

Permanent Judicial Commission
Report to the 41st General Assembly



Yvonne Chapman
Moderator

Summary of Work, 2020-2021:

1. Reviewed Provisional Opinion 2021-01, regarding conducting a hybrid 41st General Assembly (**Recommendation 41-02**) (See G.21-3D.1b).
2. Examined a proposal from the National Leadership Team (NLT) to amend *Rules of Assembly* to incorporate provisions accommodating virtual meeting participants. (**Recommendation 41-03**) (See G.21-3D.2a).
3. Examined the Theology Committee report recommending three proposed amendments to the *Book of Order* (**Recommendations 41-11, 41-12, 41-13**) (G.21-3D.2a).
4. Examined the Overture from the Chaplains Work and Care Committee to amend *Book of Worship* 3-3G by adding a new section "G4" to permit administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by EPC Chaplains, and to amend *Book of Government* 9-5E by deleting the last sentence (**Recommendation 41-15**) (See G.21-3D.2a).
5. Examined the Ascending Overture to the General Assembly from the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic requesting approval to create three Presbyteries from the current one. (**Recommendation 41-21**) (See *Acts of Assembly* 12-05).
6. Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) Moderator conferred with leadership in the Office of the Stated Clerk regarding use of legal terminology in the *Book of Discipline*; no official action taken.
7. Reviewed Provisional Opinion 2021-02 regarding facsimile and electronic signatures on official minutes of Sessions and Presbyteries. (See G. 21-3D.1b). The request for this provisional opinion was subsequently withdrawn and informal guidance was supplied by the Office of the Stated Clerk.

Recommendations to the 2021 General Assembly:

1. Recommendation 41-02:

The Permanent Judicial Commission recommends that the 41st General Assembly **SUSTAIN** the Provisional Opinion issued by the Office of the Stated Clerk on January 29, 2021, to permit holding a hybrid (including virtual attendance) 41st General Assembly.

2. Recommendation 41-03:

The Permanent Judicial Commission recommends that the 41st General Assembly **APPROVE** the proposal from the National Leadership Team to amend the *Rules of Assembly* to incorporate provisions related to virtual attendance at General Assembly.

3. Recommendation 41-11, 41-12, 41-13:

The Permanent Judicial Commission recommends that the 41st General Assembly **APPROVE** the proposal from the Theology Committee recommending three proposed amendments to the **Book of Order** as follows:

- Amend G.19-4.C.1 by deleting the phrase “create agencies for education” and substituting the phrase “identify resources for ministry to and inclusion of” and deleting the phrase “other suitable activities” and substituting the phrase “the disabled” so the provision would read as follows:

Current <i>Book of Government</i> 19-4.C.1	Proposed <i>Book of Government</i> 19-4.C.1 <i>Amendments in bold italics.</i>
1. To work with other Presbyteries and the General Assembly to create agencies for education, the orphaned, the aged, and other suitable activities.	1. To work with other Presbyteries and the General Assembly to create agencies for education , <i>identify resources for ministry to and the inclusion of</i> the orphaned, the aged, and the disabled . <i>other suitable activities.</i>

- Amend G.20-4A.3 by deleting the word “create” and substituting the word “identify” so the provision would read as follows:

Current <i>Book of Government</i> 20-4A.3	Proposed <i>Book of Government</i> 20-4A.3 <i>Amendments in bold italics.</i>
3. To create separately or in conjunction with the Presbyteries those agencies or institutions needed for education or other purposes that would enhance the life and ministry of the whole Church.	3. To create <i>identify</i> separately or in conjunction with the Presbyteries those agencies or institutions needed for education or other purposes that would enhance the life and ministry of the whole Church.

