

# MANUAL OF OPERATION NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY

## VISION

*WE BELIEVE ALMIGHTY GOD IS CALLING NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY  
TO BECOME A CHRIST-CENTERED, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY  
OF FAITHFUL AND HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS.*

## ACTION PLANS

- 1) *To initiate and assist the development of churches throughout their life cycles;*
- 2) *To strengthen connections among congregations, other governing bodies, and denominations;*
- 3) *To provide training and education for leadership development;*
- 4) *To foster spiritual growth and discernment;*
- 5) *To provide pastoral care and counseling to the Ministers of the Word and Sacrament of the presbytery; to facilitate the relations between/among congregations, Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and presbytery; to settle difficulties on behalf of the presbytery when possible and expedient;*
- 6) *To implement the requirements of the denomination for the preparation of persons called into the ministry; to develop and oversee a program for the recruitment of persons who feel called to church vocations.*

## ARTICLE ONE GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. This document shall be known as the Manual of Operation of Northeast Georgia Presbytery of the Synod of South Atlantic of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (Constitution- Part II, G-3.0106), designated as Manual for subsequent references to it within this document, as authorized by the Book of Order, The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Part II, designated as Constitution-Part II for subsequent references to it within this document with specific citations noted in a parenthesis immediately following the reference(s). If any provision of this Manual is in conflict with the Constitution, the Constitution shall prevail. It is the purpose and intent of this Manual to avoid repetition of provisions of the Constitution, and to provide such additional guidance about the work of Northeast Georgia Presbytery as may be necessary; however, it is also the intent of this Manual to provide appropriate flexibility to the Presbytery Coordinating Team and the Committees of Northeast Georgia Presbytery to adapt to the changing context in which the ministry of Northeast Georgia Presbytery is conducted.
- B. Northeast Georgia Presbytery shall include all churches and new worshipping communities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in the Georgia counties of Union, Towns, Rabun, Lumpkin, White, Habersham, Hall, Banks, Franklin, Stephens, Hart, Jackson, Madison, Barrow, Clarke, Oglethorpe, Elbert, Oconee, Morgan, Greene, Taliaferro, Wilkes, Lincoln, Jasper, Putnam, Baldwin, Hancock, Warren, McDuffie, Columbia, Washington, Glascock, Jefferson, Richmond, and Burke , subject to the inclusion or exclusion of additional churches, chapels, or new church developments

which may at later dates be organized or dissolved in accordance with the Constitution-Part II (G-3.0301).

- C. Membership in Northeast Georgia Presbytery and rules related to membership shall be established as provided in the Constitution-Part II (G-2.0503, G-3.0306).
- D. The above stated Action Plans will serve as the priorities of the presbytery. These priorities shall guide the Presbytery Coordinating Team in defining programmatic and mission emphases. Once every three years, the presbytery will engage in a process to define its major priorities for the upcoming three-year periods. Those approved priorities shall guide the Presbytery Coordinating Team in defining programmatic and mission emphases for the ensuing three years.
- E. The duties and responsibilities of the Presbytery are found in the Constitution-Part II (G-3.03).

## **ARTICLE TWO PRESBYTERY MEETINGS**

- A. Northeast Georgia Presbytery shall establish the dates, times, and locations for the stated meetings of the presbytery for the upcoming year by November 1 of the current calendar year.
- B. The dockets shall be determined by the Presbytery Coordinating Team or by its designated representatives with subsequent approval of details and docket by the Presbytery Coordinating Team.
- C. Stated meetings and special meetings of the presbytery shall be called and conducted in conformity with the Constitution-Part II (G-3.0304).

## **ARTICLE THREE OFFICERS**

Northeast Georgia Presbytery shall have the following officers, with the indicated duties and terms.

### **A. MODERATOR**

- 1. The Moderator shall serve for a period of one year, beginning at the first stated presbytery meeting of the year, being installed at the beginning of that meeting, and serve until the first stated meeting of the following year. Ordinarily, the Moderator's office will alternate between Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elders. A Moderator-In-Nomination shall be nominated and elected approximately one year prior to the beginning of service as Moderator and begin training after election. (Rev. 66th Stated Meeting 5-17-08)
- 2. The duties of the Moderator shall be:
  - a. To fulfill functions described in Constitution, Part II (G-3.0104) which include presiding at each meeting of the Presbytery during the moderator's term of office;
  - b. To serve as an ex-officio member of the Presbytery Coordinating Team with vote;

