



THE PRESBYTERY OF  
LOS RANCHOS

# The Standing Rules

OF

## The Presbytery of Los Ranchos

COMPLETE REVISION

APPROVED MAY 17, 2008

REVISED TO COMPLY WITH THE ODYSSEY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS APPROVED BY PRESBYTERY, MAY 2009

First Revisions February 2010

Revised November 21, 2013, Revised February 26, 2015

Revised May 28, 2015

Revised September 24, 2015

Revised September 28, 2019

Revised November 19, 2019

Revised November 18, 2021

# STANDING RULES FOR THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS

## SYNOD OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA & HAWAII

### 1.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### 1.1 Standing Rules and Constitution

This document shall be known as the Standing Rules of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, a California Corporation. This Presbytery is an entity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (Hereinafter known as the PCUSA). These Standing Rules were adopted by The Presbytery of Los Ranchos on May 16, 2009. The Presbytery of Los Ranchos shall be governed by the Constitution<sup>1</sup> of the PCUSA and, as consistent with that constitution, by these Standing Rules. It is the intent and purpose of these Standing Rules to avoid repetition of provisions of the Constitution.

#### 1.2 Geographical Definition

The Presbytery of Los Ranchos, organized January 4, 1968, is an organizational unit and governing body of the Presbyterian Church (USA) realized by the convocation of all ministers and elder members representing churches<sup>2</sup> and ministries in the County of Orange, California and in those portions of the County of Los Angeles, California described as follows: Commencing at the intersection of the Pacific Ocean and the westerly city limits of Long Beach; then along the westerly city limits of Long Beach, Compton, Lynwood, South Gate, Huntington Park and Vernon; then easterly along the northerly city limits of Vernon to the Los Angeles River; then northerly along the Los Angeles River to Alhambra Avenue; then easterly along Alhambra Avenue to Daly Street; then southerly along Daly Street to Mission Road; then northeasterly along Mission Road to Valley Boulevard; then easterly along Valley Boulevard to Indiana Street; then southerly along Indiana Street to Medford Street; then easterly along the southerly city limits of Los Angeles to the westerly city limits of Monterey Park; then southerly and easterly along the city limits of Monterey Park to Pomona Boulevard; then easterly and southerly along the northerly and easterly city limits of Montebello to the Whittier Narrows Dam; then easterly along the Whittier Narrows Dam to the San Gabriel River; then northerly along the San Gabriel River to the crest of the Puente Hills; then southeasterly along the crest of the Puente Hills (including all of the City of La Habra Heights) to Fullerton Road; and then southerly along Fullerton Road to the Orange County line; And including Catalina Island.

#### 1.3 Responsibilities.

As a corporate expression of the church consisting of all the churches and ministers of the Word and Sacrament within the area defined in section 1.1 of these Standing Rules, The Presbytery of Los Ranchos is responsible for the mission and government of the PCUSA churches throughout its geographical district. It therefore has the responsibilities and powers as defined in the Constitution of the PCUSA, including the power to delegate any power so permitted by the Constitution of the PCUSA.

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1 The “Constitution” consists of Part I, The Book of Confessions and Part II, The Book of Order.

2 Throughout this document, the word “church” in lowercase has the same meaning as the word “congregation” in this document and the phrase “particular church” in the Book of Order. The word “Church” in uppercase refers either to “the Church Universal, the Church as it is called to be in Christ” (Book of Order), or in the name of a denomination, as the “Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)”

## 2.0 MEMBERSHIP

### 2.1 Membership of Presbytery

The members of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos shall be 1) all Ministers of the Word and Sacrament (including honorably retired and members-at-large) on the active rolls of the presbytery; 2) commissioned lay pastors, 3) elder commissioners elected by sessions of the churches of this presbytery (in accordance with 2.2), 4) elder commissioners elected to and serving on either the Presbytery Council or the Presbytery's Board of Trustees, for the terms of their service, and 5) all persons certified by organizations as provided for in the constitution (but without vote).

### 2.2 Elder Members

- a) Each church shall be represented by elder members commissioned as provided for in the Form of Government:

Churches with membership up to 500 shall have one elder member representative:

501	to	1,000	: 2 elders
1,001	to	1,500	: 3 elders
1,501	to	2,000	: 4 elders
2,001	to	3,000	: 5 elders

Above 3,000 members, there shall be an additional elder representative for each 1,000 additional members.