- Amend **W.7-5** by deleting the last three sentences so the provision would read as follows:

Current <i>Book of Worship</i> 7-5	Proposed <i>Book of Worship</i> 7-5
<p>The New Testament describes the concern and compassion of Christ for the conditions of people. The Church shall emulate its Head by showing special concern for the sick, the sorrowing, the hungry, and the poor. The Session shall be responsible for establishing these ministries within the congregation, and into the community. The service of compassion to those in adversity shall include such places as hospitals, retirement homes, convalescent homes, children’s homes, prisons, and other public institutions. The higher courts of the Church shall seek to show compassion in these areas, including the establishment of institutions, both at home and abroad, for the care of various needs.</p>	<p>The New Testament describes the concern and compassion of Christ for the conditions of people. The Church shall emulate its Head by showing special concern for the sick, the sorrowing, the hungry, and the poor. The Session shall be responsible for establishing these ministries within the congregation, and into the community. The service of compassion to those in adversity shall include such places as hospitals, retirement homes, convalescent homes, children’s homes, prisons, and other public institutions. The higher courts of the Church shall seek to show compassion in these areas, including the establishment of institutions, both at home and abroad, for the care of various needs.</p>

4. Recommendation 41-15:

The Permanent Judicial Commission recommends that the 41st General Assembly **APPROVE** the proposal from the Chaplains Work and Care Committee, that Chaplains have authorization to administer the sacraments, by amending *Book of Order* by deletion of the final sentence of **G.9-5E** and insertion of a footnote in **W.3-1A** in the first sentence as follows, “*Lawfully ordained Minister’ includes EPC Chaplains who are called to serve in a military or civilian organization, have been approved by their Presbytery, and have been endorsed by the General Assembly (see G.9-5E and Rules for Assembly X.10-1J).*”

5. Recommendation 41-21:

The Permanent Judicial Commission recommends that the 41st General Assembly **APPROVE** the Ascending Overture from the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic (*as edited by the PJC*) to create three presbyteries from the current Presbytery, effective July 1, 2022, provided each of the Presbyteries reach viability.

Work of the Committee in 2020-2021:

Recommendation 41-02: Provisional Opinion 2021-01 regarding virtual attendance at the 41st General Assembly.

Provisional Opinion 2021-1

In Re Virtual Participation in the 41st General Assembly

January 29, 2021

Office of the Stated Clerk

Dr. Jeffrey J. Jeremiah

Under Book of Government (hereinafter, **G.**) 21-3D.1 “Questions concerning interpretation of the Book of Order shall be referred by the Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk may issue a provisional opinion that is binding until acted upon by the next General Assembly.” **G.** 21-3D.1b “[The PJC] shall review all provisional opinions and shall recommend to the Assembly that they be sustained, not sustained, or amended, along with reasons.”

Presbytery of the Central South Ruling Elder Rob Liddon has asked the Stated Clerk to issue a provisional opinion as to whether the Book of Order Rules for Assembly may permit members of the 41st General Assembly to join meetings by virtual means and be counted “present” for the purposes of quorum with both voice and vote at the Stated Meeting of the General Assembly at Second Presbyterian Church in Memphis, Tennessee June 23-25, 2021.

The Book of Government is silent on this issue, but Act of Assembly 10-02 (adopted by the 30th General Assembly in 2010) is instructive. This Act affirmed a 2010 provisional opinion relying on Robert’s Rules of Order holding that “Bylaws of representative bodies [may] establish a quorum and conduct business in a meeting with both real and virtual participants.”

“It is a fundamental principle of parliamentary laws that the right to vote is limited to the members of an organization who are actually present at the time the vote is taken in a legal meeting, although it should be noted that a member need not be present when the question is put. *Exceptions to this rule must be expressly stated in the bylaws.*” (Robert’s Rules of Order (10th edition), pp. 408-409) (emphasis added).

