



East Central Presbytery Operations Manual

Modified June 8, 2021



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OPERATIONS MANUAL CONTENTS

1.0 How this Manual Relates to *ECO Polity*

The presbytery is governed by the *ECO Constitution*, which includes the *ECO Polity*, *ECO Rules of Discipline* and the *ECO Essential Tenets*. Nothing in this manual is intended to conflict with the *ECO Constitution*—but if it does, the *ECO Constitution* will always govern and supersede any conflicting provision in this manual, which is intended to offer guidance with respect to operating within ECO.

Similarly, this manual is “silent” on many provisions in *ECO Polity* that relate to presbyteries. This is because there are other materials that address these specifics. The primary purpose of this manual is to focus on presbytery governance policies and practices that are not spelled out in *ECO Polity*.

2.0 The ECO Presbytery

An ECO presbytery has a responsibility to help equip and train leaders to boldly live the mission of ECO in their unique regional contexts through their service to and equipping of covenant partners, new believers, and seekers.

2.1 *ECO Presbytery Mission – Equip and train leaders to boldly live ECO’s Mission*

“The presbytery, as a covenant community, exercises apostolic authority by and for the nurture and benefit of its congregations, that the communities they serve may know the love and invitation of Christ.” (*ECO Polity* 3.0101)

2.2 *ECO Presbytery Values – Shared convictions that guide decisions and collaborate strengths*

“The presbytery has the authority and pastoral responsibility to promote the health of the covenant community to the end that its congregations and members may bear fruit for the Kingdom of God.” (*ECO Polity* 3.0103a)

3.0 ECO's Mission and Core Values

3.1 *ECO's Mission – Building flourishing churches that make disciples of Jesus Christ*

3.2 *ECO's Values – Shared convictions that guide our decisions and reveal our strengths*

- **The Complete Local:** The strength of our movement is how we create nimble environments for churches to flourish in their unique Kingdom calling. ECO demonstrates this by:
 - Efficient structures that maximize each church's identity and effectiveness.
 - Creativity to embolden and develop a variety of distinct missional expressions.
 - Adamant belief that the stronger each church is...the stronger we all are.
- **A Livable Theology:** The strength of our faith is how we live our Reformed beliefs in a relentless, contextual way. ECO demonstrates this by:
 - Our zealous view that the sovereignty of God drives our ability to risk.
 - Our call to deeply influence culture with the Gospel, not just protect theology.
 - Our passion that renewed minds lead people to embody their faith in Jesus every day.
- **Our Mutual Spurring:** The strength of our covenant community is how we challenge one another to constantly transform. ECO demonstrates this by:
 - Distinct systems that inspire and equip continual advancement.
 - Innovative coaching culture that magnifies the power of relational partnership.
 - Strategic connections with the wider evangelical body to deepen impact here and globally.
- **Your Leadership Acceleration:** The strength of our influence is how we together create vibrant systems for leader multiplication. ECO demonstrates this by:
 - Competency-based approach unleashing potential in all God's people.
 - Thoughtful attention to help women and men lead and thrive in all phases of life and ministry.
 - Intentional focus to equip congregations to deploy laity in exponential ways.

3.3 *ECO's "Core" and "Progress"*

- **Key Premise** – Flourishing churches are led by flourishing leaders, who are flourishing disciples
- **The ECO Synod** oversees, supports, and guides presbyteries and congregations:
 - It assesses and proclaims the missional vision and theology of ECO (*ECO Polity* 3.0201)
 - It links “presbyteries to one another for mutual encouragement” (*ECO Polity* 3.0202a)
- **A Flourishing ECO Church:**
 - **Knows its unique identity & calling**
 - Covenant partners can articulate the distinct mission and vision of the congregation with clarity and heartfelt conviction.
 - Covenant partners seek creative ways to engage personally and corporately with their church’s calling with their time, treasure, and talents.
 - Covenant partners create ever-deepening ways to communicate and fulfill their church’s vision in the broader community and beyond.
 - Covenant partners use systems that consistently measure how effectively every ministry and dollar enhance the way people boldly live the church’s calling.
 - **Normalizes risk taking**
 - ECO leaders and covenant partners accept that failure is sometimes a necessary step for learning and growth.
 - ECO covenant partners put themselves in ministry situations that stretch them and increase their reliance on the Lord.
 - Staff and lay leaders seek stories to celebrate how people and ministries are experimenting to fulfill an ECO congregation’s calling.
 - Congregational leadership drives those they lead to do whatever it takes to see God’s Kingdom come in their context and world.
 - **Nurtures missional living**
 - ECO leaders and covenant partners consciously spend ministry time and energy outside the walls of the church.
 - ECO covenant partners can name specific non-believers they’re inviting into their life of faith as a natural extension of who they are.

- An ECO church's training systems consistently evaluate and improve how the church equips covenant partners to be ambassadors for Christ in their daily lives.
- ECO covenant partners emulate the posture and attitude of Jesus in every situation where they live, work, and play.
- **Expects disciple making**
 - ECO covenant partners can name at least one person who is mentoring them and holding them accountable.
 - ECO covenant partners have at least one person in whom they're investing intentionally to encourage their growth.
 - ECO people throughout the congregation can name a specific area in which they're seeking to grow in their generosity as a follower of Christ.
 - ECO church leaders use defined processes to evaluate, change, or eliminate ministries that are not effectively growing people as disciple makers.
- **Multiplies leaders**
 - ECO church systems are effectively identifying, developing, and launching more and more leaders into ministry in and beyond the church.
 - An ECO church enriches the souls and vitality of current leaders by nurturing them to engage in the church's vision based on their unique wiring.
 - An ECO church's ministry staff spends most of their time intentionally equipping others for ministry rather than being the primary doers of the ministry.
 - ECO church leaders can name and are working on their personal Flourishing Next Step in their growth as a multiplying leader.
- **Prepares to launch**
 - ECO church leaders regularly pray for and seek new, entrepreneurial opportunities to strengthen their impact based on the needs in their community and world.
 - ECO congregations are actively engaged in birthing new church expressions, including financial support.
 - ECO churches prioritize giving growing percentages of their mission budget to church planting here and/or globally.

- ECO congregations have a mindset of abundance that spurs them to be generous with their people, leaders, and finances to revitalize and plant.
- **The 10 Core Competencies of Leadership**
 When looking at the qualities and competencies of a leader, it is important to understand each leader holistically. Viewing a leader holistically, the 10 Core Competencies can be remembered as “HEAD – HEART – HANDS”:
 - **HEAD** – The competencies associated with what the leader knows intellectually and is able to apply in various situations.
 - **HEART** – The competencies associated with the character and integrity of the leader in his or her relationship with God and with others.
 - **HANDS** – The competencies associated with a leader’s skill and ability.

ECO	10 Core Competencies
Competency #1	Maturity of Faith and Personal Call
Competency #2	Personal Integrity
Competency #3	Biblical Knowledge and Interpretation
Competency #4	Theological Knowledge
Competency #5	<i>ECO Polity</i> Knowledge and Application
Competency #6	Sacramental Knowledge and Practice
Competency #7	Missional Engagement
Competency #8	Leadership Development
Competency #9	Team Leadership
Competency #10	Preaching and Teaching

An ECO presbytery encourages congregation and church plants to use the “10 Core Competencies of Leadership” to identify, develop, and deploy leaders (see Appendix A).

4.0 The ECO Presbytery: Shaped by *ECO Polity*

In *ECO Polity*, the role of the presbytery is to support, encourage, and resource local churches in our common, yet unique journeys to boldly live the mission of ECO. As a movement, ECO's ongoing mission is building flourishing churches that make disciples of Jesus Christ. This is the common call that hinges us together.

ECO's Mission – Building flourishing churches that make disciples of Jesus Christ

However, ECO presbyteries are designed to be flexible and to cultivate connection and community among member congregations. In its unique journey and regional diversity, a presbytery lives out its mandated responsibilities as defined in the *ECO Constitution*:

- It gathers for equipping and encouragement
- It helps churches to live out ECO's mission effectively and faithfully.
- It promotes healthy relationships among covenant partners, so all may bear fruit for the Kingdom of God (*ECO Polity* 3.0103).

5.0 The ECO Presbytery: Guiding Operating Principles

A flourishing presbytery accomplishes the goals it was created for in a particular way that honors and aligns with the mission, values, culture, operating principles, and strategies of the ECO movement.