- b) In addition, elders elected to or serving on Council and Trustees shall be named as commissioners;
- c) Additional elder members may be commissioned by sessions of churches identified by presbytery if an annual determination by the Stated Clerk indicates that the number of resident and able-to-attend Ministers of the Word and Sacrament members exceeds the number of elder commissioners identified in "a" and "b". The following process will be used to identify such sessions and to redress any imbalance:
- (i) One ruling elder commissioner shall be added from each congregation whose most recent annual statistical report reflects a majority membership of individuals recorded as other than "White."
  - (ii) Should further ruling elder commissioners be required in order to redress any imbalance between ruling elder and teaching elder commissioners, the Stated Clerk shall by a random process establish a list of all of the presbytery's congregations. One additional ruling elder commissioner shall be added from each congregation on the list in descending order until balance is achieved.
- d) The Stated Clerk shall notify sessions of the total number of their elder commissioners on or before the first presbytery meeting of the year, with all elder commissioners seated May 1 to April 30 of the following year. The Stated Clerk shall report this information to the first presbytery meeting of the year. Notification of additional commissioners shall include a request that churches give consideration to representational concerns.

### **2.2.1 Elder Representation**

- a) Each church session is invited to commission an elder or elders as members of presbytery as described above.
- b) Elder members of presbytery shall normally be elected and commissioned for a term of one year. Sessions may elect “rotating commissioners” (different elder for each meeting) provided they so indicate when informing the presbytery of commissioners.
- c) Elder members of presbytery shall be enrolled by written notice from the session to the Stated Clerk of the name of the commissioner and of the alternate commissioner, complete with mailing address, email address, and telephone number.
- d) If an elder commissioner is unable to attend a specific meeting, the alternate may attend, OR session may elect another elder to attend as alternate, provided presbytery is notified prior to the meeting of presbytery.

### **2.3 Corresponding Members**

Presbyters (Ministers of the Word and Sacrament or elders) in good standing in other governing bodies, who are present at any meeting of the presbytery, may be invited to sit as corresponding members, with voice but without vote.

### **2.4 Ministers**

Active members are expected to attend all Stated Meetings of presbytery. Ministers should avoid business and personal time conflicts with presbytery Stated Meetings.

## **3.0 THE CORPORATION**

### **3.1 Corporation**

The presbytery shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of California to enable it to:

- a) Receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer such property and assets as may come under its jurisdiction.
- b) Manage its corporate business affairs as presbytery may direct from time to time.

### **3.2 Members**

Members of the corporation of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos shall consist of the members of the presbytery.

### **3.3 Board of Trustees**

There shall be a “Board of Trustees” of the presbytery, properly constituted according to civil requirements and elected by the corporation. The roles, responsibilities, and terms of the Board may be incorporated into the work of an administrative body of the presbytery according to the following provisions:

#### **3.3.1 Membership**

The Board shall consist of twelve members, nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the members of the corporation, up to six of whom shall be Ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Elder members of churches of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos, if not members of presbytery, become members by reason of election to the board. The corporation shall elect the President and Treasurer upon nomination by the Trustees.

- a) The president of the corporation shall be the moderator of the Board.
- b) The Stated Clerk of the presbytery shall be the Corporate Secretary, ex officio, without vote.

### **3.3.2 Responsibilities**

The board shall be responsible for securing and maintaining corporate and not for profit status and for serving as the legal/fiduciary agent of the corporation in civil matters. These include, but are not limited to a) holding title to property; b) oversight of the financial integrity of the corporation; c) examining and making recommendations of all instruments involving legal transactions requiring presbytery approval; d) signing all legal documents necessary to implement presbytery decisions; e) securing legal counsel as necessary. The President and Corporate Secretary shall sign all legal documents unless otherwise provided for by specific action.

### **3.4 Terms of office**

Officers and directors hold office for their designated term (normally three consecutive years, six consecutive years maximum) and until their successor is elected.

## **4.0 PRESBYTERY GATHERINGS**

### **4.1 Stated Meetings**

The Presbytery of Los Ranchos shall gather four times a year, normally in February, May, September, and November.

#### **4.1.1 Location**

Gatherings shall be held at sites deemed suitable by the Council. Presbytery shall reimburse the host site for use of space. Participants shall share in the cost of a catered dinner.

#### **4.1.2 Activities**

Gatherings shall normally consist of the following activities as approved by Council:

- a) Educational, missional, and community-building opportunities in various formats organized by any group recognized by Council and scheduled by the Presbytery Gathering Team. A schedule of events and activities shall be posted on the presbytery's web site at least two weeks prior to the gathering and updated regularly.
- b) Common meal consisting of a catered meal at cost and worship coordinated through the Presbytery Gathering Team.
- c) Stated (Fiduciary) Meeting consisting of action items of business and reports from the executive staff and entities with standing before Presbytery.

#### **4.1.3 Materials**

Materials for Stated Meetings of the presbytery shall be established by Council and posted on the presbytery website. The date, time, and location for the next meeting shall be included in those materials.

