

# **STANDING RULES**

of

**THE REFORMED CHURCH OF BRONXVILLE  
BRONXVILLE, NEW YORK**

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## ARTICLE I

### Meetings of Consistory

1. The **Consistory** is the main decision-making body of the Church. Consistory receives recommendations from the Board of Elders and votes to accept/reject those recommendations. All proposals which are of strategic importance to the Church, including adoption of any Strategic Plan, and proposals that involve spending amounts greater than what is approved in the Annual Operating Budget, involve spending that is not funded by the Annual Operating Budget, or relate to the changing of an established custom or practice of the Church, must be approved by the Consistory. Additionally, those proposals which relate to the changing of an established custom or practice of the Church, require two readings at Consistory in successive months.

2. Unless otherwise fixed at a previous meeting, the stated meetings of Consistory shall be held every other month, in the months of October, December, February, April and June, on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The meeting shall include scripture and shall be opened and closed by prayer.

3. A majority of Consistory shall be a quorum for the transaction of business.

3. The Senior Minister of the Church shall be the President of Consistory and shall preside at all meetings thereof. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall preside, and if both the President and Vice President shall be absent, Consistory shall elect one of the Elders to be President pro tem who shall preside.

4. Special meetings of Consistory may be called by the President or, in the President's absence, the Vice President, when deemed by the Vice President necessary. Special meetings of Consistory may also be called by three members of Consistory when deemed by them to be necessary. The Congregation shall be notified of special meetings.

5. The President or the Vice President shall open the meeting at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as a quorum shall appear. The presiding officer shall direct the proceedings, maintain order and dignity, confine the members to the question, issue or motion before them, and prevent interruption. When a motion is presented and seconded, the presiding officer shall invite reasonable discussion. When the members are prepared to vote, the presiding officer shall call for yeas, nays and abstentions, and declare the decision by the hearing of the yeas and nays, unless any member shall express a doubt of the decision, in which case a count shall be taken.

6. When not in conflict with these Standing Rules, business shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

7. Church members may attend Consistory meetings as observers

but shall not be heard without the permission of the presiding officer of Consistory.

8. Personnel matters shall be handled in confidential executive session.

9. No established custom of the Church, nor any of the Standing Rules of the Church, shall be altered or repealed, nor any new Standing Rules adopted, unless notice stating action proposed shall be given at a meeting of Consistory previous to that at which such action shall be considered. Such action shall be taken only by a vote of two-thirds, plus one, of all the members of Consistory.

(a) The decision as to whether the subject or proposed action shall be designated “an established custom of the Church” shall be made by the presiding officer of Consistory in consultation with the Vice President and shall be announced at the stated meeting.

(b) A member who is present at the meeting of Consistory at which such action is announced is eligible to vote by written proxy at the subsequent meeting when the vote shall be taken respecting a Standing Rule or established custom of the Church. Members not present at the meeting at which such action is announced may vote at the meeting when the vote shall be taken.

10. Items that may be acted upon at a meeting of Consistory which require the commitment of the financial resources of the Church through the adoption of a budget or an amendment thereto shall undergo special consideration and be subject to the approval of the Management Council in addition to Consistory.

11. Members of Consistory are required to make every effort to attend Consistory meetings in person at the Church. Phone and video conferencing will be provided, whenever possible, to allow members to attend electronically when members cannot be present at the Church and when meetings at the Church are not advisable. A member is eligible to vote (a) if he or she is present at a Consistory meeting at the Church when a vote is taken, (b) if he or she is attending a Consistory meeting electronically and can hear the other members and be heard by the other members, (c) as provided in Section 9(b) above, and (d) by email when the President or a group of three Consistory members calls for an email vote on a matter that does not involve a change to the Standing Rules or an established custom of the Church.

12. Consistory shall cause a Committee to be formed in January 2022 and every third January thereafter, which Committee shall be charged with the duty to review the Standing Rules and make recommendations for changes, if any, to the Board of Elders. The President, after consultation with the Chair of the Board of Elders and the Chair of the Board of Deacons, shall nominate members of the Committee for consideration by Consistory.

## ARTICLE II

### **Elders, Deacons, Officers and Ex-Officio Youth Members of Consistory**

1. There shall be twelve Deacons and twelve Elders, whenever possible. The number of Elders may be between ten and twelve, and the number of Deacons may be between twelve and fourteen, when determined by the President and the Vice President that having even numbers is not advantageous for a given year. The Deacons and Elders, together with the Senior Minister and other Called Ministers, shall constitute the Consistory, every member of which shall have one vote and count toward the making of a quorum. The Senior Minister and other Called Ministers shall not be voting members of the Board of Deacons or the Board of Elders, nor shall their presence at a meeting of the Board of Deacons or the Board of Elders count toward a quorum thereof. The offices of Deacon and Elder shall be divided into four classes of three each, whenever possible. Each class of Deacons and Elders shall be elected for a term not to exceed four years commencing at the adjournment of the stated June Consistory meeting in the year of election.

2. At the expiration of any term which has been of at least twelve months' duration, a Deacon or an Elder shall not again be eligible for service to either office until two years shall have elapsed. In determining eligibility for election to a term of office, service as an Elder or as a Deacon for a term of office of less than twelve months shall be disregarded.

