

Presbytery of Coastal Carolina
Mission Cabinet
**Guidelines for the
Nomination of Commissioners to the General Assembly**
Approved by Presbytery on October 20, 2018

Rationale:

Whereas the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina uses a rotation system to select the commissioners to attend the General assembly, and

Whereas there are 184 churches in the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina having a total of 23,578 members (as of August 4, 2018) and only six commissioners are selected to attend General Assembly (total Presbytery membership determines number of Commissioners not number of churches), and

Whereas there is a need to afford greater opportunities for a broader participation, and

Whereas there is a need to select those with extraordinary gifts to attend regardless of the rotation,

On October 20, 2018, the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina adopted the following policy for the nomination and election of presbytery commissioners to the General Assembly.

I. General

- A. Commissioners to biennial meetings of the General Assembly (even-numbered years) will be nominated by the Committee on Nominations for election by Presbytery. At the present time, the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina is authorized to send six commissioners and one Young Adult Advisory Delegate to the General Assembly.
- B. Two commissioners (one teaching elder and one ruling elder) will be selected from each of the three communities. Teaching elder commissioners must meet the criteria for teaching elders listed below (II. B. 1). The churches from which the ruling elder commissioners will be chosen must meet the criteria for churches listed below (II. C. 1.) and the ruling elders must meet the criteria for ruling elder listed below (II. C. 2).
- C. The Presbytery Youth Council will recommend a young adult to serve as the Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD) based on a system of rotation among the three communities of the Presbytery. Young Adult Advisory Delegates must be at least 17 years of age and no older than 23 on the date General Assembly begins.
- D. Alternate commissioners to General Assembly shall be nominated from the same communities as the principal commissioners.
- E. Persons elected as commissioners who must withdraw or who decline to serve will be replaced by the alternate from the same Presbytery Community.

- F. The nomination of commissioners shall be in accordance with the *Book of Order* F-1.0403 and G-3.0103.
- G. Commissioners and delegates to General Assembly will include equal numbers of teaching and ruling elders and equal numbers of women and men and attention shall be given to assure inclusion of racial ethnic and age representation.
- H. All candidates for nomination as commissioners to the General Assembly or as a YAAD shall complete an application provided by the Committee on Nominations.
- I. Commissioners must commit to attending General Assembly training offered by the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina and to attending all sessions during the entire General Assembly period. Any commissioner who cannot make this commitment will be replaced by the alternate commissioner from his/her community.
- J. Persons who have attended the General Assembly in the prior ten-year period will be ineligible for consideration as commissioners.

II. Criteria for Selection of Nominees

- A. All Candidates for Nomination as Commissioners to the General Assembly must:
 - 1. be willing to commit to:
 - a. read over 1,000 pages of reports and overtures provided to them electronically before the General Assembly begins.
 - b. attend Presbytery sponsored orientation meeting(s).
 - c. attend the committee meetings and plenary sessions of the General Assembly.
 - d. being open to the leading of the Holy Spirit as they vote on the issues before the Assembly.
 - e. report back to a meeting of the Presbytery on the actions taken by the General Assembly and on his/her experiences as a GA commissioner and, when possible, report to congregations upon request.
 - 2. be able to use effectively electronic devices (laptop computers, smart tablets, etc.) to read documents and take notes before and during the General Assembly.
- B. Teaching Elder Commissioners
 - 1. Those teaching elders who are eligible for consideration for nomination shall ordinarily be considered on a seniority basis. The following factors shall be used in determining seniority:
 - a. Length of membership in the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina.
 - b. Length of service within the denomination since ordination.
 - c. Date of last General Assembly attended.
 - d. In case of a tie, service within the structures of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be the determining factor.
 - e. Only ministers in validated ministry or honorably retired will be considered in accordance with the *Book of Order* G-2.0503.

2. To be eligible for consideration as a candidate for nomination as a commissioner the teaching elder must:
 - a. have been a member of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina for at least five years
 - b. have participated on a committee, sub-committee or Commission of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, the General Assembly or one of the Communities of the Presbytery at some point in the last six years prior to being nominated and have attended at least four of the last six meetings of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina or its communities (Called meetings are excluded from this count.) Attending one or more community meetings shall count as one (1) appearance during any given year. Maximum attendance for a calendar year is three meetings (Called meetings are excluded from count.) Pastor attendance shall be recorded by Presbytery staff on the Presbytery database.

C. Ruling Elder Commissioners

1. The churches from which the ruling elder commissioners will be chosen shall ordinarily be considered on a seniority basis. The following factors shall be used in determining seniority:
 - a. The last year, since the inception of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina, that the congregation sent a ruling elder as a commissioner to the General Assembly.
 - b. In the case of a tie in seniority, the Committee on Nominations will take into account the congregation's record of support of and participation in the work of the Presbytery.
2. To be eligible to suggest a ruling elder for nomination as a commissioner or alternate, the congregation must:
 - a. have had a ruling elder commissioner attend at least four of the last six meetings of the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina (Called meetings are excluded from count.) Attending one or more community meetings shall count as one (1) appearance during any given year. Maximum attendance for a calendar year is three meetings (Called meetings are excluded from count.) Church attendance shall be recorded by Presbytery staff on the Presbytery database.
 - b. have remitted to the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina the full asking of *per capita* apportionment and made a contribution to the shared mission budget of the Presbytery for each of the two years prior to being selected to suggest a ruling elder as a commissioner to the General Assembly.

D. Alternate Commissioners

1. Alternate commissioners shall be selected in the same manner as commissioners.
2. Alternate commissioners shall ordinarily become the principal commissioners to the next General Assembly if they have not replaced their principal at the previous Assembly. In order to sustain the eligibility of the alternate who is to become commissioner, the church originally nominating the alternate must continue to meet the criteria cited in II. C. 1-2.

III. Implementation

A. Information used during Selection Process

1. The computerized Presbytery database shall contain the updated data for all enrolled ministers in the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina. The Committee on Nominations shall extract all needed information from this database.
2. The computerized Presbytery database shall contain the updated data for all congregations making up the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina. The Committee on Nominations shall extract all needed information from this database.
 - a. Commissioner and Alternate data shall be updated following each meeting of the General Assembly.
 - b. All data required for the nominations process shall be updated continuously with special review and updating prior to the beginning of every nomination process.
3. Reports used by the Committee on Nominations (CON) shall be available for inspection upon request.

B. Solicitation of Applications

1. Early in the year before the next biennial General Assembly, the Committee on Nominations will develop a list of those teaching elders eligible for nomination as commissioners to the General Assembly and of those congregations eligible to suggest a ruling elder for nomination as a commissioner to the General Assembly.
2. Each teaching elder and session of a congregation that is eligible to apply for nomination will be contacted and asked if they wish to be considered.
3. Those teaching elders willing to be considered and any ruling elder(s) suggested by the session of an eligible congregation shall fill out the Application Form developed by the Committee (CON) for this purpose.

C. Nomination and Election

1. The Committee on Nominations will review the applications received from teaching and ruling elders and establish a slate of nominees to be presented to the Presbytery for election based on the criteria of seniority and the needs of balance and diversity called for in the *Book of Order*.
2. This slate will be announced at the second stated meeting of the Presbytery (Summer Gatherings of each missional Community) in the year before the General Assembly meets. The election of the commissioners will occur at the last stated meeting of the Presbytery of that year.
3. The right of the members of the Presbytery to nominate persons from the floor shall be maintained when the vote takes place.

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