

Preamble

The Rules of Procedure which govern the **Virginia Presbytery** of the **Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church** in North America are those contained in the **Standards of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church** which are supplemented by this Manual.

The Boundaries of Virginia Presbytery (as redrawn in 1987) include the State of Virginia, except for those counties to the east and north of the boundary formed by the western boundaries of Fauquier and Loudoun Counties and the Rappahannock River; and the State of West Virginia except for the counties north of the southern boundaries of Preston, Taylor, Harrison, Doddridge, Ritchie, and Wood Counties.

Article I. Composition

The members of the Virginia Presbytery shall consist of all the ministers, in number not fewer than two (2), and at least one (1) ruling Elder from each congregation within the geographical boundaries. F.O.G. XII c.1,2,3

F.O.G. XII c.1,2,3

1. The members of the Presbytery shall consist of all the ministers, in number not fewer than two (2), and at least one (1) ruling elder from each congregation within a geographical area as determined by the General Synod, which area shall include at least five (5) congregations. The moderator of the Presbytery not otherwise a member thereof shall be a member by virtue of his office. If a Presbytery fails to meet these requirements for a period of one year, the General Synod shall review the status of such Presbytery. If this failure continues for a period of three years, the Presbytery shall be dissolved and its congregations and pastors shall unite with other Presbyteries.

2. Every congregation in the Presbytery shall be represented by one (1) ruling elder, and every congregation whose active communicant membership exceeds four hundred (400) in number shall be represented by two (2) ruling elders and shall be entitled to one (1) additional ruling elder for each additional four hundred (400) active communicants. The session shall make a record of each appointment and credentials of such appointment shall be submitted to the Presbytery.

For the purpose of determining the number of elder representatives to which a church is entitled, the number of active communicants as reported on the Annual Statistical Report shall be the basis to determine the number of elders to represent a church. Any change in the number thereafter that would modify the number of elder representatives shall be certified to the Principal Clerk, not less than 30 days prior to the next meeting of Presbytery. [Amendment No. 10 effective June 10, 1986]

3. The term of membership of a ruling elder in the Presbytery shall continue until his successor is duly elected and qualified by presenting credentials of his appointment from the session of the congregation which he represents. Only those members of the Presbytery who are personally present at the meeting shall be entitled to vote. .

Ministers in good standing in other Presbyteries or in other Christian denominations being present at any meeting of the Presbytery may be invited by the Presbytery to sit as consultative members. Such members may deliberate and advise, but shall not vote.

Article II. Authority and Responsibility

The **Form of Government** gives Virginia Presbytery certain responsibilities and empowers it with authority to carry out those responsibilities. (F.O.G. XII B)

FOG XII, B

B. ITS AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Presbytery shall have as its primary responsibility the initiation, planning, organization and administration of programs designed to enable it to carry on the mission of God in Christ's Church by word and deed in the Presbytery and also in the local congregations, the General Synod and the whole world.
2. In order to carry out its responsibilities, the Presbytery has power:
 - a. To enforce the lawful injunctions of the higher courts.
 - b. To receive, hear, resolve, and decide references, appeals, and complaints according to constitutional procedures, including questions of doctrine or discipline.
 - c. To advise and to assume original jurisdiction for adjudication on matters from church sessions where their authority cannot be exercised.
 - d. To review and approve or censure the records of sessions and to require their correction, to redress anything contrary to order, and to take effectual care for the observance of the Constitution of the Church.
 - e. To unite, divide, organize, dissolve, receive, dismiss, and transfer congregations.
 - f. To hold, dispose, and apply the properties of dissolved congregations at its discretion.
 - g. To approve or disapprove the buying, selling, mortgaging, or leasing of any real property by a congregation over which the Presbytery may have control or jurisdiction.
 - h. To inquire into the condition of the congregations under its care, correcting, and advising in any matter and taking special oversight of congregations without pastors by appointing moderators of sessions, supplying preaching and other ordinances of worship for congregations without pastors.
 - i. To receive under its care students of theology as candidates for the ministry.
 - j. To examine and approve candidates for the ministry.
 - k. To ordain, install, receive, dismiss, remove, and try ministers of the Gospel, requiring ministers to devote themselves diligently to their sacred calling and censuring the delinquent.
 - l. To examine and approve calls and changes in terms of calls.

- m. To establish the pastoral relation, and to dissolve it at the request of one or both of the parties, or at its own discretion.
- n. To direct the labors of ministers who have no pastoral charge.
- o. To establish and direct mission work within its bounds.
- p. To institute and superintend the agencies necessary for its work and to concert measures for the enlargement of the Church within its bounds.
- q. To consider and pass upon all proposed measures referred to it by the General Synod which would change the established order of doctrine and government of the Church.
- r. To propose to the General Synod such measures as may be of common advantage to the whole Church.
- s. In general to take whatever action may be necessary for the spiritual welfare of the congregations under its care and for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ.

3. The Presbytery shall:

- a. Keep full and accurate records of its proceedings and submit annually such records to the General Synod for inspection and review.
- b. Report annually its proceedings to the General Synod with details in reference to:
 - (1) Students of theology received.
 - (2) Ordinations, installations, and dissolutions of pastoral relations.
 - (3) Formations, organizations, dissolutions, unions, and divisions of congregations, and the receiving and transferring of congregations within the General Synod.
 - (4) Ordination and receiving of ruling elders.
 - (5) Deaths of ministers, ruling elders, and deacons.
 - (6) Through the Annual Statistical Report of its churches, the receiving, dismissing and death of members and, as may be determined by the General Synod from time to time, organizational membership and summary financial information.
 - (7) Condition and progress of work within its bounds.
 - (8) In general all of the important business that has been transacted and changes that have taken place during the year.
- c. Issue a certificate of standing to a minister upon valid application. Such certificate shall not be valid for more than one year.

Article III. Meetings

A. The **Form of Government** defines **Stated Meetings** in the following way :

F.O.G. XII,C, 5

5. The Presbytery shall hold stated meetings at least twice a year. Such meetings shall ordinarily be opened with a sermon by the retiring or incoming moderator or in case the moderator is a ruling elder, by an appropriate address or a sermon by a minister of the Presbytery appointed by the moderator, and every particular session shall be opened and closed with prayer. A quorum for stated meetings of Presbytery shall be one-third (1/3) of the ministers of the Presbytery and duly elected elders from one-third (1/3) of the congregations.

1. Regular Stated Meetings shall ordinarily be held at 10:00 am on the third (3rd) Saturday of March and October each year.
2. Meetings shall ordinarily be held in the churches of the Presbytery in alphabetical order of the names of the churches.
3. The host church shall ordinarily serve the noon meal.

B. Adjourned Meetings are defined as follows:

(FOG XII, C, 5)

A Presbytery may adjourn to a meeting during the sessions of the General Synod, but only at a time when the General Synod is in recess.