“The bylaws may authorize a board or committee (or even a relatively small assembly) to meet by videoconferencing or teleconference. If they do, then such a meeting must be conducted by a technology that allows all persons participating to hear each other at the same time (and, if a videoconference, to see each other as well). The opportunity for simultaneous communication is central to the deliberative character of the meeting and is what distinguishes it from attempts to do business by postal or electronic mail or by fax.” (Id. at p. 482)

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church has formally established *Rules for Assembly* to specifically govern the organization’s annual General Assembly meetings. These *Rules for Assembly* indicate that “Except as otherwise specifically provided in these Rules,

“Robert’s Rules of Order” shall be the standard of parliamentary procedure.” (*Rule for Assembly* 14-1) Believing the virtual 40th General Assembly September 17-18, 2020 would be a one-time event, the General Assembly did not amend its *Rules for Assembly* to permit virtual meeting participants. However, in light of the unanticipated continuation of the worldwide health issue of the COVID-19 “Coronavirus,” the Stated Clerk is asked whether it is appropriate, under the current crisis, to temporarily permit virtual participation in the 41st meeting of the General Assembly in order to consider whether the *Rules for Assembly* should be amended.

Provisional Opinion

The Stated Clerk holds that the Constitutional responsibility of the General Assembly to “oversee the total work of the Church” supersedes *Robert’s Rules of Order* when following parliamentary procedure presents the General Assembly with the unenviable choice of either risking the health, welfare and safety of its Commissioners or excluding them altogether from participating in the governance of the denomination.

The Stated Clerk hereby rules that irrespective of *Robert’s Rules of Order*, the General Assembly may include virtual participants in its 41st General Assembly meeting provided that sufficient technology is utilized to ensure that every participant is able to hear, communicate, and vote in the proceedings. This ruling remains in effect until the 41st General Assembly has determined whether this opinion be sustained, not sustained, or amended, along with reasons. Furthermore, the Stated Clerk requests the 41st General Assembly to determine whether the *Rules for Assembly* ought to be amended to include a provision for virtual participation.

ON MOTION

The Permanent Judicial Commission recommends that the 41st General Assembly **SUSTAIN** Provisional Opinion 2021-01 issued by the Office of the Stated Clerk on January 29, 2021, allowing for a hybrid 41st General Assembly.

Recommendation 41-03: Proposed amendments to *Rules for Assembly* to accommodate special circumstances that might require virtual participation in General Assembly meetings.

ON MOTION

The PJC recommends that the 41st General Assembly **AMEND** *Rules for Assembly* as follows (**amendments in bold**):

Rule 1-1 The General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church shall meet annually on the date and at the place fixed by the preceding General Assembly, between May 1 and June 30. **In the event of a natural disaster, epidemic or restrictions mandated by the federal, state or local government affecting the host church, virtual participation of commissioners may take place; the National Leadership Team will determine whether virtual participation is permitted no less than 30 days prior to the first day of registration for an upcoming General Assembly.**

Rule 1-2 The place of meeting for **physically present commissioners** shall be rotated among the various areas of the church as much as possible.

Rule 2-2 The Stated Clerk shall present a report on the enrollment and declare if a quorum is **physically and virtually present (if virtual presence is necessary)**.

Rule 2-3 The first order of business shall **ordinarily** be the election of a Moderator.

Recommendations 41-11, 41-12, 41-13: Recommendations from the Theology Committee for three proposed amendments to the *Book of Order*. Thorough descriptions of that committee’s recommendations to the Assembly, including proposed wording changes to *Book of Government* or other supporting material, are in the Theology Committee’s report.

1. Recommendation 41-11: Proposed changes to *Book of Government* 19-4.C.1.

Current <i>Book of Government</i> 19-4.C.1	Proposed <i>Book of Government</i> 19-4.C.1 <i>Amendments in bold italics</i>
1. To work with other Presbyteries and the General Assembly to create agencies for education, the orphaned, the aged, and other suitable activities.	1. To work with other Presbyteries and the General Assembly to create agencies for education, <i>identify resources for ministry to and inclusion of</i> the orphaned, the aged, and <i>the disabled.</i> other suitable activities.

