

Standing Rules of Covenant Presbytery

As of 04/28/20

1. Name

Covenant is the name of the presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America whose constituting churches are in Arkansas, west Tennessee, and north Mississippi, and south west Missouri.

2. Relationship of Covenant Presbytery to its Constituting Churches

1. Covenant Presbytery is composed of all teaching elders and congregations within its geographical bounds which have been accepted by the presbytery, together with the mission churches for which it has the responsibility of initiation and oversight.
2. Any congregation in the geographical bounds of Covenant Presbytery may ask for admission into the presbytery, upon which request the presbytery shall select a commission for the enablement of admission, according to **BCO** 13-8.
3. New churches are necessarily organized by the presbytery.
4. The jurisdiction of the individual congregation is in its session, and, if it has no session, is in the presbytery.
5. Since membership in the presbytery is voluntary, congregations may remove themselves from the relationship to Covenant Presbytery when they so desire.
6. Properties are owned by the individual congregations, not by or with any higher court.
7. Covenant Presbytery is responsible for the oversight of individual member congregations, and exercises this responsibility chiefly through the examination of session records each year.
8. Covenant Presbytery budgets money for its various operations of service, and asks the local congregations to make contributions for that service, sending, if possible, at the beginning of each year, quarter or month, as it is necessary for the payment of presbytery expenses.

3. Meetings

1. Stated Meetings
 - a. Presbytery shall hold (3) three Stated Meetings a year, on the first Tuesday in February and October, and the third Tuesday in May at 9:30 a.m. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at the February and October meetings. The place of each meeting shall be determined at the previous meeting. The Presbytery may approve and announce special observances, memorial services and other particular forms of worship agreeable to the word of God and unto His glory.
 - b. A proposed docket shall be prepared by the Stated Clerk for each meeting of Presbytery in consultation with the Moderator, Chairmen of the Permanent Committees and the Administration Committee, and a copy suitable for reproduction of all communications and reports from individuals, committees, and Church courts which require action by the Presbytery shall be received by the Stated Clerk three (3) weeks prior to the Stated Meetings of Presbytery. Requests for special speakers or presentations from outside Presbytery shall be referred to the appropriate Permanent

Committee and approved by that Committee before being admitted to the docket. Presbytery shall adopt the docket by a majority vote, and the body may amend the docket at any time during the meeting by a majority vote.

- c. The Administrative Committee shall appoint a Worship subcommittee to plan and coordinate the worship services at presbytery meetings. This subcommittee shall consult with the host church regarding music, facilities, and other matters related to the worship service. Worship subcommittee members shall serve a one year term and may be reappointed.
- d. Presbytery meetings shall be held at a particular place and time unless in a time of National/State/Regional Emergency where providential hindrances pose an undue threat of harm to commissioners and make it unreasonable so to do. The Moderator may then change the forthcoming meeting to a videoconference meeting pursuant to his powers as stated in section 4.d and 4.e of these Standing Rules and pursuant to the guidelines set forth in the current version of Robert's Rules of Order used by Presbytery. If a Presbytery meeting is to be held by video conference, the Stated Clerk in the Whitebook or in the call of the meeting shall state the suggested manners by which commissioners may obtain the floor, raise a point of order, and vote on matters before the court. [NOTE – Teleconference and Video Conference guidelines for committees and commissions of Presbytery are governed by section 5.6 of these Standing Rules.]

2. Adjourned Meetings

Adjourned Meetings may be held as determined necessary by Presbytery for continuing the business of regular Stated Meetings.

3. Called Meetings

All called meetings of Covenant Presbytery shall meet the requirements of the **Book of Church Order** 13-12. In addition, there shall be no called meetings of Presbytery without either (a) the approval of one-fourth (1/4) of the Sessions of Covenant Presbytery, or (b) the unanimous vote of all members present at a properly called meeting of a committee or commission of Covenant Presbytery to have a called meeting of Presbytery, or (c) the majority vote of the commissioners present at a stated or called meeting of Covenant Presbytery to have a called meeting of Presbytery.

4. Attendance

Unless honorably retired, declared infirm, or permitted to labor outside the geographical bounds of Presbytery, all Teaching Elders are expected to attend all meetings of Presbytery. Permission for absences shall be requested through the Stated Clerk or from the floor during the Stated Clerk's report.

