

Africo-American Presbyterian

"AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—John viii:32.

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PROPOSED STANDING RULES FOR SOUTHERN VIRGINIA PRESBYTERY

Chapter I. of these rules will consist of the history of Southern Virginia Presbytery.

Chapter II. Membership

1. The roll of ministerial members as kept by the Stated Clerk and revised by Presbyterial action, together with the Roll of Ruling Elders representing the churches at a particular meeting, shall be the Roll of Presbytery. The Stated Clerk shall record for every minister the date of his ordination, and the date of his entrance into the ministry of the Presbyterian Church.

2. The roll of licentiates attached to the Presbytery, with their addresses, and the roll of ministerial candidates and their addresses and the churches from which they came, shall be appended to the roll and corrected after each stated meeting of Presbytery in accordance with action taken.

3. The credentials of all applicants for admission to membership in this Presbytery shall be referred to a special committee for examination. The committee shall satisfy itself as to all applicants not only as to their ecclesiastical status, but also as to their character, and doctrinal soundness, and their reason for seeking admission to this Presbytery. This special committee shall report thereon with its recommendations in each case.

4. Ministers in good standing in other Presbyteries, or in any sister churches, who may happen to be present, may be invited to sit with the Presbytery as corresponding members. Such members shall be entitled to deliberate and advise, but not to vote in any decisions of the Presbytery.

Chapter III. Meetings

1. Stated Meetings: There shall be one stated meeting of the Southern Virginia Presbytery each year—the first Tuesday after the first Sunday in April.

a. This April meeting shall be known as the Annual Meeting of the Presbytery and will have to do with the general review of the year's work of the Church and reports from the various fields.

2. Pro-re-nata Meetings: These meetings may be called in accordance with the Form of Government, Chapter X, Section IX. If a pro-re-nata meeting is found necessary, the church requesting such shall provide for the entertainment of said meeting.

Chapter IV. Officers

1. The officers of the Presbytery shall be as follows: Moderator, Stated Clerk, Permanent Clerk, Temporary Clerk, Treasurer and a Statistician.

2. Election. (a) The Moderator and Temporary Clerk shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Presbytery and serve until their successors are elected.

(b) The Stated Clerk, Permanent Clerk, Treasurer and Statistician shall be elected for a term of five (5) years. In case of a vacancy, the successor shall be elected to fill the unexpired term.

3. Salaries: The salary of the Stated Clerk shall be Ten Dollars (\$10.00) per year. The salary of the Permanent Clerk shall be Five Dollars (\$5.00) per year. The salary of the Treasurer shall be Five Dollars (\$5.00) per year. The Temporary Clerk shall receive Two Dollars and a Half (\$2.50) per year.

Chapter V. Duties of Officers

1. For duties of Moderator, see Section II, Chapter XIX, Form of Government.

2. The Stated Clerk shall perform such duties as may naturally fall to him in keeping with the office as prescribed in the Form of Government.

3. The Permanent Clerk shall keep correct record of the proceedings of Presbytery and read the minutes and turn them

over to the Stated Clerk at the close of the meeting. He shall perform such other duties as the Stated Clerk may direct.

4. The Temporary Clerk shall become the assistant to the Permanent Clerk and shall be under the direction of the Stated Clerk.

5. The Treasurer shall receive and disburse all monies belonging to the Presbytery upon written order signed by the Stated Clerk or the Standing Committee incurring the debt. He shall make his report at the Annual Meeting of the Presbytery, propose the rate of assessment needed to meet the expense for the ensuing year, and submit his accounts for audit.

The Treasurer shall submit with his report an itemized report of receipts from each church, including delinquent churches, and take steps to collect all over-due assessments.

6. The Statistician shall compile statistics of the Presbytery and report the same at the Annual Meeting.

Chapter VI. Committees

1. The Committees of the Presbytery shall be of three classes: (1) Standing; (2) Temporary; and (3) Special.

1. The Standing Committees shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Presbytery. Those elected to the Standing Committees shall serve for a term of three (3) years. No member of the Presbytery shall be Chairman of more than one Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall meet at least once a year and shall present a written and signed report to Presbytery at times designated.