3. Elders and Deacons shall be chosen not later than January 31 of each year from among the members of the Church in full communion using the following procedures: Prior to such selection, a Nominating Committee of eleven members shall be chosen through the following process:

- (a) First, a Nominating Committee Chair shall be appointed each year by a three-member committee consisting of the President, who shall act as Chair of the three-person committee, the outgoing Nominating Committee Chair and the VP of Consistory. The Nominating Committee Chair shall be a current Consistory member who will have served at least one prior Consistory term at the time of appointment. It is preferred, but not necessary, that the Nominating Committee Chair have served previously on a Nominating Committee. The incoming Nominating Committee Chair shall be announced no later than at the stated June Consistory meeting, or at the first Consistory meeting following June if none is held in June.

- (b) At the first Consistory meeting held after August in each year, Consistory shall choose four of its members to serve on the Nominating Committee, at least three of whom shall have served at least one prior year on Consistory at the time of appointment. A tie vote shall be decided by drawing. The Nominating Committee Chair, the President and the Vice President of Consistory shall appoint a Vice Chair of the Nominating Committee. The Vice Chair of the Nominating Committee shall act as Chair in the absence or inability to act of the Chair of the Nominating Committee. The Chair of the Nominating Committee shall ensure that a mailing is made no later than October 15 to members of Great Consistory soliciting their suggestions for candidates for Elder and Deacon, and asking those not currently on Consistory if they would like to be considered. The Chair shall present resulting responses to the Nominating Committee at or before the first meeting thereof following their receipt.
  
- (c) The Senior Minister shall identify members of the congregation who would be suitable candidates for membership on the Nominating Committee, and shall enlist other Ministers, staff members, former and present Nominating Committee Chairs and other persons with knowledge of members of the congregation in the Senior Minister's initial efforts to identify such members. The Senior Minister shall then, by or before September 15, prepare a slate of at least twelve willing Church members who are not Consistory members. This slate, with six blank spaces for write-in candidates, shall be presented to the attending Church members on three successive Sundays, commencing with either the last Sunday in September or the first Sunday in October. Each Church member may vote for no more than six members (including write-in candidates) through a signed ballot, and the six candidates receiving the most votes shall be elected to the Nominating Committee. Church members may also vote by email. A tie vote shall be decided by drawing. Any Church member may request a ballot at the Church office or request that one be mailed.
  
- (d) The names of elected and other members of the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the congregation in the Sunday Bulletin/Beacon on or before the last Sunday in October, together with a solicitation of names of members for consideration by the Nominating Committee.

4. The Nominating Committee shall meet as necessary, on dates determined by the Nominating Committee Chair, to complete its work by January 15. The Nominating Committee shall nominate suitable persons to fill the vacancies occurring in the offices of Deacon or Elder, as necessary, taking into account the respective responsibilities of such offices. When vacancies occur, the Nominating Committee may nominate suitable persons to terms shorter than four years. Records of the deliberations and voting records of the Nominating Committee need not be maintained following the making of nominations, but in any case shall be kept confidential and shall not be maintained in any form or manner which could discourage the free discussion of candidates. The Nominating Committee may, however, at the discretion of the Chair of the Nominating Committee, forward to the Senior Minister and Council Chairs, the names of candidates identified by the Nominating Committee who are known to be interested in or are thought appropriate for membership on Councils or other service to the Church but have not been nominated to the office of Deacon or Elder by the Nominating Committee.

5. The Nominating Committee shall endeavor to complete a list of nominees prior to January 15. After a list of nominees has been agreed upon by the Nominating Committee, the name of each nominee for the office of Elder and Deacon shall be published in the Church Bulletin on three successive Sundays to the end that any lawful objections may be presented to the Elders for consideration. After such consideration, if any, the slate of Elders and Deacons shall be presented for its approval to the Congregation at a meeting thereof. After election, Elders and Deacons shall be ordained and installed.

6. Whenever any vacancy of a remaining term exceeding twelve months occurs in an office of Elder or of Deacon through any cause other than expiration of a term, the Nominating Committee shall designate a replacement who shall then be presented to the Congregation according to the procedures of this Article II, Section 5. Consistory may elect Elders and Deacons selected by the Nominating Committee to fill vacancies of for terms of less than twelve months.

7. The officers of Consistory, all of whom shall be members of Consistory, shall be: the President, a Vice President (who shall be an Elder), a Treasurer and a Clerk of Consistory. The Vice President shall be nominated by the President or by an Elder and elected annually by Consistory. The Clerk of Consistory shall be nominated by the President and elected annually by Consistory. The Treasurer shall be appointed annually by the President.

8. Church staff members shall not be eligible for service on Consistory or on the Nominating Committee. Family members of staff members may serve on Consistory and the Nominating Committee. Called Ministers and members of the Professional Staff may participate in Nominating Committee deliberations if invited to do so by the Committee. Family members may not serve on Consistory at the same time.

9. Should a Consistory member become a regular part-time or

salaried member of the Church staff, such member's term on Consistory shall immediately end and a replacement shall be determined in accordance with Article II Section 6 above.

### **A. Board of Deacons**

1. The Deacons shall constitute a Board of Deacons. All actions of the Board of Deacons shall be taken by a majority of the Deacons. The Board of Deacons shall elect a Chair and a Clerk of the Board of Deacons. The President of Consistory shall nominate, and each Deacon may elect to nominate, a candidate for each such office from among the Deacons. If more than one candidate is nominated, the Board of Deacons shall vote and the election will be determined by simple majority. The Board of Deacons may adopt rules of procedure for conducting meetings. The Chair of the Board of Deacons, or, in the absence of the Chair of the Board of Deacons, his or her nominee, shall act as presiding officer at meetings. The Clerk of the Board of Deacons shall transmit the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Deacons to the Elders within five business days of the meeting. The Clerk of the Board of Deacons, or such Clerk's designee, shall give notice of all meetings of the Board of Deacons and cause to be recorded the minutes of each meeting in suitable books kept for that purpose and shall perform such other duties as the Deacons shall assign.