4. Officers

1. Moderator and Vice-Moderator

- a. The Moderator and the Vice-Moderator shall be elected by Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee for a term of one (1) year, subject to reelection at the will of Presbytery. Election shall normally be held at the October Stated Meeting, with term of office to begin on January 1st the following.
- b. In odd numbered years, the Moderator will be a Teaching Elder and the Vice-Moderator, a Ruling Elder; in even numbered years, the Moderator will be a Ruling

- Elder and the Vice-Moderator, a Teaching Elder.
- c. The Moderator shall preside over all Meetings of Presbytery. In the event of the Moderator's absence, the Vice-Moderator shall preside over the Meeting as the acting Moderator. If both Moderator and Vice-Moderator are absent, the last Moderator present or the last Vice-Moderator present or the Teaching Elder longest-a-member-of-the-court may hold the chair until a new Moderator is elected.
 - d. The Moderator has all the authority necessary for the preservation of order, for the proper and expeditious conduct of all business before the court according to the **Book of Church Order** of the Presbyterian Church in America and **Robert's Rules of Order**.
 - e. In any emergency the Moderator may, by circular letter, email, or telephone notification, change the time or place (or both) of meetings to which the court stands adjourned, giving reasonable notice of such change.

- f. The Moderator shall appoint the members of Standing Committees and their chairmen.
- g. The Moderator is responsible for appointing a time keeper. Debate on a main motion shall be limited to twenty (20) minutes unless extended. In the first twenty minutes of debate on the main motion, each speaker shall be limited to a maximum of five (5) minutes. In the event Presbytery wishes to extend the debate, each speaker shall be limited to three (3) minutes. Time extension shall be approved by a simple majority of Presbytery and shall be in increments of six (6) minutes.
- h. The Moderator and the Vice-Moderator, by the authority vested in them, are ex officio members of the Administration Committee.

2. Stated Clerk

- a. The Stated Clerk shall be elected by Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee for a term of one (1) year, subject to re-election at the will of Presbytery. Election shall normally be held at the October Stated Meeting, with term of office to begin on January 1st the following.
- b. The Stated Clerk shall receive an annual stipend to be fixed by Presbytery.
- c. He shall nominate to Presbytery Temporary Clerks, who, upon election, shall serve under the direction of the Stated Clerk.
- d. He shall refer communications to appropriate committees when practicable, and present to Presbytery all other communications intended for that body.
- e. He shall promptly communicate all special orders of Presbytery.
- f. He shall sign and issue promptly all official papers of Presbytery not otherwise provided for, and he shall conduct the official correspondence of the Presbytery.
- g. He shall have the Minutes, proceedings, and reports as adopted by Presbytery reproduced and distributed following each meeting and shall preserve carefully the official copy of the permanent Minutes.
- h. In order for the Stated Clerk to properly edit the minutes submitted by the Recording Clerk, the Presbytery shall furnish and maintain adequate recording equipment to make an electronic record of each meeting.
- i. He shall receive invitations from churches desiring to host Presbytery Meetings and report these to Presbytery.
- j. He shall keep a file of annual statistical reports received from churches of Presbytery for five (5) years.
- k. He shall keep an accurate roll of the churches, Clerks of Sessions, and Teaching Elders of Covenant Presbytery.
- l. He shall advise the Moderator in every possible way, by keeping him informed of matters requiring his attention, giving notice for him of Called Meetings of Presbytery or changes in time and place of Meetings, making the facilities of the office available to him for correspondence or other matters, and rendering any service requested by the Moderator in connection with the operation of Presbytery.
- m. He shall plan and compile the docket for each Meeting of Presbytery in consultation with the Moderator, the chairmen of Permanent Committees, and the Administration Committee. Requests for special speakers or presentations from outside Presbytery

shall be referred to the appropriate Permanent Committee and approved by that Committee before being added to the docket.

- n. Prior to each Stated Meeting of Presbytery, the Stated Clerk shall prepare an information packet (the Whitebook), including in it the docket and all committee reports which require action by Presbytery. The Whitebook will be available for download on the Presbytery website. Ten (10) days prior to the Stated Meetings of Presbytery, the Stated Clerk will mail hard copies of the Whitebook only to those who request one. Hard copies will be provided at the Stated Meeting based on the average number of voting members in attendance at the previous three Stated Meetings.
 - o. He shall keep a historical record of Presbytery from year to year and shall preserve all such records.
 - p. He shall notify in writing within fifteen (15) days after the Meeting of Presbytery each member who has been elected or appointed to a Committee of Presbytery. It shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to provide the Stated Clerk with accurate names and addresses of the persons elected by Presbytery to membership on any Committee of Presbytery.
 - q. He shall prepare a suggested operating budget for the operation of his office, to be presented to the Administration Committee at its meeting prior to the October Meeting of Presbytery.
 - r. He shall be an ex-officio member of Presbytery's Administration Committee.
 - s. In association with the Church Care Committee, he shall, by October 15th, remind each church Session that records are due for examination and that they need to mail a copy of their unexamined records to the Chairman of the Church Care Committee by December 15th.
 - t. He shall maintain the PCA Presbytery members directory and it shall contain:
 - 1. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of the Stated Clerk, the Recording Clerk, and the Presbytery Treasurer, and publish these on the Presbytery's website.
 - 2. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of each of the members of the permanent Committees of Presbytery, namely, Administration, Candidates, Christian Education, Church Care, Credentials, Mission to North America, Mission to the World, Reformed University Fellowship, and Nominating. The members of each Committee shall be listed by classes and the chairman of each noted.
3. Recording Clerk
- a. The Recording Clerk shall be elected by Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee for a term of one (1) year, subject to re-election at the will of Presbytery. Election shall normally be held at the October Stated Meeting, with term of office to begin on January 1st following.
 - b. The Recording Clerk shall receive an annual stipend to be fixed by Presbytery.
 - c. He shall be given two (2) copies of all committee reports as presented to Presbytery for inclusion in the Minutes and a written copy of all motions adopted by Presbytery.

