

1 **Standing Rules**  
2 **of**  
3 **The Synod of the Trinity of**  
4 **The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
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7 **ARTICLE I - THE SYNOD**  
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9 **10.00 Jurisdiction**

10 10.01 The Synod of the Trinity is a council teaching and ruling elders of the Presbyterian  
11 Church (U.S.A.), as defined by the *Book of Order*, comprised of representatives from the  
12 Presbyteries of Beaver-Butler, Carlisle, Donegal, Huntingdon, Kiskiminetas, Lackawanna,  
13 Lake Erie, Lehigh, Northumberland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Redstone, Shenango, Upper  
14 Ohio Valley, Washington, and West Virginia.  
15

16 **10.10 Membership**

17 10.11 The members of the Synod Assembly, both ecclesiastically and corporately, known as  
18 commissioners, shall be elected by each presbytery for three-year terms. Commissioners  
19 may be reelected. However, no commissioner may serve for consecutive terms, either full or  
20 partial, aggregating more than six years. A commissioner having served a total of six  
21 consecutive years shall be ineligible for reelection for a period of at least one year. Each  
22 presbytery shall be represented by one teaching elder and one ruling elder. Commissioner's  
23 terms shall coincide with the calendar year.  
24

25 10.12 The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Synod of the Trinity are committed to and  
26 shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership, and shall provide  
27 means which will assure a greater inclusivity in its life and work. Presbyteries are urged to  
28 strive for an appropriate representation among their commissioners in the same way they  
29 would when securing members for presbytery committees, noting criteria such as male and  
30 female, age, racial ethnicity, and current or previous service to Synod. There shall be six  
31 additional racial ethnic commissioners, elected by their respective presbyteries, upon the  
32 request of Synod's Stated Clerk, in consultation with the Committee on Representation,  
33 selected to ensure compliance with this commitment. The provisions of Paragraph 10.11,  
34 concerning terms, length of service, etc. shall apply to these additional commissioners.  
35

36 10.13. The Moderator of Presbyterian Women of the Synod shall be an ex-officio member of  
37 the Synod with voice and vote.  
38

39 10.14 Synod Staff, Presbytery Executives, shall be ex-officio members with voice but  
40 without vote. Should any of those persons not be ruling or teaching, they shall be invited as  
41 guests with the privilege of the floor.  
42

43 10.15 Annually, all of the Synod's presbyteries may elect a Young Adult Advisory Delegate  
44 (YAAD) between the ages of 17 and 23. The YAADs will have voice, but not vote.  
45

46 **10.20 Meetings and Expenses**

47 10.21 The Synod Assembly may meet in regular session, up to four times per year.  
48 Meetings shall be held in person, or may be held telephonically or digitally as long as all  
49 may fully participate in discussions and voting. The Synod Assembly shall hold an "annual

50 meeting," ordinarily in October, at which time the Moderator and Vice-moderator shall be  
51 elected, installed, and begin their terms of service.

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53 10.22 Special meetings of the Synod Assembly may be called by the Moderator in  
54 accordance with the provisions of the *Form of Government*, G-3.0405. Special meetings of  
55 the Synod Assembly may be held via web conferencing.

56  
57 10.23 The room, board, and travel expenses of commissioners, ex-officio members, and  
58 Young Adult Advisory Delegates to Synod meetings shall be met from the funds provided for  
59 Synod expenses.

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61 10.24 All motions brought before commissioners at meetings of the Synod Assembly, shall  
62 include, at least, the following information: who shall implement the motion, the timing of  
63 when the motion shall be implemented, an estimate of the financial implications, and the  
64 expected source of income for the motion's implementation.

65  
66 10.25 Committees and/or Commissions, may conduct meetings by telephone conference  
67 calls, and/or by using web conferencing as long as all participants can hear, participate in  
68 discussion and vote.

69  
70 **10.30 Quorum**  
71 10.31 A quorum of the Synod Assembly shall be twelve commissioners, at least six of whom  
72 shall be ruling elders and at least six of whom shall be teaching elders representing at least  
73 six presbyteries.

74  
75 **10.40 Officers, Terms, and Election**  
76 10.41 The officers of the Synod shall be a Moderator, Vice Moderator, Synod Executive,  
77 Stated Clerk and Treasurer, and shall be known as the Synod Leadership Team.

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79 10.42 The term of service of the Moderator and Vice Moderator shall be one year, and they  
80 shall be eligible for re-election. They shall be elected by the Synod Assembly and installed  
81 at the annual meeting of the Synod Assembly.

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83 10.43 The Stated Clerk shall be elected for a term of five years and be eligible for  
84 reelection. The Stated Clerk may name a journal clerk and assistant clerks, who need not  
85 be commissioners, to serve during the meeting of the Synod Assembly to assist in the  
86 recording of minutes, registration, recording leave of absences, and to carry out such other  
87 duties and responsibilities as will facilitate the efficient functioning of the meeting.