C. Called Meetings are defined as follows:

(FOG XII, C, 6 & 7)

6. If any matters which require immediate attention arise between the stated meetings, meetings may be held upon the call of the moderator, or, in his failure to act, of the principal clerk, or upon the request of three (3) members of the Presbytery from at least two (2) congregations. At least one week's notice of called meetings shall be given to all members of the Presbytery specifying the time and place of meeting and the particular business for which the meeting is called. No other business shall be transacted at called meetings except that specified in the notice. A quorum for called meetings of the Presbytery shall be two (2) ministers and the duly elected elders from at least two (2) congregations.

7. The Presbytery shall convene when directed to do so by the General Synod for the transaction of designated business only.

Article IV.
Program for Stated Meetings

- A. The Program plans for Stated Meetings shall be made by the Presbytery Council in consultation with the minister and an elder from the host Church.
- B. The Moderator and Stated Clerk of Presbytery and the host minister shall be responsible for the printing of the program.
- C. The program for all stated meetings shall ordinarily include the following:
 - Registration
 - Moderator Constitute with Prayer
 - Message by Moderator or Appointee
 - The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Fall Meeting)
 - Welcome by host church
 - Constitution of the Roll
 - Recognition of Guests
 - Communications
 - Adoption of Minutes
 - Unfinished Business
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Moderator-Elect Called to Chair (Spring meeting)
 - Introduction and confirmation of Vice Moderator (Spring meeting)
 - Appointment of Committees
 - Presentation of Program
 - Call for Papers for Referral
 - Report of Council
 - Standing Committee Reports
 - Meal
 - Moderator's Committee Meetings (during lunch break)
 - Devotional
 - Special Committee Reports
 - Ecclesiastical Commission Reports
 - Moderator's Committee Reports
 - New Business
 - Election of A Moderator (Fall)
 - Announcement of Date and Place for next Meeting
 - Announcements
 - Adjournment
 - Benediction
- D. Occasionally, the Council shall endeavor to stress some aspect of the work of the Synod through a guest speaker or mini-seminar.

- E. The Sacrament of The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at the Fall Stated Meeting. The host Church shall be responsible for leading this service.
- F. Candidates for the ministry shall preach their Sermons of Progress at the Spring Stated Meeting.

Article V. Officers

The Officers of Virginia Presbytery shall be:

A. Moderator

- 1. Manner of Selection:** The Moderator must be a member of the Court over which he presides and is to be elected by it at the Fall Stated Meeting. Any Teaching or Ruling Elder is eligible to serve in the Office of Moderator.
- 2. Term of Office:** He shall take office at the Spring Stated Meeting when the unfinished business has been disposed of and shall serve until the unfinished business at the next Spring Meeting is concluded.
- 3. Duties of the Moderator:**
 - a. Call to order and preside over the meetings of Presbytery.
 - b. Announce the business before the court.
 - c. State and put all questions properly brought before the court.
 - d. Take the vote and announce the results.
 - e. Decide all questions of order subject to an appeal to the house by any two members.
 - f. Appoint a Vice-Moderator for confirmation by the Presbytery.
 - g. Appoint Moderator's Committees.
 - h. Serve as Chairman of the Presbytery Council.
 - i. Deliver a sermon or give an appropriate address at the opening of Presbytery or appoint someone else to do so.
 - j. Appoint Moderator of Session for vacant churches.

B. Vice Moderator

- 1. Manner of Selection:** The Vice Moderator must be a member of the Court and is chosen by the Moderator. He must be a Teaching or Ruling Elder and shall be confirmed by the Presbytery at the Spring Meeting.
- 2. Term of Office:** His term shall be the same as that of the Moderator.
- 3. Duties of the Vice Moderator:**
 - a. Assist the Moderator as requested to do so.
 - b. Serve as a member of the Presbytery Council.
 - c. Assume the duties of the Moderator in the absence of the Moderator.

C. Stated Clerk

- 1. Manner of Selection:** The Stated Clerk shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected by the Presbytery.
- 2. Term of Office:** The Stated Clerk shall be elected at the Fall Stated Meeting for a three year term to begin on January 1 of the next calendar year. He may succeed himself.
- 3. Duties of the Stated Clerk:**
 - a. Keep a roll with the addresses of members and approved supplies.
 - b. Record all proceedings.
 - c. Receive and record documents acted on by the court.
 - d. Record all unfinished business to come before the Court.
 - e. Sign all official papers.
 - f. Send and receive all official communications on behalf of the Presbytery.
 - g. Publish the Minutes.
 - h. Serve as custodian of all Presbytery Records.
(1.) Copy of all Minutes to be sent to the Historical Foundation, Montreat, NC.
 - i. Serve as a member and secretary of Presbytery Council.
 - j. Notify Synod's boards and Committees of the name and address of the Chairman of the corresponding Virginia Presbytery Committee.
 - k. Give at least one week's notice of all Presbytery Meetings.
 - l. Keep an up to date calendar of all Synod and Presbytery events so that where possible , conflicting meeting may be avoided.
 - m. Upon request by Committee Chairman, meeting notices will be prepared and mailed from the Clerk's Office.
 - n. Inform by letter all those who have been elected to Presbytery's committees.
 - o. Notify Committee Chairman of new members with addresses and phone numbers.
 - p. Prepare the official roll for Virginia Presbytery for the meeting of the General Synod.
 - q. Serve as contact person within the Presbytery for Synod's Board of Annuities and Relief.

D. Reading Clerk

- 1. Manner of Selection:** The Reading Clerk shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected by the Presbytery.
- 2. Term of Office:** The Reading Clerk shall be elected at the Fall Stated Meeting for a three year term to begin on January 1 of the next calendar year. He may succeed himself .

3. Duties of the Reading Clerk:

1. Assist the Stated Clerk
2. Take the Roll at Presbytery Meetings
3. Call the Roll whenever required.
4. Present business to the Court in the order determined by the Moderator or the agenda.
5. Read reports to the Presbytery except when the report is presented by a representative of a committee.
6. Perform the duties of the Stated Clerk in his absence.
7. Serve as a member of Presbytery Council.

E. Treasurer

1. **Manner of Selection:** The Treasurer shall be nominated by the Committee on Nominations and elected by the Presbytery.
2. **Term of Office:** The Treasurer shall be elected at the Fall Stated Meeting for a three year term to begin on January 1 of the next calendar year. He may succeed himself .
3. **Duties of the Treasurer:**
 - a. Serve as custodian of all funds committed to the Presbytery.
 - b. Maintain a current, accurate record of all transactions.
 - c. Make a financial report to Presbytery at each Stated Meeting.
 - d. Assist in the development and supervision of an annual budget.
 - e. Serve as a member of Presbytery Council.
 - f. Serve as an ex-officio member of the Committee on Stewardship.

