

**BYLAWS
AND
MANUAL OF OPERATIONS**



**PRESBYTERY OF TRES RIOS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

**[Adapted to conform to the new Form of Government
adopted by PCUSA, 2011:Effective 7-11-2011]**

**[Proposed amendments of the Next Steps Implementation Team 9-17-2018]
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

BYLAWS..... 2 - 4

MANUAL OF OPERATIONS..... 5 - 16

Mandate, Purpose, Method of Amendment 5

PRESBYTERY OF TRES RIOS (General Organization)

Section 1 Introduction 5 - 7

Section 2 Officers, Trustees, Staff and Regional Groupings..... 7 - 9

Section 3 Stated Meetings of Presbytery..... 10 - 11

Section 4 Administrative Team..... 12-13

Section 5 Pastoral Team14

Section 6 Vision and Outreach Team.....15

Section 7 Permanent Judicial Commission.....16

Revised

PRESBYTERY OF TRES RIOS BYLAWS

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this presbytery is: The Presbytery of Tres Rios of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is a council of the Synod of the Sun and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

ARTICLE II. BOUNDARIES

The geographical area of the Presbytery of Tres Rios includes the following counties in the State of Texas, U.S.A.: Andrews, Brewster, Coke, Concho, Crane, Crockett, Culberson, Ector, El Paso, Gaines, Jeff Davis, Glasscock, Howard, Hudspeth, Irion, Loving, Martin, Midland, Pecos, Presidio, Reagan, Reeves, Runnels, Schleicher, Sterling, Sutton, Terrell, Tom Green, Upton, Ward, and Winkler.

ARTICLE III. CONSTITUTION & AUTHORITY

The Constitution of the Presbytery of Tres Rios shall consist of the *Book of Confessions* (Part I) and the *Book of Order* (Part II) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

ARTICLE IV INCORPORATION

The Presbytery of Tres Rios of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been organized under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act exclusively for charitable, religious, and benevolent purposes under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future tax code. The management of the affairs of the corporation is vested in its members. The duties and responsibilities usually vested in officers of a non-profit organization are hereby vested in the presbytery.

The corporation's principal office is located at 1201 W. Wall, Midland, Texas 79701. The corporation will maintain a registered office and registered agent in Texas. The registered office may, but need not, be identical with the corporation's principal office in Texas, and the presbytery may change the registered office and agent as permitted in the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act.

ARTICLE V - TRUSTEES

Trustees shall be elected by presbytery according to the process specified in the Manual of Operations.

The trustees, as directed by presbytery and the Book of Order, shall receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property and facilitate the management of its civil affairs according to the constitution of the church and the laws of the State of Texas.

ARTICLE VI - ALL PROPERTY HELD IN TRUST

All property of the Corporation, both real and personal, is held in trust for the use and benefit of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as per the *Book of Order*.

ARTICLE VII. MEMBERS

The members of the Presbytery of Tres Rios shall be: all the congregations and teaching elders of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) within its boundaries. When the presbytery meets, each church shall be represented by one or more ruling elder(s) commissioned by each session as allowed by the PC (U.S.A.) Constitution.

ARTICLE VIII. PRESBYTERY OFFICERS

Officers of the Presbytery shall be established and defined in the Manual of Operations.

ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS AND QUORUM

Presbytery shall meet at least twice per year as required by the *Book of Order* and may call special meetings as necessary in accordance with the Manual of Administrative Operations. A quorum for stated meetings shall be: four (4) teaching elders who are members of presbytery; and four (4) ruling elder commissioners from four (4) different congregations. Presbytery shall only meet as a constituted body in a specific location and only those members physically present shall vote.

The presbytery shall use the most current addition of *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised* except where the Manual of Administrative Operations or the Constitution of the church shall provide otherwise.

ARTICLE X. ELECTIONS AND TERMS OF OFFICE

Presbytery shall elect officers, *trustees* and new classes, fill vacancies to its permanent and required teams and commissions, elect commissioners to upper councils at a stated meeting each year upon nominations by the proper group in accordance with the Manual of Operations.