5.1 *How to Flourish as an ECO Presbytery*

- A Flourishing ECO Presbytery aspires to:
 - Know its unique identity within its particular regional context
 - Serve more than govern
 - Maintain life-giving governance
 - Serve local congregations to enable flourishing by making disciples of Jesus Christ
 - Remain flexible and takes risk – not regulatory
 - Multiply church growth – not just add/subtract
 - Embrace accountability and consistency
 - Create “guiding pathways” – not policies for every eventuality
 - Encourage collaboration among volunteers for fruitful ministry
 - Foster healthy growth
 - Create small and relational presbyteries
 - Operate from the local church up – not the presbytery down
 - Emphasize goals, mission, and purpose – not rules or static processes
 - Implement Presbytery Gatherings that equip and unleash leadership
 - Promote holistic discipleship linked with justice/mercy ministries and/or *ECO Essential Tenets*
 - Know how congregations have common missions, “To Make Disciples...,” but they need to accomplish this differently in their respective contexts
 - Help all congregations to actively participate in presbytery life
 - Encourage church leaders to see one another as allies and partners and fosters authentic sharing among them
 - Strive for effectiveness, not only efficiency, in developing and implementing mission

5.2 *Philosophy of Administration and Governance*

ECO's philosophy of administration is to empower smaller groups within the presbytery to oversee and manage presbytery affairs.

ECO's philosophy of governance is to encourage collaboration through delegation into each flourishing next step of ministry and growth.

- Flourishing Administration & Governance
 - Implements a strong board governance model in which executive power is delegated to the Presbytery Governing Council.
 - Has strong delegation, by the Presbytery Governing Council, of ecclesiastical issues to Ministry Partnership Team and other supporting teams.
 - The teams reporting to the Presbytery Governing Council do the bulk of the work of the presbytery. This allows the Council to focus on overall governance, policy, and strategy and to leave execution to specialized groups of people.
 - Focuses on Pastor Covenant Groups (PCGs) and Mission Affinity Groups (MAGs) as environments where many of the goals of the presbytery are lived out. ECO desires to create an environment in which Christ-followers are consistently wrestling with and asking one another what their "Flourishing Next Step" will be.
 - Ensures Presbytery Gatherings as highlights of the year, devoted as much as possible to the premise that "flourishing churches are led by flourishing leaders who are flourishing disciples."
 - Serves – not rules – congregations. Ministry happens "from the church up" not "from the presbytery down."
 - An ECO presbytery "Receive[s], dismiss[es], examine[s], install[s], provide[s] pastoral care for, and discipline[s] pastors." and "Settle[s] differences between congregations and pastors." (*ECO Polity* 3.0103 g & j)
 - Maintains synergy with Synod initiatives, so presbytery becomes a conduit of Synod resources to churches.
 - Encourages church planting by local congregations, as guided by the Synod and affirmed by the presbytery.

6.0 ECO Presbytery: Presbytery Governing Council

A flourishing ECO presbytery is more than just coming together to manage ECO affairs in a particular region. It's about seeking God's face together and staying sensitive to the Holy Spirit, so all members can carry out their specific responsibilities and tasks faithfully and effectively.

The Presbytery Governing Council along with a presbytery's officers, pastors, elected elders of member congregations, committees, various groups and teams all respect one another's roles and duties. They seek to maintain healthy relationships, so all can work together in a thriving ministry environment.

To ensure continuity of ministry and operations from year to year, the officers of Presbytery Governing Council and members of teams and commissions are divided into "classes", which are appointed and/or elected as called for by class term.

6.1 *Presbytery Governing Council: Oversees and manages an ECO's presbytery's affairs*

- Functions much like a local congregation's session including developing a budget for the East Central fiscal year of May 1 through April 30 and presenting the budget at the spring presbytery meeting.
- Manages all affairs and activities of the presbytery (except for those matters specifically reserved for the broader membership or specific officers).
- Generally includes the following elected officers and committee chairs:
 - Moderator
 - Vice Moderator
 - Stated Clerk
 - Treasurer
 - Ministry Partnership Team (MPT) Chair
 - Pastoral Ministry Ordination Team (PMOT) Chair (optional)
 - Nominating Chair (optional)

6.2 *Presbytery Governing Council: Composition and Terms of Service*

- 6.2.1 East Central Presbytery may delegate to the Presbytery Governing Council any of its functions, except the election of members to the Council and Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) or the approval or concurrence of proposed amendments to the *ECO Constitution*. A Presbytery Governing Council may appoint someone to

- fill a vacancy on the Council or the PJC until the next Stated Presbytery Meeting. (*ECO Polity* 3.0104)
- 6.2.2 The East Central Presbytery Governing Council has 9 members. Four officers shall be elected directly to Council: Moderator, Vice Moderator (either the Moderator Elect or the Past Moderator depending on the year), Stated Clerk, and Treasurer. The five other council members shall be the team chairs of Church Planting, Missions, MPT, Nominating and PMOT. Elected members are nominated by a Presbytery Nominating Team (the latter which is made up of at least 2 members of the current council), and elected by East Central Presbytery as a whole. A Council member may serve in other areas of the Presbytery.
- 6.2.3 Presbytery may choose to have council members serve as chairs of required and voluntary teams as well as elected officers of the presbytery.
- 6.2.4 Terms of Service shall be defined by the Presbytery. Terms in East Central Presbytery begin after the spring presbytery meeting (usually on May 1).
- 6.2.5 The East Central Presbytery term of service on the Council depends on the position held.
- 6.2.6 The Officers of the Presbytery shall be the Moderator, the Vice Moderator (either the Moderator Elect or the Past Moderator depending on the year), the Stated Clerk, and the Treasurer—all of which shall be elected by East Central Presbytery as a whole for terms as stated in section 7.
- 6.2.7 The Presbytery Governing Council delegates the election of officers to East Central Presbytery as a whole.
- 6.2.8 Leaving Council before the term expires:
- 6.2.8.1 A Council Member may resign from the Presbytery Governing Council at any time.
- 6.2.8.2 If an elder Council Member ceases to be a Covenant Partner of a Congregation of the Presbytery or if a pastor Council Member ceases to be a member of Presbytery or if a Council Member ceases to adhere to the *ECO Essential Tenets*, he or she shall be removed as a member of Council by a two-thirds vote of the Presbytery Governing Council.
- 6.2.8.3 Any elected officer may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Presbytery Governing Council.

- 6.2.8.4 When a Council Member is unable or fails to perform the duties of a Council Member for a period of six months, the Council Member's service on the Council shall be terminated by the Council unless there is a good reason not to do so, which shall be recorded.
- 6.2.8.5 A Council Member may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Presbytery members voting at a stated or called Presbytery meeting.
- 6.2.8.6 When a Council Member leaves Council before their term expires, then a replacement shall be appointed by Council for an elected member or by the team that the person represented.

7.0 Officers of Presbytery: Terms & Responsibilities

7.1 Moderator - Presiding leader of presbytery and Presbytery Governing Council

The Moderator shall serve a two-year term as Moderator that begins at the end of a one-year term as Moderator Elect when he or she performed the duties of Vice Moderator. After serving a two-year Moderator term, the Moderator will move to the Past Moderator position to act as Vice Moderator for one year to complete the four-year moderator cycle.

The Moderator serves as the President of the corporation and Moderator of both East Central Presbytery and the Presbytery Governing Council and shall have the following authority and responsibilities:

- 7.1.1 Moderates meetings of the Council and Presbytery and leads and models best leadership practices at Presbytery Gatherings (see Appendix A, "10 Core Competencies").
- 7.1.2 Liaisons with the Synod and attends regular Synod meetings by computer or phone, the annual Presbytery Leadership Gathering in person, the National Gathering and Moderator Training and the bi-annual Synod Business Meeting in person.
- 7.1.3 Works with the Presbytery Governing Council to implement the mission of ECO in East Central Presbytery.
- 7.1.4 Co-labors with ECO congregations, church plants, pastors, elders, and lay leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- 7.1.5 All other duties as assigned by the Council or Presbytery.

7.2 Vice Moderator (either the Moderator Elect or Past Moderator depending on which position is filled for the year) - Second presiding leader of presbytery and Presbytery Governing Council

The Moderator Elect shall be elected every other year by East Central Presbytery as a whole to begin a four-year cycle of service with one year as Moderator Elect, two years as Moderator and one year as Past Moderator. This person will act as Vice Moderator while they hold the Moderator Elect and Past Moderator positions.