F. The Trustees of Virginia Presbytery

- a. **Membership:** The committee shall have four (4) members chosen from the Presbytery at large in view of special interests and abilities. The Trustees shall be nominated by the Committee On Nominations and elected by the Presbytery.
- b. **Term of Office:** The term of Office shall be ten years. The Trustee shall be elected at the Fall Stated Meeting of Presbytery, and shall take office on January 1 of the next calendar year.
- c. **Duties:**
 - (1.) To receive and/or transfer real property on behalf of the Presbytery.
 - (2.) To enter into purchasing and/or selling property on behalf of the Presbytery.
 - (3.) To issue or receive mortgages on behalf of the Presbytery.
 - (4.) To be thoroughly familiar with “The Form of Government” as it applies to church property.
 - (5.) To see that each Church has an original deed or a copy with plat in her file, that such deed is recorded in the courts of the local county and that a copy of the deed and plat is on file in the Presbytery.
 - (6.) To have at least one Trustee or someone appointed by the Trustees to be present at the annual property owners meeting at Bonclarken.

Article VI. Virginia Presbytery Council

- A. The Presbytery Council is the Executive Committee of Virginia Presbytery. Its purpose is to promote and coordinate programs of the various committees and agencies of Virginia Presbytery, and to relate the program of the General Synod to the Presbytery and the local churches. It is responsible for long-range planning on behalf of the Presbytery. In addition, the Virginia Presbytery Council is empowered to act in behalf of Virginia Presbytery in all routine matters of business and report their activities to the next Stated Meeting of Virginia Presbytery for its approval.
- B. The Council shall be composed of the five principal officers of Virginia Presbytery and the Chairmen of all standing committees, and the Presbytery representative to Synod's Executive Board.
- C. Meetings of The Virginia Presbytery Council: The Virginia Presbytery Council shall meet at least three times a year, usually on the fourth Thursday of February and September and on a suitable date in late April or early May. These meetings shall be between the Stated Meetings of Virginia Presbytery or at the call of the Moderator or Stated Clerk. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the principal officers plus one committee chairman.
- D. Duties of the Virginia Presbytery Council
 - 1. The Council shall maintain close oversight of the committees of Virginia Presbytery in order to coordinate the work of its committees and to promote economy of effort by avoiding duplication of duties or assignments.
 - 2. It shall prepare a yearly calendar of activities of Virginia Presbytery to be distributed to the local congregations.
 - 3. It shall review the Minutes of the General Synod and bring to the attention of the Presbytery and the local congregations those actions, recommendations, and directives of the General Synod which relate to the General Synod and the local congregations.
 - 4. It shall recommend to the Presbytery the necessary structures for carrying out the actions of the General Synod.
 - 5. Council is empowered to act on behalf of Virginia Presbytery: to transfer ministers who are in good and regular standing upon request, to fill vacancies on commissions and committees and to prepare the annual report to General Synod.
 - 6. Council shall oversee matters of Stewardship within the Presbytery in cooperation with Synod's Board of Stewardship, and shall prepare the annual Presbytery Budget to be submitted to the Presbytery at the Fall Stated meeting.
 - 7. Council shall seek to work with Virginia Presbyterial to address areas of common concern. The President of Virginia Presbyterial shall report through the Council to the Presbytery, being given at least yearly opportunities to directly address Presbytery.

VII. Committees and Commissions

- A. A **Committee** is appointed to study matters referred to it by the Virginia Presbytery and to make recommendations to the Presbytery on the basis of the studies. Its recommendations require action by the Presbytery.
- B. A **Commission** of the Presbytery is appointed to act for the Presbytery with its actions reported at the next Presbytery meeting.
- C. A **Standing Committee** is a body appointed to oversee a specific area of the Virginia Presbytery's work which is of a permanent nature. All standing committees shall submit a written report to the Presbytery at each stated meeting. Members of a standing committee shall be elected at the Fall Meeting to serve a four year rotation term beginning July 1 of the next calendar year. The membership of standing committees shall be members in good standing of the Presbytery or of congregations in the Presbytery.

1. The Covenant Discipleship Committee

- a. **Membership:** The committee shall have four members chosen from the Presbytery at large in view of special interests and abilities.
- b. The Chairman of the Covenant Discipleship Committee shall be Virginia Presbytery's representative to the General Synod's Board of Covenant Discipleship. In the event that the Chairman is unable to serve in this capacity, the Committee shall designate one of its members to serve in this position.
- c. **Duties:**
 - (1.) The Committee shall guide the Presbytery in its Christian Education program in cooperation with Synod's Board of Covenant Discipleship
 - (2.) It shall develop a program for the training of effective leadership in the field of Christian Education.
 - (3.) It shall analyze and evaluate Presbytery's educational program.
 - (4.) It shall survey the needs of the Church school program in order to provide churches with information related to staff needs, teaching needs, equipment needs, facilities, etc.
 - (5.) It shall study curriculum materials in order to make available to the churches information concerning the better materials.
 - (6.) It shall plan and carry out under its direction, Presbytery Conferences, camps, meetings, and training sessions for church youth and other conferences and retreats for other groups as needed.
 - (7.) It shall review church school reports from the local congregations.
 - (8.) The amount of the suggested donation for use of the Virginia Cottage shall be reviewed by the Committee. Recommended changes shall be submitted to Presbytery for consideration.
 - (9.) It shall work with the Men of Virginia Presbytery and Virginia Presbyterial in promoting all aspects of Christian Education in the Presbytery.

C.1 amended by Name Change to Covenant Discipleship 3/18/00

2. The Committee On Outreach North America

- a. Membership: The committee shall have six (6)* members chosen from the Presbytery at large in view of special interests and abilities.
- b. The Chairman of the Committee On Outreach North America shall be Virginia Presbytery's representative to the General Synod's Board of Outreach North America. In the event that the Chairman is unable to serve in this capacity, the Committee shall designate one of its members to serve in his position.
- c. Duties:
 - (1.) This committee shall be responsible for promoting a continuous program of evangelism and church extension through the various channels of the Presbytery.
 - (2.) It shall be charged with the responsibility of promoting interest throughout the Presbytery in the extension program of the General Synod.
 - (3.) It shall cooperate with sustentation churches in supplying empty pulpits with the regular ministry of the preaching of the gospel.
 - (4.) It shall maintain up-to-date studies of all church extension congregations within the Presbytery. It shall note their present problems and project their future needs and the ability of the congregation to meet those needs.
 - (5.) It shall provide guidance for self-supporting and sustentation congregations in planning remodeling of existing buildings and locating new buildings.
 - (6.) It shall work in concert with the Committee On The Minister and His Work to guide and counsel all Mission congregations in securing a Pastor/Stated Supply Pastor.
 - (7.) It shall oversee the organization of new churches.
 - (8.) It shall work in concert with the Committee On The Minister and His Work to study the grouping of churches with a view towards determining the most effective pastoral service and preaching and the most effective ministry of the churches.

