



# Presbytery of Genesee Valley

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

(appendices provided separately)

AS COLLECTED AND APPROVED IN 2011 and AMENDED THROUGH OCTOBER 2021

## PREFACE

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley of the Synod of the Northeast and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is comprised of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations in the New York State counties of Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Orleans, and Wyoming, and also includes the Victor Presbyterian Church in the county of Ontario. The Presbytery has adopted this policy with regards to a Manual of Administrative Operations:

“Presbytery shall have a Manual of Administrative Operations, which will include the *Manual of Organization* and *Personnel Policies*. Presbytery shall attach appendices to its manual of administrative operations as it shall, from time to time, deem appropriate. The manual of administrative operations shall be amended by a consultative process in conformity with *Book of Order*.”

This *Policies and Procedures Manual* provides a common understanding of the ways whereby we have agreed to order our life together. Completed in 2011 and revised in response to the new Form of Government adopted in 2013, it is a consolidation of policies, guidelines, and procedures already contained in the following documents:

- *Manual of Organization*
- Presbytery Committee and Big Picture Team policies, procedures and guidelines
- Presbytery operating policies and guidelines

It was further revised in 2017, in accordance with the Design of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley, described below in Sections I and II.

The policies, listed below, are incorporated into this Manual as appendices.

- A. Neighborhood List, as updated
- B. Committee on Ministry Handbook and Transition Manual
- C. Operations Manual for the Committee on Preparation for Ministry
- D. Consolidated Financial, Investment and Funding Policies
- E. Job Descriptions for Standing Committees/Commissions of the Presbytery
- F. Position Descriptions for Presbytery Staff
- G. Presbytery Sexual Misconduct Policy
- H. Presbytery Child Safety Policy
- I. Guidelines for Writing a Session Sexual Misconduct Policy
- J. Policy on Automatic Administrative Leave
- K. Presbytery Personnel Policies and Practices

First and foremost, the Presbytery of Genesee Valley is governed by the *Book of Order* (Part II of *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*). In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between these Policies and the *Book of Order* or applicable New York State law, the provisions of the *Book of Order* or State law shall control. Specific instances of possible conflict or inconsistencies of previously enacted policies, procedures or guidelines not expressly addressed in these Policies, should be brought to the attention of Stated Clerk in writing. The Stated Clerk and Big Picture Team shall report any such occurrences to Presbytery, together with a recommendation as to any action.

In addition to the *Book of Order*, for procedural purposes the Presbytery uses the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* (Scott Foresman edition). Amendments to this document shall be done according to the procedures outlined herein.

## PART I: MISSION AND VISION

### Our Mission: Know Christ, Live Christ, Share Christ

#### Preamble

We lift up our understanding of the mission of God for the Presbytery of Genesee Valley. This mission begins with the faithfulness of those who have preceded us. It emerges in a context of turbulence and rapid change in church and society. Our understanding of God's mission for us grows in the hearts of our diverse people as we commit to serve Christ together.

#### Mission Statement

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley glorifies God by Knowing Christ, Living Christ, and Sharing Christ.

#### What does this Mission look like?

- **We Know Christ** when we worship God through Scripture, prayer, songs, and preaching; when we live as disciples of Jesus Christ within a faithful community of congregations; and when we experience the Holy Spirit leading us into the world with purpose and conviction. This mission calls for the Presbytery to train and equip the people of God for faithful service in the life of our churches and surrounding communities.
- **We Live Christ** when we model the truth and integrity of the Gospel as we build trust and work with one another and our neighbors; when our elders, pastors and church leaders feel strong spiritual encouragement and support for their vocation; and when we demonstrate our calling in ways that capture the attention of people who live throughout the Genesee Valley. This mission calls for the Presbytery to demonstrate the wonder and joy of Christian faith as we eat, work, play and reach out together.
- **We Share Christ** when we initiate emerging faith communities, develop new churches, and support existing churches; when our congregations join hands for shared mission endeavors; and when we engage in ministries of healing, comfort, renewal, justice, and peace. This mission calls on the Presbytery to be a gathering of faithful congregations in which we mourn our defeats, celebrate our successes, and seek God's confidence and strength as we embrace the future.

### Our Vision: Healthy, Vital, and Sustainable Congregations and Leaders

In light of the changes in our culture and demography, and the challenging environment in which the Church lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we assert that the primary focus of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley is not the preservation of itself as a governing body or an institution. The focus of our Presbytery is now the landscape of possibilities and challenges facing our congregations in the places they are serving. Our primary goal is the encouragement and empowerment of **healthy, vital, and sustainable congregations and leaders**: active in the mission of serving God and neighbors, engaged with partners within the presbytery and beyond it. These partners may include other churches, community organizations, and mission agencies.

Our vision is aspirational. Just as the Kingdom of God is dawning in our midst but not yet fulfilled, we are working to promote healthier, more vital, and sustainable congregations as we move into God's future. We seek to encourage, resource, and empower leaders, pastoral leaders, and congregational leaders in their ministries. We seek to enable partnerships in which congregations can build on shared strength to be effective in their mission fields. We seek to practice that we are "better together," as we support the missions and ministries of our churches with grants, tools and training, and resources.

## PGV POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL (appendices separate)

We use the word **Healthy**, not just to connote the absence of visible illness or trouble, but as a dynamic condition of strength, nourishment, effective functioning and well-being.

We use the word **Vital** to connote active engagement in worship and mission; care for members, neighbors and strangers; and the work of justice and peace.

We use the word **Sustainable** to connote the ability to gather resources necessary to continue and grow in mission and ministry. This may include a critical mass of energetic people, a vision for faith and mission, trained leadership, sufficient finances, and buildings or other locations that enable ministry. The role of the Presbytery is to provide tools and resources to evaluate and enhance sustainability in times of change and to plan with congregations regarding their future.

How will we know that we are fulfilling our Vision?

- When congregations, either singly or in partnerships, feel energized and purposeful
- When congregations work together
- When the Presbytery functions as a facilitator of successful relationships
- When people enjoy working together and have stories to tell about it
- When we know Christ, live Christ, and share Christ here

### Gathered in Neighborhoods

To begin this work the Vision and Strategy Committee of the former Presbytery Council encouraged the development of six Neighborhoods within the Presbytery. Pastoral leaders and congregations are gathered to initiate conversations about the realities of mission and ministry in their region of the Presbytery, what they may want to address or learn together, how they may support each other, and whether they will be active in mission together. For the current Neighborhood Grouping list see Appendix A. Relationships between congregations across Neighborhoods, existing or yet to be formed, are also encouraged.

#### Anticipated Outcomes

- A growth in the number of mission partnerships, either regionally or project-based
- A stronger network of support for all pastoral leaders
- Churches deepening relationships with each other and supporting each other through prayer, shared mission, and gatherings
- Churches and leaders learning new skills together that will strengthen their life and ministry

## Part II: ORGANIZATION

### Presbytery Design

The Presbytery Design seeks to provide a variety of ways to serve the Presbytery. Some groups will continue to be nominated by the Committee on Representation, elected by the Presbytery, and serve three-year terms. Other groups will be brought together less formally and will organize around passion, interest, skills and experience. These Teams and Working Groups may be short- or long-term, focused on a particular shared concern or event, or an ongoing function of serving congregations. Participants may be self-identified or invited through Presbytery communications and by personal invitation. These groups may design a meeting schedule and structure scaled to the work they are doing. They will form and re-form as needed.

