



Congregational Elder Training

Opening

- Prayer
- Announcements

Presbyterian Polity

Presbuteros

Three key characteristics:

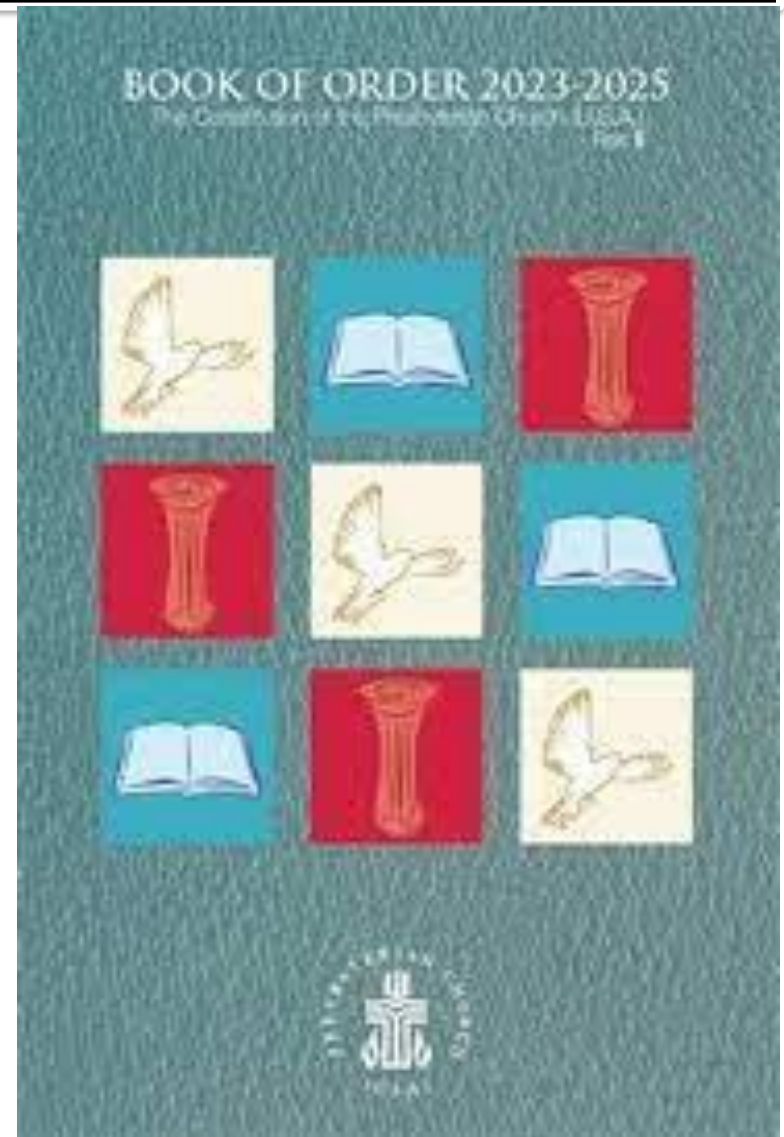
1. Constitutional
2. Representative
3. Relational/connectional

The Book of Order

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part II

Contents:

- The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity (F)
- The Form of Government (G)
- Directory for Worship (W)
- Rules of Discipline (D)



Called to Ministry

- All members called to ministry
- Types of membership
 - Baptized
 - Active
 - Affiliate



Calvin's Representative Church Structure

- Purpose of the church was to nurture God's people
- Wanted to break distinction between clergy and lay people
- Intended church to have more lay people involved than clergy
- Created structure with four groups— ministers of word and sacrament, doctors, elders, and deacons – ordered ministry



Ordered Ministry

Today we have three groups of ordered ministry:

1) Ruling Elders- ministry of discernment and governance

2) Deacons- ministry of compassion and service

3) Ministers of Word and Sacrament/Teaching elders-

Ordination is perpetual

Ordination/Installation Question

**Will you be a faithful deacon,
teaching charity, urging concern, and
directing the people's help to
the friendless and those in need?
In your ministry will you try to show
the love and justice of Jesus Christ?**

Deacon Defined G-2.0201

“The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.”

Under Authority of Session G-2.0202

Deacons may be individually commissioned or organized as a board of deacons. In either case, their ministry is under the supervision and authority of the session.

