

# **RULES FOR ASSEMBLY**

As amended through the 43rd General Assembly  
(June 2023)

Evangelical Presbyterian Church  
Office of the General Assembly

# RULES FOR ASSEMBLY

As amended through June 2023

## I. Date and Place of Meeting

- 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.
- 1-2** The place of meeting for physically present commissioners shall be rotated among the various areas of the church as much as practical. Any Presbytery or church of Presbytery that desires to entertain the General Assembly shall forward an invitation to the Stated Clerk no later than three years before the preceding Assembly. If two or more Presbyteries or churches submit invitations to host the General Assembly for the same year, the National Leadership Team will submit a recommendation to the General Assembly naming the host church or Presbytery. The National Leadership Team will make its recommendation based on the following criteria:
- A.** Capability to host, i.e., availability of housing, costs, travel arrangements, committee meeting rooms, availability of food service for breaks and meals, space for exhibitors and General Assembly staff, and local transportation.
  - B.** Priority will be given to the Presbytery or church which has never hosted a General Assembly, or which hosted General Assembly the greatest number of years ago.

## II. Organization of a General Assembly's Meetings

- 2-1** The General Assembly shall be called to order at the designated time by the Moderator and shall begin with a worship service which shall include a prayer for the President of the United States, all United States military personnel (to include their families) especially those serving in harm's way, the Governor of the State in which the General Assembly takes place, and the United States of America. Also, this public prayer should be communicated in writing by the Moderator to the President and the Governor.
- 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). If such is present, the Assembly shall be declared to be properly constituted. At this time the Stated Clerk may also recommend that Ministers or Ruling Elders in good standing in other parts of the Church be seated as corresponding members of the Assembly, having the privilege of the floor but without vote.
- 2-3** The first order of business shall ordinarily be the election of a Moderator. Though the Moderator-elect will normally be the presumptive nominee, the Committee on Nominations must make such nomination. The floor shall be opened for additional nominations. There shall be only one nominating speech per nominee not to exceed five minutes for each nominee. No seconding speeches shall be permitted.
- 2-4** A Moderator-elect shall be elected according to the same procedure as the election of Moderator.
- 2-5** Election shall be by ballot, on ballots provided by the Stated Clerk. Tellers appointed by the Stated Clerk shall gather, count, and report the ballot tabulation to the Stated Clerk. Election shall be by majority. Should no majority exist among a plurality of nominees,

a second ballot shall be called for the two highest nominees. The Moderator shall declare the election. If there is only one nominee, a motion for a voice vote to elect by acclamation shall be in order.

- 2-6 The Moderator and Moderator-elect shall assume their respective duties immediately upon being declared elected.

### III. The Moderator

- 3-1 The Moderator shall preside at all sessions of the Assembly except for those times when the Moderator may temporarily invite another Commissioner to act as the presiding officer.
- 3-2 The Moderator shall call the succeeding Assembly to order and preside until a successor has been elected. An address from the retiring Moderator is appropriate. If the Moderator is unable to act, the most immediate past Moderator present, or in the absence of any, the Stated Clerk shall call the Assembly to order and preside over its session until a Moderator has been elected.

### IV. Moderator-elect

- 4-1 The Moderator-elect is an officer of the General Assembly and shall ordinarily be the presumptive nominee for Moderator at the succeeding Assembly. The duties of the Moderator-elect shall be to assist the Moderator in the performance of the Moderator's duties as requested by the Moderator.