2. Recommendation 41-12: Proposed change to *Book of Government* 20-4A.3.

Current <i>Book of Government</i> 20-4.A.3	Current <i>Book of Government</i> 20-4.A.3 <i>Amendment in bold italics</i>
3. To create separately or in conjunction with the Presbyteries those agencies or institutions needed for education or other purposes that would enhance the life and ministry of the whole church.	3. To create <i>identify</i> separately or in Conjunction with the Presbyteries those agencies or institutions needed for education or other purposes that would enhance the life and ministry of the whole church.

3. Recommendation 41-13: Proposed changes to *Book of Worship* 7-5.

Current <i>Book of Worship</i> 7-5	Current <i>Book of Worship</i> 7-5 Amendments in bold italics
<p>The New Testament describes the concern and compassion of Christ for the conditions of people. The Church shall emulate its Head by showing special concern for the sick, the sorrowing, the hungry, and the poor. The Session shall be responsible for establishing these ministries within the congregation, and into the community. The service of compassion to those in adversity shall include such places as hospitals, retirement homes, convalescent homes, children’s homes, prisons and other public institutions. The higher courts of the Church shall seek to show compassion in these areas, including the establishment of institutions, both at home and abroad, for the care of various needs.</p>	<p>The New Testament describes the concern and compassion of Christ for the conditions of people. The Church shall emulate its Head by showing special concern for the sick, the sorrowing, the hungry, and the poor. The Session shall be responsible for establishing these ministries within the congregation, and into the community. The service of compassion to those in adversity shall include such places as hospitals, retirement homes, convalescent homes, children’s homes, prisons and other public institutions. The higher courts of the Church shall seek to show compassion in these areas, including the establishment of institutions, both at home and abroad, for the care of various needs.</p>

Once the Stated Clerk refers a proposed amendment to the Permanent Judicial Commission, the PJC “shall examine the proposed amendment for clarity and consistency of language and for compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.” The PJC “shall report its findings to the General Assembly along with its recommendations, which may include an amended version of any proposed constitutional changes as well as advice to accept or decline the proposals referred to the Commission” (G.21-3.D.2).

PJC members examined and discussed the report from the Permanent Committee on Theology recommending three proposed amendments to the *Book of Order*.

Recommendation 41-11: The PJC recommends that the 41st General Assembly **APPROVE** the amendment to the *Book of Government* as proposed by the Theology Committee as follows:

Book of Government 19-4.C.1 (Proposed)—To work with other Presbyteries and the General Assembly to identify resources for ministry to and inclusion of the orphaned, the aged, and the disabled.

Recommendation 41-12: The PJC recommends that the 41st General Assembly **APPROVE** the amendment to the *Book of Government* as proposed by the Theology Committee as follows:

Book of Government 20-4.A.3 (Proposed)—To identify separately or in conjunction with the Presbyteries those agencies or institutions needed for education or other purposes that would enhance the life and ministry of the whole church.

Recommendation 41-13: The PJC recommends that the 41st General Assembly **APPROVE** the amendment to the *Book of Worship* as proposed by the Theology Committee as follows:

Book of Worship 7-5 (Proposed) - The New Testament describes the concern and compassion of Christ for the conditions of people. The Church shall emulate its Head by showing special concern for the sick, the sorrowing, the hungry, and the poor.

Recommendation 41-15: Ascending Overture from the Chaplains Work and Care Committee to amend *Book of Worship* 3-3G which addresses the special occasions and circumstances for administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by adding a new section (G.4) and to amend *Book of Government* 9-5E by deleting the last sentence.

The Chaplains Work and Care Committee (CCWC) submitted an Ascending Overture to the 41st General Assembly to amend the *Book of Worship* Chapter 3-3G, by adding a new section, and the *Book of Government* 9-5E by deleting the last sentence. *See Attachment 1 below.*

Once the Stated Clerk refers a proposed amendment to the Permanent Judicial Commission, the PJC “shall examine the proposed amendment for clarity and consistency of language and for compatibility with other provisions of the Constitution of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.” The PJC “shall report its findings to the General Assembly along with its recommendations, which may include an amended version of any proposed constitutional changes as well as advice to accept or decline the proposals referred to the Commission” (G.21-3.D.2).

