### Persons in Ordered Ministry and Elections

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#### 1. Moderator of the General Assembly

**Title/Functions**

a. Title and Functions of the Moderator at the General Assembly

(1) The Moderator of the General Assembly is an ecclesiastical person in ordered ministry, along with the Stated Clerk, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). The ministry of the Moderator is grounded in the ministry of baptized persons and in the particular ordained ministry of ruling elders and teaching elders.

(2) The office of Moderator may be shared by Co-Moderators. In this case, the office of Vice Moderator will remain vacant until the next election of a Moderator.

(3) The title of the Moderator is “The Moderator of the [number] General Assembly [year] of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).”

(4) The Moderator of the General Assembly is a commissioner of the General Assembly.

(5) When the Moderator presides at the assembly, it is to be a sign of the bond of unity, community, and mission in the life of the church. During the period between assemblies, the Moderator serves as an ambassador of the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, telling the story of the church’s life and upholding the people of God through prayer.

(6) The Moderator shall preside over the General Assembly that elects him or her, and over the meetings of the next General Assembly until a successor is elected. The Moderator possesses the authority necessary for preserving order and for conducting efficiently the business of the council *(Book of Order, G-3.0104)*.

(7) The Moderator(s) and the Vice Moderator (when filled) shall submit a written report of their work to the session of the General Assembly at which their successors are installed.

**Stand with Either Co-Moderator or Vice-Moderator Candidate**

b. At the discretion of the candidate, he or she may choose to stand for election with a Co-Moderator or with a Vice Moderator candidate. When choosing to stand with another Moderator candidate, both candidates:

   (1) must fulfill all the requirements specified in these Standing Rules,

   (2) notify the Stated Clerk of their intention to stand for election together, and

   (3) will together determine how to fulfill the duties of the office.

**Election**

c. Election of the Moderator

(1) Each person nominated to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly must be a commissioner to the General Assembly. Action by presbyteries to endorse candidates for
Moderator of the General Assembly shall not take place until after the adjournment of the immediately preceding assembly. The Office of the General Assembly shall provide resourcing and orientation for Moderatorial candidates.

(2) Ordinarily, no later than forty-five days prior to the convening of the assembly, the Moderatorial candidates will announce the name of a commissioner each has selected to offer to the assembly to elect as Vice Moderator, as appropriate.

(3) The following guidelines are intended to create an equal and open opportunity for moderatorial candidates. To this end, the following procedures shall be observed:

(a) Candidates shall covenant not to spend in excess of $2,000 in making their candidacy known to the church. This $2,000 includes out of pocket expenses as well as the estimated value of in-kind contributions, but does not include travel and meeting expenses.

(b) Each candidate shall submit to the Stated Clerk an itemized statement of expenses, including travel and meeting expenses related to his/her candidacy and in-kind contributions. This statement shall be submitted to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly prior to the convening of the General Assembly. This information shall be distributed to commissioners and advisory delegates prior to the election of the Moderator. The statement of expenses of all candidates shall be kept on file in the Office of the General Assembly following the meeting of the General Assembly.

(c) The Office of the General Assembly shall not reimburse a candidate for campaign expenses, but shall assume expenses involved in printing and distributing material submitted for information packets as outlined in Standing Rule H.1.c.(3)(g).

(d) In order to encourage reliance on the leading of the Holy Spirit in the selection of the Moderator, neither candidates or their advocates are allowed to communicate with commissioners and/or advisory delegates.

(e) Distribution of written campaign materials at General Assembly shall be limited to the public distribution area.

(f) Candidates are encouraged to meet and make themselves available for conversation with commissioners and advisory delegates within the scope of these procedures.

(g) Not less than fifteen days before the convening of the General Assembly, the Stated Clerk shall publish for commissioners and advisory delegates an electronic information packet containing the following material regarding each candidate for Moderator who is known to the Stated Clerk and who wishes to be included:

(i) A photograph, a biographical sketch, a personal statement by the candidate that includes a statement regarding the candidate’s sense of call to the ordered ministry,

(ii) A written presentation by the presbytery having jurisdiction over the candidate, if that council has endorsed the candidate,

(iii) The responses of the candidate to a questionnaire developed by the Stated Clerk.

The layouts for the presentation under this standing rule (as outlined above) may be chosen by the candidates, but all material including photographs submitted for each presentation shall be provided in electronic format as well as print. The material shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk no less than forty-five days before the convening of the General Assembly for reproduction and distribution, and shall be accompanied by a statement indicating the willingness of the candidate to serve as Moderator, if elected.

(4) The Moderator of the General Assembly shall be elected in the following manner:

(a) When the General Assembly is ready to elect its Moderator, each candidate shall be nominated by a commissioner to the assembly in the following manner: the commissioners making nominations shall be recognized at microphones on the assembly
Upon recognition by the assembly Moderator, the nominator shall say one of the following statements:

(i) “Moderator, I place in nomination for the office of Moderator of the ___ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder _____ from the Presbytery of ______ and Ruling/Teaching Elder ________ from the Presbytery of _____.”

