

THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA

SEE, WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST

By God's Spirit, The Churches, Pastors, Elders, Deacons and Congregation Members of the
Presbytery of Western North Carolina Are The Body of Christ.

We Covenant to ...

"See Thee more clearly"

Strengthen Congregations

"You are Christ's body—that's who you are!"

1 Corinthians 12:27 The Message

"Love Thee more dearly"

Equip Disciples

*"For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life."*

Ephesians 2:10 NRSV

"Follow Thee more nearly"

Engage in Mission

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"*

Matthew 28:19 NRSV

WHO'S IN CHARGE?

How to start off well....

When you've been asked (or elected) to serve as the Moderator or Chairperson of a committee, here are the things we recommend that you do to help the committee be successful.

Contact each member to introduce yourself and thank them for their service. This seems like a "no brainer" but is important.

The following list will provide you with reminders of ways to get started.

1. Get to know the members and let them get to know you. Take the time for introductions and provide tent name cards for in person meetings and for Zoom meetings their names will appear on the screen.
2. Provide the members with a roster, a list of meeting dates and times and the objectives established for this committee. What is this committee supposed to do and what is its place in the Presbytery structure?
3. Elect (or appoint) a secretary who will keep minutes and help you prepare an agenda for each meeting. Committee minutes are important and must be sent to the Presbytery office.
4. Utilize Robert's Rules of Order as your guide to keep the meeting flowing and efficient.
5. Establish starting and stopping times and try to keep the meeting within that time frame.
6. Establish a few "rules" of operation so that the meeting time will be well spent; such as Starting on time, asking that there be no side conversations, asking that there be no cross talk, and ask that the members come to the meeting prepared to discuss the items on the agenda (which needs to be sent to each participant prior to the meeting).
7. Call on your Presbytery staff representative when you have questions or need help. You are not in this alone.

Blessings and thank you for your willingness to serve as the chairperson of a committee and for participating in this workshop.

Barbara Ross

Presbytery Associate

MEETINGS? DO WE HAVE TO???

1. **YES.** The short answer is, “yes, we have to have some meetings.”
2. **Why?** Because we have been called to serve the greater mission of the presbytery; and the presbytery has been called to serve Christ’s mission.
3. **Because.** The presbytery, in its [mission statement](#), has covenanted to:
 - Strengthen Congregations
 - Equip Disciples
 - Engage in Mission
4. **It’s the way we’ve always done it.**
The way we fulfill this covenant is through the work of committees. And that work is coordinated through meetings.

BUT.... A lot of that work can be done through email, phone calls, working groups, etc.

5. **How often?** A better question may be, “**how many meetings are necessary?**” To answer that question, keep in mind the following...

Fact: some people just like to go to meetings; and Zoom meetings don’t seem to meet their needs for fellowship and camaraderie.

Fact: we serve the Lord Jesus Christ and not the “lord of productivity”. So, don’t be too quick to do everything by email. Furthermore, some tasks, like brainstorming, are done more efficiently through in-person meetings.

Therefore: to date, it seems to work best that **most committees meet FIVE time per calendar year**. Most of those can be completed by Zoom; and we seem to get better attendance via Zoom (but maybe not better participation?).

IF YOU'VE GOTTA HAVE A MEETING, THEN YOU'VE GOTTA HAVE AN AGENDA:

1. **Rationale.** The meeting should move the agenda; the agenda serves to move the committee along its mission; the committee's mission has been delegated by the Council; the Council serves the Presbytery; the Presbytery serves the Lord.

That does not mean that it's purely a one-way street for communication. The committee can ask the Council for further clarification and discernment.

- i) All that to say, the agenda is set to propel the Committee towards fulfilling its mission. Each committee's mission is described in:

- (1) <https://presbytery-wnc.s3.amazonaws.com/files/1/2019/aug-2017-revised-committee-responsibilities-20190220.pdf> (Note: this is a bit dated and is in need of a slight "refresh");
- (2) <https://presbytery-wnc.s3.amazonaws.com/files/1/2018/2018-descriptions-for-division-chairs-approved-by-council-1-13-2018.pdf>

- ii) Agendas also help prevent "Mission Creep".

Mission creep occurs **when an organization (committee) takes on new (few) activities that lie slightly outside (inside) the core purpose**. Gradually, as efforts and resources flow in that direction, the ~~organization's~~ (committee's) outcomes ~~shift~~ (diminish). The temptation for mission creep usually comes when funding is tight (and time and energy follows).

2. Setting the Agenda.

- i) **Presbytery Staff:** "I'm from the presbytery, and I'm here to help..."

Honestly, presbytery staff assigned to your committee are there to help you set the committee's agenda. Please work with them to do so. This system provides continuity from year-to-year as committee members and chairpersons change. Also, the staff provide an additional conduit to the Council to ensure your committee's work gets the attention it needs.

- ii) **Previous Chairs:** We have found that many of our committees work more efficiently year-to-year with a chairperson and vice chairperson; the vice assumes the chair the following year. Contact the previous chairperson to see what has and has not been done previously.

