

**GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION OF COMMISSIONERS
TO THE
SYNOD OF LAKES AND PRAIRIES**

Adopted September 13, 2011

G-3.0401 The Synod is the intermediate council serving as a corporate expression of the church throughout its region. It shall consist of not fewer than three presbyteries within a specific geographical region.

The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area elects 2 ruling elder commissioners, 2 teaching elder commissioners, and a YAAD (young adult advisory delegate ages 17-23 during the duration of service) to the Synod of Lakes and Prairies. Persons elected according to these guidelines as ruling elder and teaching elder commissioners are elected to three year terms and may be re-nominated for a total of no more than six years; the YAAD is elected for a one year term and may be re-nominated for a total of no more than three years. Service begins at the annual meeting of the Synod. Elections to fill any vacancies occur in the March meeting of the presbytery in the year of a vacancy.

ELIGIBILITY

As a representative of the Presbytery, persons elected as a commissioner or YAAD to the Synod must be:

- committed to the ongoing life and welfare of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),
- an active participant in the life of a particular congregation of the presbytery, and
- an active and current participant in the regular meetings of the presbytery or its committees: YAAD applicants shall have been active in the youth ministry initiatives of their congregation.

Ordinarily, ruling elders and teaching elders are eligible two years after ordination and with two years of membership in the presbytery or one of its churches.

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

Commissioners and the YAAD should:

- be aware of the responsibilities of the Synod, and have expertise suited or adaptable to those functions;
- possess the ability to utilize the technology of the Synod and function actively within its committee process, operating guidelines, and policy structures;
- be committed, in accordance with F-3.0204 “not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ”; and
- be willing to report on their participation and the actions of the Synod to the presbytery and its congregations.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To be considered for nomination by the Nominating Committee, persons must complete an application form and **return** it to the presbytery office **by February 1st** in the year of a Synod vacancy. Church sessions are encouraged to identify ruling elders and encourage their application.

Application forms are **available on line in November**: hard copy may be requested from the presbytery office. A call for applicants will be made at the November and January presbytery meetings and by email notice to all teaching elders, congregations, and committee/council/other entity chairpersons. If an insufficient number of applicants are received by February 1st to allow for the preparation of a slate of nominees the Nominating Committee may seek additional applicants taking into account the church's commitment to inclusiveness and diversity (F-1.0403).

Each application shall be accompanied by an attestation that the applicant meets the eligibility criteria from (1) the stated clerk of the presbytery or chairperson of the presbytery committee regarding active and current participation in the life of the presbytery or its committees, and (2) the clerk of session regarding active participation in the life of a particular congregation.

NOMINATION PROCESS

G-3.0111 All councils higher than the session shall have a process for nominating persons to serve in positions requiring election by the council. The process shall ensure that nominations are made by an entity broadly representative of the constituency of the council, and in conformity with the church's commitment to unity in diversity (F-1.0403)

In accordance with the provisions of F-1.0403 the Nominating Committee shall seek to honor the foundational principle of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that: "The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church's membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution."

Nomination of Commissioners and a YAAD: Following February 1st the Nominating Committee shall interview all eligible applicants to ascertain their gifts and motivation for seeking election. Subsequently, the Nominating Committee in consultation with the Committee on Representation shall recommend to the March meeting of the presbytery a slate to fill the Synod vacancies.

The Nominating Committee will compile from the application forms a written biographical sketch outlining the qualifications, service, motivation, and commitment to serve for all persons who completed the application process and were interviewed (unless the person has formally withdrawn), and distribute it along with the Committee's recommended slate.

ELECTION PROCESS

F-3.0106 That though the character, qualifications, and authority of Church officers are laid down in the Holy Scriptures, as well as the proper method of their investiture and institution, yet the election of the persons to the exercise of this authority, in any particular society, is in that society.

Presiding Officer: The moderator of presbytery shall preside.

Nominations from the Floor:

Persons may be nominated from the floor of the presbytery meeting at the time of election.

For those who did not complete the application process the person making the nomination must provide a written biographical sketch outlining the nominee's qualifications, service, motivation, and commitment to serve, evidence that the person meets the eligibility requirements, and has agreed to serve if elected. Sufficient quantities of this material should be prepared for distribution at the presbytery meeting when the election will occur. For those who did complete the application process and were interviewed by the Nominating Committee the biographical sketch prepared by the Nominating Committee provides sufficient background.

Election

Elections of commissioners and a YAAD shall be based solely upon the written biographical sketches and shall proceed in the following manner.

- The Nominating Committee shall place its slate in nomination.
- Nominations from the floor shall specify the specific nominee being contested.
- Uncontested nominees may be elected by a voice vote.
- Prior to each contested vote the Nominating Committee shall remind the presbytery of the denomination's commitment to an inclusive diversity.
- For contested nominations the presbytery shall vote by written ballot. The nominee receiving the most votes shall be elected provided they have received a majority of the number of persons voting.
- If no nominee receives a majority vote, there shall be a second written ballot.
- This procedure shall continue until all contested positions are filled.