2. The Standing Committees are as follows—with any additions as the Presbytery may designate from time to time:—

a. National Missions: Three (3) ministers and two (2) elders.

b. Foreign Missions: Three (3) ministers and two (2) elders.

c. Christian Education: Three ministers (3) and two (2) elders.

d. Board of Pensions: Two ministers (2) and one (1) elder.

e. Necrology: One minister (1) and one (1) elder.

f. Vacancy and Supply: Three (3) ministers and two (2) elders.

g. Examination: Five (5) ministers.

h. Program and Field Activities: The Chairman shall be elected by the Presbytery with the Chairman of the four Standing Committees, namely, National Missions, Foreign Missions, Christian Education and Pensions. The Stated Clerk (who may serve as Secretary) and the President of the Woman's Presbyterian Society may serve as a corresponding member. This Committee shall coordinate all educational and promotional work proposed by the Boards and the various activities of all agencies operating within the Presbytery. This Committee shall make its report to the Annual Meeting of the Presbytery.

i. American Bible Society: It shall be the duty of the Committee on the American Bible Society to cooperate with that Society in their relations to our work.

j. Board of Trustees: The Trustees shall assume such duties as are usually given trustees.

k. Minutes of Synod: This Committee shall function according to instructions.

Chapter VII. Temporary Committees

The Temporary Committees should be as follows with such changes as may be necessary:—

1. Bills and Overtures: Two (2) ministers and one (1) elder. All papers presented to the Presbytery for due consideration shall be placed in charge of this committee and the committee shall make proper recommendations to the

Presbytery.

2. Judicial Business: Two (2) ministers and one (1) elder. This Committee shall consider the proper disposition of all papers referring to matters of government and discipline. No paper involving a complaint against a person or church shall be read in open meeting of Presbytery except on recommendation of the Committee. This Committee shall have no power to hear or determine judicial cases, but may recommend a Special Judicial Commission of five (5) ministers and two (2) elders as provided in the Book of Discipline.

3. Sessional Records: Two (2) ministers and one (1) elder. This Committee shall examine all records of the different churches of the Presbytery and report their findings to the Chairman. The Committee will then make its report to Presbytery for adoption.

4. Auditing Committee: Three elders.

5. Nominations: Three (3) ministers and Two (2) elders.

6. Leave of Absence: Two (2) ministers and one (1) elder.

7. Resolutions of Thanks: One (1) minister and Two (2) elders.

8. Next Place of Meeting: One (1) minister and One (1) elder.

9. Special Committees may be appointed at the will of the Presbytery.

10. Arrangements: The Moderator, Stated Clerk and Session of the entertaining Church.

Chapter VIII. Commissions

Special Commissions may be appointed as time and occasion may demand.

1. In the election of commissioners to the General Assembly preference should ordinarily be given to those ministers who have been longest in the service of the Presbytery without having been members of the General Assembly. And in so far as practicable ruling elder commissioners shall be selected in accordance with a similar policy.

2. Commissioners to the General Assembly shall be elected during the morning session on the second day of the Annual Meeting.

The ministerial or lay candidate may be disqualified if the church he represents has failed to pay its quota of benevolences and Presbyterial assessment.

The Alternate (if he is not called upon to serve) shall become the nominee for the following year.

Chapter IX. Miscellaneous

1. The Stated Clerk shall bring to each stated meeting of Presbytery the records of the last stated meeting and meetings subsequent thereto, the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, the Digest, and copies of his last published minutes of the Synod and General Assembly.

2. In case any minister of the Presbytery should be absent from the regular meetings for more than one year, without assigning sufficient reasons, he shall be cited to appear before Presbytery to answer for his delinquency.

3. The roll shall be called at the close of each stated meeting of the Presbytery and the members who shall be found absent without leave shall be so recorded.

4. The docket of business for the Presbytery shall be prepared by the Stated Clerk. This docket shall be printed and a copy mailed to each minister and the Clerk of each Session in the Presbytery at least three weeks before time for Presbytery to convene.

5. Method of Amendment: Any amendment or addition to the rules of Presbytery shall be presented in writing, referred to the Permanent Clerk for wording and arrangement, and the consideration of the same postponed until the next stated meeting of Presbytery, unless by unanimous vote the immediate consideration is ordered. In either case a two-thirds vote shall be required to effect a change.

