

# Manual of Procedure

of

# First Presbytery

of the

## Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church



Last updated November 2025

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**ARTICLE I: PURPOSE, AUTHORITY, & ORGANIZATION**

- I.A. The Court of the Church next higher than the Session is the Presbytery. Its purpose, authority, and responsibilities are delineated in F.O.G. 10.1 ff.
- I.B. First Presbytery includes those Associate Reformed Presbyterian Churches within the geographical bounds of the Presbytery as determined by the General Synod (see <http://arpchurch.org/presbyteries/> ).
- I.C. First Presbytery was incorporated under the laws of the State of North Carolina on October 3, 2017. The mailing address of the corporation shall be that of the current Stated Clerk of First Presbytery. The officers of the corporation shall be the current officers of First Presbytery as delineated in Article IV of this Manual.

## **ARTICLE II: MEETINGS**

II.A. First Presbytery shall have three Stated Meetings during the year:

1. Spring Meeting: March (Second Tuesday) 10:00 A.M.
2. Summer Meeting: July (Third Tuesday) 10:00 A.M.
3. Fall Meeting: November (Second Tuesday) 10:00 A.M.

When a stated Presbytery Meeting falls within the week of a special Church season, a national event such as Election Day, or when complications arise from the host site, the Stated Clerk in consultation with the Program Committee shall have authority to move the meeting either one week later or earlier so long as sufficient notice is made to the Presbytery.

II.B. Stated Meetings shall ordinarily be held in the churches of the Presbytery in alphabetical order of the names of the churches. Churches unable to host the meetings shall notify the Stated Clerk in a timely manner.

II.C. The quorum and other procedures for Stated Meetings of Presbytery is specified in the F.O.G.

10.11.A.

II.D. The procedures and limitations for Called Meetings of Presbytery are specified in the F.O.G.

10.12.

II.E. Retired pastors shall not be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum of any meeting of Presbytery. This in no way affects their eligibility and participation in meetings they attend.

II.F. A summary report on the proceedings of the Stated Meetings shall be sent to the churches by First Presbytery's Stated Clerk.

### ARTICLE III: PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- III.A. The Program for all Stated Meetings of Presbytery shall be prepared by the host Pastor, an elder representative of the host congregation, and the Officers of First Presbytery, including the Moderator-Elect. The Moderator shall serve as Chairman of the Program Committee. The Program shall be presented to the Presbytery for approval.
- III.B. The Program Committee shall work with the Standing Committee on Candidates & Examinations in arranging a schedule for seminary students to preach before the Presbytery.
- III.C. The Program Committee shall be responsible for the presentation to the Fall Meeting of Presbytery of a doctrinal sermon. This sermon shall be for the purpose of challenging the Presbytery through our doctrines to a greater understanding of, love for, and service to our God. The Committee is not to be limited to members of First Presbytery in selecting one to render this service.
- III.D. The Program Committee shall be responsible for inviting the President of First Presbyterial to give an address at First Presbytery at least once per calendar year.
- III.E. The Program Committee shall endeavor to stress some feature of the work of Presbytery and Synod at various times.
- III.F. The Program Committee may invite Fraternal Delegates from sister denominations from time to time.
- III.G. The Program for Stated Meetings shall ordinarily include the following:
  - 1. Registration (30 minutes prior to the time of meeting)
  - 2. Moderator constitute meeting with prayer
  - 3. \*Address by the retiring Moderator or someone appointed by Moderator
  - 4. Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Fall Meeting)
  - 5. Welcome by host church
  - 6. Constitution of Roll (through registration)
  - 7. Recognition of guests
  - 8. Collection for the Presbytery Benevolence Fund [added April 2015]
  - 9. Unfinished business
  - 10. Moderator-Elect called to the Chair
  - 11. Introduction of Vice-Moderator
  - 12. Announcement of Committees, if needed
  - 13. Presentation of Program
  - 14. New Business
  - 15. Report of the President of First Presbyterial (Spring Meeting)
  - 16. Standing Committee Reports
  - 17. Lunch
  - 18. Continuation of Business
  - 19. Election of Moderator
  - 20. Announcement of place for meeting
  - 21. Adjournment
  - 22. \*\*Singing of 133rd Psalm

\* The Program Committee shall dispense with the Retiring Moderator's Sermon when there are two or more student sermons scheduled at any meeting of First Presbytery.

\*\*The custom of the Presbytery, as well as the General Synod, has been to close each stated meeting with the singing of the 133rd Psalm.

III.H. Guide for the Program Committee of First Presbytery

1. Items normally occurring at all Stated meetings:
  - A. Moderator responsible for time for special prayer.
  - B. New Moderator, in conjunction with Stated Clerk, appoints three Ministers for Committee on Memorials and Resolutions. First minister named (& present) will be asked to chair the Committee. Three Elders (plus one alternate) will be appointed by alphabetical rotation of churches.
  - C. Address by Moderator of Synod (Fall, Winter, or Spring).
  - D. Sermon or devotion at beginning of afternoon session.
  - E. Consider Overtures from Synod (Discuss at Fall Meeting. Discuss and vote at Spring Meeting).
  - F. Consider Memorials from churches. Will be read and referred to Moderator's Committee on Memorials.
2. Items normally at Fall Stated Meeting:
  - A. Communion Service - Host Pastor and host church elders responsible in conjunction with Moderator.
  - B. Doctrinal Sermon.
3. Items normally at Spring Stated Meeting:
  - A. Sermon or Address by current/retiring Moderator (unless superseded by doctrinal or student sermons).
  - B. Nominations for and Election of Moderator
  - C. New Moderator select Vice-Moderator (Minister appoint elder and vice-versa).
  - D. Report on Congregational Reports - Committee on Congregations.
  - E. Address by President of First Presbytery.
4. Responsibilities of Stated Clerk for Presbytery Meetings
  - A. Have registration sheets for ministers, elders, and visitors.
  - B. Provide extra forms for elder delegate registration along with a place to collect forms.
5. Responsibilities of Host Church for Stated Presbytery Meetings
  - A. Registration will begin no later than 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting.
  - B. Provide 2 tables in the registration area along with nametags and pens.
  - C. Provide coffee, juice, water, and light breakfast foods.
  - D. Provide lunch at a cost determined by the host church. Receive money for lunch during registration.
  - E. Make arrangements for organist or pianist for worship at 10:00 A.M., 1:00 P.M., and at close of meeting.
  - F. Provide bulletin for meeting including the music for singing the Christian Unity Psalm at close of meeting.
  - G. Have someone from host church to give a welcome during the morning session.
  - H. Provide meeting rooms for committees that may be meeting, along with one or more people to guide delegates to the proper rooms.
  - I. Provide clerical staff for reports that may need to be edited and/or printed.
  - J. Provide a map/directions showing how to get to church.
  - K. Provide a table, lectern, and 2 chairs for the clerks.

## ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS

IV.A. The Officers of First Presbytery shall be as follows: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Stated Clerk, Assistant to the Stated Clerk, Parliamentarian, and Treasurer. The Officers of Presbytery are excused from serving on Moderator's Committees (see FOG 10.10).

### IV.B. THE MODERATOR

#### 1. MANNER OF SELECTION:

The Moderator must be a member of the court, over which he presides and is to be elected by it. Any minister or elder is eligible to the Office of Moderator. Anyone making a nomination must have approval of the nominee. The Moderator shall serve a one (1) year term being elected at the Spring Stated meeting prior to his taking office at the Summer Stated meeting. The Presbytery shall ordinarily alternate between electing a Minister and an Elder. When the Moderator-Elect is a Minister, he shall ordinarily select an elder as his Vice-Moderator and vice-versa. In case an elected Moderator dies, moves his membership from First Presbytery, or resigns before he serves as Moderator, the Clerks of Presbytery shall be responsible for securing someone to serve as Moderator and Vice-Moderator of Presbytery for that meeting.

#### 2. TERM OF OFFICE:

The Moderator shall take office at the Stated meeting of Presbytery for which he was elected, when the unfinished business has been disposed of, and shall serve through the unfinished business at the end of his term.

If an elder, he shall be an ex-officio member of the court until the conclusion of the meeting at which he surrenders his office.

#### 3. DUTIES:

- A. Appoint a Vice-Moderator, who shall be confirmed by the Presbytery at the Summer Stated Meeting prior to his assuming office.
- B. Appoint a Moderator's Committee on Memorials and Resolutions and report this information to the Program Committee prior to the meeting of Presbytery.
- C. Serve as Chairman of the Program Committee.
- D. Call to order and preside over the meetings of Presbytery.
- E. Announce the business before the court.
- F. State and put all questions properly brought before the court.
- G. Take the vote and announce the result.
- H. Decide all questions of order subject to an appeal to the house by any two members.
- I. The moderator shall compose and send a letter of thanks and encouragement to the hosts of all Stated Meetings of First Presbytery.

### IV.C. THE VICE-MODERATOR

#### 1. MANNER OF SELECTION:

The Vice-Moderator must be a member of the court and is chosen by the Moderator-Elect. He must be a minister or elder and shall be confirmed by the Presbytery prior to assuming office.

#### 2. TERM OF OFFICE:

One year.

If an elder, he shall be an ex-officio member of the court until the conclusion of the meeting at which he surrenders his office.

#### 3. DUTIES:

- A. Serve as a member of the Program Committee.
- B. Assist the Moderator as requested to do so.
- C. Assume the duties of the Moderator in the absence of the Moderator.

**IV.D. THE STATED CLERK**

1. MANNER OF SELECTION:

The Stated Clerk shall be nominated to the Presbytery by the Committee on Nominations and shall be elected by the Presbytery.

2. TERM OF OFFICE:

Three years. He may succeed himself.

If not a member of the court, he shall have the privileges of the floor at all open and executive sessions.

3. DUTIES:

- A. Keep a roll of the Presbytery.
- B. Constitute the roll at the meeting of Presbytery. The roll shall be constituted from enrollment forms (See Appendix 15) and by signing an enrollment form prepared by the Stated Clerk at the meeting.
- C. Keep attendance lists for every meeting and include such in the Minutes.
- D. Serve as the convener and a member of the Program Committee.
- E. Send out notices of Stated and Called Meetings at least one week before the date of the meeting.
- F. Take responsibility of all papers and reports to be referred and place such papers and reports in the hands of the proper committees or persons.
- G. Make a note of unfinished business to come before the Presbytery at its next meeting.
- H. Keep accurate minutes of the proceedings of Presbytery.
- I. Prepare the minutes of the Presbytery and distribute as soon as possible. An electronic copy of the Minutes will be sent to all others churches and ministers of the presbytery and to the ARP Center. A copy of all minutes, including those of judicial commission record of the case, shall also be posted on the First Presbytery web page(s) with password protection. The clerk will provide copies to at least one archival site approved by the General Synod.
- J. Receive and send all official communications on behalf of the Presbytery.
- K. He shall present a report of his actions since the last Stated meeting to the subsequent Stated meeting of the Presbytery.
- L. Sign all official papers of the Presbytery.
- M. Maintain a current copy of the Manual of Procedure and post the most recent edition on the Presbytery webpage.
- N. Provide a *Manual of Procedure of First Presbytery* to each minister who becomes a member of First Presbytery and to each candidate for the ministry.
- O. Serve as an advisory member of the Committee on Stewardship and Finance.
- P. Upon the death of a minister of the Presbytery, send a message of condolence to the family. He shall notify the presbytery and appoint a representative to attend the funeral service if possible, and appoint some member of Presbytery to prepare a memorial tribute for the records of Presbytery and Synod.
- Q. Notify the Committee on the Minister and His Work of a minister's absences from presbytery when those absences reach or exceed fifty percent over two calendar years.

**IV.E. THE ASSISTANT TO THE STATED CLERK**

1. MANNER OF SELECTION:

The Assistant to the Stated Clerk shall be nominated to the Presbytery by the Committee on Nominations and shall be elected by the Presbytery.

2. TERMS OF OFFICE:

Three years. He may succeed himself.

If not a member of the court, he shall have the privileges of the floor at all open and executive sessions.

3. DUTIES:

- A. Assist the Stated Clerk as requested to do so.
- B. Assume the duties of the Stated Clerk in the absence of the Stated Clerk.
- C. Read all reports and correspondence that are to be considered by the Presbytery as requested.  
Ordinarily, only recommendations contained in the committee reports are to be read to the Presbytery.
- D. Call the roll of the Presbytery whenever required by the Court.
- E. Serve as a member of the Program Committee.

**IV.F. THE PARLIAMENTARIAN**

1. MANNER OF SELECTION:

The Parliamentarian shall be nominated to the Presbytery by the Committee on Nominations and shall be elected by the Presbytery.

2. TERM OF OFFICE:

Three years. He may succeed himself.

If not a member of the court, he shall have the privileges of the floor at all open and executive sessions.

3. DUTIES:

- A. At all meetings of First Presbytery, the Parliamentarian shall call attention to procedures which are not in accord with the *Form of Government of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church*, the *Manual of Procedure of First Presbytery*, and where none of these applies, by *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*. On request, he shall advise the moderator on procedural matters. However, all questions of order shall be decided by the Moderator, subject only to the appeal of two or more members of the court.
- B. Serve as a member of the Program Committee.

**IV.G. THE TREASURER**

1. MANNER OF SELECTION:

The Treasurer shall be nominated to the Presbytery by the Committee on Nominations and shall be elected by the Presbytery.

2. TERM OF OFFICE:

Three years. He may succeed himself.

If not a member of the court, he shall have the privileges of the floor at all open and executive sessions.

3. DUTIES:

- A. Serve as the custodian of all funds committed to First Presbytery.
- B. Maintain an up-to-date and accurate record of all receipts and disbursements using a computer program.
- C. The Treasurer shall present timely and complete financial reports to be distributed with the Stated Clerk's packet for stated meetings. These report shall be computer generated and done according to accepted accounting practices.
- D. Serve as a member of the Program Committee.
- E. Serve as an *ex officio* member of the Committee on Stewardship and Finance.
- F. Assist the Committee on Stewardship in the development and supervision of an annual budget.
- G. Pay expenses of Presbytery Officers and Committees as approved by Presbytery.  
Appropriately documented expense report will be maintained by the Treasurer.

- H. Unless otherwise designated, the Treasurer will post the amount received through church commitments to the General Fund first.
- I. The Treasurer shall notify in the month of June churches that have failed to remit one-half of their commitments by the Summer Stated Meeting.