2. The Board of Deacons shall review and coordinate the work of the Education, Fellowship, Congregational Care, Mission, and Youth and Family Councils in order to promote the best use of resources, and shall prepare agenda items for use by the Board of Elders in their preparation of the Agenda for the next Consistory meeting. Such agenda items shall include, but need not be limited to, items relevant to the work of the aforesaid Councils. Any significant proposals which involve personnel, facilities, legal or financial matters must be brought to the Management Council before being proposals for Consistory. The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Education, Congregational Care, Fellowship, Mission, and Youth and Family Councils shall be Deacons. Unless, upon motion of the presiding officer adopted by a majority of the those present, it has been determined to be appropriate to meet in confidential executive session, Church members may attend Board of Deacons meetings as observers but shall not be heard without the permission of the presiding officer of the meeting.

3. The Board of Deacons shall meet every other month, in the months of September, November, January, March and May, on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The Board of Deacons may elect to meet monthly on a schedule to be determined by the Chair in consultation with members. Such schedule will be posted prior to the first meeting of the year. The Board of Deacons shall be on call for any special meetings requested by the Senior Minister, or by the Chair of the Board of Deacons. The Chair of the Board of Deacons may request that the Board meet at a place and time other than the regularly scheduled monthly meeting, but must do so with approval of a simple majority of Deacons. Four Deacons other than the Chair may call a special meeting of the Board.

4. At the invitation of the Chair of the Board of Deacons, the Senior Minister, or another Minister nominated by the Senior Minister, shall attend meetings of the Board of Deacons in an advisory capacity.

5. When reviewing and coordinating the work of the Education, Fellowship, Congregational Care, Mission, and Youth and Family Councils, the Board of Deacons shall undertake or take into consideration the responsibilities assigned to deacons in the Book of Church Order.

### **B. Board of Elders**

1. The Elders shall constitute a Board of Elders. All actions of the Board of Elders shall be taken by a majority of the Elders. The Vice President of Consistory shall serve as Chair of the Board of Elders, and the Board of Elders shall elect a Clerk of the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders may adopt rules of procedure for conducting meetings. The Chair of the Board of Elders, or, in the absence of the Chair of the Board of Elders, his or her nominee, shall act as presiding officer at meetings. The Clerk of the Board of Elders shall transmit the minutes of each meeting of the Board of Elders to the Consistory within five business days of the meeting. The Clerk of the Board of Elders, or such Clerk's designee, shall give notice of all meetings of the Board of Elders and cause to be recorded the minutes of each meeting in suitable books kept for that purpose and shall perform such other duties as the Elders shall assign.

2. The Board of Elders shall review and coordinate the work of the Worship, Stewardship and Management Councils in order to promote the best use of resources, shall review the minutes of the most recent meetings of the Board of Deacons and shall prepare the agenda for the next month's Consistory meeting. Such agenda items may include, but need not be limited to, items relevant to the work of the aforesaid Councils, and shall include the agenda items transmitted to the Board of Elders from the Board of Deacons, provided, however, that any agenda item which includes the consideration of a proposed budget, or an amendment to the adopted budget, may be included in the Consistory agenda with such limitations or amendments as shall appear appropriate to the Board of Elders. The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Worship, Stewardship and Management Councils shall be Elders. Unless, upon motion of the presiding officer adopted by a majority of those present, it has been determined to be appropriate to meet in confidential executive session, Church members may attend Board of Elders meetings as observers but shall not be heard without the permission of the presiding officer of the meeting.

4. The Board of Elders shall meet every other month, in the months of September, November, January, March, and May, on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The meeting shall include scripture and shall be opened and closed by prayer. The Board of Elders shall be on call for any special meetings requested by the Senior Minister, or by the Chair of the Board of Elders. The Chair of the Board of Elders may request that the Board meet at a place and time other than the regularly scheduled monthly meeting, but must do so with approval of a simple

majority of Elders. Four Elders other than the Chair may call a special meeting of the Board.

5. The Senior Minister, or another Minister nominated by the Senior Minister, shall attend meetings of the Board of Elders in an advisory capacity. If the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer are not Elders, the Treasurer and/or the Assistant Treasurer shall attend the meetings of the Board of Elders by invitation. The Chief Operating Officer will attend meetings of the Board of Elders by invitation, as will as other members of Consistory on occasion.

6. Annually, the Board of Elders shall request the Treasurer to prepare a draft Budget for the coming year, incorporating consultation with all the Council Chairs, the Chair of the Board of Deacons and the Chief Operating Officer. Such draft Budget shall be presented to and reviewed by the Board of Elders, and, if necessary, revised by the Board of Elders after appropriate consultation with the Treasurer, the COO and the Chair of the Board of Deacons. When the draft Budget is satisfactory to the Board of Elders, it will be presented to the Consistory for adoption.

7. When reviewing and coordinating the work of the Stewardship, Management and Worship Councils, the Board of Elders shall undertake or take into consideration the responsibilities assigned to elders in the Book of Church Order.

8. In accordance with the Book of Church Order, the Board of Elders shall seek to determine whether any members of the congregation are in need of spiritual care and to encourage the faithful use of the means of grace by all members, including worship attendance and participation in the sacraments. Issues of spiritual care may be considered confidential at the discretion of the Chair.

