

PROPOSED STANDING RULES
South Texas Presbytery
January 2022

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PREFACE TO THE STANDING RULES

The vision of the South Texas Presbytery is to glorify God by engaging, exhorting, and shepherding teaching elders, ruling elders, congregations, and missions, proclaiming Christ crucified and engaging in the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in South Texas.

South Texas Presbytery functions as:

Fellowship

God has called the South Texas Presbytery to care for one another through worship, prayer, edification, fellowship, and accountability. We are passionate about God-centered worship as a priority in our churches and our Presbytery. We proactively minister to one another and to the churches under our care. We encourage and invest in the ministries of the men, women, youth and children in the Church.

Court

God has called the South Texas Presbytery to uphold His truth and to maintain high expectations for those who lead His church. We are dedicated to exhibit mutual trust, encouragement, and accountability of our committees, our commissions and ourselves. We exhort our elders to be active participants in Presbytery and to be prepared for our meetings.

Mission

God has called the South Texas Presbytery to advance the Gospel of His kingdom to all people through church planting, church revitalization, campus ministry, and missions of mercy. We are committed to forming and nurturing healthy, growing, and churches and ministries capable of reproducing other churches, ministries, and disciples. We work with others of like faith and ministry, without compromising the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in order to communicate this Gospel and extend God's Kingdom.

This preface indicates the intent of the framers of these Standing Rules and does not have the force of rule or law.

AUTHORITY

Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America

South Texas Presbytery operates as a court under the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, which is subject to and subordinate to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the inerrant Word Of God, consists of its doctrinal standards set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith, together with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and the *Book of Church*

Order, comprising the Form of Government, the Rules of Discipline and the Directory for Worship; all as adopted by the Church (from Preface. III – The Constitution Defined).

NAME AND CREATION

The name of this presbytery shall be the South Texas Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America. The South Texas Presbytery was created by Overture No. 15 of the 12th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America meeting in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, June 118-22, 1984. (answered in the affirmative 12-67, III, 17, p. 151). South Texas Presbytery was incorporated as a non-profit corporation in Texas on July 7, 1994 (from legal documents).

BOUNDARIES

South Texas Presbytery consists of the geographical area south of and including or bounded by the Gulf of Mexico, the Rio Grande River, and the following counties in Texas: Val Verde, Sutton, Kimble, Mason, Llano, Burnet, Williamson, Milam, Robertson, Brazos, Grimes, Washington, Fayette, Lavaca, Jackson, and Calhoun. The geographical boundaries including the major metropolitan areas of Austin and San Antonio, and cities of Bryan/College Station, Corpus Christi, Laredo, Brownsville, McAllen, Edinburg, and Mission (from GA Overture). .

BUSINESS OF THE PRESBYTERY

The normal business of the South Texas Presbytery is carried out according to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of America.

Book of Church Order

All the business of Presbytery shall be conducted according to the *Book of Church Order*.

Roberts Rules of Order

The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern the Presbytery meetings in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with Scripture or the *Book of Church Order*.

Suspension of Rules

These Standing Rules or any portion thereof, may be suspended by a three-fourths vote of the members present at any meeting of Presbytery, which affirmative

vote shall be no less than 50% of the enrollment at that meeting. Such suspension shall be effective only for that meeting of Presbytery.

Amendment of Rules

These Standing Rules may be amended at any Stated Meeting of Presbytery by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present. The amendment must have been proposed in writing at the previous Stated Meeting and reported in the docket of the meeting where the vote is scheduled to take place.

STRUCTURE

Membership

The Presbytery consists of all the teaching elders and churches that have been accepted by the Presbytery within its bounds. When the Presbytery meets as a court it shall comprise all teaching elders and ruling elders as elected by their Session.

Representation

Each congregation is entitled to two (2) ruling elder representatives for the first 350 communing members or fraction thereof, and one additional ruling elder for each additional 500 communing or fraction thereof.

Meetings

The Presbytery shall meet at least twice a year on its own adjournment (from *BCO* 13-12). Meetings are defined as in person, via conference call, or via electronic mail.

Quorum

The quorum to conduct business at any meeting of Presbytery shall be five (5) Ruling Elder Commissioners from at least three (3) different churches, and five (5) Teaching Elders.

Leadership

The officers of the Presbytery shall be a Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, Recording Clerk, Treasurer, and Trustees.

Committees

The presbytery shall carry out its work through the following permanent committees:

- Administrative Committee
- Ministerial Relations Committee
- Mission to North America Committee
- Mission to the World Committee

- Nominations Committee
- Review of Sessional Records Committee
- Campus Ministries Committee
- Candidates and Credentials Committee

RECORDS

The records of the South Texas Presbytery preserve the actions of previous courts and provide guidance to future court decisions. Records of the presbytery should be open to members and access given to non-members according to the following.

Permanent

The Presbytery shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings and shall send it up to the General Assembly annually for review. It shall report to the General Assembly every year, all the important changes which may have taken place, such as licensures, ordinations, the receiving or dismissing of members, the removal of members by death, the union and the division of churches, and the formation of new ones (from *BCO* 13-11).

Sessional Record Book

The Sessional Record Book shall contain a copy of the Standing Rules. Each member of Presbytery shall be given a copy annually and these Rules shall be included annually in the Presbytery minutes.

Presbytery Minutes

A minute book is a bound book with numbered pages that serves as a permanent record of the church and its session. Once the minutes have been approved by the presbytery, the minutes should be placed in an official Minute Book and signed by the moderator and the stated clerk. The Minute Book may be kept in electronic form, but a hardcopy must be maintained by the stated clerk. The Minute Book should be kept in a secure fireproof environment in a manner that can be transferred to succeeding officers of the presbytery.

Committee minutes

Committees shall maintain a faithful record of their actions, decisions, and practices. Committee minutes should be submitted to the stated clerk on a regular basis following committee meetings or actions.

Financial Records

The fiscal year of Presbytery shall be from January 1 through December 31 of each year.

Retention policy

The stated clerk will maintain an inventory list of the records of the presbytery. The records retention schedule will detail how long various categories of records should be maintained. Financial records must be kept as long as tax or state laws require. Administrative records such as the Minutes and a directory of the presbytery must be kept indefinitely. Routine correspondence, travel arrangements, etc. can be discarded as soon as their need has been met and any reports related to them have been made. Records deemed to have historical value should be referred to the Presbyterian Historical Society for advice. Inactive records should be stored in a dark, dry place with containers clearly marked as to contents. If possible, they should also be marked with the date on which they can be destroyed. Important records should be kept on quality paper or on microfilm. Permanent records should not be kept on magnetic media such as computer hard drives, disks, CDROMs, etc.

ORGANIZATION

The work of the presbytery shall ordinarily be carried out through its officers, committees, commissions, and actions.

