

**Recommendation** on Plan for Parity between Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders at Presbytery Meetings  
**For Presbytery Approval – May 18, 2019**  
Effective as of the September 21, 2019 Presbytery Meeting

**Important Note** – The revised Standing Rules of the Presbytery of Santa Barbara were approved by the Presbytery at the November 10, 2015 Presbytery meeting and effective January 1, 2016. The amendments made as part of this revision include a change to Section 2 (Members and Meetings) with regard to numerical parity of voting at Presbytery Meetings between Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders. Whereas the prior version of the Standing Rules provided for a minimum of **one** Ruling Elder Commissioner per congregation, the Revised Standing Rules provide for a minimum of **two** Ruling Elder Commissioners per congregation. As a result, this proposal includes new Ruling Elder Commissioner Allocation numbers for congregations, as shown in the chart below.

General Provisions:

G-3.0301 of the Book of Order: THE PRESBYTERY - Composition and Responsibilities.

The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and ministers of the Word and Sacrament within that district. *The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many ruling elders each session should elect as commissioners to presbytery, with a goal of numerical parity of ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders. This plan shall require each session to elect at least one commissioner and shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103.* Ruling elders elected as officers of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members during the period of their service. A presbytery may enroll, or may provide by its own rule for the enrollment of, ruling elders during terms of elected service to the presbytery or its congregations. (Emphasis added).

Presbytery of Santa Barbara Standing Rules 2.10 MEMBERS:

The members of the Presbytery consist of all teaching elders duly enrolled, ruling elders elected as officers of the Presbytery during their period of service and, at least two ruling elder commissioner elected by church session in accordance with G-3.0202a, and enrolled at a Presbytery meeting, with the following additional provisions: ENROLLED: At a Presbytery meeting, Ruling Elders elected by session as commissioners shall be enrolled as voting member commissioners of the Presbytery upon the filing an enrollment card with the Stated Clerk whereon the person certifies their election. Said card shall comprise the roll of the meeting. Chairs of each standing committee, as well as honorably retired members also have voting rights. Corresponding members may have the privilege to deliberate and advice, but will have no vote. Honorably retired teaching elders who have not attended a meeting of Presbytery in the past year will not be included in establishing a plan for parity between teaching and ruling elders at a meeting of the Presbytery.

**The Stated Clerk recommends that Presbytery approve the following method of correcting any imbalance of Ruling Elder Commissioners to Teaching Elders of the Presbytery at Presbytery Meetings, based on Section 2.10 of the Presbytery Standing Rules and G-3.0301 of the Book of Order:**

The members of the Presbytery shall be:

- A. All teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders duly enrolled and when Presbytery meets, including honorably retired members;
- B. Ruling elders elected as officers of the Presbytery during their period of service;
- C. Chairs of each Standing Committee;
- D. Each church, regardless of the size of the congregation, shall be represented by two ruling elders commissioned by the Session and duly enrolled at the Presbytery Meeting, with the following additional provisions:
  - 1) For churches with membership under 200, no additional ruling elder commissioners
  - 2) For churches with membership of 200-400, one additional ruling elder commissioner
  - 3) For churches with membership of 400-600, two additional ruling elder commissioners
  - 4) For churches with membership over 600, three additional ruling elder commissioners

Annually, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery shall ascertain the number of resident Teaching Elders who are members of Presbytery and the number of Ruling Elders which the churches are entitled to send as commissioners to Presbytery Meetings pursuant to this recommendation. The Stated Clerk shall bring any imbalance to the attention of the Presbytery at its May Stated Meeting.

Application of this Recommendation for Presbytery as of the May 18, 2019, to take effect as of the September 21, 2019 Meeting:

As of May 18, 2019, there are 83 Teaching Elder members of Presbytery, 45 of these are honorably retired. Of these honorably retired members, 8 have actually attended a Presbytery meeting in the past year. In accordance with the Standing Rules, honorably retired teaching elders who have not attended a meeting of Presbytery in the past year will not be included in establishing a plan for parity between teaching and ruling elders at a meeting of the Presbytery:  $45 - 8 = 37$ . This leaves a potential attendance of **46** ( $83 - 37 = 46$ ) Teaching Elders.

RATIONALE for Assignment of Ruling Elder representation to Presbytery. In order to serve compliance with the Book of Order requirement that the size of congregations be considered in determining how many Ruling Elders each Session should elect as commissioners to Presbytery, a method of proportional representation based on membership is recommended in this proposal, as shown in the Chart below. The potential attendance of Teaching Elders per the formula in 2.10 of the Standing Rules (46) compares to the maximum possible Ruling Elder attendance (60).

Objectives: (1) Create an opportunity for parity in numbers of Ruling Elder and Teaching Elder representatives at Presbytery, (2) Follow the Book of Order and Presbytery of Santa Barbara Standing Rules minimum guidelines, (3) Allow each church to have at least two ruling elder representative as required by the Presbytery Standing Rules, while not disenfranchising members in larger churches.

## ALLOCATION OF RULING ELDER COMMISSIONERS FOR 2019, ADJUSTED FOR 9/21/19 PRESBYTERY

A Number of commissioners based on church membership role 12/31/18

B Additional commissioners per recommendation

C Total per church

D Column D shows the ratio of members to commissioners (e.g., 1 commissioner for every 99 members for Newbury Park)

Church	A	B	C	D	
Church	Membership 12/31/18	2 RE Per Church (2.10)	Additional based on Membership	Total	Ratio
Camarillo TAPCVC	29	2	0	2	14
Summerland	61	2	0	2	30
Santa Paula	79	2	0	2	39
Pismo Beach	83	2	0	2	41
Living Hope - Port Hueneme	97	2	0	2	48
Lompoc	99	2	0	2	49
Carpinteria	130	2	0	2	65
Grover Beach	144	2	0	2	72
Oxnard First	155	2	0	2	77
Goleta	159	2	0	2	79
SB St. Andrew's	183	2	0	2	91
Newbury Park	199	2	0	2	99
Nipomo	236	2	1	3	78
San Luis Obispo	277	2	1	3	92
Paso Robles	342	2	1	3	114
SB First	350	2	1	3	116
Thousand Oaks	351	2	1	3	117
Ojai	373	2	1	3	124
Moorpark	380	2	1	3	126
Simi Valley	480	2	2	4	120
<b>Subtotals</b>	4207	40	9	49	
RE Elected Officers of Presbytery*				2	
Commissioned Ruling Elders (Unless Counted as Officer or Chair of Standing Committee)**				7	
Elders Chairs of Standing Comm.***				2	
<b>TOTALS</b>	4207	40	9	60	

\*RE Elected Officers of Presbytery as of September 2019 – 2. Stated Clerk, RE Sandy Thoits; Treasurer, CRE Bonnie Boe

\*\*CRE serving as Committee Chair – CRE Chuck Curtis. CRE Serving as Officer – CRE Bonnie Boe

\*\*\*RE Chairs of Standing Committee – Scott Eschbach (P&F); Tamara Skov (Personnel)