**IV.H. THE ASSISTANT TREASURER**

1. MANNER OF SELECTION:

The Assistant Treasurer shall be nominated to the Presbytery by the Committee on Nominations and shall be elected by the Presbytery.

2. TERM OF OFFICE:

Three years. He may succeed himself.

3. DUTIES:

A. In the absence of the Treasurer, as needed, shall serve:

- 1) As the Custodian of all funds committed to First Presbytery; and;
- 2) Fulfill all other duties of the Treasurer.

B. Serve as an *ex officio* member of the Committee on Stewardship and Finance.

## ARTICLE V: PROCEDURES

### V.A. Reports

1. In order to be considered at Presbytery, all reports are to be submitted to the Stated Clerk in the form of a good printed or electronic copy no later than 8 days prior to the meeting of Presbytery. The Committee on Candidates & Examinations, the Committee on Congregations, the Committee on the Minister and His Work, and the Committee on Church Extension are excused from this requirement provided some of their work is still pending, though they are encouraged to submit a report with as much information as possible before the meeting.
2. All Memorials, Resolutions to Synod, Constitutional Amendments, and changes in the *Manual of Procedure* are to be considered only if they are received by the Stated Clerk in time to be sent with the announcement of the Presbytery meeting.
3. All reports of Standing Committees shall be acted on by the Presbytery without reference. Each committee is to be prepared and required to defend its proposals, recommendations, etc. on the floor of Presbytery.
4. Requests for Special Speakers to address First Presbytery by committees or individuals must be submitted in writing to the Stated Clerk no later than 45 days before the Stated meeting of Presbytery for which the request is made.

### V.B. Presbytery will pay for expenses incurred for Presbytery's business that is done by its direction and approval provided such expenses are specifically provided for in the Operating Budget of the Presbytery. The mileage rate shall be 100% of the specified IRS rate.

### V.C. Representatives to Presbytery

1. Each session is required to send to the Stated Clerk the name of its representative(s) to the meeting of Presbytery not later than one week prior to the meeting. See Appendix 8 for a copy of this form. If this form is not mailed or e-mailed to the clerk, then it should be taken to Presbytery meeting. (It is important that all churches be represented.)
2. Excuses for Ministers and Licentiates/Students are to be sent to the Stated Clerk. The Clerk will track excused and unexcused absences in order to help the Minister & His Work Committee facilitate MOP VI.E.2.B.4.
3. While the Presbytery desires and needs the participation and counsel of all its ministers, the Presbytery will not require that honorably retired ministers, active missionaries currently out of the country, and active duty military chaplains be in attendance. [rev. 10-14]

### V.D. Presbytery shall be governed in its meetings by the *Form of Government of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church*, the *Manual of Procedure of First Presbytery*, and where none of these applies, by *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*.

When the Presbytery conducts its business in Executive Session, the first order of business should be to constitute itself as a committee of the whole; to recognize its moderator as the chairman of the committee; and to elect a committee reporter whose responsibility it shall be to report to the Presbytery the actions taken by the committee, which report when adopted shall be considered the official records of the Executive Session and shall be entered into the Minutes of the Presbytery.

### V.E. Changing the Rules

1. Proposed changes to the *Manual of Procedure of First Presbytery* are to be considered only if they are received by the Stated Clerk in time to be sent with the announcement of the Presbytery meeting. Precise references shall be given regarding these changes. Such

changes must be approved by Presbytery at a Stated Meeting and shall become an Order of the Day at the next Stated Meeting. If approved at the time of final consideration, the change becomes a part of the *Manual of Procedure*.

2. Any rule of Presbytery, except those from the *Form of Government of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church* and those provided for in the changing of the *Manual of Procedure of First Presbytery*, may be suspended for a particular meeting or until the next Stated Meeting by consent of two-thirds of the members present.
3. Committees are encouraged to review their duties and submit any proposal that will improve the work of the committee and the Presbytery.

**ARTICLE VI: STANDING COMMITTEES (see FOG 10.14)**

- VI.1. The Presbytery has appointed Standing Committees to take the management of a specified area of Presbytery's work. Standing Committees shall have power to manage the work entrusted to them without particular instructions from the Presbytery, but they shall be required to obey the Presbytery's instructions whenever given to them. The Presbytery has full power to approve or set aside any action taken by a Standing Committee. All Standing Committee assignments are to begin the first day of July and end the last day of June of the years indicated.
- VI.2. Each Standing Committee shall elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and a Secretary. Elections shall be held before the Fall Meeting of Presbytery. The term of service for the Vice-Chairman and Secretary shall be at the discretion of the Committee. The term of service for the Chairman of Standing Committees shall ordinarily be three (3) years.
- VI.3. The term of service for committee members ordinarily shall not exceed four (4) years, and no member shall be eligible to serve longer than six (6) years without rotating off the committee for a period of one (1) year.
- VI.4. Any member who misses two committee meetings in succession of any committee of Presbytery is to be replaced unless he has a valid excuse. The committee will determine the validity of the excuse and will determine whether or not to accept it. If a replacement is needed, the Chairman of the committee shall notify the Stated Clerk and chairman of the Nominations Committee.
- VI.5. No person shall serve on a Standing Committee who is called or employed by the committee or whose work or studies are supervised by the committee or who is directly affected by the outcome of the committee's work. (For example, a mission developer shall not serve on the Committee on Church Extension, or a resident of the ARP Manor shall not serve on the ARP Home Board of Directors.)
- VI.6. In the event the chairman of a standing committee can no longer serve due to resignation, illness or transfer, the senior minister on the committee shall convene the committee for the purpose of electing a chairman.
- VI.7. A report shall be made by all standing committees at each Stated meeting of First Presbytery if they have conducted any business. Each committee shall report at least once each calendar year regardless.

## VI.A. STANDING COMMITTEE ON CANDIDATES AND EXAMINATIONS

### VI.A.1. MEMBERSHIP:

A. This Standing Committee shall be composed of eight (8) members each, with each member serving a term of four (4) years, beginning the first day of August and ending the last day of July of the years indicated with two (2) members retiring each year. The members of this committee shall be excused from serving on the Moderator's Committees at the meeting of the Presbytery. The Nominating Committee will nominate candidates to be elected by First Presbytery at a stated meeting and is to try to maintain an equal balance of ministers and elders. The Chairman shall be elected by the Committee before the Fall Meeting of Presbytery and shall serve for the remainder of his time on the Committee, preferably at least two years. A Vice-Chairman shall be elected to overlap the final year of the outgoing Chairman, and shall normally then succeed to the position of Chairman as stated above, to ensure a smoother transition from one chairmanship to the next. The Chairman shall be Presbytery's second representative on the Synod's Committee on the Minister and His Work

### VI.A.2. CONCERNING CHURCHES WITHOUT A PASTOR:

A. It shall be responsible for counseling with churches regarding a pastoral call. A Procedure for Securing a Pastor for a Local Congregation has been adopted by the Presbytery. (Appendix 3)

### VI.A.3. CONCERNING MINISTERS TRANSFERRING INTO THE PRESBYTERY:

A. It shall examine all Ministers who have applied for transfer into the Presbytery.

- 1) Ministers transferring from another ARP presbytery shall normally only be examined orally by the Candidates and Examinations Committee primarily in regard to their theological views, but also their personal testimony and call and other areas as the committee sees fit.
- 2) Ministers transferring from a fellow North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) denomination or confederation shall normally be given the written theology portion and a summary portion of the remainder of the written exam pertinent to our ARP history, polity, and ethos. Subsequently, they shall be examined orally by the Candidates and Examinations Committee primarily in regard to their theological views, but also their personal testimony and call and other areas as the committee sees fit.
- 3) Ministers transferring from outside the ARP Synod and outside of NAPARC shall be given all portions of the Presbytery's written exam and then subsequently be examined orally by the Candidates and Examinations Committee primarily in regard to their theological views, but also their personal testimony and call and other areas as the committee sees fit.

B. The Committee though may administer the written exam in part or the whole to anyone if they have cause to explore a minister's views and competence more fully, though they should be ready to provide a rationale for doing so to the presbytery.

C. Ministers shall not be recommended for transfer unless they have an acceptable call within the presbytery or are eligible to be approved to a work outside the bounds of presbytery. Ministers who are honorably retired may also be recommended for transfer if they are from another ARP presbytery and their theological views remain in agreement with the ARP Standards as ascertained by the Committee.

- D. It shall examine the credentials and standing of Ministers transferring into the Presbytery and shall report to the Presbytery whether or not they are in order. Ministers seeking transfer shall not be presented to the full presbytery until the Candidates and Examinations Committee believes them to be acceptable candidates.
- E. If a minister wishes to transfer into First Presbytery who was ordained by a non-Presbyterian body, the Candidates and Examinations Committee shall make a determination as to whether to recommend the candidate for re-ordination or not, at which time the presbytery shall decide how to proceed.

VI.A.4. CONCERNING MINISTERS TRANSFERRING WITHIN THE PRESBYTERY:

- A. It shall examine the call to ensure that it meets the requirements of Appendix 3. It may act as a commission to approve a call from a congregation in First Presbytery or an agency of the General Synod to a member in good standing of First Presbytery, providing that the call meets all requirements set forth in Appendix 3.

VI.A.5. CONCERNING CHURCHES AND MINISTERS ENTERING BI-VOCATIONAL OR PART-TIME RELATIONSHIPS (see FOG 9.11)

- A. Purpose:  
To provide a procedure for ministers and churches desiring to enter into bi-vocational or part-time relationships.
- B. Definitions:
  - 1) Bi-vocational does not refer to a full-time minister who with the permission of his session spends only a minor part of his time in employment other than his church-related responsibilities.
  - 2) The term bi-vocational ministry includes part-time ministries.
  - 3) A bi-vocational minister is one whose working hours are more or less equally divided between serving a congregation in any ministerial capacity and working in another capacity of employment in order to obtain a total income necessary to provide a living for himself and his family.
  - 4) A bi-vocational ministry that is self-initiated by a minister and that does not involve a call from a church is to be considered labor outside the ecclesiastical bounds of the Presbytery and shall be excluded from these provisions.
- C. Policies and Guidelines
  - 1) Before a church and a minister may enter into any bi-vocational relationship, the call must be approved by the Presbytery.
  - 2) The terms of call for a bi-vocational relationship must specify the number of hours in which the minister is expected to labor in his church related responsibilities and the total number of hours in which he may labor in any other capacity of employment. Any change in these terms must receive the approval of the Presbytery.
  - 3) In bi-vocational relationships, First Presbytery's minimum compensation package shall be prorated according to the amount of time the minister is expected to labor in his church-related responsibilities. For example, if a minister is called for half-time work, one-half of the minimum terms shall apply.
  - 4) Insurance and retirement consideration:
    - a. A bi-vocational minister must be employed by a church for at least thirty hours a week in order to be eligible for Synod's insurance program. If it is available, and he so desires, he may seek coverage under a program carried by his non-church employer.
    - b. A bi-vocational minister must be employed by a church for at least twenty hours a week in order to be eligible for Synod's retirement program. If a minister qualifies

for this program, the church should pay the required amount into Synod's plan, and this should be included in the call.

- 5) Any reference in this policy to another employer should be understood to apply equally to self-employment.
- 6) All provisions of this policy shall apply when conditions within a congregation make it necessary for a relationship to be changed from full-time to bi-vocational.

#### VI.A.6. CONCERNING CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY:

##### A. COMING UNDER CARE

- 1) It shall examine men who ask are requested to be taken under the care of the Presbytery as students of theology according to the procedures of FOG 9.15-16. The candidate will normally be expected to give before Presbytery a testimony of his personal relationship to Christ and his reasons for desiring to be received, as a part of a recognition service. A candidate should be enrolled in or a recent graduate of a graduate program (normally a Master of Divinity) at a school approved by the Presbytery.
- 2) It is expected that a student will seek to come under care by the end of his middle year of studies at the latest (roughly 2/3 through his program of studies) – preferably sooner. Should a student seek to come under care later in his studies, the Candidates and Examinations Committee may require that he remain under care for a minimum of six months prior to a licensure exam in order to allow the presbytery enough time to sufficiently evaluate his qualifications and call. Students under the care of another presbytery (ARP or other) may be received by transfer under the status of a student if the Committee approves them. Students from another presbytery (ARP or other) who have completed their studies and have been extended a call from a congregation in First Presbytery may simply be examined for licensure and ordination without coming under care if the Committee so desires.

##### B. OVERSIGHT

- 1) It shall appoint annually (12-month term, July-June) Student Liaisons to work with students under care. Student Liaisons shall be a minister(s) or elder(s) in good standing of the Presbytery (preferably a current committee member); if he is not currently serving on this committee, he shall serve as a non-voting advisory member of the committee. Student Liaisons are meant to assist and facilitate the work of the committee and in particular the chairman through maintaining contact with students under care. Student Liaisons shall work with each student in coordination with the committee, and shall:
  - a. Contact them (or appoint another member of the committee to do so) 3-4 times annually to stay up to date on their academic progress, personal life and progress in the faith, as well as their other needs and plans. Contact should be face to face when possible. A written report shall be given on each student to the committee 4 weeks prior to the spring and fall stated Presbytery meetings.
  - b. Help to arrange their preaching schedule in coordination with the chairman of this committee as needed.
  - c. Help to set up their written exam proctoring in coordination with the chairman of this committee as needed.
  - d. Help to arrange the grading of the written exam if requested by the committee.
- 2) It shall keep a careful check on the scholastic records of the candidates as needed and in keeping with privacy laws.
- 3) It shall report to the Presbytery the progress of each student at the spring *stated* meeting of Presbytery.

**C. FIELD WORK**

- 1) It shall cooperate with the seminary's Director of Field Work (or similar position) in seeking field work for the students as fits the student's schedule and also meets the requirements of the seminary they attend.