Officers of the presbytery

Moderator

Terms of Office

The Moderator shall be elected by the Presbytery for a period of one year at the October meeting and will assume office at the conclusion of that meeting. Nominations for Moderator shall come from the floor of Presbytery. The office will alternate between a Teaching Elder and a Ruling Elder.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Serve as presider at all stated and called meetings of the presbytery
2. Prepare a docket of the business for each Presbytery meeting in coordination with the Stated Clerk
3. Arrange for the worship services in coordination with the host church
4. Convene each meeting of Presbytery and preside according to parliamentary procedure
5. Appoint the Resolution of Thanks Committee and Ad Hoc Committees created by Presbytery
6. Appoint conveners for Permanent Committees, Ad Hoc Committees and Commissions
7. Appoint other members of Presbytery to help him preside over the meeting (for example, a Parliamentarian, a Timekeeper, etc.)
8. Appoint commissions and ad hoc committees as directed by Presbytery
9. Serve as a member of the Administrative Committee

10. Participate in debate by relinquishing the chair to the Chairman of the Administrative Committee.

Vice- Moderator

Terms of Office

The retiring Moderator shall serve as Vice – Moderator. In his absence, the most recently elected Moderator shall serve.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Serve as moderator in the absence of the moderator
2. Serve as a member of the Administrative Committee

Stated Clerk

Terms of Office

The Stated Clerk shall be elected at the October meeting and will begin service at the January Meeting, serving for a period of three years, with the privilege of serving additional terms when so elected. Any Ruling or Teaching Elder shall be eligible to be elected. Nominations for Stated Clerk shall come from the floor of Presbytery. A Recording Clerk may be elected by Presbytery to assist the Stated Clerk when necessary and desired.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Record and preserve the minutes of all meetings.
2. In co-operation with the Moderator, prepare the docket of each meeting, and distribute at least 10 days prior to the meeting.
3. Administer the Presbytery's correspondence and records.
4. Have the minutes of the immediate past meeting of the Presbytery prepared and distributed to the membership with the docket for the next meeting of Presbytery.
5. Report to Presbytery all requests for excused absences.
6. Serve as a member of the Administrative Committee
7. Request data for and publish, at the October meeting, a Directory of Churches, Teaching Elders and Presbytery Committees, including:
 - a. Names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses of all churches (both particular and mission), Teaching Elders and Clerks of Session
 - b. Names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses of all Committee members and Trustees of Presbytery.

Recording Clerk

Terms of Office

The presbytery shall annually elect a recording clerk at its October stated meeting

to serve for the following year. The recording clerk shall record the minutes of the meeting under the stated clerk's direction and submit them in proper form to the stated clerk within fourteen days for printing.

Treasurer

Terms of Office

The Treasurer shall be elected for a term of three years at the October meeting and may be elected to additional three year terms. Nominations for Treasurer shall come from the floor of Presbytery. The Treasurer shall be a Teaching Elder in the Presbytery, or a Ruling Elder or Deacon in a church of the Presbytery.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Be the custodian of the funds of the Presbytery and shall receive, deposit, and disburse such funds as directed by the Presbytery.
2. Prepare, or have prepared, such reports of the financial condition of the Presbytery for each stated meeting
3. Comply with fiscal internal controls and operating procedures established by the Administrative Committee
4. Serve as a member of the Administrative Committee. However, if the Treasurer is a Deacon, he will be a non-voting member of this Committee.

Trustees

Terms of Office

Members of the Administrative Committee by right of their election as chairmen of substantive committees of the presbytery shall serve as trustees of the presbytery.

Duties and Responsibilities

Trustees are empowered to hold in trust for Presbytery such property of the Presbytery. The committee shall supervise, control, collect, and distribute whatever Presbytery shall entrust to them and formulate written reports as necessary for the temporal undergirding of the court.

Meetings

The normal business of the presbytery shall be carried out through stated and called meetings of the presbytery.

Stated meetings

Dates and times

Presbytery shall ordinarily meet in stated session on the last Friday night and Saturday morning of January, April, and October and the second Friday night and Saturday morning of August. The time and place shall be fixed by a previous meeting of Presbytery. The hours shall normally be 6:30 p.m. (Friday) and 8:00 a.m. (Saturday) but may be changed at the discretion of the Moderator or the Court.

Locations

The site and location including the host congregation shall be established by the Administrative Committee. Dates should be set at least three (3) years in advance so as to allow maximum planning and participation by members of the presbytery.

Absences

Teaching Elders of the presbytery who are not retired or on medical leave or sabbatical granted by their sessions are expected to be at all four (4) meetings of the presbytery each year. Teaching elders may request absences from attendance. Such requests for absence must state the reason for the absence. Teaching elders are expected to schedule congregational and personal time around the dates presbytery meets. Two consecutive absences will result in communication from the Ministerial Relations Committee.

Meals and expenses

Presbytery meetings held in churches may have their evening meal on Friday furnished by the host Church (optional), while the other meals will be borne by the representatives and/or their churches. Presbyters attending presbytery meetings held in a central meeting place (like a motel) will have all expenses borne by the church they represent.

Season of prayer

Before the business session of the Presbytery, a Season of Prayer will be enjoyed by all members of the court.

Prayer opening Committee Reports

Before each committee report, prayer seeking God's wisdom and guidance will be offered by the chairman or his designee.

Called meetings

The Moderator shall call a special meeting at the request or with the concurrence of three teaching elders and three Sessions from at least three different churches. Should the Moderator be for any reason unable to act, the Stated Clerk shall, under the same requirements, issue the call. If both Moderator and Stated Clerk are unable to act, any three teaching elders and three ruling elders of at least three different churches shall have power to

call a meeting. However, any Presbytery may prescribe in its rules its own requirements for calling a special meeting, provided that those requirements are not less than those stated in this section. Notice of the special meeting shall be sent not less than ten days in advance to each teaching elder and to the Clerk of Session of every church. In the notice, the purpose of the meeting shall be stated, and no business other than that named in the notice is to be transacted.

Electronic Meetings

Meetings by Teleconference or Video Conference (Electronic Meetings). Called Presbytery meetings, Presbytery committees or commissions may conduct meetings by teleconference or videoconference with the following restrictions and provisions:

1. The meeting shall not include the business of: (a) the gathering of evidence; (b) deliberation of guilt or innocence; (c) deliberation of a censure; or (d) an examination for ordination or licensure on the floor of Presbytery. The Candidates and Credentials Committee may, at its discretion, conduct such examinations electronically.
2. The technology for the conference shall ensure that all persons participating be able to hear each other or the see and hear each other (if video conference) simultaneously in order to preserve the deliberative nature of the meeting.
3. The meeting shall be conducted by the moderator of the presbytery, committee chairman, commission moderator, or convener of a committee or commission.
4. Participants in such a meeting shall seek the floor by announcing name (and church, if requested by the moderator). The meeting moderator shall recognize the speaker by name. Participants shall take care to avoid unnecessary noises or distractions, and speaking out of turn.

Electronic Voting

- i. Any Permanent Committee, through its Chairman, may request an electronic vote of a Committee recommendation that is so urgent that it is impracticable for the matter to wait for a called or stated meeting of the Presbytery. The Committee Chairman shall send his request to the Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk shall inform the Moderator who shall rule the matter in order or out of order. The decision of the Moderator shall be final. If the Moderator rules the matter in order, he shall inform the Stated Clerk to put the matter to the Presbytery for a vote in accordance with the following provisions:
- ii. If the Committee has not stated its motion in a succinct manner, the Moderator shall direct the Stated Clerk to reply to the Committee to rephrase the motion in succinct and clear language.
- iii. Each Session should appoint ruling elders to vote on the issue in the same number as would be eligible to attend Presbytery (see *BCO 13-1*). The Clerk of the Session shall record in the Session's minutes the names of those appointed to vote on the measure just as they record the names of delegates to Presbytery or General Assembly.
- iv. The Stated Clerk, in coordination with the Moderator and the Chairman of the Committee requesting the vote may establish a deadline for the Sessions to

communicate their votes to the Stated Clerk and this deadline shall be included in the motion sent to the Churches. Responses received by the deadline shall be used by the Stated Clerk to determine if a quorum was met for the electronic vote. If there is a lack of quorum, the Stated Clerk shall notify the Moderator and the Chairman of the Committee that the electronic matter failed for lack of quorum and the Committee may docket the matter as part of its report at the next meeting of Presbytery.

