

What are the responsibilities of a presbytery?

- The **government** of the church throughout its district
 - **Assisting & supporting** the witness of CONGREGATIONS to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that congregations become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness
- ❖ “The congregation is the church engaged in the mission of God in its particular context.” (*Book of Order, G-1.0101*)

How shall we organize Albany Presbytery in order to
ASSIST & SUPPORT OUR CONGREGATIONS
to engage in the mission of God
in their particular contexts?

SOME REALIZATIONS

- No organized structure will be perfect.
- Our Presbytery has both a formal AND an informal structure.
- We are living in a time of declining membership and tightening resources.

- Our structure will need to be flexible, adaptable, responsible, and accessible.
- We would like to be more relational, more connectional, and more missional.

- In order to be successful, our structure—*formal & informal*—will need to foster
FELLOWSHIP, TRUST, & LOVE.
(See G-1.0102)

SOME QUESTIONS

- How well is our current structure working?
Are we meeting our responsibilities effectively as a presbytery?
- Do we need to make “minor repairs” to our current structure? Or, do we need a “major overhaul”?

➤ The new Form of Government describes the responsibilities and powers of a presbytery (see G-3.03), but it no longer prescribes how a presbytery will carry out these responsibilities (for example, a Committee on Ministry is no longer required). Some presbyteries delegate their powers to committees & commissions (see G-3.0106).

→ Would this option work in Albany Presbytery? With what responsibilities?

- A presbytery is required to meet twice a year. We currently meet 5 times a year. Our meetings are a combination of business, fellowship, learning, and worship. Some Presbytery members favor meetings that deal mainly with business. Other members prefer more time for learning and fellowship.
 - How many times should the Presbytery meet?
 - What should Presbytery meetings be like?
 - Should there be two types of meetings—one for business and another for fellowship & learning?

OUR CURRENT STRUCTURE

MEETINGS: At least 4 times per year for business, worship, learning, fellowship

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Moderator, Vice Moderator, Stated Clerk, Executive Staff

PRESBYTERY ORGANIZATION:

A. **The Presbytery Council**—is a *visioning and coordinating* body with a primary responsibility to discern how God is at work in Albany Presbytery, what God wants the members of Albany Presbytery and its churches to do in the future, and to develop a strategy for following that vision.

B. **Council Commitees:**

Personnel Stewardship & Mission Interpretation Worship Task Force

Peacemaking Task Force Disaster Response Task Force (recently dismissed)

Mission Trip Scholarship Team Youth of Albany Presbytery (recently dismissed)

Guatemala Task Force

C. **Presbytery Committees:**

Committee on Ministry Committee on Preparation for Ministry

Committee on Nominations Committee on Representation

Committee on Self-Development of People

D. **Permanent Judicial Commission**

E. Board of Trustees

➔ Modify the current structure by giving commissioned powers to certain committees

A MENU OF OPTIONS

MEETINGS: How many meetings? (2 are required)

What kind of meetings? For business? For learning? For fellowship?

COMMITTEES & COMMISSIONS: How many? With what responsibilities and powers?

Councils may designate by their own rule such committees and commissions as they deem necessary and helpful for the accomplishment of the mission of the church.

A **committee** shall study and recommend action or carry out decisions already made by a council. It shall make a full report to the council that created it, and its recommendations shall require action by that body.

A **commission** is empowered to consider and conclude matters referred to it by a council. The designating council shall state specifically the scope of the commission's powers and any restrictions on those powers. [G-3.0109]

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AMONG MEMBERS:

How can we best build relationships among members of the Presbytery?

BUILDING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN CONGREGATIONS:

How can we connect congregations in order to strengthen mutual missions?

OPTION #1

[Fewer Committees with broader responsibilities]

MEETINGS: 6 meetings per year

PRESBYTERY COMMITTEES:

Committee on Ministry

Committee on Preparation

Coordination Committee

Vision Committee

Permanent Judicial Commission

Board of Trustees

*All committees are examples **only**

OPTION #2

[Fewer committees with larger memberships, broader responsibilities & commissioned powers]

MEETINGS: 3 meetings per year for business; most regular business taken care of by commissions

PRESBYTERY COMMITTEES:

Committee on Ministry

Committee on Preparation

Coordination Committee

Vision Committee

Permanent Judicial Commission

Board of Trustees

*All committees are examples **only**

OPTION #3

*[More committees with smaller memberships and narrower responsibilities;
with or without commissioned powers]*

MEETINGS: 2 meetings per year for business; most regular business taken care of by commissions; additional “meetings” for worship, fellowship, and learning

PRESBYTERY COMMITTEES:

Pastoral Relationships
Interventions & Difficulties
Preparation for Ministry
Commissioned Ruling Elders
Coordination
Vision
Worship
Budget & Finance
Staff Personnel
New Worshiping Communities
Peacemaking
Disaster Response

*All committees are examples **only**