



# Manual of Operations

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**2023**

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**Maumee Valley Presbytery**

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**Our Guiding Principles  
Maumee Valley Presbytery**

**HISTORY**

5 Maumee Valley Presbytery is a regional expression of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The Presbytery includes PCUSA congregations in Northwest Ohio and Southeastern Michigan.

One of three predecessor presbyteries, the Lima Presbytery was established in April 1887

The Maumee Valley Presbytery, constituted in 1972, was formed out of the former Maumee Presbytery and churches from the former Wooster and Southern Michigan Presbyteries as well  
10 as Maumee.

Among the initial goals identified with the new Presbytery were:

1. An emphasis on strengthening the churches, especially the so-called small churches;
2. A Presbytery structured to serve the churches rather than primarily the churches serving the Presbytery. “from Reflections for Maumee Valley Presbytery from  
15 Elwain Dreyer, Executive from 1972-1983 as told to Rev. Jim Shotwell at the Dreyer Farm in Cardington, Ohio”

**OUR MISSION AND CALL**

20 We are called by Jesus Christ in this time and place:

Living as covenant community;

Transforming lives and communities in Jesus Christ;

Making healthy transitions as leaders and congregation

25 Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work. Administration is the process by which a council implements its decisions. Administration enables the church to give effective witness in the world to God’s new creation in Jesus Christ, and strengthens the church’s witness to the mission of the triune God. Maumee Valley Presbytery provides examples of policies and procedures that may be gathered into this  
30 advisory handbook. These examples illumine practices required by the Constitution {of the Presbyterian Church, USA} as practiced by Maumee Valley Presbytery. This handbook offers information that enhances, or secures the ministry of this Presbytery.

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## **PRACTICES THAT REFLECT OUR VALUES AND PRACTICES**

### **A. We are a covenant community in Jesus Christ.**

40 Grounded in the Biblical Narrative and nourished by the Reformed Tradition, we are leaders of disciples of Jesus Christ who have been called by ordination to ministries of discernment, governance and equipping the saints for the work of ministry.

45 Our ministry, mission and identity are grounded in living as covenant community. We seek to engage in partnership for the transformation of life in Jesus Christ.

50 We live generously out of the abundant life initiated by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In receiving and adopting the essential tenets of the Reformed faith, we affirm that the church of the past, present, and future reflect the movement of the Spirit in particular ages.

We value each individual as a child of God, and seek authenticity.

55 The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the church universal and God's word to disciples individually.

### **B. We worship and proclaim.**

60 We encourage testimony to and proclamation of Jesus Christ.

We listen to God through the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit.

65 We commit time to listen to the Triune God, through the testimony of the Old and New Testaments.

70 We practice disciplines of spirituality including prayer, study of Scripture and the Confessions of the Church, the Renewal of Baptism, the covenant of our Ordination vows, singing of psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs, silence, sacred conversations, and working for the reconciliation of Christ in the world. We are called to live holy and joyful lives.

### **C. We practice Stewardship.**

We are challenged by the urgent and continually unfolding needs of God's changing world.

75 We commit ourselves to practices of vital congregations and leaders who are making healthy transitions.

We practice sacred trust, respecting colleagues and other disciples. We believe the offices of ordered ministries are a gift to be used for the building up of the body of Christ.

80

**D. We gather.**

We value ministries and congregations working together in unique and different ways based upon authentic relationships, maintaining mutuality, mindful of how our actions and words affect others.

85

We value the processes of discernment, parity of ordered ministries, respectful discourse.

We are formed and shaped by the principles of Order and Government, namely that:

90

- a. God alone is Lord of the conscience;
- b. Every Christian church is entitled to declare the terms of admission into its communion;
- c. Truth is in order to goodness;
- d. We exercise mutual forbearance towards one another;
- e. Election of leaders is within that “society”;
- f. All church power is ministerial and declarative;
- g. The value of ecclesiastical discipline is to contribute to justice, and the countenance and blessing of the Great Head of the Church, Jesus Christ. <sup>1</sup>

95

100

We reflect the rich diversity of trust in Jesus Christ and accept that faith in Him is larger than any one individual disciple or congregation’s expression of the particulars of that faith.

105

It is the duty of Presbyters to be active members, serving on committees and task forces, and attending meetings of this governing body.

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<sup>1</sup> F – 3.01 Historic Principles of Church Order

**Purpose of This Manual  
Maumee Valley Presbytery**

**THIS MANUAL OF OPERATIONS**

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The purpose of the Manual of Operations (Standing Rules, Operational Procedures, and Policies and Procedures) is to outline the core values of the covenant community of Maumee Valley Presbytery; to fulfill legal and financial responsibilities as have been granted by the States of Ohio and Michigan, and to describe the workings of the units of the Presbytery.

10

**AMENDMENTS TO THE MANUAL OF OPERATIONS**

15 The Standing Rules may be suspended or amended by a two-thirds majority of presbyters present and voting, provided that proposed amendments have been submitted in writing at the previous stated meeting or have been distributed in written form in connection with the call for the meeting.

20 By previously approved methods of Amending the Manual of Operations, on 11/12/2012, The Guiding Principles [Core Values, Our Covenant Life (excluding Constitutional Questions) may be amended by Council (i.e. now Central Support)].

25 Amendments to the Operational Procedures may be made by the Central Support Commission of Maumee Valley Presbytery. If changes are made to the standing committees, the Central Support Commission shall, after consultation with affected parties, refer proposed changes to a stated meeting of the presbytery.

By previously approved methods on 11/12/2012 the Appendices are amended by action of the ministry team and presented to the Presbytery of Maumee Valley at a stated meeting of Presbytery.

30 The Policies and Procedures are instituted by the Commission overseeing that ministry/functions, in this time of transition, per Central Support Commission, April 20, 2020 meeting.

**Standing Rules  
Maumee Valley Presbytery**

**Authority**

5 Maumee Valley Presbytery (“the Presbytery”) is a council of the Presbyterian Church, USA (“PC(USA)”) (G-3.03) and subject to the Constitution of the PC(USA) (“the Constitution”), constituted by the Book of Order, the Book of Worship and the Book of Discipline. Nothing in these standing rules shall contradict the Constitution.

10 **Description of the Presbytery**

The Presbytery is a corporate expression of the church in Northwest Ohio and Southeastern Michigan. The Presbytery bears responsibility for ministry within the boundaries of the following counties in the State of Ohio: Allen, Auglaize, Crawford, Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Lucas, Mercer, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Van Wert, Williams, Wood and  
15 Wyandot, and the First Presbyterian Church of Shelby in Richland County. The Presbytery bears responsibility for ministry within the boundaries of the following counties in the State of Michigan: Lenawee and Monroe.

**Incorporation**

20 The Presbytery is incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio and shall have a statutory agent in the State of Michigan. The Central Support Committee shall be the Trustees of the corporation. Officers of the corporation shall be:

President – Moderator of the Central Support Committee

Secretary – Stated Clerk

25 Treasurer - Treasurer

**Members, Meetings & Officers**

Minister Members

30 Continuing members of presbytery are teaching elders (ministers), as described in the Book of Order (G-2.05). Ministers of other denominations, who qualifies under the provisions of G-2.0506, shall be enrolled as temporary members for the duration of their service within the presbytery.

Voting Privileges for Members and Commissioners

35 Continuing and temporary members of presbytery, commissioners elected by their respective sessions, and ruling elders serving as officers of the presbytery and moderators of continuing committees, who are ruling elders, are entitled to vote on matters coming before the presbytery. The following Ruling Elders, also have voice and vote:

- a. Current members of the Committee on Ministry
- b. Former Moderators of the Presbytery
- 40 c. Commissioned Ruling Elders in active service to a congregation

The following composition for commissioners elected by their respective sessions shall be:

Churches with a membership of up to 299 shall have 1 commissioner.

Churches with a membership of 300 to 599 shall have 2 commissioners.

45 Churches with a membership of 600 to 899 shall have 3 commissioners. Etc.

Corresponding Members and Visitors

Corresponding members and visitors are welcome to attend Presbytery meetings. The Presbytery may grant voice but not vote to corresponding members and visitors.

50

Meetings

The Presbytery will hold stated meetings at least twice each year (G-3.0304) and will adopt the number and date of the stated meetings on a yearly basis. The last meeting of each calendar will normally be the annual meeting of the corporation and will normally include the installation of the Presbytery

55 Moderator and other Presbytery officers.

Special meetings of the Presbytery may be called by five members of presbytery.

60 The most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be used to conduct meetings requiring deliberation or the setting or enacting of policy of Presbytery and its teams, committees and commissions, except where the Constitution provides otherwise.

These standing rules superseded all previous standing rules, by-laws, and procedures enacted by Maumee Valley Presbytery or its predecessor presbyteries.

65

Quorum

The quorum for meetings of the Presbytery shall be three ministers of Word and Sacrament and an equal number of ruling elders from at least three churches. Committees, commissions, and work groups may set their own quorum, and if not specified it shall be one half of its elected members. No unit may conduct business without a quorum.

70

Officers

The officers of the Presbytery are moderator, vice moderator, stated clerk, treasurer, and immediate past moderator.

75 Moderator: The Moderator shall preside over all meetings of the Presbytery and shall be the Vice Moderator of the Central Support Committee, with vote, and shall appoint all committees except those elected or otherwise named, and may appoint moderators of committees.

80 Vice-Moderator: In absence of or at the request of the Moderator, the Vice Moderator shall perform the duties required of the Moderator and be a member of the Central Support Committee, with vote. Upon completion of a term of service as Vice Moderator, the Vice Moderator will normally be nominated for the office of Moderator of the Presbytery.

Immediate-Past Moderator: The Immediate Past Moderator shall be the moderator and a member of the Central Support Committee, taking office upon adjournment of the Presbytery meeting in which a new Presbytery Moderator is installed.