- v. The members appointed by the Session should vote on the measure presented and the Clerk of the Session record the number of votes for and against the measure. The Clerk of the Session or the Moderator shall have the votes for and against (numbers only, unless an elder requests that his vote be recorded in the minutes) transmitted to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. The Stated Clerk shall report the result to the Moderator, the Chairman of the Committee and to the entire Presbytery at the next meeting of Presbytery. The motion and results of the motion shall be recorded in the minutes of the Presbytery under the Stated Clerk's Report.
- vi. If three or more Sessions object to voting on the matter electronically, the Stated Clerk will inform the Moderator, the Chairman of the Committee, all churches and teaching elders in the Presbytery that the electronic vote shall not be taken, and shall docket the matter for the next meeting of Presbytery.
- vii. A matter may be presented only once for an electronic vote. If the matter fails for lack of quorum or objection by requisite number of Sessions it may not be resubmitted for a subsequent electronic vote. A matter which fails to obtain the requisite number of yes votes may be reconsidered at a subsequent Presbytery meeting following the same rules to request reconsideration of a matter.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome to presbytery meetings. As observers, visitors, and guests may not speak or actively participate in any portion of the gathering unless invited by the moderator.

Confidentiality

Many non-business gatherings are intended to provide participants with the opportunity to openly examine personal and corporate issues of faith and life. Media representatives and visitors are asked to honor this atmosphere of openness and acceptance.

In certain circumstances, when the confidentiality of the subject matter is impeding the open work of the group, meetings may be closed.

Media

Media representatives will register as such, including the name of the publication or media outlet for which they are acting as a media representative. Media representatives and visitors should wear name tags identifying themselves as such during all portions of the gathering.

Media representatives are observers and may not speak or actively participate in any portion of the gathering unless invited by the moderator.

The provisions of this policy shall apply to visitors and to representatives of both church and public media, including print, electronic and photographic journalists.

Committees

The routine work and business shall be carried out through committees and commissions of the presbytery.

The following standing committees shall be established to coordinate work of the Presbytery between meetings and report at successive stated meetings:

- Administrative Committee
- Campus Ministries Committee
- Candidates and Credentials Committee
- Ministerial Relations Committee
- Mission to North America Committee
- Mission to the World Committee
- Nominations Committee
- Review of Sessional Records Committee

Review and Presentation of Calls

The Candidates and Credentials Committee is responsible to approve that a call to the gospel ministry is in good order, examine all candidates requiring such pursuant to the Book of Church Order, and present to the presbytery candidates for approval unless the call is more specifically within the authority of another committee. Each such committee shall present to the presbytery for approval a call as follows:

- The Ministerial Relations Committee shall review and present to presbytery a call regarding a member of South Texas Presbytery.
- The Campus Ministries Committee shall review and present to presbytery any call to the ministry under Reformed University Fellowship.
- The Mission to North America Committee shall review and present to presbytery any call regarding the establishment of a new mission church.

Committee Membership

Members

Permanent committee membership is open to all Teaching Elders, all Ruling Elders currently serving on church Sessions, and inactive elders (those who have been elected and installed by their present congregation recommended by their church Session). Each permanent committee membership shall be comprised of no more than two persons from a particular church session in the Presbytery. Should a committee member move his membership to another church within Presbytery during mid-term, he shall be allowed to keep his committee membership for the

remainder of the term.

Absences

A Teaching Elder member of a permanent committee shall cease to be a member of that committee upon being given permission to labor out of bounds if his laboring out of bounds is also outside the geographical area of the Presbytery. A Teaching Elder who ceases to be a voting member of a permanent committee under this provision may become an advisory member of that permanent committee upon being invited to join the committee by a resolution of that committee.

Committee Vacancies

Whenever a vacancy occurs on any of the Permanent Committees of Presbytery, the Chairman of that Committee shall report it to the Nominations Chairman, who will present a nominee to fulfill the unexpired term at the next Stated Meeting for final approval by the Presbytery.

Committee Meetings

LEADERSHIP

Each standing committee (excepting the Administrative Committee) shall elect or re-elect a chairman at the January stated meeting of even numbered years. Said election shall be reported to the presbytery during the committee's report on the floor.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS QUORUM

Each permanent committee must meet its established quorum to carry out formal business. The committee may meet with fewer members, but no formal actions, recommendations, or reports may be issued unless a quorum of at least four (4) members with a minimum of one (1) TE and one (1) RE present. Administrative committee requires simple majority of members.

COMMITTEE RECORDS

Each standing committee shall keep a record of its meeting and provide a copy of its minutes to the Stated Clerk prior to the next stated meeting of presbytery.

Standing Committees

The following standing committees are responsible for the routine and normal work of the presbytery.

Administrative Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Administrative Committee is to provide leadership and direction for the presbytery between meetings and at times the presbytery is unable to act in a timely manner

.

Membership

This committee shall consist of the chairmen of the permanent committees, the Stated Clerk, the Treasurer, the Moderator, the Vice Moderator, and one member at large elected to serve as chairman for a three-year term. Nominations for Chairman shall come from the floor of Presbytery. The at large member serving as chairman may serve as many terms as elected except that he may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

Quorum

A quorum for the Administrative Committee shall consist of a simple majority of the members of the committee appointed.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. *Prepare the Presbytery budget each year and present it at the October meeting. All committees with budgets over \$1000 will provide line item budgets.*
2. *Formulate a long range program for Presbytery.*
3. *Serve as a public relations committee.*
4. *Suggest a stewardship program and policies.*
5. *Receive and review all complaints, appeals and references For reports concerning the character of a TE, If the Administrative committee finds the complaint in order, the moderator shall appoint a Preliminary Investigative Committee (PIC) as outlined under Judicial Process below.*
6. *Appeals to an action taken by the session of a member church will be received and adjudicated in accordance with BCO-42*
7. *Receive all matters for which no other Permanent Committee has responsibility*
8. *Act as the liaison between the Presbytery and the General Assembly Committees on Administration, PCA Foundation and Insurance, Annuities and Relief, and inform the Presbytery regarding their work.*
9. *Serve as trustees and are empowered to hold in trust for Presbytery such property of the Presbytery. The committee shall supervise, control, collect, and distribute whatever Presbytery shall entrust to them and formulate written reports as necessary for the temporal undergirding of the court.*

Campus Ministries Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Campus Ministries Committee is to aid and assist the ministry to college campuses in the South Texas Presbytery.

Membership and quorum

This committee shall be composed of at least six elders in three classes. Each class shall have at least one teaching elder and one ruling elder. A quorum shall consist of five members, including two teaching elders and two ruling elders.

Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of this committee will be assigned and carried out in a way consistent with the "Affiliation Agreement for Campus Ministries." (Appendix B).

Candidates and Credentials Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Candidates and Credentials Committee is to assist vacant churches, oversee ministers and licentiates, conduct requisite examinations, oversee candidates for the Gospel ministry, and direct internship programs for candidates within the presbytery.