The Vice Moderator shall have the following authority and responsibilities:

- 7.2.1 Leads and models best leadership practices (see Appendix A, "10 Core Competencies").
- 7.2.2 Assumes the duties of Moderator in his or her absence or inability to act.
- 7.2.3 Partners with the Moderator to liaison with the Synod and its scheduled meetings and attends ECO leadership meetings and gatherings.
- 7.2.4 Helps facilitate the implementation of ECO's mission.
- 7.2.5 Co-labors with ECO congregations, church plants, pastors, elders, and lay leaders to make disciples of Jesus Christ.
- 7.2.6 Serves as Vice President of the corporation and assumes the duties of the Moderator in his or her absence or inability to act.
- 7.2.7 Attends scheduled Synod meetings by computer or phone as requested by the Moderator, the annual Presbytery Leadership Gathering in person, the National Gathering and Moderator/Vice Moderator training, and the bi-annual Synod Business Meeting in person.
- 7.2.8 All other duties as assigned by the Council or Presbytery.

7.3 *Stated Clerk - Secretary of presbytery and keeper of records*
 The Stated Clerk shall be elected by East Central Presbytery as a whole. The Stated Clerk shall serve a two-year term, which is renewable indefinitely.

The Stated Clerk serves as the Secretary of the corporation and the Clerk for both East Central Presbytery and the Presbytery Governing Council. The Council may employ one or more persons to assist the Stated Clerk in the fulfillment of his or her duties. The Stated Clerk shall have the following authority and responsibilities:

- 7.3.1 Leads and models best leadership practices (see Appendix A, "10 Core Competencies")
- 7.3.2 Performs all duties incident to the corporate office of Secretary.
- 7.3.3 Attends scheduled Synod meetings by computer or phone, the annual Presbytery Leadership Gathering in person, and the bi-annual Synod Business Meeting.
- 7.3.4 Gives all notices as provided in the Presbytery bylaws, Presbytery policy, or as required by the *ECO Polity* or by law.

- 7.3.5 Takes minutes of the meetings of the Presbytery and the Council and keeps the minutes as part of the records of the Presbytery.
- 7.3.6 Serves as or designates someone to act as the Parliamentarian for business meetings of the Presbytery and Council meetings.
- 7.3.7 Maintains custody of the corporate records and of the seal of the Presbytery, if any.
- 7.3.8 Affixes the seal of the Presbytery to all documents as authorized.
- 7.3.9 Serves as communications liaison, coordinating presbytery correspondence and notices.
- 7.3.10 Keeps a register of the contact information of each congregation or pastor member of Presbytery, Presbytery Officers, Presbytery Governing Council members, Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission members, and all Presbytery Committee/Team members.
- 7.3.11 Works with the MPT to coordinate Presbytery-Congregation Communications.
- 7.3.12 For remedial and disciplinary cases before the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission, fulfills the duties assigned by the *ECO Rules of Discipline*.
- 7.3.13 All other duties as assigned by the Council or Presbytery.

7.4 *Treasurer - Steward of presbytery funds*

The Treasurer shall be elected by East Central Presbytery as a whole. The treasurer shall serve a two-year term, which is renewable indefinitely.

The Treasurer serves as the Treasurer of the corporation and the Treasurer of the Presbytery. The Presbytery Governing Council may employ one or more persons to assist the Treasurer in the fulfillment of his or her duties. The Treasurer shall have the following authority and responsibilities:

- 7.4.1 Leads and models best leadership practices (see Appendix A, "10 Core Competencies").
- 7.4.2 Has charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of East Central Presbytery, including the establishment of banking relationships.
- 7.4.3 Receives and gives receipts for monies due and payable to the Presbytery from any source.
- 7.4.4 Deposits all monies in the name of East Central Presbytery in banks, trust companies, or other

depositories as provided and directed by the Presbytery Governing Council. Write checks and distribute funds to discharge obligations of the Presbytery.

- 7.4.5 Maintains financial books and records of East Central Presbytery.
- 7.4.6 Arranges for annual review of the Presbytery Financial Records from a competent source not related to or in direct relationship with the Treasurer.
- 7.4.7 Creates systems in which established ministry team chairs may request funds and distribute funds as approved by the Presbytery Governing Council.
- 7.4.8 Prepares financial reports for each Council meeting, so that the Council may receive and approve the Financial Report.
- 7.4.9 All other duties as assigned by the Council or Presbytery.

No officer shall have the authority to incur any debt on behalf of the Presbytery other than typical vendor payables for expenses incurred in connection with day-to-day operations, including Presbytery Gatherings.

8.0 Presbytery Governing Council: Teams and Committees

The flourishing ECO presbytery has chosen to refer to its committees as “teams.” This is to embody the active, ministerial nature of a group of leaders who are reaching out as the head, heart, and hands of presbytery to fulfill a specific task or role.

The team is composed of presbytery’s pastoral members, or elders who are covenant partners of ECO churches—and even other covenant partners from congregations, who may have the skill set and desire to serve with a signed commitment to adhere to the *ECO Constitution*.

Usually, the chairperson of the team holds a seat on the Presbytery Governing Council.

When travel and expenses are incurred in the fulfillment of team duties, an ECO presbytery may make provisions to support team members in the completion of their ministry tasks.

8.1 *Composition of Presbytery Governing Teams*

The Presbytery Governing Council shall at minimum have a team with responsibility for the pastoral relationships of the Presbytery. It shall have authority to create additional teams or committees as needed to conduct the operations of the Council and Presbytery. The Presbytery primarily has chosen to refer to their committees as “teams.”

- 8.1.1 The Presbytery Governing Council will create the following permanent teams to operate under its direction—some are required in ECO, while others are optional yet highly useful within the Presbytery:
- Ministry Partnership Team (MPT) [required 3.0105a]
 - Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) [required 3.01015b]
 - Pastoral Ministry Ordination Team (PMOT) [optional see 6.1]
 - Nominating Team for Council, MPT, Nominating Team, and PJC
 - (Other teams as created and deemed necessary by the Presbytery)
- 8.1.2 Team Members shall serve three-year terms and be divided into three classes as evenly as possible, with term of only one class ending each calendar year. (PJC Members shall serve six-year terms, as defined in 11.4.)

A team's membership should ordinarily include at least one Presbytery Governing Council Member, who may serve as chair of the ministry team. Other team members shall be pastor members of Presbytery or elders, who are active Covenant Partners of member Congregations. However, other active Covenant Partners of the Presbytery's member Congregations may be added to a team as non-voting advisory members. Honorably Retired Pastors, Affiliate Pastors, and Pastors in validated ministries may serve on ministry teams with voice and vote.

- 8.1.3 Team members may serve a maximum of two consecutive full three-year terms, and a team member who has served two consecutive full three-year terms shall not be eligible for reelection for at least one year.
- 8.1.4 The Presbytery Governing Council shall determine the size of each team (if is not specified in *ECO Polity*), and each team is responsible for recommending potential team members to the Nominating Team.
- 8.1.5 Any team member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the chair of the team that the member is serving on. The chair will forward the letter of resignation to the Stated Clerk for Presbytery Governing Council's information.
- 8.1.6 If a team member ceases to be a Covenant Partner of a Congregation of the Presbytery or a pastor member of the Presbytery, his or her membership shall automatically terminate.
- 8.1.7 Any team may create sub-teams with the approval of the Presbytery Governing Council to assist in their work. For example, the MPT may want a sub-team of trained conflict mediators or a sub-team to do pastoral care with pastors or churches in need. The authority and scope of the teams will be determined by the established Presbytery team. A sub-team may be permanent or organized for a specific project.