85 Stated Clerk: The Stated Clerk shall perform all the duties required by the Constitution, shall be a member of the Central Support Committee, without vote, and shall serve as the secretary of the



Central Support Committee. The work and compensation of the Stated Clerk shall be reviewed annually by the Central Support Committee.

90 Treasurer: The Treasurer shall keep an accurate and up-to-date record of the financial transactions and condition of the Presbytery and provide for the receipt and disbursement of all monies assigned to the Presbytery. The Treasurer shall have the authority to invest funds of the Presbytery in keeping with the policies and approval of the Central Support Committee. The Treasurer shall be accountable to the Presbytery through the Central Support Committee and shall submit all records for an annual audit under its direction. The Treasurer shall be bonded at 95 the expense of the Presbytery, have a thorough knowledge of accounting, and be present at all Central Support Committee and Presbytery meetings so as to effectively present and handle the business of the Presbytery. The work and compensation of the Treasurer shall be reviewed annually by the Central Support Committee.

### Election and Installation

100 The election of the officers of those essential for the fulfillment of the mission and ministry of the Presbytery shall normally take place during the last meeting of the calendar year of Presbytery.

Officers of the Presbytery, commissioners and alternates to General Assembly and Synod are normally elected by written ballot if more than one person is nominated for a particular position.

105 Officers (the Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Immediate-Past Moderator) will each be elected to one-year terms and may not be elected to the same office until three years have passed. The Stated Clerk and Treasurer will be each elected to three-year terms and may be re-elected to successive terms, without restriction.

110 Members of the Central Support Committee, other Committees, and Constitution mandated committees and subcommittees shall also be elected at the last stated Presbytery meeting of the calendar year. Elections shall be for three-year terms unless otherwise provided for in these Standing Rules or in the Constitution. Moderators of Committees will be elected by Presbytery for one-year terms and will be eligible for annual re-election for up to six consecutive terms.

### **Presbytery Staff**

A General Presbyter may be authorized, called, and employed by the Presbytery. The work and compensation of the General Presbyter shall be reviewed annually by the Central Support Committee.

120 The Presbytery may employ other staff as deemed necessary in order to fulfill its mission.

### **Suspension and Amendment of Rules**

125 These standing rules may be suspended or amended by a two-thirds majority of presbyters present and voting, provided that proposed amendments have been submitted in writing at the previous stated meeting or have been distributed in written form in connection with the call for the meeting.

When changes in the *Constitution* occur that place these standing rules in contradiction, the *Constitution* prevails.

**Operational Procedures  
Maumee Valley Presbytery**

**SECTION 1 – General Principles of Operation**

5 "Councils may designate by their own rule such committees and commissions as they deem necessary and helpful for the accomplishment of the mission of the church, and may create such structures jointly with other councils, in consultation with the next higher council. In appointing such committees and commissions councils shall be mindful of the principles of unity in diversity consistent with the provisions of the Constitution." G-3.0109

10 Each committee and commission will carry out its ministry comprised of ruling elders, teaching elders, deacons and members of the congregation, except when otherwise provided or designated by these operational procedures or policies.

15 A budget for each ministry area is proposed to Central Support Commission, who recommends to presbytery for approval.

20 Those committees/commissions with nominating function shall prepare a slate of nominees giving full expression to the rich diversity of the church of Jesus Christ and with consideration of both gifts and call necessary for the fulfillment of the mission and ministry, in accordance with G-3.0103.

25 All commissions, committees and teams are encouraged to promote meeting by electronic conferencing. Electronic votes must comply with the current policy on electronic meetings, and shall be reported in minutes which are approved by the ministry team.

30 Maumee Valley Presbytery ("the Presbytery") is a council of the Presbyterian Church, USA ("PC(USA)") (G-3.03) and subject to the Constitution of the PC(USA) ("the Constitution"). Nothing in these standing rules shall contradict the Constitution.

**SECTION 2 – Members, Meeting, & Officers**

Minister Members

35 Minister members of presbytery are teaching elders who have been received and enrolled in accordance with provisions in the *Book of Order* (G-3.0306). The committee on ministry or the presbytery itself will examine ministers seeking membership prior to their reception.

Election of Commissioners

40 The session of each church elects ruling elder commissioner(s) to represent the congregation at meetings of the presbytery. Church representation is as follows:

- Up to membership of 299 — 1 ruling elder
- 300 to 599 — 2 ruling elders
- 600 to 899 — 3 ruling elders
- 900 to 1199 — 4 ruling elders
- 45 1200 to 1499 — 5 ruling elders

From 1,500 members there shall be an additional ruling elder representative for each 299 additional members.

Presbytery urges sessions to select commissioners and alternate commissioners for an entire year; and shall notify the stated clerk of commissioners and alternates selected, including term of service.

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#### Privilege of the Floor

Privilege of the floor, with voice but not vote, shall be granted to the following persons resident within the presbytery:

55

- Moderator (or vice moderator), Presbyterian Women in Maumee Valley Presbytery
- Certified Christian Educators
- Certified members of the Administrative Personnel Association
- Certified members of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians
- Certified members of the Presbyterian Church Business Administrators Association

60

#### Corresponding Members and Visitors

Teaching elders in good standing in other presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); officers of other councils in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and officers of partner ecumenical organizations, who are present at any meeting of the presbytery, may be invited to sit as corresponding members with voice but without vote. Presbytery may grant privilege of the floor to visitors, with or without voice, for all or part of the meeting as may be appropriate in each instance.

65

#### Redress of Imbalance

When the number of ministers entitled to vote in presbytery is greater than the number of ruling elders so entitled, the clerk shall report this imbalance annually and shall invite sessions, on a rotating basis in the order of the church's date of charter, to elect an additional ruling elder commissioner until the balance is restored.

70

### **MEETINGS**

The Presbytery normally holds four stated meetings each year, normally on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the months of February, May, September, and November. Normally the February and November meetings begin at 10:00 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m., the May and September meetings begin at 3:00 p.m. and end at 9:00 p.m. The dates and times are set by Central Support Commission each year.

75

#### Attendance

Minister members, ruling elder commissioners, and ruling elders entitled to vote by virtue of office are expected to attend all stated meetings unless excused. Requests for excused absence shall be submitted to the stated clerk within three business days from adjournment of the meeting for which an excused absence is requested. For a church to be listed as excused, both the commissioner and the alternate must have approved absences.

80

All ministers on the roll of presbytery who are honorably retired or who are living or laboring outside the bounds of the Presbytery of Maumee Valley shall be excused from regular attendance.

85

#### Place of Meeting

The place for each stated meeting shall be determined in advance by the presbytery upon recommendation of the Central Support Commission. The date, time, and place for special meetings of the Presbytery, when duly called by five members of presbytery, are determined by the stated clerk in coordination with the moderator, and general presbyter.

90

#### Change of Place or Time of Meeting

Whenever it becomes necessary to change the time or place of any stated meeting of the presbytery,

95 the moderator, stated clerk, and general presbyter shall be authorized to secure another time and/or place of meeting, and to issue a call for that meeting according to the rules for calling a special meeting.

If it becomes necessary to cancel or modify a stated meeting, due to weather concerns or any other emergency, this decision will be made by the moderator, stated clerk, and general presbyter. This declaration would then afford the opportunity for an electronic/virtual meeting, which will comply with  
100 the presbytery policy for electronic meetings adopted for committees/commissions/etc.

## **PRESBYTERY DOCKET**

### Worship

105 Each stated meeting begins with prayer and incorporates worship. At the February stated meeting, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated.

### Proceedings

Each session convenes with prayer, followed by

- 110 a) Roll call,
- b) Seating of alternate commissioners and corresponding members,
- c) Introduction of new business for that session
- d) Adoption of the docket for that session.

115 A portion of each stated meeting will be devoted to events designed to enhance the ministry of the presbytery and its churches.

### Consent and Action Agendas

#### *Consent Agenda*

120 The stated clerk will prepare a consent agenda (omnibus motion) from recommendations submitted by presbytery officers, committees, commissions and task forces, provided that the items will not generate debate, contain housekeeping/routine matters, and do not require explanation.

The consent agenda will be distributed to members and commissioners no later than the evening before it is due to be considered. Items will be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any voting member, and these items will be dealt with on the action agenda.

#### *Action Agenda*

125 Action items are presented in the form of a motion. (Motions from presbytery committees and commissions do not require a second.) Substantive motions will be presented in the approved format and distributed to members and commissioners no later than the evening before they are due to be considered. (A sample format for presentation of action items is located in the "Forms" section of the presbytery manual.)

## **130 OFFICERS**

### Moderator

The vice moderator is normally installed as the moderator of presbytery upon the election and installation of a new vice moderator. The one-year term begins at the adjournment of the November stated meeting.

135 Person Description/Expectations:

- Possess an appreciation and love for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and for the ministry and witness of Maumee Valley Presbytery.
- Provide inspiration and encouragement to commissioners, elected personnel and staff.

- Represent the larger church to congregations and ecumenical agencies.
- Possess knowledge of Presbyterian polity and parliamentary procedure.
- Be available to visit congregations and/or ecumenical gatherings, as invited.

Responsibilities:

- Preside over presbytery meetings, guiding the presbytery in fulfilling its responsibilities.
- Moderate administrative commissions (for ordination/installation) as necessary.
- Visit committees as time permits, and encourage members in their service.
- Visit congregations upon invitation, as time and budget allow, interpreting the mission of the whole presbytery.
- Attend denominational and ecumenical gatherings as requested by the general presbyter and/or presbytery.
- Appoint investigating committees and committees of counsel in consultation with the stated clerk and moderator of the committee on ministry in accordance with requirements of the *Rules of Discipline*; and report appointments to the next stated meeting of presbytery.
- Make appointments to fill vacancies on presbytery entities (with the exception of the permanent judicial commission) and representation to ecumenical bodies between meetings of the nominating committee and presbytery.

Vice Moderator

The vice moderator is nominated by Central Support Committee and elected during the November stated meeting. The one-year term begins at the adjournment of the November stated meeting.