#### **4.2 Adjourned Meetings**

Adjourned meetings may be held as presbytery (or its Council) determines the need. (Robert's Rules of Order, current edition)

#### **4.3 Special Meetings**

Special meetings of presbytery may be called according to the provisions of the Constitution or by the Moderator of presbytery in consultation with the Council. Paper and/or electronic notice of a special meeting shall be sent not fewer than ten days in advance to each minister *and* commissioner and to the session of every church in the presbytery.

#### **4.4 Documents**

The docket shall be established by the Council. All papers related to items to be voted on shall be electronically communicated to commissioners and/or posted on the web site at least seven days prior to the meeting. Items for action received late must be treated as New Business.

#### **4.5 Quorum**

One fifth of the membership shall be required for a quorum at any stated meeting of the presbytery. At special meetings of presbytery, a quorum shall be twelve minister members and twelve elder members, provided that at least six churches total are represented. If challenged, a quorum must be registered and present.

#### **4.6 Worship**

Each Stated Meeting of presbytery shall be opened and closed with prayer, and worship shall be provided by Presbytery Gathering Team during the Gathering or immediately preceding the Stated Meeting. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at least annually.

#### **4.7 Minutes**

Council shall read, correct and approve the complete minutes of the Stated Meeting at the first meeting of Council following the Stated Meeting. The Stated Clerk is responsible for creating the minutes and shall summarize the meeting online, and shall, when requested, provide members of presbytery the complete minutes.

#### **4.8 Meetings by Teleconference or Other Electronic Means**

Commissioners not physically present in person at a stated or special meeting of the Presbytery may by electronic transmission by and to the Presbytery or by electronic video screen communication participate in a meeting of the Presbytery, be deemed present in person, and vote at such a meeting whether that meeting is to be held at a designated place or in whole or in part by means of electronic transmission by and to the Presbytery or by electronic video screen communication only (1) if the Presbytery implements reasonable measures to provide commissioners a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meeting and to vote on matters submitted to the commissioners, including an opportunity to read or hear the proceedings of the meeting concurrently with those proceedings, and (2) if any commissioner votes or takes other action at the meeting by means of electronic transmission to the Presbytery or electronic video screen communication, a record of that vote or action is maintained by the Presbytery.

### **5.0 OFFICERS AND STAFF**

#### **5.1 Positions**

The principal officers of the presbytery as an ecclesiastical organization shall be a moderator, a moderator-elect, and a Stated Clerk. The presbytery staff shall include exempt and non-exempt personnel as shall be determined from time to time by the presbytery.

#### **5.2 Officer Election, Terms, Duties**

##### **5.2.1 Moderator**

The Moderator of presbytery shall ordinarily assume that role after having served as Moderator-elect and been elected by presbytery and shall be installed at the first Stated Meeting of the calendar year

She or he shall moderate presbytery in accordance with the current Book of Order and the current Robert's Rules of Order. The Moderator normally moderates ordinations and installations and shall serve as Vice-Moderator of Council.

##### **5.2.2 Moderator-Elect**

The Moderator-Elect of presbytery shall be elected by presbytery for a term of one year at the last stated meeting of the calendar year and installed at the first stated meeting of the new year. The Nominating Committee shall nominate a candidate for the position of Moderator-Elect. Nominations from the floor require prior consultation with, and agreement by, the proposed nominees.

The Moderator-Elect shall perform the functions of the Moderator when requested by the Moderator or if the Moderator is unable to serve. If the Moderator ceases to be a member of the presbytery, the Moderator-Elect shall serve as Moderator and be eligible to be elected as Moderator the following year. If the Moderator-Elect replaces the Moderator or is otherwise unable to complete their term, the presbytery shall elect another Moderator-Elect.

##### **5.2.3 Rotation**

Ordinarily, the positions of Moderator and Moderator-elect shall rotate among Ministers of the Word and



Sacrament and elders.

#### **5.2.4 Stated Clerk**

The Stated Clerk is the primary ecclesiastical officer of presbytery. He or she shall normally be elected at presbytery's last Stated Meeting of the year for a term to be determined by the presbytery to begin the first day of January following the election. If the Stated Clerk also is elected to serve in an executive staff position, the terms of the positions shall be coterminous. The Stated Clerk must be an ordained elder or Minister of the Word and Sacrament.

##### **5.2.4.1 Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the office of the Stated Clerk shall be those set forth in the Constitution and in the personnel policies of the presbytery including maintenance of all official documents and current, master copies of Standing Rules and Policies and Procedures.

The Stated Clerk also shall perform such additional duties as may from time to time be assigned by the presbytery or its appropriate committees.

##### **5.2.4.2 Minute Clerk**

The presbytery may appoint or contract with a minute clerk to assist the Stated Clerk in taking and creating minutes for presbytery, Council and the Committee on Ministry (or its equivalent).