Ordination/Installation Question

**Will you be a faithful ruling elder,
watching over the people,
providing for their worship, nurture, and service?**

**Will you share in government and discipline,
serving in governing bodies of the church, and
in your ministry will you try to show
the love and justice of Jesus Christ?**

Session G-3.02

- Composed of current Ruling Elders and moderator
- The session has responsibility for governing the congregation and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation is and becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness.
- Size of session

Trustee Duties (G-4.01-.02)

- The Session becomes the trustees in a unicameral board, and in a bicameral board, the corporation (church) determines another method for electing trustees.
- Must elect officers of corporation – president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer
- Fiduciary duties of 1) due care; 2) prudent investing; 3) loyalty; and 4) obedience

Ordination/Installation Question

**Will you be a faithful minister,
proclaiming the good news
in Word and Sacrament,**

teaching faith and caring for people?

**Will you be active in government and discipline,
serving in the councils of the church; and
in your ministry will you try to show
the love and justice of Jesus Christ?**

Ministers of Word and Sacrament

- Membership in and accountability to presbytery
- Categories- installed or temporary; validated, member at large, honorably retired

Pastoral Authority

- Selection of Scripture and hymns
- Content of sermon and prayers
- Voting at session and presbytery meetings
- Moderating session
- Proposing the session agenda, in consultation with the Clerk of Session
- Head of Staff
- Weddings
- Commissioned Ruling Elders

Congregational Authority and Responsibilities

- elect Ruling Elders and Deacons
- elect at-large members to the Nominating Committee, which are the majority
- call (PNC) and dissolve installed pastors
- set Terms of Call for installed pastors
- buy and sell property
- request Presbytery dissolve the congregation

Councils

- Responsibilities in common- reviews
- Elected officers of each body- moderator and clerk
- Meeting format

Presbytery

166 that meet at least twice each year
equal # of Ministers and Ruling Elders from all the churches

Presbytery of Hudson River

71 congregations

8839 Active Members

(4/27, 9/24, 11/12)



MISSION STATEMENT

As a resurrection people, Hudson River Presbytery engages people's passions; builds partnerships; nurtures strong leadership; and creates healthy, vital communities of faith; all to the Glory of God.

Engage With Us!

- www.hudrivpres.org
- Hudson River Presbytery Facebook page
- PresbyNews: weekly
 - Webinars, resources, event
- MissionInsite
- New programs
- www.prcli.org

