

Standing Rules
and
Manual of Operations
of the
Presbytery of Sierra Blanca

STANDING RULES

Preamble: Foundational Principles of Presbytery Mission

The organization of the Presbytery of Sierra Blanca contained in these Standing Rules is based on the following principles:

- The Stated Meetings of the Presbytery are central events in the mission of the Presbytery.
- Parity and equality among ministers and elders are essential to a healthy Presbytery, and constant, intentional effort is required to maintain these values.
- The Presbytery's organization is to provide for deliberate and caring use of power to serve the common good of the Church.
- All parts of the Presbytery's organization and work are accountable to the Presbytery for faithful implementation of its Mission, Vision and Strategies, and for evaluation.
- The Presbytery is organized upon the Historic Principles of the Presbyterian Church Government, especially
 - that a majority will govern, and
 - that a minority's right to be heard will be protected.
- The Presbytery is a community of people whom God has chosen and given to one another so that by God's grace we can enjoy and share the good news in joy.
- As a community of Christians, the Presbytery depends for its energy and imagination on the Risen Christ and the fellowship of its members in an atmosphere of compassion and trust.
- This organization will seek to be led by the Holy Spirit.
- The churches of the Presbytery and the Presbytery depend upon one another in the mission of the Church.
- Public worship of God is a primary means by which we demonstrate the Rule of God at meetings of the Presbytery as well as in every congregation. Listening for the Word of God is the most important discipline in every gathering of Christians, in sessions, in Presbytery, and in committee meetings.

I. Mission

1. MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Sierra Blanca Presbytery is to nurture, support, and equip our diverse communities to embody God's transforming love and grace in their unique congregations, clusters, and beyond.

2. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Sierra Blanca Presbytery is the regional community entrusted by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) with the mission and government of the Church within its geographical region.

As the Presbyterian people in southern New Mexico, united under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and entrusted by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) with the mission and government of the Church within its geographical region, we believe that:

- A. Mission is informed by Scripture, inspired by prayer, and is an expression of our worship, by which we glorify God and bear witness to God's love for the world in Jesus Christ.
- B. Trusting in God we are called to take risks and to dream as we fulfill Christ's mission.
- C. The Presbytery's primary role is to advance the mission of congregations.
- D. The Presbytery conducts mission within the polity of the PCUSA and the theology of the Reformed tradition.

3. PRIORITIES

God calls us to Support, Nurture, and Equip leaders and congregations by:

- A. developing geographical clusters
- B. allowing for flexible structures and adaptive systems to support our mission
- C. establishing partnerships that will help sustain and enable congregations to carry out their particular ministry
- D. encouraging church leaders and congregations in discipleship
- E. cultivating generosity, hospitality, and mutuality in all of our relationships
- F. creating an educational culture that challenges and shapes effective lay and pastoral leadership
- G. providing for faithful stewardship of our traditions, diversity, and resources

II. Definitions

1. BOUNDARIES

Sierra Blanca Presbytery is a Council of the Presbyterian Church (USA) with jurisdiction over the minister members within its bounds and over the particular Presbyterian Church (USA) congregations in New Mexico in the counties of Chaves, Curry, De Baca, Doña Ana, Eddy, Guadalupe, Lea, Lincoln, Luna, Otero, Quay and Roosevelt, and Township Two South, Range Nine East, New Mexico Principal Meridian in Socorro County. The presbytery has the responsibility and power to provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard, provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received, and nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ. G-3.0101a,b,c.

2. CORPORATION

Sierra Blanca Presbytery is a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of New Mexico. It is successor to the pre-1973 Presbytery of Pecos Valley and partial successor to the Presbytery of the Rio Grande.

3. GOVERNANCE

The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the activity of God in the world as described in G-3.0301a, b, c. The Presbytery of Sierra Blanca is governed by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), by these Standing Rules, its Manual of Operations and by such policies as it may from time to time adopt.

4. MEMBERSHIP

A. Voting Membership of the Presbytery consists of teaching elders and ruling elders, in numbers as equal as possible.

1. All ordained ministers enrolled by the presbytery as active members or members-at-large are voting members.
2. Each church in the presbytery is represented by at least one Ruling Elder commissioned by the Session to be a voting member. Churches with more than 300 members are represented as follows
301-600—2 elders
 - (a) Sessions are encouraged to name elder commissioners and alternates for one-year terms that begin in January of each year, and to report their names, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers to the Stated Clerk.
3. Each Ruling Elder elected by the Presbytery as Moderator, Moderator Elect, Stated Clerk, Moderator of a Committee or Commission, Moderator of Presbyterian Women of Sierra Blanca, or member of Presbytery Leadership Team will be enrolled as a member of the Presbytery for the term of office, whether commissioned by his/her Session.
4. Each Ruling Elder elected by the Presbytery in a staff position will be enrolled as a member of Presbytery for the duration of service in that staff position.
5. Each Ruling Elder serving as a Commissioned Ruling Elder and Certified Christian Educator in active service to Presbytery congregations or authorized mission projects shall be enrolled as members of Presbytery for the duration of service in a particular position, by action of Presbytery.
6. To correct imbalance in the numbers of minister and elder members, at the end of the year the Stated Clerk will notify the churches how many extra elder members they will receive for the next year. The process is to determine the number of ministers within the bounds of the Presbytery. The number of elder members is subtracted from the number of ministers. The resulting number will determine the number of elder members to be equally distributed among the churches.