* Amended 3/15/2003

3. The Minister and His Work Committee

- a. Membership: This committee shall have four (4) members chosen from the Presbytery at large in view of special interests and abilities. This committee shall consist of ruling and teaching Elders and be representative of the Churches in the Presbytery. A quorum shall consist of three members.
- b. This committee shall have a chairman and a vice chairman. The Chairman shall represent Virginia Presbytery to the General Synod's Committee On the Minister and His Work. In the event that the Chairman cannot do any one or all of his responsibilities, the vice chairman shall stand in for him.

c. Duties:

- (1.) **Work of the Minister:** The Committee shall have special responsibility in the area of the relationships of ministers and congregations and shall receive and consider matters which pertain to the work of the minister.
 - (a.) It shall counsel with ministers as to their needs and make recommendations to the Presbytery where necessary.
 - (b.) It shall counsel with church sessions as to their ministerial needs or difficulties and make recommendations to the Presbytery where necessary.
 - (c.) It shall encourage churches having duly installed pastors to have an annual review of their call.
- (2.) **Candidates For The Ministry:** Candidates for the ministry shall present to the Committee On the Minister and His Work a letter of recommendation and endorsement from his local Session after the local Session has examined the candidate as to his knowledge of the Gospel, Saving Relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, Christian character, Call to the ministry and qualifications. This committee shall have special responsibility over those men who seek to enter the Christian ministry

- (a.) It shall examine candidates for the ministry (FOG X,D,1,a,b,c) and present them to the Presbytery. If the Presbytery gives an affirmative vote to receive the candidate under its care, a service of recognition shall follow.

FOG X,D,1,d

1. Candidates for the ministry.

- a. One preparing to become a minister shall be a candidate under the care of the Presbytery which has jurisdiction of the congregation in which he is a member.
- ~~b. One seeking to be received under the care of the Presbytery shall be examined,~~

through a committee, as to his Christian character, his conviction of being called of God to the ministry, his qualifications, and his saving relationship with the Lord Jesus.

FOG X,D,1,d continued

c. The Presbytery shall enroll and counsel with each candidate under its care and shall direct his theological studies, inquiring into his diligence and progress. He shall preach trial sermons before the Presbytery as it may direct. The Presbytery, with or without his request, may remove his name from the roll of students under its care.

d. A candidate shall be received under the care of the Presbytery in an appropriate service of recognition in which he shall be asked to stand before the Presbytery and answer the following questions:

(1) Do you promise in reliance upon the grace of God to maintain a character consistent with your Christian profession and to be diligent and faithful in making full preparation for your ministry?

(2) Do you promise to submit yourself to the supervision of the Presbytery in matters concerning your preparation for the ministry of the Word?

When these questions have been answered in the affirmative, the moderator or his appointee shall briefly address the candidate and shall close the service with prayer.

e. A candidate shall attend the meetings of his Presbytery and remain a member of his congregation and shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership. His pastor and session shall give special encouragement and counsel during his years of preparation.

Following the prayer, the Moderator shall declare:

“In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great head of the Church, I do now by the authority of Virginia Presbytery, declare that you are acknowledged and received as a candidate for licensure and ordination in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, and I do now direct that your name be recorded on the roll of this Presbytery as a candidate for the Christian Ministry.”

The Moderator shall here present a Bible provided by the Presbytery for this purpose and he shall say:

“Take now this Bible and be diligent to study the things written therein, that as much as in you lies, you may faithfully and truly teach the Gospel of the grace of God and be an example of faith and holy living.”

- (b.) It shall recommend to the Presbytery the appointment of a minister-sponsor from the Presbytery for each minister under its care. This sponsor shall not be either the student's minister nor a seminary professor. The sponsor shall keep in touch with the student concerning his progress, needs, plan, and any other matters that would help the student prepare for the Christian ministry. The Presbytery shall pay the student's portion of participation in Synod's Health Insurance Program for up to thirty-three (33) months while the student is enrolled to receive the Master of Divinity Degree as a regular student under the care of the Presbytery.
- (c.) It shall report to the Presbytery at its Spring Meeting the progress of each student. At this meeting the student shall be in attendance and during his second year of study shall deliver a sermon of progress from a text approved by this committee at least three weeks prior to the meeting of Presbytery. The student's travel expenses to this meeting of Presbytery shall be paid by the Presbytery.
- (d.) It shall cooperate with the seminary's department of field work in seeking work for the student during his summer vacation.

(3.) **Licensure, Ordination and Installation:** This committee shall have special responsibility over the services of licensure, ordination and installation of ministers.

~~(a.) It shall examine candidates for Licensure and present them to the Presbytery according to the procedures of FOG X,C.~~

FOG X, C

C. PROCEDURES FOR LICENSURE

1. It is agreeable to the Scriptures, and for the best interests of the Church, that trial be made of those who are to be ordained to the gospel ministry in order that this office may not be committed to unworthy men and that churches may have an opportunity to judge the qualifications of those by whom they are to be instructed and governed. To this end Presbyterians are to license candidates for the ministry as probationers to preach the gospel, who, after a competent trial of their gifts and a good report from the churches, are to be ordained to the office of the ministry.
2. As a rule no one shall be licensed to preach the gospel without a course of theological study embracing three years. This, however, shall not prohibit students of theology from preaching occasionally, under the direction of Presbytery, during their theological course.
3. Every candidate for licensure, whether or not he has a diploma from a seminary, shall be examined by the Presbytery in open session as to his soundness in the faith, and belief in and adherence to the distinctive principles of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

FOG X,C continued

4. The trial for licensure shall consist of a popular sermon, to be delivered by the candidate in public immediately before licensure.
5. After the trial the Presbytery shall proceed to consider it, and also to offer suggestions and criticisms.
6. If the Presbytery be not satisfied with his trials and refuse to sustain them, they either will be appointed to him again, or he shall be directed to resume his studies, as the Presbytery may deem best.
7. If his trials give convincing evidence that he is lacking in the essential qualifications for the ministry, the Presbytery should kindly suggest to him to seek some other calling.
8. If his trials for licensure be sustained, he shall present himself before the Presbytery in public meeting and take the obligations in the prescribed formula of questions (See formula of questions for ordination of ministers, excepting 8). The moderator shall then declare him licensed by the Presbytery, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to preach the gospel as a probationer for the holy ministry; and shall, in a few words, remind him of the importance, the difficulties and the excellence of that work on which he is about to enter, and exhort him to devote himself to it in faith and zeal.
9. Probationers shall be given certificates of licensure signed by the moderator and the stated clerk of the Presbytery.
10. Probationers, or licentiates as they are commonly called, shall labor under the direction of their respective Presbyteries. The Presbytery in assigning them fields of labor is to consult, as far as possible, their circumstances and inclinations, always bearing in mind, however, that the interests of the Church are more to be considered than the personal wishes of any laborer.
11. Probationers, not being ministers, shall not administer the sacraments, pronounce the benediction, officiate in marriage ceremonies, ordain officers, or act as moderator or vote in any church court. It is their duty, however, to attend the meetings of their respective Presbyteries and of the Synod, in which they shall have the right to deliberate and advise, and shall always be consulted in matters pertaining to their particular work and appointments.