- d. As soon as practicable, he shall convey the Minutes in type written form (or any other form acceptable to the Stated Clerk), properly recorded, to the Stated Clerk for editing and publishing.
4. Treasurer
 - a. The Presbytery Treasurer shall be elected by Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee for a term of one (1) year, subject to re-election at the will of Presbytery. Election shall normally be held at the October Stated Meeting with the term of office to begin January 1st following.
 - b. The Treasurer shall receive an annual stipend fixed by Presbytery.
 - c. He shall receive and record all funds contributed to Presbytery, shall discharge all designated funds as directed, and shall disburse all undesignated funds under the guidelines of Presbytery. All disbursements shall be approved by the respective Committees of Presbytery.
 - d. He shall give an accounting of the funds to the Presbytery at each Stated Meeting.
 - e. He shall be an ex-officio member of the Administration Committee.
 5. Parliamentarian
 - a. The Parliamentarian shall be elected by Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee for a term of one (1) year, subject to re-election at the will of Presbytery. Election shall normally be held at the October Stated Meeting, with term of office to begin January 1st following.
 - b. He shall advise the Moderator and Presbytery concerning the alternatives of parliamentary order available to the court as to be expeditious in the dispatch of all business before the court while being in accordance with **Robert's Rules of Order**.
 - c. He shall advise the Recording and Stated Clerks as to the appropriate wording so the Minutes of Presbytery accurately reflect the actions of the court while being in accordance with **Robert's Rules of Order**.
 6. Trustees
 - a. The Trustees of Presbytery shall be composed of six (6) members, with parity of Teaching and Ruling Elders or Deacons. Members shall be elected by Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee, for a term of three (3) years, subject to re-election at the will of Presbytery. Election shall normally be held at the October Stated Meeting with terms of office to begin January 1st following.
 - b. They shall hold title in the name of Presbytery to any real property or assets.
 - c. They shall administer such property or assets as Presbytery's agents when so directed by Presbytery.

5. Committees and Commissions

1. Standing Committees

The Standing Committee shall include Resolution and Thanks. The Moderator shall appoint these Committee(s) at each Meeting of Presbytery from the members present, shall name the chairman of each, and shall name at least two (2) members to the Resolution and Thanks Committee.

2. Permanent Committees

- a. The Permanent Committees shall consist of Administration, Candidates, Church Care, Credentials, Mission to North America, Mission to the World, and Reformed University Fellowship. Each Committee shall be composed of not less than six (6) members with parity of Teaching and Ruling Elders or Deacons, to be divided into three or more classes of equal number. Members shall be elected by Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee and shall not be eligible to be elected to a consecutive term on any given Committee. Members elected to fill unexpired terms shall be eligible to serve one full term additionally. Two alternate members with parity of Teaching and Ruling Elders or Deacons shall be elected annually to each Committee, who shall be required to attend the Committee Meetings and vote in the absence of any principal members. Elections shall normally be held at the October Stated Meeting of Presbytery with terms of office to begin upon election.
- b. The Permanent Committees shall meet as needed in order to fulfill their appointed responsibilities, and the quorum shall be at least one half the number of the principal member positions. Alternates present count toward a quorum. Those members habitually absent shall be reported to Presbytery at the May Stated Meeting.
- c. The Permanent Committees shall elect their own chairmen and other officers from their membership annually. Each Committee is urged to select a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary from different classes.
- d. The Permanent Committees shall report to Presbytery at each Stated Meeting.
- e. The members of Presbytery shall serve on only two (2) Permanent Committees as principals or alternates at the same time including the Nominating Committee.
- f. Committee Reports which require action by Presbytery shall be sent by the chairman or secretary of the Committee to the Stated Clerk at least three (3) weeks prior to the Stated Meeting of Presbytery.
- g. The Chairmen of the Permanent Committees shall submit their proposed committee budgets to the Administration Committee by the September meeting of the Administration Committee for consideration at the October Stated Meeting of Presbytery.
- h. Each Permanent Committee shall operate according to its own Presbytery approved policy manual and changes in the manual will require the adoption of Presbytery. Copies of the manuals shall be sent available on the Presbytery website or mailed upon request by a member of Presbytery.
- i. The chairman of the Candidates, Church Care, Credentials, Mission to North America, Mission to the World, and Reformed University Fellowship Committees are ex-officio, non-voting, members of the Administration Committee and particularly when they have significant business to propose to the Administration Committee or to the Presbytery.
- j. At the fall meeting the Administration Committee, with the help of the Treasurer, shall furnish the churches with a per member cost of operating the Presbytery.
- k. Whenever a permanent committee is given a continuing power of a commission, this will be noted in an appendix to the Standing Rules as long as the committee is entrusted with that power.

