

## What Are the Qualifications for a Presbytery Commissioner?

- The commissioner is a ruling elder from a local church who is chosen to prayerfully seek, with others, God's will for the presbytery.
- The commission is NOT a political representative for her or his local church, and so is not bound to participate or vote how the church, or its pastor, may want the commissioner to participate or vote.
- The commissioner is expected to seek information that will help her or him understand the issues that come before the presbytery. That can include speaking to her or his pastor, finding resources online, or speaking to people in fields that can give insight to the commissioner. It also may entail gaining information from different sides of an issue so that the commissioner can understand not only her or his own point of view, but those of other commissioners.
- To humbly listen to what other commissioners and pastors have to say during debates and discussions, recognizing that God may be speaking to her or him through that commissioner or pastor.
- To treat all pastors and commissioners with the respect and consideration that Paul speaks of in Ephesians: *"I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* (4:1-3).

## What Is the Presbytery Seeking in a Commissioner?

The presbytery consists of an equal number of elder commissioners and the minister members.

The elders and ministers are one a par with one another in speaking, voting and serving the presbytery.

We are calling for elder commissioners who will participate in meetings with a willingness to seek God's call for them rather than merely voting for what they think their church wants, their pastor wants, or even what they want. We are calling for elders who ultimately seek what Christ, who is the head of the church (Ephesians 1:22-23), wants, and who are open to the workings of the Holy Spirit all around them.

Finally, we are calling for elders who will live out the prayer that we often say to begin our presbytery meetings:

Gracious God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:

We are here to serve you,  
opening our hearts and minds  
to your sacred voice.

Help us to have the meekness of mind  
to seek your thoughts  
over our own thoughts;  
to have the humility of heart  
to yearn for one will—Your will;  
to have the Serenity of the Spirit  
to let your peace be our peace,  
no matter what transpires.

Help us to be your servants  
seeking wisdom, and acting in faith.

Hear us as we pray the prayer Christ taught us:  
*"Our Father, who art in heaven..."*

**Thank you for considering this important  
ministry and service to the larger  
Presbyterian Church.**

*Serving as a Presbytery  
Commissioner for*



## Thank You!

Thank you for considering whether or not you are called to be a Presbytery Commissioner from your church to Beaver Butler Presbytery. This is an important consideration for you and for the life of the presbytery.

## What Are We Asking You to Consider?

The presbytery recently passed a proposal to *adopt a policy encouraging churches to appoint ruling elder commissioners from their church (whether active or inactive on their respective sessions) to a one-year term to serve as "Presbytery Commissioner;" and that the terms be from September of one year through July of the following year.*

We are asking you to prayerfully consider whether you are called to be a *presbytery commissioner* from your church to the presbytery.

## What Does This Entail?

Serving as a Presbytery Commissioner is a commitment, but it is an important one in which you will be helping the larger church seek and do God's work in supporting local churches, local and global missions, the work of our Synod (we are in the Synod of the Trinity, which encompasses Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and a portion of Ohio), and the national church.



## Specifically, this Means...

- Participating in presbytery meetings, which meet in different presbytery churches in September, November, January, March, May, and July.
- The meetings generally last about 2 and 1/2 hours.
- The meetings include:
  - Sharing with each other what is taking place in our churches.
  - Sharing information on presbytery, synod, and national church ministry and mission activities.
  - Worshiping and sharing in communion with other elder commissioners and pastors.
  - Taking time for fellowship to forge relationships with other elder commissioners and pastors, thus fostering better relationships among churches.
  - Discussing, discerning, and voting on matters before the presbytery. These can include:

- ◆ *Examining pastor candidates for ordination and/or installation in local churches.*
- ◆ *Considering matters that are impacting the Presbyterian Church (USA) locally, nationally, and globally.*
- ◆ *Prayerfully considering issues sent to the presbytery for a vote from the once-every-two-years General Assembly meetings.*
- ◆ *Overseeing the ministry and mission budgets of the Presbytery.*
- ◆ *Other items that are of concern to local Presbyterians.*