Person Description/Expectations: (same as for moderator)

Responsibilities:

- Discharge the functions of the moderator when requested by the moderator to do so, when the moderator is absent or is incapacitated, or when the moderator has moved from the bounds of the presbytery.
- Coordinate worship services at presbytery meetings in conjunction with the moderator.
- Coordinate with Central Support Commission the host churches for presbytery meetings for the following year, to align with planned programs.

Moderator Pro Tempore

In the absence of the moderator and vice moderator, the stated clerk is authorized to name a member or commissioner present to be elected by presbytery as moderator pro tempore for that meeting.

Stated Clerk & Treasurer

Position descriptions for stated clerk and treasurer are included in the presbytery personnel manual.

**SECTION 3 - Organization For Mission**

**Central Support Commission (Central Support Committee)**

The Central Support Commission shall be composed of nine (9) members elected at-large in rotating classes according to the usual nominating procedures, nominated by the Leadership Commission to presbytery to vote. The immediate past moderator of presbytery, the moderator of presbytery, and the vice-moderator of presbytery shall serve ex-officio with voice and vote. The general presbyter, stated clerk, and treasurer shall serve ex-officio and without vote.

The immediate Past Moderator shall moderate the Central Support Commission, taking office upon adjournment of the presbytery meeting in which a new presbytery moderator is installed.

The stated clerk shall record and preserve the minutes of each meeting.

185

The Central Support Commission handles only such administrative and programmatic business as may be referred to it by the presbytery. It may make recommendations concerning administrative and programmatic business as may come to its attention between meetings of the presbytery. Central Support shall have no power to initiate action except as provided below. No judicial business may be referred to Central Support. Central Support shall report at each stated meeting of the presbytery every item of business transacted. Its decisions shall be immediately operative wherever power has been conferred, but may be reviewed and reversed by the presbytery.

190

The following powers are assigned to the Central Support Commission, subject to presbytery review:

195

a) To develop strategy for the mission of the Church within the presbytery's geographic area, consistent with F-1.00, in collaboration with Leadership, Discipleship, and Mission Commissions, and to recommend to the presbytery appropriate actions to initiate mission in light of the larger strategy of the synod and the General Assembly.

200

b) To coordinate relationships with ecumenical bodies and agencies consistent with presbytery mission strategy, and recommend to presbytery new ecumenical partnerships or revisions to existing partnerships.

c) To consult with the synod concerning the overall mission needs of the synod, as well as the need for staff services in the presbytery.

205

d) To approve project grants and scholarship applications from budgeted funds.

e) To endorse grant applications to synod and General Assembly from churches and related entities.

f) To approve expenditures from designated/restricted funds, and in accordance with the purposes established for those funds.

210

g) To consider and report on all proposals and appeals for funding presbytery programs beyond the current budget.

h) To oversee financial operations of the presbytery, reviews financial statements and selected transactions, advises presbytery on financial matters, and recommends policies as needed.

215

i) To develop annual budgets in consultation with appropriate committees and structures of the presbytery, and presents budgets for review and presbytery approval at the November stated meeting. Central Support recommends budget adjustments as needed.

j) To approve contracts for the conduct of audits and financial reviews, and report results of such reviews to presbytery.

k) To function as the Trustees of the corporation, including the issuance of corporate resolutions of authority as may be necessary for the conduct of presbytery business.

220

l) To deal with all property matters requiring presbytery action under the *Constitution*, and consults with particular churches on such matters as insurance and risk management.

m) To approve requests from particular churches for permission to take actions regarding real property described in G-4.000. (Requests that fail to achieve unanimous consent will be referred to the presbytery.)

225

n) To provide for the maintenance of presbytery offices, furniture, fixtures and equipment.

o) Shall create a personnel sub-committee, who directs the work of employed administrative personnel, and with concurrence of Central Support to terminate or accept (between stated

meetings of the presbytery) the resignation of administrative staff, in accordance with personnel policies of the presbytery.

- 230 p) To nominate persons to serve on the presbytery's committees, commissions, and representatives at synod and General Assembly (excluding nominations to the Central Support Commission which are made by the Leadership Commission).
- q) To make recommendations to presbytery concerning proposed bills and overtures, including proposed amendments to the Constitution for the next General Assembly.
- 235 r) To propose the docket for meetings of presbytery, in consultation with the stated clerk, and general presbyter, moderator and vice-moderator of presbytery.
- s) To recommend locations for stated meetings of the presbytery.
- t) To review standing rules, manuals and policies, in consultation with the stated clerk and with committees and others responsible for implementing specific areas of presbytery mission; and
- 240 to recommend changes as appropriate, except in those areas assigned to another committee.

### **Leadership Commission**

245 The Leadership Commission (formerly Committee on Ministry) shall be composed of at least six (6) members, composed of ministers and ruling elders. The general presbyter and stated clerk are ex-officio members, without vote.

250 The work of the Leadership Commission is to provide support, resources, and care for our pastoral leaders. They will work with congregations, session, and pastoral leaders in all areas of their relationship, including pastoral transition, act on grant requests from individuals seeking support for conference, workshops, and other learning opportunities. They will work with congregations in exploring non-traditional staff models, as well as congregational redevelopment/transformation efforts.

255 The Leadership Commission shall have authority to perform those functions detailed below and those in D-9.0101a.

The commission shall serve the presbytery in the following ways:

- a. It shall visit regularly and consult with each minister of the presbytery. It shall report to the presbytery annually the type of work in which each minister of the presbytery is engaged, as well as report compensation annually.
- 260 b. It shall visit with each session of the presbytery regularly, discussing with them the mission and ministry of the particular church and encouraging the full participation of each session and congregation in the life and work of presbytery and of the larger church. (W-1.4002)
- c. It shall counsel with churches regarding calls for installed pastoral relations, visiting and counseling with every committee elected to nominate a pastor or associate pastor. It shall advise
- 265 with the committee regarding the merits, availability, and suitability of any candidate or minister whose name is contemplated for nomination to the congregation, and shall have the privilege of suggesting names to the committee. No call to a permanent pastoral relationship shall be in order for consideration by the presbytery unless the church has received and considered the commission's counsel before action is taken to issue a call. A call to a permanent pastoral
- 270 relationship shall not be issued until it has been approved by the presbytery. In the case of a church receiving aid in supporting a pastor, it shall confer with both the church and that agency of presbytery charged with arranging such aid before it shall recommend to the presbytery that a call to such a church be placed in the hands of a minister. The proper agency of the presbytery

- 275 shall present to the commission a statement of the presbytery's anticipated support of a pastor,  
which shall be attached to the call of the church.
- d. It shall counsel with sessions regarding temporary pastoral relationships, or when a church is  
without a pastor, and it shall provide lists of pastors, commissioned ruling elders, and qualified lay  
persons who have been trained and commissioned by the presbytery to supply vacant pulpits.  
280 Concurrence of the presbytery through its leadership commission is required when a session  
invites a temporary pastoral leader.
- e. It shall provide for the implementation of equal opportunity employment for ministers and  
candidates without regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, or disability. In the case  
of each call, it shall report to the presbytery the steps in this implementation taken by the calling  
group.
- 285 f. It shall have authority to find in order calls issued by churches, to approve and present calls for  
services of ministers, to approve the examination of ministers transferring from other  
presbyteries, to dissolve the pastoral relationship in cases where the congregation and pastor  
concur, to grant permission to labor within or outside the bounds of the presbytery, and to  
dismiss ministers to other presbyteries, with the provision that all such actions be reported to the  
290 next stated meeting of the presbytery.
- g. It shall have authority to appoint moderators for churches where there is no pastor, or where the  
pastor has been placed on administrative leave.
- h. It shall serve as an instrument of presbytery for promoting the peace and harmony of the  
churches, especially in regard to matters arising out of the relations between ministers and  
295 churches. Its purpose shall be to mediate differences and reconcile persons, to the end that the  
difficulties may be corrected by the session of the church if possible, that the welfare of the  
particular church may be strengthened, that the unity of the body of Christ may be made  
manifest.
- i. It shall exercise wise discretion in determining when to take cognizance of information concerning  
300 difficulties within a church, proceeding with the following steps:
- (1) It may take the initiative to bring the information which has come to it to the attention of  
the session of the church involved, counseling with the session as to the appropriate actions  
to be taken in correcting the reported difficulties.
- (2) It may offer its help as a mediator in case the session either finds itself unable to settle the  
305 problems peaceably or takes no steps toward settlement.
- (3) It may act to correct the difficulties if requested to do so by the parties concerned, or if this  
authority is granted by the presbytery for the specific case. When so doing, the committee  
shall always hold hearings which afford procedural safeguards as in cases of process,  
following the procedures outlined in the Rules of Discipline.
- 310 j. It may appoint administrative commissions for the ordination and/or installation of teaching  
elders and commissioned ruling elders.
- k. It shall nominate persons to serve on the Central Support Commission.

315 The Leadership Commission shall have authority to perform those Committee on Ministry  
responsibilities further described in the committee handbook published by the Presbyterian Church  
(U.S.A.). The commission also reviews and recommends policies affecting calls and/or contracts for a  
variety of pastoral and professional services. The committee also shall review a minister's request for  
vindication (D-9.0101a) and, in consultation with the stated clerk, may advise the on the most  
appropriate course of action.

320



### **Discipleship Commission**

The Discipleship Commission shall be composed of six (6) members, composed of ministers and ruling elders. The general presbyter and stated clerk are ex-officio members, without vote.

325

The work of the Discipleship Commission shall be to encourage and equip our congregations and leaders in discipleship, cultivating new and emerging leaders, overseeing the programming of the presbytery that relates to emerging disciples, equipping leaders with continuing education/training events to satisfy our Covenant of Sacred Trust (boundary training, etc.), and will seek to work with congregations collectively or regionally in the development of new collaborative efforts in Christian discipleship, giving particular attention to children and youth, worship, evangelism, congregational development, nurture the spiritual life of congregations and leaders, church administration, and the stewardship of God's abundance.