3. Nominating Committee

- a. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of six (6) members with parity of Teaching and Ruling Elders or Deacons, to be divided into two (2) classes of equal number. Members shall be elected by Presbytery at the May Stated Meeting of Presbytery upon nomination from the floor, with terms of office to begin immediately upon election. One Teaching Elder and two Ruling Elders or Deacons shall be elected on odd numbered years, and two Teaching Elders and one Ruling Elder or Deacon shall be elected on even numbered years. The quorum shall be at least one half of the elected members. The Committee shall elect its own chairman and other officers annually.
- b. The Committee shall report to Presbytery at the October Stated Meeting by submitting nominations for all Presbytery committees and other vacancies and shall report at other meetings as vacancies occur.
- c. The Committee shall also make nominations to Presbytery for the appropriate nominations to General Assembly.
- d. The Committee shall submit its nominations to the Stated Clerk three (3) weeks prior to the October Stated Meeting of Presbytery.

4. Church Care Committee and Sessional Records

- a. Each church Session shall submit copies of their records (either by mail or by electronic means if allowed by the committee) to the church care committee by December 15th of each year for review, consisting of all records which have been taken since their last review. The records are to be reviewed by an ad hoc sub-committee of Church Care consisting of the Church Care Committee and other elder volunteers from Presbytery churches such as clerks of sessions, and reported on at the February meeting of Presbytery.
- b. The Church Care Committee shall examine the records in accordance with **BCO** Chapter 40 and shall classify exceptions as notations, exceptions of form or exceptions of substance. The Committee will consult the **RAO** guidelines on examining Presbytery minutes in defining these terms. Exceptions of substance should be limited to serious irregularities, gross errors, corrupt practices and heretical opinions.
- c. Notations and exceptions of form shall normally be sent to the Clerk of Session by the Committee without being read before Presbytery or recorded in its minutes. Exceptions of substance shall be reported to Presbytery as recommendations to be voted upon. The Sessional Records shall be approved without exception; or with exception of form and/or substance.
- d. Sessions shall advise the Presbytery by the following Stated Meeting through the Church Care Committee that they have disposed of the exception of substance in one of the following manners: the Session agrees with the exception of substance, corrects its record or action if possible, and promises to try to be more careful in the future; or, the Session respectfully disagrees with the exception of substance, states its grounds and refers the exception back to the Presbytery for action. The Church Care Committee will bring a recommendation regarding accepting the disposition as satisfactory.

- f. The Church Care Committee shall report to Presbytery regarding any Sessional Records that have not been submitted for review in the past year.
- g. The Church Care Committee shall provide help for any Clerk of Session seeking guidance in preparing Sessional Records for the yearly Presbytery review.
- h. The Church Care Committee shall send a written record of the review approved by presbytery to the clerks of session of churches reviewed.

5. Commissions

- a. All commissions appointed by Covenant Presbytery will have a quorum of two Teaching Elders and two Ruling Elders unless otherwise specified by Presbytery.
- b. Judicial Commissions
 - 1. Presbytery judicial commissions will follow the guidelines found in the GA SJC manual that are applicable to the presbytery level except for the guidance on distribution of the judicial commission reports.
 - 2. Between the time when presbytery appoints a specific judicial commission and the time when that specific judicial commission gives its final report, copies of the report may be distributed as follows:
 - i. Any TE in good standing in presbytery and any session in a church in presbytery may on their own initiative inform the presbytery stated clerk of their desire to receive a copy of that specific judicial commission's written reports as they become available.
 - ii. Such requests will give a specific name and a specific address (either physical address, postal box or e-mail address) to which the presbytery stated clerk is to send the reports.
 - iii. The stated clerk will send these reports to these as they become available to him.
 - iv. Those who receive these written reports will be responsible to limit the sharing of this information with the "community of interest" and to avoid any unnecessary distribution of this information to avoid the promotion of gossip and as a matter of legal precaution.
 - v. The stated clerk will include in his report to presbytery lists of those who have requested him to send to them the reports of specific judicial commissions and lists of those to whom he has sent specific judicial commission reports.