#### **5.2.5 Treasurer**

The presbytery's Treasurer may be a volunteer or paid position and shall be elected by the Corporation. Responsibilities:

- a) To consult with the appropriate presbytery body in the preparation of the ecclesiastical budget and in recommending the per capita apportionment needed to support this budget;
- b) To be an ex-officio member of the presbytery body responsible for budgets.
- c) To sign checks, review bank reconciliations, provide for annual audit, and such other duties as provided for in the Personnel Manual or assigned by Committee on Staff Relations.

#### **5.2.6 Officer Vacancies**

- a) Any officer vacancy created through any cause shall be filled by election procedures as stipulated in these Standing Rules.
- b) When the Stated Clerk is unable to fulfill her or his duties, the Moderator of presbytery, with Council concurrence, shall appoint a temporary Stated Clerk to fulfill those responsibilities.

### **5.3 Staff Election, Terms, Duties**

The Committee on Staff Relations shall, from time to time, recommend to the presbytery, through Council, the need for specific exempt and non-exempt staff positions. When doing so, they shall present a staffing rationale, position description for each specific position, and a financial impact statement indicating the effect on the appropriate budget(s). Once approved by presbytery, these positions shall continue until such time as the Committee on Staff Relations and/or Council recommends, and presbytery approves, modifications or elimination.

### **5.3.1 [Section deleted September 28, 2019 ]**

### **5.3.2 Presbytery Staff**

The presbytery may employ exempt and non-exempt staff as required to fulfill the connectional, supportive, and missional responsibilities of presbytery.

All staff shall be governed by the personnel policies administered by the Committee on Staff Relations.

### **5.4 Staff Vacancies**

Staff vacancies shall be filled in accordance with presbytery personnel policies and Manual of Administrative Operations.

## **6.0 ORGANIZATION**

### **6.1 Organizational Components**

To facilitate proper discharge of its various functions, presbytery is organized with the following components:

- Council
- Corporation (Board of Trustees)
- Nominating Committee
- Committee on Staff Relations
- Such program, mission, and administrative groups as the presbytery shall from time to time determine are necessary to carry out its vision for mission and the requirements of the Form of Government.

### **6.2 Election And Terms: Council, Committees, and Corporation Members**

#### **6.2.1 Terms of Office**

The term of office for elected members of the Council, any standing committees, and for the Board of Trustees shall be three years and/or until reelected or their successor shall be elected. In each instance, membership shall be divided into three approximately equal classes, with one class to be elected each year.

#### **6.2.2 Limitations**

No person on the Council, on the Trustees, or on a presbytery standing committee, shall serve in that capacity for more than six consecutive years. Any person having served six consecutive years shall be ineligible for another term in the same office until at least one year has elapsed. Ordinarily a member of presbytery shall serve on only one standing committee at a time.

#### **6.2.3 Elections**

Annual elections shall be held at presbytery's last stated meeting of the year. Terms of office shall begin on the first day of January next following election (or, where applicable, when installed). Persons may be elected at other times of the year in order to fill vacancies and shall take office as soon as elected.

#### **6.2.4 Advisory Membership on Presbytery Committees**

Any committee of presbytery may enlarge its membership for advisory purposes by co-opting members without vote. Such co-opted members do not have to be ordained.

#### **6.2.5 Absenteeism**

If a member is absent from three consecutive meetings of the Council or a standing committee, or 5 or more meetings in a given year, that group may declare the position vacant and request election of a person to fill the unexpired term.

#### **6.2.6 Quorum**

The quorum for the Council, the Trustees, and standing committees of the presbytery shall be one half the membership unless otherwise stipulated in these Standing Rules.

#### **6.3 Delegated Powers**

Powers delegated by presbytery to a program, mission, or administrative group may NOT be delegated to another body.

#### **6.4 Meetings by Teleconference or Other Electronic Means**

Members of Presbytery components listed in Section 6.1 who are not physically present in person at a meeting of their respective component may by electronic transmission by and to the component or by electronic video screen communication participate in a meeting of the component, be deemed present in person, and vote at such a meeting whether that meeting is to be held at a designated place or in whole or in part by means of electronic transmission or by electronic video screen communication only (1) if the component implements reasonable measures to provide members a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meeting and to vote on matters submitted to the members, including an opportunity to read or hear the proceedings of the meeting concurrently with those proceedings, and (2) if any member votes or takes other action at the meeting by means of electronic transmission or electronic video screen communication, a record of that vote or action is maintained by the component and reported to its supervising entity.

### **7.0 COUNCIL**

The Presbytery Council shall be composed of the Moderator and Moderator-Elect of Presbytery, and the most recent former Moderator of Presbytery, the Executive Staff (non-voting), nine at-large members nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by presbytery, and the Moderator or Chair of each of the following: Committee on Ministry, Generative Catalyst Team, Committee on Staff Relations, Strategic Coordinating Team, and Trustees.