ARTICLE XI. PRESBYTERY STRUCTURE

All necessary business of the presbytery as defined by the *Book of Order* shall be accomplished through the work of teams, task forces and commissions as described in the Manual of Administrative Operations. They shall meet as required by the Manual of Operations including meeting and voting electronically. Commissions may be appointed by presbytery for specific purposes authorized by the presbytery.

ARTICLE XIII. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Presbytery of Tres Rios will be January 1 through December 31.



PRESBYTERY OF TRES RIOS

MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

MANDATE

The Book of Order states that each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that council. The provisions of this Manual of Operations are subordinate to the Bylaws of the Presbytery of Tres Rios and to the *Book of Order* of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

PURPOSE

Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work. Administration is the process by which the presbytery implements its decisions, and 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.

This Manual of Operations establishes the rules for the interrelationships of the presbytery's various *ordered ministries* and agencies and for its internal operating procedures.

METHOD OF AMENDMENT

Presbytery may also amend this Manual of Operations by a simple majority of those present and voting in a stated Presbytery meeting. Amendments may originate with a team, member of presbytery or the session of a particular church.

The Manual of Administrative Operations may be suspended in whole or in part for the duration of the session of that meeting.

ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Proposed amendments to the Bylaws shall be sent to the stated clerk at presbytery office for distribution at least four weeks before a stated meeting of the presbytery. The stated clerk shall include the proposed amendment on the docket of the presbytery meeting and may include an opinion.

If, the amendment is passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, it shall become effective at that time.

ARTICLE XV. MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

A Manual of Operations shall be established that outlines rules and policies for administration of internal organizational operating procedures and interrelationships of the presbytery while in session and between meetings. The Manual of Operations supplements the By-Laws and may be suspended in whole or in part for the duration of a session as stipulated in the Manual of Operations.

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

Tres Rios Presbytery partners with pastors and congregations so that all feel respected, encouraged and inspired.

Our Presbytery is built upon the foundation of partnership. Why? So that all pastors and congregations feel respected, encouraged and inspired. We are partners. We work together and come alongside one another. We show respect for our shared Presbyterian tradition, heritage and form of government; for our diverse perspectives and ministry contexts; and simply for each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. We encourage one another not merely to feel good, but to build one another up, to demonstrate our care for one another, and to embolden each other in our ministry and witness. We inspire one another to move beyond ourselves, to see our communities and be empowered to serve and share the love of Jesus with those outside our churches.

Tres Rios Presbytery partners with pastors and congregations so that all feel respected, encouraged, and inspired. All our efforts should be filtered through this desired impact. How can we partner? Does it show respect? Does it encourage? Does it inspire?

Presbytery Vision and Mission Statement

[As a first order of business for the newly re-formed Presbytery, the Vision and Outreach team will consider the creation of a specific Vision and Mission Statement that, in accordance with the primary mandate of the Great Commission would set specific expectations for enhancing the lives of its congregations.]

Presbytery Structure and Governing Philosophy

1. Tres Rios Presbytery is governed by three teams; The Administrative Team, the Pastoral Team, and the Vision and Outreach Team:
 - The Administrative Team partners with pastors and congregations to facilitate the business of the presbytery and ensure proper fulfillment of the Book of Order requirements.
 - The Pastoral Team partners with pastors and congregations to encourage spiritual growth and guidance.
 - The Vision and Outreach Team partners with pastors, congregations and officially established projects of the Presbytery to inspire vision and service to the community.
- (1A) Each of these teams will consist of 4 nominated and elected members: two clergy and two ruling elders, each representing one of the four clusters. Each will serve a two-year term, with the exception of one clergy and one ruling elder from the first class who will serve a three-year term.
- (1B) The teams will function as commissions, having authority to make their own decisions and spend within their budget, with the exception of items that require a vote of the full presbytery.
- (1C) Each team will have the power to create sub-committees and task forces as necessary.

