

# **Congregation Nominating Committees**

**Book of Order Requirements and Helpful Tips**

# **Book of Order, G-2.0401**

## **Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons**

Ruling elders and deacons are men and women elected by the congregation from among its members. The nomination and election of ruling elders and deacons shall express the rich diversity of the congregation's membership and shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness (F-1.0403).

# **Book of Order, F-1.0403**

## **Unity in Diversity**

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.

# **Book of Order, G-2.0401**

## **Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons**

Ruling elders and deacons shall be nominated by a committee elected by the congregation, drawn from and representative of its membership. Congregations may provide by their own rule for a congregational nominating committee. The rule shall meet the following criteria: (1) the minimum size of the committee as specified in the rule shall be at least three persons; (2) at least one member of the committee shall be an elder currently serving on session; and (3) a majority of those persons on the committee who are eligible to vote shall consist of persons not currently serving on session. The pastor shall serve ex officio and without vote.

# **Book of Order, G-2.0401**

## **Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons**

When elections are held, full opportunity shall always be given to the congregation for nomination from the floor of the congregational meeting by any active member of the congregation. A majority of all the active members present and voting shall be required to elect.

# Helpful Tips

- “No, thank you” is an appropriate response when someone volunteers to serve.
- “No, thank you” is an appropriate response from someone who has been asked to serve.
- Electing the same people over and over again is not good for the church’s health or long-term viability.
- The primary task is to prayerfully discern the needs of the mission and ministry of the congregation and the skills and talents of the members who could lead the congregation to deeper faithfulness.
- Have a clear and honest understanding of the commitment involved in serving the congregation as an elder or deacon.

# Helpful Tips

- Healthy churches invite new members into leadership and are constantly seeking to encourage leadership skills throughout the congregation.
- There is no minimum age to serve as an elder or deacon; the only requirement is membership.
- Do not ask someone to serve as an elder or deacon to try to get them to come back to church. Regular participation in worship and the mission of the congregation is necessary in order to help lead the congregation.
- If someone says “yes” but then is consistently absent from meeting, worship, or other central events in the life of the church, it is appropriate to have a conversation to discern if they are not called to this ministry at this point in time.