



GRACE PRESBYTERY
of the
ASSOCIATE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**MANUAL
of
PROCEDURE**

Draft 1.1.6

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I. STATEMENT OF IDENTITY AND PURPOSE (ARTICLE I)

Grace Presbytery of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, believing that its existence and work is the result of the Triune God's redemptive work, recognizes its dependence on him for biblically fruitful labors. We demonstrate our reliance upon our Triune Lord in our reliance on the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, prayer and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. We express our unity in our adherence to the Westminster Standards. Believing that our Lord by his supernatural grace is sanctifying us through his Word and Spirit, we commit ourselves to a unity, orthodoxy and ministry in pursuit of that holiness created and perfected by our Lord, and without which no one will see him. We affirm our mutual accountability as ministers and elders to this holiness, and the means of grace by which our Lord promises to perfect it in us and enable us to spread his kingdom. The great joy of our lives is to pursue this identity and purpose together with our brethren in the Lord, the members of this presbytery.

The start of Grace Presbytery represents an opportunity to pursue the biblical ideal of Presbyterianism. Through God's help may we be sound in doctrine (Titus 2.1-2), fervent in faith (Heb. 11:1), abounding in love (1Thess. 3:12), united in Spirit (Ephesians 4.3), and fruitful in ministry (Acts 9.31, 42).

We confess our need to grow in godliness (Titus 2.11-14), to pursue greater conformity to and maturity in our ARP theological standards (Eph. 4.13-16), to live in brotherly love and unity and humility of mind (1 Peter 3.8), longing for Christ to use us to bear fruit in his Church in our generation (Luke 8.8,15, Col 1.6-10). These principles are eternal, and we must grow towards them constantly, closing the gaps separating our theology from our experience and practice, and striving to excel still more and more (1Thess. 4:1ff).

We must always be about the great business of continual reformation. Therefore, we will strive to create and maintain an ecclesiastical culture marked by five essential virtues:

Doctrinal Orthodoxy

In the mercy of God and with joyful conviction, we are a presbytery of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, committed to the doctrines contained in the Westminster standards as founded on the word of God and the expression of our own Christian faith, and the heritage entrusted to us by the Protestant Reformers rooted in the apostolic age.

Faithful Unity

Healthy orthodoxy has never been perfectly monolithic. Several streams make up the river of our reformed, confessional heritage. We will allow appropriate diversity in the way men interpret, prioritize, and apply the principles contained in our standards. We shall be a presbytery where good men, preaching the knowledge of the truth and the grace of God can flourish (Titus 1:1, 2.11-14). Toward this end we will use the paper "Acceptance of and Exceptions to the

Westminster Standards in Grace Presbytery of the ARPC” as our default approach to exceptions, while affirming that humility is the need of the hour for all presbyters regardless of conviction.

Prayerful Spirituality

If we are ever to go on well for the Lord as a body, we believe it will be on our knees. Therefore, we resolve to devote substantial time to prayer during each of our called meetings. In seasons of contentious or difficult debate, we will endeavor to stop and commit ourselves afresh to God.

Personal Integrity

In a fallen world, where our knowledge is at best partial, our understanding mixed with confusion, and our perspective hampered by imbalance, unity is a difficult but essential grace to maintain. We need the Holy Spirit to give us wisdom, humility, and courage to reject a suffocating, censorious strictness on the one hand, and a worldly, compromising pragmatism on the other.

Wisdom: This begins with and expresses the fear of God (Ps. 111:10; Prov. 1:7). There are some things we will never be able to understand and practice skillfully if we go wrong here. Self-interest, party spirit, and pride stand always at the door to upend each one of us. We must afford them no quarter in our midst.

Humility: Too often, Presbytery discussions result in good men talking past one another, when they speak without listening and endeavor to teach without an equal desire to learn from their brothers (Prov. 18:13). We must humbly remind ourselves that we answer to our Lord and that his Spirit works in our brothers in the Lord.

Courage: Adam said nothing when God’s word was challenged. But Christ, The Second Adam, answered all such opposition decisively. The coming decades may well prove our mettle as men of God. May the Commander of the Lord’s Army to make us steadfast (Joshua 5:14). We must hold his grace and truth at all costs (John 1.14, 17).

Gospel Ministry

We exist for the glory of God’s name, the strengthening and increase of Christ’s Church (Acts 16.5), and the growth of God’s kingdom from North Carolina to the ends of the earth. In obedience to our Lord and by his power (Mt. 28:16-20), we seek to reach the lost, gathering and growing obedient disciples by planting Gospel-centered churches, in which the ordinary means of grace can have their extraordinary effect.