THE COMMITTEE.

BY THE WAY

By Uncle Billie

Time places many of us in another world by removing familiar landmarks, taking our old mates and acquaintances, and placing strangers in their places. This, of course, makes quite a host of us, who came along in the making of departed landmarks, quite lonely and feel gripped by an unfriendly embrace of a monster nurtured not by things of earth. We look back; and, lost to the present for a few minutes, we ask the invisible: "What is this?"

But why live in the past when there is much ahead to be solved? The future tense welcomes us with open arms. It stands before us as a medium—"The fullness of time"—for the advent of a better economy; it holds out better means and methods of living well and better in the sight of Him who knows no compromise that fosters a backward step or makes destruction sure to the higher life. The economy that lies before us will reflect God and not man. In the present economy, we look and behold (consider seriously) and we see only man, Mammon, and the translation of Mammon into worldly pleasures and implements of war.

Nothing foretells the near approach of the end of a God-displeasing order of economy more clearly and markedly than the increase of man's inventions; for the uses to which they are put do not please God; and retribution in the form of plague or disaster or human contention, or the result of contending forces of nature, will without the slightest failure balance the account with compound interest.

The prophet Nahum (2:3-4), in prophesying the coming of the automobile—and it is clear enough that it was the prophesy of the coming of the automobile—said: "The chariots shall be with flaming torches * * *. The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broadways; they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightning." This we see day and night with an end somewhere on the King's Highway of holiness.

The fulfillment of this prophesy makes one tremble in the streets and causes one to feel as a pedestrian that he has no rights in the streets that an automobile driver should respect. These inventions are not used for a better economy; therefore they, too, shall become relics of departed landmarks.

We look up into the stellar dome, and we behold man commanding the winds to serve his craft in the aerial regions; but this invention is not being used to bring the Kingdom of God into the hearts of men for the consummation of His Kingdom; but it is used to enlarge and strengthen belligerent resources to become invincible in arms. Yet we should not be alarmed, not even over wars and rumors of wars. They do not hurry God up, but mark the rapid approach of a self-centered economy, which exhibits itself as the cause and God as the effect.

The Man of Galilee, and of a few years from the carpenter's bench, and who would not stay in a Roman-sealed tomb, says: "And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end is not yet." "Rumors of wars" are written wherever the trees seem to kiss the skies, that the near-sighted may run and read; they are written on every craft of the air that once impregnable forts may be reminded that they are archives wallowing in a sea of glass and on a soundless floor, and are targets for the craft in the air; and "wars and rumors of wars" are written on the high seas that those nations on whose possessions "the sun never sets" may keep vigil. All this is to keep the "peace" by which and in which the world will try on her long white

robe down by the river side and study war no more."

Shadows

There are short or mid-day shadows of the approach of a Godly economy, or a means and method of better living; and these means and methods restore the souls of those who are willing to die without the sight.

There are clear evidences that the present economy, in its scope—household, society, and State,—is breaking down from the fact that men and nations in the highest ascendency of the human realm have and are daily leaving God out of their knowledge; and Holy Writ tells us that when we subtract God out our knowledge, we allow our time and attention to be diverted to "things that are inconvenient," only to be reduced to a creature most miserable, and to a personality reflecting all that constitutes human depravity. This is seen in capital letters, increasing in brilliancy and in magnitude, in the administration of justice. When the Prophet Amos exhorted the people to "Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with God," no doubt, he saw this requirement of God as a dead letter among the people or those who administered and executed justice. And it is demonstrated daily that justice slumbers and sleeps when called to protect and defend, or serve as a shield and buckler for minority groups: the Negro and the Jew.

It is putting it very mildly to say that injustice in the "land of the free and the home of the brave" is the most hardest, sky-towering, deep-seated boulder in the rugged path of an American minority group—the Negro's efforts to make a single day count for aught.

The optimist can proclaim from the housetop the near approach of an economy reflecting divine attributes, because those at the head of the present economy, said to be aimed at means and methods for the higher advancement of home, society, and State are not ashamed to resort to satanic plans to defeat justice where the Negro, as a general rule, is concerned.

When any dispensation exhausts its resources in quest of selfish gain, God takes the steering wheel, sets weeping man aside, gives his opportunity to another, and takes up where Christ left off.