9. The Board of Elders receives reports and recommendations from the Management, Worship and Stewardship Councils and from the Board of Deacons and determines which recommendations should be moved forward to Consistory. Any proposals which involve significant personnel, facilities, legal, or financial matters, must be brought to the Management Council before proceeding to Consistory.

### **C. Ex-Officio Youth Members**

1. The President, in consultation with the Youth and Family Minister, may annually select one or two high school students who are members of the Church to participate in stated meetings of Consistory. They shall have privilege of the floor but no vote. They may participate in special meetings of Consistory and other Consistory functions at the discretion of the President, but shall not be present at any confidential executive session meeting.

2. The Ex-Officio Youth Members shall have been confirmed at The Reformed Church or another church. They may be family members of Consistory members.

3. An Ex-Officio Youth Member shall serve a one-year term, which may be extended to two years at the discretion of the President.

### ARTICLE III

#### President

1. The Senior Minister shall be the President of Consistory (the “President”), shall be the presiding officer of the Church and shall have the discretion to approve the employment of Professional Staff. If there is no Senior Minister, Consistory shall elect a called minister as President, who shall fulfill the duties of the office as defined in the Book of Church Order.

2. In selecting and appointing Chairs for Consistory Councils and Committees, as well as considering any major changes in worship, educational programs, church operations or policies generally affecting the Congregation, the Senior Minister is encouraged to consult Consistory members for advice and counsel.

3. The President shall notify each person elected to an office or appointed to a Council of Consistory of election or appointment and shall inform all officers and Council Chairs of any action of Consistory affecting their respective duties. The President shall notify the Chairs of each Council of Consistory of the names of the Consistory members composing such Council and of the business committed thereto.

4. The President, or the Clerk of Consistory, shall send or cause to be sent all notices required to be given to the members of Consistory.

5. The President may appoint a Recorder, who need not be a member of Consistory, to attend all meetings of Consistory and of the Congregation to take Minutes of the proceedings. The Recorder must provide all Minutes to the Clerk of Consistory. At the request of a member of the Church, the Clerk of Consistory shall give a copy of Minutes of such meetings to the member so requesting.

6. All acts of Consistory, which are required to be executed in writing, shall be signed by the President. In the President’s absence, such acts shall be signed by the Vice President, and countersigned by the Clerk of Consistory or Treasurer.

7. The President, in consultation with the Vice President, Treasurer, and Chair of the Board of Deacons, shall annually appoint members of a Management Council. The Management Council shall consist of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Chair of the Board of Deacons, and five other Consistory members. There shall be an equal number of elders and deacons. The President shall annually appoint a Chair of the Management Council, who shall be an Elder. The Chief Operating Officer shall serve as an advisor to the Management Council and shall not have a vote. No member of the Management Council shall serve for more than three consecutive years.

## ARTICLE IV

### **Vice President of Consistory**

1. The Vice President of Consistory shall be an Elder and the Senior lay officer of the Church. The Vice President of Consistory shall serve as Chair of the Board of Elders, as a member of the Management Council and, if there is no Senior Minister, shall have the powers and fulfill the administrative duties assigned to the Senior Minister.

2. The Vice President of Consistory shall serve for no more than two consecutive years. If at the expiration of such term or the occurrence of a vacancy in the office of Vice President there is no Senior Minister then serving, one or more Elders may nominate an Elder as Vice President to be elected by Consistory. No Elder will be eligible to serve again as Vice President of Consistory until such Elder has not served in that position for at least four years.

3. The President of Consistory shall nominate a candidate for Vice President of Consistory from among the Elders. Any Consistory member may nominate a different Elder to be Vice President. If there is more than one nominee, the Vice President of Consistory will be elected by a simple majority vote of the Consistory. In the case of a tie vote, the President's nominee shall be elected Vice President.

## ARTICLE V

### **Clerk of Consistory**

1. Consistory shall annually elect one of its members as Clerk of Consistory. The Clerk, or the Clerk's designee, shall attend all meetings of Consistory and of the Congregation, and preserve the minutes of each meeting in suitable records. The Clerk shall have charge of and be responsible for the safekeeping of the records of those proceedings, the records of the baptisms, marriages and members of the Church, and all other books, papers and materials committed to the Clerk's charge, and also the seal. The Clerk shall not permit any of them to be removed from the Church premises except on an order of Consistory or the President or Vice President of Consistory, but it shall nevertheless be the Clerk's duty to deliver to members of Councils and Committees, to the Treasurer, and to delegates of the Church to the Classis and Synods, such books, papers and materials as may be necessary for the discharge of their respective duties, taking a receipt for the same.

2. The Clerk, or the Clerk's designee, shall keep records in which

the Clerk shall register or cause to be registered the names of all members of the Church as they shall be admitted, with the dates of their admission, and the names of all members transferred to other churches, and the dates of their transfer. When a certificate of transfer from another church has attached to it a blank form for the acknowledgment of the receipt of such certificate, the Clerk shall complete or cause to be completed the blank and return it to such church without delay. The Clerk shall from time to time enter or cause to be entered in the records of the Church death of members, so far as the same shall come to the Clerk's knowledge, and the date of each such death

3. The Clerk of Consistory is eligible to serve as Clerk of the Board of Elders or the Clerk of the Board of Deacons.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Treasurer**

1. The Treasurer shall be a Consistory member, appointed by the President for a one-year term, renewable, and shall be the chief financial officer of the Church. The Treasurer shall, together with two sufficient individual sureties, or a surety company to be approved by Consistory, execute a bond to "The Reformed Church of Bronxville" in the sum of an amount fixed by the President conditioned for the prompt and faithful discharge of the trusts reposed in the Treasurer. A similar surety bond shall also be executed by the Assistant Treasurer and each other person as shall be appointed by the President regularly to assist the Treasurer in the performance of duties as they are set forth in this Article VI. The premiums on any such bonds shall be paid from the funds of the Church.

