

HOMESTEAD PRESBYTERY BY-LAWS



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(Revised 2013)

**BYLAWS OF HOMESTEAD PRESBYTERY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

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PREAMBLE

God has called a servant people to witness to Jesus Christ in and to the world. As members of Homestead Presbytery we voluntarily covenant to govern ourselves and direct our mission toward the fulfillment of our call in Christ in conformity with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Bylaws of HOMESTEAD PRESBYTERY structure the presbytery as an instrument of mission.

The presbytery is a council of the Presbyterian system. It serves the denomination by carrying out administrative and program responsibilities with reference to local congregations under its jurisdiction, and by pursuing those administrative and legislative responsibilities related to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), hereinafter referred to as PC(USA).

The connectional polity calls for teaching and ruling elders to share in the responsibility to interpret and strengthen the life and mission of the Church.

ARTICLE I – NAME, CORPORATION, DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

A. Homestead Presbytery (hereinafter referred to as the presbytery) is a council of the PC(USA), and is incorporated under the laws of the State of Nebraska. The presbytery comprises an area included within the counties of Antelope, Boone, Burt, Butler, Cedar, Colfax, Cumming, Dixon, Dodge, Fillmore, Gage, Greeley, Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Lancaster, Madison, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Pierce, Platte, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Stanton, Thayer, Thurston, Wayne, Wheeler, and York.

B. The corporation directors shall be named by the council from among its elected members who are assigned the responsibilities of providing leadership in the management of the budget and finances of the presbytery.

C. The corporation officers shall be:

1. The moderator of the budget and finance committee shall be the president of the corporation.
2. The stated clerk of the presbytery shall be the secretary of the corporation.
3. The treasurer of the presbytery shall be the treasurer of the corporation.

ARTICLE II - STATED ASSEMBLIES

A. The stated assemblies of the presbytery will ordinarily be held on the following dates and with the following stipulations, as established by the presbytery Council:

1. Third Saturday in February (winter) at 10:00 a.m.
2. Third Thursday in May (spring) at 10:00 a.m.
3. Third Saturday in August (summer) at 10:00 a.m. ordinarily at Calvin Crest.
4. Third Thursday in November (fall) at 10:00 a.m.

B. The annual assembly of the presbytery shall be the fall assembly.

C. The corporate meeting shall be the winter assembly.

D. There shall be a period of worship, including celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, at each stated assembly.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the presbytery shall be determined as prescribed in the *Form of Government*. A ruling elder elected moderator, vice moderator, moderator of a standing committee or member of Council shall be enrolled as a member of the presbytery for the term of office, whether commissioned by his or her session.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

A. There shall be the following officers of the presbytery: moderator, vice moderator, stated clerk and treasurer. The *Manual of Operations* of the presbytery shall include a current position description of all officers.

B. The officers of the presbytery shall carry out all responsibilities as outlined in the *Book of Order of the PC (U.S.A.)*, and *Homestead Presbytery Manual of Operations*.

1. A moderator of the presbytery shall serve for a term of one year. The moderator may appoint temporary or special committees or commissions (including appointment of a moderator), except in cases in which the presbytery shall decide otherwise.

2. A vice moderator's term of office shall be concurrent with that of the moderator.

3. A stated clerk shall be elected for a term of three years. The compensation of this office shall be determined by the presbytery.

4. A treasurer shall be elected for a term of three years. The compensation shall be determined by the presbytery.

ARTICLE V - PRESBYTERY COMMITTEES/UNITS

A. Presbytery may create committees, as needed to accomplish its stated mission goals. These presbytery standing committees shall meet the requirements of the *Form of Government*. Presbytery units shall ordinarily consist of church members, teaching and ruling elders elected to three-year terms and arranged in classes, with one class retiring each year. Members may ordinarily serve a maximum of six consecutive years on any particular committee.

B. Membership on presbytery Council, or the committees, and commissions, of the presbytery shall have as nearly as possible fair representation of male and female ministers of the Word and Sacrament, male and female elders, racial and/or ethnic categories, and generations.

C. All committees of the presbytery shall meet quarterly, or as needed, and report activities and actions to the presbytery. A quorum for a meeting of any presbytery unit is that established in (*RONR*). Each presbytery unit may name from among its members a vice moderator and a secretary.

D. Missing three meetings in a twelve-month period by any member of presbytery Council, the standing committees, or commissions, shall ordinarily constitute resignation.