Outspoken Remnant

The mid-day approach of short shadows of a better and a Godly economy reflects itself daily in a remnant of God-fearing men and women, willing to be persecuted for righteousness' sake; and be it understood that this remnant is never found among the low-brows or the self-styled aristocrats; but they are found among men like Elijah, Amos, John the Baptist, Paul en route to Damascus, and Martin Luther—personalities that knew no compromise for earthly gain or bodily safety.

When one sees a remnant upholding righteous principles at the expense of social divides and satanic-welded traditions that men, regardless of race, creed, color, or condition may live the common life, think in high thoughts, and render service that counts, an ungodly dispensation is on its last pillar of support.

Elijah—as most of us would have done—ran away and sat under a juniper tree; and, hiding by the Brook Cherith, declared unto God that he had enough; and, saying further: "I, even I only am left; and they seek my life to take it away." Surely these are words expressing despair in its last stage. But when such giants show signs of despair or express despair in their efforts for a better economy, God is about to strike the fatal blow to the one passing out. Martin Luther felt alone when his friends advised him against going to the Diet at Worms. But he declared that he would go to the Diet at Worms if the devils there outnumbered the tiles on the housetop; and he went.

Followers of the Remnant

The followers of the remnant are many. Elijah had seven thousand. John the Baptist met a shameful end, but he left many followers; Paul ended up on the Roman chain-gang, but there are Christians even today on Mars' Hill and in Rome; and Martin Luther unchained the Bible and the people were glad.

Just a few years before the Civil War began (about 1860-'61) brothers (Northern and Southern) were contending in Church and State, and matching each other with Scripture, and the slaves had it hardest. Taskmasters and slave owners subtracted the supreme court, the last court of appeal (conscience) from all the hidden powers that set the divide between man and brute. Bishop Cook was mobbed in Bethel Methodist church, on Calhoun Street, Charleston, S. C., just before the Civil War, because he did not believe in American slavery. This was and is now one of the wealthiest congregations in Charleston.

Thirty-eight years ago—when I was a Sabbath school missionary and moved among many old ex-slaves of coastal South Carolina, especially the islands—these ex-slaves often told me that just before the Civil War a peck of corn was a slave's weekly ration, while meat was out the question. At night they would grind their corn into meal if they could borrow upper and nether stones from some one of their slave brethren—for some had these stones, while quite a number did not have them. Sometimes the night was too far spent to borrow these stones and grind; but some slave brother was kind enough to let his brother have some of his meal. One of the most outstanding men in Edisto Island Presbyterian church lived and served in this economy, and died a most faithful elder and member of the Grand Army of the Republic. I have often been told by survivors of this economy (King Pharaoh's brick yard in Christian America) that hard labor in the long-staple cotton fields and in the rice ponds was the strict order, and you had to eat what you might be able to find.

Even the feeble minded can see that such an attitude toward the helpless was a dispensation trying to hold on even in death. Like man and beast, a passing economy wages a most stubborn, uncompromising battle; tolls its own death knell with a defiance in the face of sure defeat.

Only the man whose physical vitality and recuperative powers are run down and can not respond to medical treatment surrenders to the clutches of death with little or no resistance. Even the infant, dying on its weeping mother's arm, seems to put up a fight against death by clinching its little hands together. The foliage of the giant oaks, while turning to its autumnal, burnished gold, acts with a bustle and surrenders with a rustle in the air. It puts up a stiff fight before a complete surrender to transmigration. But the cedars of Lebanon and the Southern pines seem to have no war to wage against the seasons of the year. They whisper a perennial favor with God.

The Persian Empire fell, in the midst of her hardest fight to exist, because her economy subtracted God and defied man. All roads led to Rome because Rome was the eternal city, while the Kingdom of God was a myth.

RENDALL PRESBYTERY

The Spring meeting of the Presbytery of Rendall will be held in the Bethany Presbyterian church, of Oklahoma City, Okla., opening on April 7, 1938, at 8 P. M. Please pay the apportionment of your church for expenses of Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, on or before the meeting, to the Treasurer of Presbytery, Elder J. H. Crowell of Perry, Okla. REV. H. G. LEE, Moderator REV. W. J. STARKS, S. C.