- (1D) Each team will participate in a “Team Meet” at least quarterly to report on their activity and decisions, presided over by the Moderator. This is not a decision-making body, but it intended to promote communication, transparency and collaboration among the teams.
 - (1E) Each team will be resourced by a part-time **staff** member and the full-time Administrative Assistant.
2. Tres Rios Presbytery is gathered two times per year as a presbytery.
- (2A) One of these gatherings will be a one day worship and business meeting planned by the Administrative Team.
 - (2B) The other gathering will be a “Big Event” to include a brief business meeting but primarily consist of an energetic, inspiring, equipping and/or mission-oriented event to be planned and organized alternately by the Pastoral Team and the Vision and Outreach team.
3. Tres Rios Presbytery is resourced by three part-time and one full-time employee as follows:
- (3A) Stated Clerk, paid part-time employee who resources the Administrative Team and fulfills the Book of Order duties of a Stated Clerk.
 - (3B) Pastoral Presbyter, paid part-time employee who resources the Pastoral Team.
 - (3C) Vision and Outreach Presbyter, paid part-time employee who resources the Vision and Outreach Team.

SECTION 2

OFFICERS, TRUSTEES, STAFF AND REGIONAL GROUPINGS

I. MODERATOR

A. Area of Responsibility

The moderator is the presiding officer at the meetings of the presbytery as prescribed in the constitution and has all authority necessary for the preservation of order and for the proper conduct of all business before the presbytery.

B. Duties and Functions

The moderator shall fulfill all the provisions of office as specified in *Book of Order*.

The moderator shall preside at all meetings of the presbytery, and at his or her discretion, may exercise the option to serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of any team, task force, committee or commission of the Presbytery.

The moderator shall attend an orientation and training session with the moderator-elect and all team and task force chairs as per Section 6.9.

C. Election

The moderator shall be elected at a stated meeting of presbytery from the members of the presbytery and shall serve until a successor is elected. The Leadership Recruitment and Representation Team shall nominate the moderator.

D. Finance

Expenses as budgeted shall be paid by presbytery.

II. STATED CLERK**A. Area of Responsibility**

The stated clerk shall perform those duties and functions prescribed in the *Book of Order*.

B. Duties and Functions

The stated clerk shall:

1. Record the transactions of the council, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, maintain any required registers, preserve its records, and furnish extracts from them when required by another council of the church.
2. Serve as parliamentarian for meetings of the presbytery.
3. Serve as a trustee and secretary of the corporation.
4. Attend all stated and special meetings of the presbytery.
5. Relate to upper councils and other agencies of the PCUSA.
6. Serve as a member of the Administrative Team.
7. Be responsible for the preparation of the docket for all meetings, and the presentation of the docket and Omnibus motion to presbytery for adoption.

C. Election

A stated clerk shall be elected by the presbytery at a stated meeting for a term of three years. The stated clerk shall be eligible for re-election. The Leadership Recruitment and Representation Team shall nominate the stated clerk.

Should a vacancy occur during the term of office, the moderator shall appoint an interim stated clerk, until such time as a new stated clerk is elected upon nomination by the Leadership Recruitment and Representation Team.

D. Finance

Expenses as budgeted shall be paid by presbytery.

A. Reports

The stated clerk shall annually report to presbytery, and as necessity dictates.

III. RECORDING CLERK

The stated clerk may appoint recording clerk(s) as needed at the meetings of presbytery.

IV. The Administrative team shall designate one or more persons as responsible for the following:

1. Prepare financial reports for each stated meeting of the presbytery, and annually report on the previous year's finances at a stated meeting of presbytery.
2. Administer the financial transactions of presbytery according to the adopted budget and any specific actions of presbytery. Remit the benevolences and per capita funds from local churches to the upper councils and agencies.
3. Assist the Administrative Team in the preparation of the annual budget of presbytery.

