



NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY

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If this is one of your first presbytery meetings . . .

Welcome! We're delighted that you will be attending our next presbytery meeting. May your experience be inspiring, informative, and offer you a sense of the presbytery's vital role in the Presbyterian system of church government. Below you will find explanation of a number of topics first-timers sometimes wonder about:

Question: Why is this meeting called a "*stated meeting*"?

Answer: Presbytery meetings fall into two types, "stated" and "special." The first type is so named because it is stated in advance when they will occur. Special meetings are sometimes referred to as "called meetings" because they are called for as the need arises.

Question: How often do stated meetings occur?

Answer: Stated meetings take place at regular recurring intervals. Currently in our presbytery, there are three: winter (the fourth Saturday in February), spring (the third Tuesday in May), and fall (the fourth Saturday in October.)

Question: Why are two on *Saturday* and one on *Tuesday*?

Answer: Often Ruling elders indicate that being away during the work week presents a difficulty. At the same time, often Teaching elders indicate that they need Saturday as a time in which to make final preparation for Sunday worship. Therefore in an effort to address multiple preferences, stated meetings are held on two different days of the week.

Question: What determines the *site or locality* where presbytery meetings are held?

Answer: Stated meetings are moved from city to city throughout presbytery in an effort to acquaint participants with all of our churches. Also by doing this, driving distances are varied. Special meetings are typically held in the Athens area which generally is in the geographical center of the presbytery. To enjoy the autumn leaves, the fall stated meeting is typically held in the mountainous area of north Georgia.

Question: What is the *geographical area* covered by North Georgia Presbytery?

Answer: Except for Monticello and Winder, which are located west of U.S. 129, U.S. 129 forms the western boundary; Milledgeville and Waynesboro constitute the southern extreme. Then, the line of demarcation follows the Georgia and South Carolina boundary all the way to Clayton and then the Georgia and North Carolina state line to Blairsville.

Question: *How many* presbyteries are there in Georgia?

Answer: Five, ours and Savannah, Flint River, Cherokee and Greater Atlanta.

Question: Who are the *staff members* of Northeast Georgia Presbytery?

Answer: Please refer to the footers on these pages.

Question: What does it mean that the presbytery docket is “*theme based?*”

Answer: Typically at every meeting one of the six presbytery ministry teams utilizes a major part of docket time to elaborate upon its mission, vision, and current emphasis. This often involves PowerPoint presentations, worship and special speakers. This is not to say that other agenda items are not docketed. Rather, theme presentation simply highlights current ministry emphasis.

Question: You mention “*ministry team.*” What is a “ministry team?”

Answer: A ministry team is an organizational unit within Northeast Georgia Presbytery. There are six: Committee on Ministry, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Communication/Links Network, Congregational Development, Leadership Development, and Spiritual Formation and Discernment.

Question: Beyond theme development, what *other agenda items* are docketed?

Answer: It varies from meeting to meeting. Typically, there are administrative items such as ministers to be examined, budgets to be reviewed and controlled, and information to be disseminated through reports. Also, key organizations within presbytery such as Presbyterian Women and Black Caucus need an opportunity to elaborate upon aspects of their ministry. Other docket items include Minutes for Mission (descriptions of ongoing ministry within given churches and communities) and pauses for Worshipful Moments.

Question: What in the world is an “*Omnibus Motion*” and why do we have one?

Answer: “Omnibus” is a term used to describe multiple and typically divergent things at once. In presbytery meetings, there often are numerous non-controversial motions which do not require elaboration or discussion and would pass unanimously. These are gathered into a motion “bundle” and passed in one motion. However, upon request, any such item can be removed from the omnibus motion and considered separately.

Question: *Do I get to vote* on matters being considered by presbytery?

Answer: That depends upon whether or not you are a commissioner or guest or visitor. A commissioner is an Ruling elder or Teaching elder who represents a congregation. As such, he or she has the privilege of the floor (can speak to matters) and the privilege of vote. Additionally, Teaching elder members of our presbytery may vote whether they are serving a congregation or not. Regardless, visitors and guests are always welcome.

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