E. Any unit of the presbytery may co-opt additional members for special responsibilities, making sure that fair representation is taken into consideration.

F. These are the standing units of Homestead Presbytery:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| a. Presbytery Council | e. Permanent Judicial Commission |
| b. Committee on Ministry | f. Business and Finance Committee |
| c. Committee on Preparation for Ministry | g. Personnel Committee |
| d. Nominating Committee | h. Program-Grant Committee |

1. PRESBYTERY COUNCIL

A. Membership on the presbytery Council with voice and vote shall be as follows:

Moderators of the standing committees; presbytery moderator; presbytery vice-moderator (who shall serve as Council moderator); presbytery treasurer; stated clerk (who shall serve as clerk of Council); the executive presbyter; a representative of Presbyterian Women of Homestead Presbytery, and three at-large members elected by the presbytery for a three year term, one member per class.

B. Meetings and Quorum

1. Meetings of Council shall occur at least two weeks before presbytery assemblies. A quorum shall be one-third of the Council membership plus its moderator.

2. Special meetings of the Council shall be called by the Council moderator at his/her discretion or upon the request of one-fourth of the membership.

C. Responsibilities:

1. Shall coordinate the mission and program of the presbytery.

2. Shall be responsible for long range planning, goals, and policies of the presbytery.

3. Shall propose the docket for stated assemblies in consultation with the stated clerk, presbytery moderator, and executive presbyter.

4. Shall receive and provide for the study of proposals from individual churches and make recommendations to the presbytery for appropriate action.

5. Shall receive and provide for the study of proposed amendments from the General Assembly by a special committee whose membership shall include all commissioners and youth advisory delegates elected by the presbytery to the most recent General Assembly and Synod Assembly, with the presbytery stated clerk acting as convener. Said committee shall select its own moderator and will bring recommendations to the presbytery for appropriate action.

6. Shall review and recommend updates to the *Homestead Presbytery Manual of Operations* at least every third year for action by the presbytery.

7. Shall constitute the COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION

With the following Responsibilities:

a. Shall advise and assist the presbytery in implementing principles insuring fair and effective representation.

b. Shall advocate for the representation of racial/ethnic members, different age groups, both sexes, persons with disabilities, and persons from differing geographical locations on the units of presbytery and endeavor, in consultation with the presbytery nominating committee; to discover and to encourage nominations of persons in these categories.

c. Shall advise the presbytery on the employment of personnel, in accordance with the principles of participation and representation, and in conformity with the church wide plan for equal employment opportunity.

d. Shall review the performance of the presbytery in these matters and shall report annually to it and to the next more inclusive council with recommendations for any needed corrective actions.

2. COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

A. Membership shall be as follows: Eighteen people, equally divided between teaching and ruling elders, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the presbytery upon recommendation of the nominating committee, with consideration given to Article V.B.

B. Responsibilities:

1. Shall fulfill the responsibilities designated for a committee on ministry by the *Form of Government* [G-3.0307]:

- a. to find terms of calls of teaching elders in order;
- b. to examine and receive into presbytery membership teaching elders seeking admission to presbytery;
- c. to dismiss teaching elders to other presbyteries;
- d. to authorize teaching elders to labor within or without the bounds of presbytery;
- e. to visit particular sessions or congregations reported to be affected with disorder, and inquire into and settle the difficulties therein [G-3.03d.,e.], except that no pastoral relationship may be dissolved without the specific action of presbytery.
- f. all such actions taken pursuant to this section are to be reported to the next stated assembly of the presbytery.

2. Shall conduct a pastoral visitation with each session in the presbytery at least triennially.

3. Shall make recommendations to presbytery concerning minimum salary for pastors and all other matters relating to compensation, benefits, allowances, and reimbursements, and conduct annually a review of total compensation for all ministers and report that to the presbytery.

4. Shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as pastor and counselor to teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service, and certified Christian educators of presbytery.

5. Shall be responsible for the annual review of session minutes and records.

6. Shall appoint moderators for sessions without pastoral leadership.

7. Shall administer the Personal Assistance Fund for ministers, and the Ministry Support Fund for churches.

3. COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

A. Membership shall be as follows: Nine people, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the presbytery upon recommendation of the nominating committee, with consideration given to Article V.B.

B. Responsibilities:

1. Shall provide oversight, guidance, nurture, and examination of inquirers and candidates as directed by the *Form of Government*.