B. Corresponding Members, with voice but without vote, shall be:

1. Members of Synod Staff
2. Staff of Presbyterian Outreach, or Cristo Rey Project.
3. Teaching Elders or Ruling Elders of other Presbyteries of the PC(USA) and of other communions in correspondence with the General Assembly.

III. Meetings

1. STATED MEETINGS

There will be three overnight Stated Meetings of Presbytery each year. Unless Presbytery makes provision otherwise, Stated Meetings shall be held the last Saturday and the immediately preceding Friday evening in January, April and September.

2. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of the Presbytery may be called by the moderator or Stated Clerk at the request, or with the concurrence of two teaching elders and two ruling elders, all being of different churches. Notice of such meetings shall be sent not less than 10 days in advance to all members and the session of every church. The notice shall set out the purpose of the meeting and no other business shall be transacted. Special meetings may be held by internet café, telephone conference call or electronic mail, provided notice is given and opportunity afforded to all who desire to participate.

3. QUORUM

A quorum for Presbytery meetings shall be any three teaching elders and at least three ruling elder commissioners who represent three different churches.

4. ORDER

Meetings of the Presbytery and Leadership Team will be conducted in accord with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, except where otherwise required by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

5. WORSHIP

All meetings of Presbytery shall begin with the worship of God. Stated meetings shall begin with worship and the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

6. LOCATION

The Presbytery Leadership Team shall decide on meeting locations, considering invitations from the congregations of Presbytery.

7. FLOOR PRIVILEGE

Non-members in attendance at a meeting of Presbytery may be granted privilege of the floor by action of the Presbytery.

8. EXPENSES

Each particular congregation is responsible for the expenses of its Ministers and Session commissioners for meetings of Presbytery.

IV. Officers and Staff

1. ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICERS

The officers of the presbytery shall be: The Moderator, Moderator elect, Moderator of the Leadership Team, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer.

A. Moderator

The Moderator shall be nominated for election by Presbytery's Committee on Representation and Nomination and elected at the September meeting for a term of 1 year and shall assume office following their installation at the January meeting. Ordinarily, upon completion of his/her

term, the Moderator shall be nominated as Moderator of the Presbytery Leadership Team for the following year. The Moderator's duties shall be:

1. Those prescribed in the form of Government G-3.0104.
2. Such other duties as Presbytery, upon recommendation of its Leadership Team, may assign.
3. To appoint a Committee of Counsel (Presbytery) as provided in the Rules of Discipline D-6.0302, with the advice and consent of the Stated Clerk of Presbytery.
4. To appoint an Investigating Committee as provided in the Rules of Discipline D-10.0200, with the advice and consent of the Chair of the Commission on Ministry.
5. To appoint persons to represent the Presbytery in responsibilities not otherwise provided for in the Standing Rules or where timing and meeting schedules do not permit them to be named through the normal nominating process, in consultation with the Chair of Presbytery Leadership Team and the Stated Clerk.

B. Moderator Elect

The Moderator Elect shall be nominated for election by Presbytery's Committee on Representation and Nomination and elected at the September meeting for a term of 1 year and shall assume office following their installation at the January meeting. Upon completion of his/her term, the Moderator Elect shall be nominated as Moderator of the Presbytery for the following year.

C. Moderator of the Presbytery Leadership Team

Ordinarily, upon completion of his/her term, the Moderator of Presbytery shall be nominated as Moderator of the Presbytery Leadership Team for the following year.

The Moderator of Presbytery Leadership Team shall moderate all Leadership Team meetings and perform other such duties as requested by the Leadership Team of Presbytery.

D. Stated Clerk

The Stated Clerk shall be a ruling elder or teaching elder nominated for election by a representative committee and elected at a Stated or Called Meeting of Presbytery for a three-year term (G-3.0104). He/she is eligible for re-election to an indefinite number of terms. An annual performance and compensation review shall be conducted by the Administration and Finance committee.

1. Duties

The duties of the Stated Clerk are those defined in the Book of Order, and others stipulated by the Presbytery Manual of Operations and Stated Clerk job description.

E. Recording Clerk

A Recording Clerk may be appointed by the Stated Clerk. His/her duties shall be to record the minutes of the meetings of the Presbytery and to assist the Stated Clerk as desired.

- F. Treasurer
The Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee shall serve as the treasurer of the Presbytery.
1. Report formal records of all Presbytery financial transactions.
 2. Provide financial reports for each Stated Meeting of Presbytery, and for General Assembly as required, with a full financial report of the previous year to a Stated Meeting of Presbytery.
 3. To arrange for the payment of authorized expense vouchers.
 4. Receive per capita funds from local churches and make sure that the General Assembly and Synod portions are remitted accordingly

2. ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF.

Presbytery may from time to time employ additional staff to support particular mission and program needs. All staff are accountable to Presbytery through the Administration and Finance committee.

3. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Presbytery Leadership Team shall constitute the Board of Trustees (G-4.0101).

