

**STANDING RULES OF  
SOUTHWEST CHURCH PLANTING NETWORK (PCA)  
A Joint Subcommittee of the MNA or Missions Committees of Participating  
Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) in the states of  
Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona**  
*As Approved by the Network at its Annual Meeting on February 15, 2005*

**ARTICLE 1-NAME, PURPOSES, OFFICES**

**Name**

1.1 The Southwest Church Planting Network (Network) is a Joint Subcommittee of the Participating MNA or Missions Committees of the PCA Presbyteries in the states of Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona (Network Presbyteries) as approved by each Presbytery. Such approval shall stand until revoked and shall not require annual renewal. The Joint Subcommittee will operate under the name of “Southwest Church Planting Network (PCA)”.

**Purpose**

1.2 The purpose of the Network is to work within the courts of the Church as a servant organization to assist the Network Presbyteries by 1) identifying and training church planters, 2) strategically planting churches and new RUF chapters, 3) nurturing new plants until full maturity, and 4) developing financial resources through non-church donors.

**Principal Office**

1.3 The principal office of the Network initially shall be in Dallas, Texas, but may be relocated by action of the Network.

**ARTICLE 2-NETWORK STRUCTURE AND OPERATION**

**Over Sight of The Network**

2.1 The strategic direction and over sight of the Network shall be under the direction of the Network representatives meeting as a whole. Representatives shall be elders of churches which are members of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) in the states of Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Arizona that voluntarily join together as the Network. Each participating church in good standing shall name one representative to the Network except for churches with over 1,000 communing members who may name two members to the Network. The chairmen of the MNA or Missions Committees of the Network Presbyteries are also members of the Network regardless of whether their churches are participants. The Executive Director shall be a non-voting member of the Network. The Network may delegate some of its functions to an Executive Committee.

## **Obligations of the Network Churches**

2.2 Each church participating in the Network shall obligate itself for an initial three year period both in participation and financial support. The participation shall be in terms of the church's Network elder representative attending regular meetings and providing expertise in some particular aspect of new church and/or RUF plantings. It is highly desirable for the elder representative to serve a minimum of two years. The Network Presbyteries reserve the right to ask a participating church in its Presbytery for a replacement elder representative if for some reason the selected elder is deemed unsuitable for the Network.

The following additional provisions are in effect for churches whose participation in the Network began after August 31, 2000. However, it is hoped that all Network participants would choose to be bound by them for the overall good of the Network, the Network Presbyteries, and the new church plants and RUF campus works that are currently being supported by the Network. After three years in the Network, the participation commitment automatically renews annually for an additional year unless the participating church has given notice of its intent not to continue. If a church decides to cease full Network participation after the initial three year period or subsequent automatic renewal periods, it must give the Network notice in writing that it wants to phase down its participation one year in advance. After the one year period, the church's financial participation for the next two years will be reduced as follows. The year following the twelve month advance notice date given by a participating church, the financial obligation of that church to the Network reduces to 2.00% of their general fund receipts (not including building or other designated funds) for the previous year and .75% to their respective Network Presbytery. The second year following the notice date, the financial obligation to the Network reduces to 1.00% of their general fund receipts for the previous year and .75% to their respective Network Presbytery. During these last two years of financial participation in the Network, it is optional by the withdrawing church whether or not they choose to be an active participant in the other affairs of the Network.

2.3 Financially, each PCA church over two years old that participates in the Network (if a Mission church or a financially challenged church see special provisions below) is obligated to pay to the Network and to their constituent Network Presbytery a percentage of their previous calendar year's general operating receipts (not including building or other designated funds). The first year's percentage is 2.00% to the Network and .75% to the Network Presbytery. The second and subsequent year's percentage is 2.75% to the Network and .75% to the Network Presbytery. Financial payments for established churches shall be made on a monthly basis prorated for partial calendar year membership (1/12 of previous year's general operating receipts for each month in The Network times the applicable %).

2.4 Churches (and missions) initiated and/or provided significant funding by the Network shall be obligated to be participants in the Network starting with their first regular weekly worship service. Non-Network new church plants may also participate in the Network on this same basis. Once the church has been particularized, its Session will

be encouraged to continue this participation as a way to reimburse the Network and continue a tradition of supporting church planting. The first year participation, on a monthly basis, is 1.25% of the monthly average of the church's general fund receipts to the Network. The second year, on a monthly basis, it is 2.00% of the monthly average based on the previous rolling twelve months of the church's general fund receipts to the Network, and the third and subsequent years 2.75% of the church's previous calendar year's general fund receipts to the Network and .75% to its Network Presbytery payable in even monthly payments.