### V. The Stated Clerk

- 5-1 The date and time of the election of the Stated Clerk at the Assembly shall be determined by the Moderator. A new Stated Clerk shall assume office at the end of the Assembly, or at such time thereafter as designated by the General Assembly. (*Cf. Acts 82-09*)
- 5-2 The Stated Clerk shall perform the duties assigned by the **Book of Government** and by the **Rules for Assembly**, and such other duties as are assigned by action of the Assembly.
- 5-3 The Stated Clerk shall assemble the items of business to come before the Assembly and prepare a daily docket for the receiving of committee reports and consideration of all appropriate business to come before the Assembly.
- 5-4 The Stated Clerk shall keep the Minutes of the General Assembly. He shall publish them annually with statistical reports of the Church and reports of the committees of the Assembly.
- 5-5 The Stated Clerk shall have the privilege of the floor in all matters pertaining to his office and at such times when the Moderator, chairmen of Standing Committees, or any Commissioner request clarification of Assembly business.
- 5-6 The Stated Clerk, or a person designated by the Stated Clerk, shall be the parliamentarian of the General Assembly.
- 5-7 The Stated Clerk shall have surveillance over denominational archives and historical documents on behalf of the General Assembly and shall be responsible for the right of access to such documents.

### VI. The Assembly Arrangements

- 6-1 The Stated Clerk, or a person designated by the Stated Clerk, shall plan the periods of worship at the meeting of the Assembly, including the celebration of the Lord's Supper and public services. A brief worship service shall be included at the beginning of each day's session.

- 6-2 The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated by the General Assembly. The retiring Moderator shall preside on this occasion and shall preach a sermon or deliver an appropriate address. The newly elected Moderator shall assist in this service.
- 6-3 The first order of the day, except the opening day, at the beginning of the business session shall be the presentation of a docket listing the business which is to be considered that day. Revision of the docket may be necessary during the day.
- 6-4 The Stated Clerk shall oversee all arrangements for the meeting and housing of the General Assembly in conjunction with the host Presbytery and/or host church.

## VII. Communications and Overtures

- 7-1 A communication to the General Assembly is formal correspondence received by the Stated Clerk from other churches, inter-church agencies, and from other organized bodies outside the church proper having business with the Assembly.
- 7-2 The Stated Clerk shall recommend to the Assembly reference for all communications.
- 7-3 An overture ordinarily is the request of a Presbytery for action by the General Assembly upon a specific matter.
- 7-4 All overtures proposing amendments to the *Book of Order* shall be delivered to the Stated Clerk at least sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the General Assembly (G.21.3D.2a). All other overtures shall be delivered to the Stated Clerk at least thirty (30) days prior to the opening of General Assembly. No overtures received after those filing dates shall be considered by its Assembly convening in that year. Overtures from the floor of General Assembly prior to the deadline for new business shall be considered only if received by a 2/3 vote of assembled Commissioners.

## VIII. Reports to the General Assembly

- 8-1 The Moderator, Stated Clerk, permanent committees, and special committees shall make annual reports. Such reports shall be transmitted to the Stated Clerk by May 1. These reports shall be referred to the Commissioners by the Clerk by June 1.
- 8-2 All ad interim committees shall make full reports in writing with the rationale for all recommendations included therein, and such reports shall be mailed to all Commissioners at least two weeks prior to the convening of the Assembly.

## IX. Standing Committees

- 9-1 All business shall ordinarily come to the floor of the Assembly for final action through Standing Committees, except reports of ad interim committees, which shall report directly to the Assembly. The following committees shall handle the matters indicated:
  - A. Administration, concerning administrative matters.
  - B. World Outreach, concerning world missions.
  - C. Next Generation, concerning children's, youth, and college ministries.
  - D. Ministerial Vocation, concerning preparation and care of ministers.
  - E. Fraternal Relations, concerning other denominations and agencies.
  - F. Memorials and Appreciation, concerning appreciation.
  - G. Overtures and Resolutions, concerning communications and matters that do not fall within the purview of other Standing Committees.
  - H. Theology, concerning theological matters under study.
- 9-2 The Stated Clerk, in consultation with the Moderator, will appoint chairmen and recording clerks of each Standing Committee. Representation on each committee shall be

Presbyterial. The Nominating Committee will elect Standing Committee personnel from Commissioners registrations and Ruling Elder certifications received no later than May 31. The committee membership ratio should be as close as possible to the ratio of Ruling and Teaching Elders registered and certified as Commissioners.

