

**CONSTITUTION
of the
NORTH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED COUNCIL**

CONSTITUTION

[As amended by the 3rd (1977), 22nd (1996), and 40th (2014) Meetings of the Council]

I. NAME

The name of the Council (“the Council”) shall be The North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (“NAPARC”).

II. BASIS

Confessing Jesus Christ as the only Savior and Sovereign Lord over all of life, we affirm the basis of the fellowship of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches to be full commitment to the Bible in its entirety as the Word of God written, without error in all its parts, and to its teaching as set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms.

III. PURPOSE

We regard this basis of fellowship as warrant for the establishment of a formal relationship of the nature of a council, that is, a fellowship that enables the Member Churches to advise, counsel, and cooperate in various matters with one another, and to hold out before each other the desirability and need for organic union of churches that are of like faith and practice.

IV. FUNCTION

1. Facilitate discussion, consultation, and the sharing of insights among Member Churches on those issues and problems which divide them as well as on those which they face in common.
2. Encourage the Member Churches to pursue closer ecclesiastical relations, as appropriate, among the regional and major assemblies.
3. Promote the appointment of committees to study matters of common interest and concern and, when appropriate, make recommendations to the Council with respect to them.
4. Exercise mutual concern in the perpetuation, retention, and propagation of the Reformed faith.
5. Promote local, regional, and general assembly/synodical-wide cooperation wherever possible and feasible in such areas as missions, relief efforts, training of men for the ministry, Christian schools, activities for young people, and church education and publications.
6. Operate a website to facilitate the exchange of information and to foster increased cooperation and fellowship among the Member Churches.

V. NATURE AND EXTENT OF AUTHORITY

It is understood that the Council is not a synodical, classical, or presbyterial assembly, and therefore all actions and decisions of the Council, other than those with respect to a church's membership in the Council (*Constitution*, VI.4), are advisory in character and may in no way curtail, restrict, or intrude into the exercise of the jurisdiction or authority given to the governing assemblies of the Member Churches by Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church.

VI. MEMBERSHIP

1. The Council was duly constituted on October 31, 1975, by the delegates from the five founding Member Churches, having been previously authorized to do so by their major assemblies. A list of past and present members of the Council shall be maintained among the Council's documents.

2. Churches eligible for membership are those which profess and maintain the basis for fellowship (*Constitution*, II) and which maintain the marks of the true church (the pure preaching of the gospel, the Scriptural administration of the sacraments, and the faithful exercise of discipline).

3. A major assembly's application for membership must be sponsored by the major assemblies of at least two Member Churches and shall include copies (either paper or digital) of the applicant's confessional standards, declaratory acts (if applicable), form of government, and form(s) of subscription, together with a brief overview of their history, ecclesiastical relationships, memberships in ecumenical organizations, missions activities, and the theological education of their ministers.

4. Admission to, suspension from, restoration to (after suspension), and termination of membership shall be proposed by the Council to the Member Churches by two-thirds of the ballots cast by unit vote; this proposal must then be approved within three years by two-thirds of the major assemblies of the Member Churches eligible to vote. A proposal to suspend or terminate the membership of a Member Church may be initiated only by a major assembly of a Member Church eligible to vote. A suspended church may send Delegates to meetings of the Council but they shall not vote nor may that church be represented on the Interim Committee.

VII. AMENDMENTS

This *Constitution* may be amended by recommendation of the Council by two-thirds of the ballots cast by unit vote of the Member Churches' Delegates, and this recommendation must then be adopted within three years by two-thirds of the major assemblies of the Member Churches eligible to vote. The amendment as recommended to the Member Churches is not amendable.