**D. PREACHING**

- 1) It shall be responsible for having each student preach twice for Presbytery. The committee shall work with the student on selecting a text for each sermon, and shall require the student to submit to the Committee the manuscript of his sermon at least 2 weeks before the meeting of presbytery at which he is to preach. One sermon shall be from an Old Testament text and the other from a New Testament text (in either order).
- 2) The middler sermon will give evidence of his developing gifts, and shall be preached before the Committee after the student has taken at least the first course in preaching or homiletics. The student shall submit to the committee (1) a 3-5 page exegetical study on the passage, and (2) a manuscript of the sermon itself. The Committee on Candidates and Exams shall function as a commission of Presbytery to decide whether the middler sermon is acceptable as evidence of their progress. If not, they may ask the student to preach again.
- 3) The senior sermon will be delivered at a stated meeting or at a called meeting during the week of the meeting of General Synod and will be considered by the Presbytery as part of the trial for licensure. The student shall submit (1) a 3-5 page exegetical study on the passage and (2) a manuscript of the sermon itself to the committee. The sermon should not exceed 20 minutes in length (though the presbytery may further limit the length as needed). After the sermon, a pastor designated by the committee will lead the suggestions and criticisms of the sermon. If the trials for licensure are sustained, the Moderator shall lead the service of licensure (FOG 9.24.F).

**E. WRITTEN & ORAL EXAMINATION**

- 1) When a student candidate is ready to be examined in the areas of English Bible, church history and government (polity), theology, and pastoral care, he will request examination by the committee. The student will take the written exam in the above subject areas, completing it at least one week prior to meeting with the committee (the committee shall arrange a proctor and schedule for the student to take the written exam as they deem best). A grade of 80% in each subject area shall be necessary to pass; if a student scores lower than that on any section, he may retake that section as arranged by the committee. A section may only be retaken once. He will then meet with the committee for an oral exam in which briefer questioning shall occur for clarification of his answers or views. Reasonable accommodations shall be made for those who do not speak English as their first language.
- 2) If the committee passes the candidate, they will arrange for him to be examined briefly on the floor of Presbytery primarily in theological views and will lead the exam that is representative of the committee exam. (FOG 9.25-26). If the committee does not think the student ready, they will not present him to Presbytery. The floor exam for licensure shall occur during a stated meeting or at a called meeting during the week of the meeting of General Synod.

**VI.A.7. CONCERNING EXCEPTIONS TO THE STANDARDS**

- A. When a man believes that he has an exception to the Westminster Standards he should write a brief and yet thorough answer to the following questions and submit his answers to the presbytery Candidates and Examinations Committee:
  - 1) Provide a Biblical argument for your exception and a discussion of the perceived

Biblical inadequacies of the Confessional position with which you take exception.

- 2) How do you see your exception(s) relating to the matter of orthodoxy in our Presbytery?
- 3) How do you see your exception(s) relating to the unity and maturation (theological, personal, and ministerial) of the Presbytery?
- 4) How will your exception(s) be handled in your teaching and preaching? How will you use it and explain it in your ministry? How will you hold it compared to the language of the Confession? How much do you feel a call or conviction to teach and preach your exception?
- 5) How would you communicate your respect for the Westminster Standards while holding and communicating your exception? [a.(1-5) adopted 7-19-16]

The candidate may also be required by the Candidates and Examinations Committee to study classical Reformed readings, explaining and defending the confessional position raised by the exception and show in his paper that he demonstrates a serious engagement with and understanding of those readings.

- B. The Candidates and Examinations Committee shall inform the Presbytery as part of its presentation and written report: The exceptions taken by a candidate, and the exact reference in the Standards; the biblical and theological grounds on which the exceptions are held by the candidate; the Committee's recommendation on whether or not the exception should be accepted and may be taught. The full, written statement from the candidate concerning his exception(s) shall also be submitted by the Committee as an addendum to their report to the Presbytery. This statement should first demonstrate a basic conversance with the position of the Westminster Standards (as adopted by the ARP), and the most cogent explanations within Reformed and Presbyterian history that are in support of the position.
- C. The Candidates and Examinations Committee shall instruct any candidate seeking to take an exception to the Westminster Standards as follows:

Because there is a practical, perpetual side of what it means theologically to be a Presbytery "subscribing to the Confession," but where some ministers will "take exception(s)" while subscribing, and other ministers will not take exception(s) while subscribing, we offer the following guidelines for all ministers in First Presbytery. All ministers in First Presbytery, those who take exceptions to the WCF and those who do not, must recognize that in submitting to and pursuing the peace, purity and prosperity of the church, they do so as those having the duty to teach and preach all that is communicated in the WCF as the summary of sound doctrine expressed by Holy Scripture. While an individual minister should be free to express his exceptions to the WCF he must do so only by clarifying that as he holds these he is deviating on these points from what is expressed in the WCF. He is thereby obligated not to make these exceptions the source of any matter that would upset the peace, purity unity, or prosperity of the church, and should therefore speak of his exception humbly and carefully, as opposed to divisively and polemically, with great deference being given to the Confessional position from which he deviates. This is because our subscription to the WCF, while not creating our unity, is an expression of our unity. All ministers are to understand themselves to be in subjection to their fellow presbyters with respects to our subscribing, honoring and reverencing the WCF. All ministers are to function within the church believing, confessing and implementing the system of doctrine of the church. Any exception(s) that a minister holds must remain on the periphery of his ministerial work, and if he finds that they cannot, because of conscience sake, he should make this known to his fellow presbyters, and, if after discussion with them he is unable to keep his exception(s) on the periphery, he should seek affiliation with another ecclesiastical body. [adopted 1-28-20]

D. Presbytery then makes the final determination whether a man's exceptions are acceptable or not. In any case, the candidate's or minister's statement shall be recorded in the minutes of Presbytery. The minutes shall also note when a candidate takes no exceptions to the Standards.

## VI.B. STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### VI.B.1. MEMBERSHIP:

A. The Standing Committee on Christian Education shall be composed of four (4) members, each serving a term of four (4) years beginning the first day of August and ending the last day of July of the years indicated, with one (1) member retiring each year, with the membership consisting of two Ministers and two lay persons. The Directors of the High School and the Middle School Retreats will serve a 2-year term and shall be elected by the committee and recommended to Presbytery for approval. They shall be a voting member of the committee upon approval of Presbytery. The Directors are eligible for re-election by the committee. A Treasurer shall be elected by the committee, be recommended to Presbytery for approval, and shall serve for four years. The Chairman shall be elected by the Committee before the Fall Meeting of Presbytery and shall serve for three years.

### VI.B.2. DUTIES:

A. This Committee cooperates with Boards and Committees of Synod in carrying out Synod Programs related to this Committee's work. It will seek to coordinate Synod, Presbytery and local programs.

B. On the Presbytery level, the Committee is responsible for all Presbytery matters related to Christian Education. This would include such things as

- 1) providing and promoting opportunities for leadership training,
- 2) providing retreats and conferences encouraging churches and students to participate in retreats and conferences, and encouraging churches to pay for ½ of registration costs for students and the full amount for their leaders
- 3) providing and promoting opportunities for church officer training
- 4) promotion of Christian higher education through Erskine College and Erskine Theological Seminary and through work with Associate Reformed Presbyterian students in other colleges and universities
- 5) studying and recommending to Presbytery long-range proposals for furthering the work of Christian Education in the Presbytery.

C. On the Synod level, the Committee is responsible for promoting ARP conferences to the churches in our presbytery; which include the summer youth conferences of Horizon & Quest, Appalachia Mission Trip, Camp Joy, and Family Bible Conference; as well as training that is available for local churches.

D. This Committee prepares a complete budget, which is recommended to Presbytery at the Fall Meeting. Careful records are kept and an annual accounting of income and expenditures is given to Presbytery at the Spring Meeting.

E. This Committee shall make a report to each Stated Meeting of Presbytery, and include post-retreat reports.

## VI.C. STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHURCH EXTENSION (revised Oct. '19)

### VI.C.1. MEMBERSHIP

A. The Standing Committee on Church Extension shall be composed of eight members, each serving a term of four years, with two members retiring each year, with the membership consisting of four ministers and four elders of First Presbytery. The Chairman shall be elected by the Committee before the Fall meeting of Presbytery and shall ordinarily serve two years. The Chairman shall represent Presbytery on Synod's Board of Outreach North America.

### VI.C.2. VISION

A. To fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28) by planting confessional and Presbyterian churches within First Presbytery.

### VI.C.3. FUNCTIONS

The Church Extension Committee shall focus on three primary functions:

#### A. Recruitment and Assessment

- 1) Developing networks from which to recruit potential church planters
- 2) Identifying and interviewing church planter candidates
- 3) Referring church planter candidates to ONA's Church Planter Assessment
- 4) Evaluating church planter candidates according to his past ministry experience, approach to church planting, pastoral references, skills in ministry (e.g. preaching, leadership, etc.), adherence to ARP standards, and marital stability
- 5) Developing a plan for mentoring church planters based on the CPAC report and other evaluations.

#### B. Oversight & Support

- 1) Recommending elders from organized congregations to serve on provisional sessions
- 2) Communicating with church planters and provisional sessions regarding the development of the mission – including receiving reports and acting upon requests
- 3) Maintaining a current study of all Church Extension works by assessing all works in terms of their progress toward becoming self-supporting, self-sustaining, and self-governing.
- 4) Working with Synod's Board of Outreach North America to provide assistance as needed to Church Extension works (Exploratory or Missions), always encouraging the aided churches toward self-support and giving to the Denominational Ministry Fund
- 5) Reviewing all budgets of missions as recommended by provisional sessions
- 6) Supporting church planters and their families with the proper encouragement, resources, and mentoring
- 7) Praying for and visiting missions
- 8) Overseeing the service of organization for new congregations

#### C. Identifying new fields for church planting

- 1) Developing and reviewing criteria for identifying viable new fields
- 2) Performing a demographic study and a feasibility assessment for every new proposed field
- 3) Matching church planters with appropriate fields
- 4) Evaluating written proposals that result from exploratory year
- 5) Recommending to Presbytery the approval of new missions

VI.C.4. COOPERATION

- A. This Committee shall cooperate with Synod's Board of Outreach North America, the Presbytery Committee on World Witness, and the Board of World Witness. The Committee is also to communicate with the appropriate NAPARC Presbyteries concerning church extension work as per Items #2 and #3 of the NAPARC "Comity Agreement" (appendix 14).

VI.C.5. CHURCH TRANSFERS

- A. The Committee shall receive and respond to inquiries from churches who desire to explore a relationship with the Presbytery. The Committee will make recommendations to the Presbytery concerning the reception of these congregations. The Committee will serve as the liaison between newly received organized congregations and the Presbytery for a period of one year to provide assistance and orientation to congregations transferring into the Presbytery.

VI.C.6. REPORTS TO PRESBYTERY

- A. The Committee shall make a report to each Stated Meeting of Presbytery.
- B. The Committee shall submit an annual operational ministry budget to Presbytery for approval.

**VI.D. STANDING COMMITTEE ON CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH (created Oct. '20)**

**VI.D.1. MEMBERSHIP:**

- A. The Committee will comprise 4 pastors, two of which may be “retired,” and 4 elders for a 4-year term. It is an important consideration for service on this committee to include men with significant, active, pastoral/eldership experience within a congregation.

**VI.D.2. PURPOSE:**

- A. The purpose of First Presbytery’s Committee for Congregational Health is to strengthen and encourage spiritual and numerical vitality among the congregations of the Presbytery through the methods of biblical, confessional, ordinary means of grace ministry modelling. A healthy congregation is a core group of people growing spiritually and numerically with its emphasis in gathering people around the Gospel, corporate worship, and exercising the ordinary means of grace.

**VI.D.3. SCOPE:**

- A. The Committee will encompass in its purpose of “strengthening” and “encouraging” the following: church revitalization (helping existing congregations in decline), church vitality (encouraging congregations to thrive spiritually and numerically), and strategic assessment of congregational health in terms of location, finances, yoked congregations, and core groupings). This committee will possess no judicial initiative. It is not to be approached by a congregation with grievances toward a pastor, Session or Diaconate.

**VI.D.4. VISION:**

- A. In order to promote the redevelopment or revitalization in terms of perceptible spiritual and numerical growth within existing congregations, this committee must utilize First Presbytery’s most significant resources which include, a heart for growth, pastoral experience, critical evaluation, empowering mature members from other congregations to aid in redevelopment works, kingdom-minded prayer.

**VI.D.5. DUTIES:**

- A. The Committee for Church Health will fulfill its purposes by:
  - 1) Receiving, reviewing, and reporting on the Annual Statistical Report of First Presbytery prepared by the Stated Clerk.
    - a. The review is to encompass prayerful, strategic, sensible analysis with a positive view of strengthening and encouraging the Presbytery and any struggling congregation, including its pastor and Session.
    - b. The report is to be a summarization of numerical growth/decline as well as any specific recommendations to the Presbytery for mentoring, counselling, financial support, mergers of congregations, supply of session and pastors, or in the event of severe decline, closure.
  - 2) Assessing a congregation’s health through reading of its sessional records along with open interaction and feedback from its pastor and Session.
    - a. Organize cohorts for pastors and/or Sessions of First Presbytery seeking encouragement, support, guidance, or mentoring in pursuit of church vitality. [This may be in conjunction with the Minister and His Work Committee.]
    - b. Engage congregations, pastors, and Sessions with prayerful, biblical, thoughtful, and even helpfully critical feedback purposed at encouraging a dynamic of vision and growth.

- c. Offer ideas to pastors, Sessions, or congregations for diagnosing areas of obstacle, weakness, or sin (e.g., lengthy pulpit supplies, facilities management, personnel conflicts and budgets, programs that exhaust people resources, financial, attachments to “traditionism” or idolatries of the past).
- d. Provide access to Biblically sound resources available in our denomination pertaining to church vitality.

3) Recommending to the Presbytery analysis and vision for church re-developments in strategic areas of location, demographic, and financial strength.

- a. Coordinate with the Presbytery and from nearby congregations, families or members to stabilize a given congregation’s core grouping.
- b. To encourage and give guidance to the elders of a particular session.
- c. Procure and/or ensure proper financial stability for redevelopment works seeking to call a pastor.
- d. Arrange opportunities for Sessions to discuss opportunities for merging two or more congregations.

4) Actively recruit and find/develop training for ministry candidates and/or ministers for redevelopment works.

5) Arranging with the Program Committee an annual speaker, seminar, or conference pertaining to church vitality (not necessarily revitalization).

6) Seek funding from the Presbytery for the redevelopment of congregations with potential for numerical and spiritual growth or redirect funding/property closures and sales back to Presbytery as necessary.