V. Organization

1. CLUSTERS

Clusters are used by the Presbytery to facilitate the carrying out of our vision of support, nurture, and equipping of congregations and members of the Presbytery. Each cluster under the leadership of a cluster moderator will consider opportunities to bring people in geographical close proximity together on a regular basis to build relationships and carry out the responsibilities outlined in the manual of operations and Presbytery policies.

A. Regions and Congregations

1. Northeast: First PC, Tucumcari; First PC, Clovis; Westminster PC, Clovis; and First PC, Portales
2. Southeast: First PC, Lovington; First PC, Hobbs; First PC, Carlsbad; First PC, Roswell; and Westminster PC, Roswell
3. Central: First PC, Ruidoso; Ancho Community PC; Corona United PC; First PC, Nogal; and First PC, Alamogordo
4. West: Santa Teresa PC; First PC, Las Cruces; First PC, Deming; and La Inglesia del Pueblo (NCD)

- B. **Membership**
The membership of the Presbytery cluster is open to all individuals within the cluster who are willing to share ideas and concerns, nurture and support relationships, and look for opportunities to equip and develop mission and ministry.
1. All Teaching Elders within the region of the cluster.
 2. Members of cluster congregations.
 3. Members of other worshipping communities (Presbytery women, men, youth).
- C. **Gatherings**
Clusters will gather at least 4 times a year to build community, support and nurture one another in ministry, and plan cluster wide events such as worship and joint mission projects in their region of the Presbytery.
- D. **Other Duties**
1. Work with the member of the cluster on Commission on Ministry to conduct triennial visits with each session and teaching elder in the cluster.
 2. Work with the member of the cluster on the Committee on Representation and Nomination in finding and recommending Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders to serve in the various leadership positions of the presbytery.
 3. Work with the member of the cluster on the Mission Committee to identify, promote and support Presbytery mission projects.

2. **PERMANENT COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS**

- Presbytery Leadership Team
- Commission on Ministry (COM)
- Committee on Representation and Nominations (CoRN)
- The Administration and Finance Committee
- Mission Coordination Committee
- Presbytery Judicial Commission

A. **Presbytery Leadership Team**

1. The Presbytery Leadership Team shall oversee the work of the Presbytery. Its responsibilities shall be to recommend and assist the Presbytery in administering a strategic plan, including the coordination of all agencies needed for the work of the Presbytery, the planning of the agenda of the Presbytery meetings, and develop plans for new worshipping communities. Other responsibilities shall be defined in the Presbytery Manual of Operations.
2. The members of the Presbytery Leadership Team shall be the Moderator of the Presbytery Leadership Team, the Moderator of Presbytery, Moderator elect of Presbytery, and the Moderator of each Cluster. The Presbytery Leadership Team shall also include as an advisory member the Stated Clerk.

- B. Commission on Ministry
The Commission on Ministry is to act as counselor, pastor, and advisor to teaching elders and congregations of the Presbytery and to guide, nurture, and oversee those in the process of discerning a call to and preparing for ministry as teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (G-3.0307).
1. The membership of this commission shall consist of nine (9) members with at least one Teaching Elder and one Ruling Elder from each cluster to serve in three year terms in rotating classes. Members shall be ineligible to serve more than two consecutive terms or portions thereof.
 2. The responsibilities of this commission are those defined in the Book of Order, and others stipulated by the Presbytery Manual of Operations.
- C. Committee on Representation and Nomination (CoRN)
CoRN is responsible to carry out constitutional responsibilities defined in the Book of Order and the Manual of Operations.
1. The total membership shall consist of five (5) members with as equal as possible numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders to serve two-year terms in rotating classes. There shall be at least one member from each geographical cluster. Members shall be ineligible to serve more than three consecutive terms or portions thereof.
 2. The responsibilities of this committee are those defined in the Book of Order, and others stipulated by the Presbytery Manual of Operations.
- D. The Administration and Finance Committee
The Administration and Finance Committee shall prepare and present an annual budget to the Presbytery Leadership Team, recommend per capita assessment amounts, and make evaluation of staff relationship and effectiveness.
1. The total membership shall consist of five (5) members with as equal as possible numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders to serve two-year terms in rotating classes. There shall be at least one member from each geographical cluster. Members shall be ineligible to serve more than three consecutive terms or portions thereof.
 2. The responsibilities of this committee are those defined in the Book of Order, and others stipulated by the Presbytery Manual of Operations.
- F. Mission Coordination Committee
The Mission Coordination Committee shall develop criteria for mission priorities and the allocation of mission dollars. The criteria and priorities shall be presented to the Presbytery annually for its approval.
1. The total membership shall consist of five (5) members with as equal as possible numbers of ruling elders and teaching elders to serve two-year terms in rotating classes. There shall be at least one member from each geographical cluster. Members shall be ineligible to serve more than three consecutive terms or portions thereof.

2. The responsibilities of this committee are stipulated by the Presbytery Manual of Operations

G. **Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC)**

The PJC is responsible to carry out its responsibilities as defined in Book of Order (D - 5.0000).

1. The membership shall be composed of members as indicated in the Book of Order (D - 5.0000).
2. The responsibilities of the Permanent Judicial Commission are those defined in the Book of Order (D – 5.0000).