2. The Treasurer shall have charge of and be responsible for the safekeeping of all bonds, mortgages, deeds, maps, and other papers and evidences of titles to lands, and other property belonging to the Church, and shall not deliver the same, or any of them, except on an order of Consistory or the President or Vice President, and then only against a receipt therefore. The Treasurer shall, however, aid the officers of Consistory and the members of all Councils and Committees, with all such information as the Treasurer may possess relating to subjects committed to them.

3. The Treasurer shall either directly or by delegation to the appropriate Church official, collect and receive all the income and revenues of the Church; pay all taxes and assessments payable by the Church; effect from time to time fire or other insurance on or in connection with the property of the Church and pay for the same; pay the fixed salaries of the Ministers and employees of the Church; and make only such other expenditures as may be authorized from time to time by Consistory.

4. The Treasurer either directly or by delegation to the appropriate Church official shall deposit or cause to be deposited in the name of the Church all funds of the Church in such banks and other financial institutions as Consistory shall approve. The Treasurer shall keep or cause to be kept proper and detailed accounts of all receipts

and disbursements, and all financial transactions, subject at all times to the inspection of Consistory or any Committees designated by it.

5. At the meetings of Consistory, the Treasurer shall present accounts of receipts and expenditures, showing the balance in the treasury. Not later than the Consistory meeting in April of each year, the Treasurer shall render full accounts of all transactions for the preceding fiscal year. The Treasurer, if not an Elder, shall attend the meetings of the Board of Elders by invitation.

6. When requested by the Chair of the Board of Elders, the Treasurer shall consult with each of the Council Chairs, the Chair of the Board of Deacons, and the Chief Operating Officer and then prepare a Draft Budget for the upcoming year and present such draft budget to the Board of Elders. The Treasurer shall establish a schedule for consideration of the annual budget by Consistory in accordance with the Standing Rules so as to have the annual budget in effect at the commencement of the fiscal year for which it is to apply or as soon as possible thereafter. In the event an annual budget is not adopted in accordance with the Standing Rules at such time, the Treasurer, if authorized by the Board of Elders, may authorize expenditures, up to the amounts, if any, provided for in the prior year budget for the same type of expenditures, pending such adoption.

7. An Assistant Treasurer of Consistory, who must be a member of Consistory, may be appointed to assist in the performance of the Treasurer's duties.

8. The Treasurer shall oversee the publication of a yearly annual report that shall be available for review by all church members.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Councils and Committees**

1. Consistory and its Committees (other than the Nominating Committee) shall be organized into Councils. Each Council shall carry out its own duties and responsibilities, which shall be subject to the approval of Consistory. Matters of procedure and items of concern not otherwise designated to a Council shall be referred to the Consistory and assigned to an appropriate Council. Consistory Councils and Committee affiliations, together with such staff resources as the President shall designate, are:

#### **MANAGEMENT COUNCIL:**

Personnel Matters, Archives,  
Audit, Buildings and Grounds,  
Endowment, Investment, Legal  
Advisory, Communications,

Strategic Planning Coord., Rules  
Assessment

**WORSHIP COUNCIL:**

Arts and Religion, Chancel  
Guild, Communion, Flowers,  
Laity Sunday, Music, Sermon  
and Worship Recordings,  
Ushers, Memorials

**STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL:**

The purpose of the  
Stewardship Council shall be  
to generate giving in all  
forms, and express gratitude,  
to members of the church  
family consistent with the  
church's mission and  
strategic plan. This includes  
general and targeted  
fundraising and management  
of a giving database

**EDUCATION COUNCIL:**

Adult Education, Church School,  
Confirmation Class, Nursery  
School, Children's Ministries,  
Church Library, Summer Story Hour

**FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL:**

Congregational Life,  
Fellowship, Hospitality,  
Membership

**CONGREGATIONAL CARE COUNCIL:**

Provide pastoral and other care and support for  
persons challenged by circumstances;  
engage congregation in management and provision  
of care

## **MISSION COUNCIL:**

Outreach Programs such as Coming Home, the Yonkers Project, Habitat for Humanity, Midnight Run, Saturday Playgroup, Soup Kitchen

## **YOUTH AND FAMILY COUNCIL:**

Middle School events, High School events, Confirmation Class and Youth Outreach

### **2. Council/Committee Definitions**

#### **Committees**

*Search Committees* are to be established by the Senior Minister, or in the absence of a Senior Minister, by the President of Consistory or the Vice President of Consistory.

*Other Committees* are to be established, as needed, by the Senior Minister or by Council Chairs for their respective areas of responsibility. The role of Committees is to investigate, research, and study the single subject assigned to the committee and to bring information and recommendations to the Council that handles that subject. A Committee (other than the Nominating Committee, specifically discussed herein) is a group, which plans, makes recommendations and carries out a specific function, assigned by the President, the Board of Elders, the Board of Deacons or a Council, and acts on direction of or with approval of an appropriate authority.

#### **Councils**

Councils are established to manage a variety of topics assigned to them in the Standing Rules. They oversee the work of the Church in those categories and report thereon to the Board of Elders or the Board of Deacons, whichever applies, and to Consistory, if and when requested. Councils make budget recommendations to the COO, when the Annual Budget is being prepared. Councils have the authority to spend the non-payroll money assigned to their Council in an approved Annual Operating Budget, and they have responsibility for operating within the budgeted amounts. Councils make recommendations to the Board of Elders or the Board of Deacons, whichever applies, and the Board of Elders determines when such recommendations are moved forward to Consistory. A Council may also take action and implement plans when prior authority has been granted by Consistory, which approves the plans, hears reports and reviews Council evaluations.