## VI.E. STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE MINISTER AND HIS WORK

### VI.E.1. MEMBERSHIP:

A. The Minister and His Work Committee shall be composed of eight (8) members, with each member serving a term of four (4) years, beginning the first day of August and ending the last day of July of the years indicated with two (2) members retiring each year. The members of these committees shall be excused from serving on the Moderator's Committees at the meeting of the Presbytery. The Nominating Committee, in consultation with the Minister and His Work Committee and in consideration of the needs of the Committee, will nominate candidates to be elected by First Presbytery at a stated meeting and is to try to maintain an equal balance of ministers and elders. The Chairman shall be elected by the Committee before the Fall Meeting of Presbytery and ordinarily shall serve for two years. The Chairman of the Minister and His Work Committee shall be Presbytery's first representative on the Synod's Committee on the Minister and His Work.

### VI.E.2. DUTIES:

#### A. AS A COMMISSION OF FIRST PRESBYTERY:

- 1) It shall dissolve pastoral relationships when requested to do so by the Minister, provided the congregation or the Church Extension Committee has concurred in either a duly called congregational meeting or a committee meeting of the Church Extension Committee (see FOG 9.55-61).
- 2) It shall authorize the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery to grant letters of transfer to other Presbyteries. The Commission shall contact the appropriate standing committee in order to ascertain if ministers have outstanding financial obligations to the Presbytery or Synod.
- 3) It shall visit churches in which difficulties have arisen for the purpose of inquiring into the difficulties and to counsel with the parties concerned. It may act to correct these difficulties when requested to do so by the minister and/or Session. It shall act to correct these difficulties as directed by the Presbytery.
- 4) All such corrective actions taken as a commission shall be reported to the Presbytery for review within 4 weeks. Upon direction of the Presbytery a full account of a case requiring commission action is to be provided.
- 5) When action is taken as a commission, all parties involved shall be informed that the matter will be reviewed by the Presbytery. All such actions, including actions in judicial cases without process (see *Book of Discipline* 4.3), stand until review and action by the Presbytery. Such actions by a commission may be sustained, overruled, or modified by the Presbytery.
- 6) If the difficulty entails the need for a judicial case with process under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery, the Committee shall report this need to the Presbytery for review and action. In such matters requiring process, the Committee is not to act as a judicial commission unless agreed upon by the parties involved (see *Form of Government*, 13.7.C) and as directed to do so by the Presbytery.
- 7) It shall function as an ecclesiastical commission to carry out ordination and/or installation services for those pastors who have been approved and who have an approved Call by previous action of Presbytery to accept a Call to a pastoral position in First Presbytery or in an approved ministry laboring outside the bounds of First Presbytery.

**B. AS A COMMITTEE:**

- 1) CONCERNING CHURCHES WITH A PASTOR:
  - a. It shall encourage congregations to adequately care for their minister (salary, housing, etc.). [rev. 6-14]
  - b. Study the annual review of the compensation package of each congregation and inquire when they feel a problem has arisen. Central Services in Greenville sends the Annual Statistical Reports to all churches/missions in First Presbytery. Presbytery's Stated Clerk will then send a copy of the terms of call page that he receives for each church to the M&HW Committee secretary. The Committee will review and report the results that will be published in the Spring Minutes of First Presbytery, or as received, reviewed, and reported, at a later date. [rev. 6-14]
  - c. It may visit churches in which difficulties have arisen for the purpose of inquiring into the difficulties and to counsel with the parties concerned when requested to do so by the Minister and/or Session or as directed by the Presbytery.
- 2) CONCERNING CHURCHES WITHOUT A PASTOR:
  - a. It shall maintain active supervision over all vacant churches in the Presbytery and shall appoint Moderators of Sessions after consultation with the Session.
  - b. It shall be responsible for counseling with Sessions regarding Stated Supplies, and Occasional Supplies when a church is without a Pastor. The Session shall seek the counsel of the Committee before making arrangements for the supply of the church's pulpit during a period of vacancy. A Policy for Pulpit Supply has been adopted by the Presbytery (Appendix 2).
  - c. It may visit churches in which difficulties have arisen for the purpose of inquiring into the difficulties and to counsel with the parties concerned when requested to do so by the Session or as directed by the Presbytery.
- 3) CONCERNING MINISTERS LABORING OUTSIDE THE ECCLESIASTICAL BOUNDS OF FIRST PRESBYTERY:
  - a. For men seeking to labor out of bounds, their request to labor out of bounds should be brought to presbytery through the committee, after the committee has reviewed and approved such a request.
  - b. It shall receive and review the annual reports of non-retired, ordained ministers laboring outside the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of First Presbytery. An ordained minister shall not be considered to be laboring outside the bounds of First Presbytery when he is serving in any capacity with any agency or institution of the General Synod of the ARP Church.
  - c. Not less than thirty days before the annual reports are to be submitted to the committee, a committee member shall send a written notice to ministers who are laboring outside the ecclesiastical bounds of the Presbytery with the report form included for the ministers to return to the committee member.
  - d. It shall present a condensation of these annual reports to the Spring Stated Meeting of the Presbytery.
  - e. In the event a minister ceases entirely to exercise the duties of his office, devoting himself to other pursuits without satisfactory reason, the presbytery shall endeavor to persuade him to return to his work of the ministry. These circumstances may constitute a censurable offense.
    - (1) After two years, if unsuccessful in their persuasion, the minister's name shall be removed from the roll with entry of the facts upon the record.
    - (2) For ministers that provide a satisfactory reason, a maximum of five years will be allowed. After five years the minister's name shall be removed from the roll with entry of the facts upon the record.

- (3) When practicable, removed ministers shall be transferred into a local congregation by the Presbytery, through the M&HW committee acting as a commission.
- f. When a minister has been absent from the meetings of presbytery for two years, and the presbytery is unable to find him after diligent search or the minister does not provide satisfactory reason for his absence, his name shall be removed from the roll with entry of the facts upon the record.
- g. In the event a minister becomes involved in areas of work outside the normal bounds of General Synod, his presbytery shall have the responsibility of determining his voting status [cf. FOG 9.13 and 10.5].

4) CONCERNING ALL MINISTERS:

- a. When a minister, who is neither retired nor laboring outside the geographical bounds of presbytery, has had unexcused absences fifty percent or greater from the meetings of presbytery within two calendar years, his name shall be brought forward, for admonition by the presbytery, upon first offense, at which time his excuses will be considered. After receiving an admonition from the presbytery, should the minister persist in maintaining a level of absence fifty percent or greater from the meetings of presbytery, a formal censure of rebuke may be considered, instituting the normal process of discipline per the Book of Discipline.
- b. Conflicts and/or accusations involving a minister in First Presbytery against another minister of First Presbytery shall always follow the Book of Discipline. Accusations against and difficulties concerning ministers of First Presbytery, in relationship to their congregation(s) and/or session (s), that (a) remain unresolved after reasonable efforts have been attempted to resolve matters directly by the parties involved (i.e., the minister and the congregation[s] and/or session[s]) and (b) subsequently have been communicated to the Presbytery and/or disclosed to the Committee/Commission in the course of its work in MOP 6.F.1-4 (see above), may be brought before the Committee/Commission, and shall be handled in the following manner:
  - (1) In counseling with the parties concerned, or acting to correct difficulties as requested, all members of the Committee/Commission shall always deal with all parties without prejudice or partiality. If Committee/Commission members believe that they cannot, then they are required to recuse themselves.
  - (2) The Committee/Commission shall always follow Biblical principles and the rules of discipline set forth in the *Book of Discipline*, Chapters 3 & 4, whether the conflict involves censurable offenses or not. The goal of all involved in the process is to achieve reconciliation, Lord willing. (see *Book of Discipline* 1.3).
  - (3) The parties in conflict shall be requested to compile a written list of their verifiable differences and present them to the Committee/Commission.
  - (4) All parties shall be given at least one week to submit, in writing, their responses to the other sides' differences, and submit them to the Committee/Commission.
  - (5) The Committee/Commission shall then schedule a meeting with all parties together for the purpose of helping them work through and hopefully resolve their differences, thus achieving reconciliation.
  - (6) In reporting its work to the Presbytery, the Committee/Commission shall only include information or recommendations applicable to the specific items on the lists of both concerned parties in conflict (see point C. above).

- (7) All members of Presbytery are reminded that they are required by their ordination vows to abide by the Constitutional Standards of the ARP Church, and the Manual of Procedure of First Presbytery, which includes the appendices. All the rules shall be equally applied to every member of the court, and no prejudice or partiality is to be shown to anyone.

## VI.F. STANDING COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

### VI.F.1. MEMBERSHIP:

- A. The Standing Committee on Nominations shall be composed of four (4) members, each serving a term of four (4) years, beginning the first day of August and ending the last day of July of the years indicated, with one (1) member retiring each year, with the membership consisting of two ministers and two elders. The members of this Committee shall be excused from serving on the Moderator's Committees at the meeting of Presbytery. The Chairman shall be elected by the committee before the Fall Meeting of Presbytery and ordinarily shall serve for three years. The Chairman shall be Presbytery's representative on the Synod's Committee on Nominations.

### VI.F.2. DUTIES:

- A. This Committee shall determine the best available persons to perform the Presbytery's work and to present their names to the Presbytery for election to the respective offices.
- B. It shall nominate persons for all Presbytery offices that are vacant or are to become vacant through rotation with the exception of the Moderator and Vice-Moderator.
- C. It shall nominate persons for all vacancies occurring on the Standing Committees of the Presbytery and for any special committees of the Presbytery.
- D. It shall nominate persons to be First Presbytery's representative and alternate representative on the Executive Board of Synod.
- E. It shall select a Page to represent First Presbytery at the General Synod, according to Synod's policy.
- F. It shall place in nomination only the names of those persons (including ministers) who have expressed their willingness to serve and shall give to the Stated Clerk the full name, address, and telephone number of each nominee.
- G. It shall be responsible through its chairman to notify newly elected appointees of Presbytery's Boards and Committees of their respective position of service. Said notification shall be made within 30 days of election.

## VI.G. STANDING COMMITTEE OF STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

### VI.G.1. MEMBERSHIP:

- A. The Standing Committee on Stewardship and Finance shall be composed of four (4) members, each serving a term of four (4) years beginning the first day of August and ending the last day of July of the years indicated with one (1) member retiring each year, with the membership ordinarily consisting of two elders and two ministers. The Treasurer of First Presbytery and the Assistant Treasurer of First Presbytery shall serve as *ex officio* members. The chairman shall be elected by the Committee before the Fall Meeting of Presbytery and ordinarily shall serve for three years. The chairman shall be Presbytery's representative on Synod's Committee on Stewardship and Finance.

### VI.G.2. DUTIES:

- A. It shall aid the local congregations in finding vital means of promoting stewardship among their people.
- B. It shall work with Synod's Committee on Stewardship in carrying out Synod's Stewardship program in the Presbytery.
- C. It shall determine annually the amount assessed per active member to satisfy the funding for First Presbytery's General and Church Extension Fund. The amounts shall be presented for approval at the Fall Stated Meeting. Church apportionment payments are to be made at least quarterly, on or about the following dates; and the final payments of outstanding balances shall be made no later than Dec. 15th.
  - 1) 1st quarter – Feb. 1st
  - 2) 2nd quarter – May 1st
  - 3) 3rd quarter – Aug. 1st
  - 4) 4th quarter – Nov. 1st
  - 5) Newly established missions who have yet to establish membership rolls participate in the funding of the presbytery by contributing annually a minimum of \$50.00 to be invested equally in the General Fund and the Church Extension Fund.
- D. It is to prepare a budget which shall be presented to the Presbytery for approval at its Fall Meeting.
- E. It shall serve as an advisor to the Treasurer, or the Assistant Treasurer, as required in the fulfillment of their duties. The committee will consult at least annual with such financial advisors as are available regarding the investment of the monies of the Presbytery.
- F. It shall perform, or cause to perform, an annual review of the Treasurer's record and reports. This review will be submitted to Presbytery at a Stated Meeting.
- G. It shall receive all requests for disbursements from the Ministerial Benevolence fund for consideration. Requests for \$1000 or less may be approved and sent to the Treasurer for immediate disbursement. Requests for more than \$1000, if approved, shall be submitted to the full presbytery for approval before disbursement by the Treasurer.

## VI.H. STANDING COMMITTEE ON WORLD WITNESS

### VI.H.1. MEMBERSHIP:

- A. The Standing Committee on World Witness of First Presbytery shall be composed of four (4) members, each serving a term of four years beginning the first day of August and ending the last day of July of the years indicated with one member retiring each year, with the membership consisting of ministers and lay persons. The Chairperson shall be elected by the committee before the Fall Meeting of Presbytery for the following year. Also, the mission chairman of First Presbyterial shall serve as an advisory member.

### VI.H.2. DUTIES:

- A. The Committee shall encourage each local Session to select a World Witness Coordinator, who:
  - 1) Is vitally concerned about the church's world-wide mission;
  - 2) Will give this work a high priority in serving Christ.
- B. The Committee shall disseminate information to the local churches through the World Witness Coordinator and to communicate to the World Witness Office through the Presbytery on the needs and the plans of the local churches for promoting missions.
- C. The Committee shall provide in cooperation with Synod's Board of World Witness the following:
  - 1) Information, instruction and encouragement to pastors, mission coordinators and congregations;
  - 2) The exchange of information on local church programs and plans for promoting missions;
  - 3) Assistance in the promotion of short-term trips with World Witness Coordinator.
- D. The Committee shall report to the Spring and Fall Stated meetings of First Presbytery
- E. The Committee shall serve as a liaison between the Presbytery and ordained ministers of First Presbytery who are serving as missionaries in foreign countries. The Committee's responsibilities to these missionaries will include:
  - 1) Assign one of its members as a liaison for each missionary;
  - 2) Report on missionaries who are members of First Presbytery;
  - 3) Correspond with the churches in First Presbytery when special prayers are needed for missionaries from First Presbytery.
- F. The Committee may report to First Presbytery on the work and prayer needs of World Witness missionaries from churches within First Presbytery.

### VI.H.3. First Presbytery World Witness / Missions Funding Guidelines

#### A. Long-Term Missions

- 1) Missionaries from First Presbytery (FP) should receive priority in terms of funding, as this is a committee working with FP funds.
- 2) Missionaries should have at least 85% of support raised before funding can be requested from the WW/Mission Committee. We should be viewed as a solution in cases where the missionary is basically ready to go, and just needs a little help getting to the official amount to get on the field. The potential missionary should be willing to meet with the committee for a presentation on the mission. This will help us get a better feel for the mission and the missionary/family. The amount of annual committee funding toward a long-term mission will be determined on a case-by-case basis by committee.