3. MANUAL OF OPERATIONS/HANDBOOK

Each cluster and permanent committee shall maintain a written Manual of Operations/Handbook, if necessary for conducting its work, which contains its internal organization, and its Presbytery and internal policies, forms, and procedures used in its work. Such Manuals/Handbooks shall be reviewed by the cluster or permanent committee for which it is written and adopted by the Presbytery a minimum of every six (6) years.

4. COMMISSIONERS TO OTHER COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH

A. **Synod of the Southwest**

1. Teaching elder and ruling elder commissioners to the Synod of the Southwest will be nominated by the Committee of Representation and Nominations and elected ordinarily at the April stated meeting. In the event a Synod commissioner is unable to serve, the Moderator of Presbytery may appoint a replacement to serve until the following stated Presbytery meeting.
2. Classes and terms of service will be arranged by the Committee on Representations and Nominations.
3. Ordinarily, terms of service begin with the Annual meeting of the Synod which is held in October and end when a successor's term begins.
4. The Committee on Representation and Nominations will maintain lists of persons who have served as Synod Commissioners and alternates in the past, and will seek over time to ensure that persons from the four (4) geographic areas of the Presbytery have opportunity to participate in the work of the Synod.

B. **General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

1. The full number of teaching elder and ruling elder commissioners permitted in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), one (1) teaching elder alternate, and one (1) ruling elder alternate, and one (1) Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) and alternate to the General Assembly will be nominated by the Committee of Representation and Nominations and elected at the September stated meeting of the year prior to when General Assembly meets. The Moderator of Presbytery may appoint a commissioner to

General Assembly in the event an elected commissioner and his or her alternate are unable to serve.

5. ECUMENICAL REALTIONSHPIS

- A. New Mexico Conference of Churches
- B. Ecclesiastical Relationships
- C. The “Synod of the Permian Basin”: An informal term for the partnership of Sierra Blanca Presbytery with the neighboring presbyteries of Tres Rios and Palo Duro (not presbyteries within our Synod). The relationships exist for the conduct of mutual programming and planning which benefits all three presbyteries and strengthens the life of the Presbyterian Church in this region.

6. COVENANT RELATIONSHIPS

The Presbytery may occasionally establish a covenant relationship with institutions within its bounds which are related to the Presbytery or the Presbyterian Church (USA), and which conduct work consistent with the mission goals of the Presbytery. The Presbytery Leadership Team shall arrange for periodic review and annual renewal of such covenants.

- A. Retirement Ranches of New Mexico
- B. Prairie Meadows, Inc.
 - (1) As an addition to Retirement Ranches of New Mexico, Prairie Meadows also has a covenant relationship with the Presbytery.
 - (2) The Bylaws of Prairie Meadows, Inc. were approved at the September, 2006 Presbytery Meeting, contingent upon the condition that one member of their Board of Directors be a member of the Presbytery.

VI. Amendments and Suspension

1. AMENDMENTS

- A. Standing Rules

The Standing Rules may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members of Presbytery present and voting at any stated or called meeting of Presbytery, provided that the precise wording of a proposed amendment has been given in writing two weeks before the meeting.
- B. The Manual of Operations

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

2. SUSPENDING

The Standing Rules and Manual of Operations may be temporarily suspended at any Stated Meeting of Presbytery by a two-thirds vote of the members of Presbytery present and voting.

MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

I. Introduction

The Presbytery of Sierra Blanca is a community formed by God, a family of congregations given to one another for mutual support of our common life in which we share the Good News of the Risen Christ. It is so even as it is an ecclesiastical unit in the wider church, council of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the key link in that inter-related system.

The Presbytery has as its primary task the development and support of faithful congregations. Sessions and congregations are the primary mission agent in the world. Presbytery is a support system for that reality – enabling congregations to carry out their mission, and carrying out on their behalf that which we choose to do, or must do, corporately. In these times that implies the education and training of both youth and adults in Reformed faith that is historically informed and Biblically grounded and relevant to the current opportunities. It implies the raising of children in healthy communities of faith where they learn from the cradle the ways of Jesus and the ways of the people of God. It implies the commitment of a local church to its community with a passion for justice and a love for God’s world.

In one sense the mission field is once again right on our doorstep, just as it was in the apostolic church. In another sense we are in uncharted territory, where human communities face ethical dilemmas with no parallel in Biblical stories and un-imagined by ancestral saints who crafted our historical theology. And yet the Apostle Paul assures us that there is never need to fear, for there is “nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The intention of the plan for Presbytery’s organization is that it be both ordered and flexible, that the Presbytery may respond quickly to the winds of grace, the movement of the Spirit. These are times when things are changing very quickly indeed, times when we ought to hold fast to what is good, and yet be light on our feet for God.

II. ORGANIZATION

All clusters, committees and commissions are to be guided by the mission and priorities of the Presbytery. To realize our mission and priorities as a community of congregations, God requires us to commit to:

1. Pray for and encourage one another in our mission efforts
2. Develop new models of mission and mission support
3. Enhance communication within and among congregations
4. Conduct regular and appropriate assessment and evaluation to identify and build upon existing strengths
5. Facilitate necessary programs and opportunities for leadership development and spiritual growth
6. Exercise faithful stewardship of resources and facilities

1. CLUSTERS

The Presbytery is divided geographically into Presbytery clusters and these Presbytery clusters are specifically organized to:

- provide opportunities for friendship and mutual support among clergy and lay persons within each Presbytery cluster;
- enhance communication within the Presbytery;

- implement projects and programs that better fit a smaller geographic area including an annual officers' training event;
- encourage members to share with one another the successes and difficulties of their particular ministry;
- facilitate education and support within the cluster and Presbytery;
- develop opportunities to share in mission and ministry;

A. ACCOUNTABILITY TO PRESBYTERY

The Presbytery clusters are accountable to the Presbytery through reports to the Presbytery Leadership Team.