3. **Authority** Consistory shall delegate responsibility for carrying out policies to each Council. Each Council shall be responsible for and shall make recommendations to the Board of Elders (for the Management, Worship, and Stewardship Councils) or the Board of Deacons, (for the Education, Fellowship, Congregational Care, Mission, and Youth and Family Councils) regarding an area of the Church's activity assigned to that Council. Councils shall inform Consistory of their activities through Minutes and reports at meetings of the Board of Deacons or the Board

of Elders, whichever applies, and at meetings of the Consistory. Consistory shall vote on significant actions, program changes or policy decisions. Consistory shall maintain authority over any action or program of any Council.

4. **Council Meetings/Minutes** Councils shall meet regularly at the discretion of the Chair. A majority of Council members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Council minutes and reports shall be made in writing and shall be submitted to a person designated by the President of Consistory within five calendar days of such Council meeting for distribution to members of the Consistory prior to the next month's Consistory meeting. Staff members working closely with particular Councils shall, if possible, attend Council meetings.

5. **Council Chairs** Each Council Chair shall be a member of Consistory and shall be selected annually by the President. Except by vote of Consistory, no person may serve more than two consecutive years as Chair of a Council. Each Council shall select its own Vice Chair and Secretary. The person selected as Vice Chair should be a member of Consistory with at least two years of their term remaining, but this requirement can be waived by the President.

6. **Council Membership** Church members may serve on Councils, first having been given an opportunity to express their preferences, and shall be nominated to a Council by the President and Chair of the Council. Each Council Chair, in consultation with the President, shall secure sufficient members to perform the work of that Council. There is no requirement that Consistory members serving on a Council shall exceed in number the non-Consistory members serving on a Council. Staff may be invited by the Chair of the Council to attend any Council meeting at any time and may be assigned by the President to a Council or Committee as resource person.

7. **Committee Membership** With the exception of the Nursery School Committee, a majority of voting Committee members shall be Church Members. Non-Church members shall be eligible to serve on Consistory Committees but shall have no vote, unless as the time of appointment to the Consistory Committee the Consistory designates such Non-Member as a voting member of such Committee. A majority of each Committee shall form a quorum for the transaction of business.

## ARTICLE VIII

### **Council Responsibilities**

#### **A. MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

1. The Management Council shall provide the following functions:

- (a) Personnel Matters - Providing advice to Consistory, including any search committees, with respect to the employment of the professional staff and called ministers. The professional staff includes all employees of the church engaged in the church's ministry programs as well as the Chief Operating Officer and Director of the Nursery School. The Management Council in its discretion shall set the compensation and benefits and may terminate employment of members of the professional staff as it deems appropriate; the employment relationship of called ministers shall be subject to the Book of Church Order. The Management Council shall initiate and oversee the annual staff review process, as detailed in the Personnel Policy. The Chair of the Management Council and the Vice President of Consistory shall conduct the review of the Senior Minister. Deliberations of personnel matters shall be final, strictly confidential, and not reported to Consistory, though decisions regarding personnel may be reported to Consistory at the discretion of the Management Council. Personnel spending is determined by the Management Council in consideration of advice from the COO. For subjects other than Personnel matters, the Management Council makes its recommendations to the Board of Elders, which determines which recommendations move forward to Consistory.
- (b) Ensuring the preparation of annual audits
- (c) Overseeing Buildings and Grounds
- (d) Overseeing endowments
- (e) Overseeing investments
- (f) Overseeing communications
- (g) Providing legal advice or arranging for legal advice from outside counsel
- (h) Maintaining the archives and church history.
- (i) Supporting, as requested, the Chief Operating Officer of the church and carrying out the responsibilities of that position should it be vacant.

- (j) Coordination of the development and implementation of the Church's Strategic Plan and Vision
- (k) Assessment of the smooth functioning of the leadership under current Standing Rules

2. The Chair of the Management Council shall report the activities of the Council to the Board of Elders. The Chair shall serve for no more than two consecutive years.

3. The Management Council shall meet at least once per month, except July and August, at a time and place at the discretion of the Chair.

4. The Management Council shall consist of four Elders (including the VP of Consistory and the Treasurer), four deacons (including the Chair of the Board of Deacons), and the Senior Minister.

5. The Chair of the Management Council may invite guests, such as an Associate Minister or Legal advisor, to participate in Council discussions and provide advice. Any guest must maintain confidentiality as directed by the Council.

## **B. WORSHIP COUNCIL**

1. The purpose of the Worship Council shall be to provide worship experiences and opportunities for the Church family. It shall be responsible for:

- (a) Advising as to the order of worship during the Sunday morning services.
- (b) Planning worship services for special services, such as Christmas, Thanksgiving and Pentecost.
- (c) Advising as to policies for weddings, funerals and other services of worship.
- (d) Maintaining all sanctuary and chapel fixtures and appointments.
- (e) Selecting memorial gifts.
- (f) Planning for Communion services, preparing the elements, training Elders and Deacons in serving communion and, in cooperation with the pastors, providing communion to members confined to home.

- (g) Planning opportunities for innovative worship experiences.
- (h) Developing ways to aid individuals and families in the habits of worship and Bible reading.
- (i) Recommending policies concerning musical aspects of the Church's program, including overseeing of all the Church choirs.
- (j) Arranging for special music programs during the year, e.g., at Christmas and Easter.
- (k) Providing and training ushers for all services of worship and for supervision of the offering.
- (l) Planning and implementation of Laity Sunday.

