



# Beaver-Butler Presbytery

Serving God. Serving You.

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To: Pastors and Clerks of Session  
From: The Beaver Butler Presbytery Meeting Task Force  
RE: Presbytery Commissioners  
Date: June 28, 2017

Dear Pastors and Clerks:

In 2016 we passed a policy encouraging churches to elect ruling elder commissioners from their church (whether active or inactive on their respective sessions) to a one-year term to serve as "Presbytery Commissioner." In July we will have completed the first year of the program, and it has been really helpful for the presbytery. A number of pastors and commissioners have commented that serving in the position for a year has really helped them understand better the presbytery, the issues, and the calling, and to begin to see other commissioners and pastors as colleagues in ministry, and not just strangers in a mutual meeting.

We are hoping to expand the presbytery commissioner program for the upcoming year. If you elected a regular commissioner for 2016-2017, please do so again. If you didn't, please do so for 2017-2018. While this is not a mandate for churches, it is a significant step in trying to create presbytery meetings where the members—pastors and elders—become better at discerning together God's will for the presbytery and its churches.

Please have your session seek an elder from your church to serve as the "presbytery commissioner." The term runs from September, 2016 through July of 2018.

In seeking an elder presbytery commissioner, we hope that you will seek one who you sense has the spiritual maturity to come to each meeting ready and willing to seek God's will over her or his own. We recognize that you cannot completely assess the heart and mind of another person, but we do believe that you can sense whether an elder is willing to prayerfully listen for God's guidance instead of coming to meetings with a predetermined decision. You may also want to choose an alternate commissioner for those times that the regular commissioner cannot make a meeting.

Enclosed you will find a short brochure to give prospective elders to help them consider whether or not they are called to be a commissioner. We will offer a one-hour training session, from 3:00 to 4:00 pm for elder commissioners prior to the September 26 presbytery meeting at Mars United Presbyterian Church. This session will review how presbytery meetings are structured, talk about the discipline of discernment, and give them a resource to help them during their year as presbytery commissioner. Finally, whenever you have named a commissioner (and alternate), please let the presbytery office know so that they can be placed on the meeting pre-mail list.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Graham Standish", is written over a circular stamp or seal.

The Rev. Dr. Graham Standish  
Chair, Presbytery Meeting Task Force  
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