88  
89 10.44 The Synod Executive and any Associate Executives shall be elected for a term of five  
90 years and be eligible for re-election.

91  
92 10.45 The Treasurer shall be elected for a term of five years and shall be eligible for  
93 reelection.

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95 **10.50 Governing Process**  
96 The governing process for the Synod of the Trinity shall be the Policy Governance<sup>R</sup>  
97 Manual of the Synod, in its most recent edition as approved by the Synod Assembly.

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## **10.60 Duties of Officers and Trustees**

### **10.61 Moderator and Vice Moderator**

#### 10.62 Functions:

- a. The Moderator presides over all meetings of the Synod Assembly and the Governing Commission until a successor is elected and installed. The Moderator performs all duties assigned in the *Form of Government* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and shall see that business is conducted in accordance with the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* and the Standing Rules of the Synod Assembly. The Moderator shall appoint committees and commissions authorized by action of the Synod Assembly not otherwise provided for.
- b. If, because of the absence of a quorum, a special meeting of the Synod Assembly cannot be held, the Moderator, after consultation with the Synod Executive and the Stated Clerk, may name a committee or commission to carry out responsibilities assigned to the Synod in Form of Government, G-3.0405. Such committee or commission shall conduct Special Administrative Review in accordance with Form of Government, G-3.0108. If in the opinion of those officers, the appointment of a commission is warranted, due diligence shall be exercised to ensure that the provisions of Form of Government G-3.0109 are carried out.
- c. In the case of complaints against actions or decisions of the Synod Assembly to the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission, the Moderator and the Stated Clerk of Synod shall have authority to appoint a Committee of Counsel
- d. The Moderator may attend a meeting of the General Assembly during his/her term of office. The Synod will provide reasonable expense reimbursement for such attendance.
- e. The Vice Moderator fulfills the duties of the Moderator in the absence of the Moderator, or when the Moderator deems it necessary. Should the Moderator become ineligible to serve, the Vice Moderator shall become Moderator for the remainder of the term.
- f. Expenses incurred by the Moderator or Vice Moderator in the performance of their duties on behalf of the Synod will be paid from budgeted Synod funds.

### **10.70 The Stated Clerk**

10.71 The Stated Clerk shall perform all duties required in the Form of Government of The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Stated Clerk shall give official notice of the time and place of Synod Assembly meetings, and, when the Synod Assembly convenes, shall form the roll and report it to the Synod Assembly. The Stated Clerk, with the cooperation of the Synod Executive and the Moderator, shall prepare the docket for the Synod Assembly meeting. The Stated Clerk shall be responsible for the recording of the minutes of Synod Assembly meetings, and for the timely transmission of these minutes to commissioners.

10.72 If the office of Stated Clerk should become vacant, the Moderator shall appoint a teaching or ruling elder to be acting Stated Clerk, who shall serve until Synod shall elect a Stated Clerk.

147 **10.80 The Synod Executive**

148 10.81 The Synod Executive and any Associate Executives shall perform those duties  
149 specified in the position description as prepared by the Governing Commission and  
150 approved by the Synod Assembly.

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152 **10.90 The Synod Treasurer**

153 10.91 The Treasurer shall fulfill his or her duties described in: the position description  
154 approved by the Synod Assembly and provided in the personnel policies; these Standing  
155 Rules; fiscal or financial policies adopted by the Synod Assembly or Governing Commission.

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157 **11.00 Trustees**

158 11.01 The commissioner members of the Governing Commission shall act as the Board of  
159 Trustees for the Corporation which shall be authorized under the charter of the Synod to  
160 receive, hold and transfer property, and to facilitate the management of the corporate  
161 affairs of the Synod in such manner as to realize the "Ends of the Synod" and in accord with  
162 the Executive Limitations in the Policy Governance<sup>R</sup> Manual of the Synod.

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164 11.02 The Corporation officers shall be the Moderator and Vice Moderator of the Synod, the  
165 Stated Clerk and the Treasurer of the Synod who shall serve respectively as President, Vice  
166 President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Corporation. The Synod Executive shall serve as  
167 the chief executive officer for the Corporation. A quorum of the Governing Commission/  
168 Board of Trustees shall be a simple majority of the commissioner members.

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170 11.03 The Synod Assembly shall meet as the Corporation annually, and at such other times  
171 as shall be deemed necessary. The meeting of the annual meeting of the Corporation shall  
172 be the same as the ecclesiastical meeting of the Synod Assembly.