- 9-3** The committees may be scheduled to meet prior to the opening session of the Assembly to handle business referred by the Stated Clerk.
- 9-4** The Standing Committees shall proceed as follows:
- A.** At the assigned time, each committee shall assemble in its assigned place, review material in hand, and begin its work.
  - B.** Each committee shall be available to reconvene to consider additional matters referred from the Assembly floor.
  - C.** A quorum is considered to be a simple majority.
- 9-5** The Standing Committee's report shall be brief and concise. It shall include the following:
- A.** A list of all items referred to and considered by the committee.
  - B.** A statement of all issues discussed.
  - C.** A report of all recommendations contained in reports, communications and overtures referred. Action taken by the Standing Committees to approve, modify or not approve those items referred shall be reported back to the Assembly with reasons.
- 9-6** If a Standing Committee believes that any of its recommendations will receive consensus support of the Assembly, it may, by majority vote, designate in its report that such items are to be included in an omnibus consent motion, which will contain all such items from all Standing Committees. The omnibus consent motion itself may be divided only by a majority vote. Constitutional amendments and recommendations regarding budgets may not be designated for inclusion in an omnibus consent motion.
- 9-7** Minutes of the corresponding permanent committee shall be submitted to the Standing Committee for review.
- 9-8** Informational presentation of special aspects of work reported by a particular Standing Committee shall be limited to five (5) minutes. The Moderator may extend this time up to an additional ten (10) minutes.
- 9-9** Any recommendation affecting the budget of the Assembly shall be referred to the National Leadership Team for review before presentation to the Assembly.
- 9-10** The completed report of a Standing Committee shall contain the full text of the report and handled as follows:
- A.** Proofed and signed by chairman of committee and thereafter given to Stated Clerk for permanent record;
  - B.** Presented to the Assembly during docketed time by chairman or designate.
- 9-11** No partial report of a Standing Committee shall be presented without consent of the Assembly.
- 9-12** Presbytery Minutes
- A.** Presbytery Minutes shall be examined for conformity to:
    - 1. The constitutional standards of the church, as to substance of the action recorded;
    - 2. Appropriate standards as to the use of the English language.

- B.** Each set of Presbytery Minutes must be read by at least two members of the Presbytery Review Committee.
- C.** The findings of the Committee with respect to the Minutes of each Presbytery shall be reported under the following categories as appropriate:
  - 1. Notations: Typographical errors, misspellings, improper punctuation, non-prejudicial statements of facts, and other variations in form may be reported here. Also, failure to provide sufficient or proper information or identification, misstatement of facts, etc., may be included here.
  - 2. Notations requiring response: Insufficient information in the Minutes to determine if an action is constitutional. Such notations are not read to the General Assembly but require a response of the presbytery to the Presbytery Review Committee.
  - 3. Exceptions: Violations of constitutional standards of actions which in substance appear not to conform to EPC standards should be reported here.
- D.** The Committee should prepare a report concerning the Minutes of each Presbytery. After action by the Assembly, two copies shall be given to the Stated Clerk, one for his permanent file and one to be mailed to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.
- E.** Notations and exceptions in the Committee's report shall be handled as follows:
  - 1. Notations shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery without being read to the Assembly or recorded in its Minutes.
  - 2. Exceptions shall be read before the Assembly, recorded in its Minutes and disposed of as the Assembly determines.
- F.** The Presbyteries shall take note in their Minutes of exceptions and notations conveyed from the Assembly and of the disposition they have made of such.
- G.** Guidelines for Presbytery Minutes
  - 1. Date, time, place of meeting, Presbytery must meet at least three (3) times a year. (**G.19-5A**). Presbytery review year shall be the calendar year. Presbyteries shall submit signed copies of their approved minutes for the completed calendar year to the General Assembly no later than March 1 of the following year. Minutes should reflect the names of Ruling and Teaching Elders present, visitors present, and include excused and unexcused absences. Minutes should reflect the number of the stated meeting.
  - 2. Meeting opened and closed with prayer.
  - 3. Declaration of quorum (**G.19-5C**).
  - 4. Accurate record of motions passed and actions taken (**G.19-5D**).
  - 5. Minutes should be typed with complete sentences, correct spelling, and bound in hard cover.
  - 6. Minutes should be signed by Stated Clerk and Moderator.
  - 7. Minutes should reflect an accurate record of candidates received and dismissed, including proper examination procedures leading to ordination and/or installation.
  - 8. Record of approved pastoral calls and any changes in calls and the granting of permission to labor outside the bounds of Presbytery (**G.19-4B.3**).