B. ASSIGNMENT OF CHURCHES TO GEOGRAPHICAL CLUSTERS

All the churches within the bounds of Sierra Blanca Presbytery will be a part of one of the four geographical Presbytery clusters which will consist of the following churches:

1. Northeast: First PC, Tucumcari, First PC, Clovis, Westminster PC, Clovis, and First PC, Portales
2. Southeast: First PC, Lovington, First PC, Hobbs, First PC, Carlsbad, First PC, Roswell, and Westminster PC, Roswell
3. Central: First PC, Ruidoso, Ancho Community PC, Corona United PC, First PC, Nogal, and First PC, Alamogordo
4. West: Santa Teresa PC, First PC, Las Cruces, First PC, Deming, La Inglesia del Pueblo (NCD)

C. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Presbytery cluster is open to any and all in the cluster who would share ideas and concerns, nurture and support the relationships, and look for opportunities to equip and develop mission and ministry.

1. All Teaching Elders within the region of the cluster.
2. Members of cluster congregations
3. Members of other worshipping communities groups (Preaching Points, Presbytery women, men, youth).

D. CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENTS

If there is a church which believes its assignment to a Presbytery cluster is inappropriate, it may petition the Presbytery Leadership Team to be assigned to another Presbytery cluster.

E. GATHERINGS OF CLUSTERS

There shall be no less than four gatherings of clusters per year.

F. **CLUSTER MODERATOR**

Each Presbytery cluster will be convened and led by its Moderator. The Moderator of each cluster will be nominated by the Committee on Representation and Nomination with consultation of the cluster and elected by the Presbytery at the September Presbytery meeting. The term of the Moderator is for one year (January through December) and is able to be elected for one additional year. No one shall serve more than two years consecutively.

G. **Other Duties**

1. Work with the member of the cluster on Commission on Ministry to conduct triennial visits with each session and teaching elders in the cluster.
2. Work with the member of the cluster on the Committee on Representation and Nomination in finding and recommending Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders to serve in the various leadership positions of the Presbytery.
3. Work with the member of the cluster on the Mission Committee to identify, promote and support Presbytery mission projects.

2. PERMANENT COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

- Presbytery Leadership Team
- The Commission on Ministry (COM)
- The Committee on Representation and Nominations (CoRN)
- The Administration and Finance Committee
- Mission Coordination Committee
- Presbytery Judicial Commission (PJC)

A. **Presbytery Leadership Team**

1. Purpose: To coordinate and carry out the work of presbytery between meetings as empowered by the Presbytery, and to act as the Trustees of the Presbytery.
2. Membership: Leadership Team Moderator, Moderator of Presbytery, Moderator-elect of Presbytery, and Moderator of each geographical cluster. No one shall serve more than 6 years consecutively

ex-officio member: Stated Clerk

3. Meetings: Presbytery Leadership Team will ordinarily meet three weeks prior to each stated Presbytery meeting, plus any other meetings the Presbytery Leadership Team moderator may choose to call.

4. Responsibilities:
 - (a) Lead the presbytery in planning, evaluating, and visioning its ministry.
 - (b) Authorizing task forces and working groups.
 - (c) Arranging for reporting and interpretation of the ministries of the cluster.
 - (d) Oversight of the employed staff on behalf of Presbytery through the Administration and Finance Committee.
 - (e) Developing a budget through the Administrative and Finance Committee .
 - (f) Planning the agenda and dockets of Presbytery, including provision for appropriate services of worship.
 - (g) Monitoring the relationship between Presbytery and institutions having covenant relationships with the Presbytery.

As Trustees of Presbytery, the Presbytery Leadership Team will:

- (h) Receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property and to manage the civil affairs of the Presbytery in a manner directed by the Presbytery.
 - (i) Report annually to Presbytery on matters of its financial and incorporated life.
 - (j) Make periodic surveys of local church properties as to condition, encumbrances, insurance coverage, and matters of a similar nature.
 - (k) Make all reports, take all actions, and exercise all power granted by the New Mexico Non-Profit Corporation Act, providing the exercise of such authority does not contravene any provision of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) or the articles of incorporation or Standing Rules of Presbytery.
 - (l) Provide appropriate insurance coverage for Presbytery and its properties, including directors, officers, and liability coverage.
5. Moderator of the Leadership Team: The Moderator of the Leadership Team shall ordinarily be the immediate past moderator of Presbytery and is elected by the Presbytery.

B. The Commission on Ministry (COM)

1. Purpose: To act as counselor, pastor, and advisor to teaching elders and congregations of the Presbytery and to guide, nurture, and oversee those in the process of discerning a call to and preparing for ministry as teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders (G-3.0307) in ways that support the Presbytery's mission statement and its common life.