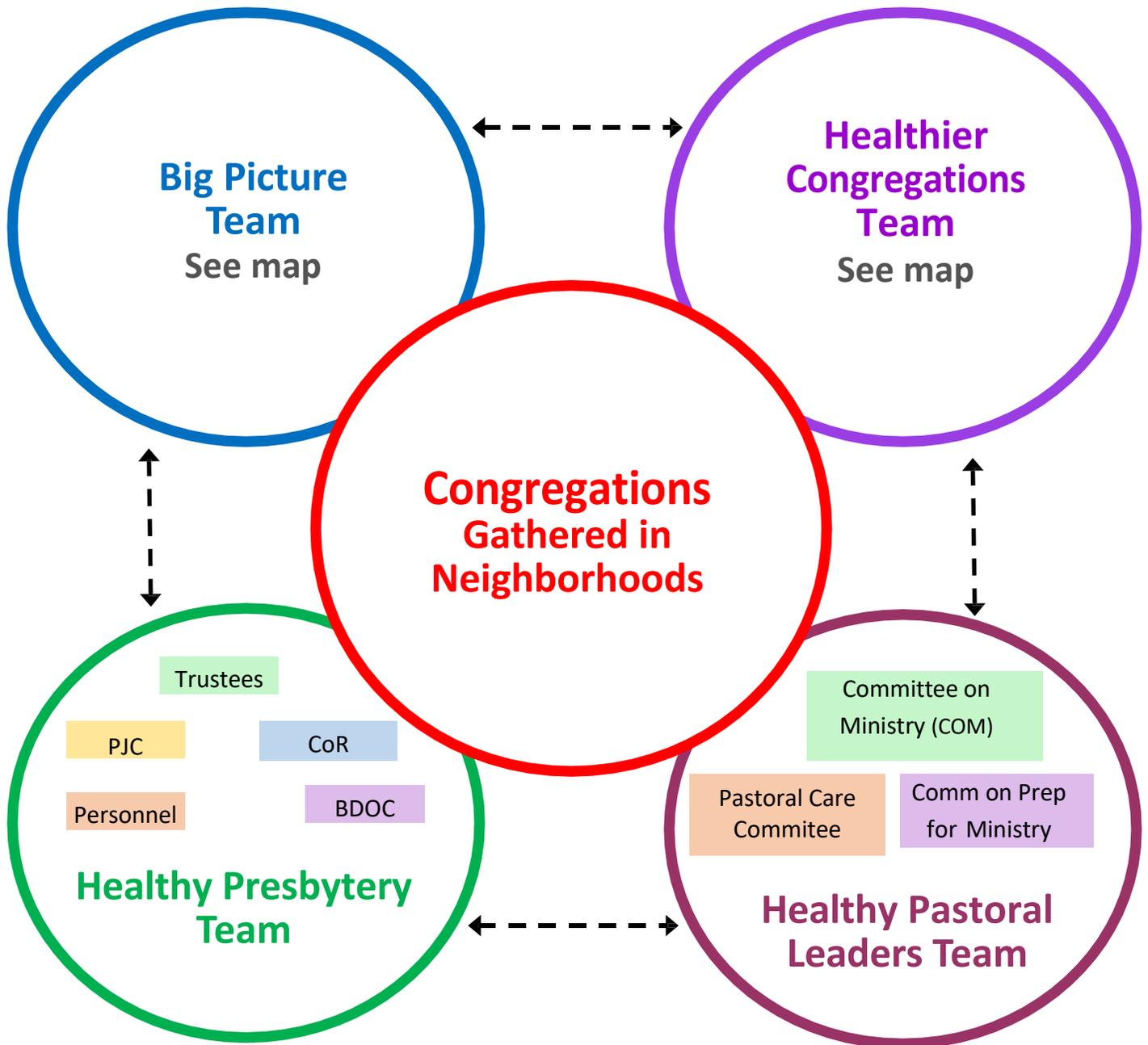
### Definitions

- **Team:** A Team is a group of people linked in a common purpose to equip, empower, and support congregations and neighborhoods, or the work of the Presbytery
- **Working Groups:** Working Groups are small groups of persons who agree to work together to accomplish identified responsibilities, objectives, and goals within a Team
- **Standing Committees of the Presbytery:** Committees serve the Presbytery by doing the work assigned to them by the Presbytery; members of standing committees are nominated by the Committee on Representation, elected by the Presbytery, and ordinarily serve three-year terms on a rotational basis
- **Committee on Representation:** Members are nominated by the Big Picture Team and elected by the Presbytery; the committee year begins each August 1; persons may be re-nominated and elected for a second term of 3 years; no committee member should serve longer than six consecutive years; chairs of the committee will be elected annually by the committee
- **Principles of Representation:** Presbytery, through the work of the Committee on Representation and its Teams, shall give expression to the rich diversity within in its membership, and provide means to increase inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life; persons of all racial and ethnic groups, different ages and sexes, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, varied abilities, geographical areas and theological understandings consistent within the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (single, married, widowed, divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access in the decision-making of the Presbytery. (*Book of Order F-1.04013, G-3.0103*)

# Presbytery of Genesee Valley

Our Mission: Know Christ, Live Christ, Share Christ

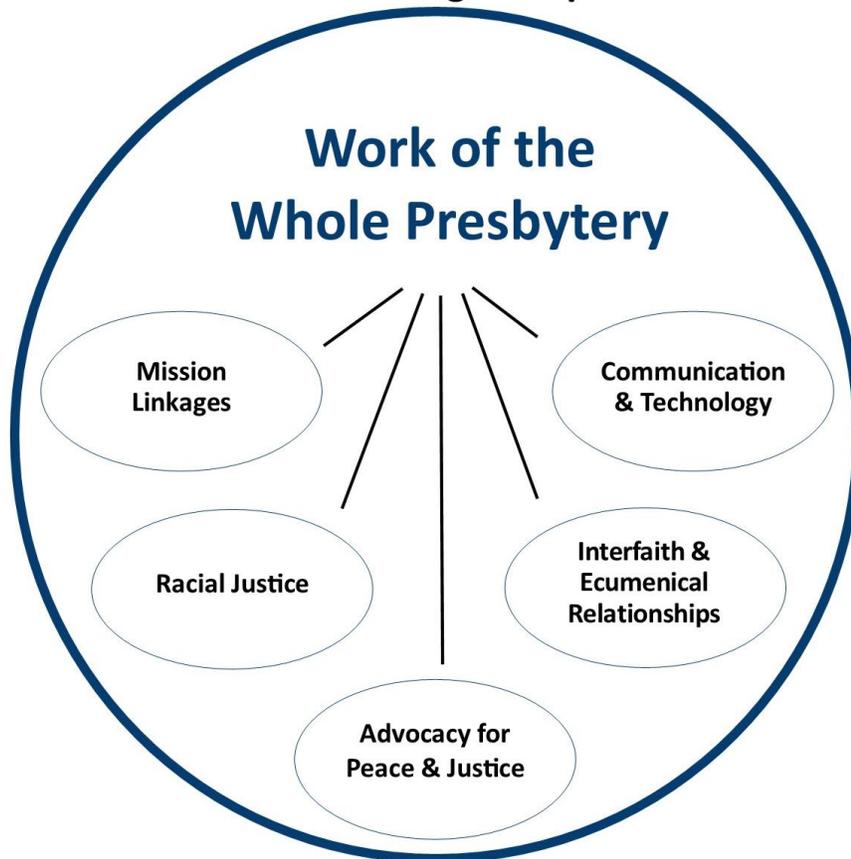
Our Vision: Healthy, Vital, Sustainable Congregations and Leaders



## Big Picture Team

and

## Working Groups



The Big Picture Team is responsible for the work of the whole Presbytery. The Big Picture Team includes many of the functions of the prior Presbytery Council including when necessary, acting on behalf of the Presbytery between its meetings, primarily with respect to recommendations from the Board of Trustees regarding a congregation's property.