Commissioners reviewed and discussed the proposed amendments.

The PJC reviewed various sections of the Book of Order and confirmed that “*EPC Chaplains who are called to serve in a military or civilian organization have been approved by their Presbytery and have been endorsed by the General Assembly*” are selected from the rank of Teaching Elders (G.9-5E).

As an Officer of the Church under *Book of Government* Chapter 9, and pursuant to *Book of Worship* Chapter 3, an EPC Teaching Elder is a “lawfully ordained Minister,” who “shall...celebrate the sacraments” (G.9-5.2).

Likewise, Teaching Elder Chaplains, Officers of the Church, are lawfully ordained Ministers, approved by Presbytery and endorsed by the General Assembly and, therefore, authorized and expected to administer the sacraments.

Accordingly, the PJC determined the concept advanced by the CCWC, that Chaplains have authorization in the *Book of Order* to administer the sacraments, is consistent and

compatible with other provisions of the Constitution of the EPC and currently is provided therein. Nevertheless, the PJC decided that, together with the deletion of the last sentence of G.9-5E, a footnote, rather than an amendment, would provide the clarity needed to achieve the intent of the CCWC.

The PJC recommends that the final sentence of G.9-5E be deleted and that the following footnote be inserted in the *Book of Worship* Chapter 3-1A in the first sentence, after the clause that reads “only a lawfully ordained Minister may administer the sacraments:”

“Lawfully ordained Minister” includes EPC Chaplains who are called to serve in a military or civilian organization, have been approved by their Presbytery, and have been endorsed by the General Assembly (see G.9-5E and Rules for Assembly X.10-1J).

The motion was approved to recommend a revision of the proposed overture for clarity and conciseness accordingly. This decision was unanimous (8-0).

[Attachment 1 to PJC Decision of November 12, 2020]
ORIGINAL RECOMMENDATION
from the Chaplains Work and Care Committee

To amend *Book of Worship 3-3G*, which addresses the special occasions and circumstances for administration of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, by adding a new section G.4.

-and-

(Related Amendment) To amend *Book of Government 9-5E* by deleting the last sentence.

Current <i>Book of Worship</i> 3-3G	Proposed <i>Book of Worship</i> 3-3G <i>Amendments in bold italics</i>
<p>3-3 The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper</p> <p>G. Special times of celebration:</p> <p>1. With those who are ill. The Session may authorize the Lord’s Supper to be celebrated with those who are ill. At least one member of the Session should be present on such occasions. The Minister shall be careful to give some brief explanation of the meaning of the sacrament.</p> <p>2. Times and places other than worship on the Lord’s Day. The Session may authorize the celebration of the sacrament at a time and place other than the ordinary place of worship on the Lord’s Day, provided that the Session is represented. In addition,</p> <p>3. Courts of the Church.</p>	<p>3-3 The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper</p> <p>G. Special times of celebration:</p> <p>1. With those who are ill. The Session may authorize the Lord’s Supper to be celebrated with those who are ill. At least one member of the Session should be present on such occasions. The Minister shall be careful to give some brief explanation of the meaning of the sacrament.</p> <p>2. Times and places other than worship on the Lord’s Day. The Session may authorize the celebration of the sacrament at a time and place other than the ordinary place of worship on the Lord’s Day, provided that the Session is represented. In addition,</p> <p>3. Courts of the Church.</p>