V. OTHER PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Presbytery may call or employ other professional staff as needed on a full or part-time basis in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order*. In the case of teaching elders, a call shall be properly executed through the Missional Ministries Team. In the case of joint staff, calls shall be executed by both the presbytery and the local church or other calling agency. All calls issued by the presbytery shall be accompanied by job descriptions which shall be included in this section of the manual.

VI. TRUSTEES

A. Area of Responsibility

The trustees, as directed by presbytery, shall receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property, and facilitate the management of its civil affairs according to the constitution of the church in *Book of Order*, and the laws of the State of Texas.

B. Composition

The members of the Administrative team and the Stated Clerk shall be the trustees of the presbytery.

VII. REGIONAL GROUPINGS OF PRESBYTERY

Regional groupings shall be as follows:

Group 1

El Paso Cluster

Shall include El Paso and Hudspeth Counties. Churches have been established in El Paso.

Group 2

Permian Basin Cluster

Shall include Andrews, Crane, Ector, Gaines, Glasscock, Howard, Loving, Martin, Midland, Reagan, Upton, Ward, and Winkler Counties. Churches have been established in Andrews, Big Spring, Coahoma, Monahans, Midland, Odessa, and Seminole.

Group 3 Mountain Cluster	Shall include Brewster, Culberson, Jeff Davis, Pecos, Presidio, Reeves, and Terrell Counties. Churches have been established in Alpine, Fort Davis, Ft. Stockton, Marfa, Pecos, and Sanderson.
Group 4 Concho Valley Cluster	Shall include Coke, Concho, Crockett, Irion, Runnels, Schleicher, Sterling, Sutton and Tom Green Counties. Churches have been established in Ballinger, San Angelo, and Sonora.

SECTION 3

STATED MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERY

I. AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibilities of the presbytery are delineated in the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

II. MEMBERSHIP

The presbytery consists of all the teaching elders and churches within its bounds. Each church shall be represented by a ruling elder, commissioned by the church session in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order*. The stated clerk will annually recommend any adjustments in Ruling Elder commissioner representation as required by the *Book of Order*. Sessions are strongly encouraged to elect commissioners and alternates for an annual term.

The members of presbytery's permanent teams, and commissions, the moderator, the stated clerk shall be ex-officio members of presbytery for the tenure of their office, if they are not ordained teaching elders. All commissioned ruling elders and certified Christian educators, who are ruling elders from congregations within the presbytery shall have voice and vote at presbytery gatherings.

All ruling elders who are ex-officio members, or granted voice and vote at presbytery meetings shall be counted as ruling elders for the purpose of the teaching/ruling elder parity.

III. ATTENDANCE AT STATED MEETINGS

Attendance at stated meetings of presbytery shall be required for every teaching elder, every commissioned ruling elder and certified Christian educator along with ruling elders commissioned by sessions of presbytery's congregations. Honorably retired teaching elders, and those who are in service outside the bounds of presbytery, are not required to attend, but are encouraged to attend and participate in the mission of the presbytery as they are able.

A request for excused absence, including clear indication of the reason for making the request, shall be communicated to the stated clerk by telephone, mail, email, or fax no later than 24 hours following the meeting for which the request is being made. A valid excuse for departing a meeting prior to adjournment must be given to the stated clerk.

IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS, TRUSTEES, AND STAFF

Presbytery shall elect officers and new classes, and annually fill vacancies to its permanent and required teams and commissions upon nominations by the Leadership Recruitment and Representation Team. Officers and new team classes shall take office upon adjournment of said stated meeting.

V. DOCKET OF PRESBYTERY

The docket of presbytery shall be prepared by the stated clerk and presented to the presbytery for adoption.

VI. MEETINGS

Presbytery shall meet at least twice per year, or at the direction of synod as required by the *Book of Order*, and may call special meetings as necessary. Each stated meeting shall be opened and closed with prayer, and at least one stated meeting shall include worship with the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and will ordinarily be preceded by training for new commissioners, provided by the moderator, moderator-elect and stated clerk. Both ecclesiastical and corporate business may be conducted at the same meeting.