II. MEETINGS (ARTICLE II)

- A. Grace Presbytery shall have at least three Stated Meetings during the year, one in the winter, the spring and the fall.
- B. Stated Meetings shall ordinarily be held in the churches of the Presbytery in alphabetical order of the names of the churches. Churches unable to host the meetings shall notify the Stated Clerk in a timely manner.
- C. The quorum and other procedures and limitations for Stated and Called Meetings of Presbytery is specified in the ARP F.O.G. 10.11.A. and 10.12
- D. Retired ministers shall not be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum of any meeting of Presbytery. This in no way affects their eligibility and participation in meetings they attend.
- E. A summary report on the proceedings of the Stated Meetings shall be sent to the churches by Grace Presbytery's Stated Clerk.
- F. Administration
 - 1. The Program Committee will be responsible for planning and administrating all meetings of Grace Presbytery.
 - 2. The Program Committee will consist of the presbytery's moderator, vice-moderator, clerk, treasurer, parliamentarian, host congregation minister, and an elder from the host congregation.
 - 3. Registration for all meetings of Grace Presbytery will begin at least 30 minutes prior to the start time of the meeting. All Stated Meetings of Grace Presbytery will have a as part of the program a designated time of corporate prayer and worship.
 - 4. The program committee will coordinate with the host church regarding the worship service, giving deference to the local session to determine the order and elements of worship. The moderator may preach the sermon or he may ask another Minister or Elder to fulfill this duty.
- G. Business Meetings: The Business Meeting for Grace Presbytery will normally proceed as follows:

Welcome by Host Congregation

Constitution of Roll (through registration)

Recognition of Guests

Time of Prayer

Unfinished Business

Presentation of Program

New Business (*Which will ordinarily include a discussion regarding our unity, orthodoxy and ministry. The moderator, in his wisdom, shall govern the length of this discussion*).

Standing Committee Reports:* (*Stewardship & Finance, Minister & His Work/Candidates & Exams, Church Health & Extension*)

Lunch

Time of Prayer

Continuation of Business
Announcement of Place for Next Meeting
Adjournment
Singing of a Psalm, hymn, or spiritual song.
Benediction

**Each Standing Committee's Report will begin and end with prayer.*

III. THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE (ARTICLE III)

- A. The Program Committee shall work with the Standing Committee on Candidates & Examinations in arranging a schedule for seminary students to preach before the Presbytery.
- B. The Program Committee shall endeavor to stress some feature of the work of Presbytery and Synod at various times.
- C. The Program Committee may invite Fraternal Delegates from sister denominations from time to time.

D. GUIDE FOR THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE OF GRACE PRESBYTERY

- 1. Items normally occurring at a stated meeting:
 - a) New Moderator select Vice-Moderator (Minister appoint elder and vice-versa).
 - b) Address by Moderator of Synod (Fall, Winter, or Spring).
 - c) Consider Overtures from Synod (Discuss at Fall Meeting. Discuss and vote at Spring Meeting).
 - d) Consider Memorials from churches.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STATED CLERK FOR PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

- 1. Have registration sheets for Ministers, Elders, and Visitors.
- 2. Provide extra forms for elder delegate registration along with a place to collect them.
- 3. Coordinate electronic registration as needed.
- 4. Coordinate hotel and travel information with the host church.

F. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOST CHURCH FOR STATED PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

- 1. Registration will begin no later than 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting.
- 2. Provide 2 tables in the registration area along with name tags and pens.
- 3. Provide coffee, juice, water, and light breakfast foods.
- 4. Provide lunch at a cost determined by the host church. Coordinate registration and payment with the Clerk.
- 5. Make arrangements for musicians that may be needed for worship as directed by the Program Committee.

6. Provide bulletin for meeting, including the music for singing a Psalm, hymn, or spiritual song.
7. Have someone from host church to give a welcome during the morning session.
8. Provide meeting rooms for committees that may be meeting.
9. Provide clerical resources for reports that may need to be edited and/or printed.
10. Provide a table, lectern, and 2 chairs for the clerk (s).

IV. OFFICERS (ARTICLE IV)

A. The Officers of Grace Presbytery shall be as follows: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Stated Clerk, Treasurer, and Parliamentarian.¹ They may also include: Assistant to the Stated Clerk, Reading Clerk, and other and sundry positions. The Officers of Presbytery are excused from serving on Moderator's Committees.

B. THE MODERATOR

1. MANNER OF SELECTION:

- a) The Moderator must be a member of the court, over which he presides and is to be elected by it. Any Minister with a call or active Elder is eligible to serve as Moderator.
- b) Anyone making a nomination must have approval of the nominee.
- c) The Moderator shall normally serve a twelve month term and may succeed himself for one additional term.
- d) In case an elected Moderator dies, moves his membership from Grace Presbytery, or resigns before he serves as Moderator, the Officers of Presbytery shall be responsible for securing someone to serve as Moderator and Vice-Moderator of Presbytery for that meeting.