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174 **ARTICLE II - SYNOD ENTITIES**

175  
176 The Synod carries out its duties and responsibilities through:  
177 The Governing Commission and the Synod Executive  
178 Book of Order Required Committees and Commissions  
179       Permanent Judicial Commission  
180       Committee on Representation  
181       Nominating  
182 Advisory and Operational Task Groups as appointed by the Synod Executive  
183 Mission Networks

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185 **20.00 Mission Networks**

186 20.01 The Synod will facilitate and support the development of a system of Mission  
187 Networks among presbyteries and affinity groups. These Mission Networks will focus on  
188 areas of common interest, need, and mission. Because of the diversity of needs throughout  
189 the Synod, these Mission Networks will focus the Synod's mission resources and energies  
190 where the people and needs dictate. Mission Networks are not limited by intra nor inter  
191 Synod geographical boundaries. Mission Networks provide responsive and flexible shared  
192 ministry opportunities. Mission Networks may help to identify those needs that should be  
193 addressed through a sustained program.

194

195 **22.20 Nominating Committee**

196 22.21 The Nominating Committee shall consist of three commissioners, of which one shall  
197 be from the Governing Commission. The nominating committee shall be elected at the  
198 annual meeting of the Synod Assembly to serve for the next year. At least two  
199 commissioners with different terms will be represented on the nominating committee.  
200

201 22.22 The tasks of the Nominating Committee for elections for Synod positions are:

202  
203 a. Nominate a Moderator and Vice Moderator to the Synod, with regard for diversity  
204 and inclusiveness. The nomination of a Vice Moderator should ensure teaching/ruling elder  
205 balance;

206  
207 b. Nominate commissioners to serve on the Governing Commission to fill expired terms  
208 or vacancies.  
209

210 **22.40 Committee on Representation**

211 22.41 The Committee on Representation shall carry out the duties prescribed by the *Form of*  
212 *Government* F-1.0403.  
213

214 22.42 The Committee on Representation will recruit, or seek, candidates for future election  
215 as commissioners, through its connections with presbytery Committees on Representation,  
216 various racial ethnic constituencies, constituencies of women, disabled persons, youth, or  
217 other minorities, as well as "persons designated by national racial ethnic membership to  
218 discover potential racial ethnic members."  
219

220 22.43 The Committee on Representation shall also be available to serve as an advisory  
221 group to the Synod Executive on matters of social and racial justice within the boundaries of  
222 the Synod.  
223

224 **22.50 Presbytery Records**

225 22.51 The stated clerks of the presbyteries shall conduct an annual peer review of  
226 presbytery records as prescribed by the *Form of Government*, G-3.0107 and G-3.0108.  
227 They shall review the minutes of the presbyteries and a statement attesting to the review  
228 shall be signed by the Convener, who shall be annually elected by the presbytery stated  
229 clerks. The report shall be circulated to each presbytery annually for reaction on the part of  
230 the presbytery. Any request from a presbytery to remove or modify an exception shall be  
231 directed to the Stated Clerk of Synod for further consideration by the Synod Assembly.  
232

233 22.52 The official action of the Synod with regard to the presbytery minutes shall be  
234 communicated to each presbytery through its Stated Clerk and the action of the Synod  
235 Assembly recorded in the minutes of the next stated meeting of the presbytery.  
236

237 **22.60 Permanent Judicial Commission**

238 22.61 The Permanent Judicial Commission is the court of judicial process for the Synod. It  
239 shall function according to the provisions of the *Rules of Discipline*.  
240

241 22.62 The Permanent Judicial Commission shall consist of twelve members elected for six  
242 year terms, serving in equal classes. Each class will contain two two teaching and two  
243 ruling elders. Members shall be nominated by the respective presbyteries and elected by  
244 the Synod Assembly, giving due attention to the principles of inclusivity set forth in *Form of*  
245 *Government* Chapter 4.0400 and elsewhere, as well as to a rotation of members among the

246 various presbyteries of the Synod. The Permanent Judicial Commission shall elect from  
247 among its members a moderator and a clerk.

248  
249 22.63 The Permanent Judicial Commission is staffed by the Stated Clerk.

250  
251 22.64 The Permanent Judicial Commission shall meet to consider the cases brought before  
252 it. If there are no cases, it shall meet for education and training, at least annually.

253  
254 22.65 No person having served on the Permanent Judicial Commission for a term of up to  
255 six years shall be eligible for re-election until four years have elapsed.

256  
257 22.66 In case a time should arise when the Permanent Judicial Commission has no  
258 Moderator, the Stated Clerk shall be authorized to convene the Commission and preside for  
259 the election of a Moderator.

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261 **22.80 Self Development of People (SDOP)**

262 22.81 The Self Development of People Committee shall consist of not fewer than six and not  
263 more than twelve members, elected by their presbytery, in three equal classes serving  
264 three year terms.

265  
266 22.82 The SDOP awards grants to groups of poor, oppressed and disadvantaged persons  
267 seeking to make significant and long-term, sustainable changes in their particular situations.