2. The Chair of the Worship Council shall report the activities of the Council to the Board of Elders, so as to facilitate the preparation of agenda items concerning the Council for the next month's Consistory meeting, and shall also report to Consistory as the Agenda of Consistory shall prescribe.

### **C. STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL**

1. The purpose of the Stewardship Council shall be to generate giving in all forms, and express gratitude, to members of the church family consistent with the Church's mission and strategic plan. It shall be responsible for:

- (a) Developing an overall plan for church giving, including the annual stewardship campaign, memorial giving and endowment giving, and on a regular basis review the most effective ways of giving. Work with the Chief Operating Officer and the Communication Committee on how to communicate with the Congregation about the campaign.
- (b) Implementing and managing the stewardship campaign and coordinating with the other Councils any specific or one-time funding campaigns, including capital campaigns, and to facilitate a clear message to the congregation about our use of resources.
- (c) Assembling and overseeing a team of stewards who will reach out to individual members on a year-round basis.
- (d) Providing stewardship education for the congregation as necessary, and working with all Councils, ministers and

staff, as appropriate, to foster and maintain a sense of giving as a spiritual mandate year-round.

- (e) Coordinate with the Chief Operating Officer and appropriate administrative staff members to maintain giving database and prepare and distribute timely and accurate reports to all givers, coordinate appropriate acknowledgements of gifts.

2. There will be a Chair of the Council, and co-Chairs of the stewardship campaign as needed, and they shall report the activities of the Council to the Board of Elders, to facilitate the preparation of agenda items concerning the Council for the next month's Consistory meeting and shall also report to Consistory as the Agenda of Consistory shall prescribe.

#### **D. EDUCATION COUNCIL**

1. The purpose of the Education Council shall be to help people learn to live together and for others in response to God's love in Christ; to facilitate personal growth and development of faith in an enriched, loving community; and, to assist all of the Councils, when requested, to plan learning opportunities related to the work of the Council. It shall be responsible for:

- (a) Enlisting, training and supervising leaders in the religious education of the Congregation, including ongoing implementation and periodic review of Safe Church policies.
- (b) Alerting teachers, planners and advisors of conferences, workshops and training opportunities.
- (c) Encouraging, with the Worship Council, the children of the Church, to help them feel a part of the life and worship of the Congregation. To provide for children's learning experiences, recreation and/or skilled care when parents are in Church activities. To provide opportunities for parents to grow in their role of teachers and examples in the home.
- (d) Developing curriculum and overseeing the Confirmation Class led by clergy and parent-leaders.
- (e) Developing curriculum, exploring new and innovative approaches, and provide resources for the Church School for all ages.
- (f) Planning special educational opportunities such as: forums after Church; educational experiences in homes;

retreats; intergenerational studies; studies designed for particular groups.

- (g) Overseeing the library activities.
- (h) Overseeing and developing the audio visual resources and equipment for educational use.
- (i) Promoting an ongoing relationship between the arts and religion.
- (j) Maintaining oversight of The Reformed Church Nursery School, and assuring that policies and practices are consistent with the Reformed Church of Bronxville.

2. The Chair of the Education Council shall report the activities of the Council to the Board of Deacons, so as to facilitate the preparation of agenda items concerning the Council for the next month's Consistory meeting, and shall also report to Consistory as the Agenda of Consistory shall prescribe.

## **E. FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL**

1. The purpose of the Fellowship Council shall be to create an understanding, caring, supportive fellowship where people share their needs, discover and use their talents, and are enabled to feel a part of a growing Christian community. This Council will also seek to bring others into this fellowship. It shall be responsible for:

- (a) Assisting the clergy and the Member Engagement Coordinator in enlisting new members through an aggressive program of community outreach toward all those who may be prospective members of the Church.
- (b) Receiving and assimilating new members to bring them fully into the life of the Church.
- (c) With other Councils, as appropriate, seeking to provide fellowship opportunities and volunteer support for the Church family.
- (d) Arranging programs for the nurture and fellowship for the members of the Congregation.

2. The Chair of the Fellowship Council shall report the activities of the Council to the Board of Deacons, so as to facilitate the preparation of agenda items

concerning the Council for the next month's Consistory meeting, and shall also report to Consistory as the Agenda of Consistory shall prescribe.

#### **F. CONGREGATIONAL CARE COUNCIL**

1. The purpose of the Congregational Care Council shall be to develop programs that provide care, concern, prayer, and support for families and individuals at various stages, places, and circumstances of life. This Council will seek to nurture the lives of the membership through congregational care, and will also seek to bring others into this ministry. It shall be responsible for:

- (a) Providing support for the hospitalized and homebound.
- (b) Arranging programs for the nurture of members of the Congregation.
- (c) Such other functions relating to the foregoing as the Consistory shall determine to be appropriate from time to time.

2. The Chair of the Congregational Care Council shall report the activities of the Council to the Board of Deacons, so as to facilitate the preparation of agenda items concerning the Council for the next month's Consistory meeting, and shall also report to Consistory as the Agenda of Consistory shall prescribe.