The primary foci of the Big Picture Team are:

- Dreaming and Discerning: for strategizing and making recommendations to the Presbytery, longer range planning, identification, and initial support of the denominational initiative—1001 New Worshipping Communities
- Engaging the three other Teams in processes of evaluation and, where necessary, coordination
- Communication, both listening and sharing, with Presbytery members, commissioners, church members, the Neighborhoods, and the wider community, through social media and face-to-face gatherings
- Presbytery meetings and gatherings: for decision-making, education, building relationships, and spiritual nurture

The structure of the Big Picture Team will be designed by the Team to best accomplish its functions. The Team will bring its design to the Presbytery for approval, allowing for experimentation, pilot projects, and collaborative work across Teams and Neighborhoods of the Presbytery.

**Members of the Big Picture Team will include both elected and appointed persons:**

- **A Convener:** nominated by the Moderator and Moderator-Elect from among its members, and elected by the Team from its members
- **Officers of the Presbytery:** Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Immediate Past Moderator
- **One representative each from:** 1) the Healthier Congregations Team (appointed by its Coordinating Council), 2) the Healthy Pastoral Leaders Team (COM), 3) the Healthy Presbytery Team, 4) Trustees, 5) Pastoral Care and Development Committee, 6) Personnel Committee, and 7) Budget Development and Oversight Committee
- **One representative from each neighborhood:** serving up to 3 consecutive years
- **Two at-large members:** for discerning and dreaming (appointed annually by the Moderator), serving up to 3 consecutive years
- **Ex-officio members:** Transitional Leader/ Stated Clerk, Treasurer, Journal Clerk

Quorum for the Big Picture Team is half (50%) of voting membership.

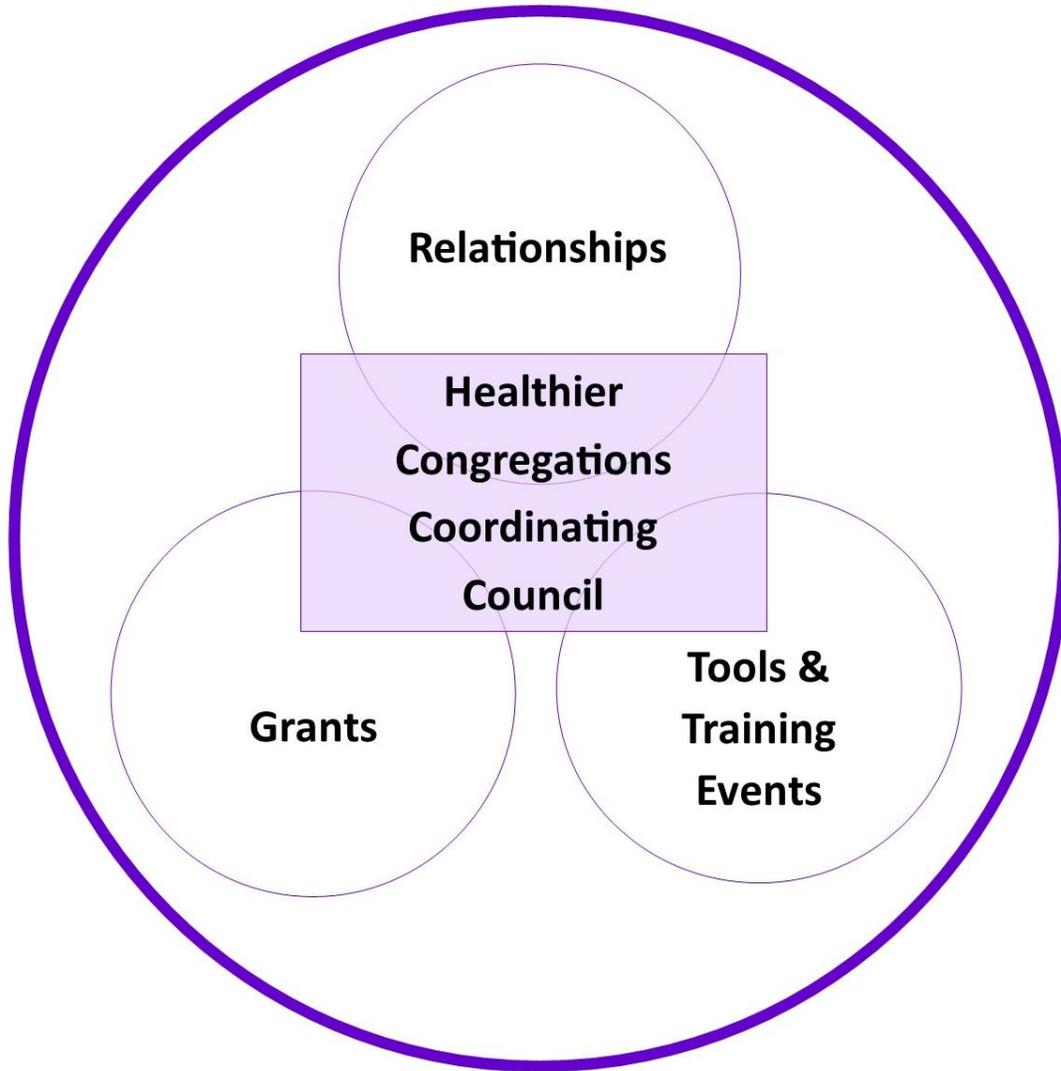
**The Big Picture Team will include these Working Groups:**

- **Mission Linkages** – relationships with designated Presbytery missions including, but not limited to: Lagom Landing, Rochester Presbyterian Home, Cameron Community Ministries, Camp Whitman, our Commissioners to the Synod of the Northeast and Synod’s Mission and Ministry Council, the General Assembly, including our Commissioners
- **Racial Justice** – acknowledging the presence and reality of systemic racism in our communities and the Church, the RJWG seeks to address our mutual responsibility and participation in systems of oppression and strive to usher in Christ's peace and reconciliation
- **Advocacy** – works with Neighborhoods, congregations, and the Presbytery to claim our call as partners in the global and local mission of justice and peace; advocate and work for systemic change to promote justice and challenge forces that oppress people and the environment (*not yet formed*)
- **Interfaith and Ecumenical Relationships** – through covenant agreements with groups such as the Greater Rochester Community of Churches, the Rochester Interfaith Network Alive, campus ministries within our bounds, and others to participate in ecumenical and interfaith dialogue and life, and mission opportunities within the wider community (*not yet formed*)
- **Communication and Technology** – works with all of the committees and working groups of the Presbytery to develop strategies and identify tools for equipping churches and fostering connections and community within the Presbytery.

A member of the Big Picture Team will convene each Working Group of that team and serve as the liaison to the Team. Working Groups recruit their own membership and are not term limited.