2. **TERM OF OFFICE:** The Moderator shall take office at the Stated meeting of Presbytery for which he was elected, when the unfinished business has been disposed of, and shall serve through the unfinished business at the end of his term. If an elder, he shall be an ex-officio member of the court until the conclusion of the meeting at which he surrenders his office.

3. DUTIES:

- a) Appoint a Vice-Moderator. He shall be confirmed by the Presbytery.
- b) Appoint a Moderator's Committee on Memorials and Resolutions and report this information to the Program Committee prior to the meeting of Presbytery.
- c) Serve as Chairman of the Program Committee.

¹ From the *ARP Form of Government* 10.10, "The officers of the Presbytery shall be a moderator, a vice moderator, a stated clerk, and such other officers as are necessary. The method of selection and terms of office and duties shall be determined by the Presbytery."

- d) Call to order and preside over the meetings of Presbytery.
- e) Announce the business before the court.
- f) State and put all questions properly brought before the court.
- g) Take the vote and announce the result.
- h) Decide all questions of order subject to an appeal to the house by any two members.
- i) Deliver a sermon or give an appropriate address at the opening of the Presbytery before retiring from his office except in cases where he shall appoint someone else to speak.

C. THE VICE-MODERATOR

- 1. **MANNER OF SELECTION:**The Vice-Moderator must be a member of the court and is chosen by the Moderator-Elect. Any Minister with a call or active Elder is eligible to serve and shall be confirmed by the Presbytery.
- 2. **TERM OF OFFICE:**Twelve months. If an elder, he shall be an ex-officio member of the court until the conclusion of the meeting at which he surrenders his office. The Vice-Moderator shall normally serve a twelve month term and may succeed himself for one additional term.
- 3. **DUTIES:**
 - a) Serve as a member of the Program Committee.
 - b) Assist the Moderator as requested to do so.
 - c) Assume the duties of the Moderator in the absence of the Moderator.

D. THE STATED CLERK

- 1. **MANNER OF SELECTION:** The Stated Clerk shall be nominated to the Presbytery and shall be elected by the Presbytery.
- 2. **TERM OF OFFICE:**Three years. He may succeed himself. If not a member of the court, he shall have the privileges of the floor at all open and executive sessions. He shall receive a stipend determined by the Presbytery.

E. DUTIES:

- 1. Keep a roll of the Presbytery.
- 2. Constitute the roll at the meeting of Presbytery. The roll shall be constituted from enrollment forms and by signing an enrollment form prepared by the Stated Clerk at the meeting.
- 3. Keep attendance lists for every meeting and include such in the Minutes.
- 4. Serve as a member of the Program Committee.
- 5. Send out notices of Stated and Called Meetings at least one week before the date of the meeting.
- 6. Take responsibility of all papers and reports to be referred and place such papers and reports in the hands of the proper committees or persons.
- 7. Make a note of unfinished business to come before the Presbytery at its next meeting.

8. Keep accurate minutes of the proceedings of Presbytery.
9. Prepare the minutes of the Presbytery and distribute as soon as possible. One hard copy will be sent to each church and to ministers, officers, chairmen of committees, and students without email, and that request them from the clerk. An electronic copy of the minutes will be sent to all others.
10. He will receive and send all official communications on behalf of the Presbytery.
11. He shall present a report of his actions since the last Stated meeting to the subsequent Stated meeting of the Presbytery.
12. Sign all official papers of the Presbytery.
13. Give a *Manual of Procedure of Grace Presbytery* to each minister that becomes a member of Grace Presbytery, and to each of its candidates for the ministry.
14. Serve as custodian of all Presbytery records. He shall send copies of all minutes to the library at Erskine College for archival purposes.
15. Serve as an advisory member of the Committee on Stewardship and Finance.
16. Keep an up-to-date calendar of Presbytery meetings, committee meetings, retreats, etc., in order to help avoid conflicts in scheduling meetings.
17. Upon the death of a minister of the Presbytery, send a message of condolence to the family. He shall notify the presbytery and appoint a representative to attend the funeral service if possible, and appoint some member of Presbytery to prepare a memorial tribute for the records of Presbytery and Synod.

F. THE ASSISTANT TO THE STATED CLERK

1. **MANNER OF SELECTION:** The Assistant to the Stated Clerk shall be nominated to the Presbytery and shall be elected by the Presbytery.
2. **TERMS OF OFFICE:** Three years. He may succeed himself. If not a member of the court, he shall have the privileges of the floor at all open and executive sessions.
3. **DUTIES:**
 - a) Assist the Stated Clerk as requested to do so.
 - b) Assume the duties of the Stated Clerk in the absence of the Stated Clerk.