268  
269 22.83 SDOP utilizes three primary criteria for groups submitting proposal for grants:

- 270 1. The project must originate from within the group writing the proposal.  
271 2. The group must control the project.  
272 3. The members of the group must directly benefit from the project.

273  
274 22.84 Meetings:

- 275 1. Once a year, normally in May to review proposals.  
276 2. SDOP may meet by conference call or web conferencing, as needed.

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278 **ARTICLE III - SYNOD STAFF**

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280 **30.00 Administrative**

281 30.01 The Synod Administrative Staff consists of a Synod Executive and such other exempt  
282 and non-exempt staff as determined by the Synod Executive.

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284  
285 30.02 The Governing Commission shall provide for annual comprehensive reviews of the  
286 work the Synod Executive and Stated Clerk. The Synod Executive shall review the work of  
287 the other members of the Synod staff.

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289 **31.00 Synod Executive**

290 31.01 The Synod Executive shall be elected as provided for in *Form of Government*, G-  
291 3.0110. The duties of this office shall only be limited as set forth in the Executive  
292 Limitations, as stated in the Policy Governance manual, and the application of the principle  
293 "any reasonable interpretation."

294 31.02 The Synod Executive shall be selected by the Governing Commission upon the  
295 concurrence of the Synod Assembly.

296 31.021 Termination of the service of the Synod Executive shall follow the same procedures  
297 as for the selection of the Synod executive.

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### **32.00 Other Staff**

300 32.01 Other staff shall be employed for terms stipulated in their position descriptions.

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302 32.02 They shall fulfill their duties and their performance will be reviewed, as provided for  
303 in the Synod personnel policies.

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## **ARTICLE IV – CODE OF CONDUCT**

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307 40.01 The Synod shall adopt a Code of Conduct applicable to all elected Commissioners,  
308 Officers of the Synod, employed Synod staff, Synod, Commissions, Synod Mission Networks,  
309 and includes some customers, vendors, organizations, and any others doing business with  
310 or on behalf of the Synod of the Trinity.

311

312 40.02 The Synod Stated Clerk shall have lead responsibility for the development of policy,  
313 distribution, implementation, and maintenance of records relating to the Synod's Code of  
314 Conduct.

315

316 40.03 Distribution of the Code of Conduct shall be made in accord with the criteria specified  
317 in the Code with records distribution and acknowledgment of receipt maintained in the  
318 Synod Stated Clerk's office where the records shall be available for review as may be  
319 necessary and appropriate.

320

321 40.04 Commissioners shall not be seated and persons elected to various positions in the  
322 Synod shall not be permitted to participate until a signed Acknowledgment and Acceptance  
323 Form from the Code of Conduct, including a conflict of interest provision, has been received  
324 and is on file.

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## **ARTICLE V - AMENDMENTS**

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328 50.01 The Standing Rules may be suspended temporarily, for a definite purpose and a  
329 definite length of time, by a two thirds vote of the Commissioners present at either a  
330 standing or a called Synod Assembly meeting.

331

332 50.02 These Standing Rules may be amended at any meeting provided that at least a ten-  
333 day written notice has been given to all Commissioners and by a two-thirds vote of the  
334 members present. A special meeting may be called for the purpose of amending these  
335 Standing Rules with the same provision as the called meeting.

336 **ARTICLE VI – Hierarchy of Governing Authority**

- 337 60.01 The hierarchy of governing authorities shall be:  
338 Scripture  
339 The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
340 Part One: Book of Confessions  
341 Part Two: Book of Order  
342 Federal and State Law  
343 Articles of Incorporation of the Synod of the Trinity  
344 Bylaws of the Synod of the Trinity  
345 Policy Governance Manual of the Synod of the Trinity  
346 Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, most recent edition  
347 Standing Rules of the Synod of the Trinity  
348

349 60.02 If there should be a conflict between the Policy Governance Manual and the Standing  
350 Rules, the Policy Governance Manual shall be considered primary until the conflict shall be  
351 reconciled by either an amendment to the Policy Governance Manual and/or to the standing  
352 rules.  
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354 **APPENDIX**

355  
356 The Synod of the Trinity includes all of the State of Pennsylvania; all of the State of West  
357 Virginia except the following counties: Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Hampshire, Mineral,  
358 Hardy, Grant, Pendleton; and the following counties in Ohio: Belmont, Harrison, Jefferson,  
359 Monroe, the southern sector of Columbia. One congregation in New York and two  
360 congregations in Maryland belong to the Synod, but their counties are associated with other  
361 synods.  
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364 *Amended*  
365 *October, 2003*  
366 *June and October, 2005*  
367 *February and October, 2008*  
368 *March and June 2009*  
369 *June 2010*  
370 *June 2011*  
371 *October 2011*  
372 *October 04, 2015*