**B. Short-Term Missions**

- 1) Members of FP churches desiring to go on short term missions should be encouraged by the Presbytery in those works.
- 2) The members desiring to go on short-term missions should first receive approval and funding from their home churches. Once that is established, they can present a support request to the committee. The amount of funding toward a short-term mission will be determined on a case-by-case basis by committee.
- 3) As with long-term missions, short-term missions out of FP receive priority. Anything being done outside of a FP church should be done with organizations in the Reformed, Biblical world. Practically, this means it has to be something affiliated with a NAPARC denomination.
- 4) Short-term missions should in some measure be seen as an opportunity to promote long term missions out of FP. Participants are encouraged to present the mission to their home church as part of a missions emphasis from the pulpit on a given Sunday (calling the members to consider the mission field). In addition, the home church should require a debriefing on how the mission went. Short-term missions should be the seeds that grow long-term missions down the road.

**C. Emergency Considerations**

- 1) Obviously, long term missions sometimes have emergencies, like we see in the COVID pandemic, where a significant portion of funding can fall away rapidly. Given these emergencies, the committee is open to receiving requests for funding support. Decisions of this nature would require an assessment that includes all interested parties (Home Church, First Presbytery, and World Witness). The amount of funding toward such emergencies will be determined on a case-by-case basis by committee.

**D. Future Requests**

- 1) All requests are considered as an annual or one-time commitment, therefore, any additional requests will need to go through the request and approval process.

## ARTICLE VII: MODERATOR'S COMMITTEES

VII.A. The Moderator's Committees are committees appointed by the Moderator of First Presbytery.

VII.B. Generally, their function is to review any papers which are referred to them and to convey to the Presbytery recommendations concerning them. At each Stated Meeting the Moderator shall appoint the Committee on Memorials and Resolutions and any other special committees as needed. The Moderator's Committee in making its report to Presbytery shall submit at least three printed copies for the use of the Moderator and Clerks.

### VII.C. THE MODERATOR'S COMMITTEE ON MEMORIALS AND RESOLUTIONS

#### 1. MEMBERSHIP:

A. The Committee on Memorials and Resolutions shall be composed of three (3) ministers and three (3) elders from three churches. (Churches are appointed alphabetically.) Candidates for the Ministry may be assigned to a committee as an observer. The Chairman of this Committee is to be appointed by the Moderator. The officers of Presbytery, members of the Standing Committee on the Minister and His Work and Standing Committee on Nominations are excused from serving on Moderator's Committees.

#### 2. DUTIES:

A. The Committee on Memorials and Resolutions shall consider all Memorials placed before the Presbytery by Sessions or by individual ministers or elders or by any other source, and shall offer to the Presbytery appropriate recommendations regarding them. Such recommendations include, but are not limited to, recommending the memorial as a whole; recommending the memorial contingent on word editing recommendations from the committee; or recommending that the memorial not be adopted, but sent back to the author(s) for clarification, specification, reworking, etc., with a new version to be brought back at another stated meeting.

### VII.D. MODERATOR'S COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

#### 1. MEMBERSHIP:

A. The Standing Moderator's Committee on Theological and Social Concerns shall be composed of six to eight members, each serving for the duration of the business of the committee. The moderator shall direct the Nominations Committee, which shall function as a commission, to appoint members to this committee within two weeks of receiving this charge. The membership of the committee should normally be made up of an equal number of ministers and elders. The first named member of the committee shall serve as the Chairman.

#### 2. DUTIES:

- A. This committee shall receive any overtures dealing with Doctrinal matters which are assigned to it by the Presbytery. It shall make a detailed study of the Overtures and to the Doctrines to which they relate and shall make appropriate recommendations to the Presbytery concerning them.
- B. The committee shall report to the Presbytery at the time assigned to it by the Presbytery.
- C. Once the Presbytery has acted upon the matter assigned to the committee, the committee shall be dissolved.

**APPENDIX 1: RULES FOR SESSIONS AND SESSIONAL RECORDS (see FOG 6.9)**

- A1.1. Each meeting should be opened and closed with prayer.
- A1.2. Sessions should meet at least monthly.
- A1.3. Sessions must send the name of the appointed delegate to Presbytery to be enrolled, whether or not he attends, and afterwards call upon the delegate appointed to report as to his attendance.
- A1.4. Minutes of each meeting should be read and approved at the next subsequent meeting, or as soon thereafter as practicable.
- A1.5. Records of baptisms, deaths, admissions, and demissions must be kept in the regular minutes. For ready reference, it is recommended that another listing be separately maintained in the church office.
- A1.6. Minutes for the prior calendar year must be submitted electronically (in one e-mail, preferably as 1 combined file) by September 1 so as to be examined prior to the Fall stated meeting of Presbytery, and delinquency without an approved reason is to be regarded as censurable neglect. The Congregational Health Committee is to make a note of such delinquents and notify the Stated Clerk, who shall call the matter up at the Spring Stated Meeting as unfinished business. If you are unable to submit minutes electronically, please see the Stated Clerk.
- A1.7. The name of the congregation to which it belongs should appear in plain letters on Records.
- A1.8. Minutes must be signed by Moderator and Clerk of Sessions.
- A1.9. Minutes should include names of Elders present and absent, time, and location of the meeting.
- A1.10. A Quorum's presence should be indicated.
- A1.11. A copy of the church budget commensurate with the records being examined should be included.
- A1.12. A statement of purpose for the church involved should be drafted and located in the opening pages of the record book.
- A1.13. Minutes of Congregational meetings should be signed and attached.
- A1.14. In compliance with the F.O.G.5.10, the Session should have read the minutes of the Board of Deacons, preferably early in the calendar year for the previous calendar year.
- A1.15. All records shall be typed electronically – handwritten minutes are not acceptable. Neatness is always insisted upon.
- A1.16. Printed copies of the minutes shall be kept in a notebook solely for sessional records. Custom minutes books are not necessary; sturdy 3-ring binders are sufficient.

## **APPENDIX 2: POLICY FOR PULPIT SUPPLY WITHIN THE PRESBYTERY**

- A2.1. The Minister and His Work Committee shall be responsible for working with (1) local congregations that need persons to supply and (2) persons available for supply work.
- A2.2. **LIST OF PERSONS AVAILABLE**
  - A. The Minister and His Work Committee shall maintain an approved list of persons available for pulpit supply. The list shall include retired ministers, ministers serving in special ministries, i.e., ministers who are on the roll of Presbytery in non-pastoral duties and non-ordained students and lay persons. Suggestions for this list shall be received from ministers and sessions.
- A2.3. **PROCEDURE FOR CONGREGATIONS THAT NEED A SUPPLY**
  - A. Congregations that need a supply, occasional or stated, may contact the Minister and His Work Committee, through the chairman, requesting the names of available persons for supply work. The Minister and His Work Committee, if requested, will make contact with an available supply to fulfill a requested appointment.
- A2.4. **RESPONSIBILITY OF PERSONS WHO SUPPLY**
  - A. Persons who permit their names to be placed on the supply list shall be careful to fulfill all commitments. Failure to meet an appointment, unless providentially hindered, shall be reason for removal of names from supply list.
- A2.5. **RESPONSIBILITY OF CONGREGATION TO SUPPLY**
  - A. Remuneration for occasional supply shall be at least \$100.00 flat amount, plus IRS travel rate.
  - B. Congregations seeking stated supplies shall negotiate with the minister the terms of service and monthly remuneration with the approval of Presbytery (Cf. F.O.G. 9.52).
- A2.6. **UPDATING AND CHANGING OF SUPPLY LIST**
  - A. New names shall be added at the discretion of the Minister and His Work Committee. Persons wishing to withdraw their names may do so at any time by notifying the Minister and His Work Committee.

**APPENDIX 3: PROCEDURE FOR SECURING A PASTOR FOR A LOCAL CONGREGATION**

A3.1. The following outline sets forth the sequential steps that must be followed by a congregation and the Presbytery.

A3.2. ELECTION OF A NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- A. The congregation shall elect a Nominating Committee to recommend a pastor according to the procedures in FOG 9.54.

A3.3. NOMINATING COMMITTEE TO CONFER WITH PRESBYTERY'S COMMITTEE ON CANDIDATES & EXAMINATIONS

- A. The chairperson of the Nominating Committee before any minister is considered or contacted shall contact the chairperson of Presbytery's Committee on Candidates & Examinations and arrange for a meeting.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the Committee on Candidates & Examinations to provide counsel in the consideration and selection of possible candidates.
- C. The Committee on the Candidates & Examinations shall be responsible for counseling with churches regarding a pastoral call.
- D. The Committee shall be available to consult with every (Nominating) Committee which is seeking the services of a full-time minister. When requested, it shall advise the (Nominating) Committee regarding the merits, availability and suitability of any man whose name is contemplated for nomination to the congregation, and shall have the privilege of suggesting names to the (Nominating) Committee.
- E. No call to a permanent pastoral relationship shall be in order for consideration by the Presbytery unless the church has received and considered the counsel of the Presbytery through its Committee before action is taken to issue a call.

A3.4. THE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED BY PERSONS OUTSIDE A CONGREGATION WHEN SUBMITTING NAMES TO THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- A. Any Person or persons who have the name of a prospective minister to recommend to a Nominating Committee are to consult with Presbytery's Committee on Candidates & Examinations and seek its advisement.
- B. The Committee shall act on the name received and inform the person submitting said name of the action taken by the Committee within fourteen days. The individual submitting the name shall then proceed at his own discretion.
- C. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Nominating Committees are free to search for any candidate they see fit and inform the Committee on Candidates & Examinations for the purpose of examination, prior to presentation to their Session.
- D. Any person approached by a Nominating committee has a right to submit a name and shall immediately notify the Committee on Candidates & Examinations.

A3.5. REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE TO PRESBYTERY'S COMMITTEE ON CANDIDATES & EXAMINATIONS.

- A. When the Nominating Committee has agreed upon a person to recommend, it shall then relate this information to Presbytery's Committee on Candidates & Examinations, which shall examine the pending call and arrange for examination of the candidate.

**A3.6. REPORT OF PRESBYTERY'S COMMITTEE CANDIDATES & EXAMINATIONS**

- A. After examination of Candidate, Presbytery's Committee on Candidates & Examinations shall then make its recommendation to the Nominating Committee: (1) To approve candidate; or (2) to disapprove candidate. If the recommendation is for disapproval, the Candidates & Examinations Committee will explain the reason for its recommendation to the Nominating Committee and recommend that the Nominating Committee begin again with Section A3.3.
- B. When the Nominating Committee disagrees with the recommendations of the Presbytery's Committee on the Candidates & Examinations, the matter shall be resolved by the Presbytery.

**A3.7. REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE TO SESSION**

- A. The Nominating Committee, having secured permission to submit a candidate's name for congregational consideration, shall request the Session to call a congregational meeting for the purpose of hearing and acting upon the request of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee's report should include all pertinent data concerning the nominee: education, experience, and other qualifications. The report should also include the terms of the Call agreed upon between the Nominating Committee and the prospective Pastor (see FOG 9.54.H).
- B. The recommended minimum compensation package for Pastors serving one or more churches as the installed Pastor is:
  - 1) \$30,000 base salary
  - 2) Housing allowance or provide manse and utilities
  - 3) 100% of Synod's life and health insurance.
  - 4) \$2,000 minimum travel allowance
  - 5) Ministerial retirement as prescribed by Synod
  - 6) \$300 for continuing education
  - 7) Expenses for meetings of Presbytery and Synod
  - 8) 30 days vacation, 4 of which may be Sundays
  - 9) 10 days to hold special services outside the local church with the church paying supply, 2 of which may be Sundays
  - 10) 7 days for continuing education, 1 of which may be a Sunday
  - 11) Other fringe benefits as determined by the local session
  - 12) 100% moving expenses
  - 13) Perform an annual review of the terms of compensation in the pastoral call, taking into consideration annual 'cost of living' increases based on local economics. This review will take place prior to the annual preparation of the church budget and will involve the participation of an Elder and a Deacon meeting with the minister to discuss his needs and the most beneficial allocation of salary and allowances.

**A3.8. CALL OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

- A. After the Session approves the report of the Nominating Committee and calls a congregational meeting, the "...meeting shall be presided over by the Moderator of the Session appointed by the Presbytery, who shall be responsible for having a call properly drafted" (FOG 9.54.B). The form of the call shall be as follows:

**CALL FOR A PASTOR**

[\*2 pages]

We the officers and members of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church of \_\_\_\_\_  
being well satisfied with your ministerial qualifications, and confident that we have been led to you by the  
Holy Spirit as one whose ministry will be profitable to our spiritual interest, do earnestly call you  
\_\_\_\_\_ to undertake the office of pastor of this congregation.  
On the acceptance of this our call we promise you in the discharge of your duty all proper support,  
encouragement, and obedience in the Lord.

That you may devote yourself wholly to the Ministry of the Word, we promise and obligate ourselves to:

- a. Pay you an annual salary of \$\_\_\_\_\_, in at least monthly payments.
- b. Housing (Check all that apply):
  - (1)\_\_\_\_ Provide you with the free use of a manse with utilities.
  - (2)\_\_\_\_ Provide you with the free use of a manse without utilities.
  - (3)\_\_\_\_ Provide you with a housing allowance of \$\_\_\_\_\_, in at least monthly payments.
- c. Pay your moving expenses
- d. Grant you a travel allowance of \$\_\_\_\_\_ annually.
- e. Pay into the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Retirement Plan Fund as prescribed by the  
General Synod.
- f. Group Insurance (Check all that apply):
  - (1)\_\_\_\_ Pay \_\_\_\_\_ % of the cost of your participation in Synod's insurance programs (life,  
dependent life, medical, dental, accidental death and dismemberment, and  
disability).
  - (2)\_\_\_\_ Pay \_\_\_\_\_ % of the cost of your family's participation in Synod's insurance programs  
(medical and dental)
  - (3)\_\_\_\_ ARP medical insurance was offered to and declined by the minister. Explain how the  
minister and family will have insurance: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- g. Grant you an annual vacation of \_\_\_\_\_ days, 4 of which may be Sundays.
- h. Grant you \_\_\_\_\_ days to hold special services outside the local church with church paying  
supply, 2 of which may be Sundays
- i. Grant \_\_\_\_\_ days for continuing education, 1 of which may be a Sunday.
- j. Pay \$\_\_\_\_\_ for continuing education.
- k. Pay expenses for Meetings of Presbytery and Synod.
- l. Review with you annually the adequacy of this compensation.
- m. Other. (Attach)

We desire also to express our minimum commitment to you and to your family for events which could occur in the providence of God. Every effort will be made to assist and lovingly sustain and uphold you and/or your family should such an event occur.