9. Minutes must reflect an annual review of sessional records.
10. Minutes must reflect establishing, dissolving, dividing, uniting, receiving, and dismissing of churches (G.19-4A.3).
11. Minutes must reflect observations of and carrying out of General Assembly injunctions and instructions.
12. Overtures to the General Assembly must be recorded.
13. Minutes will reflect any judicial cases before Presbytery and the disposition thereof in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*.
14. Minutes will include all actions of Presbytery appointed commissions.
15. Minutes should include annual approved Presbytery budget and related financial reports.

**9-13** The minutes of each day will not be read at the beginning of each day of Assembly, but will be proofread by a committee of three Commissioners in consultation with the recording clerks of the Assembly. The committee of three shall be nominated by the convening Moderator and the minutes shall be posted in a public place where they can be read by interested Commissioners.

## **X. Permanent Committees and the Permanent Judicial Commission**

**10-1** The ministries of the Assembly shall be conducted primarily through permanent committees and the Permanent Judicial Commission, to wit:

### **A. National Leadership Team**

1. Chaired by the immediate past Moderator.
2. Committee Membership: Moderator, Moderator-elect, Stated Clerk, immediate past Moderator, and twelve elected members.
3. Functions in the following ways subject to General Assembly review, approval, and the *Book of Order*:
  - a. Mission, Vision, and Strategy
    - 1) Primary responsibility to seek the mind of Christ for our denomination and to express this in a mission statement that states who God has called the EPC to be.
    - 2) Development of vision and strategies that express what God is calling the EPC to do to carry out the mission statement.
    - 3) Assess the execution of the mission, vision, and strategies on behalf of the General Assembly.
    - 4) Encourage EPC Presbyteries and local churches to participate in implementing the mission, vision, and strategies.
  - b. Administrative oversight
    - 1) Oversight and coordination of National Leadership Team with World Outreach, Ministerial Vocation, and Next Generation Ministries Council.
    - 2) Responds to emergency and disaster situations.
    - 3) Serve as Directors of the corporation for the purposes of compliance with the laws of the state in which the EPC is incorporated and in accord with EPC by-laws.
  - c. Denominational Development
    - 1) General Assembly planning.

- 2) Promotion/public relations.
  - 3) Personnel administration (staff hiring, staff accountability).
  - 4) Budget development: receive projections from all committees and submit to General Assembly a proposed budget.
  - 5) All legal and corporate matters.
  - 6) Property and liability insurance.
- d. All other business of ecclesiastical matters not specifically assigned to any other committees.
4. Explanatory Statement
- The National Leadership Team is not a court of the denomination, nor a commission of the General Assembly, but a committee of the denomination, with authority derived from the Book of Order. The NLT is therefore responsible to the General Assembly and carries out its work under the authority of the General Assembly by proactively making recommendations to the General Assembly and exercising authority to carry out those recommendations as approved by the General Assembly.
- B. Committee on World Outreach**
1. The Committee on World Outreach shall be comprised of nine members on a three-year, three class system, with the Moderator and Stated Clerk serving as ex-officio members with voice and vote. A quorum of the committee shall be five, excluding ex-officio members. The Committee's membership shall include three Teaching Elders and at least four Ruling Elders. The two remaining positions may be filled by non-ordained, active members of EPC churches with particular expertise or experience in world missions. Committee members may serve all or part of two consecutive terms and then may not be reelected for at least one year. The Committee on World Outreach shall meet at least twice a year, including the week of General Assembly.
  2. The Committee on World Outreach, in consultation with the Ministerial Vocation Committee, shall be responsible for providing a course of instruction for those global workers to be commissioned by the General Assembly with authority to administer sacraments on the mission field (W.3-1, G.20-4A.5). All such workers shall sustain a written examination developed by the Ministerial Vocation Committee, be recommended to the General Assembly by the World Outreach Committee and sustain an oral examination by the World Outreach Committee.
- C. Committee on Ministerial Vocation**
1. Membership to be six members; chairman elected by committee.
  2. Monitors and aids ministerial committees of local presbyteries.
  3. Assists in placement of pastors and helps churches to find pastors.
  4. Provides information on colleges and seminaries.
  5. Examines extraordinary candidates.
  6. Oversees theological testing.
- D. Next Generation Ministries Council**
1. To be comprised of nine members, five of whom may be non-elders qualified in children's, youth, or college ministries and who are active