- c. To serve as an ex-officio member (with vote) of the Presbytery Meeting Action Team or any entity designated by the Presbytery Coordinating Team to plan a meeting or meetings of the Presbytery ;
  - d. To appoint interim members for vacancies on teams, committees, task forces, etc. after consulting with the Nominating Committee Chair, and subject to ratification by Presbytery;
  - e. To issue calls for special meetings of the Presbytery;
  - f. To represent the Presbytery at ceremonies; if the moderator cannot represent the Presbytery, the most recent former moderator(s) will be asked to represent the Presbytery.
3. The Moderator-In-Nomination of the Presbytery shall serve as an advisory member of the Presbytery Coordinating Team without function and without vote. In the event of the absence of Moderator of Presbytery or Chair of Coordinating Team, the Moderator-In-Nomination may preside in place of those officers at meetings.

#### B. STATED CLERK

- 1. The duties of the Stated Clerk shall be those indicated in Constitution, Part II (G-3.0104) and in a Presbytery-approved job description; .
- 2. The Stated Clerk is the custodian of all records required by the Constitution-Part II and all minutes of the Presbytery.
- 3. Ordinarily, the Stated Clerk shall serve as Secretary of NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY, INC.; in the event the Stated Clerk cannot serve, the Presbytery Coordinating Team will elect a secretary.
- 4. The Stated Clerk shall be nominated by the Presbytery Coordinating Team and elected by the Presbytery for a three-year term; the Stated Clerk may be elected to successive terms [Constitution, Part II (G-3.0104)].

#### C. RECORDING CLERK

- 1. The Recording Clerk shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of the Presbytery, incorporating all reports and documents adopted by the presbytery [Constitution-Part II (G-3.0107)].
- 2. The Recording Clerk shall provide the Stated Clerk a transcript of all proceedings of the Presbytery, which shall become, after approval by Presbytery, the Minutes of the Presbytery.
- 3. The Recording Clerk shall be nominated by the Presbytery Coordinating Team and elected by the Presbytery for a three-year term; the Recording Clerk may be elected to successive terms.

#### D. TREASURER

- 1. The Treasurer shall be responsible for clear and accurate records of all receipts and disbursements, for maintaining a current record of all fund balances and location of all Northeast Georgia Presbytery accounts [Constitution, Part II (G-3.0110)], and for accomplishing other financial responsibilities as designated in a Presbytery-approved job description;
- 2. The Treasurer shall be bonded.

3. The Treasurer shall be nominated by the Presbytery Coordinating Team and elected by the Presbytery for a three-year term; the Treasurer may be elected to successive terms.
4. All financial records of the Treasurer shall be submitted for financial review or audit; this financial review or audit shall be reported to the Presbytery per Presbytery policy [Constitution, Part II (G-3.0113)].

#### E. DIRECTORS/TRUSTEES

1. The most recently elected Presbytery Coordinating Team shall constitute the Board of Directors/Board of Trustees of the corporation of NORTHEAST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY, INC., per the Constitution, Part II (G-3.03) and the laws of the State of Georgia.
2. The Chair of the Presbytery Coordinating Team shall serve as President of the Corporation with vote, upon election by the presbytery and assuming duties.
3. The duties of the directors/trustees are as follows:
  - a. To maintain the corporation under the laws of the State of Georgia;
  - b. To examine and recommend the disposition of all legal transactions requiring Presbytery approval;
  - c. To act as the official agent of the Presbytery for all corporate matters;
  - d. To hold title(s) of all property of the Presbytery and to serve as agent for receiving and disposing of all property of the Presbytery.
4. The corporate officers of Northeast Georgia Presbytery, Inc., shall be authorized to sign all legal documents related to the sale, mortgage, assignment, transfer, or other encumbrances of any stock, bonds, securities, real or personal property of the Corporation when approved by Presbytery. (Approved October 23, 2010.) (See By-Laws, Article Two)

### **ARTICLE FOUR PRESBYTERY STAFF**

The Presbytery Coordinating Team, in consultation with the Synod, shall make recommendations to the Presbytery for specific additions, deletions, revisions for particular administrative and/or programmatic staff positions [Constitution, Part II (G - 3.0106, G-3.0110)]. All recommendations shall include a staffing rationale and a job description for specific staff positions. Upon adoption by the Presbytery, these positions shall continue until a recommendation for change has been made by the Presbytery Coordinating Team and said recommendation has been received and approved by the Presbytery. A current listing of administrative and programmatic staff with each approved job description will be maintained by the Coordinating Team