8.2 *Ministry Partnership Team (MPT) – Oversees pastoral relationships in an ECO presbytery*

Nominated by the Presbytery Nominating Team and elected by the presbytery. Ministry Partnership Team (MPT) responsibilities shall include the following:

- 8.2.1 Visits and consults with Presbytery pastors and congregations on an annual basis to encourage their local ministry and relationship with the Presbytery.
- 8.2.2 Promotes and encourages the missional effectiveness of the congregation. Assists its congregations in completing the Synod's annual Ministry Information Form (MIF), its annual financial review, and the narrative report of their ministry and mission.
- 8.2.3 Provides advice, counsel, and when needed, peacemaking/mediation for congregations in conflict.
- 8.2.4 Provides advice and counsel with congregations regarding pastoral calls (Pastor, Associate Pastor, and Assistant Pastor).
- 8.2.5 Provides support as requested for congregations operating without an installed Pastor.
- 8.2.6 Approves, equips through ECO's Commissioned Lay Pastor (CLP) Training Platform, and supervises Commissioned Lay Pastors serving as Pastor/Head of Staff.
- 8.2.7 Approves Transitional Pastors serving as Pastor/Head of Staff for congregations.
- 8.2.8 Consents to the call of Pastors, Associate Pastors, and Assistant Pastors. Consents to dissolution of pastoral relationships for Pastors and Associate Pastors. Consults to dissolution of Assistant Pastors.
- 8.2.9 Approves Presbytery pastors for installation and ordination services.
- 8.2.10 Authorizes pastors to serve in validated ministries outside ECO congregations.

- 8.2.11 Approves Church Planters and Church Plants with guidance from the Synod.
- 8.2.12 Evaluates and approves requests for Honorably Retired status from pastors serving in the Presbytery.
- 8.2.13 Evaluates and approves requests for Affiliate Pastor status from pastors ordained in other Reformed denominations.
- 8.2.14 Evaluates and approves transfer of pastors from other presbyteries and Reformed denominations.
- 8.2.15 Evaluates congregations requesting transfer into the Presbytery from other ECO presbyteries or other Reformed denominations. Evaluates congregations requesting transfer to other ECO presbyteries or other Reformed denominations. Votes to approve or deny a congregation's application for membership in ECO.
- 8.2.16 Assists transferring congregations in their assimilation into the Presbytery.
- 8.2.17 Assesses and makes recommendations to Presbytery and the Presbytery Governing Council on applications to charter a new congregation or to take action in dissolving a congregation.
- 8.2.18 Oversees *ECO Polity* Missional Affinity and Pastoral Covenant Group requirements.
- 8.2.19 Works with the Stated Clerk to coordinate Presbytery-Congregation communications.
- 8.2.20 All other duties as assigned by the Council or Presbytery.

The chair of the MPT shall meet regularly with the Synod in scheduled meetings (online/phone) and through annual and occasionally bi-annual retreats. Presbyteries shall make funds available for the MPT chair to attend these events.

8.3 *Pastoral Ministry Ordination Team (PMOT) – Oversees pastoral ordination in ECO*

It is through the PMOT that the Synod relates to the Presbytery on all issues related to pastoral ordination. Some presbyteries, due to size or preference, may include these responsibilities in the work of the MPT. Regardless, a presbytery is responsible to have the chair attend scheduled Synod PMOT meetings and national trainings, when applicable. The Presbytery will make funds available for chairs to attend required events. When formed, PMOT responsibilities shall include the following:

- 8.3.1 Works with and encourages those seeking pastoral ordination in ECO, overseeing candidates in their preparation for ministry.
- 8.3.2 Works with congregational sponsors of ordination candidates to assist congregations in fulfilling their sponsorship obligations.
- 8.3.3 Examines the candidate upon completion of preparation for ordination and make an ordination recommendation to the MPT of the calling presbytery.
- 8.3.4 Upon the request of the MPT, assists in an in-depth assessment of candidates who have requested transfer of their ordination from other denominations or church backgrounds.
- 8.3.5 Promotes and encourages pastoral ordination in ECO.
- 8.3.6 All other duties as assigned by the Council or Presbytery.

8.4 *Nominating Team – Recommends presbytery’s pastoral members or elders who are covenant partners of ECO churches to required or necessary positions*

In most presbyteries, it is helpful to have a Nominating Team to elect members of Presbytery to required and/or necessary positions. This is not a required team in *ECO Polity*. The Nominating Team of East Central Presbytery shall include either the Moderator or Vice Moderator of Council. Its responsibilities shall include the following:

- 8.4.1 Creates a slate of nominees to serve on the Council, MPT, PJC and other Council designated teams from

presbytery's pastoral members or elders who are covenant partners of ECO churches.

- 8.4.2 Solicits recommendations for nominations from Council and the current members of teams and commissions.
- 8.4.3 Searches for the "right person," more than a "warm body." Nominees will be identified through their gift and skill set, recommendations from colleagues, and a clear commitment to the mission of ECO and East Central Presbytery.
- 8.4.4 Works with each team or the Presbytery Governing Council, to understand the gifts and skill set they are looking for to serve in vacant positions.
- 8.4.5 Commits to finishing their work according to the timeline set by the Presbytery Governing Council and develops biographical sketches for each nominee, so that East Central Presbytery may learn about each nominee.
- 8.4.6 All other duties as assigned by the Council or Presbytery.

9.0 Presbytery Gatherings

9.1 *Presbytery Gathering: Goals*

9.1.1 Brings “the Boardroom” to “the Upper Room.”

9.1.2 Gathers presbytery officers, teams, committees, covenant partners, elders, deacons, staff, pastors, and visitors of a specific ECO region.

9.1.3 Celebrates with worship, prayer, and training.

9.1.4 Balances business matters with fellowship, spiritual edification, and voting on new pathways of ministry.

9.1.5 Engages in the following six-fold rhythm:

- **PREPARE** hearts to gather for listening to the Lord.
 - Agape meal: intentional breaking of bread together
 - Spiritual practices (lectio divina, prayer, meditation)
 - Worship/Devotional
- **LISTEN** for God’s Word in content.
 - Guest speakers are teaching on leadership development and resources to help the local church flourish
 - Inspirational teaching on how to be flourishing disciples and flourishing leaders who lead flourishing churches
- **REFLECT** on where we hear the Holy Spirit speaking.
 - Take time to prayerfully sift through content to discern what resonates
 - Silently reflect on reflection questions
- **SHARE** with one another what is heard from the Lord.
 - Small group discussion (MAGs, PCGs, triads) on what was heard
 - Discuss: “Based on what you heard today, what’s your Flourishing Next Step?”
 - Have 1 or 2 small groups share their thoughts with the whole presbytery
- **ACT/COMMIT** on the business agenda at hand.
 - What business has God put before us that needs to be done, so our churches can flourish and make disciples of Jesus Christ?
 - What tasks do we need to do together today?
- **PRAY** over commitments, actions, and flourishing next steps.
 - Bring forward groups who shared with the whole presbytery and lay hands on them, praying specifically for flourishing next steps

- Bring finished and unfinished business before God and ask that His will to be done
- Bring a church forward to pray generally and for specific needs

9.2 *Presbytery Gatherings: Preparation and Implementation*

9.2.1 East Central Presbytery shall hold at least two Presbytery Gatherings and Stated Business Meetings each calendar year, the time of which shall be determined by the Presbytery Governing Council (*ECO Polity* 3.0104). Presbytery ordinarily will hold a gathering and possibly a meeting at ECO's Annual National Gathering. This may serve as a third gathering for most presbyteries.

9.2.2 The Presbytery Gatherings shall be open to covenant partners, elders, deacons, staff, pastors, and visitors. Presbytery Gatherings are to be filled with worship, prayer, and times of training and equipping. The Presbytery encourages congregations to bring as many people as possible to take part in the gatherings.

9.2.3 The Presbytery Gatherings shall primarily focus on building flourishing churches, flourishing leaders, and flourishing disciples. A model for an ECO Presbytery Gathering is available through the Synod.

9.2.4 Additional Called Meetings may be called by the Presbytery Governing Council, the Synod, or East Central Presbytery, including when requested in writing by one-fourth of the sessions of the Presbytery's member congregations. The notice of the Called Meetings shall state clearly the purpose(s) of the meeting, and the Presbytery may not consider any other matter(s) at the meeting.

9.2.4.1 Commissioners to the Presbytery Business Meetings are the pastors granted voting authority pursuant to the *ECO Polity* 2.0401 and elder commissioners elected by the sessions of the Presbytery's member congregations. Each congregation may elect the number of elder commissioners equal to the number of their pastors possessing Presbytery voting privileges. If a congregation

has zero pastors possessing Presbytery voting privileges, that congregation may elect one elder commissioner.