330

335

The Discipleship Commission will work with inquirers and candidates on behalf of the Presbytery as they move through the process of preparation for ministry as outlined in the Advisory Handbook on Preparation for Ministry from the General Assembly. Provide for the training, examination, and nurture of ruling elders seeking to be commissioned to pastoral service assuring that the training meets Book of Order guidelines (G-2.1002)

340

The Discipleship Commission shall have authority to perform those Committee on Preparation for Ministry responsibilities further described in the committee handbook published by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in particular, implementing the care and oversight process of those seeking to enter into ordered ministry, as detailed in the *Book of Order*. The committee may enroll inquirers, advance inquirers into candidacy or into the commissioned ruling elder program, certify candidates as ready for examination for ordination, and dismiss candidates, with the provision that all such actions be reported to the next stated meeting of the presbytery in accordance with presbytery rules and the *Book of Order* (G-2.0609). The committee nominates readers (and alternates) for the Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee examinations.

345

350

The Discipleship Commission also administers an education program for commissioned ruling elders, advises the presbytery of policies and procedures related to the program, and advocates for the role of commissioned ruling elders in the church. The commission receives and approves applications from persons desiring to enter the commissioned ruling elder training program, normally enrolls them as inquirers in the preparation for ministry process, provides care and oversight for such persons, and coordinates all aspects of their preparation for this ministry. Upon completion of basic courses, the committee may certify to presbytery persons ready to be examined and commissioned to a particular ministry.

355

### **Mission Commission**

The Mission Commission shall be composed of six (6) members, composed of ministers and ruling elders. The general presbyter and stated clerk are ex-officio members, without vote.

360

The work of the Mission Commission shall be to encourage and equip our congregations in mission individually and as networks. It shall connect congregations with appropriate resources for their ministry/mission, challenge congregations in the development of new collaborative mission initiatives, and act on mission grant requests from congregations seeking support for new collaborative mission and ministry initiatives, well-articulated growth-oriented goals (Isaiah 43:19), upgrading technologies,

365

and for conference, workshops, and other learning opportunities. They shall validate mission projects and fund-raising projects that are consistent with presbytery mission.

370

The Mission Committee will promote, encourage, and enable congregational participation in, and support of, Presbyterian mission, social justice concerns, and peacemaking initiatives, including but not limited to the presbytery's current mission connections:

375

- a) Mobile Health Fair
- b) Campus Ministry
- c) School Ministries of Ohio
- d) Kirkmont Center (Summer Camp and Retreat Center)
- e) Latino Ministries
- f) Ohio Council of Churches
- g) Partnership Covenant with Berea Presbytery in Mexico

380

### **New Worshipping Communities Commission**

385

The New Worshipping Communities Commission shall be composed of six (6) members, composed of ministers and ruling elders. The general presbyter and stated clerk are ex-officio members, without vote. Members should have experience, knowledge, expertise or willingness to undergo training in the area of New Worshipping Communities. Other individuals, including members and leaders of new worshipping communities, regardless of ordination status or congregational membership, may be invited by the commission to serve in a non-voting capacity when the commission determines such participation would support the commission's work and mission.

390

The commission shall serve the presbytery in the following ways:

395

- a. Establish, oversee, and dissolve all New Worshipping Communities and Fellowships, and their Task Forces/Leadership Teams. Each New Worshipping Community and Fellowship will be governed by a Task Force/Leadership Team authorized by the NWC Commission. The Task Force shall have responsibility and authority similar to that of a church session and appropriate to the context (including the calling of a leader), as determined by the NWC commission, and accountable to the NWC Commission and Leadership Commission in the case of pastoral calls.
- 400 b. Maintain a Manual that governs the establishment, development, oversight, and processes for NWCs.
- c. Strategize the overall continued growth of new worshipping communities within the bounds of Maumee Valley Presbytery.
- 405 d. Encourage and coordinate congregational efforts to engage in local or multi-congregational new worshipping community experimentation
- e. Pursuant to G-3.0109b, provide examination for leadership utilizing the approved terms of call, and dissolve the relationships of leaders of New Worshipping Communities and Fellowships. The membership status, pastoral calls, and ministry contracts of Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving New Worshipping Communities and Fellowships in Maumee Valley Presbytery will continue to be subject to the examination and approval process of the Leadership Commission (COM) in consultation with NWCC
- 410 f. Distribute presbytery allocated resources in support of New Worshipping Communities and Fellowships.
- g. Monitor and evaluate the progress of New Worshipping Communities and Fellowships.

- 415 h. Authorize the administration of the sacraments in New Worshipping Communities and Fellowships.
- i. Communicate regarding New Worshipping Communities and Fellowships, and report the commission's actions on behalf of the presbytery.
- 420 j. Recommend that presbytery charter a New Church when appropriate, in consultation with Leadership Commission.

#### **Commission for Churches Concluding Ministry**

425 The commission for churches concluding ministry (originally formed in 2016 as an administrative commission on dissolving and dismissing churches, or ACDC) works with congregations who have initiated a request to be dissolved or dismissed, or upon referral from the Leadership Commission are questioning their viability/sustainability and considering possible closure. In each instance, the Commission will visit with the Session and bring recommendations to presbytery for appropriate next steps. The general presbyter and stated clerk are ex-officio members, without vote.

#### **Permanent Judicial Commission**

430 The permanent judicial commission shall be composed of seven (7) members, according to terms and organization outlined in D-5.0102 and D-5.0201. The permanent judicial commission shall handle all matters referred to it under the *Rules of Discipline*. Elections are held in odd-numbered years, or to fill vacancies as needed. The stated clerk staffs the commission, coordinates training for commission members, and refers matters to it as necessary.

435

#### **Committee on Representation**

440 The committee on representation shall be composed of three (3) members, in accordance with provisions of the Book of Order G-3.0103. The committee shall fulfill responsibilities assigned to it in the Book of Order. The Committee reviews all nominations, consults with the committees which nominate and reports annually to the presbytery. The general presbyter and stated clerk are ex-officio members, without vote.

#### **Temporary Committees & Task Forces**

445 Temporary committees, task forces and ministry teams report to the appointing body. Unless otherwise provided for in the budget, expenses for temporary committees and task forces are charged to the appointing body.

#### **Investigating Committees, Committees of Counsel & Other Special Committees**

450 The moderator of presbytery appoints investigating committees (in consultation with the stated clerk and the moderator of the leadership commission) and committees of counsel (in consultation with the stated clerk), in accordance with requirements of the *Rules of Discipline*; and reports appointments to the next stated meeting of presbytery. The moderator, in consultation with the stated clerk, may also appoint special committees to deal with requests for vindication (D-9.0000), as necessary. The stated clerk will arrange training for investigating committees and committees of counsel.

#### **Conflicts of Interest**

455 Mindful of potential conflicts of interest, persons serving on presbytery entitles may speak but are to refrain from voting on matters affecting them or the churches or enterprises with which they are connected. Persons serving on presbytery entitles will not receive remuneration beyond reimbursement of expenses for duties performed in connection with their service.

460 **Resignation from Office**

Any person who is or becomes unable to perform the duties of office shall submit a resignation to the stated clerk, who shall present the resignation to presbytery at its next stated meeting.

465 Members of presbytery entities who move outside the bounds of the presbytery will be considered to have resigned from any office held (effective the date of such move) unless the person presents to the stated clerk reasons for remaining in office. Upon receipt of such a statement, the stated clerk will present it to the next meeting of the mission strategy group for its consideration and recommendation to presbytery.

470 It is the responsibility of all entities of the presbytery to encourage full participation of their members. A non-functioning member of any presbytery entity (except the permanent judicial commission) may be replaced by another member elected by the presbytery (or temporarily appointed by the moderator of presbytery) at the request of the entity. Requests for such replacements shall give details of non-participation, i.e. number of unexcused absences, etc. Before appointing a temporary replacement, the moderator shall consult with the vice moderator and with the presbytery's Central Support committee.

475 Appointment of a temporary replacement shall be reported to presbytery. Temporary appointments shall remain in force until the presbytery elects a replacement.

**Amendment of Rules**

480 While the Standing Rules are suspended or amended by the presbytery, amendments to the Operational Procedures may be made by the Central Support Commission of Maumee Valley Presbytery. If changes are made to the standing committees, the Central Support Commission shall, after consultation with affected parties, refer proposed changes to a stated meeting of the presbytery.

**Policies and Procedures  
Maumee Valley Presbytery**

5

The Policies and Procedures portion of the Manual of Operations includes the following:

- 1) A Covenant of Sacred Trust (includes our Sexual Misconduct Policy, Child Protection Policy, Youth Protection Policy)
- 2) Policy on Electronic Meetings and Digital Communications
- 3) Process to Fill a Pastoral Vacancy and Types of Pastoral Service
- 4) Policy on Involuntary Termination
- 5) Leave Policy
- 6) Authorizing and Training Specific Ruling Elders to Preside at the Lord's Supper Policy

15

There are additional policies, like the Financial Practices (approved 2/19/2013), Personnel Policies (revised 2022), and the New Worshipping Communities Manual (adopted 9/19/2023), along with the Committee on Ministry Manual, which are all posted at [www.maumeevp.org](http://www.maumeevp.org) under Policies and Procedures, or call the church office at (419) 423-9073

20

For Minimum Terms of Call for Pastors, CREs, and CCEs, visit [www.maumeevp.org](http://www.maumeevp.org), visit Documents and Forms for the current approved policy on minimum compensation.

**A Covenant of Sacred Trust**  
**includes Sexual Misconduct Policy, Youth Protection Policy, Child Protection policy**  
**Maumee Valley Presbytery**

**I. STATEMENT OF BELIEF**

We believe and proclaim that all people are created by God and made in the image and likeness of God. God values human life and intends that men, women and children have worth and dignity in all relationships. Scripture asserts that religious leadership involves a covenant relationship that presumes the trustworthy exercise of power (i.e. scripture exerts Ezekiel 34, Mark 9, 1 Timothy 3; likewise see *Book of Confession* 7.241).