2.5 Financially challenged churches may participate in the Network. A financially challenged church is an organized church at least 2 years old with general operating receipts in their previous calendar year of \$100,000 or less (not including building or other designated funds). The first year's percentage is .75% to the Network and .00% to the Network Presbytery. The second year's percentage is 1.00% to the Network and .25% to the Network Presbytery. The third year's percentage is 1.50% to the Network and .50% to the Network Presbytery. The fourth year's percentage is 2.00% to the Network and .75% to the Network Presbytery. The fifth and subsequent year's percentage is 2.75% to the Network and .75% to the Network Presbytery. Payments for financially challenged churches shall be made on a monthly basis prorated for partial calendar year participation (1/12 of previous year's general operating receipts for each month in the Network times the applicable %). If during the first five years, the general fund giving exceeds \$100,000, then the percentages would accelerate, beginning the next year, to those in the projected fifth year.

2.6 For churches that are desirous of participating in the Network but are unable at the present time to contribute the full amount that would normally be due, there is a provision for a non-voting participant. Non-voting church participants are committed to the work of the Network, are welcome to attend the meetings, and will, over time, increase their financial participation up to the full Network and presbytery commitment levels.

### **Regular Meetings and Quorum**

2.7 The Network shall meet at times and places to be determined by the Network at a previous meeting or as called by the Executive Committee. There shall be at least an "Annual Meeting". It shall be the first meeting of the calendar year and be held during February. The Network participants shall be notified of the time and the place for the meeting at least 60 days in advance. At the Annual Meeting the Network shall confirm direction and strategy and elect the Chairman and Vice Chairman during odd years, and the at-large members of the Executive Committee during even years. The Executive Director shall be elected each year at the Annual Meeting. A Nominating Committee consisting of the past Chairmen of the Network and the Executive Director shall meet at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting to select nominees for either Officers or the At-Large Members of the Executive Committee to present at the Annual Meeting.

2.8 There must be a majority of the Network representatives present including a majority of the Network Presbyteries, MNA or Missions Committee Chairmen (or their alternates) at any meeting where action is taken.

2.9 Minutes of all regular and special meetings shall be taken, published, and maintained for a period of five years as permanent records of the Network.

2.10 Any procedural questions shall be resolved by using Robert's Rules of Order.

2.11 Individual churches should be responsible for the expenses of their elder representatives for attendance at the Network meetings. The MNA or Missions Committees of the Network Presbyteries should be responsible for the expenses of their chairmen for attendance at the Network meetings. The travel expenses of members of the Executive Committee shall be paid (if requested) by the Network for any called meetings requiring travel.

### **Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Network**

2.12 The Network shall every two years at its Annual Meeting during odd years, elect a Chairman for a two year term. The Chairman of the Network shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Network as well as serve as Chairman of the Executive Committee. The Chairman must be elected from elders representing individual participating churches.

2.13 Also, the Network shall every two years at its Annual Meeting during odd years, elect a Vice Chairman for a two year term. The Vice Chairman shall preside over meetings of the Network and the Executive Committee in the absence of the Chairman. The Vice Chairman must be elected from elders representing individual participating churches. The Vice Chairman is responsible for recording the minutes of the regular and special meetings unless he is acting as Chairman in which event the Executive Director shall be responsible for the minutes.

## **ARTICLE 3-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **Executive Committee Membership**

3.1 The Executive Committee shall be made up of nine members. The Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Chairman of the Network Presbytery MNA or Missions Committees have permanent seats on the Executive Committee because of their offices. The remaining members (at-large members) shall be elected by the Network for two year terms at its Annual Meeting during even years. Vacancies on the Executive Committee for whatever cause shall be filled from members of the Network elected by the Executive Committee. The Executive Director of the Network shall be a non-voting member of the Executive Committee.

### **Authority of the Executive Committee**

3.2 The Executive Committee shall have the full authority of the Network to carry out the approved plans of the Network within constraints of the annual budget. The Executive Committee is responsible for nominating the Executive Director for election by the Network. The Executive Committee is also responsible for evaluation of the Executive Director (including his examination with respect to Christian character and doctrine) and setting of his compensation and benefits. The Executive Committee is also responsible for setting up additional subcommittees of the Network as appropriate for carrying out the work of the Network and appointing members of the Network to these subcommittees.

### **Quorum**

3.3 There must be a majority of the Executive Committee present including a majority of the Network Presbyteries' MNA or Missions Committee Chairmen (or their alternates) at any meeting where action is taken.

## **ARTICLE 4-STAFF**

### **General**

4.1 The only staff of The Network initially shall be an Executive Director on a part time basis. As The Network grows and matures, other part time or full time staff may be added as required to carry out the approved plans of the Network.

### **Election and Term of Office**

4.2 The Executive Director shall be elected by the Network at the Annual Meeting of the Network.

### **Executive Director**

4.3 The Executive Director shall in general supervise and control all of the business affairs of the Network. The Executive Director shall have, within the budget limits approved by the Network, the general authority to cause the employment of staff as the proper conduct of operations may require and to fix their compensation. The Executive Director may also remove any employee and may take such other actions on behalf of the Network as may be necessary or advisable to conduct the activities of the Network. He may sign, with the Chairman or any other proper individual authorized by the Network, any contracts or other instruments which the Network or Executive

Committee have authorized to be executed and perform all duties incident to the office of the Executive Director and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Network or Executive Committee from time to time.