### **ARTICLE FIVE PRESBYTERY COORDINATING TEAM**

- A. The Presbytery shall elect a Presbytery Coordinating Team
  1. The Presbytery Coordinating Team shall lead the Presbytery in accomplishing the functions of a presbytery as defined in the Constitution - Part II (G-3.01 and 3.03). It will:

- a. plan for meetings of the presbytery (G-3.0105),
  - b. provide oversight and support for presbytery staff (G-3.0110),
  - c. insure appropriate attention to issues related to representation (G-3.0103),
  - d. develop an annual budget to be approved by presbytery (G-3.0106),
  - e. implement an ongoing strategic action plan which reflects the mission and program priorities of the presbytery, and
  - f. initiate/review program assessment functions.
2. The immediate past Moderator of Presbytery shall serve as Chair of Coordinating Team for one year. The term of service shall begin on the day when a new Moderator of Presbytery is installed.
  3. The Presbytery Coordinating Team will be composed of approximately twelve (12) voting members with parity between Ruling Elders and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament (with attention given for balanced representation by gender, race, and ethnicity), who are elected by presbytery for one- year terms, renewable, not to exceed six consecutive years, beginning January 1.
  4. A quorum of Coordinating Team will be a simple majority of the voting members.

B. The Presbytery Coordinating Team members with vote are as follows:

1. One member from each presbytery committee listed in Article Six of this document. Each Committee in consultation with the Nominating Committee will nominate to the Presbytery a Committee member from its membership, who may or may not be its chair, to serve on the Coordinating Team;
2. One member of The Presbyterian Women nominated to the Presbytery by the Presbyterian Women;
3. One member of The Black Presbyterian Caucus nominated to the Presbytery by The Black Presbyterian Caucus;
4. One member of Presbyterian Campus Ministry, Inc. nominated to the Presbytery by Presbyterian Campus Ministry, Inc.;
5. The Committee on Representation may nominate a member of the Presbytery for the purposes of balanced representation;
6. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.
7. The Treasurer of the Presbytery.
8. The Moderator of the Presbytery.
9. The Chair of Coordinating Team

C. Advisory Members of the Presbytery Coordinating Team (without vote) are:

1. The Moderator-in-Nomination of the Presbytery.
2. The General Presbyter and other staff.

D. The Presbytery Coordinating Team will create the Action Teams and Task Forces needed to accomplish its functions.

E. The Presbytery Coordinating Team shall receive and review annual reports from each Committee, highlighting the accomplished, the ongoing, and the planned work by each of their Action Teams as well as their Committee.

F. The Presbytery Coordinating Team shall nominate candidates for election to the Nominating Committee of the Presbytery.

G. The Presbytery Coordinating Team shall be responsible for appropriate preservation of the historical records of the presbytery (G-3.0107).

H. A representative from the Board of Directors of the Georgia Lodge shall report to the Coordinating Team annually.

## **ARTICLE SIX COMMITTEES REPORTING TO COORDINATING TEAM**

The presbytery will implement its mission through committees and their action teams and/or task forces. Each committee may create action teams and/or task forces to accomplish its missions. While action teams and task forces do not need presbytery approval, a listing of the action teams and task forces for each committee will be kept by the committee chair and reported to the presbytery upon their creation or dissolution. Additionally, each action team and task force will list their purpose and some general guidelines as established by the committee regarding their duties and functions.

The Nominating Committee will nominate persons for each committee and its chair for election by the presbytery. A committee member may serve one successive term, but no more than six years without a minimum of one year break in service. The chair of the committee may serve no more than three successive years without a minimum of a one-year break in service. Each committee will nominate one member from the committee to the presbytery (who may or may not be its chair) to serve on the Presbytery Coordinating Team for a one year term and renewable for one term. This nominated member shall be a Ruling Elder or Minister or the Word and Sacrament. A quorum of each committee will be a simple majority of the voting members.

### **A. Congregational Connections Committee**

1. Purpose: To connect congregations so that they might share ministry together.
2. The Congregational Connections Committee will be composed of nine (9) persons, with parity between non-ordained persons, Ruling Elders, and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament elected in classes of three (3) persons for three-year terms and renewable for one term.

### **B. Clergy ~~Support~~ Care Committee** *(name change, Feb 2019 Stated Meeting)*

1. Purpose: To support clergy in their work.
2. The Clergy Care Committee will be composed of nine (9) persons, with parity between non-ordained persons, Ruling Elders, and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament elected in classes of three (3) persons for three-year terms and renewable for one term.