**II. FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTHY BOUNDARIES AND SAFE CHURCH PRACTICES**

While the language in this document refers specifically to pastors, anyone serving at a Presbytery sponsored event is subject to the policies and practices of this Sacred Trust Agreement of the Maumee Valley Presbytery. The exception is that this covenant is guided by the following assumptions regarding the sacred trust of leadership:

- A purpose of this covenant is to serve as guide for authentic and appropriate relationships that model sacred trust.
- Sacred trust is present in all pastoral and staff relationships.
- By virtue of their office, pastors hold a unique power with those whom they have a pastoral relationship. In many settings the power relationship between a pastor and a parishioner, regardless of age, is disparate with the pastor holding more power.
- Adults have more power than children and youth.
- The mutuality of friendship is challenged when there is a disparity of power.
- When sacred trust has been broken, one task of the wider church is to promote healing of individuals as well as congregations.

The following acts are prohibited by this policy and will not be tolerated or accepted:

- Possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any function of the congregation or while using any property of the church
- Possession of, advocacy of the use of, or being under the influence of an illegal drug
- Consumption of or being under the influence of alcohol while leading or engaging in ministry specific to children, youth or at risk adults

**III. GUIDELINES**

**A. Sexual Misconduct and Inappropriate Physical Relationships**

Sexual misconduct of any kind between a pastor and a parishioner will not be tolerated. Upon receipt of a written allegation of sexual misconduct by a Minister of Word and Sacrament or a Commissioned Ruling Elder, the Presbytery will initiate a swift investigative process according to the “Rules of Discipline” in the *Book of Order*. If such an accusation is found to be true, the procedures set forth in the “Rules of

42 Discipline” in the *Book of Order* will be followed. Actions may be taken that include, but are not limited to,  
43 prescribed counseling, termination of call, suspension of ordination, financial remediation to the victim.

44  
45 Retaliatory actions towards reporters of allegations of the breaking of sacred trust will not be tolerated.  
46  
47

## 48 B. Definitions

49 1. **Sexual Misconduct** is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include:

- 50  
51 a. **Sexual abuse** as outlined in the *Book of Order*: “Sexual abuse of another person is  
52 any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to (1) any person under the age of  
53 eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental  
54 capacity to consent; or (2) any person when the conduct includes force, threat,  
55 coercion, intimidation, or misuse of office or position” (*Book of Order*, D-  
56 10.0401c).  
57
- 58 b. **Child sexual abuse**: Any contact or interaction between a child and an adult when  
59 the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult person or of a third  
60 person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior between a  
61 child and an adult is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the  
62 child. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the sexual abuse definition of a child is  
63 anyone under age eighteen.  
64
- 65 c. **Sexual harassment**: The unwelcome sexual advances, or requests for sexual  
66 favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or more of  
67 the following is alleged to have happened:  
68
- 69 • Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or  
70 condition of an individual’s employment, or their continued status in an  
71 institution.
  - 72 • Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for  
73 employment decisions affecting an individual.
  - 74 • Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with  
75 an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or  
76 offensive working environment.
  - 77 • An individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual jokes, unwelcome or  
78 inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade,  
79 and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children.
  - 80 • Physical contact that is excessive, unwelcome or sexually stimulating.
- 81
- 82 d. **Sexual assault**: contact by force, threat, or intimidation; unwelcome  
83 touching or fondling that is injurious to the physical or emotional health of  
84 another.  
85
- 86 e. **Sexual language that is** offensive, obsessive or suggestive.

87  
88                   f. **Voyeurism** is unwelcome visual fixation on a person of any age  
89

- 90           2.     **Sexual malfeasance is defined as** sexual activities within a professional ministerial relationship  
91           that involves misuse of office or position arising from the professional ministerial relationship,  
92           regardless of the age of the parishioner.  
93
- 94           3.     **Physical abuse is defined as** bodily harm which is deliberate and intentional.  
95
- 96           4.     **Neglect is defined as** reasonable suspicion or reasonable cause to suspect the failure of  
97           parents or other caregivers to provide for the basic needs of a child, youth or at risk adult.  
98           Basic needs include food, clothing appropriate to the weather, and shelter. Neglect may also  
99           include lack of education, medical, physical or emotional support.  
100
- 101          5.     **Misuse of technology is defined as** use of technology that results in sexually harassing or  
102          abusing another person, including, but not limited to texting or emailing suggestive messages  
103          and images sent to or from persons with whom one has a ministerial relationship. When this  
104          includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse. There is never an  
105          expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by a church or  
106          church entity or within the context of ministry whether from person to person or posted or  
107          made public.  
108

### 109 **C. Child and Youth Protection**

110  
111     The following guidelines are provided for modeling relationships of sacred trust:  
112

- 113     • **Rule of Three** - Situations in which one unrelated adult and one child/youth are alone should be  
114     avoided. Whenever practical, there should be at least three people (one adult and two children/youth  
115     or two adults and one child/youth) present.
- 116     • **Transparency of Interactions Between Adults and Children** - During counseling of children or youth,  
117     an unobstructed view into the space is required. If there is no window, the door to the room must  
118     remain open for the entire counseling session. Adults who minister with children and youth are  
119     strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile. All church  
120     sponsored networks should have at least two adult administrators who monitor the content and  
121     appropriate conversations.
- 122     • **Windows in all Classroom Doors** - It is recommended that all rooms used for children or youth have a  
123     window in the door, or a means that provides an unobstructed view of the entire room at all times.
- 124     • **Advance Notice to Parents** - Parents will be given advance notice and full information regarding  
125     events in which their children will participate. In the event that a leader will be alone with a child or a  
126     youth, a parent will be notified and will be required to give written permission in advance for their  
127     child's participation.  
128

### 129 **D. Dating relationships Between Pastor and Parishioner**

130



131 Should there be a mutual interest in pursuing a romantic relationship between a single pastor and a single  
132 parishioner, the best course of action is for one or the other, either the pastor or the parishioner, to choose a  
133 different faith community during their courtship.

134

#### 135 **E. Beginnings and Endings of Professional Relationships**

136

137 Pastoral relationships are based upon sacred trust. The pastor of a local church shares in the  
138 congregation's moments of joy, grief, struggle, victory, birth, life, and death by virtue of his or her office.  
139 While relationships of an enduring nature may evolve over the course of time, the specific sacramental,  
140 ecclesiastical and pastoral responsibilities are time specified by mutual agreement between the leader, the  
141 congregation and the Presbytery. The beginning and ending dates are mutually approved by the  
142 congregation, or Council (Session) of the Congregation, the individual providing pastoral functions, and the  
143 Presbytery of Maumee Valley.

144

145 Therefore, after the ending of a pastoral relationship, the Minister of Word and Sacrament or  
146 Commissioned Ruling Elder may not, at the request of a member of the former congregation, officiate at  
147 any wedding, funeral, baptism, Bible study or prayer gathering except upon invitation from the Moderator  
148 of the Session or from the clerk of session if unable to contact the moderator. The departed pastoral  
149 leader is expected to refuse invitations from individuals to perform pastoral responsibilities. The departed  
150 Minister of Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Ruling Elder, may not offer professional services to  
151 former parishioners, offer insights concerning congregational life, or perform any pastoral function related  
152 to the congregation, regardless of the distance from the congregation.

153

#### 154 **F. Financial Situations**

155

- 156 • Pastors should not use their knowledge of a parishioner's financial position for personal gain.
- 157 • Pastors should not seek money for personal use from members of the congregation they serve.
- 158 • Pastors should not borrow money from nor loan money to members of the congregation.
- 159 • Pastors should not borrow money from the congregation they serve without making sure that the loan  
160 is a secured loan and that proper legal documents are signed. Such loans ordinarily will be for the  
161 purchase of a home and would ordinarily, be part of the call to the congregation. Full disclosure to the  
162 congregation must be part of this process. The status of the loan needs to be reported annually to the  
163 congregation and to the Committee on Ministry. When this loan is paid off, it should be reported to  
164 the General Presbyter and/or the Committee on Ministry.
- 165 • Pastors should make sure that all money they handle for the congregation be recorded properly and  
166 used as the donor instructed.
- 167 • All clergy need to be aware of the power associated with money and should not use their position to  
168 manipulate others for their personal gain whether within the church, their personal lives, or within the  
169 workforce.
- 170 • Pastors shall not take on the role of executor for an estate of a non-relative, or to have financial power  
171 of attorney for a non-relative, or to be placed in a position to handle financial matters involving non-

172 relatives. (This particular point applies to pastors only, and not to other members or friends of the  
173 Presbytery.)

- 174 • Upon leaving a particular pastoral service, arrangements need to be made by the departing pastor for  
175 the full repayment of any loans or financial commitments within the church.

176

#### 177 **G. Use of Internet and Social Networking**

178 As an ever increasing number of people use and prefer digital communication over other forms, it is  
179 essential that the church be present in this mission field. Social networking sites, on-the-spot  
180 communication devices and email can enhance communication, faith sharing and deepen  
181 relationships.

- 182 • **An assumption is made within these standards that all virtual communication is public.** All  
183 communication sent digitally (email, social networking sites, texts, notes, posts, and other forms of  
184 digital communications) is not considered to be confidential. Virtual communication is sometimes  
185 shared and reposted to others.
- 186 • **Definitions of “Friend” may differ in the virtual and physical worlds.** In the “virtual world”, friend can  
187 mean anyone with whom you are willing to communicate in that medium. In the physical world,  
188 expectations of intimacy, self-disclosure, and mutuality differ. Adults who minister to children and  
189 youth are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile.  
190 Adults should not submit “friend requests” to minors or youth as youth may not be comfortable  
191 declining such requests due to the disparity of power. If an adult chooses to accept friend requests  
192 from minors or youth associated with their community of faith, other adult leaders must have full  
193 access to all aspects of that adult’s profile and correspondence.
- 194 • **Boundaries between personal life and sacred trust relationships need to be carefully managed.**  
195 Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Ruling Elders who want to connect via a social  
196 networking website or apps with members of their church are strongly encouraged to set up a group  
197 account that all parishioners may join. When one ministry ends, the minister should no longer be  
198 involved in any comments about the life of the church.
- 199 • No church should post pictures of children on social media without written permission of parents or  
200 guardian.
- 201 • When possible, social media groups should be password protected.

