

THE PRESBYTERY OF THE MIAMI VALLEY BYLAWS

(Note: Whenever the term “minister of the Word and Sacrament” is used in these Bylaws, it is deemed to be identical to the equivalent term “teaching elder” when that term is used in the Book of Order.)

ARTICLE I ORGANIZATION

Section 1.01: Purpose

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

The Church is to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life.

The Church is to be a community of hope, rejoicing in the sure and certain knowledge that, in Christ, God is making a new creation. This new creation is a new beginning for human life and for all things. The Church lives in the present on the strength of that promised new creation.

The Church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down.

The Church is to be a community of witness, pointing beyond itself through word and work to the good news of God’s transforming grace in Christ Jesus its Lord.

(Book of Order F-1.0301)

Section 1.02: Name and Function

The Presbytery of the Miami Valley of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) including Presbyterian congregations in Butler, Champaign, Clark, Clinton, Darke, Greene, Logan, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, Shelby, and Warren counties in the state of Ohio.

Section 1.03: Organization

The Presbytery of the Miami Valley (hereinafter the “presbytery”) is a non-profit corporation organized and existing under the Ohio Nonprofit Corporation Law.

(End of Article I)

ARTICLE II MEMBERS

Section 2.01: Ministers of the Word and Sacrament (Revised 11/14/15; 5/24/19)

Ministers of the Word and Sacrament shall be enrolled and maintain their membership in the presbytery as provided in *G-3.0306* of the most recent *Book of Order* and policies of the Committee on Ministry in the *Presbytery of the Miami Valley Policy and Practice*. It shall be the duty of each minister of the Word and Sacrament who is an active member or a member-at-large to attend all stated meetings of the presbytery.

- a. Ministers of denominations covered under the Formula of Agreement may be enrolled as members of the presbytery for the duration of their terms of service in a particular congregation. Such members of the presbytery shall comply with the provisions for ministers of the Word and Sacrament with respect to presbytery participation.
- b. For clarity, in the Presbytery of the Miami Valley Bylaws and Policy and Practice manuals, the term minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be synonymous with minister members of the presbytery from other denominations.

Whenever a minister of the Word and Sacrament fails to attend four consecutive stated meetings without excuses satisfactory to the presbytery, the minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be notified in writing by the Stated Clerk and shall be requested to render satisfactory reason for this absence. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are Honorably Retired or permanently disabled are granted an excuse from attendance at all meetings of the presbytery.

Section 2.02: Representatives of Churches

Each session under the jurisdiction of the presbytery shall be represented at each meeting of the presbytery by the number of ruling elders directed by the following active membership calculations:

- 1 – 249 members: 1 ruling elder
- 250 or more members: 2 ruling elders

Whenever a session is not represented by a regularly elected ruling elder commissioner at four consecutive Stated Meetings without excuses satisfactory to the presbytery, the session shall be notified in writing by the Stated Clerk and shall be requested to render satisfactory reason for this absence. (Revised 11/12/2022)

Section 2.03: Ruling Elder Members of the Presbytery

Ruling elders elected to serve as: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Leadership Council Chair, a member of the Leadership Council, a member of the Committee on Ministry, a member of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, a chairperson of a standing committee,

Executive Presbyter, and Stated Clerk shall be enrolled as ruling elder members of the presbytery for the duration of service in these positions, whether or not commissioned by their sessions. (Revised 11/12/2022)

Section 2.04: Corresponding Members

Former moderators of the presbytery who are ruling elders shall be enrolled as corresponding members of the presbytery with voice but no vote as long as they maintain active membership with a member church. A ruling elder serving as Recording Clerk shall be enrolled as a corresponding member.

Visiting ministers of the Word and Sacrament may be seated as corresponding members by majority vote of the presbytery. Such persons shall have voice but no vote.

Section 2.05: Imbalance of Teaching and Ruling Elders

When the number of resident ministers of the Word and Sacrament entitled to vote in the presbytery is greater than the number of ruling elders so entitled, this imbalance shall be redressed annually by providing for the election, appointment, or selection of additional ruling elders, paying special attention to the concerns of *G-3.0103*. Such additional elders shall serve for one-year terms, beginning at the close of the May meeting of presbytery.

