



BYLAWS
Mujeres Hispanas Latinas Presbiterianas
(Hispanic Latin Presbyterian Women - HLPW)



I - Preamble

Mujeres Hispanas Latinas Presbiterianas (MHLP) is made up of women with origins in different countries and diverse backgrounds. Some of us are immigrants to United States of America from Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean. Many live outside the continental United States, in Puerto Rico. The bond that unites us in song and prayer is our love of God, our church, our Hispanic Latin people, and the Spanish and Portuguese languages, our common Latin roots.

II - Purposes

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves

- to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,
- to support the mission of the church worldwide,
- to work for justice and peace, and
- to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

III - Name

This organization will be known as Mujeres Hispanas Latinas Presbiterianas (MHLP) Presbyterian Church USA or Hispanic Latin Presbyterian Women (HLPW) Presbyterian Church USA.

IV - Mission Statement

As MHLP we share the beliefs of the Reformed Theology of our denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA). We are an integral part of Presbyterian Women (PW). We have the following particular responsibilities:

- Affirm our culture and language, thus Spanish is the official language of our meetings. If necessary and possible, translations into Portuguese and English will be provided.
- Discover and develop the gifts and talents of the leaders.
- Empower MHLP with the necessary training and resources in Spanish and Portuguese.
- Emphasize unity in diversity to accomplish complete participation of Hispanic Latin women in the life and mission of the PC (USA) and all of society.

V - Goals and Objectives

The fulfill participation in the life and mission of the PC (USA) and the society through:

- leadership development
- leadership of strategies to confront economics and social needs, and justice and peace
- enlarge the network of communication within MHLP.

VI - Relationships

MHLP establish and maintain relations with Presbyterian Women PC (USA), Afro-American women, Asian-American women, Koreans-American women, Middle East women, Native-Americans women, Ecumenical groups and any committee relatives to presbyteries, synods and General Assembly. Also maintains relationship with others groups and personnel of the Hispanic offices within of the General Assembly.

VII - Membership

49 Membership in MHLP is open to all women speak Spanish and Portuguese, lay or ordinate women,
50 within of PC (USA) who choose to participate in or is supportive of MHLP in any way. The MHLP
51 participating within the organization through:

- 52 ▪ local church, presbytery, synod and national meetings
- 53 ▪ strategies and programs.
- 54 ▪ workshops and seminaries for leadership
- 55 ▪ renovation retreats and spiritual enrichment
- 56 ▪ national and regional gatherings
- 57 ▪ communication networks and personal contact.

58

59 **VIII – Meetings/Gatherings**

60 The meetings of the National Encuentros carried out every three years to provide enrichment,
61 nurture, education and to carry out the necessary business such as electing the Coordinating Team
62 and approve the proposed budget for the following triennium.

63

64 **IX – Voting Representatives**

65 There will be two voting representatives from each synod where are groups of organized, active
66 Hispanic Latin Presbyterian women. There will also be an additional delegate for each 500
67 additional women based on percentage according to the statistics of the General Assembly, to a
68 maximum of four (4) delegates. Two Portuguese speaking women selected from those attending the
69 Gathering will be recognized as members of the Gathering.

70

71 **X - Quorum**

72 The quorum will be one third part of the voting representatives of the participating synods.

73

74 **XI - Regional Encuentros**

75 The attendees of the National Encuentro are responsibly to reproduce the program in their Synod,
76 according of the necessities of the area. The regional Encuentros will be the year following the
77 national Encuentro.

78

79 **XII – Responsibilities of the Coordinating Team of MHLP**

80 The Coordinating Team of MHLP is responsible in fulfilling the Purpose and Principles of
81 Presbyterian Women. To serve as the coordinating team and promote relations with MHLP and
82 PW through out the denomination.

- 83 1. Develop specific goals for the triennium.
- 84 2. Identify issues concerning MHLP.
- 85 3. Respond to the recommendations made by the voting representatives.
- 86 4. Affirm and collaborate with the planning of National and Regional Encuentros.
- 87 5. Comply with the policies of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in the life and mission of the
88 church in all levels of the governing bodies.
- 89 6. Motivate participation of MHLP
- 90 7. Collaborate with General Assembly personnel and other entities of the Church in justice
91 and gender issues.
- 92 8. Provide names of leaders to the governing bodies and organizations in the Presbyterian
93 Church (USA). Accountability in finances by: developing a triennial budget, presenting an
94 operational expense report to the Business Meeting at Encuentros, suggest an annual fee
95 and establish selection criteria and select beneficiaries of the “Fondo Adelante” Fund.