members of EPC churches. Chairman is to be elected by committee.

2. Duties:

- a. To encourage and support Next Generation ministry workers (paid and/or volunteer) by promoting and providing training events, resources, mentoring, and networking opportunities. The Committee will also coordinate the allocation of scholarship funds to provide financial assistance to individuals wishing to participate in relevant conferences and events.

**E.** Committee on Theology

1. Membership shall be comprised of six individuals, one-half of whom shall be Teaching Elders and one-half of whom shall be Ruling Elders, to be in three rotating classes of two each.
2. Duties: to receive and study such theological matters as may be referred to it by the General Assembly and to return to the General Assembly its opinions and requested papers or documents.

**F.** Committee on Fraternal Relations

1. Membership to consist of nine members, plus the Moderator and the Stated Clerk as members ex-officio. The chairman is to be selected by the committee.
2. Duties: to assist the General Assembly and the Office of the Stated Clerk in identifying, developing, and implementing relationships with other bodies of Christians including denominations in the Reformed tradition, ecumenical agencies (evangelical or Reformed in character), and other groups working to advance the Kingdom of God through evangelism, nurture, and service. The committee shall receive, study, and pursue only such fraternal matters as may be referred to it by the General Assembly and shall report annually to the General Assembly on all matters referred and the development of existing fraternal relationships.

**G.** Permanent Judicial Commission

“The Permanent Judicial Commission: The General Assembly shall establish a PJC. The Commission shall consist of a minimum of nine persons in three classes of three each, and of which at least two-thirds must be Ruling Elders. The Assembly shall determine their eligibility to succession. Efforts shall be made to give fair representation to the various Presbyteries. During service on this Commission, no member may hold office or employment in the court. Its quorum shall be two-thirds of its membership. It shall elect its own moderator and a clerk from among its members and an accurate record shall be kept of its deliberations and actions, with a permanent record of these Minutes filed with the Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.” Duties of the PJC described in the *Book of Government*, 21-3

**H.** Committee on Presbytery Review

1. Membership: Committee to consist of six members, including at least one former Stated Clerk.
2. Duties: To provide structure, order, and continuity in reviewing the minutes of the Presbyteries.

**I.** Committee on Chaplains Work and Care

1. Membership: The Committee shall consist of nine members, including at least five members with experience as Chaplains and at least three Ruling Elders, as nominations allow. Whenever possible, one position on the Committee will be filled by a currently serving military chaplain,

normally the EPC's most senior in rank. The Chairman shall be elected by the Committee and be responsible for coordinating the work and business of the Committee in consultation with the Office of the Stated Clerk and the Chaplain Endorser.

2. Responsibilities: The Committee will be responsible to:
  - a. Oversee and conduct the chaplain endorsement process,
  - b. Develop and implement policies and procedures for EPC chaplain ministry,
  - c. Provide for pastoral care for endorsed chaplains and their families.
3. Chaplain Endorser: The Moderator shall nominate to the General Assembly a Teaching Elder to serve as the denomination's Chaplain Endorser for a three-year term, which is renewable. The Endorser will be operationally accountable to the Office of the Stated Clerk.
  - a. The nominee should be a well-qualified, retired military chaplain unless there is not one available.
  - b. The Endorser is an ex-officio member of the Chaplains Work and Care Committee with voice and vote, and together, recruit, endorse, and support all EPC Chaplains.
  - c. The Endorser is the denomination's designated signatory for chaplain endorsements, and the official representative of the denomination regarding chaplaincy matters to government agencies, institutional chaplain certification agencies, and chaplain endorsing conferences and associations with which the denomination has affiliation.
  - d. The Endorser is the denominational representative for pastoral visits to chaplains at their place of service.
  - e. Should the Endorser resign or become unable to serve, the Stated Clerk or the Clerk's designee shall serve in that position until a new Endorser is nominated and elected.