202

#### 203 **IV. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO VIOLATIONS AND ALLEGATIONS**

204

205 At all times, the privacy and security rights of individuals are to be protected with utmost care. The  
206 Stated Clerk shall assure that physical means and processes are in place to protect individual rights.

207

- 208 A. Initial reports of violations of sacred trust will occur in a variety of ways. Neither an individual  
209 church nor the Presbytery can control who will be contacted initially. Therefore, it is important  
210 that all church leaders and employees be informed about the appropriate processes.

211

- 212 B. In response to allegations of sexual misconduct, members, persons in ordered ministry, and  
213 employees of the church should seek healing and ensure the protection of all persons. The  
214 privacy of persons should be respected and confidentiality of communications should be  
215 maintained.
- 216 C. Pastors, elders and deacons are considered mandated reporters of child abuse and shall report to  
217 the civil authorities, and to the General Presbyter or Stated Clerk, any suspected incidents of  
218 physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of children and youth. Everyone has a particular duty to  
219 report allegations involving children within 3 days of knowledge of the alleged incident.
- 220 D. Allegations involving misconduct of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament or Commissioned  
221 Ruling Elders shall be reported to the Stated Clerk or General Presbyter. Allegations regarding  
222 ruling elders or church members shall be reported to the Clerk of Session or the Moderator of the  
223 Session for the purposes of investigation. The appropriate processes are described in the “Rules  
224 of Discipline” in the *Book of Order*.
- 225 E. The person receiving the initial report of violation of sacred trust from the accuser shall  
226 encourage and/or assist the accuser in submitting a written report concerning the incident to the  
227 General Presbyter, the Moderator of the Committee on Ministry, or the Stated Clerk of the  
228 Presbytery of Maumee Valley. The disciplinary process does not begin until the Stated Clerk has  
229 received the allegation in writing. If the initial report involves a minor, the Stated Clerk of  
230 Maumee Valley Presbytery and the Moderator of the Permanent Judicial Commission will be  
231 notified within 3 days of the receipt of the information.
- 232 F. The Legal procedures of the specific state, be it Michigan or Ohio, must be followed.
- 233  
234

235 **V. PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COVENANT OF SACRED TRUST**

236

- 237 A. Acknowledgement of the reading of the Covenant of Sacred Trust is a requirement of all  
238 Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Ruling Elders before a new call or new  
239 contract can be approved.
- 240 B. Maumee Valley Presbytery will provide boundaries training which includes child protection  
241 training every year. Every Minister of Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Ruling Elder is  
242 expected to attend a boundaries training event once every three years. If someone chooses not  
243 to attend the Committee on Ministry will take appropriate action.
- 244 C. The Stated Clerk will keep a record of those who attended.

**Policy on Electronic Meetings and Digital Communications**  
**Maumee Valley Presbytery**

The following rules regarding electronic meetings and digital communications are adopted for all presbytery committees, commissions, task groups and teams.

- 1) Every Presbytery Committee, Commission, Team and Task Group should decide on the methods by which they will conduct electronic meetings and digital communications.
- 2) Except where specifically prohibited, meetings of commissions, committees, teams, and task forces may be conducted as an electronic meeting, in whole or in part, without the participants being physically present in the same place. The chair is authorized to call the meeting electronically, or modify a previously set meeting to an electronic meeting, provided ample time and notice is given to members.
- 3) Electronic meetings may be conducted via a phone conference call platform for voice communication or through Zoom, Skype or other video conference platform for voice and visual communication.
- 4) Regardless of the platform, in each meeting those present shall have the opportunity to seek recognition and assignment of the floor, interrupt motions (points of order, appeals from the ruling of the chair, etc.), motion processing, and voting. No secret ballot votes are in order. The chair and clerk will strive for a best practices for the size of the group and platform used.
- 5) The presbytery maintains subscriptions to both aural conference call and video platform conference systems for the use of presbytery groups. These services are also available to congregations by prior arrangement with the presbytery office. The key factor that defines an electronic meeting is that all participants must have the opportunity for simultaneous communication.
- 6) Commissions, committees and teams, and task forces of Maumee Valley Presbytery may take action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting with like effect between meetings of the entity, provided that every member is contacted either in person or via email and no member objects. If contacted via email, verification must consist of an email reply stating “no objection,” or words to that effect. If any member objects or wishes to have discussion on the motion, then a special face-to-face or electronic meeting is required to take the action. Discussion via email in lieu of a meeting is not sufficient. Action via email, if taken, shall be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the entity as an action taken by unanimous consent between meetings in accordance with the rules. Electronic meetings should be conducted, rather than email, in order for a group to approve any actions that will be reported to the presbytery.
- 7) Training shall be provided for any digital tools in use by a committee (such as Smartsheet) or electronic meeting platforms. Electronic meetings are challenging and require a high level of skill from the moderator and participants. The presbytery staff are available to train groups and individuals.

**Process to Fill a Pastoral Vacancy  
and Types of Pastoral Service in  
Maumee Valley Presbytery**

5 While the appropriate leadership for a congregation is unique and best discerned in prayerful conversation within the church and with the presbytery, the Book of Order and presbytery recognize the following basic types of pastoral service:

**I. Installed Pastoral Relationships:**

10 Pastor, Co-Pastor and Associate Pastor: A minister of the Word and Sacrament in good standing in the PC(USA) may be installed for an indefinite period of time. (G-2.0504a) The process to search for an installed pastor is as follows:

- 15 a. The congregation shall seek the guidance and permission of the presbytery to proceed to search for a new pastor when (a) there is a vacancy, or (b) after the presbytery has approved the effective date of the dissolution of an existing pastoral relationship. (G-2.0801)
- b. The session shall call a congregational meeting to elect a pastor nominating committee (PNC). (G-2.802)
- c. The PNC, in consultation with the session, shall complete the Ministry Information Form (MIF) and have the MIF approved by the presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM).
- 20 d. The PNC shall conduct an open search. Once a candidate is identified, the COM will interview the candidate to ensure the suitability and availability of the candidate for the call. (G-2.0803)
- e. Once approved by the COM, the PNC presents the candidate to the congregation for vote. If approved by the congregation, the COM will consider approving the call, including the terms of call, on behalf of the presbytery. The terms of call shall meet or exceed any minimum requirements. (G-2.0804)
- 25 f. The session is responsible for annually reviewing the terms of call and reporting those terms to the COM. Any changes to the terms of call must be approved by the session and the presbytery.
- g. The installed pastoral relationship may be dissolved only by the presbytery. This may be done at the request of the pastor, congregation or the presbytery (G-2.0901).
- 30 h. When a congregation has two pastors serving as co-pastors, and the relationship of one of them is dissolved, the other remains a pastor. The relationship of the associate pastor to a congregation is not dependent upon that of a pastor (G-2.0504a).
- i. An associate pastor is ordinarily not eligible to be the next installed pastor of that congregation (G-2.0504a). A presbytery may determine that its mission strategy permits a minister of the Word and Sacrament currently called as an associate pastor to be eligible to serve as the next installed pastor or co-pastor. In such a case, the call from associate pastor to pastor in the same congregation must be approved by 85% or more of the members of the congregation and three-quarters (75%) or more of the presbytery present and voting (G-20504c).
- 35

40 **II. Temporary Pastoral Relationships**

Temporary Pastoral Relationships are established by the Session of a congregation with approval by the COM. These positions, as listed below, do not carry a formal call or installation, but may (as noted) involve a commissioning service. Contracts for the following positions are normally for the period of one year and must annually be renewed by the Session and approved by the COM.

45 Normally, a congregation will fill any pastoral vacancy with an installed pastor. However, in specific situations and if the need is presented, the COM, on behalf of the presbytery, may allow a congregation to fill a pastoral vacancy with one of the following types of positions:

Interim or Transitional Pastor or Interim or Transitional Associate Pastor

- a. An interim or transitional pastor is a minister of the Word and Sacrament invited to serve a church with a pastoral vacancy and in need of specific skills or particular work to be accomplished before the next installed pastor is called.
- 5 b. The session may serve as the search committee or may appoint a committee, that will report to the Session for its approval, with representatives of session and the congregation to serve as the search committee. Guided by the COM and the General Presbyter, the search committee will conduct the search.
- 10 c. The duties necessary for the interim/transitional pastor to fulfill during the interim period are determined in consultation between the COM, the session and the General Presbyter.
- d. The General Presbyter presents candidates, when available, to the search committee. The search committee may also participate in the search through the CLC system and by advertising the position as appropriate.
- 15 e. A contract is written between the session and the pastor and approved by the COM. The contract is normally for up to 12 months and may be renewed, if necessary.
- f. The COM, on behalf of the presbytery, concurs with establishing, renewing and dissolving the relationship.
- g. The interim or transitional pastor or associate pastor may not be called as the next pastor.

20 Temporary Pastor

- a. A temporary pastor is a minister of the Word and Sacrament who is invited to serve a congregation with a pastoral vacancy.
- b. The session may serve as the search committee or may appoint a commission with representatives of session and the congregation to serve as the search committee. Guided by the COM and the General Presbyter, the search committee will conduct the search.
- 25 c. Titles and terms of service for temporary pastor relationships shall be determined by the presbytery (G-2.0504b).
- d. A person serving as a temporary pastor is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the COM on behalf of the presbytery (G-30 2.0504b).
- e. A minister of the Word and Sacrament employed as a Temporary Pastor may be changed at any time to a called and installed position with an affirmative vote of 85% or more of the congregation, the COM, and a three-fourths (75%) or more of the presbytery (G-2.0504c).