96

- 97 9. Inform and seek nominations to fill any vacant positions which may occur in cases of
98 resignations, death or inability to fulfill the responsibilities. Excepting in the position of
99 Moderator as the Vice-Moderator automatically fills the position.
100 10. Appoint four consultants around the nation and select one to be a member with voice and
101 vote of the Coordinating Team.

102 The Coordinating Team will meet at least once during the triennium and will hold as many
103 conference calls as necessary to carry out their ministry. Other means of communication such as
104 electronic mail, fax, etc. will also be used.
105

106 **XIII – Criteria for the Coordinating Team members**

107 The women who belong to the Coordinating Team shall be members of the Presbyterian Church
108 (USA) Each one shall participate in the Coordinating Team fulfilling the PW Purpose and will
109 provide leadership in the Coordinating Team of MHLP of the PC (USA).

- 110 1. Commitment to God, the PC (USA), Presbyterian Women (PW) and Mujeres Hispanas
111 Latinas Presbiterianas (MHLP)
112 2. Knowledge of the PC (USA) and its structure.
113 3. Knowledge of women’s work within the church and the structure of Presbyterian Women.
114 4. Three to five years experience actively involved in the work of women (local, presbytery,
115 synod levels) and MHLP.
116 5. Commitment with justice issues which affect and a readiness to advocate for the rights of
117 women.
118 6. Excellent human relationships including people of different racial ethnic groups, ages,
119 education and economic backgrounds.
120

121 **XIV -Leaders**

122 The elected leaders are: moderator, vice-moderator, secretary/historian, treasurer and spiritual
123 coordinator. They shall be active members of the congregation, presbyteries or Synods of the
124 MHLP. They will serve three years and cannot be reelected in the same position but may be elected
125 to serve in a different position.
126

127 **MODERATOR**

- 128 1. Speaks for and represents MHLP in the PC (USA).
129 2. Is the official contact between PW, other women’s groups within PCUSA and ecumenical
130 groups.
131 3. Leads all MHLP meetings (the Coordinating Team and National Business Meeting in
132 Encuentro. Develops the agendas for meetings.
133 4. Interprets the purpose of PW and the particular purposes of MHLP in the PC (USA) or with
134 other organizations.
135 5. Plans goals and objectives with the Coordinating Team for three years.
136

137 **VICE-MODERATOR**

138 Should be familiar with the Moderator’s responsibilities and serve in her absence or when asked
139 as she could be considered to be the moderator in the next triennium.
140

141 **SECRETARY/HISTORIAN**

- 142 1. Keep records of the meetings of the Coordinating Team including conference calls and the
143 Business Meeting of MHLP at Encuentro.
144 2. Maintains the Minutes Book and other documents such as the Bylaws.
145

146 **TREASURER**

- 147 1. Receives funds, pays expenses previously approved by the Moderator.

- 148 2. Has a checking account and her signature will be one of two authorized for signing checks.
- 149 3. Provide a written report of the General Funds and “Fondo Adelante” when required by the
- 150 Coordinating Team and at the Gathering/Encuentro.
- 151 4. Remind the Moderator to write and motivate local groups to send the annual fees.
- 152 5. Develop with the Coordinating Team a proposed budget for the next triennium to be
- 153 presented at the Business Meeting in Encuentro

154 155 SPIRITUAL COORDINATOR

- 156 1. Provide spiritual leadership and support to the Coordinating Team of MHLP.
- 157 2. Prepare devotional and liturgy for the Coordinating Team’s meetings.
- 158 3. Provide leadership when the Coordinating Team is planning Goals and Objectives and
- 159 suggest themes and resources for study and reflection.
- 160 4. Support each member of the Coordinating Team serving as a conciliator in conflicts and
- 161 provide pastoral help.

162 163 **XV – Planning/Search Committee**

164 The Planning/Search Committee for national Encuentro (national gathering) consist of at least two
165 women of the Coordinating Team; Vice-Moderator and other member, plus one women by each
166 area were MHLP has exists. The team must be inclusive of all ages, academic preparation and
167 country of origin.