**J. Committee on Disaster Relief**

1. Membership is comprised of nine members on a three-year, three class system, including three Teaching Elders, three Ruling Elders, and three who need not be elders. Non-elders should be qualified in areas of emergency management, disaster relief mobilization, or other areas essential to the duties below. The Committee will be divided into three classes each with three-year terms. The Committee may utilize input from EPC sources outside the continental United States when considering disaster relief plans for The Bahamas or Puerto Rico.
2. Duties
  - a. To develop a plan to implement an emergency response to disasters in cooperation with local EPC congregations, appropriate governmental agencies, and other relief organizations.
  - b. To produce and distribute a guide to requesting disaster help to all Sessions, Presbyteries, and other EPC agencies, which would include emergency aid contacts to use in the event of a disaster situation.

**10-2** The power and authority of the permanent committees shall be those set forth in these Rules or by direction of the General Assembly.

- 10-3** Each committee shall be constituted on a three-year, three-class structure. All members shall be Teaching Elders or Ruling Elders except as noted. Insofar as practicable, the ratio of two Ruling Elders to one Teaching Elder shall be maintained.
- 10-4** In the event of a vacancy on a permanent committee of the General Assembly, when such vacancies seriously affect the work of the committee, and upon the request of the chairman of that committee, the National Leadership Team is authorized to appoint a person to fill the vacancy of that committee. Such appointees shall serve until the following General Assembly at which time the person shall be presented to the General Assembly by the Nominating Committee for approval. Upon approval of the General Assembly, the nominees shall then be approved for the terms and the classes according to the vacancies being filled.
- 10-5** A majority of a permanent committee shall constitute a quorum.
- 10-6** Each permanent committee shall elect its chairman for the forthcoming assembly year before the Assembly that initiates that assembly year. Persons not yet elected to the forthcoming year shall not be eligible.

## **XI. Committee on Nominations**

- 11-1** The membership shall consist of one Teaching or Ruling Elder from each Presbytery and shall be organized in three classes with numbers as close to equal as possible. Ordinarily, there should be at least two more Ruling Elder than Teaching Elder members. A member may serve all or part of one three-year term and then be eligible for re-election for an additional three-year term. The Stated Clerk, or a person designated by the Clerk, shall work with the committee to ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Rules for Assembly*.
- 11-2** The chairman shall be named from the next outgoing class by the outgoing Moderator of the Assembly. The chairman shall take office at the close of the Assembly.
- 11-3** Each year at the Assembly, the outgoing Moderator shall nominate the appropriate number of persons to the Assembly for membership on this committee. At that time, the floor will be opened for other nominations. However, all nominations must meet the requirements for Presbytery representation and for the Teaching Elder and Ruling Elder distribution. The Stated Clerk shall rule if a nomination from the floor is valid, and if it is valid, the Stated Clerk shall determine which of the Moderators three nominees the nominee from the floor will run against. Those elected shall take office at the close of the Assembly.
- 11-4** Duties:
  - A.** Nominees for Moderator-elect: The committee shall advise each Presbytery following the meeting of the Assembly of the privilege of that Presbytery to recommend to the committee a person for Moderator-elect of the General Assembly. Such recommendation shall be forwarded to the committee no later than February 28 of that year. After February 28, the committee shall evaluate the recommendations of the Presbyteries, as well as other recommendations it may receive, and at the next meeting of the Assembly shall recommend no more than two persons as its nominees for Moderator-elect. At that time, nominations may also be made from the floor. Election shall be by a majority vote of the Assembly. Nominees of the committee shall be advised of their pending nomination, ordinarily no less than thirty days prior to the meeting of the General Assembly.
  - B.** Nominees for Moderator: Ordinarily, the Committee shall nominate the Moderator-elect for Moderator of the succeeding Assembly. However, if the Moderator-elect is unable or declines such nomination or the Committee deems it

unwise to do so, it shall nominate at least one but not more than two candidates for Moderator utilizing the same procedures as for Moderator-elect.