2. Shall designate readers for the ordination examinations conducted by the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates.

3. Shall work in consultation with the committee on ministry on the identification and preparation of persons certified as commissioned lay pastors.

4. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A. Membership shall be as follows: Nine people, one of whom shall be the moderator, nominated by the Council and elected by the presbytery, with consideration given to Article V.B. Members are eligible to serve one three-year term. Any member having served a total of three years shall be ineligible for re-election to this committee for a period of one year.

B. Responsibilities

1. Shall nominate for election by the presbytery:
 - a. all presbytery standing committees, except the nominating committee,
 - b. members of the permanent judicial commission.
2. Shall nominate for election by the presbytery moderators of all presbytery committees and the permanent judicial commission except the nominating committee.
3. Shall nominate to the Calvin Crest Camp and Conference Retreat Center Board of Directors, persons to serve as directors.
4. Shall nominate for election by the presbytery commissioners and youth advisory delegates to General Assembly and synod; and nominate persons for election to committees, councils and agencies of synod or General Assembly.
5. Shall consider a representative geographical distribution of participants in making nominations.
6. Shall give consideration to “expertise” in making nominations.
7. Shall be responsive to the need for inclusiveness.
8. Shall ordinarily present its slate of nominees at the fall assembly. Those persons elected shall take office on January first of the next year, except for the presbytery moderator and vice moderator who take office immediately following election and installation.
9. Shall, when a stated clerk or treasurer for the presbytery is to be elected, defer to a special nominating committee. This **special nominating committee** shall:
 - a. Be composed of one member from each of these presbytery units, appointed by the moderators of each unit: presbytery Council, committee on ministry, and the nominating committee.
 - b. Be convened by the member from the nominating committee.
 - c. Be responsive to the need for inclusiveness.
 - d. Report its recommendations to the next stated assembly of presbytery.

5. PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION

A. Membership shall be as follows: seven people, elected by the presbytery upon recommendation of the nominating committee in conformity with the requirements specified in the *Rules of Discipline*. The officers of the permanent judicial commission will be determined as required by the *Rules of Discipline*.

B. Responsibilities:

The permanent judicial commission shall carry out those duties and obligations assigned to it in the *Rules of Discipline*.

6. BUSINESS AND FINANCE

A. Membership shall be as follows: four people, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the presbytery upon recommendation of the nominating committee, with consideration given to Article V. B.

B. Responsibilities:

1. Prepare the annual budget for Presbytery
2. Recommend to presbytery the per capita rate for the following year.
3. Provide an accounting of all presbytery financials, and review them quarterly.
4. Cause an annual audit or review of presbytery books to be made.
5. Manage presbytery funds and banking relationships.
6. Oversee and maintain presbytery assets and properties.
7. Prepare and file corporate papers for presbytery.

8. Review and determine master insurance policy for presbytery and monitor individual church policies.
9. Review and approve requests of congregations concerning property.
10. Review and approve contracts of Homestead Presbytery.
11. Review grant requests made on behalf of Homestead Presbytery.

7. PERSONNEL

- A. Membership shall be as follows: four people, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the presbytery upon recommendation of the nominating committee, with consideration given to Article V.B.
- B. Responsibilities
 1. Review and administer personnel policies of presbytery.
 2. Develop and review position descriptions for staff of presbytery.
 4. Conduct performance reviews of executive presbyter annually.
 5. Implement a plan for equal opportunity employment consistent with the principles of inclusiveness of the PC (USA).
 6. Administer a process of job classification and compensation. Salaries for executive, administrative and program staff positions will be determined on the basis of relative responsibilities required.
 7. Administer a process for the reimbursement of employee related expenses.
 8. Administer a process of continuing education consistent with the needs of presbytery, and the career goals of the employee.
 9. Provide employee benefits consistent with the goals and financial capacity of presbytery.
 10. Administer a procedure for resolving job related problems.
 11. Make available to employees a copy of presbytery's personnel policies and procedures.

8. PROGRAM – GRANT

- A. Membership shall be as follows: six, people, one of whom shall be the moderator, elected by the presbytery upon recommendation of the nominating committee, with consideration given to Article V.B.
- B. Responsibilities:
 1. The Program – Grant Committee appoints Ministry & Missions task groups (M & Ms) for specific tasks or areas of responsibility. The M & Ms must be authorized each year by the Committee, contingent upon their goals, action plan, and a written report of objective and accomplishments. M & Ms may be allotted a budget through the Program – Grant Committee funds. Membership in an M & M task group shall be appointed by the Program – Grant Committee.
 2. The Program – Grant Committee, in conjunction with Business and Finance Committee, shall establish categories of funds available for individuals, congregations, task forces, commissions, committees, and other groups, and develop a fair application process with stipulations for awarding of funds.
 3. The Program – Grant Committee shall evaluate grant applications from individuals and congregations.