Healthier Congregations Team

Working Groups & Coordinating Council



**Healthier Congregations Team Vision Statement**

We equip and empower congregations and neighborhoods to support one another for the risky work of discerning how to share God’s love more fully in our community, build healthier relationships, explore new ways of being church together, and live as a sign of hope for the world.

## Presbytery Teams

### Healthier Congregations Team (HCT)

During 2016 and 2017, four standing committees of the Presbytery (Resource & Education, Congregational Development, Mission & Advocacy, Stewardship Development & Interpretation) came together to form the Healthier Congregations Team. Their task is to work directly with congregations and neighborhoods to bring the services of the Presbytery to them as needed or requested. Membership on HCT Working Groups is open to all and is not elected or term limited.

### Healthy Pastoral Leaders Team

The Healthy Pastoral Leaders Team is comprised of three standing committees of the Presbytery. Members of these committees are nominated by the Committee on Representation and elected by the Presbytery:

- **Committee on Ministry** – see Appendix B, Committee on Ministry Handbook and Transition Manual, for the description of its work
- **Committee on Preparation for Ministry** – see Appendix C, Operations Manual for the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, for a description of its work
- **Pastoral Care and Development Committee** – see Appendix E for the job description for this committee

Leaders and members of these teams are encouraged to communicate regularly with each other on matters of common interest and concern. Leaders are encouraged to meet at least annually to discuss an overview of the work in which the committees are engaged, identifying overlapping responsibilities and concerns, and developing a plan to coordinate their work.

### Healthy Presbytery Team

The Healthy Presbytery Team is comprised of five standing committees of the Presbytery. Members of these committees are nominated by the Committee on Representation and elected by the Presbytery:

- **Board of Trustees** – see Appendix D: Consolidated Financial, Investment and Funding Policies, for a description of the Board's work
- **Permanent Judicial Commission** – see Appendix E, Standing Committees/Commissions of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley, for a description of its work
- **Budget Development & Oversight Committee** – see Appendix E
- **Personnel Committee** – see Appendix E
- **Committee on Representation** – see Appendix E

Leaders and members of these teams are encouraged to communicate regularly with each other on matters of common interest and concern. Leaders are encouraged to meet at least annually to discuss an overview of the work in which the committees are engaged, identifying overlapping responsibilities and concerns, and developing a plan to coordinate their work.

## Presbytery Officers

### Elected officers

In the election of officers of the Presbytery, opportunity shall always be given for nominations from the floor.

- **The Moderator** of Presbytery shall be nominated by the Committee on Representation. Ordinarily, the Moderator is elected and installed during the third quarter/summer meeting and assume the position immediately upon installation for a term of approximately one year. In addition to the duties and powers given by the *Book of Order* (G-3.0104), the Moderator may be given special responsibilities as approved by Presbytery. The Moderator (or their designee) shall preside at all installations of ministers, propound the constitutional questions, and declare the minister installed. The Moderator shall be a member of the Big Picture Team and continue to serve on that team, with voice and vote, during the year after leaving office.
- **The Moderator-Elect** of presbytery shall ordinarily be elected and installed during the third quarter/summer meeting and assume the position immediately upon installation for a term of approximately two years, one as Moderator-Elect and one as Moderator. The Moderator-Elect shall preside over the meeting of presbytery at the request of, or in the absence of, the Moderator. If the office of Moderator becomes vacant, the Moderator-Elect shall fill the unexpired term. If the Moderator-Elect is unable to serve, the most recent available Moderator shall serve. The Moderator-Elect shall be a member of the Big Picture Team, and with members of the Team, coordinate worship for the Presbytery meeting.
- **The Stated Clerk** shall ordinarily be elected at the January meeting of Presbytery for a term of three years starting on February 1 of that year. The presbytery may elect the Stated Clerk for successive terms. The Stated Clerk shall receive such compensation as the Presbytery shall direct. In addition to fulfilling the constitutional duties, the Stated Clerk shall advise the committees of Presbytery, as appropriate or as requested, with reference to the rules and procedures of the Presbytery and of the denomination. The Stated Clerk shall be an ex-officio member of the Presbytery Big Picture Team and the Committee on Ministry. The Stated Clerk is to be available to pastors and church officers for consultation on questions concerning the *Book of Order* and Presbytery policies.

A Stated Clerk Nominating Committee, comprised of a representative of the Presbytery Committee on Representation, a representative of the Personnel Committee, and a person appointed by the Chair of the Presbytery's Big Picture Team, shall be convened by the Chair of the Big Picture Team. The committee will make a nomination to the Presbytery. Near the end of a term, applications for the position may be accepted from interested persons for consideration by the Stated Clerk Nominating Committee. Annual reviews by the Personnel Committee and the Big Picture Team will be conducted according to the Personnel Policies and Practices of the Presbytery. A summary of Annual Reviews for a Stated Clerk seeking re-nomination will be provided to this committee by the Personnel Committee.

- **The Treasurer** shall be elected at the January meeting of Presbytery for a term of one year starting on February 1 of that year. After six successive one-year terms, a Treasurer shall be ineligible to serve until one year has elapsed. The Treasurer provides supervision and oversight for the reception of all funds payable to the Presbytery and likewise provides supervision and oversight for the disbursement of all funds within the adopted budget of the Presbytery. Extra-budget disbursements shall be made only with the approval of the Presbytery. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Big Picture Team, Budget Development and Oversight Committee, and the Trustees. The Treasurer shall provide oversight for the annual financial review of the Presbytery's financial records.

### **Appointed officers**

- **New Business Committee** shall be appointed by the Moderator of the Presbytery at the beginning of each on-site Stated Meeting of Presbytery. The New Business committee shall be comprised of four (4) members: two (2) teaching elders and two (2) ruling elder commissioners.

Following the appointment of the New Business Committee, the Moderator shall call for any new business. Such items shall be referred to the New Business Committee which will be excused to consider the proposed item(s). The New Business Committee shall make any report at the conclusion of the Presbytery meeting. The New Business Committee shall be dissolved upon the adjournment of the meeting during which they were elected.

- **Legal Counsel** – The Presbytery no longer retains a Presbytery Attorney. If a congregation or member needs legal services, the Presbytery Trustees may refer legal questions as needed to an appropriate attorney. Attorney's fees are the responsibility of the congregation or member and will be billed directly by the attorney.

### **Presbytery Staff**

In addition to the Stated Clerk elected by the Presbytery, the Presbytery may employ other staff persons to assist the Presbytery in work guided by the Mission and Vision of the Presbytery. A Presbytery leader and any other presbyters will be nominated by a committee formed for that purpose and elected by the Presbytery. Administrative staff persons will be employed by the Big Picture Team, upon recommendation by the Presbytery Leader and the Personnel Committee. Position descriptions will be prepared by the Personnel Committee and approved by the Big Picture Team.

See Appendix F, Position Descriptions of Presbytery Staff.

### **Corporations and Other Relationships**

#### **Relationship to Presbyterian Homes and Residences**

Historically a single corporation, the Rochester Presbyterian Home, the Presbyterian Residence Center (Valley Manor), and the Genesee Valley Presbyterian Nursing Center (Kirkhaven), separated from the Presbytery of Genesee Valley in 1997. The Presbytery of Genesee Valley continued to relate to the Rochester Presbyterian Home and Seniors First (Valley Manor and Kirkhaven) through the Mission & Advocacy Committee of the Presbytery. In 2014 Valley Manor was acquired by Episcopal Senior Services. Beginning January 1, 2018, the Rochester Presbyterian Home and Seniors First (Kirkhaven) relate to the Presbytery through the Mission Linkages Working Group of the Big Picture Team, for purposes of promotion and interpretation of their services and volunteer organizations.