- 9.2.4.2 Advance notice of no less than ten days and no more than 60 days is required for a Gathering and/or Business Meeting of East Central Presbytery. This advance notice shall specify the time, place, and purpose (for a Stated Meeting) of the Presbytery Gathering in writing, by email, or U.S. or other mail. The notice period shall be measured from when the email is sent or when the notice is delivered to the mail agency.
- 9.2.4.3 Presbytery meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, except when it is contradicted by the state law, the *ECO Polity*, the Presbytery's Articles of Incorporation or bylaws or other rules adopted by the Presbytery.
- 9.2.5 The Moderator of East Central Presbytery shall ordinarily moderate all Presbytery Gatherings and Business Meetings. If it is impractical, the Moderator may ask the Vice Moderator or another Presbytery Governing Council Member to moderate the meeting.
- 9.2.6 The Stated Clerk shall ordinarily serve as secretary for all Presbytery Gatherings and Business Meetings. If this is impractical, the meeting Moderator shall appoint a secretary for that meeting.
- 9.2.7 The minimum number of elder and pastor commissioners that must be present for the transaction of business at Presbytery Stated and Called Meetings shall be no less than 40% of a number equal to the number of member pastors and elder commissioners with voting authority as set forth in *ECO Polity*. Commissioners may not vote by proxy or absentee ballot.
- 9.2.8 The following business items shall be conducted at a Presbytery meeting, but not necessarily at every

Presbytery meeting; nor are Presbytery meetings limited to just the following:

- Election of members to the Presbytery Governing Council.
- Election of members to the Presbytery Ministry Partnership Team.
- Election of members to the Presbytery Permanent Judicial Commission.
- The chartering or dissolution of congregations under its authority.
- Approval of overtures to the Synod of ECO for changes in the *ECO Constitution* and the concurrence with such an overture.
- Approval or rejection of resolutions from a particular Synod business meeting.
- Approving any amendments to the Presbytery's articles of incorporation, bylaws, or other corporate governing documents, and dissolution, merger, and any other corporate action requiring voting member approval.

9.2.9 East Central Presbytery, and any council or team of the Presbytery, may hold a meeting by telephone conference call or electronic means in which all persons participating in the meeting may communicate with one another. The notice of a meeting by electronic means must be included in the announcement as well as what will be discussed and voted on when giving notice. Participation of a person on a conference call or electronic meeting constitutes presence of that person at the meeting. Email voting may be used on items that would normally be on a consent agenda and would not need further discussion or be controversial. Any member of the Presbytery Governing Council or Presbytery Ministry Team may request an email vote be tabled until the group can meet in a forum where interaction is available.

10.0 Quorums and Electronic Voting for Presbytery Governance (Council, Team & Committee)

The minimum number of an ECO presbytery's voting council, team, or committee members that must be present for business to transact is 50%. This is to ensure that all business is transacted in a fair and equitable way, with a sufficient number of voting members present.

Notice must be given in writing, so an ECO presbytery's voting council, team, or committee members are aware that important business will take place.

Electronic voting can happen through computer forms or specific web platforms—for example, by email or during live conference calls using Zoom. The electronic format or platform utilized will be at the discretion of the presbytery and/or its respective council, team or committee.

All voting results are entered in an ECO presbytery's meeting minutes and kept as official records.

- 10.1 The minimum number of Council, Team, or Committee members that shall be present for the transaction of business at Council, Team, or Committee Stated and Called meetings is 50% of Council, Team, or Committee members eligible to vote. Council, Team, or Committee members may not vote by proxy or absentee ballot.
- 10.2 Action may happen without a meeting (with proper notice [the "Notice"]), with votes accepted in writing and/or electronically.
- 10.3 The Notice shall be in writing and shall state the action(s) to be taken, the time by which the Council, Team, or Committee member must respond (which may not be less than two working days), and that the Council, Team or Committee member's failure to respond by the time stated in the Notice will have the same effect as if, prior to the time stated in the Notice, the Council, Team, Committee member had abstained in writing and failed to demand in writing that action not be taken without a meeting.
- 10.4 Electronic voting may happen through computer forms or specific web platforms—for example, by email or during live conference calls using Zoom. The electronic format or platform

utilized will be at the discretion of East Central Presbytery and/or its respective Council, Team, or Committee.

- 10.5 The results of this type of voting shall be reported at the next called meeting of the Council, Team, or Committee and entered into the minutes.

11.0 Permanent Judicial Commission: Authority and Responsibilities

Discipline and adjudicating conflicts are often topics people do not like to discuss. However, the Word of God addresses it, and the *ECO Constitution* provides for it. The flourishing presbytery in ECO engages in discipline and adjudicates conflicts with love, respect, and dignity for all involved. The Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) is outlined in *ECO Polity* and *ECO Rules of Discipline*, so those involved in the process will know what to expect from one another.

Grace and restoration and bringing healing to those who have been harmed is the pathway we seek. The PJC heads the process and is the hinge that holds it all together.

- 11.1 The Permanent Judicial Commission shall exercise the powers and the responsibilities entrusted to it by *ECO Polity* and *ECO Rules of Discipline* and engage in its duties with love, respect, and dignity for all involved.
- 11.2 The Commission shall consist of at least 5 and no more than 9 members in three equal classes serving a six-year term. No more than one of the Commission's elder members may be affiliated with a single congregation. Commission members shall be divided into three classes with the term on only one class ending each even number year. The PJC shall be as close as possible to an equal number of elders and pastors.
- 11.3 The members of East Central Presbytery may elect a person to fill the unexpired terms resulting from a vacancy on the Commission created due to resignation, death, or any other cause.
- 11.4 A person who has served on the Permanent Judicial Commission for a full six-year term shall not be eligible for reelection until four years have elapsed after the expired six-year term. No person shall serve on more than one judicial commission at the same time.
- 11.5 If at all possible, it is preferred that PJC members do not concurrently serve on the Presbytery Governing Council, MPT, or PMOT.
- 11.6 The quorum of a meeting or hearing of the PJC shall be a majority of its members.

- 11.7 When a church, elder, or pastor of a particular church is a party to a case, a Commission Member who is a Covenant Partner or Pastor (any designation) of that church shall not participate in the trial or appeal of that case by recusing themselves.
- 11.8 The PJC shall develop rules governing the conduct of its hearing and deliberations, in accordance with *ECO Polity* and *ECO Rules of Discipline*.

APPENDIX A -- Leadership Competencies in ECO

To be faithful to ECO's mission to build flourishing churches that make disciples of Jesus Christ, ECO has compiled an initial set of competencies (qualities, characteristics, and skills) that should be found in leaders. These are not hard and fast requirements but rather suggested guidelines for those serving on various leadership teams within ECO. Presbyteries will want to consider the following qualities when helping candidates prepare for ordination or when elders or deacons are commissioned to pastor a church. Sessions will want to consider seeking these characteristics in commissioned officers who celebrate sacraments as well as during their process of new officer selection. In addition, sessions may want to use the following characteristics to help current church officers identify opportunities for growth and development.

Your Leadership Acceleration

The strength of our influence is how we together create a vibrant system for leader multiplication.

BACKGROUND

One of ECO's key values is "Your Leadership Acceleration." Within the ECO movement, there are certain things that we seek to do to help one another advance "Your Leadership Acceleration."

First, we look at the general types of leaders that are defined in *ECO Polity* and the roles that they play within the movement. It is understood that leadership includes pastors, elders, and deacons. In some instances, church leaders (and also those elders and deacons who are commissioned for service) may be called to fulfill a greater role than their offices ordinarily would allow. Therefore, it is important to define each of those leaders and the roles they play.

Second, we need to define the qualities and characteristics that should be present or developing within each of these different kinds of leaders. Some of these qualities need to be present within all types of leaders, while some qualities will be specific to certain types of leadership roles.

LEADERSHIP FLOWS FROM DISCIPLESHIP

It bears repeating that quality leaders are only developed from quality disciples. A believer's first call is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. If God so

chooses to call someone into a leadership role, it is because he or she has a strong foundation as a disciple. Therefore, when churches, presbyteries, or mentors are seeking to develop leaders, they must first start with ensuring that a person is qualified in all aspects of discipleship and training.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

Ideally, all leaders would possess the leadership competencies and characteristics contained in this document prior to assuming their particular offices or roles. However, we know that in many ways some competencies will be more aspirational in nature for current leaders. With existing leaders, therefore, it is ECO's hope that these competencies will be instructive so individuals can discern the places in which they can continue to grow in their Christian leadership. This document also can be used as a guide for determining how to best support and train the emerging leader.

