



Welcome to Presbytery!

INFORMATION FOR NEW COMMISSIONERS
PRESBYTERY OF NEWTON

Overview of the Presbyterian Structure

Local

The PRESBYTERY OF Newton consists of 58 congregations in Morris, Warren, Sussex, parts of Hunterdon and Passaic counties. There are just of over 11,000 members with 112 teaching elders (active and retired).

As a mid-council of the church, the Presbytery meets five times per year. The voting membership consists of all ministers and an equal number of elder commissioners (at least one from each church). The Presbytery is responsible for the mission and government through its geographic district.

State

The SYNOD OF THE NORTHEAST consists of 22 presbyteries in New York, New Jersey, and all of New England. There are two Synod meetings each year. Synod membership consists of a representation of teaching and ruling elders from each presbytery. It is responsible for supporting the mission and ministry of a wider regional area.

National

The GENERAL ASSEMBLY is the most inclusive court of the church. It meets bi-annually and its membership consists of a representation of ministers and elders from each presbytery. It is responsible for the total program of the denomination and its budget. The Office of the General Assembly is located in Louisville, Kentucky.

The PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) consists of 1.7 million members in 10,000 congregations within 172 presbyteries and 16 synods across the United States.

Find out more about the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly

Presbytery of Newton – www.newtonpresbytery.org

Synod of the Northeast www.synodne.org

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) www.pcusa.org

2018-2019 Presbytery Officers

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Guidelines for Participating in a Presbytery Meeting

- When speaking at Presbytery, please use the microphone and speak to the Moderator not the assembly.
- Introduce yourself, by stating your name and your church or your position.
- The parliamentary authority is Robert's Rule of Order Newly Revised.
- Motions presented by commissions or committees do not require a second.
- Each speaker during debate has up to three minutes to address the issue to which they are speaking. The moderator may give a 30-second warning, so that speakers may conclude their remarks.
- The moderator will normally alternate between speeches for and against the motion before the assembly.
- The maker of the motion or commission/committee presenter may make the final speech.
- Only enrolled commissioners (ruling elder commissioners, teaching elders, commissioned ruling elders, certified Christian Educators in active service, and ruling elders serving on commissions) are authorized to vote. Corresponding members are entitled to address the Presbytery. Visitors may be invited by the moderator to address the Presbytery.
- Any substantive motion (new, amendment, substitute) made by a commissioner in the assembly must be given to the stated clerk in writing, at the time the motion is made.
- Any new business must be placed in the hands of the stated clerk/parliamentarian prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Parliamentary Procedure

Basic Principles

Parliamentary procedure is designed to facilitate decision-making by groups of people.

Parliamentary procedure balances the expression of individual conscience with the will of the majority. Therefore, parliamentary procedure seeks always to protect the four rights of individual members:

- _the right to know
- _the right to speak
- _the right to vote
- _the right to hold office

Action that affects any of the four rights requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

RULES OF DECORUM

The Moderator must recognize all speakers before they speak.

This includes those rights of speech, which interrupt, including a point of personal privilege or a point of order.

Please stand to be recognized. To interrupt, you may stand and say, "Madam Moderator, I rise to a point of order/personal privilege." Then wait to be officially recognized.

Each person may speak twice on a particular subject. However, you may not speak a second time until everyone who wishes to speak has done so.

(Generally) Allow 3 minutes for remarks. Plan carefully what you intend to say. There is nothing wrong with having some notes to guide you; in fact, notes are encouraged.

Motions

There are some “basics” regarding the making of a motion that it will be helpful for you to understand. The normal procedure is for motions and recommendations to come through specific committees of the Presbytery, but they are also permitted from the floor.

If you make a motion you may speak to that motion (after it has received a second) if you so choose.

Most motions require a second (unless coming from a committee). Some motions may not be debated.

Most motions are adopted by a simple majority vote. The Stated Clerk/Parliamentarian can advise which motions require more than a simple majority, if requested.

Most motions do not bring original business to the floor, but perfect the business at hand so a conclusion may be reached.

There are four types of motions:

THE MAIN MOTION – there can be only one main motion on the floor at any given time.

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS which perfect the main motion and bring the subject at hand to resolution. Subsidiary motions include motions to postpone indefinitely, to amend, to refer etc.

PRIVILEGED MOTIONS which deal with the rights and privileges of the governing body and its members. These motions do not advance the main motion and include motions to call for the “order of the day” [an action that is mandated by the adopted docket to occur at a specific time during the meeting], questions of privilege, or motions to take a recess or to adjourn.

INCIDENTAL MOTIONS which are related to the business at hand. These motions might include points of order, motion to appeal, motions to suspend the rules, and motions relating to methods of voting.

What to expect during a meeting

DEBATE AND ACTION

We'll be making a few decisions that we may need to talk about before we vote - to clarify an issue, share different views, to understand alternatives. Not all actions require debate. Your role is to listen, share in debate as you are spiritually led, and vote your conscience. If you don't understand what is happening, LET THE MODERATOR KNOW.

Stand up and call "Point of Order." We'll take time to see the issue more clearly.

EDUCATION

Being here is an opportunity to learn about our Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Visits from mission volunteers or other guests, educational exercises and activities--those are examples. Your role is to share what you are learning with appropriate groups in your own congregation.