G. THE PARLIAMENTARIAN

1. **MANNER OF SELECTION:** The Parliamentarian shall be nominated to the Presbytery and shall be elected by the Presbytery.
2. **TERM OF OFFICE:** Three years. He may succeed himself. If not a member of the court, he shall have the privileges of the floor at all open and executive sessions.
3. **DUTIES:**
 - a) At all meetings of Grace Presbytery, the Parliamentarian shall call attention to procedures which are not in accord with the *Form of*

Government of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Manual of Procedure of Grace Presbytery, and where none of these applies, by Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

- b) On request, he shall advise the moderator on procedural matters. However, all questions of order shall be decided by the Moderator, subject only to the appeal of two or more members of the court.
- c) Serve as a member of the Program Committee.

H. THE TREASURER

1. **MANNER OF SELECTION:** The Treasurer shall be nominated to the Presbytery by the Committee on Nominations and shall be elected by the Presbytery.
2. **TERM OF OFFICE:** Three years. He may succeed himself. If not a member of the court, he shall have the privileges of the floor at all open and executive sessions.
3. **DUTIES:**
 - a) Serve as the custodian of all funds committed to Grace Presbytery.
 - b) Maintain an up-to-date and accurate record of all receipts and disbursements using a computer program.
 - c) The Treasurer shall present timely and complete financial reports to be distributed with the Stated Clerk's packet for Stated meetings. These reports shall be computer generated and done according to accepted accounting practices.
 - d) Serve as a member of the Program Committee.
 - e) Serve as an advisory member of the Committee on Stewardship and Finance.
 - f) Assist the Committee on Stewardship and Finance in the development and supervision of an annual budget.
 - g) Pay expenses of Presbytery Officers and Committees as approved by Presbytery, and maintain appropriately documented expense reports.
 - h) Unless otherwise designated, the Treasurer, in his report, will post first the amount received through church commitments to the General Fund.

I. THE ASSISTANT TREASURER

1. **MANNER OF SELECTION:** The Assistant Treasurer shall be nominated to the Presbytery and shall be elected by the Presbytery.
2. **TERM OF OFFICE:** Three years. He may succeed himself.
3. **DUTIES:**
 - a) In the absence of the Treasurer, as needed, shall serve as the Custodian of all funds committed to Grace Presbytery and Fulfill all other duties of the Treasurer.

- b) Serve as an advisory member of the Committee on Stewardship and Finance.

V. PROCEDURES (ARTICLE V)

A. Reports

1. In order to be considered at Presbytery, all reports are to be submitted to the Stated Clerk no later than 14 days prior to the meeting of Presbytery.
2. All Memorials, Resolutions to Synod, Constitutional Amendments, and changes in the *Manual of Procedure* are to be considered only if they are received by the Stated Clerk in time to be mailed with the announcement of the Presbytery meeting.
3. All reports of Standing Committees shall be acted on by the Presbytery without reference. Each committee is to be prepared and required to defend its proposals, recommendations, etc. on the floor of Presbytery.
4. Requests for Special Speakers to address Grace Presbytery by committees or individuals must be submitted in writing to the Stated Clerk no later than 21 days before the Stated meeting of Presbytery for which the request is made.

- B. Presbytery will pay for expenses incurred for Presbytery's business that is done by its direction and approval provided such expenses are specifically provided for in the Operating Budget of the Presbytery. The mileage rate shall be 50% of the specified IRS rate.

C. Representatives to Presbytery

1. Each session is required to send to the Stated Clerk the name of its representative(s) to the meeting of Presbytery not later than one week prior to the meeting.
2. If this form is not mailed or emailed to the clerk, then it should be taken to Presbytery meeting.
3. While the Presbytery desires and needs the participation and counsel of all its ministers, the Presbytery will not require that honorably retired ministers, active missionaries currently out of the country, and active duty military chaplains be in attendance, unless serving on a Presbytery committee.
4. When a church has no representation at Presbytery for two consecutive meetings, they shall be contacted by the Committee on the Minister and His Work.

- D. Presbytery shall be governed in its meetings by the *Form of Government of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church*, the *Manual of Procedure of Grace Presbytery*, and where none of these applies, by *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*. When the Presbytery conducts its business in Executive Session, the first order of business should be to constitute itself as a committee of the whole; to recognize its moderator as the chairman of the committee; and to elect a committee reporter whose responsibility it shall be to report to the Presbytery the actions taken by the committee, which report when adopted shall be considered the official records of the Executive Session and shall be entered into the Minutes of the Presbytery.