In the event of **total disability**, as defined in the Synod's insurance program, we promise:

- a.  To continue the provisions of this call during the prescribed waiting period for commencement of benefits from Synod's insurance program. (90 days)
- b.  To continue the provisions of this call for a period not to exceed \_\_\_\_\_ months from the onset of total disability.
- c.  If you are residing in the manse, and during the month following the terms outlined in "a" or "b" above, to assist you in relocating and to contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ toward your relocation expenses.
- d.  Other. (Attach)

In the event you should **die** during the terms of this call, we promise:

- a.  To continue the provisions of this call dealing with annual salary, housing, and group insurance for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ months.
- b.  If you are residing in the manse, and during the month following the terms outlined in "a" above, to assist your family in relocating and/or contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ toward these relocation expenses.
- c.  Other. (Attach)

In testimony whereof we have respectively subscribed our names this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ (month), \_\_\_\_\_ (year).

Signatures (on separate sheets):

1. Elders
2. Deacons
3. Members

"It is desirable that the choice be unanimous, or nearly so. If the minority persists in its rejection of the nominee, the congregation shall be asked to reconsider its vote. A full account of the voting will be given to the Presbytery along with the call." (FOG 9.54.C).

Following the moderation of the call, "The signed call shall be confirmed in writing by the Moderator." (FOG 9.54.F).

The form to be used is as follows:

#### **ATTESTATION OF A CALL**

On (month) , (day) , (Year), I presided in the moderation of a call for (candidate) as pastor at the (local) Church.

\_\_\_\_\_, Moderator

[Note: Sessions may request an electronic copy of this form from the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.]

A3.9. REPORT OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TO COMMITTEE ON CANDIDATES & EXAMINATIONS

- A. Following the congregational meeting, the Moderator shall forward the call and the attestation of the call to the Committee Candidates & Examinations for review and recommendation to Presbytery (see FOG 9.54.G). If the call is in order, the Committee on Candidates & Examinations shall arrange for a meeting of the Presbytery to examine the pastor-elect.

A3.10. MEETING OF PRESBYTERY

- A. No person shall be chosen for pastor of a congregation who has not been regularly ordained, or examined by the Presbytery and approved for ordination" (FOG 9.46). If the Presbytery approves, the call will be tendered to the pastor-elect for acceptance.
- B. If the call is accepted, the pastor-elect shall then be granted permission to move onto the field of service.

A3.11. INSTALLATION

- A. The Committee on the Minister and His Work, along with the pastor-elect and Session, shall arrange for the service of installation.
- B. A Commission appointed by the Presbytery to ordain and install a minister at a called meeting of First Presbytery shall not be fewer in number than three (3) members, consisting of at least two (2) ministers and one (1) elder. (FOG 13.8.E.(2)).
- C. All members of a Commission shall participate in a service of ordination and installation of a minister at a called meeting of First Presbytery. Others may be allowed to participate (including guest outside our denomination) if approved by the Committee on the Minister and His Work, the Session, and the pastor-elect.
- D. A Commission appointed by the Presbytery to install a previously ordained minister shall consist of the same number of members as above without need of a called meeting of First Presbytery.

#### APPENDIX 4: RECOGNITION SERVICE FOR A CANDIDATE FOR THE MINISTRY

A4.1. The candidate shall stand before the Moderator, who shall preside. The Moderator shall ask the following questions, to which the candidate shall answer, "I do."

A4.2. The Moderator shall begin by saying, [see FOG 9.20]

**"The First Presbytery, having approved your testimonials and sustained your examination, now requires you to answer the following questions":**

- 1. Do you promise in reliance upon the grace of God to maintain a character consistent with your Christian profession and to be diligent and faithful in making full preparation for your ministry?**
- 2. Do you promise to submit yourself to the supervision of the Presbytery in matters concerning your preparation for the ministry of the Word?**
- 3. Do you desire now to be received by this Presbytery as a candidate for the Christian ministry in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church?**

A4.3. The Moderator shall then offer an appropriate prayer, at which time the candidate may kneel. Following the prayer the Moderator shall say:

**"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great head of the Church, I do now by the authority of the Presbytery declare that you are acknowledged and received as a Student of Theology in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, and I do now direct that your name be recorded on the roll of this Presbytery as a Candidate for the Gospel Ministry."**

A4.4. The Moderator shall then present to the candidate a Bible provided by the Presbytery for this purpose. The Moderator shall say:

**"Take now this Holy Bible, and be diligent to study the things which are written therein, that, as much as in you lies, you may faithfully and truly teach the Gospel of the grace of God."**

A4.5. Following this the Moderator shall close the service with a Benediction or Prayer.

**APPENDIX 5: REQUIREMENTS FOR A CANDIDATE FOR THE MINISTRY**

- A5.1. A Candidate for the Ministry shall be a member of a congregation in First Presbytery and endorsed by the church's Session (see FOG 9.15).
- A5.2. Candidates for the ministry under the care of the First Presbytery shall be graduates of an accredited college.
- A5.3. Candidates for the ministry under the care of First Presbytery who matriculate with the desire to be ordained by the Presbytery, i.e.,:
  - A. candidates enrolled by the Presbytery;
  - B. candidates who transfer to First Presbytery from other Presbyteries within the ARP Church, and;
  - C. candidates who transfer to First Presbytery from non-A.R. Presbyterian communions, shall be required to pass an objective test administered by the Candidates and Examinations Committee which shall include Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church History, Polity, Systematic Theology, Bible, and Worship and Sacraments, and Pastoral (practical) Ministry (see FOG 9.25).
- A5.4. Candidates for the ministry under the care of First Presbytery for ordination must be graduates from a seminary approved by the American Association of Theological Schools.
- A5.5. Candidates coming from another judicatory (whether from within or outside of our denomination) will follow these guidelines if they become candidates for the ministry under our care.
- A5.6. Candidates shall be required to attend one stated meeting of Presbytery each year unless providentially hindered.
- A5.7. The candidate will preach twice before Presbytery. The committee on Candidates and Examinations shall work with the student, his Minister-Sponsor, faculty advisor or homiletics professor on selecting a text for each of these sermons, with one being from an Old Testament passage and one from a New Testament passage, and shall require the student to submit to the Committee the manuscript of his sermon at least 4 weeks before the meeting of presbytery at which he is to preach. The first sermon will give evidence of his developing gifts. The second sermon will be delivered at a stated meeting and will be considered by the Presbytery as part of the trial for licensure. After the sermon, the student's minister sponsor will lead the considerations (suggestions and criticisms) of the Presbytery. If the trials for licensure are sustained, the moderator shall lead the service of licensure (FOG 9.24.F). The floor exam for licensure shall occur during a stated meeting or at a called meeting during the week of the meeting of General Synod.
- A5.8. Candidates in their final year of seminary shall prepare a statement of their faith which shall be sent to the Committee at least one month before they preach before Presbytery.
- A5.9. Candidates shall inform Presbytery, in writing, through the Candidates & Examinations Committee, of their desire for Licensure and/or ordination at least one month prior to the time for such services to be held.

- A5.10. Candidates shall not be ordained until the completion of courses required for graduation from Seminary and have an approved call (FOG 9.25.F).
- A5.11. Candidates are to be examined by Presbytery prior to licensure, ordination and installation.
- A5.12. Candidates from another denomination may be ordained by the Presbytery after they have completed the education work and other requirements prescribed for ordination by the Presbytery for our candidates, have satisfactorily passed examination given by the Presbytery on Doctrine, Church Government, Church History, Spiritual Experience, and personality qualifications, and after the proper credentials have been received by the Presbytery.
- A5.13. A Candidate that has been licensed has fulfilled all the requirements for ordination except having a call to a congregation or approved ministerial labor. The time of his probation (i.e., after being licensed) is especially designed for him to exhort and lead in ministry so that the church may see his gifts in action to the end that he be called to a particular ministry (FOG 9.22-24).

**APPENDIX 6: POLICY CONCERNING THE ETHICAL RELATIONSHIPS OF A MINISTER  
TO HIS FORMER FIELD OF LABOR**

- A6.1. When Presbytery dissolves the pastoral relationship, that pastoral relationship is dissolved. Only the person duly installed by Presbytery is authorized to perform pastoral services among a particular congregation.
- A6.2. For a Pastor or Associate Pastor to return to a former parish to perform pastoral services for the people, when they have another person as their pastor, is for him to show lack of taste and disregard for the minister who is there. The same is true for continued attendance at congregational functions, continued visiting among the congregation, or in the hospitals.
- A6.3. If he does return to assist in pastoral services, such as weddings, baptisms or funerals, it should be at the invitation of the pastor who is on the field, or the Session if a pastor is not on the field.
- A6.4. In this connection, the people are urged to give consideration to the pastor on the field, whom they have called; and to give him due respect by calling upon him to perform these services.
- A6.5. When a minister is released from his pastoral charge by First Presbytery, the Stated Clerk of First Presbytery shall send a copy of these relationships both to him and to the Clerk of the Session of the local church from which the pastoral relationship was dissolved in order that we may all be reminded to give respect to those who succeed us.

**APPENDIX 7: ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR LEGACY & GENERAL SEMINARY FUNDS**

- A7.1. Loans from the First Presbytery Legacy Seminary Scholarship Fund or the First Presbytery General Seminary Scholarship fund shall be made by check, payable to the candidate's student account at Erskine Theological Seminary (from the Legacy Seminary Fund) or another approved seminary (from the General Seminary Fund).
- A7.2. The candidate shall execute the promissory note form provided in paragraph 13 of this article. The promissory note shall become due for the amount of the loan on the date of graduation or one year from the date of note, whichever is earlier. Interest shall accrue at the lower of the following rates: one-half of prime rate at Bank of America, Charlotte, N.C, on the date of maturity of the note, or 6%.
- A7.3. At maturity, subject to paragraph 5 below, the note shall be renewed, at option of the candidate, and a new note executed for principal of the matured note, interest on the matured note, and any additional loan which may be authorized, under conditions of paragraphs 1 and 2.
- A7.4. At maturity, the second note shall be subject to renewal under terms set forth in paragraph 3. Funding shall not be provided for repeated courses nor in the event that the candidate fails to complete the prescribed courses within the normal time allotted as deemed appropriate by the candidate's seminary or First Presbytery's Committee on Candidates & Examinations.
- A7.5. No note shall be renewed if the candidate ceases to be a student of theology under the care of an ARPPresbytery and/or discontinues studies at Erskine Theological Seminary or another approved seminary. Any amount due at the time the candidate ceases to be a student or discontinues studies shall become payable in full at the date of maturity. In the event such note is not paid when due, the student may negotiate with representatives of the endowment for a term note, at Bank of America prime rate, providing for payment in full in not more than three years, with annual equal payments from date of note to maturity. Should the candidate re-enter Erskine Theological Seminary or another approved seminary, the note may be re-negotiated, and any interest paid adjusted to rates set forth in paragraph 2.
- A7.6. At maturity of the note (immediately following the graduation of student) a term note shall be executed payable in five equal annual payments or equivalent monthly installments, with interest atrates set forth in paragraph 2.
- A7.7. Payment of each annual installment of the note issued under provisions of paragraph A7.6 shall be waived and become a grant, provided at due date the individual is engaged in ministry to a church inthe A.R. Presbyterian denomination or is employed by the A.R. Presbyterian General Synod, one of its presbyteries, or one of its agencies, including Erskine College and Erskine Theological Seminary. No interest shall accrue on any installment waived under provisions of this paragraph. Upon commencement of an active ministry to an ARP congregation, Presbytery, or agency, such ministry shall continue for the following durations:
  - A. Students who received financial assistance for the M.Div. program shall serve five years, upon completion of the degree program.

B. Students who received financial assistance for other programs shall serve one year.

If the individual should cease to be employed as described herein, and become employed in other work, the existing balance of this term note at that time shall become due and payable. A new note may be executed, under conditions and terms as provided in paragraph 5 and shall be prorated on the basis of full months served.

A7.8. Any notes issued under the terms of this instrument shall be signed by the candidate, and, if married, by the candidate's spouse. If the student is a minor, the note shall be co-signed by one parent of the candidate.

A7.9. If a candidate for the Doctor of Ministry degree or any other degree is removed from the membership roll of First Presbytery, that candidate shall cease to receive funds upon the completion of the semester in which the candidate was removed from the roll of First Presbytery.

A7.10. Any scholarship assistance given to Erskine D.Min. candidates shall be for tuition costs and may provide up to one hundred percent (100%) of tuition costs, based upon available funding, as determined by the Committee on Candidates & Examinations.

A7.11. The Treasurer is pre-authorized to reimburse reasonable travel expenses (from the Legacy Theological Seminary Fund or the General Seminary Fund) for students with an approved promissory note (up to a \$1,000 maximum), the cumulative value of which shall be rolled over into the promissory note at the time of its next renewal or else its final mature value.

A7.12. The provisions of these administrative procedures shall be retroactive to September 1, 2000.