## **ARTICLE 5- FINANCES**

### **Billing of Churches**

5.1 The Executive Director shall be responsible for developing systems for the billing of participating churches on a monthly basis. Optionally, the Network shall bill the participating churches for the Network Presbyteries' monthly financial contribution and forward it to the appropriate Presbytery's Treasurer.

### **Bank Account**

5.2 After authorization by the Network or Executive Committee, the Executive Director shall open one or more bank accounts for the funds of The Network. Checks written on this account(s) must be signed by the Executive Director, the Chairman or the Vice Chairman of the Network, or other properly authorized individual for amounts up to \$5,000.00 and signed by two of these individuals for amounts of \$5,000.00 or more.

### **Financial Review**

5.3 As appropriate and at least annually, the Executive Committee shall cause an independent review to be made of the financial records of The Network and a report made to the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE 6- TELEPHONE OR E-MAIL MEETINGS**

6.1 Members of the Executive Committee or members of any committee designated by the Executive Committee may participate in and hold regular or special meetings by means of conference telephone or handle one issue approvals by electronic mail.

## **ARTICLE 7- PRESBYTERY OVERSIGHT OF NETWORK ACTIVITIES**

The Network must, prior to moving ahead with a new church plant, attend to the following:

7.1 Notify the appropriate Presbytery MNA or Missions Committee as soon as a new church plant or a new RUF chapter is being seriously contemplated.

7.2 Consult with the Sessions of other PCA churches near the proposed target area.

7.3 Receive site approval from the appropriate Presbytery.

7.4 In the case of a church plant, receive Presbytery MNA or Missions Committee approval of the philosophy of ministry.

7.5 Receive Presbytery MNA or Missions Committee approval of the business plan.

7.6 Arrange for an interview of the organizing pastor or RUF candidate with the Presbytery MNA or Missions Committee and receive their endorsement of the candidate.

7.7 Ensure all candidates satisfy the credential requirements through the Candidates & Examinations Committee of the appropriate Presbytery.

7.8 Send copies of advertisements that will employ the PCA name and logo to the appropriate Presbytery MNA or Missions Committee.

7.9 Report twice each year to each Presbytery's MNA or Missions Committee in person and twice each year in writing.

## **ARTICLE 8- AMENDMENTS**

8.1 These Standing Rules may be altered, amended or repealed, or new Standing Rules may be adopted at any regular or special meeting of the Network by a majority vote of the Network, provided notice of the proposed alteration, amendment or repeal or adoption be contained in the notice of such meeting provided to the Network at least thirty days in advance. In the event proper notice was not given, a two thirds vote of the Network participants at such meeting is required to alter, amend, or repeal the Standing Rules.

8.2 Alterations, amendments, or deletions to the Standing Rules must be approved by the Network Presbyteries if such changes are substantive changes to the original Network Proposal or subsequent wording approved by the Network Presbyteries.

## **ARTICLE 9- LIFE OF NETWORK**

9.1 At any time the Network by a two thirds vote may recommend to the Network Presbyteries that the Network be terminated. Each of the Network Presbyteries must approve that recommendation.

9.2 Any of the Network Presbyteries may vote at any time to withdraw from the Network. Upon that occurrence, the Network would be reconstituted to consist of only the remaining Network Presbyteries. The withdrawing Presbytery's action would not effect the individual churches in that Presbytery that were participating in the Network other than eliminate the requirement on their part to contribute .75% of its annual general fund receipts to that Presbytery. If all but one of the Network Presbyteries votes to withdraw from the Network, then the Network would terminate after it takes steps to satisfy its outstanding debts and obligations.

9.3 In the event of termination of the Network, all money, property, or other assets of the Network received from or funded by participating churches will, after payment of all legal debts and obligations, be distributed back to the participating churches on a prorata basis based on the amount of the moneys each paid into the Network.

9.4 In the event the Network is terminated, all undistributed funds given by individuals shall be handled in one of the following ways:

9.4.1 If after payment of all obligations and with no qualified successor to the Network, the donor(s) will be contacted and given the following choices:

1. The actual or prorated remainder of their donation can be returned to them according to all applicable law and the guidelines of any third party fiduciary, if any.
2. The actual or prorated remainder of their donation will be given by the Network to the qualified Christian Charity of their choice as long it meets the then prevailing Internal Revenue Service's, or its successor organization, guidelines for being a tax exempt organization.

9.4.2 If there is a qualified nonprofit successor to the Network, the donor(s) will be contacted and given the following choices:

1. The actual or prorated remainder of their donation can be returned to them according to all applicable law and the guidelines of any third party fiduciary, if any.
2. The actual or prorated remainder of their donation will be given by the Network to the qualified Christian Charity of their choice as long it meets the then prevailing Internal Revenue Service's, or its successor organization, guidelines for being a tax exempt organization.
3. All remaining donated funds to be transferred to the successor organization.