E. Changing the Rules

1. “Proposed changes to the *Manual of Procedure* shall be sent out 2 weeks in advance of the meeting at which the changes are to be discussed, and such changes may then be voted upon at the same meeting.”
2. Precise references shall be given regarding these changes.
3. Such changes must be approved by Presbytery at a Stated Meeting and shall become an Order of the Day at the next Stated Meeting.
4. If approved at the time of final consideration, the change becomes a part of the *Manual of Procedure*.
5. Any rule of Presbytery, except those from the *Form of Government of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church* and those provided for in the changing of the *Manual of Procedure of Grace Presbytery*, may be suspended for a particular meeting or until the next Stated Meeting by consent of two-thirds of the members present.
6. Committees are encouraged to review their duties and submit any proposal that will improve the work of the committee and the presbytery to the presbytery in a stated meeting.

VI. THE STANDING COMMITTEES (ARTICLE VI)

- A. The Presbytery may appoint Standing Committees to take the management of a specified area of Presbytery’s work.²
 1. Standing Committees shall have power to manage the work entrusted to them without particular instructions on how to do this from the Presbytery, but they shall be required to obey the Presbytery’s instructions whenever given to them.
 2. The Presbytery has full power to approve or set aside any action taken by a Standing Committee.
 3. All Standing Committee assignments are to begin the first day of July and end the last day of June of the years indicated.
- B. The Standing Committees of Grace Presbytery at its beginning will be:
 1. Minister & His Work / Candidates & Exams
 2. Church Health & Extension
 3. Stewardship & Trustees
- C. Each Standing Committee shall have at least six members. It is recommended that a 50/50 balance be kept between ministers and elders, i.e. three ministers and three elders.
 1. No church may have more than one representative per committee.
 2. Each committee shall elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and a Secretary.
 3. Elections shall be held before the Fall Meeting of Presbytery.

² From the *ARP Form of Government*, 13.13.3 “Standing Committees: A standing committee shall be a permanent committee to study and implement specific orders of the court or board. The court or board shall appoint the members of its standing committee in any manner it may determine for a specified term. The committee shall report to the appointing court or board at each meeting or as otherwise directed. Such committees shall reorganize annually.”

- D. The term of service for committee members at the beginning of Grace Presbytery on will vary among the committee members.
 - 1. Two members will serve three year terms. Another two members will serve two year terms, and the other two will serve one year terms. This is in order to implement a rotation system within each committee.
 - 2. As those members serving one, two, and three year terms are replaced, they will be replaced by men serving three year terms.
- E. No person shall serve on a Standing Committee who is called or employed by the committee or whose work or studies are supervised by the committee or who is directly affected by the outcome of the committee's work. (For example, a mission developer shall not serve on the Church Health & Extension Committee.)
- F. In the event the chairman of a standing committee can no longer serve due to resignation, illness or transfer, the senior minister on the committee shall convene the committee for the purpose of electing a chairman.
- G. When a committee has conducted any business, it shall give a report of such business at the next Stated Meeting after it has conducted that business. Each committee shall report at least once each calendar year regardless of whether it has conducted business or not.
- H. Each committee will be responsible for deciding how to administrate its work in keeping with the Manual of Procedures "Article I: "Statement of Identity and Purpose." The general sphere of responsibility for each committee is as follows:
 - 1. The Minister & His Work/Candidates & Exams Committee will be entrusted with overseeing the work and health of all ministers in Grace Presbytery and the reception of new ministers into the presbytery.
 - 2. The Church Health & Extension Committee will be entrusted with overseeing the work of church planting and nurturing the health of existing congregations within the presbytery.
 - 3. The Stewardship & Trustees Committee will be entrusted with overseeing the work of managing all the presbytery's resources, particularly those pertaining to finances and property, while also governing the presbytery's relationships to synod's work as a whole.

VII. NOMINATIONS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEES (ARTICLE VII)

- A. Nominations to the standing committees shall be considered during a specified period of time, after which they'll be distributed to the entire court at least six weeks before the meeting upon which the vote shall occur.
 - 1. Names of men shall be sent to the Stated Clerk along with a short description of their experience and qualifications for a particular committee.
 - 2. Nominees shall be consulted before their name is submitted to the Stated Clerk.