(End of Article II)

**ARTICLE III
OFFICERS**

Section 3.01: Officers.

The officers of the presbytery shall be: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Leadership Council Chair, Stated Clerk, and Recording Clerk. All positions will be held by a minister of the Word and Sacrament member of presbytery or a ruling elder on the active membership roll of a member church. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by the *Presbytery of the Miami Valley Policy and Practice* and by the parliamentary authority as described in the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

Section 3.02: Nomination Procedure, Time of Elections

At the May stated meeting of the presbytery, the Committee on Nominations shall present nominations for all open officer positions. Nominations from the floor shall be permitted.

Section 3.03: Term of Office

Persons elected as Moderator, Vice-Moderator, and Leadership Council chair shall be elected to serve for one year and their term of office begins immediately upon installation.

Persons serving as Stated Clerk and Recording Clerk shall be elected to serve three year terms.

Section 3.04: Office-Holding Limitations

No member shall hold more than one office at a time.

(End of Article III)

**ARTICLE IV
MEETINGS**

Section 4.01: Stated Meetings

Unless modified by action of presbytery there shall be four (4) stated meetings each year:

February: The second Saturday

May: The second Tuesday

September: The second Tuesday

November: The second Saturday

The Leadership Council shall establish and publicize annually the starting time for each stated meeting in the following year, and for good cause may modify such starting time for a particular meeting with appropriate notice at least 45 days prior to that meeting.

(Revised 2/9/19)

Section 4.02: Special Meetings

The Moderator shall call a special meeting at the request, or with the concurrence, of two ministers of the Word and Sacrament and two ruling elders, the ruling elders being of different churches. Should the Moderator be unable to act, the Stated Clerk shall, under the same conditions, issue the call. Except in the cases of emergency, notice of a special meeting shall be sent no fewer than ten (10) days in advance to each minister of the Word and Sacrament and to the session of every church. The notice shall set out the purpose of the meeting, and no other business than that listed in the notice shall be transacted.

Section 4.03: Electronic Meetings

The presbytery, as determined by the Leadership Council, may meet by electronic means if all minister of the Word and Sacrament members 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. The quorum for such an electronic meeting is prescribed in Section 4.04 of these Bylaws. Further requirements for such meetings may be prescribed in the Presbytery of the Miami Valley Policy and Practice. (Added 9/8/2020)

Section 4.04: Quorum

The quorum of the presbytery shall be any three ministers of the Word and Sacrament and the ruling elders present, provided that at least three churches are represented by ruling elders.

Section 4.05: Location

The Leadership Council shall establish the location of each stated meeting of the presbytery. Through the Stated Clerk, the Council shall solicit and receive invitations from sessions that wish to host the stated meetings of the presbytery.

Section 4.06: Docket

The officers shall prepare a proposed docket for each meeting of the presbytery. The Stated Clerk shall forward a copy of the proposed docket to each minister of the Word and Sacrament and clerk of session ten (10) days in advance of each meeting.

(End of Article IV)

**ARTICLE V
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

Section 5.01: Purpose

The Leadership Council shall be responsible for the coordination and superintending of the agencies necessary to execute the work of the presbytery that are responsible to the presbytery through the Leadership Council.

The Leadership Council shall develop a *Policy and Practice* manual describing as *policy*, those aspects of the work for which authorization from the presbytery is *required*; and to which any changes must be approved by presbytery.

Section 5.02: Specific Duties and Powers

The Leadership Council shall have general supervision of the affairs of the presbytery between its business meetings; set the agendas and fix the hour and place of meetings; make recommendations to the presbytery; and perform other duties as are specified in the *Policy and Practice*.

The Leadership Council shall be directly responsible to, and shall be subject to the orders of, the presbytery, and none of its acts shall conflict with action taken by the presbytery.