The moderator shall preside at all meetings. If absent or unable to preside, the moderator's designee will preside.

Presbytery meeting packets will be sent by U.S. Mail, sent electronically, or posted on the presbytery website no less than two weeks in advance of the meeting and shall serve as public notice.

Special meetings of presbytery may be held when necessary. The moderator or the stated clerk shall call a special meeting at the request, or with the concurrence of three teaching elders, and three ruling elders all being from different churches. Notice of such meeting shall be sent electronically or by US Mail not less than 10 days in advance to the moderator and clerk of session of every church and to all other teaching elder-members of the presbytery and ruling elders who are members by virtue of office. The notice shall set the purpose of the meeting, and no other business shall be transacted. The quorum shall be the same as a stated meeting.

VII. VOTING

Only members/commissioners of the presbytery (members of the presbytery meeting/session as identified in the above Section II of this manual) present shall vote. No proxy votes shall be permitted.

SECTION 4

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Tres Rios Presbytery partners with pastors and congregations so that all feel respected, encouraged and inspired.

Membership:

The Administrative Team shall be comprised of 4 members nominated by the Leadership Recruitment and Representation Team and elected by the Presbytery. Each member will represent one of the four clusters. Members will serve a two year term in classes (with the exception of the first class who will serve a three year term) as follows:

Even year class: 1 clergy, 1 ruling elder

Odd year class: 1 clergy, 1 ruling elder

The Administrative Team will maintain a standing Leadership Recruitment and Representation sub-team, 2 clergy and 2 ruling elders in 2 classes representative of each cluster, to nominate the 4 members of each team, the Moderator of Tres Rios Presbytery, the members of the Permanent Judicial Commission, and the new class of the Leadership Recruitment and Representation Team. They shall fulfill the nominating and representation functions required by the Book of Order.

The Administrative Team has the power to appoint sub-committees and task forces as deemed necessary.

The Administrative Team is resourced by the Stated Clerk and Administrative Assistant.

Mechanics:

The Administrative Team will serve as a commission, having authority to make its own decisions and spend within its budget, except for items requiring approval by the presbytery.

- At first meeting of each new class, the Administrative Team will elect a team moderator and clerk.
- The team clerk will provide minutes of all meetings to the Administrative Assistant and Stated Clerk for Presbytery packets, Team Meets, record keeping, website and any other shared communications.

Responsibilities:

The Administrative Team partners with pastors and congregations to facilitate the business of the presbytery and ensure proper fulfillment of the Book of Order requirements. This includes:

1. All financial duties such as the budget and annual review
2. Matters concerning property and insurance
3. Maintain the Manual of Operations
4. Provide for necessary Personnel functions of the presbytery

5. In partnership with the Stated Clerk:
 - Records Review
 - Matters pertaining to General Assembly and Synod
 - Provide for the nomination of new team leadership and a moderator in collaboration with current team leadership
 - Resource the Permanent Judicial Commission, Administrative Commissions and any other judicial functions of the presbytery.
6. Provide for all matters pertaining to Pastoral Calls (receiving inquirers and candidates, annual consultations, examinations, ordinations and installations, etc.)
7. Plan the annual worship and business meeting
8. Plan the annual small business portion of the Tres Rios Big Event
9. Organize and participate in the Team Meet at least quarterly

The Team will consider the following in all their responsibilities:

1. How can we partner?
2. Does this decision/action show respect?
3. Does this decision/action offer encouragement?
4. Does this decision/action inspire?

SECTION 5 PASTORAL TEAM

Tres Rios Presbytery partners with pastors and congregations so that all feel respected, encouraged and inspired.

Membership:

The Pastoral Team shall be comprised of 4 members nominated by the Leadership Recruitment and Representation Team and elected by the Presbytery. Each member will represent one of the four clusters. Members will serve a two-year term in classes (with the exception of the first class who will serve a three year term) as follows:

Even year class: 1 clergy, 1 ruling elder

Odd year class: 1 clergy, 1 ruling elder

The Pastoral Team has the power to appoint sub-committees and task forces as deemed necessary.