## Part III: GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Policy Development

A **policy** of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley is a course of action or a principal of action which is intended to apply broadly to the decisions and actions of the Presbytery, its committees, and other entities of the Presbytery.

**Guidelines** and **procedures** are not as broad as Presbytery-wide policies. Guidelines and procedures define the manner in which certain courses of action are followed or implemented, consistent with Presbytery-wide policies. Guidelines and procedures may inform and instruct the work of committees or other entities, as they serve to enact or bring to fruition the decisions made by the Presbytery.

Committees and other entities of the Presbytery may develop guidelines and procedures for the work of their particular group consistent with Presbytery-wide policies. These guidelines and/or procedures are communicated to the Presbytery through the appendices of this Manual.

#### Enactment of a Presbytery Policy

- Policies of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley shall be enacted by the Presbytery, in a duly called meeting, by a 2/3 vote of presbyters who are present for that meeting
- Proposed policies shall come to the floor of Presbytery through the Big Picture Team

#### Procedures for Proposal of Policies to the Presbytery

- Those who wish to propose a policy (a congregation, a committee, a ministry team, an individual, or a group) shall prepare the proposed policy in the following format:
  - Part 1 – The text of the proposed policy, including a recommendation for when the policy, if approved, shall be reviewed by the Presbytery. Every policy should be reviewed at least every five years
  - Part 2 – A description of who is proposing the policy
  - Part 3 – A clear, succinct rationale for the policy
- The author(s) of the proposed policy shall submit the above document to the Big Picture Team for its deliberation; the Team will provide for full consideration of the proposed policy, including the opportunity for advocates of the policy to be heard
- The Team shall determine when the policy shall come to the Presbytery and shall make a specific recommendation to the Presbytery (approve, disapprove, approve with amendment); the rationale for the Team's recommendation shall be clearly stated
- The Team shall place the proposed policy, with all supporting rationales, in the Mailed Docket for the Presbytery meeting during which the proposed policy will be considered; under no circumstances will the proposed policy be placed in the Taken Docket for a particular meeting
- It will be the Team's responsibility to keep a record of the review dates of Presbytery policies, and to conduct the review of the policy; the Team will bring to the Presbytery the recommendation as to continuing, discontinuing, or amending the policy; this will ensure that policies remain applicable and up to date

With the exception of this paragraph, any policy (including provisions of this Policies and Procedures Manual) of the Presbytery of the Genesee Valley may be temporarily suspended at any Stated Meeting of the Presbytery by a three-fourths vote of the members present, providing that thereby no provisions of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are violated.

**Accessibility Policy** *Approved November 2016; Revised May 2019*

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley strives to make full inclusion a priority. To this end the Presbytery encourages its constituent congregations to:

- Continually work to remove all barriers, physical and otherwise, to full inclusion in the life of the church of all persons with disabilities
- Provide children and adults with disabilities the opportunity for a Christian education
- Provide persons with disabilities the opportunity for church membership, even when requirements and activities for membership must be modified to meet their special needs and challenges
- Intentionally and continually build awareness and understanding of all types of disability and of the issues that people with disabilities confront
- Promote advocacy for justice for people of all ages with disabilities

The Presbytery of Genesee Valley makes a commitment to:

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Suggestion for Implementation</b>
2. Provide sign language interpreters when requested in a timely manner.	2. Request for ASL interpreter will be submitted to the Presbytery Office two weeks before the scheduled meeting.
3. Provide printed materials in alternative formats (e.g., large print or braille) as requested.	3. Requests for alternative formats will be submitted two weeks before the event.
4. Encourage speakers to read aloud projected materials that have not previously been made available.	4. The Moderator will lead this effort to make new information available to all who are present.
5. Urge that requests for PiLP endorsements for funding new construction or remodeling of church property include provision for accessibility.	5. The requestor will submit provisions for accessibility to the Trustees.
6. Encourage speakers and leaders to use person-first language when referring to persons with disabilities. For example, use “a woman who is blind,” rather than “a blind woman.” Use inclusive language. For example, use a statement like “Please rise in body or in spirit” rather than “Please rise”.	6. The Big Picture Team will model the person first language.
7. Encourage the Committee on Representation to seek out persons with disabilities for leadership positions in Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly.	7. The Stated Clerk will provide this encouragement, accessing information from annual church statistical reports as needed.
8. Encourage inclusion of people with disabilities in worship leadership.	8. The Moderator and worship planners will seek out participants with the help of pastors.
9. Take feasible steps to ensure that Presbytery offices meet ADA requirements for accessibility.	

**Automatic Administrative Leave Policy**

See Appendix J.

## Cancellation Policies

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

The Presbytery Office will be closed when the Gates Central School District closes because of travel-related weather.

### **Presbytery Event Cancellation Policy**

In the event of a severe weather forecast which would make traveling hazardous, Presbytery-wide events may be cancelled, rescheduled for another date, or held electronically. A decision to cancel/postpone/hold electronically will normally be communicated to participants no later than three hours before the time when the meeting or event is scheduled to begin. A decision to cancel/postpone/hold electronically other Presbytery-wide events will be made by the person or group with responsibility for the event.

### **Committees, Teams and Working Groups**

Decisions to cancel/postpone/hold electronically meetings will be made by the convener of the group. The convener will be responsible for notifying members of the group and for making sure that the Presbytery Office knows about the cancellation/rescheduled date/move to an electronic meeting.

### **Notification of Cancellation**

Notification methods may include the following, as appropriate to the event being cancelled/ postponed/held electronically:

- E-mailing groups and/or registered individuals
- Posting the notice on the Presbytery webpage (<http://www.pbygenva.org/>)
- Posting an announcement on the 13WHAM website, as well as on their TV and radio stations (<http://www.13wham.com/>)
- Posting an announcement on additional media websites and TV and radio stations as may be determined to be effective
- Telephone calls to persons without e-mail
- Recording the cancellation information on the Presbytery Office voice mail

This policy will be posted on the Presbytery website and will be widely distributed to the Presbytery.

## Candidate Indebtedness Policy *Approved April 2008* (to be reviewed by CPM)

### **When the Presbytery of Genesee Valley is the Presbytery of Care**

1. In order to assess net worth, and to make a plan for financing the cost of seminary, inquirers are required to:
  - attend a Board of Pensions Fiscal Fitness Workshop held annually at each of the 11 Presbyterian seminaries during inquiry, or
  - meet with the Board of Pensions regional representative or the Presbyterian Foundation representative during inquiry, or
  - attend a local bi-annual Fiscal Fitness Workshop sponsored by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry
2. The Presbytery of Genesee Valley will share the cost, with the congregation of which the candidate is a member, of attending a career and counseling center for career guidance in pursuit of ordination in the Presbyterian Church (USA).
3. A designee of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry will make available annually the median income for the denomination reported by the Board of Pensions and the minimum effective salary established by the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.
4. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry will be an advocate with the congregation of which the inquirer or candidate is a member, and with other congregations of the Presbytery as appropriate, to generate financial support for the inquirer or candidate in the form of grants.
  - The Committee on Preparation for Ministry will make available upon request a list of options for pursuing grants and interest free loans and other funding that may be available through the Financial Aid for Studies Office of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and PC(USA) seminaries.
  - The Committee on Preparation for Ministry may suggest that inquirers and candidates work with a financial advisor on their own to evaluate or anticipate indebtedness and assets.