<p>The Presbytery and General Assembly may authorize the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at a meeting of the court or at some service or worship under the authority of the court.</p>	<p>The Presbytery and General Assembly may authorize the celebration of the Lord’s Supper at a meeting of the court or at some service or worship under the authority of the court.</p> <p>4. Chaplains. <i>EPC Chaplains who are called to serve in a military or civilian organization, have been approved by their presbytery, and have been endorsed by the General Assembly¹ may administer the sacraments in the normal course of their duties as a Chaplain without prior approval of a church court.</i></p>
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Current <i>Book of Government</i> 9-5E	Proposed <i>Book of Government</i> 9-5E <i>Amendments in bold italics</i>
<p>E. Chaplain</p> <p>A court of the Church, a hospital, the military, institutions, universities, or other appropriate fields of service may call a Teaching Elder as Chaplain if the Presbytery deems it appropriate. In such cases, the Chaplain shall always have as a primary responsibility the sharing of the Good News of God in Jesus Christ. The Presbytery may authorize the Chaplain to administer the sacraments in that role.</p>	<p>E. Chaplain</p> <p>A court of the Church, a hospital, the military, institutions, universities, or other appropriate fields of service may call a Teaching Elder as Chaplain if the Presbytery deems it appropriate. In such cases, the Chaplain shall always have as a primary responsibility the sharing of the Good News of God in Jesus Christ. <i>The Presbytery may authorize the Chaplain to administer the sacraments in that role.</i></p>

Footnote 1. See the responsibilities of the Chaplains Work and Care Committee and Chaplain Endorser in *Rules for Assembly* X.10-11.

Rationale:

Many chaplains, whether serving in the United States, aboard ship, or in a foreign country are expected to administer the sacraments as part of their normal duties as a Chaplain. The guidance for chaplains in *Book of Government* 9-5E (last sentence) is vague, not specifying whether authorization must be requested for each occurrence or if the Presbytery may provide a general authorization for a Chaplain to administer the Lord’s Supper for the duration of his/her call.

Therefore, it is necessary for a Chaplain to have general authorization to administer the sacraments in the Chaplain’s role since contact with their presbytery to request authorization may not be possible in a timely manner. The last sentence of *Book of Government* 9-5E is no longer necessary.

Recommendation 41-21: Ascending Overture from the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic.

The PJC met on May 26, 2020, to consider an Ascending Overture from the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic requesting that the General Assembly create three presbyteries from the current one. Referencing *Acts of Assembly* 12-05, in a unanimous decision the PJC found the Overture to be consistent with the *Book of Order* but recommended edits for clarity. Below is the version approved by the PJC.

Overture to the 41st General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (as edited by the PJC)

The Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic requests the National Leadership Team to approve the following overture for a first reading at the 2020 General Assembly pending the final approval of the overture by the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic at its meeting on April 25, 2020.

The Overture:

That the General Assembly be requested to create three presbyteries from the current Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic. Working titles: Coastal Presbytery, Mountain Presbytery, and Piedmont Presbytery. (All current names are placeholders only; each future Presbytery will be given the right to select its name.)

Howard Shockley, our beloved late Administrative Director and Stated Clerk, often signed off with “It’s still about the Great Commission.” This admonition has been the driving force of our discussion as we have sought to multiply our presbytery from one to three for the sake of the Kingdom. Our overarching purpose is to create *missional* presbyteries whose reason for existence is to plant new congregations and vitalize existing ones. By concentrating energy and leadership over a less-expansive geography and a closer affinity each of the presbyteries will have greater investment in the Great Commission.

Bounds:

Coastal Presbytery is bounded on the north even with Hope EPC in Fredericksburg, VA, to the west by a line running Southwest to Raeford, NC, Southwest to Bishopville, SC, and due South to the Georgia border.

Mountain Presbytery is bounded on the east by the line from Fredericksburg, VA to Durham, NC. Its Southern boundary is contiguous with, and north of I-40 to I-77. Its North border is the Southern border of Presbytery of Alleghenies.

Piedmont Presbytery is bounded on the east by the boundary of Coastal Presbytery, on the north by I-40, to the west by the boundary line of Southeast Presbytery, and on the south by the Georgia border.

If the way be clear and each of the Presbyteries reaches viability, we request that this action become effective July 1, 2022.