- iii) **Minutes:** Reading over previous minutes will help in establishing an agenda going forward.

- iv) **The Committee Itself:** After talking over the agenda with staff, distribute a draft agenda before your meeting to the committee and ask for any additions or corrections. We work in groups for a reason; there's simply too much to be remembered by one person and creativity abounds in a group.

MEETING MINUTES:

1. WHY?

- a. They ensure that the mission of the committee continues from meeting to meeting, year to year. With minutes, you don't have to begin at the starting line each time and can simply "pick-up where you left off."
- b. Accountability: the minutes serve as a record and is a vehicle to hold us accountable.

2. WHO?

- a. Preferably the "Vice Chair" of the Committee.
- b. Second choice would be someone on the committee who is particularly gifted at the task.
- c. Third choice, staff -but I'll tell you this is not my strong suit, and it means I won't be as available to assist the chairperson in keeping the meeting on-track
- d. Absolutely should avoid having the Chairperson taking minutes.

3. HOW?

- a. Work from the agenda, use it as a template.
- b. Better yet, use an actual template (that has the agenda incorporated into it).
- c. Know the art of what to leave out, as well as what to keep in.
 - i. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/how-to-write-meeting-minutes>
 - ii. https://www.asaecenter.org/resources/articles/an_magazine/2016/september-october/dos-and-donts-for-meeting-minutes

4. NOW WHAT?

- a. Distribute for corrections. As soon as the person recording the minutes can produce a draft, distribute that draft to those in attendance (or at least the chair, vice chair, and staff) for corrections and additions.
- b. Approve the final draft.
- c. Final Distribution
 - i. File
 - ii. Staff (usually Billy and Tonya, but may vary depending on staff assignments)
 - iii. Council
 1. Division Chair
 2. Council Chair
 3. Council Vice Chair

GO TELL IT FROM THE MOUNTAIN?

My committee has done great work and we have an event/opportunity to share with the wider presbytery. Now what?

1. **Identify your audience.**

Is it truly for the entire presbytery, or a sub-set like mission-minded elders in Gaston County or left handed elders with red hair in Mitchel-Avery-Yancy?

2. **Distribute.** Tailor the message to the audience and distribute it where they'll receive it.

REPEAT the message more times than you assume is necessary.

- i) Weekly email "blast" from the presbytery office, entitled "What's Happening..."
- ii) Presbytery's website
- iii) Targeted emails
- iv) Presbytery's YouTube Channel
- v) Presbytery's Facebook pages
- vi) "the darkweb" of Facebook groups tangential to the presbytery like pastors in a certain geographic area. No joke, there may be some informal networking going on that we're simply unaware of.
- vii) Word of mouth. It's been our hope that congregations in clusters would network and support one another. If your message is tailored to a specific cluster(s), why not utilize these networks?

WORK OF THE CLERK

Book of Order G-3.0104

Each council shall elect a clerk who shall record the transactions of the council, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, maintain any required registers, preserve its records, and furnish extracts from them when required by another council of the church. Such extracts, verified by the clerk, shall be evidence in any council of the church. The clerk of the session shall be a ruling elder elected by the session for such term as it may determine. The clerk of a presbytery, a synod, and the General Assembly shall be called stated clerk, shall be elected by the council for a definite term as it may determine, and must be a ruling elder or minister of the Word and Sacrament. A stated clerk may be removed from office prior to completion of his or her term of service through the use of the process outlined in [G-3.0110](#).

PWNC Standing Rules, II, E.

Stated Clerk's Duties. The Stated Clerk shall be elected by the Presbytery and serve the Presbytery as its constitutional officer. The Stated Clerk shall perform those duties and functions prescribed in the Book of Order and those agreed upon by the General Council. He or she shall annually arrange for the records of all Sessions to be reviewed. Subject to the approval of the General Council, the Stated Clerk may appoint an Assistant Stated Clerk, whose term of service shall be the same as the Stated Clerk's. Should an investigating committee be necessary, the Stated Clerk and the chairs of the General Council and the Committee on Ministry, with consultation of the General Presbyter shall together appoint one, following the "Rules of Discipline" in the Book of Order. The Stated Clerk shall be elected for a term set by Presbytery, and is eligible to be re-elected.

1. Arranging and preserving minutes of Presbytery meetings.
2. Support the work of clerks of Session
3. Respond to constitutional (*Book of Order*) questions from churches
4. Supporting work of General Council
 - a. Supporting and providing updates on Administrative Commissions
 - b. Identifying the transitions underway in churches
5. Supporting work of Committee on Ministry
 - a. Same as a & b above
 - b. Working as liaison with certain churches in their transitions, including PNCs
6. Overseeing Boundary Training per Presbytery's Policies on Sexual Misconduct and Child and Youth Protection.
7. Organizing and overseeing disciplinary process
8. Civil legal matters: because certified extracts from presbytery records are frequently needed.