The nine at-large members will serve rotating, three-year terms and may be elected to second terms but may not serve more than six consecutive years, with at least two years off Council before being eligible for election again.

#### **7.1 Powers**

Council serves as the primary leadership body of the presbytery. Its functions include:

- a. Providing preliminary study, recommendation, and planning of strategic missions and fulfilling presbytery's commitment to developing healthy, missional congregations;
- b. Overseeing fiduciary responsibilities of presbytery;
- c. Aligning presbytery life to its Vision for Mission;
- d. Evaluating presbytery effectiveness and faithfulness;
- e. Designing Presbytery Gatherings;
- f. Calling special meetings of the presbytery;
- g. Naming Moderators of Council Teams;
- h. Nominating new members of the Nominating Committee for Presbytery election;
- i. Bringing Proposed Amendments from GA to presbytery—reviewing and recommending action to Presbytery regarding overtures from Sessions to GA;
- j. Negotiating and arbitrating processes, responsibilities, and functions of other groups and committees.

Council is empowered to fulfill all functions charged to it by the Constitution, Standing Rules, and Vision for Mission—or delegated to it by presbytery.

Acting between meetings of presbytery, it shall act as a commission having all delegated powers permitted by the Constitution, with the provision that such actions shall be reported at the next meeting of presbytery. The right of administrative review is reserved to the presbytery.

## **7.2 Moderator**

The immediate past Moderator of Presbytery shall be the Moderator of Council. If the Moderator of Council is unable to moderate or unavailable to moderate, the Moderator of Presbytery shall moderate. If both the immediate past Moderator of Presbytery and the Moderator of Presbytery are unable to moderate, the Council shall elect a Moderator from among its members for the period of the meeting.

## **7.3 Reports**

The Council shall report all business transacted by Council at each stated meeting of presbytery.

## **7.4 Docket Committee**

The Docket Committee shall consist of the Moderator and Moderator-Elect of Presbytery, the Council Moderator, the Stated Clerk and other executive staff, and two members of Council elected by Council. Its responsibility is to recommend to Council the docket for the Stated Meeting portion of Presbytery Gatherings. It may provide advisory recommendations to Council on matters coming before Council.

## **7.5 Council Executive Committee**

The Council Executive Committee shall consist of the Council Moderator, Presbytery Moderator, Presbytery Moderator-Elect and executive staff. It is empowered to name a Committee of Counsel, appoint an Administrative Commission or Investigating Committee, and to contract for legal services on behalf of the presbytery when it is in the best interests of the presbytery to do so, provided such actions are reported to Council electronically as soon as convenient and appropriate and reported at the next meeting of Council and/or presbytery.

## **7.6 Meetings**

Council shall normally meet six times per year at a working dinner. It shall meet four times within 25 days prior to the Stated Meeting of presbytery and twice a year at days of its choosing to focus on the Generative work of the presbytery.

### **7.6.1 Special Meetings**

The Moderator of Council may convene special meetings of Council and shall convene a special meeting of Council at the request of any four members of Council representing not fewer than three churches. Notice of such meetings must be provided all members at least five days prior to the meeting.

### **7.6.2 Open Meetings**

Council shall follow the open meeting policies of the denomination, reserving the right to go into executive session as necessary for personnel or legal reasons, or for reasons related to the strategic best interests of the presbytery.

## **8.0 BUDGETS**

### **8.1 Presbytery Budgets**

The Council shall present an annual budget to presbytery. The budget shall be supported, as applicable, by congregational assessments, general mission giving, and investment earnings.

### **8.2 Preparation**

The annual budget shall be prepared by the Trustees under the oversight of Council and in consultation with the appropriate program, mission or administrative group(s).

### **8.3 Budget Presentation and Adoption**

The presbytery shall adopt the annual budget after consideration of Council recommendations. This should be done (a) so as to permit publication of congregational assessments and request for mission support in time for congregations to budget accordingly, and (b) no later than the final Stated Meeting of the year.

### **8.4 Remittance**

Each church in the presbytery is expected to pay to the Treasurer of presbytery, on or before February 1 of each year, its congregational assessment for the current year in an amount approved by presbytery. The presbytery shall forward the portion of the congregational assessment that has been assessed by the Synod and General Assembly (“Synod per capita” and General Assembly per capita”).

A church with a financial hardship may request (prior to February 1) permission to budget assessment payments over six months. Approval by presbytery must be obtained.

### **8.5 Shared (Unified) Mission Remittances**

Congregationals shall send all contributions for the Shared (Unified) Mission of the PCUSA to presbytery for distribution to the appropriate governing bodies. Undesignated mission contributions to presbytery shall be distributed as follows: thirty percent (30%) shall be forwarded to the Presbyterian Mission Agency and seventy percent (70%) shall be retained by presbytery for its mission activities.