### **When the Presbytery of Genesee Valley is the Presbytery of Call:**

1. When a minister serving a first call following graduation from seminary comes with educational indebtedness and wishes to access assistance from the Board of Pensions, they shall be asked if they have attended a financial planning workshop such as a Fiscal Fitness Workshop sponsored by the Board of Pensions, or other financial planning workshop. If the minister has not attended such a workshop, they shall be required to do so within 12 months of start-up, the cost of registration fee, accommodation, and travel for such a workshop to be considered legitimate reimbursable expense from study leave allowance.
2. The Committee on Ministry shall encourage calling congregations to utilize further educational debt reduction as a point in negotiating salary with a prospective pastor who is a recent seminary graduate.
3. Processing of applications to the Seminary Debt Assistance Program shall be the responsibility of Presbytery's Board of Pensions liaison, through the Pastoral Care and Development Committee. Ministers interested in applying to the Board of Pensions Seminary Debt Assistance Program should be referred to the liaison.
4. The Committee on Ministry shall advise ministers being called to churches in the Presbytery of Genesee Valley of the availability of this program. Those who meet the qualifications to apply for the Board of Pension's Seminary Debt Assistance Program will be referred to the Presbytery's Board of Pensions liaison.

## Electronic Meeting Policy Approved 11/26/13, revised 4/25/2020

An “Electronic Meeting” means a meeting at which some or all participants are joined electronically. It is preferred that each participant attend the meeting individually on a computer or device, rather than one being shared by multiple members.

- Effective August 2021, all stated and special meetings of the Presbytery will be held by virtual platform.
- Electronic meetings may be held by the Presbytery Big Picture Team, a committee or working group of the Presbytery when:
  - business is time-sensitive and in need of action before the next in-person meeting
  - the cost of an in-person meeting is not justified for the business at hand
  - time and distance are factors in members’ accessibility to an in-person meeting
  - weather-related circumstances
- Electronic meetings are permissible when all active members have reasonable notice of the electronic meeting and the ability to discuss, deliberate, and discern the will of God and vote on business items
- Electronic meetings must provide for simultaneous aural communication among all participants to allow for discussion of the issue being considered; video access is preferred but not required; collaborative technologies, such as the web-based Zoom, GoToMeeting, or Skype, and interactive video teleconferences fit the necessary requirements for maintaining the deliberative character of meetings held in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order
- The moderator/convener/chair shall give attention to ensuring that all persons are included in the discussion and have the capability to hear, understand and participate fully in the proceedings
- Only the moderator of the Presbytery, the convener of the Big Picture Team, a chair of a committee, or a convener of a working group may call an electronic meeting
- Reasonable notice of an electronic meeting shall be given by the moderator, convener or chair before the meeting and shall include the purpose or the agenda for the meeting; instructions on how to participate shall accompany the call for the meeting; reasonable care shall be taken to ensure participation in the selection of the date and time for the meeting
- Established quorums will be upheld for electronic meetings and shall be declared at the beginning of the meeting
- Just as in an in-person meeting, electronic meetings shall open and close with prayer
- The same rules regarding participation apply in electronic meetings as in in-person ones: the body may but is not obligated to grant the privilege of the floor to a guest who may not vote or speak to an issue once debate closes; a guest in an electronic meeting is someone who is not a member of the named committee, working group or Presbytery
- Minutes of the proceedings shall be recorded and added to the minutes record
- Motions shall be processed in the same manner as in an in-person meeting; each attendee is responsible for their connection to the internet and the meeting; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member’s individual connection prevented them from participating in the meeting, provided that at least a quorum of members was connected and adequately able to participate

### Rationale

When the COVID pandemic forced all meetings to be held virtually, the attendance at virtual meetings surged by 30%. Recognizing the Zoom platform provided greater accessibility to its members, the Presbytery voted to hold all stated and special meetings by virtual platform. This policy clarifies that an electronic meeting does not include decisions made through a series of email communications which does not provide for simultaneous discussion of a motion. Moderators/chairs/conveners may contact the Communications Coordinator at [communications@pbygenval.org](mailto:communications@pbygenval.org) to schedule a Zoom meeting.

## Presbytery Meeting Policies *approved 2/6/07, last revised 2019*

### Setting Dates and Locations

Stated Presbytery Meetings are normally held four times a year. Meetings are held either on Tuesdays or Saturdays. Occasionally there will be special called meetings to deal with business which cannot wait until the next stated meeting. Special meetings are usually held on a Tuesday evening. Effective August 2021, all stated and special meetings of the Presbytery are held by virtual platform (Zoom). When the list of meetings is finalized, it is approved by the Big Picture Team and communicated with the Presbytery.

### Setting Deadlines

The Docket request deadline is approximately three weeks before the meeting. The deadline for materials to go into the Docket is usually a couple of days later than the request deadline. The Docket is posted on the website about seven days before the meeting. All materials to be included in the docket must be submitted electronically to [communications@pbygenval.org](mailto:communications@pbygenval.org).

### Docket Requests

The Presbytery Leader or Moderator receives all requests for time on the docket for the meeting. The draft docket is prepared and finalized by the Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Stated Clerk, and may be presented to the Big Picture Team for review.

### The Docket

The Docket is posted on the website and emailed in advance of the meeting so that participants have an opportunity to read it. Materials requiring Presbytery action must be included in this Docket. The Docket is posted on the website and mailed to all commissioners about seven days before the date of the meeting.

### Pre-Presbytery Meetings

Opportunities for learning and discussion may be offered before the Presbytery Meeting begins. These gatherings focus on an item of business to be acted on at the Meeting, or another offering from a team, committee, working group. All requests for pre-Presbytery Meeting time are made to the Presbytery Leader and approved by the Moderator.

### Sign Language Interpreter and Alternate Forms of Written Materials

If needed, sign language interpretation is offered at Stated Presbytery Meetings, and large print dockets can be provided. Requests may be made through on-line registration.

### The Slide Show

The Communications Coordinator is responsible for putting together the PowerPoint presentation which is used at all Presbytery Meetings. Presenters who wish to provide slides for insertion in the slide show should submit them electronically no later than 10 days prior to the meeting. All submissions are subject to editing.

### Participants in the Meeting

- **Minister members of Presbytery**—Teaching elders in good standing of the PC(U.S.A.), honorably retired (HR), members-at-large (AL), or serving in validated ministries (VM) are members of the Presbytery with voice and vote
- **Corresponding Members**— Teaching elders or ruling elders in good standing in other governing bodies of the PC(U.S.A.) or in any Christian church who are invited to participate in the meeting; corresponding members currently serving congregations in temporary, non-installed pastoral relationships may seek temporary membership ministry and have voice and vote; all other corresponding members are granted the privilege of voice only

## PGV POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL (appendices separate)

- **Elder commissioners** —Each church is permitted to designate elder commissioners to participate in meetings of the Presbytery; the number of commissioners from each church is based on the membership size of the congregation
- **Additional elder commissioners**—Additional elders including commissioned pastors serving congregations may be appointed by the Presbytery as commissioners in order to maintain a balance of minister members and elder commissioners as required in the Book of Order and also to allow elders who are committee chairs and others with similar responsibility access to the floor; additional elder commissioners will be appointed for one-year renewable terms as recommended by the Stated Clerk and approved by the Presbytery
- **Visitors**—Attendees who do not fit one of the above categories; an elder who is not a commissioner is considered a visitor; visitors do not have the privilege of the floor and shall not vote

### Attendance

All Pastors and elder commissioners, including HR, AL, and VM, are required to attend Presbytery meetings. Ministers and elder commissioners may request an excuse from attending a Presbytery meeting. Presbyters who do not request excuses may be marked absent.