### C. Committee on Ministry

1. Purpose: To provide pastoral care and counseling to the Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and Ruling Elders of the presbytery; To facilitate the relations between/among congregations, sessions, Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and presbytery; To settle difficulties on behalf of the presbytery when possible and expedient; To coordinate the work of the presbytery in this area .The Committee on Ministry will be composed of eighteen (18) persons, with parity between Ruling Elders and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament elected in classes of six persons for three-year terms and renewable for one term.
2. The Committee on Ministry may have the authority of a commission

### D. Committee on Preparation for Ministry

1. Purpose: To implement the requirements of the denomination for the preparation of persons called to the ministry; To encourage recruitment of persons who sense a call to church vocations; To coordinate the work of the presbytery in this area .
2. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry will be composed of nine (9) persons, with parity between Ruling Elders and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, elected in classes of three persons for three-year terms and renewable for one term.
3. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry will have the authority of a Commission to remove Inquirers and Candidates from the roll, certify Candidates ready to receive a call, and transfer or dismiss Inquirers and Candidates under care.

## **ARTICLE SEVEN COMMITTEES REPORTING TO PRESBYTERY**

The following committees report only to the presbytery and not to the accountable to the Coordinating Team.

### A. BILLS AND OVERTURES COMMITTEE

1. The Bills and Overtures Committee ordinarily consisting of two Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and two Ruling Elders, shall receive, consider, report and recommend action(s) regarding any bill(s) or overture(s) placed in its hands by the Presbytery. The Committee also has the responsibility for preparing and presenting to the Presbytery information and recommendations related to Proposed Amendments to the Constitution when forwarded to presbyteries from a General Assembly.
2. The Moderator of Presbytery will name the members of this committee for a term of one year.

### B. COMMITTEE ON REPRESENTATION [Constitution, Part II (G-3.0103)]

1. Membership of this committee will consist of a minimum of six (6) persons, who will be elected in classes of not less than two persons for three-year terms and renewable for one term. The Nominating Committee will nominate the Chair and members of this committee to serve a term beginning January 1. The Chair may serve no more than three consecutive years without a one-year break in service. .
2. A quorum of this Committee shall be a majority of its membership.
3. This Committee shall report annually to the presbytery.

C. NOMINATING COMMITTEE [Constitution, Part II (G-3.0103, 3.0111)]

1. Membership of this committee will consist of nine (9) persons broadly representative of the constituency of the presbytery, and in conformity with the church's commitment to unity in diversity. They will be elected in classes of three persons for three-year terms and renewable for one term. The Presbytery Coordinating Team will nominate persons for this committee for election by the Presbytery. The Chair of this committee will be elected by the members of this committee on an annual basis to serve a one-year term beginning January 1 of each year. The Chair may serve no more than three years without a minimum of one-year break in service. Election of the Chair for the upcoming term will be held after the Presbytery has elected this committee each year and at least one month prior to assuming office. .
2. The Nominating Committee will be responsible for nominations for the Moderator and Moderator-In-Nomination of the Presbytery, for Chair of the Presbytery Coordinating Team, for the membership of all Committees and Commissions, the representatives to the Georgia Lodge Board of Directors, and Commissioners to the Synod and General Assembly. Nominations may come from the floor of Presbytery at any time. The Nominating Committee is not responsible for nominations to Action Teams, Task Forces, members of Coordinating Team that represent the committees in Article Six, Black Presbyterian Caucus, Presbyterian Women, Presbyterian Campus Ministry, presbytery staff members, or the Nominating Committee itself.
3. Ordinarily, the Nominating Committee will fill vacancies as they occur. In extraordinary circumstances the Nominating Committee Chair may suggest persons to the Presbytery Moderator, who may then make interim appointments until the next election.
4. A quorum of this Committee shall be a majority of its membership.
5. This Committee shall report at least annually to the presbytery.

D. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT PASTORAL RESPONSE COMMITTEE

1. Membership on this committee will consist of nine persons elected for three-year rotating terms. Members may be re-elected to a second three-year term.
2. This committee should be composed of persons who will be able to respond skillfully, sensitively, and objectively to situations of alleged sexual misconduct.
3. The committee is accountable to the Presbytery and the Presbytery shall specify a chair for the committee.
4. Members of this committee should be familiar with the legal, administrative, and disciplinary procedures of the Presbytery as well as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
5. Pursuant to the Sexual Misconduct Pastoral Response Team Policies and Procedures (adopted by Presbytery on Feb. 26, 1994 and revised Oct. 1997, Oct. 2003, May 2004, March 2005, and March 2012), this committee shall meet no less than two times per year for familiarization with policies, procedures, and for continuing education.