APPENDIX I: GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES OF PRESBYTERY



APPENDIX II: DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES WITHIN GRACE PRESBYTERY

Church	Synod #	Location	ARPChurch.org Phone
Adams Farm Community	G005	5113 Mackay Rd Jamestown NC 27282	336-292-4565
Ambassador Presbyterian	G008	1010 Schieffelin Rd Apex NC 27502	919-249-0230
Christ Covenant Church	G055	811 Jefferson Rd Greensboro NC 27410-3631	336-252-3599
City Church of Greensboro	G057	310 S Greene St Greensboro NC 27410	336-772-6978
Covenant Fellowship	G085	1807 Brassfield Rd Greensboro NC 27410	336-312-7307
Covenant of Grace	G087	508 Harvey St Winston-Salem NC 27103-1605	724-992-1399
Covenant ARP	G088	106 Plantation Blvd Jacksonville NC 28540	910-346-5687
First ARP of Burlington	G030	2250 Saddle Club Rd Burlington NC 27215	336-584-6929
Grace Community ARP (Exploratory)	G042	5547 Woodbridge Rd Black Creek NC 27813	252-239-8505
Grace Hill ARP	G316	515 Meadowlands Dr Ste 500 Hillsborough NC 27278-8581	919-593-2169
Grace Reformed	G167	2585 Little Creek Church Rd Clayton NC 27520	919-550-0739
Hillside ARP	G043	3743 Maple Ave Burlington NC 27215	336-263-2796
Hope Chapel ARP	G173	908 N. Josephine Boyd St. Greensboro NC 27403	336-420-9010
Korean Bethel	G016	901 Bunce Rd Fayetteville NC 28314	910-864-5739
The Lord's Korean	G205	4960 US Hwy 220 Summerfield NC	412-805-7337
Maupin Avenue Presbyterian	G210	100 Maupin Ave Salisbury NC 28144	704-633-9101
New Beginnings Presbyterian (Mission)	G232	232 Davis Mill Rd Pine Level NC 27568	919-989-5832
Providence Presbyterian [Received June '20]	--	400 Eastwood Ave, Fayetteville, NC 28301	(910) 630-1215

APPENDIX III: SESSIONAL MINUTES CHECKLIST

Church Name: _____

Last date record were examined: _____

Current date of examination: _____

	Categories	Y	N	Notes
1	Name of Congregation appears clearly on outside/front of minutes book?			
2	Meetings opened and closed with prayer?			
3	Monthly meetings held (minimum 9 times per year)?			
4	Date, Time, Place of meetings noted?			
5	Names of session members present / absent?			
6	Quorum present & noted?			
7	Previous Minutes reviewed & approved?			
8	Elder delegates to Presbytery/Synod noted? Delegate gives report from meetings?			
9	Diaconate minutes / reports received?			
10	Minutes signed by Moderator and Clerk?			
11	Minutes neat in appearance and legible?			
12	Sessional minutes kept in front of minutes book?			
13	Congregational Minutes kept separately in back?			
14	Records of new members, dismissed members, baptisms, and deaths kept with minutes book?			
15	Copy of <u>current</u> church budget kept in back of minutes?			
16	Statement of purpose kept in front of minutes book?			

Records examined by: (print name) _____ (signature) _____

APPENDIX IV: ACCEPTANCE OF AND EXCEPTIONS TO THE WESTMINSTER STANDARDS IN GRACE PRESBYTERY OF THE ARPC

1. What is meant by acceptance of the Westminster Standards?

Acceptance³ of the doctrines of the Westminster Standards must be understood in light of the nature and function of Christian doctrine. Christian doctrine is for the purpose of introducing someone to Jesus' Lordship and for their maturation in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus (WCF 1.10; 25.4, 5; 26.1; 31.4). This introduction and maturation addresses the orthodoxy, unity and ministry of the body of Christ, including the conscience of her individual ministers and elders.

Acceptance of the Westminster Standards is the man's willingness to agree with and submit to its doctrines for the sake of entering into the orthodoxy, unity and gospel ministry of the Church and into the denomination of the Church in which one accepts the Westminster Standards. This willingness does not necessarily extend to the exact terms used in the original document, because of the nature of Christian doctrine (which is about the affirmation of particular concepts not the acquiescence to terms alone). This subscription nurtures the peace, purity and prosperity of the disciplined Church community.

2. What does it mean to take exception to any aspect of the Westminster Standards?

An exception is an admission that one's understanding of the doctrine addressed in that exception differs in some way with the doctrinal affirmation that is articulated in the Confession. An exception is not merely differing with the terminology used to express the doctrine. The difference expressed in an exception may be approved or not approved within the ecclesiastical body in which one seeks union.