Here are some examples of how the 10 Competencies might be used:

- **Personal Growth Assessment:** To determine areas of personal growth for current pastors, elders, and deacons
- **Ordination Preparation Teams:** For Ordination Preparation Teams to assess the developmental needs of current or potential candidates
- **Ministry Partnership Team:** For Ministry Partnership Teams to help potential leaders get the training they need apart from a traditional seminary experience
- **Congregations:** For congregations to develop training ministries for the future leadership development of covenant partners

FOUR CATEGORIES OF LEADERSHIP

While there are many types of leaders within the church, we need people to possess different competencies and skills to support their particular congregations. There are four types of leaders specifically identified in *ECO Polity*. Each of the ten general competencies have particular qualities for each of the identified leaders. Leaders should strive to possess the basic competencies associated with their particular role. Those responsible for developing and supporting these leaders should ensure that the leaders are continuing to grow in maturity within each area and proficiency within the competencies.

- **Pastors** – Pastors include lead pastors, associate pastors, and assistant pastors who are ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Presbytery ministry and ordination team members can use these qualities when examining the suitability of a candidate for ordination or in evaluating transfer candidates from other denominations.

- **Commissioned Officers Serving as Pastors of Churches** – In 2.0503 of *ECO Polity*, elders and deacons can be trained and deployed by the presbytery to serve as the pastor of a congregation. This situation can occur for a variety of reasons. In all categories, it is our feeling that since commissioned officers in such a capacity are functioning as pastors, they should be trained to possess the same competencies as that of an ordained pastor. Ministry Partnership Teams can utilize these competencies when examining potential candidates for commissioning.
- **Officers Authorized to Celebrate Sacraments in Micro-Expressions of Church** – In 2.0502 of *ECO Polity*, elders and deacons can be trained to celebrate sacraments in smaller contexts or extensions of the church. In such cases, they serve under the authority of the pastor and session, thus requiring a greater understanding of the sacraments. This situation also requires additional strength in a variety of competencies, because these elders and deacons will be serving as shepherds of their communities. Sessions can utilize these competencies when determining the readiness of officers.
- **Elders and Deacons** – The base qualities recommended for elders and deacons are included in this document. In mentioning competencies for elders and deacons, it is assumed that they are not being commissioned for additional purposes (in this case, they would fall into other categories mentioned above). Sessions and nominating committees can use these competencies when discerning officer nominations.

10 CORE COMPETENCIES

The following core competencies are central to Christian leadership. Some of the competencies possess characteristics that **should** be present in all leaders, regardless of their position or role. (For example, all leaders should have integrity in their personal lives). Other competencies will need to be present to differing degrees, depending on the role and position of the leader. For example, elders and deacons need to possess biblical knowledge and interpretation, but to a lesser degree than pastors.

Below are the 10 Core Competencies, their qualities and characteristics, and the specific leadership roles to which they pertain. Viewing a leader holistically, the 10 Core Competencies can be remembered as “HEAD – HEART – HANDS”:

- **HEAD** – The competencies associated with what the leader knows intellectually and is able to apply in various situations.
- **HEART** – The competencies associated with the character and integrity of the leader in his or her relationship with God and with others.
- **HANDS** – The competencies associated with a leader’s skill and ability.

Competency #1: Maturity of Personal Faith and Personal Call

The extent to which the leader has an intimate and personal relationship with the Triune God that is continually formed through a variety of practices.

All Leaders:

- Regularly read and reflect upon God’s Word and apply it to their lives
- Regularly spend time in prayer through speaking and listening to God
- Incorporate other spiritual disciplines into their lives
- Manifest the Fruit of the Spirit internally and externally
- Operate from an identity that is rooted in the Gospel
- Commit to living within a community of believers for mutual encouragement and support
- Able to discern and articulate God’s call on their life and ministry

Competency #2: Personal Integrity

The extent to which the leader’s actions and attitudes are consistent with the desires of God and the example of Jesus.

All Leaders:

- Follow through with personal commitments to others
- Have genuine, sacrificial love and care for others
- Understand and live within the ethical boundaries set forth in Scripture
- Express authentic personal humility in their relationships with others
- Demonstrate a willingness to learn and grow

Competency #3: Biblical Knowledge and Interpretation

The extent to which the leader understands the entire Bible and has the ability to study and apply Scripture appropriately.

Pastors and Commissioned Officers serving as pastors of churches:

- Have an understanding of the whole narrative of Scripture

- Possess a general knowledge about the content of all books in the Old and New Testaments including major events, themes, and overall purpose
- Study passages of Scripture using a variety of tools and then can articulate meaning, purpose, and application to their own lives and the lives of others
- Appropriately apply Scripture to real-life situations with maturity and depth that is beyond simple proof-texting
- Articulate how passages of Scripture relate to appropriate biblical doctrine

Officers Authorized to Celebrate Sacraments in Micro-Expressions of Church:

- Possess a general knowledge of the flow of Scripture and major events
- Can study a passage of Scripture using limited tools to determine a general meaning and purpose for their lives and an application for others
- Can use Scripture appropriately when discipling or counseling others

Elders and Deacons:

- Possess a general knowledge of the flow of Scripture and major events
- Can study a passage of Scripture at a basic level, with or without tools, and determine a general meaning and purpose for their lives and the lives of others
- Can find basic ways of applying Scripture to current situations

Competency #4: Theological Knowledge

The extent to which the leader understands, embraces, and is able to apply both the core of the Christian faith as well as the Reformed Faith of ECO as expressed in the ECO Essential Tenets and ECO Confessions Standards.

Pastors and Commissioned Officers serving as pastors of churches:

- Fully embrace the major themes and the system of doctrine contained in the *ECO Essential Tenets*
- Can articulate confessional and scriptural support for the themes and the system of doctrine contained in the *ECO Essential Tenets*
- Can pastorally apply the theology contained in the *ECO Essential Tenets* to real situations
- Have a working knowledge of basic Church history and its impact on the church today

- Are able to identify doctrines that are outside the classic Christian and Reformed faith and show how they are incongruent with the Reformed faith
- Are willing to adhere to all aspects of the *ECO Essential Tenets* in teaching and practice, even if there is not full embrace on minor aspects

Officers Authorized to Celebrate Sacraments in Micro-Expressions of Church:

- Fully embrace the major themes and the systems of doctrine contained in the *ECO Essential Tenets*
- Can articulate scriptural support for the major themes and the system of doctrine contained in the *ECO Essential Tenets*
- Can articulate to others how the theology contained in the *ECO Essential Tenets* applies to real situations
- Are willing to adhere to all aspects of the *ECO Essential Tenets* in teaching and practice, even if there is not full embrace on minor aspects

Elders and Deacons

- Fully embrace the major themes and the system of doctrine contained in the *ECO Essential Tenets*
- Can articulate scriptural support for the major themes and the system of doctrine contained in the *ECO Essential Tenets*
- Are willing to adhere to all aspects of the *ECO Essential Tenets* in teaching and practice, even if there is not full embrace on minor aspects

Competency #5: ECO Polity Knowledge and Application

The extent to which the leader understands ECO Polity, ethos, and values, as well as their ability to appropriately apply their knowledge in various situations.

Pastors and Commissioned Officers serving as pastors of churches:

- Display a comprehensive understanding of the *ECO Polity* and are able to apply it appropriately in the local church context
- Uphold the values and DNA of ECO when working within the presbytery and within the national movement
- Are able to instruct officers in *ECO Polity* and how it applies at the local church level

- Are able to adhere to *ECO Polity* while facilitating the larger vision of the congregation

Officers Authorized to Celebrate Sacraments in Micro-Expressions of Church

- Display a full understanding of the first two chapters of *ECO Polity* and the nature of their particular commission within ECO
- Adhere to *ECO Polity* when celebrating the sacraments within their appropriate contexts

Elders and Deacons

- Display a full understanding of the first two chapters of *ECO Polity*

Competency #6: Sacramental Knowledge and Practice

The extent to which the leader understands the sacraments from a Reformed perspective and is able to celebrate those sacraments in appropriate circumstances and contexts.