### Minutes of Presbytery Meetings

Minutes of Presbytery Meetings are available on the website.

### Worship Services at Presbytery Meetings

The Big Picture Team, with the coordination of the Moderator-Elect, is responsible for the order of worship, which may take many forms. The Moderator-Elect is responsible for the preparation of the bulletin, which is given to the Communications Coordinator for inclusion in the Docket and/or PowerPoint.

- All worship services conducted by the Presbytery in session shall be a model for corporate worship, shall make full use of the whole range of biblical images when referring to God, and shall use inclusive language when referring to the people of God in the selection of hymns, prayers and liturgies
- The worship service should ensure that issues of social justice and moral concern, including poverty, racial and ethnic equality, and domestic violence, are included in joint prayer
- Full participation in worship leadership, drawing on the breadth of resources within the Presbytery
- The use of a variety of musical resources for worship, including a variety of hymn or musical styles within the same service, is encouraged
- January: The worship service in January shall include a reading of the necrology of ministers and elders for the preceding year
- Summer: The summer meeting shall include a sermon by the outgoing moderator and the installation of the incoming moderator and moderator-elect
- Fall: The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at the fall meeting

## Presbytery Operations

### Directories

The Presbytery Office maintains a database from which it produces a Presbytery Directory. The Directory contains the following sections:

- Reference pages
- Churches
- Summary of individuals
- Ministries Supported by the Presbytery of Genesee Valley

## PGV POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL (appendices separate)

An updated directory is occasionally distributed electronically to all clergy and CP's, clerks of session, churches, and others who have requested this type of distribution. Persons wishing to be placed on the electronic distribution list should contact the Communications Coordinator, [communications@pbygenval.org](mailto:communications@pbygenval.org). Presbytery members may also request printed copies.

### Employment Postings

Congregations may post brief descriptions (25 words or less) of available church related positions on the Presbytery website. In addition, the posting should provide a contact name and information. Links to e-mail or church websites will gladly be posted. Material should be submitted to the Communications Coordinator, [communications@pbygenval.org](mailto:communications@pbygenval.org).

### E-News

#### Background

In April 2011 the Presbytery began publishing the *Presbytery of Genesee Valley E-News*. The *E-News* includes additional information such as reports from Presbytery meetings, highlights on missions of the Presbytery, comings and goings of clergy in the Presbytery, denominational news, and congregation news.

#### Submission Guidelines

Submissions are welcomed and encouraged. Items to be included must be relevant to a congregation within the Presbytery, a Presbytery committee, a special mission supported by the Presbytery, or a Presbytery corporation. We will also publish information about opportunities for clergy and lay people being offered by local, regional, and national groups as appropriate.

Please follow these guidelines for submissions:

- Electronic submission only
- Documents in MS Word format
- Pictures of events and relevant graphics are encouraged
- Links are encouraged

We are looking for information from churches including:

- Church happenings—upcoming events and reports on past events
- Help wanted—job openings in churches
- Give and take—items needed by churches and ministries and items to be given away
- Special stories that you think might be of interest to the Presbytery

All submissions are subject to gentle editing. Send submissions to the Communications Coordinator, [communications@pbygenval.org](mailto:communications@pbygenval.org).

The deadline for each issue is the first of the month; the publication date is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. *E-News* will be posted on the [Presbytery website](#) on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month and a link will be sent to the distribution list (clergy, commissioned pastors, committee chairs, clerks of sessions, church offices, and others who request that their names be added).

Broad distribution within the Presbytery is encouraged. Here are some ways it might be shared:

- Post the link in your church's newsletter
- Copy selected articles for your church's newsletter
- Forward it to your congregational e-mail list
- Post it on your bulletin boards
- Encourage people to request that they be added to the distribution list

## **Social Media**

Items to be posted on the Presbytery's social media channels (currently Facebook) must be sponsored by:

- a congregation within the Presbytery
- a Presbytery committee
- a special mission supported by Presbytery
- or a Presbytery corporation

Items are posted at the discretion of the Communications Coordinator in regard to timing and frequency. Items may be gleaned from eNews submissions.

## **Non-Smoking Policy** *approved 10/22/85, amended 11/17*

The Presbytery Office has established a non-smoking policy, including electronic cigarettes, for its facilities.

## **Policies Governing the Use of Audio-Visual Equipment & Labyrinths**

- Audio-visual equipment is available at the Presbytery office for use by the churches and all units of the Presbytery; wide use of this equipment is encouraged
- A responsible adult should check out all equipment and accessories; the procedure includes adequate training in use, filling out the appropriate form (noting all equipment taken and dates of borrowing, use and expected return), and the signing of an agreement, accepting full responsibility for the equipment
- Equipment should be returned promptly according to the arrangements made in advance; the borrower should use the enclosed checklist to be sure all parts of the equipment is being returned
- Covering repair or replacement cost resulting from damage or loss of equipment while away from the Presbytery office will be the responsibility of the borrower; equipment should be carried on air flights
- Please call the Financial & Program Administrator to reserve your equipment needs as soon as they become known to you; all equipment must be picked up and dropped off in person according to the agreed lending time; a release agreement must be signed before borrowing equipment

## **Sharing Directory Information** *approved 1/1997*

Presbytery directories are distributed to persons in the Presbytery for their use for Presbytery-related activities and should not be used for other purposes or shared with individuals or groups outside the Presbytery. The Presbytery's *Policy on the Use of Presbytery's Directory* is placed in a prominent place in the Presbytery Directory. Policy statement: The Presbytery will not distribute mailing lists of the Presbytery or its churches to any outside agency.

## **Services to Presbytery Teams, Committees, and Working Groups**

### **Staff Support**

The Presbytery staff may assist teams, committees, and working groups, as requested, in sharing information with other groups of the Presbytery. Requests are made by email to a Presbytery staff member. The Presbytery staff will also maintain a record of activity if agendas and minutes are forwarded to the Communications Coordinator or Financial & Program Administrator.

Every group has an e-mail address (listserv) by which members can communicate with one another. This list is kept up to date by the support staff person assigned to each group. Anyone on the listserv may communicate with the entire group by sending an email to the listserv. Committees are encouraged to use this method for distributing agendas, minutes, and other documents.

### **Space Reservations**

Meeting space in the Presbytery office may be reserved by calling the Presbytery office or by contacting the Communications Coordinator, [communications@pbygenval.org](mailto:communications@pbygenval.org). Notice of meeting cancellations or changes helps the office staff let others know of changing plans. Many meetings are held in churches within the Presbytery. Scheduling of these meetings is the responsibility of the chair or convener of the group.

### **Presbytery Database**

The Presbytery Office maintains a database of clergy, elders, committee members and others involved in the life of the Presbytery. Presbytery support staff are responsible for keeping the database up to date. Therefore, changes in information about churches and persons in the Presbytery should be communicated to the office staff as soon as possible. If changes affect committee lists, a new list should be e-mailed to the members.