Duties and Responsibilities

VACANT CHURCHES

1. This committee shall assist vacant churches in securing supply preaching and interim supply.

MINISTERS

1. Churches desiring to call a minister may seek the committee's counsel.
2. The committee shall be responsible to present to Presbytery: transferring ministers, candidates for ordination, and licentiates seeking admission to South Texas Presbytery along with their credentials. The applications for admission to South Texas Presbytery must ordinarily be received one month prior to the Presbytery meeting at which the applicant will be examined.
3. This committee shall review all calls, examining them as to whether they are in order, before presenting them to Presbytery.
4. This committee shall instruct churches that a minister must be examined and approved by Presbytery before he can move on the field.
5. This committee shall transfer a minister's credentials only at a meeting of presbytery.
6. This committee shall hear and make recommendations to Presbytery concerning Teaching Elders who report changes in their views related to Ordination Vow #2 (BCO 21-5).

CANDIDATES

1. The committee shall oversee the candidates' course of study and practical training.
2. This committee shall have the oversight of all candidates for the Gospel ministry under the care of Presbytery still pursuing courses of preparation, keeping in touch with their progress and spiritual growth by annual reports from them.
3. It shall receive and consider all applications from persons seeking to become candidates for the Gospel ministry.
4. The committee shall recommend candidates eligible for a loan from funds administered by the Presbytery, or a seminary, when funds administered by the seminary require such recommendation and approval by the Presbytery.
5. This committee shall assist candidates and licentiates of the Presbytery in securing summer employment within the bounds of the Presbytery.
6. The committee shall provide guidance to sessions on the process of bringing a candidate under care of the session and Presbytery.
7. This committee shall hear and make recommendations to Presbytery concerning Teaching Elders who report changes in their views related to Ordination Vow #2 (BCO 21-5).

EXAMINATIONS

1. The Candidates and Credentials Committee shall prepare and conduct a preliminary examination of those seeking licensure, ordination, and ministers seeking admission from another Presbytery or denomination according to the requirements of the *Book of Church Order 21.4*.
2. All candidate sermons shall be heard by the committee on behalf of the Presbytery and shall report their recommendation to the Presbytery.

INTERNSHIPS

1. Approve all intern programs.
2. Approve all intern mentors.
3. Receive reports from interns and mentors.

Ministerial Relations Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Ministerial Relations Committee is to assist churches and ministers.

Duties and Responsibilities

VACANT PARTICULAR CHURCHES

1. This committee shall assist vacant churches in securing supply preaching and interim supply at the church's request.
2. The committee may provide necessary leadership for vacant churches at the church's request.
3. Churches desiring to call a minister may seek the committee's counsel.

MINISTERS

1. This committee shall have the oversight of ministers who are laboring outside the bounds of Presbytery, or who are without a definite call. The term "bounds of Presbytery" refers to both geography and oversight of the particular work he is doing. A minister may only engage in work beyond the bounds of Presbytery with the permission of Presbytery. This committee shall receive requests and make recommendations concerning ministers who desire to work beyond Presbytery's jurisdiction. Teaching Elders laboring outside the bounds of Presbytery or who are without a definite call will report to STP through the MR Committee as regards to their ministry at least annually. Some clarification concerning fulltime endorsed chaplains:
 - a. Civilian chaplains: this committee will have oversight of civilian chaplain ministers who are members of STP.
 - b. Military chaplains: this committee will have oversight of military chaplain ministers who are members of the STP. STP chaplains should notify Presbytery of pending deployments so that the presbytery can pray and support their families in any way possible.

2. Those active ministers who are without a definite call shall report their progress in seeking to engage in their functions as teaching elders at the January meeting of Presbytery.
3. This committee seeks to provide support, encouragement, and counsel to all STP ministers. Ministers may contact the Chairman of the Ministerial Relations Committee with the assurance of confidentiality (when allowed by law) when a need arises dealing with themselves and/or their family members. Funds have been set aside to help defray possible costs for such support upon request.
4. This Committee shall develop strategies to encourage and strengthen fellowship among members of STP.
5. This committee shall provide guidance for pastors and churches seeking to dissolve their relationship.
6. This committee shall receive requests for the dissolution of pastoral relationships and recommend actions to Presbytery.
7. The Ministerial Relations Committee has the authority to act as a commission of South Texas Presbytery in dissolving pastoral relationships in cases where the minister and congregation formally concur in such dissolution and when pastoral problems are not involved.
8. In situations in which no congregation is involved the committee has the authority to act as a commission of South Texas Presbytery in dismissing ministers. The Ministerial Relations Committee shall inform the Stated Clerk of South Texas Presbytery of any action taken in exercising this authority, and the Stated Clerk may subsequently dismiss the minister.

Mission to North America Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Mission to North America Committee is to oversee presbytery relationships with new churches and chaplains laboring in home missions.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Have oversight and supervision of all home mission churches, giving assistance in evangelism, stewardship, etc.
2. Confer with, examine, and guide the session of any organized church seeking admission to the Presbytery.
3. Assist in the survey for, and organization of, new congregations, chapels, and missions, using Presbytery's Guidelines for organization along with the denomination's Mission to North America Guidelines.
4. When an organized church has been admitted into the Presbytery the committee will visit the church during a worship service and extend Presbytery's welcome.
5. In the case of newly organized churches, the commission appointed by Presbytery will perform this privilege of extending Presbytery's welcome.

6. Promote the cause of General Assembly's work on Mission to North America.
7. Maintain the oversight of those presbyters who labor as evangelist. Each evangelist of Presbytery is required to prepare a written report, in English, concerning his work. These reports are to be submitted quarterly to the chairman of the Mission to North America Committee.
8. Develop and oversee mercy and caring ministries.
9. Develop and oversee resources for building and finance to aid new church development.

Mission to the World Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Mission to the World Committee is to promote the cause of world missions in the churches of the presbytery.

Membership and quorum

The Mission to the World Committee shall be composed of not less than three teaching and three ruling elders in three classes. Each class shall have at least one teaching and one ruling elder.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Encourage churches to keep informed about our denomination's mission program.
2. Encourage churches to invite missionaries into their churches and when needed, to arrange itineraries for same.
3. Seek to encourage candidates for the mission field.

Nominations Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Nominations Committee is to review the structure and participation of presbytery members in the various activities of the church and denomination.

Membership

The Nominations Committee shall be composed of two Teaching Elders and two Ruling Elders. This committee shall be elected by nominations received on the floor of Presbytery at the April meeting and shall serve for two years, alternating a new class each year.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Nominate presbyters to serve on the permanent committees of presbytery.
2. Nominate those persons to serve on General Assembly's permanent committees and committees of commissioners.

Sessional Records Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the sessional records committee is to provide oversight and assistance to sessions of the presbytery by periodically reviewing sessional minutes and recommending corrections or best practices to assist the session in performing its work.

Membership and quorum

A Sessional Records Chairman shall be elected for a term of three years at the October stated meeting of Presbytery. A quorum shall consist of two members, including one teaching elder and one ruling elder.

Duties and Responsibilities

At the April stated meeting of Presbytery, the Chairman shall receive from each church the minutes of the Session of that church for the preceding year. The Chairman shall assign the review of the minutes of a particular church to one member of the Committee or Presbytery who shall review those minutes in accordance with the requirements of the *BCO* and the guidelines established by the Presbytery (Appendix C). The member shall report his review to the Chairman.

The Chairman shall report to the Presbytery the result of the review of the minutes and shall make recommendations in relations to those minutes. Such recommendations shall include whether the minutes are to be approved with or without exceptions or notations.

South Texas Presbytery is required by the *Book of Church Order (BCO)* 13-9.b. to review Sessional Minutes annually to “redress whatever they may have done contrary to order and take effectual care that they observe the Constitution of the Church.” This review is not intended to be punitive, rather it is ministerial in nature, commenting on conformity or non-conformity of the actions recorded in the minutes to the Constitution of the Church. The annual review assists all Sessions in careful conformity to the Constitution of the Church in both action and record keeping. Accordingly, the South Texas Presbytery adopts the following Standing Rule and operating procedure to meet its duties to Sessions under *BCO* 13-9.b.