- C. To nominate to the Assembly persons for vacancies of all Assembly permanent committees. Recommendations from Sessions or Presbyteries shall be forwarded to the Committee no later than February 28 of that year. The Endorsement for Nomination form shall be used and shall reflect official action of the Session or the Presbytery.
- D. To name from the Commissioners to the Assembly those who will serve on the various standing committees of the Assembly.
- E. The Committee shall meet in March each year to select nominee(s) for Moderator-elect or Moderator of the General Assembly as the case may be and for permanent committees.
- F. In the event that a vacancy on the Committee occurs, the Moderator of the Assembly may appoint another person from that Presbytery to fill the position and serve the term of the person who vacated their membership.
- G. In the event that a member is not able to attend the meeting of the Committee, the Moderator may appoint another person from that Presbytery to serve in the place of the absent member for that meeting.

## **XII. Benefit Resources, Inc., (BRI) Board of Directors**

**12-1** The BRI Board of Directors shall oversee the administration of the denominational Retirement Plan and the Group Insurance Plan.

- A. Membership to consist of nine persons, in three classes of three each. At least one of the members must be a Teaching Elder and at least two must be Ruling Elders. The other members shall be active members of EPC congregations with expertise needed for the Board to carry out its responsibilities. Members may serve all or part of two consecutive terms and are eligible to be reelected for additional terms after an interim of one year. The members of the Board shall be nominated to the Assembly by the Nominating Committee, with the chairman to be nominated at the Assembly by the outgoing Moderator.
- B. Duties: to serve as trustees under the Retirement Plan adopted by the Assembly; to administer the Group Insurance Plan; to administer the proceeds of the “Gratitude Gift;” and to make an annual report of its proceedings to the Assembly.

## **XIII. New Business**

**13-1** Any matter presented in any form which has not been received by the Stated Clerk prior to the opening of the General Assembly shall be treated as new business.

**13-2** New business must be presented to the Assembly by noon of the second day of business. The National Leadership Team may assist the Stated Clerk in referring all new business coming to the Assembly.

## **XIV. Parliamentary Procedure**

**14-1** Except as otherwise specifically provided in these *Rules*, “Robert’s Rules of Order” shall be the standard in parliamentary procedure.

**14-2** In presenting the report of a committee, the chairman shall lead the Assembly in a brief prayer before making the report. The entire report shall be read before any comment. The Assembly may waive the reading of any particular report by a majority vote of commissioners’ present. When a minority of a committee wishes to present a minority report the member reporting for the minority shall have the privilege of presenting the

minority report and moving it as a substitute for the portion of the majority report affected.

**14-3** Each recommendation in each report must be read, considered, and acted on separately, unless otherwise recommended by the chair and approved by a majority vote of the Assembly.

- A. The chairman moves the adoption.
- B. The Moderator asks, "Is there objection or question?"
- C. Hearing no objection or question, the Moderator states, "It is adopted."  
(Procedure known as "Short Form of Voting.")

**14-4** Procedure in debating a question:

- A. The committee chairman may answer questions concerning the report addressed through the Moderator.
- B. The chairman shall have the opportunity to make the final statement in debate.
- C. No Commissioner may speak on the same question more than once until all desiring to speak have done so.
- D. Debate on the main motion shall be limited to fifteen (15) minutes unless extended. A simple majority may extend debate in additional five (5) minute increments. No Commissioner may speak longer than three (3) minutes at one time.
- E. Debate shall be free, open, and responsible with equal time being given to proponents insofar as possible.

**14-5** All motions shall be presented in writing and read before the vote.

## **XV. Amendment or Suspension of Rules**

**15-1** The *Rules* of the General Assembly may be amended or suspended only by a three-quarter (3/4) vote of the Commissioners present and voting. A motion to amend is debatable. A motion to suspend is not debatable.