6. Conducting Business by Teleconference, Videoconference, Postal and Electronic Mail, and Facsimile (FAX)

Presbytery committees and commissions may vote on motions by e-mail, postal mail, telephone polling, facsimile or any combination thereof at the chairman's discretion unless one-fourth of the committee or commission membership (with alternates allowed to object and included in calculating the number needed to prohibit) inform the chairman upon receiving the call that they object to using this method of voting because they do not believe the vote can be conducted properly without deliberation or with only the information provided by the chairman in the call. In these calls, the chairman needs to indicate which committee member or alternate is making the motion to be voted on, and which committee member or alternate is seconding the motion. Presbytery committees and commissions may conduct business by teleconference or videoconference at the

chairman's discretion unless a majority of the committee membership (with alternates allowed to object and included in calculating the number needed to prohibit) inform the chairman upon receiving the call that they object to using this method of deliberation and voting for that particular meeting.

6. Government

1. Rules of Order

The rules of parliamentary order shall be the Standing Rules of Covenant Presbytery herein-after provided, the **Book of Church Order** of the Presbyterian Church in America, and **Robert's Rules of Order - Revised**.

2. Standing Rules of Presbytery

- a. The Standing Rules shall be printed in the minutes of Presbytery once a year and posted on the Presbytery website. Suspension of the Standing Rules shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of Presbytery and shall apply only to a particular action in the same meeting in which suspension takes place.
- b. Amendments to the Standing Rules shall be proposed in writing at one meeting, admitted to the docket of the next Stated Meeting, and become effective by a majority vote of Presbytery.

7. General Policies

1. Expenses

- a. Presbytery committee and commission expenses shall be paid by the Treasurer when approved in writing by the chairman of the committee or commission.
- b. Presbytery shall reimburse for automobile travel expense at the current rate per mile allowed by the Internal Revenue Service.
- c. General Assembly expenses incurred by the Floor Clerk(s) shall be paid up to the amount designated in the annual budget of Presbytery by the Treasurer when approved in writing by the chairman of the Administration Committee. If two or more individuals serve as Floor Clerks, the funds shall be allocated proportionally among those reporting their expenses in writing.

2. Obligations of Teaching Elders

MINISTERIAL OBLIGATION

Believing the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice; and Sincerely receiving and adopting the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and further promising that if at any time I find myself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, I will on my own initiative, make known to my Presbytery the change which has taken place in my views since the assumption of my ordination vows; and

Approving of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America as being in conformity with the general principles of Biblical polity; and
Promising subjection to my brethren in the Lord; and
Having been induced, as far as I know my own heart, to seek the office of the holy ministry from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the Gospel of His Son; and
Promising to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto me on that account; and
Engaging to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all my duties as a Christian and a minister of the Gospel, whether personal or relational, private or public; and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in my manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before the flock of which God shall make me overseer;
Therefore I, _____, do sincerely receive and subscribe to the above obligation as a just and true exhibition of my faith and principles, and do resolve and promise to exercise my ministry in conformity therewith.

Appendix 1
Powers of Commission Entrusted
and Guidance Given to Committees and Agencies
(Taken from Committee Manuals and Presbytery Minutes)

NOTE: The Appendices are not part of the Standing Rules.

1. The Administration Committee

DUTIES 6. Presbytery grants the Administration Committee the power of a commission to find a complaint in order and to hear the complaint in accordance with **BCO** 43-8 provided both the party complaining and the party complained against are agreeable to this.

80th Stated Meeting (5/27/97); see 80-11.5

The motion was seconded and passed that every other stated Presbytery meeting be held in the Memphis, Tennessee, metropolitan area.

2. BAIC

78th Stated Meeting, October 1, 1996

78-22.3 The recommendation was made that Covenant Presbytery approve the merger of **Faith Prison Ministry** and **BAIC** under the following stipulations:

78-22.3.1. We agree jointly upon a statement of creed.

78-22.3.2. The board of the newly merged ministry will maintain at least a representation of fifty percent PCA elders, coming from Covenant Presbytery through the nominating committee of Covenant Presbytery, and the initial board coming from Faith Prison Ministry with the details of their appointment being governed by the by-laws of said ministry.

78-22.3.3. We will work promptly to secure a staff person to focus upon the state penitentiary at Parchman, Mississippi, along with other opportunities for prison and jail ministry in North Mississippi.