As a Commission of the Presbytery, the COM shall elect their own officers, shall meet bi-monthly for regularly Stated Meetings as well at the call of the Moderator and shall report through the Leadership Team to Presbytery. Presbytery's Stated Clerk shall serve as an advisory member to the Commission on Ministry. The Moderator shall be responsible for the date, place and agenda for each meeting, including the one at which a new Moderator is to be elected. The Moderator shall also be responsible for orienting new members and the oversight of Commission's expenditures.

2. Membership: There shall be nine (9) members as equal as possible numbers of Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders to serve three-year terms in rotating classes. Each cluster shall be represented by at least one teaching elder and one ruling elder. Members shall be ineligible to serve more than two consecutive terms or portions thereof.
3. Responsibilities:
With regard to the responsibilities assigned to this commission as it relates to teaching elders, ruling elders commissioned to particular service, certified Christian educators, and for relations with the Presbytery's congregations. Detailed guidelines are contained in the most recent version of the PC(USA)Advisory Handbook for Ministry Committees/Commissions, Office of Vocation.
 - (a) Consult regularly with each teaching elder of Presbytery, report to Presbytery annually the type of work in which each teaching elder is engaged, and require an annual report from every teaching elder performing work not under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery or a higher council of the church;
 - (b) Assist churches through the call process and vacancy period;
 - (c) Examine and receive teaching elders desiring to become members of the Presbytery; provided all such actions be reported to the next stated meeting of Presbytery;
 - (d) Examine and present candidates for the ordered ministry of teaching elder for examination before the Presbytery;
 - (e) Approve calls for the services of teaching elders that are found in order; provided all such actions be reported to the next stated meeting of Presbytery;
 - (f) Make recommendations to the Presbytery regarding calls for services of candidates for the ordered ministry of teaching elder;

- (g) Visit with each session of the Presbytery at least once every 3 years, discussing with them the mission and ministry of their congregation and encouraging their participation as session and congregation in the life and work of the Presbytery and the larger church;
- (h) Assistance with churches that are in conflict or other forms of distress;
- (i) To dissolve pastoral relationships in cases where the congregation and pastor concur, and to dismiss ministers to other presbyteries, provided all such actions be reported to the next stated meeting of Presbytery;
- (j) To implement Presbytery's Policy on Sexual Misconduct ;
- (k) To nurture, shepherd, and direct ruling elders seeking to be commissioned in accordance with the policy of Commissioned Ruling Elder;
- (l) Coordinate educational events for ruling elders desiring to become commissioned ruling elders;
- (m) To examine Elder candidates for the position of Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) and present the Elder candidates for examination before Presbytery;
- (n) Grant permission to Labor inside/outside the bounds of Presbytery; issue a Call for a Special Meeting of Presbytery to act on Pastoral Calls and/or Membership of candidates to the ordered ministry of teaching elder; and dismiss teaching elders to other presbyteries; provided all such actions be reported to the next stated meeting of Presbytery;

With regard to the responsibilities assigned to this commission as it guides, nurtures, and oversees those preparing for the ordered ministry of teaching elder. Detailed guidelines are contained in the most recent version of the Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), office of vocation.

- (o) To nurture Inquirers investigating a vocational call;
- (p) To nurture, shepherd and direct Candidates under care of Presbytery;
- (q) To prepare Candidates under care for the trials of ordination;
- (r) To communicate regularly with Candidates, and conduct annual reviews;
- (s) To assist Candidates in managing the financial costs of theological education;
- (t) To report directly to Presbytery when recommending Inquirer and Candidate status;
- (u) Provide one committee member, and another as alternate, to serve on the General Assembly Committee on Reading of Ordination Exams on an annual basis.

- C. The Committee on Representation and Nominations (CoRN)
The Committee on Representation and Nominations will carry out the purposes described in the Book of Order G-3.0103
1. Purpose: To advise the Presbytery with respect to its membership, Committees, and Commissions in order to implement the principles of participation and inclusiveness so as to ensure fair and effective representation in the decision making of the church. To seek persons for leadership who are committed to Christ as well as to the Presbyterian Church (USA) and whose gifts meet the requirements of the particular ministry that is needed in the position to which they are to be nominated.
 2. Membership: There shall be five (5) members with equal numbers as possible of Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders to serve two-year terms in rotating classes. Each Cluster shall be represented by at least one member. Members shall be ineligible to serve more than three consecutive terms or portions thereof.
 3. Moderator: Elected from among the elected members of the committee.
 4. Responsibilities:
 - (a) To nominate persons to fill all the vacancies that require election or nomination by the presbytery, including commissioners to Synod, General Assembly, and the New Mexico Conference of Churches.
 - (b) To provide to the Stated Clerk the correct full names, mailing address, phone number, and Email address of those nominated.
 - (c) To ensure the Presbytery reflects its commitment to the inclusiveness of its constituency through those elected to leadership.
 - (d) To inform the Presbytery of its progress toward fair representation of the rich diversity within its membership.
- D. Administration and Finance Committee
The Administration and Finance Committee will carry out the oversight of Presbytery finances, staff and policies that relate to personnel and finance
1. Committee Membership: There shall be five (5) members with equal numbers as possible of Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders to serve two-year terms in rotating classes. Each cluster shall be represented by at least one member. Members shall be ineligible to serve more than three consecutive terms or portions thereof.
 2. Moderator: Elected from among the elected members of the committee, the moderator shall normally represent the Presbytery on the Synod Budget and Finance Committee. The Moderator shall serve as the Treasurer of the Presbytery.