Out of a desire to nurture orthodoxy, unity and ministry within the body of Christ without violating the conscience of ministers we recommend the following procedure be adopted when men claim to take an exception. When a man believes that he has an exception to the Westminster Standards he should write a brief and yet thorough answer to the following questions and submit his answers to the presbytery:

³This is an adaptation of a paper originally written for First Presbytery of the ARPC and reported on at its January 2016 meeting in which the following two questions were answered: 1) What does it mean to subscribe to the Westminster Standards? 2) What does it mean to take an exception to the Westminster Standards? Both the term *subscription* and the act of *subscribing* to a confessional document have a long history in Presbyterian and Reformed churches. Cf. David W. Hall, ed., *The Practice of Confessional Subscription* (Oak Ridge, TN: The Covenant Foundation, 1997). Yet, the vows for church members, elders, and ministers in the ARPC use the term *accept* rather than *subscribe* (FOG 4.5 (6); 8.17 (3); 9.30 (3)). While these are two different terms, it is difficult to conceive of them as communicating two different meanings within the vows as they have been written. For the purposes of this document they should be regarded as synonyms. Identifying terms with particular concepts and practices that one believes faithfully or accurately represents what is true for all people for all times and places represents the very nature of doctrinal work and making a faithful Christian confession.

1. How do you see your exception(s) relating to the matter of orthodoxy in our Presbytery?
2. How do you see your exception(s) relating to the unity and maturation (theological, personal, ministerial) of the Presbytery?
3. How will your exception(s) be handled in your teaching and preaching? How will you use it and explain it in your ministry? How will you hold it compared to the language of the Confession? How much do you feel a call or conviction to teach and preach your exception?
4. How would you communicate your respect for the Westminster Standards while holding and communicating your exception?

3. What are the practical realities of subscription and exception to the Westminster Standards?

Because there is a practical and perpetual side of what it means for us as a Presbytery to “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,” (FOG 9.30 (3)) with some ministers and elders “taking *exception(s)*” and others not, we offer the following guidelines for all ministers and elders in Grace Presbytery.

All ministers and elders in Grace Presbytery must recognize that in submitting to and pursuing the peace, purity and prosperity of the church, they do so having the duty to teach and preach all that is communicated in the WCF as the summary of sound doctrine expressed by Holy Scripture. While an individual minister or elder should be free to express his allowable exception to the WCF he must do so only by clarifying that as he holds these he is deviating on these points from what is expressed in the WCF and the official position of the ARPC. He is thereby obligated not to make these exceptions the source of any matter that would upset the peace, purity or prosperity of the ARPC, and should therefore speak of his exception humbly and carefully, as opposed to divisively and polemically.

We must keep in mind that no exception that is allowed becomes part of the Standards. In this sense we do not have fluid, but fixed Standards. Our acceptance of the doctrines of the ARPC contained in the WCF and catechisms, while not creating our unity is an expression of our unity. All ministers and elders are to understand themselves to be in subjection to their fellow elders with respects to the vows they take. All ministers and elders are to function within the ARPC believing, confessing and implementing the system of doctrine of the ARPC. Any exception(s) that is allowed must remain on the periphery of the minister or elders ministerial work. If he finds that it (or they) cannot, because of conscience sake, he should make this known to his fellow ministers and elders. If after discussion with them he is unable to keep his exception(s) on the periphery of his ministerial work he should seek affiliation with another ecclesiastical body.

APPENDIX V: POLICY FOR CHURCHES MAKING INQUIRY TO GRACE PRESBYTERY

When a congregation of another denomination, or an independent congregation makes inquiry into possible relationship with Grace Presbytery, the contact shall be made through the Committee on Church Health & Extension with the knowledge of the moderator and the Stated Clerk of Grace Presbytery (see FOG 10.3.E)

The following procedures shall be followed:

1. Grace Presbytery will officially respond to such inquiries when a letter of intent from the session of the interested congregation has been supplied to the Committee on Church Health & Extension. Notice will also be given at that time to the Minister and His Work Committee.”
2. The Committee on Church Health & Extension can respond, send letters, make visits and perform other responses as may be requested. An invitation to the chair of the Minister & His Work Committee/Candidates & Exams shall be extended so that a representative may attend any in-person visits.
3. Prior to a congregation officially requesting affiliation into Grace Presbytery, it is required that any ministers from that congregation as well as at least one ruling elder attend at a minimum of one stated presbytery meeting and General Synod, or if not General Synod, two Stated Presbytery meetings. An invitation shall also be given to these ministers and elders to encourage their attendance at General Synod.
4. If affiliation is pursued, the Committee on Church Health & Extension shall ascertain, among other things, if the session and the minister adhere to the Standards of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church as well as agree to meet Grace Presbytery’s minimum requirements for pastoral support.
5. The Committee on Church Health & Extension is charged with the examination of the elders. The Committee on Candidates & Examination is charged with the examination of the ministers.
6. The congregation desiring to be received into Grace Presbytery shall present a letter of dismissal from its presbytery, or other recognized judicatory, to Grace Presbytery’s Committee on Church Health & Extension, along with a complete roll of its membership (communicant and non-communicant) and a list of elders and deacons currently serving the church.
7. The Committee on Church Health & Extension shall inform the session or other appropriate representatives of the congregation to be present at the meeting of Grace Presbytery when their request for reception is placed on the agenda for consideration.