35 Commissioned Ruling Elders (CRE)

- a. A ruling elder who has completed training through the presbytery's CRE training program and is a ruling elder in good standing of a congregation within the bounds of the presbytery may be commissioned by the presbytery to serve a congregation with a pastoral vacancy.
- 40 b. The COM and General Presbyter will work with the session of the church to find suitable candidates for the position.
- c. The contract between the ruling elder and the session must be approved by the COM on behalf of the presbytery. The contract is normally for no more than 12 months and must annually be approved by the Session and the COM.
- d. Before serving a congregation, the CRE must be examined by the presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission (G-2.1002).
- 45 e. The presbytery will authorize the commissioning of the ruler elder to serve in a validated ministry of the presbytery. In this commission, the presbytery may authorize the ruling elder to moderate the session, to administer the Sacraments, and to officiate at marriages permitted by state law (G-2.1011).

- f. The COM will specify the term of service, which shall not exceed three years but shall be renewable (G-2.1001).
- g. Normally, a CRE will not be permitted to be commissioned to the church where s/he is a member. If an exception is to be made, the CRE must be interviewed by the COM and approved to serve by at least three-fourths (75%) of the COM. The interview will include a discussion of appropriate boundaries and the requirement to follow the presbytery's policies and procedures for leaving a congregation at the end of the commission.
- h. The ruling elder commissioned shall work under the supervision of the presbytery. A minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be assigned as a mentor and supervisor (G-2.1004).
- i. A ruling elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in the specified ministry is no longer authorized to perform the functions specified in the commission (G-2.1002).

#### Extended Pulpit Supply

- a. When, after consultation with the COM, a session believes its mission and purpose are best served by a contract for extended pulpit supply, or when a pulpit supply preacher has preached 15 times in a calendar year (see Pulpit Supply, below), a contract may be initiated with a minister of the Word and Sacrament or an elder who has received training to preach.
- b. Normally, a member of the congregation will not sign a contract for extended pulpit supply with the session.
- c. This contract may be for up to one year and is renewable. The responsibilities of the extended pulpit supply preacher may include worship leadership and limited pastoral care. The contract must be approved by the COM.
- d. The session may invite a minister of the Word and Sacrament to officiate at the sacraments or an elder who has been properly trained.
- e. The COM may appoint the pastor providing extended pulpit supply to moderate the session.

#### Parish Associate

A parish associate is a minister of the Word and Sacrament who is a continuing member of the presbytery in good standing and who wishes to maintain a relationship with a particular church or churches.

- a. The pastor nominates to the session the minister of the Word and Sacrament.
- b. The expectations of the relationship shall be defined and approved by the pastor, parish associate and session and approved by the COM, on behalf of presbytery. The parish associate may serve with or without remuneration. The parish associate is responsible to the pastor.
- c. The relationship of the minister of the Word and Sacrament as parish associate shall terminate upon the dissolution of the call between the installed pastor and the church. The presbytery may dissolve the relationship between the parish associate and the church upon the recommendation of the COM.
- d. Normally, a parish associate may not be called to be the installed pastor or associate of a church s/he served as parish associate unless recommended by COM and approved by 85% or more of the congregation and three-fourths (75%) or more of the presbytery.

#### Pulpit Supply

The presbytery will maintain a Pulpit Supply List which is available on the presbytery's website (with password). The list is comprised of ministers of the Word and Sacrament, candidates for ministry in the presbytery, ruling elders who have completed the presbytery's preaching classes, or ministers from other reformed denominations who have been approved by the COM.

If there is an individual who will or who has served as pulpit supply for 15 weeks within a calendar year, the preacher is considered the regular preacher for the congregation. As the regular preacher, the pulpit supply

preacher must become the Extended Pulpit Supply The session shall go through the steps above to approve an ongoing contract, including approval by COM.

Pastor Emerita/Emeritus

- 5 When any minister of the Word and Sacrament retires and the congregation is moved by affection and gratitude to continue an association in an honorary relationship, it may, at a called congregational meeting, elect her/him as pastor emeritus with or without honorarium or pastoral authority. This action shall be taken only after Session has consulted with the presbytery's COM. A congregation normally waits a minimum of one year to approach the COM about conferring pastor emeritus/emerita status. The COM
- 10 recommends waiting three years. *See COM Resources: Guidelines for Pastor Emerita/Emeritus.*



1 **Policy on Involuntary Termination of Pastoral Services**  
2 **Maumee Valley Presbytery**

3  
4 **Rationale**

5  
6 The Presbytery serves as the third party to the Call between an installed pastor and the  
7 congregation. As presbytery, Teaching Elder and congregation must all agree to the Call, so  
8 must the three parties agree to its dissolution. “The Presbytery may inquire into reported  
9 difficulties in a congregation and may dissolve the pastoral relationship if, after consultation  
10 with the teaching elder, the session, and the congregation, it finds the church’s mission under  
11 the Word imperatively demands it.” Book of Order (G-2.0904)

12 When a pastoral relationship is terminated at the request of the Session or congregation, or by  
13 a Teaching Elder for reasons other than acceptance of a new call or retirement it shall be the  
14 policy of the Committee on Ministry/known in Maumee Valley Presbytery as the Leadership  
15 Commission to negotiate termination agreements between the Teaching Elder and the  
16 congregation through the Session. Teaching Elders are self-employed and, thus, have no  
17 unemployment security. Time and financial support are needed to allow the Teaching Elder to  
18 relocate.

19 Where there is conflict or disagreement between Teaching Elder and congregation, the first  
20 obligation on the part of both is to seek reconciliation. The Leadership Commission (Committee  
21 on Ministry) is available to serve as an objective third-party in efforts to secure harmony. Only  
22 after all efforts toward reconciliation have been exhausted, shall the LC/COM move to  
23 consideration of termination of pastoral relationship. At such a time, the issue becomes the  
24 peace and unity of the church and the health and welfare of the pastor.

25 **Procedure when termination is agreed upon**

26 When termination of a pastoral relationship has been agreed upon by the Teaching Elder,  
27 session, and LC, the following procedure shall be followed:

28 1. The pastor shall submit a resignation by requesting the Session to call a  
29 congregational meeting in the regular place of worship to act upon the pastor's request that  
30 the pastoral relationship be dissolved. A member of LC shall be present at this Session meeting,  
31 whatever the reason for dissolution be, to show support of the Teaching Elder and  
32 congregation for their period of transition.

33 2. The date set for the dissolution shall be irrevocable.

34 3. Wherever possible, the duties and responsibilities of the Teaching Elder shall not  
35 change between the date of resignation and its effective date. When change is warranted, it  
36 shall be with full agreement of the Teaching Elder, taking into consideration that some Teaching  
37 Elder functions are given by ordination, not by the position description for that call. If there is

38 conflict over the Teaching Elder’s work between the time of resignation and its effective date,  
39 LC shall decide if all duties of the Teaching Elder should cease.

40

41 **Procedure when termination is not agreed upon:**

42 When the pastor, Session and congregation are not in agreement regarding the terms of  
43 termination, the terms shall be submitted to a binding mediation. The mediator shall be  
44 appointed by the Leadership Commission (LC).

45 The termination agreement shall include but not be limited to the date of dissolution, all  
46 financial compensation, continuation of benefits agreements, housing agreements, vacation,  
47 study leave and manner of vacating the office and the manse.

48 The final written termination agreement is approved by the Maumee Valley Presbytery  
49 through the Leadership Commission.

50 **Compensation**

51 If Teaching Elder has no employment at effective date of termination, the congregation  
52 shall have responsibility for providing continued compensation by this schedule:

53 1. Full salary shall be paid for a minimum of six months. Housing allowance or  
54 manse and utility provisions of the call shall also be included for an equal period. If  
55 manse has been provided but it seems proper to arrange other housing for this period,  
56 it shall be provided by the church.

57 2. Full pension payment shall be paid for the support period identified in 1. above.

58 3. Any accrued vacation time for the current year shall be allowed in addition to  
59 the above termination provision. Accrued vacation time may be taken before the  
60 effective date of the termination but shall be clearly understood as vacation, not as  
61 early departure of Teaching Elder.

62 4. Accrued study leave shall be given only if there has been a specific educational  
63 event previously agreed upon between Teaching Elder and session..

64 5. Additional terms of termination compensation may be negotiated where the  
65 situation indicates.

66 6. Salary earned during support period agreement shall be reduced by the amount  
67 of income received by Teaching Elder from any alternate employment secured.

68

69 **Supportive Measures**

70 The Presbytery, through its Leadership Commission may:

71 1. Direct the Teaching Elder to proper counseling and training opportunities.

72 2. Through normal activities and Executive Staff activities, work with Teaching Elder  
73 toward relocation and with church regarding internal issues and concerns surrounding  
74 the dissolution of the pastoral relationship.

75 3. Provide support to heal the hurts caused by conflict situations and to clarify  
76 issues with regard to the church's calling of future pastors.

77 4. Provide recommendations for interim measures needed for the stability of  
78 congregational life.

### 79 **Termination For Cause**

80 If the dissolution of the pastoral relationship is for cause (such as, but not limited to,  
81 disciplinary action), the provisions for compensation outlined above do not apply. If the  
82 dissolution of the pastoral relationship is for cause, then compensation (if any) is at the  
83 discretion of the Leadership Commission in consultation with the Teaching Elder and the  
84 Session of the church.

**Leave Policy**  
**Maumee Valley Presbytery**

**I. Theological Grounding**

God created us to be in relationship with one another, to care for one another, and to participate in families. We are called to honor our parents, and to care for our siblings, our children, and our kin. As God chooses to enter into covenant relationship with us and the world, when a pastor is called to serve a church, both the pastor and congregation freely covenant to care for the other and to fulfill the responsibilities of their relationship. Thus, provision is made when a pastor needs to be absent from work in order to care for both self and family.