INFORMATION

You will receive lots of information to share with your own Session and church. You will hear committee reports that let you know what the Presbytery is doing. Also, you will hear about presbytery-wide training events, resources, and programs. You'll hear about programs in other congregations that might benefit your own. Your role is to communicate - to pass the good news along to your Session and local leaders.

CELEBRATION OF OUR COMMUNITY

We'll worship and sing at each meeting, pray for each other and for our world, share in the Lord's Supper from time to time, enjoy mealtime fellowship, give thanks for special accomplishments, say "hello" and "goodbye", and just enjoy each other's company.

Presbytery of Newton Teams and Committees

Presbytery Coordinating Team (PCT)

The Presbytery Coordinating Team (PCT) is responsible for: coordinating the work of the Presbytery, continuing to explore vision for the Presbytery's journey, serving as the interpreter for the ministry and mission of the Presbytery, organizing Presbytery meetings: (planning, content and worship), telling our story and providing resources in Stewardship for congregations, preparing the annual budget, encouraging the generosity of congregations, nominating the nominating committee, overseeing matters of personnel in relation to paid and volunteer staff and relating to all other councils of the church.

Presbytery Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for: Matters that deal with Real estate, Historic grants, Loans and loan guarantees, Sale and rental of church property, Manse and church building inspections, Management of the Presbytery's investments, Insurance and risk management and Legal issues as they arise

Emerging Ministry and Mission Co-op – EMMCO

The Emerging Ministry and Mission Co-op: Responsible for credentialing, funding, and evaluating the collaborative efforts of Presbytery's congregations and members who gather in partnerships for ministry and mission.

The Missional Ministry Team - MMT

The Missional Ministry Team: will seek to challenge and nurture congregations that are engaged in transformation and redevelopment, will provide experiences of growth for the leaders of these congregations, will oversee the development of new worshipping communities and will serve as a resource to congregations engaged in developing ministry strategies.

Committee on Preparation for Ministry—CPM

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry nurtures and encourages those who are discerning God's call to ministry as Teaching Elders or Commissioned Ruling Elders.

Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry (COM) nurtures and cares for all minister members of the presbytery (both active and retired), Certified Christian Educators and Commissioned Ruling Elders while they are serving in the presbytery's congregations; the congregations of the Presbytery and parish-pastoral relationships.

Partnerships

A centerpiece to the Presbytery's 2012 Design was to develop and nurture partnerships between congregations, leadership, presbyteries and others in order to support and grow in mission and ministry.

The Presbytery of Newton has several continuing local partnerships along with our traditional partnerships with the Synod of the Northeast and the General Assembly of the PC (USA).

Local Continuing Partnerships

Presbyterian Women
Nairobi Partnership
Blair Academy
Johnsonburg Camp

Emerging Ministry and Mission Co-op

EMMCO works with congregations and leaders to have encourage and nurture partnerships. Presently they offer two types of grants to assist in the development of Partnerships – The Emerging Ministry Partnership Grant and the Peacemaking Grant.

You can learn more about our many partnerships on our website at www.newtonpresbytery.org



GLOSSARY

AMENDMENT: A change that is made in the wording of the original motion.

BOOK OF ORDER: The rules and guidelines under which Presbyterians have agreed to live.

CALL THE QUESTION: When someone thinks they have heard enough discussion and feels ready to vote, he or she can "call the question." At that point, debate stops while a vote is taken on whether the majority is ready to vote.

COMMITTEES OF THE PRESBYTERY: Elders and clergy are elected to committee positions to implement the mission and ministry of the Presbytery.

COMMISSION: A commission is empowered by the presbytery or session to consider and conclude matters on behalf of the presbytery or session. The Presbytery often uses commissions for ordinations and installations, examining teaching elders for membership in the presbytery, receiving candidates under care and for other needed administrative responsibilities.

DEBATE: A discussion of the proposal (motion) that is carefully managed by the Moderator in order to be sure that all sides of the issue are heard.

DOCKET: The listing of things that the presbytery wants to accomplish and the amount of time allotted for each item. If items are not on the docket, you can't talk about them.

MID COUNCIL: A governing body of the church: a Session, Presbytery, a Synod, the General Assembly.

MODERATOR: A person elected to preside over a judicatory of the church. The pastor, called by the congregation, is moderator of the Session. A Ruling or Teaching Elder may be moderator of a mid-council, the Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly.

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH: Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders, Deacons

OVERTURE: A proposal to change the Book of Order. An overture starts at the local level but must be voted on at all levels of the church before it can become a new part of the Book of Order.

POINT OF ORDER: An interruption of the debate process made by someone to ask a question about the process. When someone has called a point of order, all debate stops until the question is answered.

REPORT: The sharing of information of a group or committee within our presbytery.

STATED CLERK: Records everything that happens at a presbytery meeting, keeps records on everything that happens in between presbytery meetings, writes letters and receives letters from other churches, and other organizations in the church. Knows all the rules for discussions at presbytery and answers questions about procedural problems.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: another motion offered to replace a motion being debated. A substitute motion is usually substantially different from the main motion; otherwise, the maker of the motion would simply amend the motion.

VOICE AND VOTE: not everyone at a presbytery meeting can speak and vote on issues. Only those designated as "commissioners" can vote. Permission of the whole presbytery is required for non-commissioners who wish to speak at a meeting.