8. The Committee on Church Health & Extension shall report its actions to Grace Presbytery and make its recommendations concerning the congregation making application for membership. If it is mutually agreed upon that the minister continue to serve the church in capacity as pastor, he shall be examined for reception in the regular manner before action is completed to receive the congregation. Then, a motion may be made to receive the congregation.
9. The minister, elders and deacons shall continue in their office in the church without reinstallation.
10. The Committee on Church Health & Extension shall be established as a commission of Grace Presbytery to hold a Service of Reception and Welcome for the newly received congregation at a date and time convenient to all parties involved. The Service of Reception and Welcome will include prayer, the bringing of greetings from Grace Presbytery, the preaching of the Word, the renewing of vows by the pastor, the officers and the congregation, and any other items deemed appropriate.

APPENDIX VI: MISSION/DESCRIPTION of the STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHURCH HEALTH & EXTENSION

MEMBERSHIP

The Standing Committee on Church Health & Extension shall be composed of six members, each serving a term of three years, with two members retiring each year at the end of June. It is recommended that a 50/50 balance be kept between ministers and elders (i.e. three ministers and three elders). The chairman shall be elected by the committee before the Spring meeting of Grace Presbytery and shall ordinarily serve a term of two years. The chairman shall represent Grace Presbytery on Synod's Board of Outreach North America (ONA).

VISION

To fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) by planting churches who confess Jesus Christ as the only Savior and the Sovereign Lord over all of life, and are fully committed to the Bible in its entirety as the Word of God written, without error in all its parts, and to its teaching as set forth in the historic Reformed standards of the Westminster Confession of Faith. To also promote church health within Grace Presbytery by providing assistance and guidance to ministers, sessions and congregations.

FUNCTIONS

The Church Health & Extension Committee shall focus on five primary functions:

1. Recruitment and Assessment

- a. Developing networks from which to recruit potential church planters.
- b. Identifying and interviewing church planter candidates.
- c. Evaluating church planter candidates according to their past ministry experience, approach to church planting, pastoral references, skills in ministry (e.g. preaching, leadership, etc.), adherence to ARP standards, and the qualifications set forth in God's Word (1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9).
- d. Referring church planter candidates who meet the criteria set forth by this committee and Grace Presbytery to ONA's Church Planter Assessment.
- e. Developing a plan for mentoring church planters based on the assessment received back from ONA and other evaluations.

2. Oversight and Support

- a. Recommending elders from organized congregations to serve on provisional sessions.

- b. Working with Synod's Board of ONA to provide assistance as needed to exploratory and missional works within the Presbytery.
- c. Maintaining a current study of all missional works within the presbytery by assessing their progress toward becoming an organized congregation that is self-supporting, self-sustaining, and self-governing.
- d. Communicating with church planters and provisional sessions regarding the development of the missional work. This includes receiving periodic reports and taking needed action.
- e. Annual review of the budgets of all exploratory and missional works and as needed by the recommendation of provisional sessions.
- f. Supporting all exploratory and missional church planters and their families with the proper encouragement, resources and mentoring.
- g. Continually praying for and annually visiting the exploratory and missional works within the presbytery.
- h. Overseeing the service of organization for new congregations.

3. Identifying new fields for church planting

- a. Develop a strategic short and long term plan for church planting within Grace Presbytery.
- b. Developing and reviewing criteria for identifying viable new missional fields.
- c. Performing a demographic study and a feasibility assessment for every new proposed missional field.
- d. Matching church planters with appropriate fields.
- e. Evaluating written proposals that result from exploratory work.
- f. Recommending to Grace Presbytery the approval of new exploratory and missional works.

4. Promotion of church health within Grace Presbytery

- a. Meet with and encourage ministers, Sessions and congregations who make an inquiry to this committee for assistance in the area of church health.
- b. Help ministers, sessions and congregations formulate plans for growth, evangelism and edification.

COOPERATION

This Committee shall make recommendations to and cooperate with Synod's Board of ONA. The committee is also to communicate with the appropriate North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) presbyteries concerning church planting work per items #2 and #3 of the NAPARC "Comity Agreement."

CHURCH TRANSFERS

The committee shall receive and respond to inquiries from churches who desire to explore a relationship with Grace Presbytery. The committee will make recommendations to the presbytery concerning the reception of these congregations. The committee will serve as the liaison between newly received organized congregations and Grace Presbytery for a period of one year to provide assistance and orientation. See Appendix V for the specific policy for churches making inquiry to Grace Presbytery.

REPORTS TO PRESBYTERY

1. The committee shall make a report at each stated meeting of Grace Presbytery.
2. The committee shall submit an annual operational ministry budget to Grace Presbytery for approval.