TE Jeffrey Lancaster presented the rationale of the committee in recommending this merger. By unanimous consent Mr. Joe Elliott, Director of BAIC, was allowed to address presbytery to tell of the work of BAIC and how he foresaw the future ministry after the merger. After further discussion, the recommendation was approved. TE Tim Starnes prayed for God's blessings on this joint ministry.

3. The Candidates Committee

904. The Committee has the power of a commission to give a certificate of dismissal to another presbytery upon application of the candidate (**BCO** 18-7). This action on behalf of Presbytery shall be submitted to Presbytery for inclusion in Presbytery's minutes in accordance with **BCO** 15-1. This power will be used when the request for dismissal comes between the meetings of Presbytery, there is some urgency (such as when a candidate wishes to immediately begin an internship in another presbytery), and there are no irregularities.

4. The Church Care Committee

- III.B.5. Any minister or congregation desiring to dissolve a pastoral relationship shall appear personally (in the case of a minister) or send representatives (in the case of a congregation) before the Committee and then before Presbytery, unless this be waived by the Committee and/or Presbytery. The Committee may act on behalf of Presbytery in dismissing a TE to another presbytery or denomination when both parties to his call concur in the dissolution of an existing relationship.
- III.B.7. The Committee may act on behalf of Presbytery in the dissolution of a pastoral relationship when the church and the pastor concur in their request to Presbytery, and there is a proper call to another church.
- III.B.8. The Committee may act for Presbytery to grant permission to a minister who is a member of Covenant Presbytery, to move to another field within the Presbytery, in the case of a new call, with the understanding that the call must still be approved by Presbytery.
- III.C The Committee may act on behalf of Presbytery in accordance with BCO 15-1 and Preliminary Principles 2 and 6 by appointing an interim Session, if requested to do so by a local congregation before the next stated meeting of Presbytery.

5. The Credentials Committee

- III.B.1. Ordained ministers from another PCA Presbytery: They ordinarily may not move on to the field without the permission of Presbytery (**BCO** 21-1). The Committee has the power of a commission to grant exceptions to this rule but only after having examined a man on his views in committee and only by a vote of those present in a properly called committee meeting with a quorum present. Any who move on to the field under this provision must understand that their examination must still be sustained by Presbytery and their call must still be approved by Presbytery.
- III.C.1. Candidates licensed to preach in Covenant Presbytery: The Committee may act as a commission to grant permission to a current licentiate in Covenant Presbytery to move on to the field and to function as a student supply until the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery. The Committee may do this only by a vote of those present in a properly called committee meeting with a quorum present. Any who move on to the field under this provision must understand that their examination must still be sustained by Presbytery and their call must still be approved by Presbytery.

91st Stated Meeting (02/06/01); see 91-21

Presbytery adopted the opinion on creation adopted by the 28th General Assembly, as Covenant Presbytery's position on creation, which reads as follows:

"Since historically in Reformed theology there has been a diversity of views of the creation days among highly respected theologians, and, since the PCA has from its inception allowed a diversity, that the Assembly affirm that such diversity as covered in this report [the final report of the General Assembly's Advisory Committee on Creation] is acceptable as long as the full historicity of the creation account is accepted."

6. The Mississippi Joint Committee on Campus Work

[See previous versions of the Standing Rules for a history of actions regarding the MJCCW.]

Teaching Elder Tim Reed gave the MNA report and moved the following in concurrence with the MJCCW:

**A Recommendation from the Mississippi Joint Committee on Campus Work
(MJCCW)
to the Presbyteries of Covenant, Mississippi Valley, and Grace**

The Mississippi Joint Committee on Campus Work (MJCCW) recommends to Covenant, Mississippi Valley and Grace Presbyteries that a new Joint Committee be formed and appointed directly by the respective presbyteries.

The current members of your MJCCW hereby submit our resignations, to become effective immediately upon the appointment of the new members of the Joint Committee by Covenant, Mississippi Valley, and Grace Presbyteries.

The MJCCW humbly recommends that the three presbyteries make their appointments to the new Joint Committee at each presbytery's May meeting, in order to facilitate a swift transition.

The MJCCW recommends that the new Joint Committee be constituted as a presbytery-level joint committee, not a sub-committee, and directly appointed by the presbyteries through their normal nominations process, with 2 TEs and 2 REs representing each presbytery, serving 4 year terms, and eligible to serve for two consecutive terms.

The MJCCW further recommends (as per the usual method of initial committee appointments) that the terms of the first classes appointed by the three presbyteries be staggered in order to allow for a normal pattern of one Joint Committee member from each presbytery rotating off the committee each year.*

The MJCCW recommends to the three presbyteries that this Joint Committee be comprised of all new members and that no one be nominated or elected that has been heavily engaged in the recent controversies.

