

Guidelines for Congregations Hosting a Presbytery Meeting Committee

For Great Lakes-Gulf Presbytery Meeting, March 4-6, 2021

Fathers and Brothers,

Our committee was tasked with clarifying and enhancing the guidelines for congregations hosting presbytery meetings. In fulfilling our task, we asked for input from five past host churches regarding cost. Based on those who responded, an upper range of \$1,200-\$1,300 was identified, while one church incurred under \$500 in expenses. This did not include additional housing costs in hotels. We also note that the number of delegates and participants has been increasing, so that about 60 delegates registered for the March, 2020 meeting and 80 plus were served the evening meals.

We believe it would be helpful for the Time and Place Committee and/or Nominating Committee to communicate the parameters required for hosting a presbytery meeting to potential host congregations when inquiring as to whether they might serve as hosts. This will help to avoid misunderstandings by host congregations and enable them to plan appropriately financially and logistically.

Following are the current basic responsibilities of the host congregation as we understand them:

1. Provide housing for delegates and guests who attend the meeting. (2 overnights typically)
2. Provide meals and snacks during breaks while presbytery meets (morning & afternoon drinks and snacks; meals--typically 2 bfasts, 2 lunches—including bag lunch for departing delegates, 2 dinners).
3. Provide transportation to and from local airports.
4. Arrange for transportation to hosts' homes where necessary.
5. Provide comfortable sufficient meeting space for 60-100 with A/V equipment, PA system, wireless service for a large group, power strips for computer plug-ins, etc.
6. Provide access to copying/printing capabilities and supplies.
7. Misc. items

In 2020 presbytery budgeted up to \$750 to assist the host congregation with these costs. Hotel costs are not typically reimbursed by the presbytery, although the AIC has approved presbytery covering this cost for our March, 2021 meeting due to COVID concerns.

With the growing size of the presbytery, it could become a burden for congregations to host and fund most of the expenses for the meeting. Yet, if we want to keep the cost to presbytery lower, perhaps some of the larger congregations are content to continue to bear this cost. For discussion, we propose two alternative solutions below in our recommendations, as well as the status quo option.

1. That presbytery provide additional support for host congregations through one of the options below:
 - a. That presbytery increase the amount budgeted for offsetting expenses to host congregations.
 - b. That presbytery authorize host congregations to collect a modest registration fee for delegates attending the meeting to be paid by the delegate's home congregation.
2. That presbytery continue to minimize the cost to delegates and presbytery by asking larger host congregations to bear most of the expense for hosting the meetings.
3. That the basic hosting requirements and expectations be communicated to potential host congregations when they are asked to serve as hosts.
4. That this committee be dismissed.

Respectfully submitted,

Wade Mann and Richard Holdeman (H.P. McCracken transferred to MWP)