

## **BY-LAWS of MISSION PRESBYTERY, INC**

### **ARTICLE 1: ORGANIZATION**

#### Section 1. Name

The name of this part of the Body of Christ shall be “Mission Presbytery, Inc.”

#### Section 2. Denominational Membership and Boundaries

Mission Presbytery shall be a member Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and consist of all the churches and ministers within its boundaries. Its boundaries shall be determined by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Synod of the Sun, within whose boundaries Mission Presbytery exists. The geographic boundaries of this Presbytery are the following: The Gulf of Mexico north from the junction with the Rio Grande River (Cameron County) to the west side of the Colorado River in Matagorda County; west and north along the Rio Grande River and including Val Verde County; and along a line at the western, northern or eastern extremities of these counties: Val Verde, Edwards, Kimble, Menard, McCullough, San Saba, Lampasas, Coryell (only Copperas Cove), Burnet, Williamson, Lee, Fayette, Lavaca, and Wharton and Matagorda Counties west of the Colorado River.

#### Section 3. Deed of Trust Provision

Churches are urged to include the following language in deed when purchasing real property: “The premises herein conveyed shall be used, kept, and maintained by the grantee for divine worship and other purposes of its ministry as a particular church belonging to Mission Presbytery or its legal successors, subject to the provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) or its legal successors.”

#### Section 4. Constitutional Basis

The Constitution (Part I, Confessions, and Part II, Book of Order) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall regulate the proceedings of this Presbytery. No rule shall violate the provisions of this Constitution.

### **ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE**

Mission Presbytery, Inc., has been organized under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future tax code, and more specifically to:

#### Section 1. Purpose Statement

We are Mission Presbytery, serving Christ in the world. In the Reformed Tradition, we (a) establish and equip congregations and sessions to carry out their missions; (b) recruit, receive, ordain, develop, and care for those called to service in the church; (c) enable mission and witness to the Gospel that congregations cannot

accomplish alone; and (d) steward our resources faithfully and generously. We are better together.

Section 2. Objectives

1. Mission Presbytery participates as a council (governing body) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and relates with other communities of faith.
2. Mission Presbytery serves its churches through pastoral care and oversight of its congregations, church officers and members, and by providing resources for congregational life and mission.
3. Mission Presbytery offers a corporate witness of faith, justice, and compassion to persons, communities, and the world.
4. Mission Presbytery joins together persons and churches for spiritual growth, fellowship, and mission to:

*PARTICIPATE* in God's movement in human history;  
*CELEBRATE* God's grace that incorporates us into that story;  
*BE EQUIPPED* by the Holy Spirit for ministry in the name of Jesus Christ;  
*SERVE OTHERS* by sharing God's love, acceptance, and peace; and  
*WITNESS* to the sovereign Power and Glory of God.

**ARTICLE 3: OFFICERS**

Section 1. Classification

The officers of Mission Presbytery shall include (1) Moderator, (2) Moderator-Elect, (3) Chair of General Council, (4) Stated Clerk, (5) Temporary Clerks, (6) Treasurer, (7) Assistant Treasurer, and (8) Trustees.

Section 2. Moderator

The Moderator is a Ruling Elder or Teaching Elder who serves as Moderator for Presbytery Meetings and as a member of General Council. The Moderator is installed at the annual stated meeting and will serve for one year or until succeeded. The Moderator assumes office on January 1 following installation by Presbytery. In the absence of the Moderator, the Moderator present who was last in office shall be the Moderator of that meeting.

Section 3. Moderator-Elect

The Moderator-Elect is elected at the annual stated meeting one year in advance of installation to the office of Moderator. The Moderator-Elect is a member of General Council the first year, moderates Presbytery the next year, and then chairs General Council the third year.

Section 4. Chair of General Council

The Chair of General Council will have served as Moderator of Mission Presbytery the year prior to chairing General Council. The Chair sets the agenda and moderates General Council meetings. In the absence of a Moderator to move to chair General Council, the previous Chair of General Council shall chair.

Section 5. Stated Clerk

The Stated Clerk is elected to a five-year term at the annual stated meeting and may succeed self. The Stated Clerk is an ex-officio member without vote on the General Council, serving as Recorder. The Stated Clerk is the parliamentarian for the Presbytery and the Secretary of the Corporation.

Section 6. Temporary Clerks

Temporary Clerks shall be elected at the first session of each meeting of Presbytery upon nomination by the Stated Clerk. They will assist the Stated Clerk throughout the meeting of Presbytery.

Section 7. Treasurers

The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer shall be elected at each annual stated meeting of Presbytery for a term of one year and may succeed themselves. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer are members of the Stewardship and Financial Oversight Committee.

Section 8. Trustees

The Trustees shall be composed of 10 members, each elected for a five-year term. No trustee may succeed self.