The MJCCW recommends to the Mississippi Valley Presbytery that TE Ligon Duncan (First, Jackson, MS) be one of its appointees to the new Joint Committee, and that he be named its Convener, through the mutual agreement of all three presbyteries.

The MJCCW recommends that affiliation agreements with RUM-GA be immediately requested and pursued for all campuses under its oversight.

The MJCCW informs the three presbyteries, pending each presbytery's approval, that all funds of the Mississippi Joint Committee, will be transferred to RUM-GA, with oversight to be provided by the newly constituted Joint Committee.

The MJCCW further informs the three presbyteries, pending the approval of these recommendations by each of the three presbyteries, and per the commitment of the Coordinator of RUM-GA, that an account will be established with RUM-GA for all the respective campuses in Grace, MS Valley, and Covenant Presbyteries. Only designated monies will be deposited into those accounts. The Coordinator also agrees that a Mississippi Area Account will be established. It is into this account that non-designated monies contributed to the work of the Joint Committee will be deposited and only the Joint Committee may distribute these funds. (The Atlanta Office may

never remove, transfer, or spend money from any of the Mississippi Accounts without written direction from the Mississippi Joint Committee.)

The MJCCW humbly requests that the three presbyteries make such changes in their rules of procedure to allow for and guide the above recommendations, and that each of the three presbyteries approve this recommendation as a whole, without amendment.

*We recommend the following pattern of rotation for the initial classes:

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Covenant Pby	RE	TE	RE	TE
MS Valley Pby	RE	TE	RE	TE
Grace Pby	RE	TE	RE	TE

Approved April 8, 2011 by the Mississippi Joint Committee on Campus Work

7. The MNA Committee

76th Stated Meeting (02/13/96); see 76-13.5 - 76-13.8.

Presbytery set up an MNA church planting fund to receive donations for the purpose of church planting in Covenant Presbytery and allow the MNA Committee to act as a commission, with a required quorum of two teaching elders and two ruling elders, in managing the fund with oversight by Covenant Presbytery; the presbytery treasurer was given authority to disburse the funds as directed by the commission. The intent is to prevent the "zeroing out" of the funds at the end of the fiscal year designated specifically for church planting as would be done in the case of a normal budgeted item. The establishment of a fund specifically for gifts designated for church planting would mean that this fund would not be treated as a normal budget item so that any monies remaining in the fund at the end of the year would be carried over into the succeeding year.

77th Stated Meeting (05/28/96); see 77-25.9.

Presbytery approved a policy whereby the MNA Committee yearly brings a recommendation to the February stated meeting of presbytery as to how much of the remaining monies in the church planting account of Covenant Presbytery from the previous fiscal year is to be rolled over to the MNA Church Planting Fund.

79th Stated Meeting (02/04/97); see 79-21.5.

The committee recommended that Covenant Presbytery answer the Presbytery treasurer's question regarding disbursement of monies in the Presbytery MNA Church Planting Fund by adopting the following interpretation of the language in paragraphs 76-13.5 - 76-13.8 of the Presbytery minutes: The Presbytery treasurer is to disburse funds to each specific project as requested by the commission, and the commission is to present a commission report (**BCO 15-1&2**) of the disbursement to presbytery for its approval. The recommendation was approved.

85th Stated Meeting (02/02/99); see 85-13.2

The Administration Committee will evaluate the carryover funds requests made by the MNA Committee in February of each year using the following guideline in consultation with the presbytery treasurer: The percentage of the MNA actual church planting expenditures plus carryover request relative to the MNA budget, will not normally exceed the percentage of the overall presbytery budget actually achieved.

Example: If presbytery budget is \$100,000 and actual collection is \$80,000 (80% of budget) this percentage would be applied to the MNA budget. If the MNA budget was \$10,000 and only \$5,000 was spent, then the committee would normally not recommend that the carryover request be in excess of \$3,000, making the expended and carryover funds equal to the percentage of the presbytery budget actually achieved.

86th Stated Meeting (05/25/99); see 86-12.2

The motion was made, seconded, and passed that Presbytery instruct its treasurer not to include in his report money that has been put into the MNA Church Planting Fund (as is already done with the money put into Presbytery's Disaster Fund); that once Presbytery, through its MNA commission (see 76-13.6) or by passage of a recommendation or motion, designates Church Planting Fund money to a church planting project, that money is removed from the Church Planting Fund and will be reported on the treasurer's report with the monies designated for that particular project.

8. The Nominating Committee

III.C. The Presbytery grants to the Nominating Committee the power of a commission to fill any General Assembly Committee of Commissioner Positions not filled after the March Stated Meeting of Presbytery.