- Presbytery Standing Rules require that churches submit their minutes for review at the April meeting of Presbytery every year. Clerks of Session shall ensure that the originals of the minutes or electronic signed copies of the minutes for the Session (including the Annual Report to General Assembly and a role of the members) are conveyed to the Chairman of Sessional Records, or his designated representative. If copies of the original records are provided, the Clerk of the Session shall sign all copies as originals. Records can also be mailed to the Chairman at his church or home address. For records that are

submitted electronically, their review shall be electronic, unless requested otherwise by the Clerk of Session.

- If a Session's records includes executive sessions, the Clerk of the Session may:
 - Seal the entire year's records with a note that executive session material is included in the records and that the records may only be opened and examined by the Chairman of the Review of Sessional Records Committee, or
 - Redact the executive session material and place it in a sealed envelope to accompany the Session's records with instructions that the records may only be opened and examined by the Chairman of the Review of Sessional Records Committee.
- Electronic submission of Sessional Records shall be to the Stated Clerk who shall forward them to the Chairman of the Committee.
- The Chairman shall take all submitted records and cause them to be reviewed for conformity with the *BCO* and Presbytery Standing Rules (*SR*) using the approved check list.
 - For records with no deviations from the *BCO* or *SR*, the Committee Chairman shall so note on the check list and report a commendation to the Presbytery at the following meeting.
 - For minor deviations from the *BCO* or *SR*, the Committee Chairman shall make a notation on the check list and recommend to the Presbytery that the records be approved with notations. Clerks of Session, upon receiving a review checklist with notations should endeavor to correct their minutes and record the corrections in the next set of minutes of the Session. In the alternative, the Clerk of Session may merely report the notations to the Session and take care not to repeat the deviations in the future.
 - For major deviations from the *BCO* or *SR* or missing records, the Chairman shall attempt to contact the Clerk of Session and explain to him what appear to be major deviations.
 - The Session will be allowed to cure the deviations or supply the missing records for review.
 - The Chairman will receive any additional submissions and review the entire record for conformity with the *BCO* and Presbytery *SR* using the approved check list. If the additional submission cures the deviations, the Chairman shall so inform the Clerk and make the recommendation that the records be approved or approved with notations not requiring a report to Presbytery.
 - For major deviations from the *BCO* or the *SR* or for missing records which cannot be cured by additional submissions, the Chairman shall prepare a recommendation for the Presbytery that the minutes be approved with exceptions which must be answered by the Session at the next Presbytery meeting. The Chairman shall also include a recitation of the efforts made to cure the exceptions prior to reporting them to Presbytery.
 - For major deviations from the *BCO* or the *SR* in records from executive session which cannot be cured by additional submissions, the Chairman shall prepare a

recommendation for the Administrative Committee that the minutes be approved with exceptions which must be answered by the Session at the next Presbytery meeting. The Chairman shall also include a recitation of the efforts made to cure the exceptions prior to reporting them to Presbytery. The Administrative Committee will then decide how to deal with exceptions taken to actions recorded in executive session minutes. In discussion of these minutes by either the Administrative Committee or by the Presbytery during the Committee report to Presbytery, commissioners from the Church under discussion may move that the discussion be held in executive session. Such motion shall be treated as any other request that the body move to executive session.

- The Chairman shall prepare a complete written report to Presbytery with his recommendations and, for recommended exceptions requiring a reply to Presbytery, shall include a copy of the checklist with the specifics of the exceptions requiring a reply and efforts made to cure the exceptions.
- The Chairman shall forward a copy of his report to the Stated Clerk for distribution to the presbyters before the next stated meeting.
- At the Presbytery meeting, the Chairman shall present his report and answer questions concerning recommended exceptions requiring a reply to Presbytery. He shall then make a motion to effectuate his recommendations.
 - If the Presbytery concurs with the Chairman's recommendation that a reply to Presbytery is required, the Chairman shall, immediately following the meeting, communicate the vote of the Presbytery to the Clerk of the Session informing him that a reply is necessary and procedures for making the reply. Replies shall be through the Chairman of the Review of Session Records.
 - A Session's reply may concur with the exception and state the remedial action to be taken.
 - A Session's reply may non-concur with the exception and provide matters in defense or mitigation concerning why the Session non-concurs with the exception and believes its actions are in conformity of the *BCO* and *SR*.
 - If the Session shall fail to reply to the exception prior to the next stated meeting of Presbytery, the Chairman shall so inform the Session and the Presbytery in his report and request the Presbytery in its minutes to cite the Session to reply by the next stated Presbytery meeting.
 - If the Session still fails to reply by the next stated Presbytery meeting after being cited in the minutes, the Presbytery may deal with the Session in accordance with the *BCO* for contumacy.
 - If the Presbytery does not concur with the recommendations of the Chairman, the Stated Clerk shall record the final action by Presbytery in its minutes and the Sessional records for that year shall be deemed approved according to the decision of the Presbytery.
- At each stated Presbytery meeting following the April meeting, the Chairman shall, in his report, inform the Presbytery of all the Sessions which have submitted their records for review, which Session(s) have not submitted their records for review and any outstanding replies to exceptions. The Chairman may make recommendations to

Presbytery concerning corrective actions.

- The Chairman shall return reviewed records to a representative of the church at the next Presbytery meeting. If representatives of the church do not pick up the minutes, the Chairman shall promptly mail the minutes to the church for their retention.

Ad Hoc Committees and Commissions

Periodically, the moderator may appoint ad hoc committees or commissions to perform specific purposes within the boundaries of the Standing Rules. An ad hoc committee serves at the term of the moderator and performs the duties as charged by the moderator. A commission is appointed to examine, consider and report, and is authorized to deliberate upon and conclude the business referred to it on behalf of the presbytery, except in the case of judicial commissions of a Presbytery appointed under *BCO* 15-3 (modified from *BCO* 15-1).

Appointment

Commissions and Ad Hoc Committees may be appointed by the Moderator at any meeting for particular purposes as directed by Presbytery.

Composition

Commissions and Ad Hoc Committees of Presbytery shall be comprised of no less than two (2) Teaching Elders and two (2) Ruling Elders.

Membership

Eligible Ruling Elders include those currently serving on church Sessions and “inactive” elders, defined as those not currently serving on the Session yet having been elected by their present congregation, installed, and recommended by their Church Session.

Ecclesiastical Commissions

A commission differs from an ordinary committee. Among the matters that may be properly executed by commissions are the taking of the testimony in judicial cases, the ordination of ministers, the installation of ministers, the visitation of portions of the church affected with disorder, and the organization of new churches.

Quorum for commissions

Every commission appointed by Presbytery shall consist of at least two teaching elders and two ruling elders, and the quorum shall be one more than half its membership unless otherwise determined by the Presbytery. The quorum for a commission clothed with judicial powers and authority to conduct judicial process, or with power to ordain or install a teaching elder of the Gospel, shall not be less than two teaching elders and two ruling elders.

Examinations

When the ordination of a minister is committed to a commission, the Presbytery itself shall conduct the appropriate examinations (from BCO 15-2).