Further, any retired Teaching Elders, associate members, Candidates under Care, and all other Teaching Elders serving “out of bounds,” who have served as part of the Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic, shall be included in the membership of the newly created Presbytery according to the geographical boundary in which they currently reside. In the event they currently reside outside of the geographical boundary of any newly created Presbytery, for purposes of oversight they will be included according to the geographical boundary where they previously served, subject to any exceptions as provided for in the *Book of Government*. (This is the paragraph edited by the PJC.)

Grounds:

With the growth in population within each of the three proposed Presbyteries, we believe that church planting will be more effectively accomplished with congregations closer to where the new church plants are needed. The Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic currently has 129 worshiping communities comprised of local churches, mission churches, church plants, campuses, and church sites spread across portions of four states. With the increase in the number of churches has come a decrease in the ratio of REs to TEs in our Presbytery meetings. The distances required to travel to Presbytery meetings has impeded the ability of many of the REs to take the time away.

Viability:

Acts of the Assembly 12-05 states:

In order to be faithful to, and effective in, its mission a Presbytery must be self-sustaining, self-governing and self-perpetuating.

In order to be faithful to its mission, a Presbytery must be viable. It must have sufficient human and financial resources to carry out its work. The extent of the resources needed will vary, depending on the geographic scale of its boundaries, the experience and gifts of its members and the level of commitment of its churches. As of the date of adoption of this plan, the three Presbyteries will consist of the following:

1. Total Church Membership

The Presbytery of Coastal Mid-Atlantic will include 36 churches; the Presbytery of Mountain Mid-Atlantic will include 48 churches; and the Presbytery of Piedmont will include 44 churches.

2. Total financial resources of churches within its bounds

Coastal	Per member askings: \$148,050
Mountain	Per member askings: \$137,750
Piedmont	Per member askings: \$146,100

3. Financial support for or pledges of support for its work

Coastal	Actual \$110,201
Mountain	Actual \$103,276
Piedmont	Actual \$97,979

4. Geographic scale and cost and mode of travel within its bounds

The current Presbytery bounds require up to 6 ½ hours of driving to reach Presbytery meetings. With the new configuration, the longest drive will be 2 ½ hours.

5. Presence of experienced and capable potential leadership

Our current Presbytery is blessed with many leaders. Each of the nascent Presbyteries has an abundance of leaders and well-distributed large and mid-size congregations.

6. Other clear indications of commitment by churches within its bounds

At the January 2019 Presbytery meeting, a vote was taken to establish the three regions as the precursors to the three Presbyteries herein proposed. The vote was 93% in favor of moving toward three Presbyteries. At each meeting since, reports have been made, questions have been answered, and the Presbytery continues to support the establishment of the three Presbyteries.

7. While the presence of one or more large churches may be desirable, sufficient commitment by medium-sized and small churches can provide a sufficiently strong foundation for an effective Presbytery. Each of the proposed Presbyteries have both large and medium-sized churches as well as many smaller ones.

Committee Members:


- RE Yvonne Chapman (Moderator), Presbytery of the Central South
- RE Amanda Cowan, Presbytery of Florida and the Caribbean
- TE George Dakin, Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest
- TE Neil Ellison, Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic
- RE Donald Flater, Presbytery of the Rivers and Lakes
- RE Donald Harms, Presbytery of the Midwest
- RE Jeffrey Hollingsworth, Presbytery of the Southeast
- TE Dana Opp, Presbytery of the Alleghenies
- RE Ken Roberts, Presbytery of the West
- TE Jeff Jeremiah, Stated Clerk (ex officio)
- TE Jerry Iamurri, Assistant Stated Clerk (ex officio)

Committee Meeting Dates:

Permanent Judicial Commission deliberations are via video conference; materials are circulated, and issues clarified by email in advance of deliberations. PJC decisions are drafted and circulated by email for approval by Commissioners as soon as possible following deliberations.

- May 26, 2020: Video Conference
- November 12, 2020: Video Conference
- January 29, 2021: Leadership Call
- February 3, 2021: Video Conference
- February 11, 2021: Deliberation via email
- March 18, 2021: Video Conference

Respectfully submitted,


Yvonne K. Chapman, Moderator

June 2021