**II. Our Presbyterian Foundations**

As we are called to show compassion [F-1.0302d] and mutual forbearance [F-3.0105], and as the Church of Jesus Christ is called to be an example of the Kingdom of God [F-1.0304], congregations are bound to care for their leaders in loving, faithful, and generous ways.

**III. Purpose**

- A. To provide Sessions and other employing agencies minimum standards that are to be included in all pastoral contracts. It is anticipated that individual churches and employers will not feel limited by the minimum requirements of this policy and will respond to the need for leave responsibly and generously. Members of presbytery who are serving in other denominations or in a validated ministry may share this policy with their employer as a desired best practice in determining a contract.
- B. To ensure that pastors receive fair and equitable leave when required. It is anticipated that pastors will use this policy only when needed and will not abuse the generosity of the church.

**IV. Individuals Covered**

This policy applies to the following minister members of Maumee Valley Presbytery (“MVP”) as well as those serving in pastoral positions open to ruling elders.

- A. Those in Installed Relationships: Pastors, Co-Pastors and Associate Pastors
- B. Interim or Transitional Pastors and Interim or Transitional Associate Pastors
- C. Temporary Pastors
- D. Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs)
- E. Extended Pulpit Supply
- F. Pastors serving in other ministries of the Presbytery

Throughout the rest of this document, all individuals covered by the policy will be collectively referred to as “pastor.” “Session” shall encompass the session of the pastor’s particular church or churches or the official board of the ministry in which the pastor is presently serving.

45 **V. Medical Leave**

46 Policy Statement

47 MVP requires that in cases of severe illness (mental or physical), injury, or disability, pastors will  
48 receive, at a minimum, up to 60 days for a medical leave of absence with full salary and benefits.  
49 In addition, the leave may be extended an additional 30 days, with salary and benefits negotiable  
50 between the pastor and the session. Accrued and unused sick days (if applicable) may be utilized  
51 to meet the requirements of the policy.

52

53 Procedure

54 As soon as possible, the pastor will provide verification of the medical condition to the session.  
55 The leave will begin as soon as the verification is received or upon the date stipulated in the  
56 verification.

57

58 If the pastor is a member of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (“the Board  
59 of Pensions”), either through Pastor’s Participation or Minister’s Choice, the pastor will apply as  
60 soon as possible for short-term disability if the leave is to extend beyond two weeks. As the Board  
61 of Pensions’ short-term disability policy pays directly to the pastor 60% of effective salary after a  
62 fourteen-day waiting period, the church will be responsible to pay the pastor 40% of effective  
63 salary in order to ensure the pastor receives 100% of salary for at least the first 60 days.

64

65 If the pastor is a member of the Board of Pensions and medical leave is to continue past 90 days,  
66 application will be made to the appropriate long-term disability and death and disability program.

67

68 **VI. New Parent Leave**

69 Policy Statement

70 MVP requires that new parents shall receive at least twelve (12) weeks if the pastor is the birth  
71 parent, and four (4) weeks if the pastor is the non-delivering parent. Leave for pastors who are  
72 adopting shall be at least twelve (12) weeks if the pastor is the primary caregiver and four (4)  
73 weeks if the pastor is the secondary caregiver. Any pastor receiving new-parent leave will receive  
74 full salary and benefits. A pastor may lengthen the period of new-parent leave at his/her  
75 discretion by using accrued vacation and may also negotiate with the session for additional paid or  
76 unpaid time.

77

78 Procedures

79 Paid new-parent leave can improve the emotional and physical health of the new parents and  
80 improves the child’s well-being. It allows the parents to recover from pregnancy and the birth of  
81 their child as well as to adjust to the physical demands of the constant supervision of the infant.  
82 Paid new-parent leave is a tangible sign of support and can benefit the church as it strengthens  
83 the relationship of the pastor and the pastor’s family with the congregation.

84

85 Within 12 weeks of the confirmation by a physician of a viable pregnancy, the pastor will notify  
86 the session of the need for new-parent leave.

87

88 Leave normally begins at the time of birth or when the adoptive child is placed in the pastor’s  
89 custody.

90

91 In the event of medical complications requiring leave before the birth of a child, Medical Leave,  
92 above, shall be utilized, or additional leave may be negotiated with the session.  
93

94 **VII. Leave for Miscarriages or Still Births**

95 Policy Statement

96 Should a pastor or his/her spouse experience a late miscarriage (before 20 weeks), the pastor who  
97 is the birth parent may take up to two weeks for bereavement leave and, additionally, up to two  
98 weeks of medical leave. If more time is needed than these four weeks, then the medical leave  
99 policy, above, would be appropriate to follow. If the pastor is the spouse of the birth parent, the  
100 pastor may take up to two weeks for bereavement leave and additional time as negotiated with  
101 the session.  
102

103 Should a pastor experience a still birth (at or after 20 weeks) or neonatal death, the pastor who is  
104 the birth parent may take up to two weeks for bereavement leave and, additionally, up to four  
105 weeks of medical leave. If more time is needed than these six weeks, then the medical leave  
106 policy, above, would be appropriate to follow. If the pastor is the spouse of the birth parent, the  
107 pastor may take up to two weeks for bereavement leave and additional time as negotiated with  
108 the session.  
109

110 Procedure

111 Because of the wide range of physical and emotional needs that late miscarriage and still births  
112 can cause, the leave time necessary for each case cannot be dictated. It will be up to the pastor  
113 and the session to discuss, as soon as reasonably possible, the unique needs of the pastor and the  
114 church in such a devastating situation.  
115

116 **VIII. Family Leave**

117 Policy Statement

118 MVP requires that when a pastor needs to take leave due to the needs of a family member, family  
119 leave shall be granted of up to four (4) continuous or intermittent weeks, during which time the  
120 pastor shall receive full effective salary and benefits. If additional leave is required, the pastor shall  
121 negotiate for such leave with the session. A pastor may lengthen the period of family leave at  
122 his/her discretion by using accrued vacation.  
123

124 Procedure

125 Situations that may fall under this heading include, but are not limited to, an extended  
126 hospitalization or rehabilitation or the need to place a family member in long-term care.  
127

128 **IX. Bereavement Leave**

129 Policy Statement

130 MVP requires that when a pastor needs to take care of family matters leading up to or in the  
131 event of the death of a family member, family bereavement leave shall be granted up of to two (2)  
132 weeks, during which time the pastor shall receive full effective salary and benefits. If additional  
133 leave is required, the pastor shall negotiate for such leave with the session.  
134  
135  
136  
137

138 Procedure  
139 Bereavement leave is normally granted in the case of the death in the immediate family (e.g.,  
140 spouse, children, stepchildren, parents, parents-in-law, siblings) of the pastor. If the loss is related  
141 to a miscarriage, still birth or neonatal death, please see the above section.  
142

143 **X. Military Leave**

144 Pastors who serve in the Military Reserves shall ordinarily settle on all details regarding their  
145 military requirement in a Mobilization Agreement as part of their terms of call. These details  
146 should include the annual two-week training period and what compensation the church will  
147 provide during that time.  
148

149 It is recommended that the pastor not take a cut in salary for those two weeks, so that if the  
150 military reimbursement is less than the pastor's salary, the church makes up the difference.  
151

152 Further information, including the requirements of the applicable federal laws, The Uniformed  
153 Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), and the Heroes Earnings  
154 Assistance and Relief Tax (HEART), are available from the Board of Pensions.  
155

156 **XI. Additional Considerations for All Types of Leave**

157 A. As soon as possible, the pastor will notify the session and the MVP Leadership Commission  
158 of the need for leave. During the period in which the pastor is unable to carry out her/his  
159 responsibilities, the MVP Leadership Commission shall be in consultation with the session.

160 B. The session is responsible for the ongoing work of the congregation during the pastor's  
161 leave. The session should arrange and pay for pulpit supply, a session moderator, coverage  
162 for hospital and emergency visitation, funeral leadership, and whatever teaching and  
163 ministry for which the pastor was responsible.

164 C. Congregations are to be encouraged (implored) to respect the boundaries and privacy of the  
165 pastor while s/he is away on leave.

166 D. "Re-entry" may be scheduled on a full-time or part-time basis as agreed upon by the pastor  
167 and session.

168 E. Pastors on a leave of up to three months will be returned to the same or an equivalent  
169 position.

170 F. The expectation is that following leave, the pastor will return to service and remain in  
171 his/her current position for at least 12 months. If a pastor initiates dissolution of the call or  
172 contract within one (1) year following family or new-parent leave, any unused vacation time  
173 shall be credited against the leave.

174 G. Continuing Education days shall not be used for leave.

175 H. The time periods listed are intended to be an annual benefit and are not to be accrued.  
176

177 **XII. Death of Pastor in Service to Church with a Manse**

178 In the event of the death of any pastor while serving a congregation(s), the following provisions  
179 shall apply:

- 180 A. The minister's spouse and dependents, if residing with the pastor in the manse prior to the  
181 minister's death, shall have free use of the manse, utilities included, and/or the continuance  
182 of any housing and utilities allowances for a period of 60 days from the death of the  
183 minister.
- 184 B. From the 61st day through no more than the 180th day following the death of the minister,  
185 the spouse and dependents may, with the permission of the session, continue to occupy the  
186 manse and shall pay rent and utilities.
- 187 C. The manse shall be vacated:
- 188 i. no later than the 181<sup>st</sup> day following the pastor's death; or
- 189 ii. upon a 60-day advance notification to the spouse, or other responsible  
190 dependents, from the session between the 61<sup>st</sup> and 180<sup>th</sup> day following the  
191 pastor's death if the manse is needed to house a succeeding minister.





**Financial Manual of Operations & Personnel Manual  
Maumee Valley Presbytery**

- 5 **The FINANCIAL PRACTICES/MANUAL OF OPERATIONS, PERSONNEL POLICIES/MANUAL OF OPERATIONS, and NEW WORSHIPPING COMMUNITIES MANUAL are posted at [www.maumeevp.org](http://www.maumeevp.org) under Policies and Procedures, or call the church office at (419) 423-9073**