A7.13. The following promissory note agreement form will be used (see next page):

## Student Promissory Note Agreement

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Seminary name: \_\_\_\_\_

Seminary student financial account #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Application for assistance from (choose one):**

- The ARP First Presbytery Legacy Seminary Endowment Fund (use for Erskine Theological Seminary)
- The ARP First Presbytery General Seminary Endowment Fund (use for another approved Seminary)

**Seminary program (choose one):**

- Master of Divinity (M.Div.)
- Master of Theology (Th.M.)
- Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Terms

- A. **Parties.** This agreement is entered into on the date indicated below between the Fund indicated above ("the Fund") and the Student indicated above ("the Student").
- B. **Scholarship.** In accordance with the procedures established by First Presbytery of the Associated Reformed Church, the Fund is pleased to grant to the Student the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_, of which \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is the value being renewed and rolled over from a previous promissory note and of which \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is the value of a new grant. This financial assistance will be applied toward the cost to study at the Seminary indicated above ("the Seminary") during the following academic period: \_\_\_\_\_ (year, school term). Payment of this financial assistance will be made directly to the Seminary by the First Presbytery Treasurer ("Treasurer") upon execution of this document by the Student and receipt of this completed document by the Treasurer. The payment will reference the Student financial account indicated above.
- C. **Renewal.** This note is eligible for renewal, subject to the details set forth in the First Presbytery manual of procedure (Appendix 7.3-5)
- D. **Conversion to term note.** Upon receipt by the Fund of evidence of graduation with the degree indicated above (under "Seminary Program," etc.), this promissory note will be converted to a term note.
  - The term note will be payable in five equal annual payments or equivalent monthly installments.
  - The first installment will be due on the first day of July immediately subsequent to the Student's graduation date.
  - Interest under this section shall accrue at the lower of the following: (a) one-half of the prime rate in effect at Bank of America on the due date of any installment, or (b) six percent (6%).
  - If the Student fails to graduate as scheduled, but continues enrollment as a full-time student, the due dates referred to in this section will be extended until a date mutually agreed upon.
- E. **Conversion to grant.** Payment of each annual installment shall be waived and become a grant, provided that at the time of the due date of the annual installment, the Student is engaged in a ministry to a church in the General Synod of the Associated Reformed Church, one of its presbyteries, or one of its agencies, including Erskine College and Seminary. No interest shall accrue on any installment under the provisions of this section. Upon commencement of qualifying service to an ARP congregation, Presbytery, or agency, such

ministry shall continue for the following durations:

- Students who received financial assistance for the M.Div. program shall serve five years, upon completion of the degree program.
- Students who received financial assistance for other programs shall serve one year.

F. **Reversion to loan.** Should the student cease to be enrolled at the Seminary, or should the Student cease to be employed as described in section E of this note, the entire balance of this note plus accrued interest shall become due and payable on the first day of July next following. For students who completed their seminary degree and took an active call in an ARP congregation, Presbytery, or agency, this loan will be prorated based on the number of full months that the student served in an ARP ministry. Upon request of the student, the Fund would in that event negotiate a term note, at Bank of America prime rate, calling for repayment in not more than three years from said due date.

G. **Travel Expenses.** Students may request reimbursement for travel expenses related to their academic program up to a maximum of \$1,000 per year. The cumulative value of these travel expenses shall be rolled over into the value of the promissory note either at the point of its next renewal or at the point of its conversion to a term note (cf. Sections C and D above).

H. **Discretion.** Notwithstanding the provisions of section E of this note, the Committee on Candidates and Examinations may, at any time and upon its sole discretion, recommend that First Presbytery waive payment of any or all amounts due under this agreement.

### Signatures

Witness our hand and seal this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ (month) in the year of our Lord \_\_\_\_\_.

Student name

\_\_\_\_\_ (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ (Sign)

Spouse of Student name

\_\_\_\_\_ (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ (Sign)

Approval, Candidates and Exams Chairman, First Presbytery, ARP

\_\_\_\_\_ (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ (Sign) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Witness, Treasurer, First Presbytery, ARP

\_\_\_\_\_ (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ (Sign) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

**APPENDIX 8: POLICY FOR CHURCHES MAKING INQUIRY TO FIRST PRESBYTERY**

A8.1. When a congregation of another denomination, or an independent congregation makes inquiry into possible relationship with First Presbytery, the contact shall be made through the Committee on Church Extension with the knowledge of the Moderator and the Stated Clerk of First Presbytery (see FOG 10.3.E).

The following procedures shall be followed:

A8.2. First Presbytery will officially respond to such inquiries when a letter of intent from the Session of the interested congregation has been supplied to the Committee on Church Extension.

A8.3. The Committee on Church Extension can respond, send letters, make visits and perform other responses as may be requested.

A8.4. If affiliation is pursued, the Committee on Church Extension shall ascertain, among other things, if the Session and the minister adhere to the *Standards of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church*.

A8.5. The Committee on Church Extension is charged with the examination of the elders. The Committee on Candidates and Examinations is charged with the examination of the minister.

A8.6. The congregation desiring to be received into First Presbytery shall present a letter of dismissal from its Presbytery, or other recognized judicatory, to First Presbytery's Committee on Church Extension, along with a complete roll of its membership (communicant and non-communicant) and a list of elders and deacons currently serving the church.

A8.7. The Committee on Church Extension shall inform the Session or other appropriate representatives of the congregation to be present at the meeting of First Presbytery when their request for reception is docketed for consideration.

A8.8. The Committee on Church Extension shall report its actions to First Presbytery and make its recommendations to First Presbytery concerning the congregation making application for membership. If it is mutually agreed upon that the minister continue to serve the church in the capacity as pastor, he shall be examined for reception in the regular manner before action is completed to receive the congregation. Then, a motion may be made to receive the congregation.

A8.9. The minister and elders and deacons shall continue in office in the church without re-installation.

A8.10. The Committee on Church Extension shall be established as a Commission of First Presbytery to hold a Service of Reception and Welcome for the newly received congregation at a date and time convenient to all parties involved. (The Service of Reception and Welcome will include prayer; the bringing of greetings from First Presbytery; the preaching of the Word; the renewing of vows by the pastor, the officers and the congregation; and other items deemed appropriate.)

**APPENDIX 9: GUIDELINES FOR SHORT-TERM POSITIONS**

A9.1. The following guidelines are given so as to fit the categories of short-term positions as described by Outreach North America into the examination and approval processes of First Presbytery in accordance with its Manual of Procedure and General Synod's Form of Government. Both the church Extension Committee and the Candidates and Examinations Committee shall take these procedures into account when deal with any candidate seeking such a position.

ONA Category*	ONA Description*	Relation to FOG/MOP for approval process
Church planting resident	<p>“Intended for an experienced minister who needs further preparation related to church planting, or needing to build relationships in the ARP. Resident is placed with a mentor near the potential church plant site.”</p>	<p>Such a call shall be considered to be in the same category as that of a longer-term “mission developer” (FOG 11.6.D). Terms of a call are not encouraged to be less than 12 months.</p> <p>Since this is intended to be an ordained position, such a candidate shall go through the normal process for approval to receive a call.</p>
Church planting intern	<p>“Same as Church Planting Resident, but for someone who also needs general ministerial experienced. May be a licentiate who is not yet ordained.”</p>	<p>Such a position shall not be construed as a call to an ordained ministerial position. But any candidate for this position must be given a basic oral examination as to his beliefs and call to ministry by the Candidates &amp; Examinations Committee if he is not already under the care of this or any other ARP Presbytery – all prior to being issued an offer to this position. Terms of an offer are not encouraged to be less than 12 months.</p> <p>If the candidate is not under care of an ARP Presbytery, he should at least be under the care of another body approved by the Candidates and Examinations Committee. He shall be examined as to the orthodoxy of his beliefs and call to ministry and be approved by this Presbytery before beginning this work.</p>

ONA Category*	ONA Description*	Relation to FOG/MOP for approval process
Full-time student intern	"Interns with skills that can help a church planter immediately. Interns will be placed in a church plant or newly organized church. The goal is to help the congregation and to create a heart for church planting in the intern. These interns do not necessarily need to be potential church planters, but be willing to be involved in church planting in some way in the future."	Such a position shall not be construed as a call to an ordained ministerial position. But any candidate for this position must be given a basic oral examination as to the orthodoxy of his beliefs and call to ministry by the Candidates & Examinations Committee if he is not already under the care of this or any other ARP Presbytery – all prior to being issued an offer to this position.  If the student is not under care of an ARP Presbytery, he should at least be under the care of another body approved by the Candidates and Examinations Committee. He shall be examined as to his beliefs and call to ministry and be approved by this Presbytery before beginning this work.
Part-time student intern	"Same as full-time, but for students who continue to go to school, or who are working part-time at another job during the internship."	(Guidelines shall be the same as for a full-time student intern.)

**APPENDIX 10: SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY FOR MINISTERS IN FIRST PRESBYTERY****A10.1. Policy Statement and Overview**

A. The Presbytery recommends to the sessions of its churches that Ministers of the Word and Sacrament be granted a compensated sabbatical of at least three (3) months after four (4) to seven (7) years of service to an individual church. A sabbatical is intended for the mutual benefit and growth of both the minister and the congregation. The timing for the sabbatical is an important consideration and should be determined in the light of and be compatible with, the congregation's present needs and programming. Therefore, the exact timing, its funding, and pastoral care for the congregation during the sabbatical is to be approved by the session in consultation with the minister and the Presbytery's Minister & His Work Committee (see FOG 9.54.N). The guidelines of this policy include the following key points:

- 1) This policy is for full-time ministers; but it may be used at the discretion of churches as a guide for other educators, workers & employees.
- 2) Eligibility for a sabbatical begins after the fourth year in a particular ministry.
- 3) Sabbaticals should be granted before the eighth year in a particular ministry.
- 4) Sabbaticals are to be three *consecutive* months in duration and are to be in addition to vacation, continuing education and speaking engagement provisions of the call.
- 5) Sabbaticals are to be taken only after a plan prepared by the minister in consultation with the session has been submitted to the session and a copy provided to the Minister & His Work Committee of the Presbytery.
- 6) Pulpit supply and pastoral care during the sabbatical is to be approved by the Presbytery. Funding for the interim care is the responsibility of the local church.
- 7) Ministers returning from a sabbatical are to make a report of the sabbatical to the session, congregation, and the Minister & His Work Committee of the Presbytery.
- 8) Churches are to provide payment of salary and all benefits to the minister for the duration of the sabbatical.

**A10.2. Rationale**

A. The purpose of a sabbatical (derived from the word "Sabbath") is to enable a minister to be renewed through an extended time away spent in spiritual formation and rest, the vital pursuit of continuing education, and/or receiving fresh mentoring by respected teachers. A sabbatical enables a minister to return to the responsibilities of the ministry with new energy, spiritual vision, and effectiveness. Sabbaticals give congregations an opportunity to minister to their minister, an opportunity to develop greater congregational involvement in the ministry of the church and an opportunity to assess the current strengths and weaknesses of their congregational labors. Sabbaticals also have the potential benefit of guarding against unnecessary ministerial changes which often occur when a pastor and/or a congregation believe that such a change is the only way to achieve a "fresh start."

**A10.3. Responsibilities**

A. Minister & His Work Committee

- 1) Review the sabbatical timetable and usage plan as submitted by the minister.
- 2) Serve as mediator in any concerns of session or minister relative to the sabbatical.
- 3) Appoint a moderator of the session for the length of the sabbatical after consultation with the session and report the appointment to the Presbytery.

- 4) Counsel with the session about stated supplies. Stated supplies are to be approved by the Presbytery.
- 5) Encourage retired ministers and those ministers laboring outside the bounds of the Presbytery to receive special training in interim pastoral care and to be available to serve in such capacities in churches whose ministers are away on sabbatical.

B. Minister

- 1) Bring the sabbatical proposal before the session a minimum of six months before the intended commencement of the sabbatical.
- 2) Secure the approval of the session for the sabbatical proposal and work with the session on a plan for the necessary coverage of pastoral and pulpit responsibilities.
- 3) Bring up to date all pending responsibilities as determined in consultation with the session before departing on a sabbatical.
- 4) Submit to the Minister & His Work Committee in writing the sabbatical timetable and outline of plans.
- 5) Upon return, present an overview of the sabbatical experience to the session, congregation, and the Minister & His Work Committee.

C. Session Responsibilities

- 1) Receive "for approval" the minister's proposal for a sabbatical, at least six (6) months in advance of the intended commencement of the sabbatical.
- 2) Grant approval of the finalized plan no later than three (3) months in advance of the intended commencement of the sabbatical.
- 3) Consult with the Minister & His Work Committee about a temporary moderator of session and about stated supplies.
- 4) Continue terms of call commitments to the minister during sabbatical leave.
- 5) Communicate to the congregation the importance and values to the church of a sabbatical.
- 6) Request a written overview of the sabbatical from the minister upon return.

**APPENDIX 11: POLICY STATEMENT ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT FOR FIRST PRESBYTERY**

A11.1. Christians in general, and especially the ordained ministers of the church of Jesus Christ, are called to the highest standards of behavior. To the church at Ephesus, Paul wrote, “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs.” (Eph. 4:29 NIV). Paul also wrote that his protégé in ministry Timothy was to “set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity” (1 Tim. 4:14). Moreover, in its treatment of the Seventh Commandment, the Westminster Shorter Catechism (A. 72) declares, “The seventh commandment forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.”

A11.2. First Presbytery of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church is committed to upholding these biblical standards in our life together. It is a violation of biblical mandate, our confessional standards, and Presbytery policy for any ordained minister or student of theology in the Presbytery to engage in sexual harassment. First Presbytery will investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, and take appropriate action or discipline against those found to have violated this policy. Moreover, any overt or covert act of reprisal, interference, coercion, intimidation, or harassment directed against an individual who exercises his or her right under this policy will be subject to appropriate and prompt disciplinary action.

A11.3. Definition of Sexual Harassment

- A. United States courts have defined “sexual harassment” in the following terms:  
*“Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors (explicitly stated or implied), and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassments, when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects another individual by creating an intimidating, hostile, or fearful or offensive environment.”*
- B. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle or not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include, but are not limited to: sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, sexual jokes or innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual’s body; inappropriate touching; and other unwelcome physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature. Instances of sexual harassment must not be excused on the grounds that the perpetrator was “joking” or “meant no harm”.

A11.4. Legal Liability

- A. The Supreme Court has ruled that “to defend themselves employers would have to show that they exercise reasonable care to prevent or promptly correct any sexually harassing behavior.” This “failure to prevent doctrine” places an unusual burden on any responsible organization on whose premises an incident of sexual harassment may have occurred or have been perceived to have occurred. Thus liability is incurred not only by the perpetrator but also those whom the perpetrator represents and/or those for whom he or she works. Both the perpetrator and the organization are liable to investigation, and potentially to prosecution and the imposition of civil damages.
- B. “Reasonable care” is interpreted to include: (1) taking prompt action to deal promptly with reported incidents through the proper and established channels, and (2) acting to prevent incidents of sexual harassment by the proper instruction of individuals and the creating of an awareness of dire consequence within the organization.