3. Responsibilities include:
 - (a) To prepare Tentative Budget and an Annual Budget (the Tentative Budget will be submitted to the Presbytery at its September Meeting for information; the Final Budget will be submitted to the January Presbytery Meeting for approval. Both budgets are to be reviewed by the Presbytery Leadership Team.
 - (b) To represent Presbytery in all budget preparations and negotiations;
 - (c) To recommend to Presbytery the Per Capita Apportionment required to support the administrative expenses portion of the Presbytery Budget;
 - (d) To recommend to Presbytery the Mileage Allowance to be paid by Presbytery for those traveling on Presbytery business;
 - (e) To develop an Investment Strategy for the Presbytery and to oversee its implementation;
 - (f) To oversee and ensure management of Presbytery-owned properties and covenant relationship;
 - (g) To be responsible for the accounting records of Presbytery, along with procedures for internal control, insurance, financial reporting, governmental reporting, arranging for financial review or audit, taxes, and deeds;
 - (h) To periodically review the status of Presbytery accounts and statements of income and expenses, budget variance, balance sheet, and other financial instruments.
 - (i) To have oversight of the Staff of Presbytery, including conducting Annual Reviews of such Staff;
 - (j) To implement, on behalf of Presbytery, any Personnel Policies which the Presbytery may have.

E. Mission Coordination Committee

The Mission Coordination Committee will facilitate the mission priorities for the Presbytery.

1. Committee Membership: There shall be five (5) members with equal as possible numbers of Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders to serve two-year terms in rotating classes. Each cluster shall be represented by at least one member. Members shall be ineligible to serve more than three consecutive terms or portions thereof.
2. Moderator: Elected from amongst the elected members of the committee.
3. Responsibilities:
 - (a) To develop funding criteria for mission priorities and the allocation of mission dollars

- (b) To present the criteria and priorities to the presbytery annually at its September stated meeting
- (c) To inform congregations of mission needs and opportunities, including the financial support of the mission of the Presbytery and other church councils
- (d) To identify and facilitate opportunities for congregations to collaborate in mission
- (e) To coordinate the mission of congregations and the Presbytery with resources and needs beyond the jurisdiction of the Presbytery (e.g., PDA, Red Cross, Volunteers in Mission)
- (f) To interpret the world-wide mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to the Presbytery and its constituent churches
- (g) To invite the Presbytery to celebrate the mission accomplishments of congregations
- (h) To provide opportunity through the committee for communication from Presbyterian Women at meetings of the Presbytery

F. The Permanent Judicial Commission

The Permanent Judicial Commission will fulfill the requirements of the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) regarding provision for judicial processes.

1. Membership: Seven (7) members, teaching and ruling elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible, elected to terms of six (6) years, in three (3) classes as nearly equal as possible and with no more than one half of the members to be in one class. Not more than one (1) ruling elder member may be from any one (1) church. Any vacancy due to resignation, death, or any other cause may be filled by the Presbytery at any stated meeting by election of a person to fill the unexpired term. Members are not eligible for reelection until after four (4) years have elapsed.
The Stated Clerk shall resource the Permanent Judicial Commission
2. Commission Officers and Organization: A Moderator and a Clerk elected by the Commission from its members.
3. Responsibilities: As specified in the Rules of Discipline.

III. OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

1. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH

- A. Synod of the Southwest - The Presbytery of Sierra Blanca is a member presbytery of the Synod of the Southwest and our relationship is guided by G-3.0302 the current Bylaws and Standing Rules of the Synod, and the current plans for implementation of those recommendations approved by the Synod of the Synod Review Task Force.
- B. General Assembly- The Presbytery of Sierra Blanca is a member Presbytery of the General Assembly of the PC(USA) and our relationship is guided by G-3.0302

2. ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

A. New Mexico Conference of Churches

1. The Presbytery is a member judicatory of the Conference.
2. The Presbytery's Committee of Representation and Nominations is responsible for nominating persons whom the Presbytery will elect to fill positions to which the Presbytery is entitled on the Board of the Conference, as well as Commissioners to its Annual Assembly.
3. The Stated Clerk represents Presbytery as the chief judicatory officer, but may appoint a ruling elder or teaching elder to serve as "deputy" in the Stated Clerk's stead.

B. Ecclesiastical Relationships

1. To support ecclesiastical relationships under "A Formula of Agreement" as found in Appendix C of the Book of Order, this agreement celebrates "On Entering Into Full Communion On the Basis of A Common Calling" between the following Churches: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ.
2. To minister in accordance with "A Statement of Ecumenical Consensus" as found in Visible Marks of Churches Uniting in Christ, Appendix D of the Book of Order.
3. To minister in accordance with Chapter Five (Ecumenicity and Union) in the Book of Order).

C. The "Synod of the Permian Basin"

An informal term for the partnership of Sierra Blanca Presbytery with the neighboring presbyteries of Tres Rios and Palo Duro (not presbyteries within our Synod). The relationships exist for the conduct of mutual programming and planning which benefits all three presbyteries and strengthens the life of the Presbyterian Church in this region.