#### **G. MISSION COUNCIL**

1. The purpose of the Mission Council shall be to serve as the Church's main link with the Ministry of Witness and Outreach of the Reformed Church in America and with the ecumenical programs of witness and outreach beyond the Reformed Church's immediate environs. It shall be responsible for:

- (a) Directing and overseeing all ministries of outreach (such as midnight runs, tutoring programs, clothes closet, etc.)
- (b) Educating the Congregation regarding the mission of the Reformed Church in America and its broader ecumenical involvements through the National Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.
- (c) Maintaining the ties between the Reformed Church of Bronxville and missionaries in the field, particularly those sponsored by the Reformed Church of Bronxville.

- (d) Designing a program to enlist and encourage volunteers in the various opportunities for mission both within the Congregation and the larger community.
  - (e) Making annual recommendations regarding the granting of outreach funds and promoting special offerings such as but not limited to the targeted Christmas Eve offering.
2. The Chair of the Mission Council shall report the activities of the Council to the Board of Deacons, so as to facilitate the preparation of agenda items concerning the Council for the next month's Consistory meeting, and shall also report to Consistory as the Agenda of Consistory shall prescribe.

## **H. YOUTH AND FAMILY COUNCIL**

1. The purpose of the Youth and Family Council shall be to provide effective programs of instruction, nurture, fellowship, growth, and outreach for the Middle School and High School youth of the Church and the community. It shall provide and exercise oversight of all such procedures and resources as may be deemed appropriate to the Church's youth program and ministry. The Council shall seek to strengthen the bonds of post-Confirmation youth with the family of faith, the church. It shall be responsible for:

- (a) Encouraging and increasing youth involvement in the whole life of the Church—outreach, education, worship and governance.
- (b) Planning regular mission experiences: inner-city, domestic, foreign.
- (c) Organizing, creating and developing numerous Church-related social events which would be of interest to the youth of the Congregation and community.
- (d) Devising policies governing programs and activities for youth of the Congregation and community.
- (e) Recruiting, training and supervising leadership for youth programs.
- (f) Reviewing the effectiveness and adequacy of current programs for youth in order to provide programs and activities to meet the needs of youth.
- (g) Coordinating all youth programs in the congregation as to their timing, utilization of facilities and resources, and review objectives.

- (h) Selecting, reviewing and adapting any youth curriculum.
- (i) Reporting to Consistory concerning the youth program.
- (j) Working with youth to plan for study and activity which involves them in evangelism, work projects, social action, denominational programs, community ministry, and the life of the Congregation on a decision making level.
- (k) Planning special opportunities such as: forums after Church; educational and fellowship experiences in homes; retreats; intergenerational studies and dialogues; and special studies.

2. The Chair of the Youth and Family Council shall report the activities of the Council to the Board of Deacons, so as to facilitate the preparation of agenda items concerning the Council for the next month's Consistory meeting, and shall also report to Consistory as the Agenda of Consistory shall prescribe.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Financial Rules**

1. No expenditures in excess of those contained in the budget shall be authorized or made without the approval of the Board of Elders, or, in the case of a significant additional expenditure without the approval of the Board of Elders and of Consistory.

2. No payment shall be authorized, and no debt shall be contracted by any Council or Committee in excess of the amount appropriated to its use in the annual budget, unless such payment or debt be specially authorized by the Board of Elders or by Consistory.

3. All unexpended balances of sums appropriated for a definite period shall lapse at the end of such period, unless Consistory specifies otherwise.

4. The several Councils and Committees receiving appropriations in the annual budget shall annually at a time designated by the Treasurer present in writing itemized statements of estimated receipts and expenditures of such Committees for the ensuing fiscal year (i.e., operating budgets). The Chairs of the several Councils and Committees shall be entitled to be heard by the Board of Deacons or the Board of Elders, as the case may be, with respect to the statements so presented.

5. After the budget has been approved by Consistory, a Congregational

Meeting shall be called to provide an opportunity for members of the Congregation to ask questions or to offer comments regarding the approved budget. Copies of the approved budget will be available at the Congregational Meeting or by request to the Church office. Comments regarding the budget will be considered at the next Board of Elders meeting.

6. The Management Council shall annually select a certified public accounting firm which shall, in January of each year, or as soon thereafter as practicable, examine and report to Consistory with respect to all accounts of the Treasurer for the preceding calendar year.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Miscellaneous**

1. All minute books, books of account and books of record of any kind as they become filled, and other papers (except the deeds and other documents relating to the property of the Church, which shall be in charge of the Treasurer), after they shall be of no further use to the body or officer to which they relate, shall be deposited with the Clerk of Consistory or the Clerk's designee, to be properly labeled and safely kept among the archives of the Church or destroyed.

2. The fiscal (audit) year shall be the calendar year but in all other respects the Church year shall begin at the adjournment of the stated June Consistory meeting, and end at the adjournment of the stated June Consistory meeting in the following year.

3. To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, as such law may be amended and supplemented, the Church shall indemnify any persons, made, or threatened to be made, a party to an action or proceeding, whether civil or criminal, including an action by or on behalf of the Church, by reason of the fact that such persons, such person's testator or intestate, was a member of Consistory, or served the Church in any capacity at the Church's or Nursery School's request, against judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement and reasonable expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and necessarily incurred as a result of such action or proceeding, or any appeal therein, if such member of Consistory or other authorized person, acted in good faith, for a purpose which such person reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the Church or Nursery School and, in criminal actions or proceedings, in addition, had no reasonable cause to believe that such person's conduct was unlawful. The indemnification provided for herein shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which any such person may be entitled under any resolution of Consistory, agreement, insurance policy or otherwise.

4. The Standing Rules of the Church shall be deemed in all respects subject to the Book of Church Order of The Reformed Church in America and to the extent that such Standing Rules may at any time be inconsistent with the provisions of such Book of Church Order, the latter shall prevail.