## **8.6 Reallocation of Budgeted Funds**

After presbytery's final approval of the annual budget, the program, mission, partnership, network or administrative group responsible for specific expenditures, as defined by the budget prepared by the Trustees and ratified by the Council and Presbytery, may adjust line items within their group's specific allocated budget, provided the group's total expenditures do not exceed the group's allocated budgeted total for the current operating year. Special consideration for unbudgeted needs arising outside of the normal budgeting cycle shall be presented in writing to the Trustees. The Trustees shall identify potential sources of funding for said needs and shall provide a recommendation to Council, who shall reserve final funding decision for all unbudgeted special needs.

## **8.7 Restricted Giving**

All donor restricted receipts will be applied in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

## **9.0 COMMISSIONS & JUDICIAL PROCESS**

### **9.1 Investigating Committee**

When the need arises for an Investigating Committee and/or committee of counsel, procedures provided for in the Rules of Discipline shall be followed. The Stated Clerk, in consultation with the Council Executive Committee, may appoint an Investigating Committee or committee of counsel, provided the composition of the committee is reported at the next meeting of presbytery.

### **9.2 Commissions**

Presbytery may appoint and empower commissions for the consideration and conclusion of specific aspects of presbytery's tasks, but each commission's actions shall require full review by presbytery, and shall require timely accomplishment of assignments. Procedures for creating and the functioning of commissions are provided for in the Form of Government and Rules of Discipline.

When time constraints demand it, the Council Executive Committee, in consultation with Council, may appoint a commission, provided the composition and powers of the commission are reported at the next meeting of presbytery which may exercise administrative review.

### **9.3 Judicial Commissions**

A permanent judicial commission shall be created and maintained as required by the Constitution to consider and decide cases brought under the requirements of the Rules of Discipline.

## **9.4 Operational Criteria: Commissions**

### **9.4.1 Membership**

Membership on and quorum for commissions shall be governed by the provisions of the Constitution.

### **9.4.2 Expenses**

Normally, all necessary expenses of a presbytery commission shall be accommodated within presbytery's Ecclesiastical Budget and its supporting apportionment.

### **9.4.3 Decisions**

The decision of a presbytery commission shall be the action of presbytery from the time of its completion by the commission and the announcement, where required, of the action to parties affected by it. Such decision shall be transmitted in writing to the Stated Clerk of presbytery, who shall report it to presbytery at the next meeting of presbytery. The Rules of Discipline and other applicable portions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) shall govern judicial commissions.

### **9.4.4 Records**

Each commission shall keep a full record of its proceedings, submitting them to the Stated Clerk for preservation. Decisions of commissions shall be recorded in presbytery minutes as actions of presbytery itself.

## **10.0 ADMINISTRATIVE, STRATEGIC, AND GENERATIVE TEAMS**

Section 10 shall be reviewed by Council at least every three years to determine which ministries and programs are most critical and which are least critical to its *Vision for Mission*, and which ones continue to be administratively necessary.

### **10.1 Committees Accountable Directly to the Presbytery**

#### **10.1.1 Committee on Ministry (24 members) (Moderator on Council)**

The Committee on Ministry shall be delegated responsibility for all functions presently assigned by the Form of Government to presbyteries for governing members of presbytery, ministerial relations, and calls to ministry, with the exception of the public assessment of readiness for ordination (“floor exam”), which shall be retained by the whole Presbytery.

#### **10.1.2 Committee on Preparation for Ministry (12 members)**

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry shall be delegated responsibility for all functions presently assigned by the Form of Government to presbyteries for providing care and oversight of those preparing for ordained and commissioned ministry.

#### **10.1.3 Nominating Committee (9 members)**

The Nominating Committee shall nominate for the Presbytery’s election the Moderator-Elect, Commissioners to Synod, and members of the following: Committee on Ministry, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Council, Permanent Judicial Commission, Strategic Coordinating Team, Trustees,

and the Sexual Misconduct Response Team.

#### **10.1.4 Permanent Judicial Commission (9 members).**

The Permanent Judicial Commission shall have all responsibilities required by the Constitution.

#### **10.1.5 Sexual Misconduct Response Team (9 members)**

The Sexual Misconduct Response Team shall have all responsibilities assigned by the Prevention and Response Policy: Sexual Misconduct of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos.

### **10.2 Function Groups Accountable to, and Under the Direction of, the Council**

#### **10.2.1 Administrative Teams**

##### **10.2.1.1 Trustees**

The Trustees shall have twelve members plus the Treasurer, nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery acting as the Corporation. Council shall appoint a currently serving Trustee to act as Moderator, whom Presbytery shall elect as President of the Corporation and who shall be a member of Council.

The Trustees shall be responsible for ecclesiastical and civil financial and fiduciary matters, including loans, property, budget (preparation and management), accounting, management of resources, investments, endowment, interface with civil and legal authorities.

