the above mentioned information or reports.

Please print your full name: _____ Date: _____

Please sign your full name: _____

APPENDIX B: FOOTHILLS PRESBYTERY INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Date and time of incident: _____

Name of Reporter: _____

Primary phone #: _____ Work # _____

Name(s) of persons involved incident:

_____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

_____ Age: _____

Location of Incident (including City, State and Country): _____

Quote the first words verbatim of the child, youth or vulnerable adult making the accusation:

Describe the behavior and appearance of the person making the accusation: _____

Describe the behavior and appearance of anyone else making the accusation or involved in the incident: _____

Describe what exactly happened as reported to you: _____

Were there any witness? Yes: _____ No: _____

1st Name: _____ Age: _____

Signature _____ Date _____

2nd Name: _____ Age: _____

Signature _____ Date _____

3rd Name: _____ Age: _____

Signature _____ Date _____

4th Name: _____ Age: _____

Signature

Date

What actions did you take? _____

Has the incident been resolved? How so? _____

Person(s) this report was given to:

1st Name: _____ Date: _____

2nd Name: _____ Date: _____

3rd Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature of person submitting report: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C: South Carolina Definition of Abuse Law & Abuse Reporting Law

SECTION 63-7-20: Definitions:

(6) "Child abuse or neglect" or "harm" occurs when the parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's welfare:

- a. inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon the child physical or mental injury or engages in acts or omissions which present a substantial risk of physical or mental injury to the child, including injuries sustained as a result of excessive corporal punishment, but excluding corporal punishment or physical discipline which:

- i. is administered by a parent or person in loco parentis;
 - ii. is perpetrated for the sole purpose of restraining or correcting the child;
 - iii. is reasonable in manner and moderate in degree;
 - iv. has not brought about permanent or lasting damage to the child; and
 - v. is not reckless or grossly negligent behavior by the parents.
- b. commits or allows to be committed against the child a sexual offense as defined by the laws of this State or engages in acts or omissions that present a substantial risk that a sexual offense as defined in the laws of this State would be committed against the child;
- c. fails to supply the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, or education as required under Article 1 of Chapter 65 of Title 59, supervision appropriate to the child's age and development, or health care though financially able to do so or offered financial or other reasonable means to do so and the failure to do so has caused or presents a substantial risk of causing physical or mental injury. However, a child's absences from school may not be considered abuse or neglect unless the school has made efforts to bring about the child's attendance, and those efforts were unsuccessful because of the parents' refusal to cooperate. For the purpose of this chapter "adequate health care" includes any medical or nonmedical remedial health care permitted or authorized under state law;
- d. abandons the child;
- e. encourages, condones, or approves the commission of delinquent acts by the child, including but not limited to, sexual trafficking or exploitation and the commission of the acts are shown to be the result of the encouragement, condemnation, or approval;
- f. has committed abuse or neglect as described in subsections (a) through (e) such that a child who subsequently becomes part of the person's household is at substantial risk of one of those forms of abuse or neglect.⁴

SECTION 63-7-310: Persons required to report.

- A. A physician, nurse, dentist, optometrist, medical examiner, or coroner, or an employee of a county medical examiner's or coroner's office, or any other medical, emergency medical services, mental health, or allied health professional, member of the clergy including a Christian Science Practitioner or religious healer, school teacher, counselor, principal, assistant principal, school attendance officer, social or public assistance worker, substance abuse treatment staff, or childcare worker in a childcare center or foster care facility, police or law enforcement officer, juvenile justice worker, undertaker, funeral home director or employee of a funeral home, persons responsible for processing films,

⁴ To see complete section of SECTION 63-7-20 see: www.scstatehouse.gov Title 53 SC Children's Code

computer technician, judge, or a volunteer non-attorney guardian ad litem serving on behalf of the SC Guardian Ad Litem program, must report in accordance with this section when in the person's professional capacity the person has received information which gives the person reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected as defined in Section 63-7-20.

- B. If a person required to report pursuant to subsection (A) has received information in the person's professional capacity which gives the person reason to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by acts or omissions that would be child abuse or neglect if committed by a parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, but the reporter believes that the act or omission was committed by a person other than the parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, the reporter must make a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- C. Except as provided in subsection (A), any person, including but not limited to, a volunteer non-attorney guardian ad litem serving on behalf of the SC Guardian Ad Litem program, who has reason to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse and neglect may report and is encouraged to report in accordance with this section.
- D. Reports of child abuse or neglect may be made orally by telephone or otherwise to the county department of social services or to a law enforcement agency in the county where the child resides or is found.

APPENDIX D:



COSTANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

**Approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998)
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

Life Together in a Community of Faith:
Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Professional Code of Ethics

*Approved by the 210th General Assembly (1998) Presbyterian
Church (U.S.A.)*

Developed by

The Special Committee on a Professional Code of Ethics Published by
The Office of the General Assembly PC(USA)

Edited by

The Committee on Ministry of Foothills Presbytery
The Committee on Preparation for Ministry of Foothills Presbytery 9-4-2013
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**TOGETHER IN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH: STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR
ORDAINED OFFICERS IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

As an ordained officer* in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our Confessions, I affirm the vows made

at my ordination, confirm that Jesus Christ is the pattern for my life and ministry and, relying on God's grace, commit myself to the following standards of ethical conduct:

b) ONE

I will conduct my life in a manner that is faithful to the gospel and consistent with my public ministry. Therefore I will:

- a. Practice the disciplines of study, prayer, reflection, worship, stewardship, and service;
- b. Be honest and truthful in my relationships with others;
- c. Be faithful, keeping the covenants I make and honoring marriage vows;
- d. Treat all persons with equal respect and concern as beloved children of God;
- e. Maintain a healthy balance among the responsibilities of my office of ministry, my commitments to family and other primary relationships, and my need for spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual renewal;
- f. Refrain from abusive, addictive, or exploitative behavior and seek help to overcome such behavior if it occurs;
- g. Refrain from gossip and abusive speech; and
- h. Maintain an attitude of repentance, humility, and forgiveness, responsive to God's reconciling will.

c) TWO

I will conduct my ministry so that nothing need be hidden from a council or colleagues in ministry. Therefore I will:

- a. Preach, teach, and bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ with courage, speaking the truth in love;
- b. Honor the sacred trust of relationships within the covenant community and observe appropriate boundaries;
- c. Be judicious in the exercise of the power and privileges of my office and positions of responsibility I hold;
- d. Avoid conflicts of interest that might compromise the effectiveness of my ministry;
- e. Refrain from exploiting relationships within the community of faith for personal gain or gratification, including sexual harassment and misconduct as defined by appropriate;
- f. Recognize the limits of my own gifts and training, and refer persons and tasks as appropriate.
- g. Claim only those qualifications actually attained, give appropriate credit for all sources used in sermons, papers, music, and presentations, and observe copyrights;
- h. Refrain from incurring indebtedness that might compromise my ministry;
- i. Be a faithful steward of and fully account for funds and property entrusted to me;
- j. Observe limits set by the appropriate council for honoraria, personal business endeavors, and gifts or loans from persons other than family;
- k. Accept the discipline of the church and the appropriate guidance of those to whom I am accountable for my ministry;

- l. Participate in continuing education and seek the counsel of mentors and professional advisors;
- m. Deal honorably with the record of my predecessor and upon leaving a ministry or office speak and act in ways that support the ministry of my successor;
- n. **Participate in the life of a ministry setting I left or from which I have retired only as directed by presbytery;
- o. **Provide pastoral services for a congregation I previously served only as directed by the presbytery and provide pastoral services to members of other congregations only with the consent of their pastors; and
- p. **Consult with the Committee on Ministry in the presbytery of my residence regarding my involvement in any ministry setting during my retirement.

d) THREE

I will participate as a partner with others in the ministry and mission of the Church universal. Therefore I will:

- a. Participate in the mission and governance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and work for the unity of the holy catholic church;
- b. Show respect and provide encouragement for colleagues in ministry;
- c. Recruit church members responsibly, respect existing congregational relationships, and refrain from exploiting persons in vulnerable situations; and
- d. Cooperate with those working in the world for justice, compassion, and peace, including partners in ministry of other faith traditions.

*Includes all Ordered Ministry personnel

**These standards apply only to pastors. They also apply to commissioned ruling elders when they are performing pastoral functions.

**APPENDIX IV - PERSONNEL MANUEL
(TO BE ADDED WHEN COMPLETED)**

APPENDIX V - Procedure for Nominating Commissioners to General Assembly

At the meeting at which nominees for Commissioners to the General Assembly are determined, the Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of nominees.

1. In drawing up its slate of Commissioners to the General Assembly, the names of ministers shall be submitted as follows:
 - a) The Committee shall nominate two ministers as principals and two ministers as alternates to General Assembly. Among the criteria to be taken into account are: time of service in this and other presbyteries; fair representation of male, female and racial members; effective work on a division or committee of Presbytery, Synod or General Assembly. The Committee may also consider special reasons such as the Presbytery's desire to nominate a member as Moderator of the General Assembly, its wish to have an overture from the Presbytery duly supported, its belief that a member is especially qualified to contribute to the debate on issues before the General Assembly, or its knowledge of special circumstances in a member's case which makes it particularly appropriate that she or he be a Commissioner.
 - b) Ordinarily the ministers elected as alternates shall become the principal commissioners at the next General Assembly.
2. In drawing up its slate of Commissioners to the General Assembly, the names of elders shall be submitted as follows:
 - a. The committee shall choose elder nominees from the churches of Presbytery, taking into consideration such criteria as the varieties in the size of the congregation, the involvement of the church in the life and work of Presbytery, and the geographical distribution of churches within Presbytery.
 - b. The committee shall ask the Sessions of two churches to recommend one of their elders to the committee, as well as an alternate, including biographical data and record of church service as part of the recommendation.
 - c. In order to ensure that both men and women are represented in the nominating process, the committee shall be free to make suggestions to the sessions regarding possible candidates.
 - d. Presbytery shall elect two principals and two alternates. Ordinarily the alternates shall become the principal commissioners in the following General Assembly. The alternates will attend General

Assembly as observers at Presbytery expense.

- e. Those sessions failing to make a recommendation when given the opportunity shall be given another opportunity the following year. A session not presenting a nominee for two consecutive years shall be placed at the bottom of the list for consideration.
3. The Nominating Committee shall not place the name of any person in nomination until it has secured the consent of that person.
4. Notwithstanding the names placed in nomination by this committee, nominations from the floor of Presbytery at the time of any election shall always be in order, provided that the consent of the person nominated has first been secured and a brief biographical sketch prepared for distribution to members of Presbytery.
5. In case any minister or elder elected as a Commissioner finds it necessary to be excused from attendance at the General Assembly, the Moderator shall be empowered to substitute one of the alternate ministers or elders.
6. The Moderator shall designate one of the elected as Chair of the Commissioners. Following the General Assembly, the Commissioners, under the guidance of the Chair, shall prepare a brief report to the Presbytery which shall summarize the work of the Assembly. All commissioners shall report to the Stated Clerk, in writing, certifying their attendance at the General Assembly.