(b.) At the close of the licensing service, the Moderator shall cause the licentiate to kneel and have a dedicatory prayer. The candidate shall stand and the Moderator shall say:

“In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the authority which He has given you to the Church, we do license you to preach the Gospel as a probationer for the Christian minis-

try, and may the blessing of God rest upon you and the Spirit of Christ fill your heart. Amen.”

- (c.) It shall examine candidates for ordination and present them to the Presbytery in accord with the procedures for Ordination in FOG X, D, 2.

FOG X, D, 2

2. Procedure for ordination.

a. When a candidate has completed his academic training as required by the General Synod and the Presbytery of which he is a candidate, the Presbytery may take steps for his ordination.

b. Requirements for ordination, in addition to academic standards, shall consist of the following:

(1) A review of the candidate’s personal Christian religious experience.

(2) An examination of his knowledge of the English Bible.

(3) An examination of his knowledge of the history and government of the Church and the determination of his approval of the form of government, discipline and worship of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

(4) A sermon in manuscript form which he shall preach before the Presbytery and which shall be subject to constructive criticism by the Presbytery. The Presbytery may assign or approve the text for this sermon.

(5) A call either to a congregation or to another approved ministerial labor.

c. The presbyteries shall strive for uniformity in their examination for ordination and shall not omit any of these requirements for ordination.

d. If a minority of one-fourth or more of the members of the Presbytery disapprove a candidate’s examination, the Presbytery may require a further examination in writing on questions proposed by the Presbytery, which questions and answers shall become a part of the official records of the Presbytery.

e. When the Presbytery has approved a candidate’s examination and is furnished evidence of a candidate’s call, the Presbytery shall appoint a time and place for the ordination of the candidate. Usually the ordination shall be held before a called meeting of the Presbytery in the church of which the candidate is to be pastor.

f. On the day appointed the Presbytery shall be convened and a minister shall preach an appropriate sermon. The presiding officer shall review all that the Presbytery and candidate have done in preparation for this ordination. He

~~shall stress the nature and importance of ordination and shall impress upon the congregation the solemnity of the occasion.~~

FOG X, D, 2 continued

g. The presiding officer shall then propose to the candidate the following
Formula of Questions for Ordination

- (1) Do you believe in one God-Father, Son and Holy Spirit-and do you confess anew the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and acknowledge Him Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body?
 - (2) Do you reaffirm your belief in the Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of the Living God, the only perfect rule of faith and practice, to which nothing is to be added and from which nothing is to be taken at any time or upon any pretext?
 - (3) Do you accept the doctrines of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, as founded on the Word of God and as the expression of your own faith, and to you resolve to adhere thereto?
 - (4) Do you accept the government, discipline, and worship of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church as agreeable to and founded on the Word of God?
 - (5) Do you promise to submit in the spirit of love to the authority of the Presbytery in subordination to the General Synod, and to promote the unity, peace, purity, and prosperity of the Church?
 - (6) Do you sincerely resolve to fulfill all your responsibilities in your home life and in all your relations with your fellowman, following after righteousness, faith, and love?
 - (7) Do you accept and enter upon your ministry with a desire to glorify God and to be instrumental in strengthening His Church?
 - (8) Do you promise to preach the gospel in its purity and simplicity, declaring the whole counsel of God, and to perform all your official duties with zeal and faithfulness, seeking the salvation of sinners?
- h. The candidate having answered these questions in the affirmative, shall kneel and be ordained by prayer and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. After the ordination prayer, the members of the Presbytery shall take him by the hand saying, "We give you the right hand of fellowship to take part in this ministry with us."

i. If the ordination is not in connection with his installation as pastor, the presiding

officer shall declare the candidate set apart to the ministry, emphasizing the importance, the difficulties, and the excellence of the ministry which he now enters.

FOG X,D,2 continued

j. The newly ordained minister shall be given a Certificate of Ordination signed by the moderator and principal clerk. A full report of the ordination service shall be recorded in the minutes of the Presbytery, and a copy forwarded to the congregation of which he was formerly a member so that his name may be removed from the membership roll.

[1.] Prior to presenting the candidate to Presbytery, the Committee shall thoroughly examine the candidate for ordination and satisfy itself that he would be approved by Presbytery. If the candidate is not ready for ordination, the Committee shall withhold his name until such time as he is prepared for an examination on the floor of Presbytery.

[2.] The Committee shall present the candidate for ordination to a meeting of Presbytery following the steps in FOG X, D, 2, b,c, to which is added the following requirements to the candidates sermon: The Candidate shall submit at least three (3) weeks prior to the meeting of Presbytery at which he desires to be ordained a written exegesis of an assigned passage of Scripture and a written sermon derived from the exegesis. After the exegesis and sermon have been approved by the committee, the candidate will preach his sermon before Presbytery.

[3.] On the appointed day for ordination the Presbytery or its Ecclesiastical Commission shall lead in a service of ordination following FOG X, D, 2, f-j to which is added following the ordination prayer and before the right hand of fellowship, the following declaration:

“In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great head of the Church, and by the authority of Virginia Presbytery, I now declare that you duly ordained to the office of the Christian Ministry, committing unto you the authority to preach the Word, to administer the Sacraments and to bear rule in the Church.”

The service shall end with a solemn charge to the newly ordained minister.
The new minister may be asked to pronounce the benediction.

[4.] Upon Presbytery’s acceptance of the minister into its membership, the Presbytery or its commission shall hold a Service of Installation as outlined in the FOG X, D, 3.

FOG X, D, 3

3. Procedure for installation.

- a. A minister shall be a member of the Presbytery having jurisdiction over the congregation of which he is to be pastor and shall have a valid call properly executed by the Presbytery before he shall be eligible for installation.