Commission Records

A commission shall keep a full record of its proceedings, which shall be submitted to the court appointing it. Upon such submission this record shall be entered on the minutes of the court appointing, except in the case of a presbytery commission serving as a session or a judicial commission as set forth in *BCO 15-3*. When a commission is appointed to serve as an interim Session, its actions are the actions of a Session, not a Presbytery. Every commission of a Presbytery or Session must submit complete minutes and a report of its activities at least once annually to the court which commissioned it (from *BCO 15-1*).

JUDICIAL PROCESS-REPORT AGAINST A TEACHING ELDER

Purpose

Discipline is the exercise of authority given the Church by the Lord Jesus Christ to instruct and guide its members and to promote its purity and welfare (*BCO 27-1*).

Discipline has two senses: the one referring to the whole government, inspection, training, guardianship and control which the church maintains over its members, its officers and its courts; and the other a restricted and technical sense, signifying judicial process.

Discipline is for building up, and not for destruction. It is to be exercised as under a dispensation of mercy and not wrath (*BCO 27-4*)

Complaints

In the case of complaints against a TE, the chairman of the Administrative Committee (AC), in a timely manner, shall call a meeting of the AC to review the report. If the report is declared in order, (see appendix F), the moderator shall notify the accused of the report, and, at his discretion and with the assistance of the AC, approach both parties with the option of pursuing mediation. In such a case, the moderator is empowered to appoint a mediator.

Preliminary Investigative Committee (PIC)

If mediation is not pursued or mutually agreed upon, a Preliminary Investigative Committee (PIC) shall be appointed by the Moderator, in consultation with the chairman of the Administrative Committee, and chairman of the Ministerial Relations Committee. The PIC shall be organized and both parties shall be notified that an investigation is underway.

Guidelines for Organizing a PIC

- i. Membership- PIC membership shall be 3 Teaching Elders and 3 Ruling Elders. A quorum shall be any combination of 4.
- ii. Duties- The PIC is tasked with the duty prescribed in the first paragraph of *BCO 31-2*: “It is the duty of all church Sessions and Presbyteries to exercise care over those subject to their authority. They shall with due diligence and great discretion demand from such persons satisfactory explanations concerning reports affecting their Christian character. This duty is more imperative when those who deem themselves aggrieved by injurious reports shall ask an investigation.”
- iii. Limited Authority- The PIC has responsibility to investigate, but it does not have authority to render a final determination on “strong presumption of guilt” and indictment/commencement of process (2nd paragraph *BCO 31-2*). PIC shall only recommend to the Administrative Committee if it deems an indictment is warranted.
- iv. *BCO 38-1* Cases w/o Process - "... In the event a confession is intended, a full statement of the facts should be approved by the accused, and by the court, before the court proceeds to a judgment. ". If the PIC (or the mediator, in the case of mediation) receives a confession, it shall immediately report the full statement of confession to the Administrative Committee. The Administrative Committee shall bring a debatable recommendation to the floor for judgment and censure.

Judicial Process Following Mediation

After the Admin Committee is satisfied with the validity of the PIC report, and determines a strong presumption of guilt, the AC will request a satisfactory explanation from the party to whom the report is directed and also communicate with the accusing parties regarding timelines, etc.

The moderator, at his discretion and with the assistance of the AC, is encouraged to approach both parties with the option of pursuing mediation, and is empowered to appoint a mediator.

If mediation is not pursued, and the Administrative committee deems an indictment is warranted, it shall bring a recommendation to Presbytery to institute Judicial Process as dictated by *BCO 31-2* (second paragraph). All effort will be made to proceed in a timely manner.

Upon the Presbytery agreeing to proceed to judicial process in a particular case, the Moderator will appoint a commission of two Teaching Elders, two Ruling Elders, one Teaching Elder alternate, and one Ruling Elder alternate to adjudicate the judicial matter. The Moderator will appoint a convener for this commission.

i. A Teaching Elder is eligible to serve on a judicial commission if he is a member in good standing of the Presbytery and is not directly involved with the judicial matter at hand.

ii. A Ruling Elder is eligible to serve on a judicial commission if he is a member in good standing of a Presbytery committee or a past moderator of the Presbytery and is not directly involved in the judicial matter at hand.

iii. A judicial commission shall not have more than one member from any single session.

iv. When a judicial commission is in place, it shall conduct its business using the Operating Manual for Standing Judicial Commission of the Presbyterian Church in America's General Assembly as a guideline.

If the Moderator deems it appropriate, he will appoint a prosecutor in accordance with the *Book of Church Order*.

When a judicial commission has completed its business it shall bring a report before Presbytery. Presbytery will approve or disapprove the commission's report without amendments by a simple majority

If a commission's report is not approved by Presbytery, Presbytery may instruct the commission to continue its work on the judicial matter; or Presbytery may instruct the moderator to appoint a new commission to adjudicate the matter; or Presbytery as a whole may adjudicate the matter.

RESOLUTIONS AND OVERTURES

All resolutions and overtures (except that of the Resolution of Thanks Committee) to be considered on the floor of Presbytery shall be sent to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery at least 30 days prior to the Presbytery meeting at which the author wishes it to be considered and acted upon. The Stated Clerk will forward the resolution to the appropriate Permanent Committee, which shall meet to consider the resolution and to formulate a recommendation in the form of

a motion to be submitted to Presbytery. All resolutions and, if possible, the Committee's response, should be distributed by the Stated Clerk with the docket for the meeting at which they are to be considered.

APPENDIX – OVERTURE 15

Overture 15: From the Presbytery of Texas

Whereas, the Texas Presbytery covers a geographical area of such size that communication and travel are costly and time consuming; and

Whereas, the goals set by the Presbytery included the geographical division of north and south by 1985; and

Whereas, the balance of the two areas would justify that division at the present time based on the following data (1982):

Churches: North: Bedford (28), Colleyville (39), Casa Linda (733), John Knox (68), Lakewood (82), North Dallas (86), Gainesville (239), Gordonville (72), Greenville (32), Paris (82), Town North (102), Tyler (385), Waco (50) for a total of 13 Churches and 1916 Communing members.

Churches South: Bryan (149), Corpus Christi (85), Covenant (110), Oaklawn (114), Providence (43), Spring-Cypress (113), Webster (52), Beaumont,* McAllen,* for a total of 7 Churches and 666 Communing members and 2 Missions (with the addition of Austin, San Antonio and Harlingen). •Estimation

Ministers: North: Thorp, Smith, Johnston, Crow, Roberstad, Cobb, Pyles, Nelson, Thurman, McGinn, Cumow, Clelland, Cappel, Black, Walters, Morrison, Pancoast, Roberts, Perez, Werner. For a total of 20 ministers.

Ministers South: LaCour, Chase, Pipa, Moran, McCall, Hinkson, Ruddell, Gilchrist, Traylor, Hoolsema, Uc. For a total of 11 ministers.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Presbytery of Texas overture the Twelfth General Assembly to divide the Presbytery along a line south of the following counties from west to east: Schleicher, Menard, McCulloch, San Saba, Lampasas, Bell, Falls, Limestone, Freestone, Anderson, Cherokee, Rusk and Shelby.

Be it further resolved that the Administration Committee of Texas Presbytery determine the financial viability of the missions under the Presbytery's Mission to North America Committee in view of the division of the Presbytery's budget; and that it make recommendations for a period of adjustment.

Be it resolved that the two areas be instructed to meet before the October meeting of Texas Presbytery to organize with by-laws and officers, and to decide on names for the new Presbyteries. Be it further resolved that the division be effective on Jan. 1, 1985.

Attest: Glen Milham, Stated Clerk

Answered in the affirmative, 12-67, III, 17, p. 151.