Pastors and Commissioned Officers serving as pastors of churches:

- Affirm and are able to articulate a Reformed understanding of the nature of the sacraments including their theology and administration
- Are committed to a Reformed practice of infant and adult baptism and celebration of the Lord's Supper
- Are committed and able to appropriately link worship with the Celebration of Sacraments

Officers Authorized to Celebrate Sacraments in Micro-Expressions of Church

- Affirm and are able to articulate a Reformed understanding of the nature of sacraments including their theology and administration within a "micro-expression" of church
- Are able and committed to practicing the Celebration of Sacraments within micro-expressions of church

Elders and Deacons:

- Affirm and are able to articulate a Reformed understanding of the sacraments and their practice

Competency #7: Missional Engagement

The extent to which the leader is able to take the incarnational posture of Christ into a surrounding context to bring about transformation in the Kingdom.

Pastors and Commissioned Officers serving as pastors of churches:

- Approach the surrounding context within which God has placed them with the same love and attitude that was manifest in Jesus
- Are committed and able to bring about God's redemption in the world by working to bring people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, meet physical needs, and seek reconciliation and justice
- Are able to lead a community of believers toward a Kingdom purpose

Officers Authorized to Celebrate Sacraments in Micro-Expressions of Church

- Approach the surrounding context within which God has placed them with the same love and attitude that was manifest in Jesus
- Are committed and able to bring about God's redemption in the world by working to bring people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, meet physical needs, and see reconciliation and justice
- Are able to lead a community of believers toward a Kingdom purpose

Elders and Deacons:

- Approach the surrounding context within which God has placed them with the same love and attitude that was present in Jesus
- Are committed and able to bring about God's redemption in the world by working to bring people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, meet physical needs, and seek reconciliation and justice

Competency #8: Leadership Development

The extent to which the leader is able to help others determine the giftedness and calling and guide leaders into developing greater competency.

Pastors and Commissioned Officers serving as pastors of churches:

- Are able to help people determine their giftedness and calling
- Are able to help people grow in their own skill acquisition to enhance their strengths and improve their weakness
- Are able to create systems that help people determine and discover their giftedness and calling, in order to serve in ministry

- Are able to teach others how to develop disciples

Officers Authorized to Celebrate Sacraments in Micro-Expressions of Church

- Are able to disciple those within their community
- Are able to develop a system in their community to ensure all people are growing in personal discipleship and ability to serve in ministry

Elders and Deacons:

- Are able to help others discover their giftedness and calling

Competency #9: Team Leadership

The extent to which the leader is able to work with and lead others (both individually and corporately) who have a variety of gifts, personalities, and experiences.

Pastors and Commissioned Officers serving as pastors of churches:

- Are able to lead a team of people toward a common goal and vision
- Are able to lead change
- Are able to work with challenging personalities and those with whom they disagree
- Know when to forge ahead with a new direction and when it is prudent...to wait
- Are able to create buy-in to a vision or plan
- Are able to use the strengths of others in a team process
- Are able to put personal desires and positions aside for the sake of the group and the larger mission

Officers Authorized to Celebrate Sacraments in Micro-Expressions of Church

- Are able to lead a group discussion and process
- Are able to work with challenging personalities and those that disagree with them
- Are able to help the group move toward a common goal and vision
- Are able to put personal desires aside for the sake of the group and the larger mission

Elders and Deacons:

- Are able to lead groups and ministry teams as appropriate
- Are able to actively go along with decisions that they would not have chosen themselves

Competency #10: Preaching and Teaching

The extent to which the leader can preach both topically and exegetically in ways that are true to the meaning of the Scriptures, clear, winsome, well-organized, and contextually appropriate.

Pastors and Commissioned Officers serving as pastors of churches:

- Are able to develop a preaching message that is based in a biblical text
- If preaching topically, can ensure that the message is firmly rooted in the full counsel of Scripture and is not simply proof-texting
- Are able to clearly deliver a message winsomely and passionately, moving listeners to a faithful response
- Are able to understand one's audience and craft an appropriate message for the context

Officers Authorized to Celebrate Sacraments in Micro-Expressions of Church

- Are able to lead a group in textual study that reveals truth and moves listeners to action
- Are able to deliver Gospel truth to both the believer and the non-believer

Elders and Deacons:

- Are able to communicate the truth of Scripture to others

APPENDIX B -- How *ECO Polity* Empowers Presbyteries

*All references below come from *ECO Polity*

WHY: Purpose & Mission – Given to presbytery by ECO Polity

“The presbytery, as a covenant community, exercises apostolic authority by and for the nurture and benefit of its congregations, that the communities they serve may know the love and invitation of Christ” (3.0101).

WHO: Membership in the presbytery covenant community – Granted by ECO Polity

“The members of the presbytery are its congregations, pastors installed in service to member congregations, pastors serving in validated ministries, and pastors honorably retired” (3.0102).

WHAT: Authority, Responsibilities, and Tasks – Given to presbytery by ECO Polity

Congregations and Sessions:

- Charter and receive new congregations into the presbytery; enter into membership agreements with congregations (1.0103, 3.0103, 1.0202).
 - Presbytery shall prepare, examine, ordain, and install newly elected pastors, deacons, and elders in new congregations (1.0202).
- Dismiss congregations to other presbyteries or denominations (3.0103c).
- Exercise special care and oversight of congregations that do not have an installed pastor and appoint the moderator of such sessions (3.0103d).
- Dissolve congregations when their mission work has ceased (3.0103e).
- Authorize celebration of the Lord’s Supper beyond particular congregations (3.0103f).
- “Promote and encourage the missional effectiveness of its congregations. Each presbytery shall develop an instrument to assist its congregations in their annual review and narrative report of their

ministry and mission. These annual reports shall be reviewed and discussed by the presbytery with each congregation's session" (3.0103m).

- Ensure that all congregations within its jurisdiction are appropriately participating in Mission Affinity Groups, which may be formed beyond presbytery boundaries (1.0104).
- Receive annual, individual financial reviews from each church's session (1.0603g).
- Receive an annual report to the presbytery from the session of each congregation that evaluates the "congregation's ministry and mission" (1.603h).
- Presbytery may call a meeting of a congregation (1.0502).
- Presbytery may call a meeting of a session and may request session minutes (1.0602).

Ordained Pastors and Commissioned Lay Pastors

- "All pastors (Pastor/Head of Staff, Associate Pastor, and Assistant Pastor) serving an ECO congregation must hold their ordination in ECO or be received as affiliate pastors by the presbytery of jurisdiction" (2.04).
- Pastors are ordained and installed by presbytery (2.0101, 3.0103g).
- Presbytery is responsible for examining and credentialing pastors (2.0401).
 - Pastors/Heads of Staff and Associate Pastors are called by a congregation and installed by presbytery (2.0401a, 2.0401b).
 - Assistant Pastors are called by a session/head of staff and are not installed by presbytery (2.0401c).
 - Transitional Pastors are called by a session, not installed by presbytery (2.0401d).
 - Pastor in a Validated Ministry: Pastors may be authorized by presbytery to serve in a validated ministry outside a local congregation (2.0401e, 3.0103i).
 - Presbytery shall annually validate & review a validated pastor's ministry (2.0401e).
 - Presbytery may receive affiliate pastors not ordained by ECO and allow them to serve as a pastor at an ECO church (2.0401f).
 - Presbytery may grant the status of "honorably retired pastor" (2.0401g).
 - Presbytery shall ensure that all pastors are participating in a Pastoral Covenant Group, through the Ministry Partnership Team.

- Presbytery has the following authority and pastoral responsibility:
 - Provide pastoral care for and disciple pastors (3.0103g).
 - Enroll, dismiss, examine, and ordain candidates to called service (3.0103h).
 - Validate the call of ministers to service beyond a congregation (3.0103i).
 - “A presbytery, in consultation with the session or other responsible committee, may authorize an elder or deacon to be commissioned to serve in the role of pastor/head of staff of a local congregation or a church plant” (2.0503).
 - “The presbytery shall ensure training to include theological education, and ministry skill development as well as continued mentorship during this commission” (2.0503).
- Presbytery may (or shall) create ordination/installation commissions (3.0105) and during the ordination, if applicable, preside at the installation service for a pastor:
 - “Having answered these questions in the affirmative, those to be ordained shall kneel, if able, and the presbytery shall, with prayer and the laying on of hands, ordain the candidate to the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and install him (her) to the particular pastoral responsibility. The presbytery will invite other ordained pastors and elders to join in the laying on of hands” (2.0104).
 - “The presiding member of the presbytery will say: ‘You are now a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, a pastor (associate pastor, assistant pastor) for this congregation. Whatever you do, in word and deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Amen’” (2.0104b).