FOG X, D,3

- b. The Presbytery or its commission shall conduct the installation service. A complete report of the service shall be submitted to the Presbytery and recorded in its minutes.
- c. A minister may be installed as the pastor or associate pastor of one or more congregations. The procedure for installation of pastors may be adapted for associate pastors.
- d. When the installation service is being held in connection with his ordination, the pastor elect shall give affirmative answer to the Formula of Questions for Ordination, after which he shall give affirmative answer to the installation questions.
- e. When the pastor elect has been previously ordained, he shall renew his ordination vows by giving affirmative answer to the full Formula of Questions of Ordination, after which he shall answer the following installation questions:
- (1) Do you accept the office of pastor of the congregation, and do you promise to perform faithfully all the duties of this office, both public and private, to the best of your ability as you are led by the Holy Spirit?
 - (2) Do you make these promises in the presence of Him to Whom you must ultimately give an account?
- f. When affirmative answers have been given to these questions, the following question shall then be addressed to the congregation:
- “Do you, the members of this congregation, now acknowledge and receive _____ as your pastor, and do you promise to give him all the honor, obedience, encouragement, cooperation, and support in the spirit of love to which this office entitles him and as you promised him in the call?”
- g. When the members of the congregation have signified their affirmative answer to this question by standing, the presiding officer shall say:
- “In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great King and Head of the church, I now declare _____ duly (ordained) (installed) as pastor of this congregation.”
- h. The pastor and congregation shall then be addressed by those appointed or invited by the Presbytery as to their respective duties in the solemn relation into which they have now entered. Following the benediction, the members of the congregation shall come forward and give him the right hand of fellow-

ship, indicating their acceptance of him as their pastor.

- i. The installation service of ministers in other approved ministries shall be carried out in a manner similar to that of a pastor.

FOG X,D,3 continued

- j. ~~A Presbytery may refuse to install a minister. If so, he shall be informed of the reasons and he or the congregation who has called him may appeal the decision of the Presbytery to the General Synod.~~

(4.). Churches without a Minister:

This committee shall have special responsibility for churches without a minister in assisting with the procurement of pulpit supplies and giving guidance in the call of a minister.

- (a.) It shall maintain active supervision over all churches with vacant pulpits in the Presbytery.

- [1.] As soon as a pulpit is declared vacant, the Session shall seek the counsel of this committee before making arrangements for a pulpit supply.
- [2.] The Moderator of Presbytery shall appoint a Moderator for the Session of the vacant church. The Session shall notify the appointed Moderator of each meeting of the Session.
- [3.] To aid Sessions in supplying their pulpits, the committee shall maintain an approved list of ministers, candidates for ministry, and ruling Elders qualified to supply pulpits. Any minister or layman of another denomination who wishes to be on this list shall be examined and approved by this Committee before being added to the list.
- [4.] At each Stated Meeting of Presbytery, the Session of the Church without a Minister shall report through this committee those who have supplied their pulpits since the last meeting of Presbytery and its plans for pulpit supply in the next six (6) months. No supply shall serve a church for more than twelve (12) months without the approval of this Committee.

- (b.) **Securing A Pastor:** It shall have special responsibility in helping a church process a call for the services of a Minister in accord with FOG X, E

FOG X, E

E. PROCEDURE FOR CALLS TO PARTICULAR CONGREGATIONS

- 1. No person shall be chosen for pastor of a congregation who has not been regularly ordained, or examined by the Presbytery and approved for ordination.
- 2. The relationship between a minister and a congregation may be that of a pastor, associate pastor, stated supply or occasional supply. Each of these

shall be a minister except that the Presbytery may approve a student of theology or a layman as an occasional supply.

FOG X, E continued

3. A pastor or associate pastor shall be elected by the congregation in the manner outlined below. The relationship is established by installation and is dissolved only by action of the Presbytery. The terms of the call for an associate pastor shall specify the particular function which he is to fulfill in the life of the congregation. His work shall be under the supervision of the pastor and the session. Upon dissolution of a pastor's relationship, the relationship of the associate pastor shall be reviewed carefully by the congregation and Presbytery.
4. A stated supply is called by the session to perform the functions of a pastor in a congregation. The relationship shall be established by permission of the Presbytery only after it has given careful consideration to the qualifications of the individual and to all other factors involved. The term of a stated supply shall be for no more than twelve months and may be renewed. No formal call shall be issued by the congregation.
5. An occasional supply may be a minister, a student of theology, or a layman secured by the session to conduct services during periods when a congregation is without a pastor or when its pastor is unable to perform his duties. The session shall not secure any person as occasional supply, except in an emergency, without the approval of Presbytery or the installed pastor. The Presbytery shall keep a list of those who are available for immediate service as occasional supplies, including ministers, students of theology, and laymen who give evidence of outstanding abilities as Christian leaders.
6. To call a pastor, the session shall call a congregational meeting to elect a nominating committee representative of the whole congregation.
7. When the nominating committee is ready to report, it shall submit to a congregational meeting, convened for the election and call of a pastor, the name of its nominee for approval or rejection. This meeting shall be presided over by the moderator of the session appointed by the Presbytery, who shall be responsible for having a call properly drafted.
8. It is desirable that the choice be unanimous, or nearly so. If the minority persists in its rejection of the nominee, the congregation shall be asked to reconsider its vote. A full account of the voting shall accompany the call.
9. After the election, the call shall be signed, first by the elders and deacons, then by the other members.
10. The signed call shall be confirmed in writing by the moderator. It shall be presented by one or more congregational commissioners to the Presbytery for approval.
11. The call shall clearly state the amount of salary and other allowances, and shall include information as to manse, vacation, moving expense, medical and hospitalization insurance and provide for an annual review of the terms of the call. Without such a statement the call shall not be approved. The call

shall meet all requirements of the Presbytery before approval. A call shall be presented to a pastor-elect by the Presbytery in which the congregation issuing the call is located.

FOGX,E continued

12. If a call is issued to one who is a member of another Presbytery, the pastor elect shall secure a transfer to the Presbytery in which the congregation issuing the call is located, where he shall then be presented with the call. If the pastor elect accepts the call, the Presbytery shall immediately appoint a commission to conduct the installation service.
13. The Presbytery may decline to present a call which may be regular in all aspects if, in its judgment, the best interests of the church so require.
14. The procedure for a call to an associate pastor shall be the same as a call to a pastor.
15. A minister who is serving as a Mission Developer can be installed as a pastor of the Church at its organizational service, if he has been called as a Pastor prior to the service at a called meeting of the petitioners and the Presbytery or its Commission on the Minister and His Work has approved him for this call and the terms of the call. ~[Amendment No. 1 effective June 8, 1976]
16. The procedure for calls to other ministries shall be similar to that of a call to a pastor.
17. Any changes made in the terms of the call as a result of the annual review shall be submitted for approval to the Presbytery at its first stated meeting of the year.

The following procedures, in addition to the FOG X,E should be followed in calling a minister.