ARTICLE VI - ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

- A. Administrative staff called or assigned to work within the bounds of the presbytery shall be responsible through the Personnel Committee.

B. The chief administrator of the presbytery and head of staff shall be the executive presbyter who is elected by the presbytery.

ARTICLE VII - GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. **Minutes Submitted to Presbytery Office:** A copy of all minutes of council, committees and task groups shall be forwarded as soon as possible to the presbytery office and made part of the presbytery's permanent files.

B. **Mileage Reimbursement:** Mileage reimbursement for all approved presbytery business will be determined by the business and finance committee using the current Internal Revenue Service rate as a guideline. The executive presbyter and/or the treasurer will be responsible for informing the presbytery when any changes occur.

C. **Referrals:** The presbytery on its own authority, or Council, may refer specific issues, social concerns, and overtures to the appropriate committees or task groups to consider and report back to the presbytery or Council. Task groups may be appointed for specific tasks and for a specific length of time.

E. **Privileges of the Floor:** Any individual and/or organization that is called upon by the presbytery or any of its agencies, committees or commissions to make a report or a presentation on the floor of presbytery shall be awarded the privileges of the floor without specific action on the part of presbytery.

F. **Moderating Presbytery Assembly:** The vice-moderator of Presbytery shall moderate the presbytery assembly in the absence of the moderator or upon request of the moderator. In the absence of both the moderator and vice-moderator, the assembly shall be moderated by the most immediate past moderator present.

ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSION OF RULES

A. These rules may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the duly authorized commissioners present at any stated assembly of the presbytery, provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing, read in full, and filed with the stated clerk at the immediate preceding stated assembly; and provided that the amendment is in accord with the Constitution of the PC (USA).

B. Any of these rules may be suspended as to its temporary application, should a need arise, by a two-thirds vote of the duly authorized commissioners present at any stated assembly of the presbytery, and provided that the suspension is in accord with the Constitution of the PC(U.S.A.).

(end of By-Laws of Homestead Presbytery)

Legislative History

Original Approval	August 16, 2001
Original Implementation.....	January 1, 2002
Began indicating adding/deleting churches from list of Clusters (VII.B.)	2002
VII.B.2 (dissolved Spalding)	September 18, 2002
VII.G.....	November 21, 2002
Changed Calvin Crest Camp Title Throughout	August, 18, 2005
VII.B.3 (dissolved Deshler)	September 11, 2005
V.G.7. (Changed title)	November 17, 2005
VII.B.3 (Barneston merged with Wymore)	January 1, 2006
VII.B.5 (dissolved Lincoln Awesome God)	May 7, 2006
II.K.....	May 18, 2006
II.J.	August 17, 2006
V.G.1.A.	August 17, 2006
VII.B.1 (dissolved Ponca)	August 20, 2006
V.G.11.B.1.	November 16, 2006
V.G.9.B.1.	February 17, 2007
V.G.9.B.1.	February 17, 2007
V.G.1.B.8.	May 17, 2007
VII.B.2 (dissolved Madison)	May 27, 2007
I.B; I.C; II.J; V.1.B.8;	August 16, 2007
VII.C.	August 21, 2008
V.G.1.C.1 (rename Business and Finance).....	November 19, 2009
V.G.10 (rename Stewardship, Mission and Social Justice)	November 19, 2009
V.G.11 (revise membership of Education and Leader Development)	November 19, 2009
VII.B.5 (dissolved Seward)	November 19, 2009
II.A. Stated Assembly	August 26, 2010
V. Presbytery Committees (restructured Council & renamed committees)	November 26, 2010
VII.B.2. (dismissed St. Edward to UMC).....	December 5, 2010
V Presbytery Committees (restructured)	February 19, 2011
V. G. 7 Revision of Self-Development of People.....	August 18, 2011
V.F.2 Removed the Committee on Representation.....	May 17, 2012
Bylaws Restated.....	November 15, 2012
V.5.B.1 (Changed responsibilities of the nominating Committee).....	February 23, 2013