The Pastoral Team is resourced by the Pastoral Pastor and the Administrative Assistant.

Mechanics:

The Pastoral Team will serve as a commission, having authority to make its own decision and spend within its budget, except for items requiring approval by the presbytery.

At the first meeting of each new class, the Pastoral Team will elect a moderator and clerk.

The team clerk will provide minutes of all meetings to the Administrative Assistant and Stated Clerk for Presbytery packets, Team Meets, record keeping, website and any other shared communications.

Responsibilities:

The Pastoral Team partners with pastors and congregations to encourage spiritual growth and guidance.

This includes:

- Provide pastoral care for pastors and congregations
- Conduct congregational visits
- Create connections and relationships among congregations
- Participate in the Team Meet at least quarterly
- Plan the Tres Rios Big Event every other year

Other examples may include:

- Oversight of TRYC and/or other youth events
- Providing Officer training, Confirmation or other shared seminars/classes
- Facilitating participation in CRE training
- Providing continuing education opportunities to pastors
- Recommending educational resources

The Team will consider the following in all their responsibilities:

How can we partner?

Does this decision/action show respect?

Does this decision/action offer encouragement?

Does this decision/action inspire?

SECTION 6 VISION AND OUTREACH TEAM

Tres Rios Presbytery partners with pastors and congregations so that all feel respected, encouraged and inspired.

Membership:

The Vision and Outreach Team shall be comprised of 4 members nominated by the Leadership Recruitment and Representation Team and elected by the Presbytery. Each member will represent one of the four clusters. Members will serve a two-year term in classes (with the exception of the first class who will serve a three year term) as follows:

Even year class: 1 clergy, 1 ruling elder

Odd year class: 1 clergy, 1 ruling elder

The Vision and Outreach Team has the power to appoint sub-committees and task forces as deemed necessary.

The Vision and Outreach Team is resources by the Vision and Outreach Presbyter and Administrative Assistant.

Mechanics:

The Vision and Outreach Team will serve as a commission, having the authority to make its own decisions and spend within its budget, except for items requiring approval by the presbytery.

At the first meeting of each new class, the Vision and Outreach Team will elect a team moderator and clerk.

The team clerk will provide minutes of all meetings to the Administrative Assistant and Stated Clerk for Presbytery packets, Team Meets, record keeping, website and any other shared communications.

Responsibilities:

The Vision and Outreach Team partners with pastors, congregations and officially established projects of the presbytery to inspire vision and service to the community.

The Vision and Outreach Team will plan the Tres Rios Big Event Every other year.

Examples of the team's other work may include:

- Partnership with established agencies and missions (such as Project Vida, Pasos de Fe, etc.)
- Church Development
 - Conducting community needs assessments
 - Promoting dialogue within the community
 - Partnering with Sessions to create life-giving vision
- Development of ecumenical and interfaith relationships
- Actively partnering with other presbyteries and/or the larger church

The Team will consider the following in all their responsibilities:

How can we partner?

Does this decision/action show respect?

Does this decision/action offer encouragement?

Does this decision/action inspire?

SECTION 7

PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION

The Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) shall be established as provided in the *Book of Order*, and shall have all the rights, responsibilities, and powers designated in the Rules of Discipline. The commission shall consist of seven to nine teaching and ruling elders (exact number at the discretion of the Leadership Recruitment and Representation Team), in as near equal numbers as possible. Members shall be elected for staggered terms, and should be representative of the geographical diversity of the Presbytery.

Pursuant to the Rules of Discipline in the *Book of Order*, an Investigating Committee or a Committee of Counsel shall be appointed whenever its existence is necessary. Said committee shall consist of three to five members, and will be appointed by the moderator in consultation with the presbyters and Stated Clerk.