Congregations, Pastors, Deacons, and Elders

- Promote the health of the covenant community to the end that its congregations and members may bear fruit for the Kingdom of God (3.0103a).
- Settle differences between congregations and pastors (3.0103j).
- A presbytery may remove a pastor, deacon, or elder from office for failure to adhere to the *ECO Essential Tenets* (2.010).

Synod and Other Presbyteries

- “Propose and vote on amendments to the *Constitution*” (3.0103k).
- “Presbyteries may overture the synod of ECO for changes in this *Constitution* as follows:

- Two presbyteries must concur in the proposed changes and overture the larger body with changes.
- The synod may amend and transmit the proposed changes to the *Constitution* to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative vote, and a two-thirds majority of the presbyteries shall be required for adoption.
- Any amendment to the *Essential Tenets* shall require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members of the synod present and voting. In addition, the affirmative vote of each presbytery for such amendment shall require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members of such presbytery present and voting” (6.02).
- Elect commissioners to wider councils of ECO, including the synod. In the selection of such commissioners the presbytery is encouraged to promote representation in areas of difference recognized as the basis of discrimination and inequality in church and society—namely race, ethnicity, gender, ability/disability, and age (3.0103I).
- “Voting members of the synod are those individuals commissioned by and from their presbyteries. Presbyteries shall commission an equal number of pastors and elders. The synod, by its own rule, shall determine the number of commissioners from each presbytery, and each presbytery shall be entitled to at least one elder and one pastor commissioner” (3.0203).
- Presbytery is entitled to and may request synod records (3.0205).

Other Denominations

- Presbytery may admit to membership in the presbytery a non-ECO congregation as a union congregation (5.0201).

Discipline

- “The responsibility and authority for discipline of pastors and lay pastors belongs to the presbytery. The responsibility and authority for remedial cases and appeals is the presbytery and the synod.” (*ECO Rules of Discipline 2.2*)

HOW: *Structures and Procedures: Operational requirements and options – Given to the presbytery by ECO Polity*

Organization and Delegation

- “The presbytery shall organize itself to accomplish these tasks and fulfill these responsibilities [those in 3.0103], and may delegate authority to elected committees, ministry teams, commissions” (3.0104).

- “Each presbytery shall develop a manual of administrative operations setting forth its structures and procedures.” (3.0104).
- “The voting members of the presbytery shall have the authority to elect a governing council and to vote on all matters set forth in Section 3.0103. The voting members may also delegate to the presbytery governing council authority with respect to any such matter, other than the election of members to the presbytery governing council and permanent judicial commission, or the approval or concurrence of approved amendments to the *Constitution*” (3.0104, 3.0106).
- Presbytery may delegate to the MPT the authority to approve ordination of candidates, transfer of pastors to and from its jurisdiction, and commissions for installation and ordination (3.0105).

Meetings/Gatherings

- “The presbytery shall hold stated meetings at least twice a year” (3.0104).
- “Meetings of the presbytery, including its quorum, shall be governed by the latest edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, unless by its own rule the presbytery has adopted other procedures and practices” (3.0104).
- “Each elder commissioner elected by a member congregation shall be entitled to vote at stated meetings” (3.0104).
- “In addition, member pastors with voting authority as set forth in Section 2.0401 shall also be entitled to vote at stated meetings” (3.0104).
 - “...the right to vote is given to those serving in a pastoral capacity in a congregation” (2.0401).
 - Pastors/Heads of Staff, Associate Pastors, Assistant Pastors, Transitional Pastors (serving as Pastor/Head of Staff) who are members of presbytery have a right to vote (2.0401a, b, c, d).
 - Pastors in Validated Ministries may be granted the right to vote, if serving as a part-time assistant pastor of an ECO congregation (2.0401e).
 - If an affiliate pastor serves as pastor/head of staff of a non-union ECO congregation, then the affiliate pastor shall have a vote in presbytery (2.0401f).
 - Honorably Retired Pastors do not have voting privileges (2.0401g).
- Voice at meetings
 - “All members of the presbytery have voice in its deliberations...” (2.0401).

- Pastors/Heads of Staff, Associate Pastors, Assistant Pastors, Transitional Pastors, Pastors in Validated Ministries, and Honorably Retired Pastors who are members of presbytery have a voice (2.0401).
- "If an affiliate pastor serves as pastor/head of staff of a non-union ECO congregation, then the affiliate pastor shall have voice and vote in presbytery; otherwise the affiliate pastor shall just have voice" (2.0401f).

Presbytery Governing Council

- The presbytery may delegate to the council any function of the presbytery, except the chartering or dissolution of congregations (3.0104, 3.0106).
- "The presbytery governing council shall consist of a number of individuals determined by the presbytery with an equal number of elders and pastors" (3.0106).
- "The presbytery council shall be responsible for the records, finances, policies, and procedures of the presbytery and shall perform any functions delegated to such council by the presbytery" (3.0106).
- "The presbytery council shall have the authority to elect corporate officers (including a chief executive officer) and to hire staff to perform any such functions. The council shall review the chief executive officer's performance annually" (3.0106).
- "A presbytery's governing council shall serve as the governing board of the corporation of such presbytery. Such governing board shall elect corporate officers as it deems appropriate or as required by applicable law" (4.0102).

Required Committees

- Ministry Partnership Team (MPT) – (3.0105)
 - "Each presbytery shall elect a Ministry Partnership Team which shall have broad responsibility for the pastoral relationships of the presbytery."
 - "The Ministry Partnership Team shall have at least eight members, all elected by the presbytery, with membership being made up of an equal number of elders and pastors."
 - "No more than two members may be from the same congregation."
 - "The Ministry Partnership Team shall be available to any session or pastor of the presbytery."

- “The presbytery shall, by its own rule, delegate and determine the authority and functions of the Ministry Partnership Team. Included in this authority that may be delegated to the Ministry Partnership Team is the ability to approve ordination of candidates, transfer of pastors to and from its jurisdiction, and approve commissions for installation and ordination.”
- Permanent Judicial Committee/Commission
 - “Each presbytery shall elect a Permanent Judicial Committee as specified in the Rules of Discipline” (3.0105b).
 - “Each commission shall be composed of pastors and elders in numbers as nearly equal as possible” (*ECO Rules of Discipline* 3.1).
 - “The presbytery commission shall be composed of no fewer than five members, with no more than one of its elder members from any one of its constituent churches” (*ECO Rules of Discipline* 3.1).
 - “The term of each member of a permanent judicial commission shall be six years. Commissioners shall be elected in three classes, with no more than one half of the members to be in one class. When established for the first time, one class shall serve for two years, the second class for four years, and the third class for six years. Any vacancy due to resignation, death, or any other cause may be filled by the electing governing body, which may elect a person to fill the unexpired term” (*ECO Rules of Discipline* 3.2).
 - “No person who has served on a permanent judicial commission for a full term of six years shall be eligible for reelection until four years have elapsed after the expired six- year term. No person shall serve on more than one judicial commission at the same time” (*ECO Rules of Discipline* 3.2).

Records

- “The presbytery shall keep full and accurate records of its proceedings and make them available on request to any session or pastor of the presbytery. Each presbytery shall annually arrange for an independent financial review and shall publish the report in its minutes” (3.0107).

Finances

- “The presbytery may develop programs, engage staff, adopt budgets, and acquire and manage resources as it deems expedient to the mission of Christ. To support its function and ministry the presbytery may, by its own rule, apportion expenses to its congregations” (3.0108).

Policies and Procedures

- “Each presbytery shall establish processes and procedures for recruiting, training, and encouraging candidates to the ministry” (3.0109).
- “Each presbytery shall adopt a policy for the prevention of sexual misconduct among its members. This policy shall govern the presbytery’s congregations unless a particular session, with the consent of the presbytery, adopts its own policy” (3.0109).

Presbytery Corporation

- “The corporation of a presbytery so formed, or its individual trustees, shall have the power to receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property, real or personal” (4.0102).
- “The presbytery shall not, however, direct the use of, co-sign, or guarantee any debt instrument issued by a member congregation or any other entity (except a subsidiary of the presbytery), nor will it guarantee performance of any instrument securing such debt, be it mortgage or deed of trust or a security agreement.” (4.0102).
- “A presbytery’s governing council shall serve as the governing board of the corporation of such presbytery. Such governing board shall elect corporate officers as it deems appropriate or as required by applicable law” (4.0102).