3. COVENANT RELATIONSHIPS

The Presbytery may occasionally establish a covenant relationship with institutions within its bounds which are related to the Presbytery or the Presbyterian Church (USA), and which conduct work consistent with the mission goals of the Presbytery. The Presbytery Council shall arrange for periodic review and annual renewal of such covenants.

IV. PRESBYTERY SUPPORT TEAM

1. PURPOSE

To respond to needs that may arise on behalf of the Presbytery that requires speedy action. Such needs could occur between meetings of Presbytery Leadership Team or the Commission on Ministry.

2. MEMBERSHIP

Moderator of COM, Moderator of Presbytery Leadership Team, Moderator of Presbytery, Stated Clerk.
Backup Members: Moderator-elect of Presbytery, Moderators of the geographical clusters.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

To respond to phone call conferences, emails, or quickly-called ©Skpe or ©GoToMeeting conferences regarding the need for a decision, response to a personal crisis for one of our Sessions or Ministers, or response to a crisis in one of our congregations.

4. REPORTS

The decisions made by this Support Team shall be ratified by the Presbytery Leadership Team and reported to the Presbytery by the Stated Clerk.

V. COMMUNICATION

Presbytery will maintain regular communication with Presbytery congregations through various means, including: website, ©Facebook and electronic communication.

Congregations are encouraged to make good use of modern communication methods.

VI. STATED CLERK

1. STATED CLERK

The Stated Clerk shall be a ruling elder or teaching elder nominated for election by presbytery's Committee on Representation and Nominations and elected at the fall Stated Meeting for a three-year term (G-3.0104). He/she is eligible for re-election to an indefinite number of terms. An annual performance and compensation review shall be conducted by the Administration and Finance Committee.

- A. Act as parliamentarian for meetings of Presbytery.
- B. Record the actions of the Presbytery, present for approval the minutes of previous Presbytery meetings, and circulate these minutes for action at the next Presbytery meeting. Review, edit, and approve the work of the Recording Clerk (if used).
- C. Work with the Presbytery Leadership Team, the Moderator, and other Presbytery staff to prepare an agenda for meetings of Presbytery, and to communicate the agenda, time, and place for meetings of Presbytery to all churches and individuals as appropriate.
- D. Present all matters sent to the Clerk for Presbytery action.
- E. Ascertain the presence of a quorum and record voting members present, and those speaking as well as others attending.
- F. Notify members of their appointments, and such other duties as Presbytery may assign.
- G. Attend meetings of the Presbytery Leadership Team without vote (unless elected to another position on the Leadership Team) and record proceedings of Leadership Team meetings.
- H. Work with the Leadership Team Moderator to prepare an agenda, communicating time and place of Leadership Team meetings to its members.
- I. Represent the Presbytery in an advisory capacity on the Committee on Representation and Nomination and the Commission on Ministry.

- J. Attend meetings of the General Assembly, Stated Clerk’s Association, and other polity meetings offered by the denomination.
- K. Keep the Presbytery rolls of membership and attendance. Preserve Presbytery records, and furnish extracts from these records when required by another council of the church.
- L. To lead in Session Clerk Training and review of Session Records, reporting the results at the next presbytery meeting.
- M. Maintain communication with Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly.
- N. Provide information as needed to Investigating Committees, Administrative Commissions, Permanent Judicial Commissions, and other agencies which have a right to such information.
- O. Maintain a record of the Stated Clerk’s office expenditures.

VI. REVIEW OF SESSION RECORDS

1. RESPONSIBILITIES AND GUIDELINES

The responsibility for this regular review process lies with the Stated Clerk of Presbytery in accordance with the guidelines below:

A. Location and Calendar:

1. Reviews will be held in the following locations:

- (a) Location A – First Clovis: First PC, Clovis; Westminster PC, Clovis; First PC, Portales; and First PC, Tucumcari;
- (b) Location B – First PC, Roswell; First PC, Hobbs; First PC, Lovington; First PC, Roswell; Westminster PC, Roswell; First PC, Carlsbad;
- (c) Location C – First PC, Ruidoso; First PC, Ruidoso; First PC, Alamogordo; First PC, Nogal; Ancho Community PC; and Corona United PC;
- (d) Location D – First PC, Las Cruces; First PC, Deming; Santa Teresa PC; and First PC, Las Cruces.

2. Calendar:

- (a) Location A – February
- (b) Location B – October
- (c) Location C – August
- (d) Location D – May

B. Review Procedure:

1. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery will oversee the process for the Review of Session Records, which include the Session Minute Book and the Session Church Register and report the results at the next Presbytery meeting.
2. The Records will be reviewed by the gathering of the Session Clerks in geographical groups as indicated above. The Stated Clerk will be present at each of the Locations, assisting the Session Clerks and managing the review, such that a Session Clerk will review the minutes of another Session, and not those of his/he own Session.
3. Electronically transmitted Minutes are permitted, provided there are means to download and/or copy the Minutes beforehand, or at the location for the review. Copies of Minutes will also be accepted, as well as copies of the Church Register pages, when relevant.
4. Included with the review of records will be some training of Session Clerks by the Stated Clerk, along with discussion of questions brought to the review by Session Clerks.
5. The Stated Clerk will report the results of the Review of Records as part of the Report of the Stated Clerk at meetings of Presbytery.