##### **10.2.1.2 Committee on Staff Relations**

The Committee shall be composed of nine persons nominated by Council and elected by the Presbytery. The Council shall elect one of these nine persons to serve as Moderator, who shall also be a member of Council. No member may be a member of any other official body of presbytery. The Presbytery Co-Executive for Vision and Mission shall be a member ex officio without vote and serves as staff to the committee.

The Committee on Staff Relations shall be responsible:

- a) To ensure that presbytery has personnel policies and practices which are consistent with those established in other governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church (USA);
- b) To implement personnel policies and practices as established by presbytery and to provide all presbytery staff with support, guidance and counsel;
- c) To ensure the Presbytery's personnel policies comply with applicable state and local labor laws;
- d) To present nominations to the presbytery, through the Council, for exempt members of the staff, together with the terms of the call and to select and hire non-exempt administrative staff as needed;
- e) To review the schedule of compensation for staff members and prepare budget recommendations for the appropriate budget committees;
- f) To make an annual review of the work and compensation of each staff person, and to provide a summary report to the Council;



- g) To conduct end of term comprehensive reviews of the Stated Clerk and other presbytery executive staff and provide a summary report to the Council.

### **10.2.1.3 Records Review**

An Annual Review of Records shall be provided by an Administrative Commission appointed annually by the Stated Clerk and confirmed by Council. The Administrative Commission shall fulfill all constitutional requirements for administrative review of congregational records. Stated Clerk staffs.

### **10.2.1.4 Bills and Overtures**

Commissioners to the most recently completed General Assembly shall comprise the Bills and Overtures Committee. It shall present recommendations on all GA Proposed Amendments and overtures from Session to the Council. Stated Clerk staffs.

### **10.2.1.5 Stated Clerk's Office**

The Stated Clerk's office is responsible for records, corporate responsibilities, ecclesiastical and constitutional functions.

## **10.2.2 Strategic Coordinating Team**

The Strategic Coordinating Team shall have eighteen members nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery. Council shall appoint a currently serving member to act as Moderator, who shall be a member of Council.

The Team shall have authority over and responsibility for those functions called for in the Vision for Mission and mission goals of the Presbytery through:

- a) Helping create, maintain, support, and sustain partnerships of congregations, including mission partnerships locally and beyond;
- b) Brokering resources for creating healthy congregations and for leader development;
- c) Encouraging, facilitating, and supporting affinity and professional networks;
- d) Providing resources to maintain and encourage ethnic ministries and new worshipping communities.

These functions may be carried out through the use of teams, partnerships, committees, task forces, commissions, or any other organization type body needed to fulfill the mission (hereafter "group" or "groups"). In doing so, the Team shall make every effort to clarify and make public the membership of the group, leadership of the group, accountability for the group, responsibilities/tasks of the group, duration of the group, staff needs of the group, procedures for evaluation of effectiveness, and financial support needed for the group.

The Team shall have power to act, including to disburse funds, consistent with its assigned responsibilities so long as (a) a majority of ruling elders and ministers on the Team agree to the action; (b) it reports such actions to the next meeting of Council; and (c) any expenditures do not exceed amounts granted to it by the budget in a given year.

## **10.2.3 Generative Catalyst Team**

The Generative Catalyst Team is composed of three classes of three-year terms, service not to exceed six

years consecutively. Each class shall consist of the following: one member appointed by the Co-Executive for Vision and Mission; one member appointed by the current Moderator of Presbytery; and one member nominated by Council and elected by Presbytery.

The Team shall provide a balcony (“big picture”) or long view for the presbytery. It is responsible for adaptive thinking, evaluation, interpretation, aligning budget, challenging presbytery and congregations, oversight of media and communication for the presbytery, and providing theological reflection and guidance. Co-Executive for Vision and Mission staffs.

### **10.3 Presbytery Gathering Team**

The Presbytery Gathering Team shall be composed of the Presbytery Moderator, and Presbytery Moderator-Elect; the Stated Clerk and other executive staff; three at-large members; and one representative provided by each of the following: Council, Generative Catalyst Team, Strategic Coordinating Team.

The Presbytery Gathering Team shall be responsible for coordinating activities at each Gathering to support the Presbytery’s vision and enhance its missional effectiveness.

### **10.4 Validated organizations**

Other groups, not directly accountable to presbytery or Council, but with special interests or constituencies consistent with the presbytery’s mission, and composed of congregations of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos and/or their members, may be validated by the Council and report to Council.

### **10.5 Flexibility**

Presbytery and its generative, strategic and administrative groups shall organize to fulfill presbytery’s missional vision design-

### **10.6 Reports**

Each generative, strategic, and administrative group shall report to Council and presbytery as its assigned mission shall require.

