

## **RESTRUCTURED PROCESS FOR BEAVER-BUTLER PRESBYTERY MEETINGS**

As Amended and Adopted on May 20, 2014 from  
A Proposal from the Presbytery Meeting Task Force titled,  
“Seeking Christ’s Will in Our Decision Making”

The Presbytery Meeting Task Force asks that the following proposals be taken as one proposal that will allow the presbytery to become more intentional in seeking God’s will for it. The proposal offers an agenda template, suggestions for streamlining, a process for discernment, and a one-year trial period. The proposals:

- 1. That presbytery adopt an agenda template, using *The Lord’s Prayer* as a model, that allows for intentional discernment** (see accompanying sample agenda):
  - a. ANNOUNCEMENTS:** (*pre-prayer time*)
    - Welcome
    - Announcements
    - Presbytery Unit Matters
    - Other Announcements & Good News
  - b. OPENING TO GOD TOGETHER:** (*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name...*)
    - Opening Prayer and Lord’s Prayer
    - Gathering Hymn
    - Prayer of Blessing
  - c. SEEKING GOD’S KINGDOM TOGETHER:** (*Thy kingdom come...*)
    - Scripture Reading or Group Study
    - Sermon or Time of Meditation
    - Discussions: (What did the Spirit speak to you?)
    - Presbytery Rituals—Commissionings, Necrology, Installations, Recognitions...
    - Time of Fellowship...
  - d. SEEKING AS ONE TO DISCERN AND DO GOD’S WILL:** (*Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...*)
    - Stated Clerk Concerns
    - Executive Presbyter Concerns
    - Coordinating Team Concerns
    - Omnibus receptions and approvals:
      - a. Receive the report of the Stated Clerk*
      - b. Receive the report of the Executive Presbyter*
      - c. Receive the report of the Coordinating Team*
      - d. Receive the Financial Report*
      - e. Approve the Minutes for the previous meeting*
    - Musical Response (taize chant or other short song)
    - Prayerful Consideration of Presbytery Matters:
      - a. Ministry Examinations:*
      - b. Dismissals*

- c. *Budgets Recommendations*
- d. *Overtures*
- e. *Other Proposals*
- Hymn:
- e. **RESPONDING TO GOD’S GRACE TOGETHER:** (*Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil...*)
  - Celebration of Communion
  - *Great Prayer of Thanksgiving*
  - *Words of Institution*
  - *Prayer after Communion*
- f. **GOING IN GOD’S GRACE:** (*For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*)
  - Sending Litany

**2. That the presbytery accept the following proposals to streamline meetings:**

- a. That the Welcome, Announcements, Presbytery Unit Matters, Other Announcements & Good News all take place prior to the official start of the meeting.
- b. That reports of the units, stated clerk, and presbytery executive be limited to written reports that can read by commissioners and pastors prior to the meetings.
- c. That the presbytery offer for votes an omnibus motion for receptions and approvals, a collection of motions coming from the coordinating team, stated clerk, or units that don’t require discussion.
- d. That the presbytery adopt separate votes of “Acceptance in Principle” and of “Amendments:”
  - i. Votes of “acceptance in principle” are votes accepting the motion in its principle intent before offering amendments. Exceptions are allowed when a motion lacks sufficient clarity, and thus is confusing, and so must entertain an amendment designed to elucidate the meaning and purpose behind a motion.
  - ii. Votes on “amendments” to the motion are designed to clarify, strengthen, or perhaps even weaken the now accepted motion.
  - iii. The final amended motion will be acted upon as a whole.

**3. That the presbytery accept the following proposals to foster discernment in meetings:**

- a. That the presbytery engage in a time of prayer and study during each meeting, with the study materials or sermon designed to train members in discernment by using materials that emphasize how we can sense God’s will together.
- b. That the presbytery follow a three-step discernment process:
  - Prior to voting the members of the presbytery should be verbally encouraged by the moderator to put aside what they want, what they sense their elders/pastors want, what would be expedient, or what they sense other influential members may want. They are to steep themselves in primarily seeking God’s will.
  - The presbytery should be given between 30 seconds to two minutes to prayerfully discern, with length determined by the moderator, and based upon the potential difficulty for the body to put aside personal concerns in order to discern.

- The moderator will ask the body to vote by prompting with the following questions:
  - *All who sense this may be God's will say, aye.*
  - *All who sense this may not be God's will say, nay.*

**4. That the presbytery acceptance of the agenda proposal [be] for one year:**

- a. Since members will naturally be uncomfortable with this new approach at first, and thus resistant, we propose that in accepting the new agenda the presbytery also agree to adopt it for one year so that it can become fully immersed in it.