168
169 The responsibilities are to plan the Encuentro and to work as Search Committee looking for new
170 officers for next triennium and fill out vacancies within the Coordinating Team

171 172 **XVI - Criteria to choose the members of the Planning Committee**

173 Must be a Hispanic Latin woman, member of the PCUSA, must be committed to God, the church
174 and be active in women’s work and committed to advocating for women’s issues.

- 175 1. Must be bilingual (Spanish/English) (Spanish/Portuguese).
- 176 2. Committed to serve for three years, work with the MHLP Moderator of her area, responsible
- 177 for planning Regional Encuentro.

178 179 **XVII - Responsibilities of the Planning Committee**

- 180 1. Plan and carry out the National Encuentro in communication with the Volunteer Consultant
- 181 and the Resident Theologian.
- 182 2. Carry out a survey to determine the program and create promotion for the event.
- 183 3. Create an operational budget for the National Encuentro and remain within the same.
- 184 4. Determine strategies to raise funds.
- 185 5. Nominate five women from the members of the Committee and select the Coordinator.
- 186 6. Nominate the necessary sub-committees to carry out specific tasks during the planning and
- 187 execution of the program.

188 189 **XVIII - Responsibilities of the Search Committee**

- 190 1. Provide nominations for selection by the voting representatives at the Gathering for the
- 191 incoming members of the Coordinating Team of MHLP.
- 192 2. Fill vacancies which occur during the three years.
- 193 3. The members of the Search Committee can not be considered for any position on the
- 194 incoming Coordinating Team. If a member wishes to be considered, she must resign the
- 195 same. The Search Committee will meet during the same sessions as the Planning Committee
- 196 and will use the different means of communication to carry out their responsibilities.

- 197 a. Write letters to area and synod MHLP leaders, requesting recommendations of leaders
198 to fill the specific positions in the Coordinating Team of MHLP for the next
199 triennium.
200 b. Maintain a resource bank with names of possible leaders in case of a vacancy.
201 c. Appoint a maximum of two members of the outgoing Coordinating Team for re-
202 election in different positions than those held, to enhance continuity in the work of
203 MHLP.
204 d. Establish a rotation system within the synods represented on the Coordinating Team so
205 that the four synods with the greatest concentration of Hispanic Latin women in the
206 USA are represented.
207

208 **XIX - Election and Installation of leaders**

- 209 1. The MHLP Coordinating Team will be elected in the Business Meeting in the National
210 Encuentro by the voting representatives, using the guidelines established in the Book of
211 Order.
212 2. In order to nominate a woman at the meeting, a previous written consent and two
213 recommendations are needed.
214 3. The Search Committee Moderator will submit a list of nominees to the Moderator at the
215 Business Meeting.
216 4. If more than one woman is nominated for a given position, a ballot will be used and the
217 election will be decided by the majority plus one.
218 5. The installation will be held in the closing worship service at the National Encuentro.
219

220 **XX - Affiliation Fee**

221 The program of MHLP is financed by an affiliation fee at least \$30.00 for each group of women
222 within local congregations. This amount will be established in the MHLP triennial Encuentro. This
223 affiliation fee will be send to the Treasury before September of each year.
224

225 **XXI - Distribution of Assets upon dissolution.**

226 Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes
227 within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of
228 any future federal tax code, as the Coordinating team of Mujeres Hispanas Latinas Presbiterianas
229 with the approval of the Presbyterian Church USA, shall determine in accordance with these By-
230 Laws. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the
231 county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes
232 or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and
233 operated exclusively for such purposes.
234

235 **XXII - Parliamentary Authority**

236 The rules contained in Robert's Rulers of Order (newly Revised) govern MHLP in the Presbyterian
237 Church (USA) in all cases in which they are applicable and are not inconsistent with the bylaws and
238 the constitution of the PC (USA).
239

240 **XXIII - Amendments**

241 These bylaws may be amended at any triennium gathering by a two-thirds vote of those present and
242 voting; provided notice of the proposed amendments have been submitted to the members at least
243 sixteen days prior to the gathering (National Encuentro).
244

245 Approved on July 28, 2007

246 Adopted on July 28, 2007
247



Letty Heredia, Secretary



Cecilia Casal, Moderator