Minutes of the TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA Part I
DIRECTORY Of General Assembly Committees and Officers Part II JOURNAL Part III APPENDICES
JUNE 18-22,1984 BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

APPENDIX - SOUTH TEXAS PRESBYTERY WAS INCORPORATED AS A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION IN TEXAS ON JULY 7, 1994.

The purposes for which the corporation is organized are:

1. The corporation is organized to operate exclusively for religious, charitable, and education purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, by engaging directly in support of such purposes or by making distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code for use, by the distributes, in support of such purposes.

2. The corporation is organized exclusively for the purpose of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ and building His Kingdom through evangelism, education ,ministry, and worship, in accordance with the Constitution of the church, which shall consist of the Bible and the following subordinate standards: The Westminster Confession of Faith with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and the Book of Church Order, as adopted by the Presbyterian Church in America.

3. The corporation shall act as a court of the Presbyterian Church in America and engage in such activities as are authorized for a presbytery pursuant to the Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America.

4. The corporation is organized pursuant to the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act to have and exercise all rights and powers conferred on non-profit corporations under the laws of Texas, and which may hereafter be conferred, including, but not limited to, the power to contract, rent, buy, or sell, personal or real property and does not contemplate pecuniary gain or profit to the members thereof.

5. The corporation shall engage in any and all lawful activities incidental to the foregoing purposes, except as otherwise restricted herein. Other than as an insubstantial part of its activities, the corporation shall not carry on activities that are not in furtherance of its purposes. (From the Articles of Incorporation)

Membership of the corporation shall consist of (1) all teaching elders who are presently on the roll of South Texas Presbytery and those teaching elders who shall be subsequently admitted to South Texas Presbytery after examination and (2) such ruling elders as may be elected from time to time by the churches which constitute the South Texas Presbytery, and such churches as may subsequently be admitted to the South Texas Presbytery, pursuant to the Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America.

APPENDIX – COUNTIES IN SOUTH TEXAS PRESBYTERY

(66 counties – add as addendum)

Aransas	La Salle
Atascosa	Lavaca
Bandera	Lee
Bastrop	Live Oak
Bee	Llano
Bexar	Mason
Blanco	Maverick
Brazos	McMullen
Brooks	Medina
Burleson	Milam
Burnet	Nueces
Caldwell	Real
Calhoun	Refugio
Cameron	Robertson
Comal	San Patricio
DeWitt	Starr
Dimmit	Sutton
Duval	Travis
Edwards	Uvalde
Fayette	Val Verde
Frio	Victoria
Gillespie	Washington
Goliad	Webb
Gonzales	Willacy
Grimes	Williamson
Guadalupe	Wilson
Hays	Zapata
Hidalgo	Zavala
Jackson	
Jim Hogg	
Jim Wells	
Karnes	
Kendall	
Kenedy	
Kerr	
Kimble	
Kinney	
Kleburg	



APPENDIX A - PERMANENT COMMITTEE MINUTES/REPORT TO PRESBYTERY TEMPLATE

PERMANENT COMMITTEE MINUTES/REPORT TO PRESBYTERY TEMPLATE

MEETING TIME, PLACE, QUORUM

The meeting of the _____ Committee of the North Texas
Presbytery

was convened on ____/____/____ at _____.
(Location)

A quorum was established with the following members:

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

The meeting began with prayer by _____ at _____
AM/PM

II. SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLE BUSINESS CONDUCTED

III. MATTERS TO BE RECEIVED BY PRESBYTERY AS INFORMATION

IV. MATTERS FOR PRESBYTERY ACTION

(Committee Recommendations, which are on the floor and do not need a second)

The meeting was closed with prayer by _____ at _____
_____AM/PM

Respectfully submitted

(Committee Secretary)

APPENDIX B - RUF AFFILIATION AGREEMENT FOR CAMPUS MINISTRIES

Affiliation Agreement for Campus Ministries

Campus Ministry Affiliation Agreement Between Presbyteries and Reformed University Ministries

SOUTH TEXAS PRESBYTERY (PCA) – UNIVERSITY NAME

The below signed presbytery(ies) and Reformed University Ministries do hereby agree to an affiliation for the purpose of reaching students for Christ and equipping students for service within their geographical areas and in North America.

Through this agreement the local/area ministry is officially affiliated with Reformed University Ministries and thereby authorized to use said name and that of Reformed University Fellowship for local campus ministries within its geographical areas and in North America.

I. Responsibilities of Reformed University Ministries

- A. Reformed University Ministries will provide support services, resources, and coordination and supervision of overall ministry.
- B. Reformed University Ministries will maintain a Committee on Reformed University Ministries. The Committee will consider and make recommendations to the General Assembly for appropriate action as it relates to a unified campus ministry. This action will include:
 1. Operational procedures and guidelines for staff and ministry.
 2. Staff - Staff recruiting, processing and job descriptions.
 3. Training - Providing a regular program of training for staff.
 4. Accounting - Including receipting and acknowledgement of gifts, payment of staff and programming expenses as per presbytery specifications, and financial, budget and donor reports.
 5. Development - With data provided by the area coordinator or minister, staff, or intern, RUM will produce such items as initial appeal letters and regular newsletters. RUM will maintain all staff mailing lists within the ministry's donor database.

6. Ministry-at-large - Coordinating and implementing agreed upon programs, projects, and ministries, including intern program, conferences, public relations, pastoral care, and insurance.

II. Responsibilities of Presbyteries

Each below signed presbytery acknowledges and accepts the responsibility to:

- A. Oversee the campus ministry under its jurisdiction according to the principles and policy set forth in the "Manual for Campus Ministries, Presbyterian Church in America" (passed by 1979 GA PCA).
- B. Ensure the ministry is conducted in accordance with the doctrinal system set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger Catechism, and the Shorter Catechism of the Presbyterian Church in America.
- C. Ensure the ministry is conducted in accordance with the principles of Presbyterian polity as set forth in the "Form of Government" and "Rules of Discipline" of The Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America.
- D. Establish a Presbytery Committee on Reformed University Ministries to implement presbytery's oversight of and develop recommendations concerning the ministries in its area. The presbytery will exercise its normal review and control powers. Staff members shall be available to present reports at presbytery meetings at the discretion of the Committee on Reformed University Ministries.
- E. Call and hire all staff who work with Reformed University Fellowship within the presbytery. The presbytery will exercise all of its normal oversight responsibilities toward candidates, licentiates, interns, and ministers. If an ordained man has the major responsibility for the campus ministry he shall be designated a "campus minister." All other staff shall be designated "campus interns" or "campus staff."
- F. Determine all staff salaries, subject in the case of ordained men to the approval of the presbytery. Due consideration should be given to the ministry-at-large and general guidelines for financial matters.
- G. Fund the ministries within its area, assuming sole responsibility for all staff salaries and ministry expenses. Funding may come from presbyteries, churches, corporations, foundations and individuals.
- H. Make contributions toward the cost of support services, area assistance and training. Contributions may vary according to staff status (campus minister, staff, intern), length of time in the ministry, number of staff members, cost, and other factors.

- I. Ensure participation of all campus ministers, staff, and interns in training provided by Reformed University Ministries. Area and local staff will assist when needed in providing such training.
- J. Ensure participation of campus ministers, staff, and interns in area-wide and ministry-at-large programs and projects.
- K. Encourage its member churches to pray for Reformed University Fellowship, to refer contacts to the Reformed University Fellowship staff, and to make students aware of this ministry at the University Name.
- L. Participate in the overall campus ministry through involvement in RUM campus organizational structure (see I. B. above).