**ARTICLE EIGHT  
COMMISSIONS**



A. Commissions shall be elected and serve according to the Constitution-Part II (G-3.0109). Administrative commissions shall report to the presbytery at least annually.

**B. Permanent Judicial Commission**

1. A Permanent Judicial Commission shall be elected by Northeast Georgia Presbytery.
2. This Commission shall be composed of nine members; they shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee in dialogue with the Presbytery Coordinating Team and elected by the presbytery in three classes for terms of six years Constitution, Part II (D-5.0100). Terms, classes, vacancies, eligibility, and responsibilities shall be in keeping with the Constitution-Part II (D-5.0000).
3. The function and duties of this Commission are listed in the Constitution-Part II (G-3.0109 a, D-5.0202).
4. A quorum of this Commission shall be one more than one half of the commission's membership in keeping with the Constitution-Part II (D-5.0204c).
5. The Permanent Judicial Commission shall elect from its members a moderator and clerk to serve a term beginning January 1 per Constitution- Part II (D-5.0201).

**C. Church Property Commission**

1. A Church Property Commission shall be elected by the presbytery.
2. This Commission shall be composed of eight voting members: Chair of the Presbytery Coordinating Team, the General Presbyter, and six members-at-large. The members-at-large, one of whom shall be a competent legal advisor, and chair, shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee in dialogue with the Presbytery Coordinating Team and elected by the presbytery in three classes for terms of three years. Composition and responsibilities shall be in keeping with the Constitution-Part II (G.3.0109 b).
3. The Commission's duties shall be:
  - a. To receive and act upon requests from churches regarding property;
  - b. To report directly to the presbytery,
  - c. To maintain a record of all properties of the presbytery.
4. A quorum of this Commission shall be a majority of the voting members.

**D. OTHER COMMISSIONS**

A presbytery has authority to create other commissions to accomplish specific functions, tasks, and/or duties in accordance with the Constitution, Part II (G-3.0109).

**ARTICLE NINE  
MISSION COMMUNITIES**

- A. Northeast Georgia Presbytery shall be divided into five Mission Communities: Mountain Area, North Central Area, Greater Athens Area, South Central Area, and Greater Augusta Area. Mountain Area Mission Community shall include the following congregations: Nacoochee, Cornelia First, Clarkesville First, Cleveland First, Rabun Gap, Mountain, Helen, Dahlonega, Wiley, Clayton, and Timpson. North Central Mission Community shall include the following congregation: Gainesville First, Sardis, Commerce, Hartwell First, Winder First, Pleasant Hill, Jefferson, Homer, Trinity, Lavonia, Hebron, Hopewell, and

Carnesville. Greater Athens Mission Community shall include the following congregations: Athens First, Central, Covenant Athens, Oconee, Athens Korean, Friendship, Mount Hermon, Westside, Calvary, New Hope, and Elberton First. South Central Mission Community shall include the following congregations: Madison, Monticello, Milledgeville First, Eatonton, Greensboro First, Union Point First, and Ficklen. Greater Augusta Mission Community shall include the following congregations: Reid Memorial, Covenant Augusta, Saint Andrew, Belle Terrace, Augusta Korean, Clifford Memorial, Westminster, Bath, Christ, and Lincoln.

- B. Churches will be encouraged to join together for specific missions, interests, and projects
- C. The purpose of these Mission Communities is to strengthen connection among and between churches of the presbytery, to promote community, and to encourage cooperative strategies for an effective mission.
- D. Mission Communities shall not be responsible for ecclesiastical functions normally administered by the Committee on Ministry or the Committee for Preparation for Ministry.
- E. Mission Communities will meet no less than once a year and may organize themselves in a manner that they believe will best enable them to assist the effectiveness of their congregations. It is expected that each congregation will send representatives to these meetings.

## **ARTICLE TEN AMENDMENTS**

### **A. PROCESS OF AMENDMENT**

- 1. This Manual shall be subject to amendment by 2/3 vote of Northeast Georgia Presbytery acting at a stated meeting.
- 2. Proposed changes must be submitted in writing to the churches and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament of the Presbytery a minimum of one month prior to the date of the stated meeting at which the issue(s) are to be discussed and voted upon.
- 3. Proposed amendments should be sent to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.

### **B. RECORD OF AMENDMENT**

- 1. An official version of accumulated changes shall be kept in the Presbytery office.
- 2. An updated Manual reflecting the accumulated changes shall be published at least annually.