### **Website Editorial Policy**

Items to be posted on the Presbytery website must be sponsored by:

- a congregation within the Presbytery
- a Presbytery committee
- Presbytery staff
- a special mission supported by Presbytery
- or a Presbytery corporation

Items requiring committee approval should be directed to the chair or convener of the appropriate group.

## **Representation and Information Sharing Policies**

### **Greetings and Endorsements on Behalf of the Presbytery** *approved 7/23/09, last revised 11/17*

The Presbytery Leader, the Stated Clerk, and the Moderator of the Presbytery, are authorized to send greetings to various organizations on behalf of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley at their own discretion. Other persons may be authorized by the Big Picture Team to bring such greetings in specific circumstances.

Offering greetings **does not** imply endorsement of a particular organization's ideology or theological stance. To endorse means "to approve or ratify." Endorsement or ratification requires the approval of Presbytery, or the Big Picture Team acting on behalf of Presbytery.

Only persons authorized by Presbytery or Big Picture Team (when required by time constraints) may speak on behalf of Presbytery regarding particular issues, and then only on issues on which Presbytery has taken specific action.

It is advisable for those who address particular issues to present a written statement of the Presbytery's stance upon which the speaker would elaborate.

Executive staff persons, and elected leaders of Presbytery who speak publicly on issues without official authorization are urged to make it clear that their views do not necessarily reflect the view of the Presbytery and its member churches.

### **P3P Privacy Policy**

P3P (Platform for Privacy Preferences Project) is an industry standard providing a simple, automated way for internet users to gain more control over the use of personal information on websites they visit. The Presbytery of Genesee Valley follows the P3P Privacy Policy. P3P enhances user control by putting privacy policies where users can find them, in a form they can understand, and, most importantly, it enables users to act on what they see. The full text of the privacy policy is available on at <http://www.pbygenval.org/w3c/privacy.shtml>.

## Guidance for Churches

### **Chemical Dependency/Other Disorders Affecting Church Employees and Their Families** *Adopted 10/22/85*

This policy recognizes that alcoholism and other forms of harmful chemical dependency, mental or emotional illnesses, financial, marital or other family distress or legal problems are treatable and as such they should not be approached in a punitive fashion, but rather in a pastoral manner. We seek to enlist the support and cooperation of the entire governing body in pastoral approaches to these problems. It is, therefore, recommended to member churches of the Presbytery that this policy be adopted as part of their personnel policies.

The purpose of this policy is to assure that any church employee or their family members having such problems will receive the same careful consideration and offer of treatment that is presently extended to church employees or their family members having any other illness or behavioral disorder.

The goal of this policy is to assist the church employee or family member having trouble with alcohol and any other form of harmful chemical dependency, mental or emotional illnesses, financial, marital or other family distress or legal problems to remove these problems as a source of trouble.

1. No employee with alcohol or other form of chemical dependency, mental or emotional illness, financial, marital or other family distress or legal problems will have their job security jeopardized by a request for diagnosis and treatment, or for seeking and accepting treatment. However, an employee's continued refusal to seek help and treatment, or continued failure to respond to treatment, will receive the same response that similar refusals or treatment failures receive for other illnesses which affect job performance. However, it is most important that the person "recovering" from such problems has equal job opportunity following successful treatment.
2. When church personnel go for treatment of their problem, they should be granted leave with pay as necessary for treatment, whether residential or outpatient.
3. The role and importance of confidentiality apply to treatment of these disorders (stated in #1 and #3 preceding) and their treatment just as to any other health and/or behavioral condition.
4. It is most important that personnel committees, the Committee on Ministry and church Sessions be knowledgeable and sensitive to persons in need of help with these disorders (stated in #1 and #3 preceding).
5. We recognize that the staff and committees of governing bodies do not ordinarily have the necessary qualifications to diagnose alcohol and other drug dependencies, mental or emotional illnesses, financial, marital or other family distress or legal problems, just as they are not usually qualified to diagnose other diseases. Evaluation, referrals and diagnostic intervention will need to be made in cooperation with qualified consultants such as the Employee Assistance Program provided by the Board of Pension to its members, or other qualified health professionals.
6. Since the affected person, especially chemically dependent persons, by the very nature of the illness/disorder often denies the problem, the consultant should be open to requests for help from spouses or family members, so that some kind of creative and therapeutic intervention can be initiated to help the afflicted person.

It is expected that through this policy employees who suspect that they may have such a problem, even in its early stages, will be encouraged to seek evaluation and, when indicated, follow through with prescribed treatment.

This policy applies not only to personnel employed by the Presbytery, but also applies to pastors employed by member churches of the Presbytery, staff members of member churches of the Presbytery, and clergy in non-parish service.

### **Guidelines for Writing a Session Sexual Misconduct Policy**

See Appendix I.

## Guidance Regarding Ministers, Commissioned Pastors, and Inquirers/Candidates for Ministry

*approved 4/25/89, last revised 11.2013*

### **Policy on Access, Confidentiality, Participation and Voting (COM)**

1. As an instrument of Presbytery for promoting the peace and harmony of the churches, and especially in regard to matters arising out of the relations between ministers and churches, the Committee on Ministry shall be open at all times to direct access by, or communications from, all ministers in the Presbytery, all elders who are members of sessions, and the sessions of Presbytery through the Leadership Team of the Committee or the Presbytery Leader. (G-3.0307).
2. At the Committee's discretion, materials presented to the Committee may be available to the Presbytery and may be used for decision-making, recommendations and explanation, unless specifically given in confidence. Where such confidential information appears to be necessary for a decision or recommendation the person given such information will be requested to release that information from confidentiality. If that person does not so agree, then no decision or recommendation can be based upon that information. The information cannot form the basis or any part of the basis, for a decision or recommendation by the Committee. A copy of this policy shall be provided to any person who presents information or materials to the Committee in advance of the use by the Committee of that information or materials as any part of a basis for a decision or recommendation and in advance of its release by the Committee to the Presbytery or any other party.
3. When assessments have been made to the Committee on Ministry about an individual, session or congregation, the Committee may offer an opportunity for response. The Committee shall offer an opportunity for response to an individual, session or congregation when an assessment provided to the Committee is to be used as the basis for a decision.
4. When the Committee is dealing with matters concerning the church of one of its members, the member shall absent themselves from that part of the business.
5. When assessments have been made to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry about an inquirer or candidate, the Committee may offer an opportunity for response. The Committee shall offer an opportunity for response when an assessment provided to the Committee is to be used as the basis for a decision.

In other situations where a committee member or staff person believes that his/her relationship to a church is biased by close personal involvement or confidential information, that committee member will be expected to absent themselves from that part of the business.

## **PART IV: FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Camp Whitman Funding** *approved 10/5/94, revised ed 2/27/02*

The Presbytery will contribute a fixed amount in support of Camp Whitman, as a mission outreach program, which will be reviewed annually by the Big Picture Team.

Opportunity will be given to the Presbytery of Geneva to come annually to Presbytery, through the Big Picture Team, to request permission to solicit additional mission funding for Camp Whitman from churches and individuals within the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.

The Presbytery elects three persons to serve on the Camp Whitman Committee (*approved by Presbytery 5/30/00, amended 2019*)

### **Consolidated Financial, Investment, and Funding Policies**

See Appendix D.

## **PART V: PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

See Appendix K.