#### **ARTICLE 4: AGENCIES OF MISSION PRESBYTERY**

Section 1. Standing Committees/Commissions<sup>1</sup>

Standing Committees and Commissions\* of Mission Presbytery shall include (1) General Council\*, (2) Committee on Ministry\*, (3) Committee on Preparation for Ministry, (4) Committee on Representation, (5) Nominations Committee, (6) Permanent Judicial Commission\*, and (7) Trustees\*.

Section 2. Other Committees/Commissions

Other committees and/or commissions of Presbytery shall be formed as necessary to accomplish the mission of the church.

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<sup>1</sup> Presbytery agencies signified with an asterisk (\*) function as commissions with the full authority and power to act as the Presbytery in between presbytery meetings.

Section 3. Sub-Committees, Ad-Hoc Committees, Ministry Teams or Task Forces

General Council may designate sub-committees, ad-hoc committees, ministry teams or task forces as necessary to assist committees and commissions in accomplishing the mission of the church.

**ARTICLE 5: RULES AND PROCEDURES**

Section 1. Administrative Operating Procedures

1. A Manual of Operations shall be established that outlines rules and policies for administration of internal organizational operating procedures and interrelationships of the Presbytery while in session and between meetings. The Manual of Operations supplements the By-Laws and may be suspended in whole or in part for the duration of a session as stipulated in the Manual of Operations.
2. Each committee and commission shall develop a handbook that outlines processes and policies specific to the agency's (see Article 4) function. Handbooks shall be added to the Manual of Operation under the appropriate Appendixes.

Section 2. Committee of Counsel or Investigating Committee

When it becomes necessary for Mission Presbytery to appoint a Committee of Council or an Investigating Committee, the Executive Presbyter, Moderator of Presbytery and Stated Clerk shall be authorized to appoint such committees.

Section 3. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of Mission Presbytery, Inc. will be January 1 through December 31.

Section 4. By-Laws

The By-Laws of Mission Presbytery may not be suspended.

**ARTICLE 6: MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERY**

Section 1. Conduct of Meetings

The conduct of Presbytery meetings shall conform to the requirements of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the By-Laws of Mission Presbytery. When these do not apply or there is a contradiction, parliamentary procedure shall be guided by "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised."

Section 2. Stated Meetings

1. Three stated meetings of Presbytery shall be held each year. The Annual Meeting ordinarily begins on the fourth Friday of October. The other two meetings ordinarily begin on the first weekend of March and the third weekend of June.

2. New business may be introduced at any time, but items of a substantive nature, as determined by the Moderator, shall be referred without debate to the appropriate agency (see Article 4) of Presbytery for study and recommendation. Consideration of the business item shall take place at a subsequent stated meeting of Presbytery or as Presbytery shall otherwise direct.

Section 3. Special Meetings

Special meetings of Presbytery may be held as provided for in the Book of Order.

Section 4. Business Docket

The General Council proposes the business docket for each meeting of Presbytery.

Section 5. Representation

The Manual of Operations outlines the representation at meetings of Presbytery to be:

- Teaching Elders of the Presbytery
- Ruling Elders elected as commissioners by church sessions of the Presbytery
- Ruling Elders commissioned by new church development sessions of the Presbytery
- Ruling Elder elected as Moderator or Moderator-Elect of the Presbytery
- Ruling Elders elected as Trustees of the Presbytery
- Ruling Elders who are members of Council and Ruling Elders serving as Chairs of the Presbytery's Agencies (as defined in Article 4)
- Commissioned Ruling Elders of the Presbytery
- Ruling Elders serving as Certified Christian Educators in the Presbytery (Certified Christian Educators and Associate Christian Educators in the Presbytery have voice without vote)
- Youth Delegates of the Presbytery (voice without vote)
- Executive Presbyter
- Associate Presbyter(s)
- Guests seated by the Presbytery (voice without vote)

Section 6. Attendance

Attendance at stated meetings of Presbytery shall be required for every Teaching Elder, unless honorably retired, every Commissioned Ruling Elder and Certified Christian Educator along with Ruling Elders commissioned by sessions of Presbytery congregations. Honorably Retired Teaching Elders are encouraged to attend and participate in the mission of the Presbytery.

Section 7. Voting

Only members/commissioners of the Presbytery (members of the Presbytery meeting/session as identified in Section 5 of this Article above) have voice and vote. No proxy votes shall be permitted.

## ARTICLE 7: AMENDMENTS

### Section 1. By-Laws

These By-Laws may be amended or totally revised by a majority vote at each of any two successive stated meetings.

### Section 2. Manual of Operations

The Manual of Operations may be amended by a majority vote at any stated meeting.

### Section 3. Procedure for Amendment

Every proposed amendment, either to the By-Laws or Manual of Operations, shall first be submitted to the General Council. General Council will report to the next stated meeting of Presbytery its recommendation regarding the proposed change, together with a statement as to what specific provisions of the By-Laws or Manual of Operations are involved and what effect the proposed change will have upon the previously approved policies of Presbytery.