 Presbytery Moderator

 Coordinator of RUM

 Date

 Date

 Chairman of Presbytery RUM Committee

 Date

APPENDIX C - GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING SESSIONAL RECORDS AND MINUTES

Appendix C

GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING SESSIONAL RECORDS AND MINUTES

- I. There shall be a permanent record of the following:
 - A. All communicant members of the church, showing date of reception into the local church, method of reception (profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith, transfer) and dismissal or decease (if applicable).
 - B. All non communicant members of the church, showing date of reception into the local church, method of reception (covenant birth, joining with parents, etc) and dismissal or decease (if applicable).
 - C. All baptisms, showing date and officiating pastor.
 - D. All officers, including pastors or ministers of the Word (Regular and Supply), Ruling Elders and Deacons, with dates of election, ordination, installation and dismissal.
 - E. All moderators of session and stated clerks of session, showing dates served.

- II. The Clerk shall be responsible for keeping records up to date and recording the minutes of Sessional and congregational meetings.

- III. The minutes of the session shall include the following:
 1. Type of meeting - stated or called.
 2. Time, date, and place of meeting.
 3. Names of those attending including visitors.
 4. Name of moderator and clerk.
 5. Meetings opened and closed with prayer by whom. Include the time the meeting opened, and the time the meeting closed.
 6. If regular, reading and approval of minutes of previous meetings.
 7. The actions of the session, including all motions adopted and business transacted, together with such additional information as the session deems desirable for historical purposes. Ordinarily in Church Courts motions that are lost are not included in the records, unless an affirmative vote for the lost motion is recorded, in which case the lost motion must be shown. Each main motion should normally be recorded in the same paragraph. Subsidiary and procedural motions may be recorded in the same paragraph with the main motion to which they pertain. Main motions may be recorded in the same paragraph if they are closely related and pertain to the same item of business. It may be desirable to number these paragraphs consecutively, and to give a title over each paragraph including succinctly the content of business included. This is not mandatory, but it is desirable for the later reading of the minutes. For historical purposes, some note as to the extent of and kind of debate may be included, but minutes should never reflect the clerk's opinion, favorable or otherwise, on anything said or

done.

8. All points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost, together with the reasons given by the Chair for his ruling, should be included. This is for the sake of any case that may be carried to a higher court. The complete record of the session's actions should be recorded for this purpose.
 9. The names of those who move and second a motion can be entered into the minutes. While this is optional at the wishes of the session, this practice is helpful for current and historical purposes.
 10. When a count has been ordered, or the vote is by ballot, the number of votes on each side shall be entered.
 11. Committee reports that are adopted by the session may be handled in either of two ways. They may be entered directly into the record at the time when they are presented, and it should be reflected as the report of a committee and adopted by the session. The other way by which they may be handled is to give the report as an appendix to which reference is made by motion in the body of the minutes.
 12. Minutes signed by the clerk (the person who recorded the minutes of the meeting).
- IV. The Clerk is responsible for presenting the minutes to Presbytery for examination at the first meeting of each year.

APPENDIX D - SESSIONAL RECORD REVIEW CHECK LIST

**South Texas Presbytery
Sessional Record Review Check List**

Name of Church and City: _____

Date of Review: _____ **Reviewers Name:** _____

Year(s) of Records Reviewed: _____

Instructions:

Reviewer shall fill out two copies of this form: (1) one for the Clerk of Presbytery, and (2) one to be inserted in the Session Book. (BCOAO.3)

On the last page of reviewed minutes, Presbytery shall mark the book with date of review and whether it approves or disapproves the records with Notations or Exceptions. List any comments on the report.

NOTATIONS

Yes___No___Minutes are kept in a bound type book with consecutively numbered pages.

Yes___No___Minutes were approved at following stated meeting.

Yes___No___Opening paragraph show kind of meeting: Stated or Called.

Yes___No___Minutes showed date, time and place of meeting along with who moderated.

Yes___No___Minutes listed elders present or absent and any visitors.

Yes___No___Minutes reflect who opened and closed in prayer.

Yes___No___Minutes showed actions, motions adopted, and business transacted.

Yes___No___Names of commissioners appointed to Presbytery and General Assembly are shown, and their reports after attending.

Yes___No___Minutes were signed by Clerk of Session.

Yes___No___Church-keeps a consecutive roll of all communicant members and their baptized children. Accurate listing of date member received (noting whether by profession, reaffirmation of faith, or transfer), dismissals (noting the cause), baptisms, death and discipline. A separate record of all of the above was included for review.

Yes ___ No ___ Year-end PCA Statistical report is included in Minutes.

Yes ___ No ___ Session meets at least once a quarter (12.6).

Yes ___ No ___ Deacons regularly submit their minutes and financial records to Session (9.4).

Yes ___ No ___ Session approves and adopts the church budget (12.5); (Annually)

Yes ___ No ___ Minutes showed a quorum present either by list of attendees or by a statement (12.1).

Yes ___ No ___ Session submits records at least once a year for review by Presbytery (12.7).

Mission Church Records Check List

Mission Church Name _____

City _____

Date of Review _____

Teaching Elder Reviewer _____

Ruling Elder Reviewer _____

Reviewers shall fill out two copies of this form: one for Clerk of Presbytery, and one to be inserted in mission church record book

Yes ___ No ___ Church keeps a consecutive roll of all communicant members and their baptized children shows date received and whether by profession reaffirmation of faith or transfer.

Yes ___ No ___ Records of steering committee or leadership council show significant actions taken

Yes ___ No ___ Minutes show basic statistics on members, baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

Yes ___ No ___ Annual Statistical Report is included

APPENDIX E – SESSION RECORDS RETENTION POLICY

The Presbyterian Historical Society provides information about establishing a records management program. This is available on the internet at <http://www.history.pcusa.org/cong/records/index.html>, which serves as the entry page for the entire document. They suggest first establishing a records inventory. That is, keep a record of the church records. This should include what they are and where they are. It seems logical but it is something that is easily put off until there is more time. The length of time records should be kept varies with the type of record. The logical statement is that records should be kept for as long as they are needed. Financial records must be kept as long as tax laws require. Administrative records such as the Church Register and Session Minutes must be kept indefinitely. Routine correspondence, travel arrangements, etc. can be discarded as soon as their need has been met and any reports related to them have been made. Records deemed to have historical value should be referred to the Society for advice. Inactive records should be stored in a dark, dry place with containers clearly marked as to contents. If possible, they should also be marked with the date on which they can be destroyed. Important records should be kept on quality paper or on microfilm. Permanent records should never be kept on magnetic media such as computer hard drives, disks, CDROMs, etc. Not only are these media subject to gradual deterioration, but also the software or hardware to access the records may no longer be available (NEW).

APPENDIX F -- QUESTIONS FOR THE AC TO ASK WHEN DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO RECEIVE A REPORT:

- Is the presbytery the proper court of original jurisdiction for this report of allegations? (BCO 31-1)
- Does this report of allegations present a chargeable offense, that is, a sin against God? (29-1)
- Is this report of allegations brought by a credible witness or witnesses? (31-8 and 31-9)
- Are these charges scandalous and being brought against a minister on slight grounds? (34-2)
- Have steps been taken to pursue reconciliation? Have those steps been outlined in the report? (31-5)
- Is It necessary for the honor of religion? (27-3)
- Does the report contain enough written evidence to support the charges being made?