- [a.] As soon as practical after the pulpit has become vacant, the Session shall consult with the Minister and His Work Committee of Presbytery. The Session shall then call a Congregational Meeting to elect a Pulpit Nominating Committee. This committee should be a representative group including members of the Session and congregation who are vitally concerned with the spiritual welfare of the Church and who are involved in congregational interests. The committee shall elect a Chairman and a Secretary.
- [b.] In conference with the Session and Diaconate the committee shall determine the terms of a call which may be offered within the bounds of the congregation's budget. The expenses of the Pulpit Nominating Committee should be paid by the congregation.
- [c.] The Pulpit Nominating Committee shall then meet with Presbytery's Committee On The Minister and His Work for instruction and counsel before they proceed to contact candidates.
- [d.] When the Pulpit Nominating Committee has agreed upon a person to recommend, it shall relate this information to Presbytery's Committee which shall arrange to meet with the candidate for examination.
- [e.] After the Minister and His Work Committee has given its approval, the Pulpit

Nominating Committee shall request the Session to call a Congregational Meeting for the purpose of hearing and acting on the request of the Pulpit Nominating Committee.

- [f.] When the Session approves the request of the Pulpit Nominating Committee and calls a Congregational Meeting, the meeting shall be presided over by the Moderator of the Session appointed by Presbytery, who shall be responsible for having a call properly drafted (FOG X, E, 7, b) the form of the call is as follows:

CALL FOR A PASTOR

We, the officers and members of the _____ Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church of _____, being well satisfied with your ministerial qualifications, and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit as one whose ministry will be profitable to our spiritual interests, do earnestly call you, _____, to undertake the office of pastor of this congregation. On the acceptance of this call we promise you in the discharge of your duties all proper support, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord. That you may devote yourself wholly to the ministry of the Word, we promise and obligate ourselves to:

- a. Pay you an annual salary of \$_____ in at least monthly payments.
- b. Housing (Check all that apply):
 - (1.) __ Provide you with the free use of a Manse with utilities
 - (2.) __ Provide you with the free use of a Manse without utilities
 - (3.) __ Provide you a Housing Allowance of _____, in at least monthly payments.
- c. Pay your moving expenses.
- d. Grant you a Travel Allowance of \$_____ annually.
- e. Pay into the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Retirement Plan Fund as prescribed by the General Synod.
- f. Group Insurance (Check all that apply):
 - (1.) __ Pay ____% of the cost of participation in Synod's Insurance programs.(life, dependent life,medical, dental, accidental death and dismemberment, and disability).
 - (2.) ____ Pay _____% of the cost of your family's participation in Synod's Insurance programs.(medical, dental).
- g. Review with you annually, the adequacy of this compensation.

h. Grant you an annual vacation of _____ weeks.

i. Other

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

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

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

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

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

In testimony whereof we have subscribed our names this _____ day of _____,
A.D. _____ .

Signatures

- 1. Elders
- 2. Deacons
- 3. Members

[g.] Following the Congregational Meeting, the Moderator shall forward the call to the Committee On The Minister and His Work for review and recommendation to Presbytery. If the call is in order, the Committee On The Minister and His Work shall arrange for a meeting of the Presbytery to examine the Pastor-Elect. If the Presbytery approves, the call will be presented to the Pastor-Elect for acceptance. If accepted, the Pastor-Elect shall be granted permission to move onto the field of service.

(5). Transfers and Dissolutions of Pastoral Relationships:

- (a.) This Committee shall oversee the transfers of minister into the Presbytery in accord with FOG X,G)

FOG X, G

PROCEDURE FOR TRANSFERRING MINISTERS FROM ONE PRESBYTERY TO ANOTHER

1. Transfer within the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.
 - a. The Presbytery may transfer a minister or a student of theology from one Presbytery to another.
 - b. A minister transferring from one Presbytery to another shall present a certificate of transfer indicating his good standing in the dismissing Presbytery. A certificate of transfer shall be issued only after the pastoral or other relationship has been dissolved. He shall be a member of the dismissing Presbytery until he has been officially received by the Presbytery to which he is transferring.
 - c. A Presbytery receiving a minister from another Presbytery shall examine him as to his beliefs, his Christian character and his qualifications to perform the duties of his office. After examination the Presbytery may decline to receive the minister, or may postpone his reception until he has engaged in further preparation. The Presbytery shall strive for uniformity in the examinations given.
 - d. The Presbytery shall record the dates of the certificates and other vital information in its minutes.
2. Transfer from another denomination.
 - a. The Procedure for transferring ministers from another denomination shall follow in substance the procedure for transfer from one Presbytery to another within the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.
 - b. The minister must present an acceptable certificate of transfer from

- the Presbytery or other Church body of which he was a member.
- c. The minister applying for membership in one of the Presbyteries shall be examined as to his beliefs, his Christian character, his qualifications, and FOG X,G
- his knowledge of and adherence to the doctrines and principles of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.
- d. The minister requesting transfer from another denomination shall furnish evidence of an education equal to that required of ministers trained under the care of the Presbyteries of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. (CHAPTER 10, A through G)

- (b) This Committee shall oversee the dissolution of pastoral relationships in accord with FOG X, F.)

FOG X, F

PROCEDURE FOR THE DISSOLUTION OF PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. The dissolution of the pastoral relationship shall be by action of the Presbytery. Such action may be initiated by the pastor, the congregation, or the Presbytery.
2. When a pastor wishes to be released from his pastoral charge, he shall first inform the session in writing of his wishes. The session shall then call a congregational meeting to act upon this request. He shall then present the same request in writing to the Presbytery. The action of the congregation shall be presented in writing to the Presbytery. [Amend. No. 13 effective June 13,1989]
3. When the congregation concurs in this request, the Presbytery may dissolve the pastoral relationship.
4. If the congregation does not concur in this request, it shall submit its reasons in writing to the Presbytery. The Presbytery shall give careful consideration to all such reasons and take whatever action is in the best interests of the church and the pastor.
5. If the session desires the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, it must by calling a congregational meeting first notify the congregation of its desires and then the congregation, if concurring with the session, shall proceed according to paragraph six for this section. [Amend. No. 13 effective June 13,1989]
6. If the congregation desires the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, it shall first notify the pastor by written request and then make the same written request to the Presbytery. The Presbytery shall then take whatever action is in the best interests of the church and its pastor. [Amend. # 13 effective June 13,1989]
7. The Presbytery has authority, acting on good information, to dissolve a pastoral relationship without formal application from either party, if in its judgment the welfare of the congregation (Church) so requires. [Amend. No. 13 effective June 13,1989]

8. The Presbytery may request an installed pastor to take up the work in another field of labor, but cannot require him to do so. Any pastor so requested shall give prayerful consideration to such a request for an indication of the will of God.