### **10.7 Expenses**

All necessary administrative expenses of programmatic, mission, and administrative groups shall be accommodated within the approved ecclesiastical (operating) budget and its supporting per capita apportionment.

### **10.8 Fifty-Mile Limitation**

Travel greater than 50 miles round-trip without church reimbursement (for presbytery and generative, strategic, and administrative groups) will be paid for by presbytery at then current IRS rates.

### **10.9 Representation and Diversity**

Consistent with the Constitution, the Nominating Committee and all generative, strategic, and administrative groups shall seek to reflect the diversity of races, ages, ethnic groups, and cultures in this presbytery and insure compliance with Constitutional requirements for diversity. All groups shall seek a balance between male and female, minister and elder, theological diversity, and geographical representation.

**{Endowment Fund and Committee *have been moved to Policy Manual*}**

### **10.9.1 Committee on Self-Development of People and Committee on Representation**

Responsibilities for Committee on Representation and Committee on Self-Development of People activities shall be assigned by Council to an appropriate group on an “as needed” basis.

## **11.0 CHURCH SESSIONS**

### **11.1 Reports To Presbytery**

The Presbytery shall provide for an annual review of the records of the proceedings of each session. Presbytery shall determine from these whether the session is complying with the constitutional standards enumerated in a presbytery-provided checklist.

Each church shall present to the presbytery a copy of the current Articles of Incorporation and a copy of the current bylaws/standing rules of each church-connected corporation and shall likewise provide a copy of revisions or rewrites of each such document.

## **12.0 CONGREGATIONS**

### **12.1 Review of Mission and Ministry**

The mission and ministry of each congregation should, ideally, be reviewed every five years. When requested, the presbytery shall provide individuals to assist in this process.

In addition, there may be times when a special review is required.

- 1) When a congregation dissolves a pastoral relationship and before it calls a new, installed pastor.
- 2) When a congregation is planning on a change in its real property or a change in its encumbrances, it must consult with the presbytery and receive approval for those transactions specified in the Constitution.

**{Sections on Calls and Board of Pensions *have been moved to Policy Manual*}**

### **12.2 Insurance**

Each church “shall obtain property and liability insurance coverage to protect its facilities, programs, staff, and elected and appointed officers.” [G.3.0112] All congregations of the Presbytery of Los Ranchos are covered by Insurance Board unless they have notified presbytery and provided proof of “in force” alternative insurance.

## **13.0 PROPERTY MATTERS**

### **13.1 Leasing worship space**

A particular church shall not lease or encumber the use of church property for purposes of worship by any group outside the particular church for more than three consecutive weeks without written permission of the presbytery. Permission may be obtained by the session of a particular church by application submitted to the Presbytery's Trustees. {See Policy Manual for how presbytery decides}

### **13.2 Property Governed by Constitution**

Property of churches is governed by the Constitution of the PCUSA and the policies of the presbytery. Pastors, congregations, sessions and presbyteries have a fiduciary responsibility to abide by these provisions. All loans and encumbrances approved by presbytery shall include a reversionary clause in the terms of approval.

## **14.0 COMMISSIONERS TO HIGHER GOVERNING BODIES**

Presbytery shall establish policies for the election of commissioners to higher governing bodies which shall be part of the presbytery's Policy Manual.

## **15.0 AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSION OF RULES**

### **15.1 Amendments (“Two Readings Rule”)**

Changes to these Standing Rules may be made by two-thirds vote of members present at any Stated Meeting, provided that written notice of the proposed change is made at the previous Stated Meeting.

### **15.2 Suspension**

Any portion of these Standing Rules may be suspended for a particular meeting or vote, by a three-fourths vote of the members registered at a Stated Meeting only.

## **16.0 APPROVAL AUTHORITY AND REVISION HISTORY**

**16.1 These Standing Rules totally revised and updated May 2009**

**16.2 Revised by Approval of Presbytery February 25, 2010**

**16.3 Revised by Approval of Presbytery November 21, 2013**

**16.4 Revised by Approval of Presbytery February 26, 2015**

**16.5 Revised by Approval of Presbytery May 28, 2015**

**16.6 Revised by Approval of Presbytery September 28, 2019**

**16.7 Revised by Approval of Presbytery November 21, 2019**

**16.8 Revised by Approval of Presbytery November 18, 2021**

## STANDING RULES: THE PRESBYTERY OF LOS RANCHOS

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Total Number of Nominations for Which Nominating Committee is Responsible:

Council: 9 at large

Committee on Ministry 24

Preparation for Ministry 12

Permanent Judicial Commission 9

Trustees 12

Strategic Coordinating Team 18

Sexual Misconduct Response Team 9

TOTAL: 93

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<sup>i</sup> In this document, capitalization follows the format of denominational documents: presbytery and session are not capitalized unless named; titles of individuals are capitalized; moderator is not capitalized; official documents are capitalized when referring to a specific document.