Section 5.03: Members (Revised 11/25/2014)

The Moderator and Vice-Moderator of the presbytery plus elected and/or appointed elders (one of whom may serve as Leadership Council Chair) shall constitute the Leadership Council. Such composition shall be detailed in the *Leadership Council Policy and Practice*.

Section 5.04: Meetings

Unless otherwise ordered by the Leadership Council, regular meetings shall be held on the second Thursday of each month. Places and times of meetings shall be the decision of the Leadership Council.

Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Leadership Council Chair and shall be called upon the written request of three members of the Leadership Council.

The Leadership Council may meet by electronic means if all members have reasonable notice of the electronic meeting and the ability to discuss, deliberate, discern the will of God, and vote on business items. The quorum for such an electronic meeting is prescribed in Section 1.04 of the Leadership Council Policy and Practice. Further requirements for such electronic meetings may be prescribed in the Leadership Council Policy and Practice. (Added 9/8/2020)

Section 5.05: Staff Support

The Executive Presbyter, Stated Clerk and Treasurer shall provide staff support, without vote, to the Leadership Council.

(End of Article V)

**ARTICLE VI
COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS**

Section 6.01: Standing Committees

Standing committees of the presbytery will be identified by the Leadership Council and will include all bodies required by the Ohio Nonprofit Corporation Law. Composition, duties and policies of such committees are detailed in the *Presbytery of the Miami Valley Policy and Practice*.

Section 6.02: Administrative Commissions

The use of administrative commissions will comply with the guidelines provided in the *Book of Order (G-3.0109b)*. Once authorized by the presbytery at a duly called meeting, the Moderator shall appoint ruling elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament to the commission in accordance with the action of the presbytery.

Section 6.03: Investigating Committees

The Moderator of the presbytery may appoint an investigating committee between stated meetings of the presbytery as authorized by *D-10.0201b* upon receipt by the Stated Clerk of a written statement of an offense as defined in *D-10.0101* and *D-10.0102*. If the Moderator disqualifies her/himself in a particular case, the Moderator may delegate to the Vice-Moderator the authority to appoint an investigating committee. In making the appointment, the Moderator or Vice-Moderator shall consult with the Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk of the presbytery or their designees. The appointment of investigating committees shall be reported as information to the next stated meeting of the presbytery.

Section 6.04: Committees of Counsel

In the event the presbytery becomes a complainant or respondent in a remedial case (*D-6.0302*), the Moderator of the presbytery may appoint a committee of counsel between stated meetings of the presbytery as authorized by *D-6.0302a*. If the Moderator disqualifies her/himself in a particular case, the Moderator may delegate to the Vice-Moderator the authority to appoint a committee of counsel. In making the appointment, the Moderator or Vice-Moderator shall consult with the Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk of the presbytery or their designees. The receipt of the remedial complaint and the appointment of committees of counsel shall be reported as information at the next stated meeting of presbytery.

(End of Article VI)

ARTICLE VII PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 7.01: Constitutional Fidelity

The *Bylaws of the Presbytery of Miami Valley* and the government of this presbytery shall at all times be in consonance with the Constitution of The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The rules contained in the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the presbytery in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the presbytery may adopt.

(End of Article VII)

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

Section 8.01: Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended at any stated meeting of the presbytery by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous stated meeting. The bylaws may be temporarily suspended without such notice when two-thirds of the members present vote in favor of such suspension.

Section 8.02: Policy and Practice

The *Bylaws of the Presbytery of the Miami Valley* shall include an attachment referred to as the *Presbytery of the Miami Valley Policy and Practice*, which includes the *Policy and Practice* for the Leadership Council and all standing committees of the presbytery.

The purpose of the *Presbytery of the Miami Valley Policy and Practice* shall be to describe general policies of the presbytery and the structure, purpose, duties, and policies of the individual committees of the presbytery.

Changes to *policy* in the *Presbytery of the Miami Valley Policy and Practice* shall be by majority vote of presbytery with at least ten (10) days prior notice of such changes. Changes to *practice* may be made by the respective councils and committees charged with their oversight.

(End of Article VIII)

(End of Presbytery of the Miami Valley Bylaws)