Concerning the Relationship of A Minister To His Former Field of Labor

- (a.) When Presbytery dissolves a pastoral relationship, both the pastor and the congregation must recognize and accept the fact that the pastoral relationship that has existed is ended.
 - (b.) Recognizing that there will be continued spiritual and emotional ties between a former pastor and parishioners, all persons involved must recognize that these ties can create difficulties when a new pastor is installed and should, therefore, exercise discretion in continued contacts. A former Pastor should respect his successor, and seek to avoid any interference in the life of the congregation; and his successor should respect the fruit of the ministry of his predecessor and honor the love and appreciation that members of the congregation may have for his predecessor.
 - (c.) In this connection, the people are urged to give consideration to the pastor on the field, whom they have called; and to give him due respect by calling on him to perform needed pastoral services.
 - (d.) If a former pastor does return to the church to assist in pastoral services such as weddings, baptisms, or funerals, it should be at the invitation of the Session.
 - (e.) A former pastor may certainly express his concern as a friend to former parishioners during times of serious illness, crisis, or sorrow but he should not seek to provide the continuing pastoral care that is the responsibility and privilege of the installed pastor.
 - (f.) If a former pastor continues to live in the community in which he previously served then special care must be taken by the minister, the Session and the congregation to be sure that proper boundaries are maintained, especially during the time period before a new minister is called to the field. The Minister must not involve himself in congregational matters, and the congregation must not expect him to perform pastoral services.
 - (g.) When the pastoral relationship is dissolved, the minister, the Session and the congregation shall be reminded in writing of these guidelines by the Stated Clerk of Presbytery.
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- (6). **Other Matters:** The Minister and His Work Committee shall oversee and make any recommendations to Presbytery of any other areas of the minister's work that might arise, needing Presbytery's action.

4. The Committee On Nominations:

- a. Membership: This committee shall have four (4) members chosen from the Presbytery at large in view of special interests and abilities.
- b. The Chairman of the Committee On Nominations shall be Virginia Presbytery's representative to the General Synod's Committee On Nominations. In the event that the Chairman is unable to serve in this capacity, the Committee shall designate one of its members to serve in this position.
- c. Duties:
 - (1.) The Nominations Committee shall seek to determine the best available persons to perform Presbytery's work and to present their names to the Presbytery at the regular Fall Meeting for election to the respective offices and committee positions of the Presbytery.
 - (2.) The Committee shall seek to determine the best available persons to serve in positions mandated by Synod and shall submit their names to the Presbytery at the appropriate time.
 - (3.). Each Session shall submit to the Nominations Committee a list of names of qualified persons who are willing to serve as officers and/or committee members for Virginia Presbytery.
 - (4.). In the event of a resignation or inability of a committee member to serve as demonstrated by missing two (2) consecutive meetings, the Nominating Committee shall present a replacement's name to the next Stated Meeting of Presbytery to fill the unexpired term, or to Presbytery Council if there is need for immediate replacement.

D. Moderator's Committees are appointed by the Moderator at the regular meetings of Virginia Presbytery to serve for the duration of the one regular meeting. Their function is to review reports and papers referred to them and make recommendations as are necessary for the discharge of their duties.

1. Excuses and Leaves of Absence

All ministers and Elder Representatives who are unable to attend the Stated Meetings of Virginia Presbytery are required to send to the Stated Clerk a request for excuse. These shall be referred to this committee for recommendation of approval or disapproval. The committee shall make recommendations to the Presbytery of necessary discipline for those who do not fill this requirement.

2. Resolutions

It shall be the duty of this committee to acknowledge and thank all those responsible for the welfare of Virginia Presbytery in its Stated Meetings. This committee shall make any recommendations to the Presbytery that are necessary for the total fulfillment of fellowship work and personal dedication to the life of the church.

3. Sessional Records

It shall have the responsibility to receive and examine Sessional records at the Fall Stated Meeting and to report the findings to Presbytery.

E. A Special Committee shall be appointed whenever the work of Virginia Presbytery requires it. The Moderator or the Nominating Committee shall appoint members whenever authorized by the court. The committee shall be convened by its first named member and shall organize at its first meeting.

F. An Ecclesiastical Commission is a body appointed and empowered by Virginia Presbytery to examine, consider, and conclude certain designated business.

1. The Membership of the Commission shall be no fewer than three in number consisting of at least two ministers and one Ruling elder. An Ecclesiastical Commission to hear a judicial case shall be no fewer than five in number, of which at least three shall be ministers and two Ruling Elders.

2. Duties

a. An Ecclesiastical Commission may be formed to take testimony in judicial cases, to install ministers as Pastors, to consider and seek solutions for problems of disorder in congregations, to affect the organization or merger of congregations, and to perform similar ecclesiastical functions.

b. A judicial case brought before Virginia Presbytery may, with the consent of the party, be submitted to the judgement of the Ecclesiastical Commission. In such cases, the Commission appointed must be satisfactory to both parties. The action of an Ecclesiastical Commission may be amended, appealed, or reversed by a majority vote of Virginia Presbytery at its next Stated Meeting.

Article VIII. Virginia Cottage

The property situated at Bonclarken and known as Virginia Cottage, was property deeded to the Virginia Presbytery Young People's Christian Union, This property is maintained under guardianship by the Trustees of Virginia Presbytery.

A. The use of Virginia Cottage during Synod or Conference weeks shall be on a first-come basis, open to all members of Virginia Presbytery. The use of the Virginia Cottage during other weeks shall be by reservation. The Trustees shall appoint a reservation clerk.

B. Suggested donations for the use of the cottage shall be on a per-night basis. The amount shall be reviewed by Presbytery's Christian Education Committee. Recommended changes shall be made to the Presbytery for consideration. All donations are payable to the Treasurer of the Virginia Presbytery Trustees.

C. Keys are available from the Trustees.

A key at Bonclarken is authorized to only be used in cases of emergency and the Director of Bonclarken must be notified by an officer of Virginia Presbytery before this key may be used.

D. During a Synod Conference, the cottage will be open only to conferees.

E. All individuals using the facilities of Virginia Cottage shall be required to sign the permanent register book in the living room and note the dates of use.

F. The leader of each conference or person designated by this leader is responsible for collecting the donations and sending these funds to the reservation clerk.

G. A special offering or fund raising campaign approved by Virginia Presbytery for the Virginia Cottage may be received by the Presbytery Treasurer and dispersed to the Treasurer of the Virginia Presbytery Trustees.

Article IX. Matters Not Provided For

Such matters and details of church government and procedure not expressly provided in this manual shall be determined by Virginia Presbytery, according to the general principles of the “Form of Government” of the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and the established order and policy of the Church.

Article X. Government

- A. Presbytery shall be governed in its meetings by the Form of Government of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church , The Manual of Procedure of Virginia Presbytery, and where none of these applies, by Robert’s Rules of Order Revised.
- B. Proposed amendments to The Manual of Procedure of Virginia Presbytery shall be presented in writing. Such amendments must be approved by Presbytery at a Stated Meeting and shall become an Order of the Day at the next Stated Meeting. If approved at the time of final consideration, the amendment is enacted and becomes a part of The Manual of Procedure of Virginia Presbytery.
- C. Any rule of Presbytery, except that provided for in the amendment of The Manual of Procedure of Virginia Presbytery, may be suspended for a particular meeting or until the next Stated Meeting by consent of two-thirds of the members present.