- C. Businesses and other secular organizations view sexual harassment seriously even in its milder forms. As the church of Jesus Christ, we must be at least as vigilant and protective as are our secular counterparts, and view sexual harassment as seriously as they do, if not more so. We are the Body of Christ. Our standards must be the highest, if they are to meet the standard of holiness of the Lord of the Church.

#### A11.5. Reporting and Investigation

- A. First Presbytery encourages persons who believe that they have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment by a minister who is a member of, or a student of theology who is under the care of, First Presbytery to seek assistance in accordance with this policy as well as the Scriptural guidelines of Matthew 18:15-27 for conflict resolution. Such individuals are encouraged to advise the offender that his behavior is unwelcome and request that it be discontinued. Often this action alone will resolve the problem.
- B. Whenever a person is unable to address the offender directly, or if such action does not bring an end to the offensive conduct, the individual should notify a member of the Session of his or her church. Notice in writing shall then be given to the chairman of the Minister & His Work Committee, or in his absence or unavailability, to the Clerk of Presbytery who shall then refer it to the Minister and His Work Committee. [rev. 10-14]
- C. Upon receipt of a written notice of a report alleging sexual harassment, the Minister and His Work Committee, acting as a commission, shall promptly undertake or authorize an investigation, immediately notifying the accused and conveying to him the same rights and privileges for investigation as are applied in adjudication (see FOG.13.7.C). The alleged incident will be evaluated by considering the totality of the particular circumstances, including the nature, frequency, intensity, location, context, and duration of the questioned behavior. Even a single incident of sexual harassment maybe grounds for corrective or disciplinary action. To protect both the accuser and the accused, complaints of sexual harassment shall be treated with the maximum degree of confidentiality under the circumstances, consistent with the Presbytery's legal obligations. [rev. 10-14]

#### A11.6. Conclusion

- A. This policy has been developed and implemented to ensure that the ministries of the churches of First Presbytery take place in an atmosphere free from sexual harassment and retaliation. Any ordained officer or church member who has questions about this policy should contact the Chairman of the Minister and His Work Committee of First Presbytery.

**APPENDIX 12: COMITY AGREEMENT OF NAPARC MEMBER CHURCHES  
(ADOPTED BY MEMBER DENOMINATIONS, 1986 - [www.naparc.org](http://www.naparc.org))**

A12.1. THE “GOLDEN RULE” COMITY AGREEMENT FOR CHURCHES IN THE NORTH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED COUNCIL (NAPARC)

A12.2. Comity has meant different things to different people. We representatives of the home missions agencies and committees or boards of our denominations resist territorial statements on comity in light of the social and cultural complexity of North America society and the great spiritual need of our many countrymen who are apart from Jesus Christ. Out of a concern to build the Church of Jesus Christ, rather than our own denominations, and to avoid the appearance of competition, we affirm the following courteous code of behavior to guide our church planting ministries in North America:

- A. We will be sensitive to the presence of existing churches and missions ministries of other NAPARC churches and will refrain from enlisting members and take great care in receiving members of those existing ministries.
- B. We will communicate with the equivalent or appropriate agency (denominational missions committee or board, presbytery missions or church extension committee, or session) before initiating church planting activities in a community where NAPARC churches or missions ministries exist.
- C. We will provide information on at least an annual basis describing progress in our ministries and future plans.
- D. We will encourage our regional home missions leadership to develop good working relationships.

**APPENDIX 13: OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION FOR FIRST PRESBYTERY****A13.1. MEMBERSHIP:**

- A. The officers of the Corporation shall be the current officers of First Presbytery as delineated in Article IV of this Manual. The Stated Clerk, or Assistant Clerk in his absence, shall serve as chairman of the officers.

**A13.2. DUTIES:**

- A. The duties of the Presbytery are defined in the F.O.G. 10.3.G, as follows: "To approve or disapprove the buying, selling, mortgaging or leasing of any real property by a congregation over which the Presbytery may have control or jurisdiction."
- B. The officers of the Corporation are charged with carrying out the actions authorized by the Presbytery and are authorized to execute and deliver all documents necessary or convenient to do so.
- C. The officers of the corporation may advise and counsel local congregations concerning the buying, selling and/or leasing of real property, and, when appropriate, make recommendations to the Presbytery concerning these matters.
- D. The officers of the corporation may advise and counsel local congregations concerning new construction, and, when appropriate, make recommendations to the Presbytery concerning these matters.
- E. The officers of the corporation shall be charged with the oversight of any real property owned by First Presbytery, and, when appropriate, make recommendations to the Presbytery concerning these matters. (Church property in the ARP Church is owned and controlled by the local congregation. On occasion the Presbytery may purchase property on behalf of a mission congregation. Said property is to be deeded to the local congregation on the day the mission is organized.)
- F. The Stated Clerk and Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer are authorized to sign and execute documents relating to the borrowing of funds from the Board of Outreach North America, General Synod Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church Revolving Loan Fund.
- G. The Clerk of Presbytery will forward a statement of official actions that authorize the borrowing of funds to the rest of the officers of the Corporation so that any necessary action may be taken.
- H. The officers of the Corporation shall consult a lawyer as needed for matters assigned to them. The costs shall be paid from the General Funds of First Presbytery.

**APPENDIX 14: PROCEDURE FOR MERGING TWO OR MORE CONGREGATIONS**

A14.1. The following outline lays out the process by which congregations of First Presbytery will fulfill the requirements of sections 3.15 and 3.16 in the ARP Form of Government. Throughout this process, the Committee on Congregational Health shall act as the representative of First Presbytery to advise Sessions and congregations in matters relating to properties, pastoral relationships, staff, ministries, and memberships (see FOG 3.18).

A14.2. **CONSULT THE CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH COMMITTEE**

- A. Any Sessions beginning to consider a merger with another congregation of First Presbytery should, at the start of the process, inform Presbytery's Committee on Congregational Health and seek the Committee's counsel, according to FOG 3.18 and Article VI. D. 5. A. 3) d. of this Manual of Procedure. The Congregational Health Committee has recommended that a Session initiate the consultation process whenever it believes that it may seek Presbytery approval for a merger within the next 2 or 3 years (see Minutes of First Presbytery, March 14, 2023).

A14.3. **DRAFT OF PLAN OF UNIFICATION**

- A. With the counsel and assistance of the Congregational Health Committee, all the Sessions involved in the potential merger shall work together to draft a plan of unification (see FOG 3.15 B.). The plan shall include:
  - 1) **Information on any potential sales of church property.** This information shall provide specific details about the planned sales, including the expected timeline, potential asking prices for properties, proposed distribution of income from all property sales, and potential authorized agents involved in the sales. Sessions should consult the requirements of FOG 3.11 regarding congregational incorporation, trustees, and titles to property as they plan for these transactions. If the merger would necessitate sales of property, a formal request for permission to sell shall be submitted as part of the joint memorial to Presbytery from the congregations requesting unification (see FOG 3.12).
  - 2) **A proposal regarding pastoral positions.** The plan of unification shall include a draft of the potential call for a pastor which conforms to the requirements of FOG 9.54 H. If the merged congregation intends to call more than one pastor, descriptions of the proposed associate pastor duties and a draft of the potential call for each associate pastor shall be included in the plan of unification (See FOG 9.51). On this point, Sessions are directed to consult the Presbytery Committee on Candidates and Examinations for advice and preliminary approval of the potential pastoral calls (See FOG 3.18 and MOP Appendix 3).
  - 3) **A proposal regarding the number and function of all non-pastoral staff positions to be employed by the unified congregation.** This proposal should consider the programs, ministries, and evangelistic initiatives being contemplated for the newly unified congregation (See FOG 3.18).
  - 4) **A draft of a prospective budget for the unified congregation,** jointly prepared by the Diaconates and Sessions of all the congregations seeking unification. In making the budget, officers should consider staff budgets, ministry budgets and regular service contracts, such as landscaping and janitorial services, website and email hosting, media licensing subscriptions, Internet streaming services, and copier leasing. This budget should also include a breakdown of all projected costs incurred by the unifying congregations as a result of the merger and should show clearly whether the

unified congregation or one of the original congregations will take responsibility for payment (See FOG 3.19).

- 5) **Information regarding the meeting place for public worship** and any other properties to be held by the unified congregation, including but not limited to education buildings, administration buildings, family life centers, athletic fields, gymnasiums, and manses (See FOG 3.18).
- 6) **Information regarding the number of communicant, non-communicant, and associate members** expected to constitute the roll of the unified congregation. This information shall include any members prevented from activity by infirmity, or who are temporarily away in academic study, military service, or for other valid reasons (See FOG 4.16–17).
- 7) **The potential name of the unified congregation** (See FOG 3.14). If the unified congregation will adopt a different name not already in use by one of the constituent congregations, the plan should to provide a brief outline of the necessary changes, including but not limited to incorporation, title to property, financial accounts, tax documents, utility and telecommunication contracts, Internet website domain names, and social media representation.
- 8) **The expected timeline for fully effecting all aspects of the merger**, taking the schedule of Presbytery and Committee meetings into consideration.

**A14.4. APPROVE PLAN OF UNIFICATION**

- A. When the plan of unification has been approved by all Sessions involved in the potential merger, each Session shall call a congregational meeting for congregational approval of the plan. At each meeting, the plan of unification must be approved by at least a two-thirds vote of all those communicant members present (See FOG 3.15 B).

**A14.5. NOTIFY CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH COMMITTEE OF CONGREGATIONAL APPROVAL**

- A. Once the plan has been voted on, the Sessions of the congregations pursuing a merger shall inform Presbytery's Committee on Congregational Health of the results of the congregational vote. In the event that one or more congregations fails to approve by the required two-thirds threshold, the Committee will work with the Sessions to determine possible next steps.

**A14.6. SUMBIT PLAN OF UNIFICATION TO CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH COMMITTEE**

- A. Following the approval of the plan of unification by all congregations involved in the potential merger, the Sessions shall submit that plan as approved to the Committee on Congregational Health for review. If the Committee approves of the plan, it shall make an appropriate recommendation for the higher court's approval at a duly called meeting of First Presbytery. If the Committee does not approve, it may work with the Sessions to revise and amend the unification plan, which then would require further congregational approval, or it may counsel the Sessions seeking unification to jointly memorialize First Presbytery to approve the current plan.

**A14.7. MEMORIALIZE PRESBYTERY FOR UNIFICATION OF THE CONGREGATIONS**

- A. After receiving the counsel of the Congregational Health Committee, all Sessions involved in the potential merger will draft and pass a joint memorial to First Presbytery. If the Committee is recommending the Presbytery act on the plan, this joint memorial from the Sessions will provide their request to be received as information. If the Committee has elected not to endorse the plan, this joint memorial shall provide the

complete plan of unification as approved by the congregations and request that the higher court accordingly effect the merger under its ecclesiastical jurisdiction (See FOG 3.15 A.).

#### A14.8. CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH COMMITTEE REPORTS TO PRESBYTERY

- A. The Committee on Congregational Health will present their recommendation regarding the final plan of union at a duly called meeting of First Presbytery. Because of the many complicated and sensitive issues involved in a merger of congregations, both the Committee and the Sessions should take all necessary steps to ensure that the plan of unification is brought before Presbytery in the most timely manner. If the Committee has elected not to endorse the final plan of unification, it will present its reasoning for rejecting the plan as information to be received in a report to Presbytery. If, however, the Committee has endorsed the final plan, it will on behalf of the Sessions seeking unification present the full plan and a recommendation for Presbytery approval in its report.

#### A14.9. PRESBYTERY VOTES TO APPROVE UNION

- A. Upon receiving the plan of unification as approved by the congregations, the joint memorial from the Sessions, and the recommendation of the Committee on Congregational Health, First Presbytery shall act in the best interest of the Church by either approving or denying the union of the congregations (see FOG 3.16 A.).

#### A14.10. APPOINT UNIFICATION COMMISSION

- A. When the Presbytery has approved a plan of unification as being in the best interest of the Church, the Presbytery shall call a congregational meeting to effect the union of the congregations, and the Committee on the Minister and His Work shall appoint a commission to supervise the meeting and conduct an initial service of worship to acknowledge the union of the congregations (see FOG 3.16 C and Article VI. F. 1. G. of this Manual of Procedure) This commission shall be comprised of at least two ministers and one elder (see FOG 13.8 E and FOG 3.17 B). Being intimately involved in the process of planning the unification, it is desirable that at least one member of the Presbytery Committee on Congregational Health serve on this commission.

#### A14.11. SERVICE OF FORMAL UNIFICATION

- A. The congregational meeting called by Presbytery shall be attended by all of the believers who will make up the inaugural communicant roll of the new, unified congregation. A member of the commission appointed by Presbytery shall moderate the meeting, at which:
  - 1) The roll of the church shall be constituted with the affirmation or reaffirmation of membership vows.
  - 2) Elders shall be elected to serve on the Session.
  - 3) All calls to pastors shall be voted on.
- B. Following the close of the congregational meeting in prayer, the same commission shall then conduct a worship service of unification. In this service, the following actions shall take place:
  - 1) The commission shall announce that the congregations have been unified under the authority of the Presbytery.
  - 2) The Elders elected to serve on the Session shall be ordained, if necessary, and installed according to FOG 8.15–17.

- 3) The pastor called by the new congregation as part of the Presbytery-approved plan of unification shall be installed according to FOG 9.36–43.
- C. The Minister and His Work Committee shall include information about this service of unification as part of its regular report to the next stated meeting of First Presbytery.

**APPENDIX 15: FORMS**

(continued on following pages)

**FORM OF ENROLLMENT FOR ELDER-REPRESENTATIVE**

The Session of the \_\_\_\_\_ Church, meeting on \_\_\_\_\_  
[date:] \_\_\_\_\_, hereby appoints elder \_\_\_\_\_  
or in the case of his absence, elder \_\_\_\_\_ to be a representative of  
this Session to the Meeting of the First Presbytery of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, at [church:]  
\_\_\_\_\_  
on [date:] \_\_\_\_\_,  
or wherever and whenever the said Court may meet, to consult, determine, and vote on all things that may come  
before the Court according to the principles, Constitution and Standards of this Church and the Word of God.

Moderator of Session \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk of Session \_\_\_\_\_

When the appointed elder and his alternate are unable to attend a Stated meeting of First Presbytery, an excuse for the absence shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk. It is important for every congregation to be represented at all Stated meetings of First Presbytery.