III.D. The Presbytery grants to the Nominating Committee the power of a commission to fill any Presbytery Nominations to the General Assembly Permanent Committees not filled after the October Stated Meeting of Presbytery.

9. The Reformed University Fellowship Committee

III.G. When a teaching elder called by Covenant Presbytery as a campus minister wishes to accept a call to another work, and that call is in order, the RUF Committee may act as a commission on behalf of Presbytery to concur with his resignation as campus minister.

Appendix 2
Presbytery Policy
on the Distribution of Minutes
See 80-11.3 and 86-12.6.

NOTE: The Appendices are not part of the Standing Rules.

1. The approved minutes of Covenant Presbytery are a public record. A copy will be mailed to anyone who asks for one with the exception of executive session minutes.
2. Executive session minutes will be sent to the GA Committee on Review of Presbytery Records. The minutes of an executive session will be shown or read to any member of presbytery who was present at the executive session and who makes this request of the presbytery stated clerk. Any other request for access to executive session minutes will be referred to the Administration Committee.
3. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly may be included on the mailing list to receive copies of the unapproved minutes to provide him with a timely report of presbytery's actions.
4. Unapproved minutes may be sent to someone such as another stated clerk who is interested only in gleaning ideas on how to publish minutes.
5. Appendices normally will not be mailed out with the minutes. The appendix may include items such as committee reports, treasurer's reports, and details of calls. Details of a call will be sent to anyone in Covenant Presbytery who requests to see them. Requests for the details of a call from anyone outside of Covenant Presbytery will be referred to the Administration Committee.

Appendix 3
Presbytery *In Thesi* Statement
on the Days of Creation
91st Stated Meeting (02/06/2001); See 91-21
NOTE: The Appendices are not part of the Standing Rules.

Presbytery adopted the opinion on creation adopted by the 28th General Assembly, as Covenant Presbytery's position on creation, which reads as follows:

"Since historically in Reformed theology there has been a diversity of views of the creation days among highly respected theologians, and, since the PCA has from its inception allowed a diversity, that the Assembly affirm that such diversity as covered in this report [the final report of the General Assembly's Advisory Committee on Creation] is acceptable as long as the full historicity of the creation account is accepted."

Appendix 4
Presbytery *In Thesi* Statement
on the Federal Vision

111th Stated Meeting (10/02/2007); See 111-13.4.

NOTE: The Appendices are not part of the Standing Rules.

- Whereas the 35th PCA General Assembly recommended the Federal Vision Study Committee Report as faithful to the Westminster Standards; and
- Whereas the Westminster Standards, while subordinate to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, have been adopted by the PCA as the standard exposition of Scripture in relation to both doctrine and practice,
- Therefore be it resolved that Covenant Presbytery adopt the following recommended declarations as assisting in informing, clarifying, and expressing the meaning of the Westminster Standards for Covenant Presbytery on the NPP and what is known as FV theology; and
- Be it also resolved that Covenant Presbytery require candidates for licensure and ordination and ministers transferring into the Presbytery to declare their views with regard to the doctrines in these declarations; and
- Be it further resolved that if any member of the court is out of accord with the doctrines in these declarations, he should make his views known to the court per ordination vow 2.

Declarations:

1. The view that rejects the bi-covenantal structure of Scripture as represented in the Westminster Standards (i.e., views which do not merely take issue with the terminology, but the essence of the first/second covenant framework) is contrary to those Standards.
2. The view that an individual is “elect” by virtue of his membership in the visible church; and that this “election” includes justification, adoption and sanctification; but that this individual could lose his “election” if he forsakes the visible church, is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
3. The view that Christ does not stand as a representative head whose perfect obedience and satisfaction is imputed to individuals who believe in him is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
4. The view that strikes the language of “merit” from our theological vocabulary so that the claim is made that Christ’s merits are not imputed to his people is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
5. The view that “union with Christ” renders imputation redundant because it subsumes all of Christ’s benefits (including justification) under this doctrinal heading is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
6. The view that water baptism effects a “covenantal union” with Christ through which each baptized person receives the saving benefits of Christ’s mediation,

including regeneration, justification, and sanctification, thus creating a parallel soteriological system to the decretal system of the Westminster Standards, is contrary to the Westminster Standards.

7. The view that one can be “united to Christ” and not receive all the benefits of Christ’s mediation, including perseverance, in that effectual union is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
8. The view that some can receive saving benefits of Christ’s mediation, such as regeneration and justification, and yet not persevere in those benefits is contrary to the Westminster Standards.
9. The view that justification is in any way based on our works, or that the so-called “final verdict of justification” is based on anything other than the perfect obedience and satisfaction of Christ received through faith alone, is contrary to the Westminster Standards.