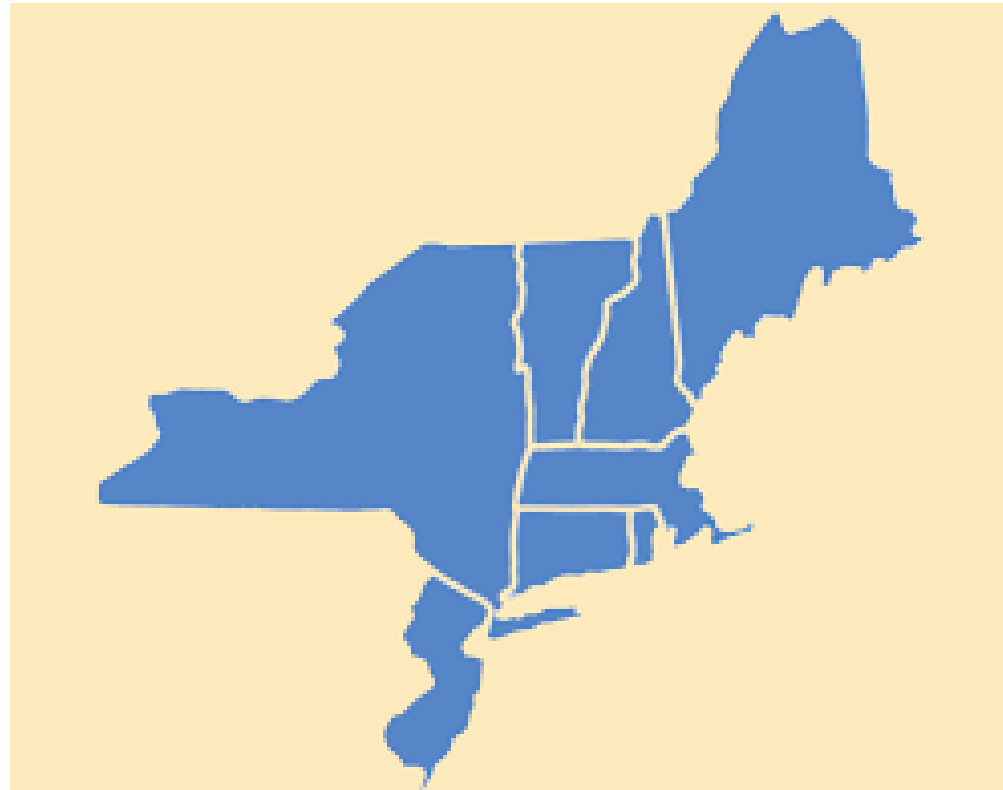
Synod

**16 synods
meeting at least biennially**

equal # of
Teaching and Ruling Elders
from its presbyteries
based their size

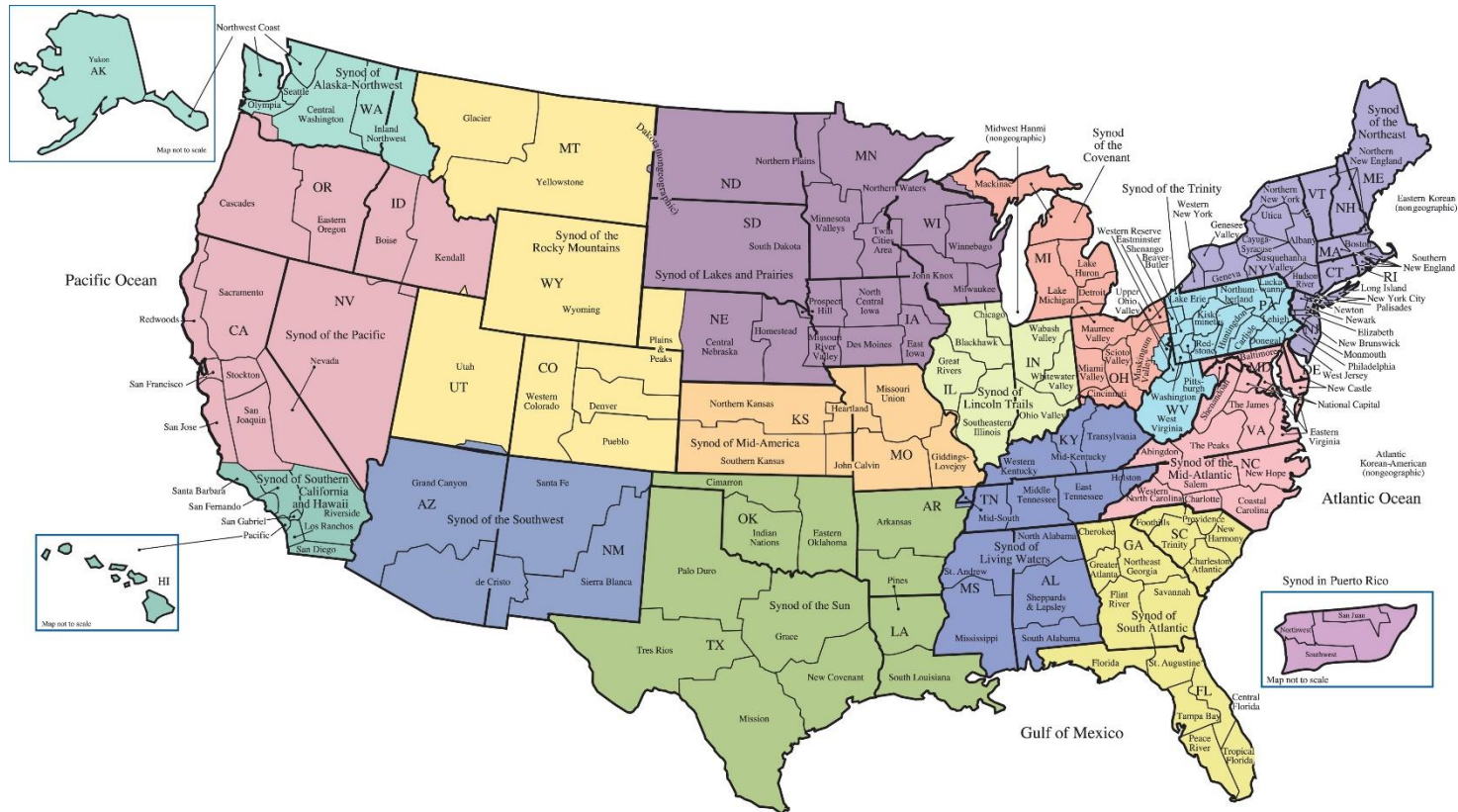
Synod of the Northeast

19 presbyteries
1130 congregations



General Assembly

meets every other year; ~800 commissioners
equal # of Ministers and Ruling Elders from
170 presbyteries based on size



Session Duties

Including but not limited to:

- **Worship (with pastor)**
- **Education**
- **Receiving members**
 - Profession of faith
 - Certificate of transfer
 - Reaffirmation of faith
- **Mission**
- **Annual Budget**
- **Providing for care of property**
 - held in trust for PCUSA)
 - can't sell, encumber or lease (for 5+ years) without presbytery permission
- **Staff hiring and dismissal, not supervision**
- **Church administration**
 - Includes having manual of operation

What is Variable
by Congregation?

QUESTIONS?