(ii) “Moderator, I place in nomination for the office of Moderator of the ___ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder _______ from the Presbytery of ___. And for Vice Moderator of the ___ General Assembly Ruling/Teaching Elder _____ from the Presbytery of ___.”

The nominator shall then return to his/her seat on the plenary floor. No seconds to nominations are required.

(b) After nominations are closed, each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to address the General Assembly for a time not to exceed five minutes, expressing the concerns that nominee feels to be the most important for the church. The order of speaking shall be determined by lot, the drawing conducted by the most recent Moderator attending the General Assembly.

(c) At the conclusion of all the presentations by the nominees, they shall respond to questions from the floor. The first question shall be addressed to the nominee who spoke first in the original presentation, and the same question shall then be put to the other nominees in the same order in which they spoke earlier. The second question shall be directed to the second nominee in this order and then to each of the other nominees in sequence. Each nominee shall be afforded an opportunity to answer each question. This process shall continue for a period not to exceed the number of nominees times fifteen minutes, or for one hour, whichever is shorter, unless terminated earlier by vote of the General Assembly.

(d) Where there is only one nomination for Moderator, the election may be by acclamation. Where there is more than one, the election may be by secret ballot in a format which is determined by the Stated Clerk and announced to commissioners and advisory delegates prior to the convening of the assembly.

(5) The Stated Clerk shall provide a service of installation for the newly elected Moderator and Vice Moderator, as appropriate, as the last item of business at the session in which the Moderator is elected. The families of the newly elected officers and all present previous Moderators shall be invited to the platform. The service shall use the order of service for “Installation of Governing Body Officers and Staff” from the Book of Occasional Services. The processional banner of the Moderator shall precede the newly elected Moderator into the assembly. The Moderator’s cross and stole shall be presented by the most recent serving Moderator. The newly elected Moderator invites a person to lead the prayer of installation. The most recent serving Moderator gives the charge, a hymn is sung by the assembly, and the newly elected Moderator gives the benediction.

Vice Moderator

(1) The Vice Moderator represents the assembly at the request of the Moderator. When the Vice Moderator serves in this capacity, all those duties incumbent on the Moderator shall be expected of him/her.

(2) Each proposed Vice-Moderator candidate shall include biographical information and a photograph in electronic format to be included with the Moderator candidate information.

(3) The Moderator may request the Vice Moderator to preside and to assist in the performance of other functions of the Moderator during and following the General Assembly.

Vacancy

(1) Should the office of the Moderator of the General Assembly become vacant, the Vice Moderator shall fulfill the functions of the Moderator. In such circumstance, all constitutional obligations and functions as prescribed by the Standing Rules of the General
Assembly and the *Book of Order* shall be incumbent upon the Vice Moderator of the General Assembly.

(2) Should the office of the Vice Moderator of the General Assembly also become vacant, the most recent living Moderator shall fulfill the functions of the Moderator as specified in the Constitution of the church.

2. **Stated Clerk of the General Assembly**

   a. **Title and Functions of the Stated Clerk at the General Assembly**

   (1) The title of the Stated Clerk is “The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)” and may be used by the incumbent until a successor is elected and takes office.

   (2) The Stated Clerk is accountable, through the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, to the General Assembly for the performance of the duties of the office, and shall present to each meeting of the General Assembly a report on the state of the church.

   (3) The Stated Clerk is responsible for all matters related to the sessions of the General Assembly and all other matters relative to and arising from the General Assembly for which no other assignment has been made.

   (4) The Stated Clerk shall also be responsible for guidance of the procedures for candidates seeking the office of Moderator, and for supervision of the election of each Moderator.

   (5) In accordance with directives from previous General Assemblies and in consultations with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and other General Assembly agencies, the Stated Clerk is authorized to decide on matters pertaining to facilities and special events that must be established before the first meeting of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures.

   (6) The Stated Clerk shall receive all reports, communications, overtures, and any other materials appropriate for General Assembly consideration. The Stated Clerk shall recommend to the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly, for presentation to the Assembly Committee on Business Referral, a referral of such items of business coming before the General Assembly (Standing Rule C.3.e.).

   (7) The Stated Clerk shall prepare for consideration of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly a proposed docket for the General Assembly’s consideration of its business (Standing Rule C.4.a.). The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly shall present the proposed docket to the first meeting of the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures so that it may recommend a docket to the commissioners at the first business session. The docket presented to the Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures shall provide a time early in the General Assembly for a report by the Stated Clerk on the state of the church, and for a report by the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly.

   (8) The Stated Clerk shall propose to the General Assembly the number of assembly committees and a name for each committee after consultation with the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly and the appropriate General Assembly entity or entities (Standing Rule C.1.). The Stated Clerk shall present the committee structure to the General Assembly for ratification at the first business session. Each commissioner and advisory delegate shall be assigned by random selection to one assembly committee at least forty-five days before the opening date of the General Assembly (Standing Rule C.2.).

   (9) The Stated Clerk shall provide opportunity for orienting the commissioners, advisory delegates, and others taking part in the session of the General Assembly. The use of *Robert’s Rules of Order*, sources of parliamentary advice, and the availability of resource persons and materials to facilitate their work should be part of the orientation.